

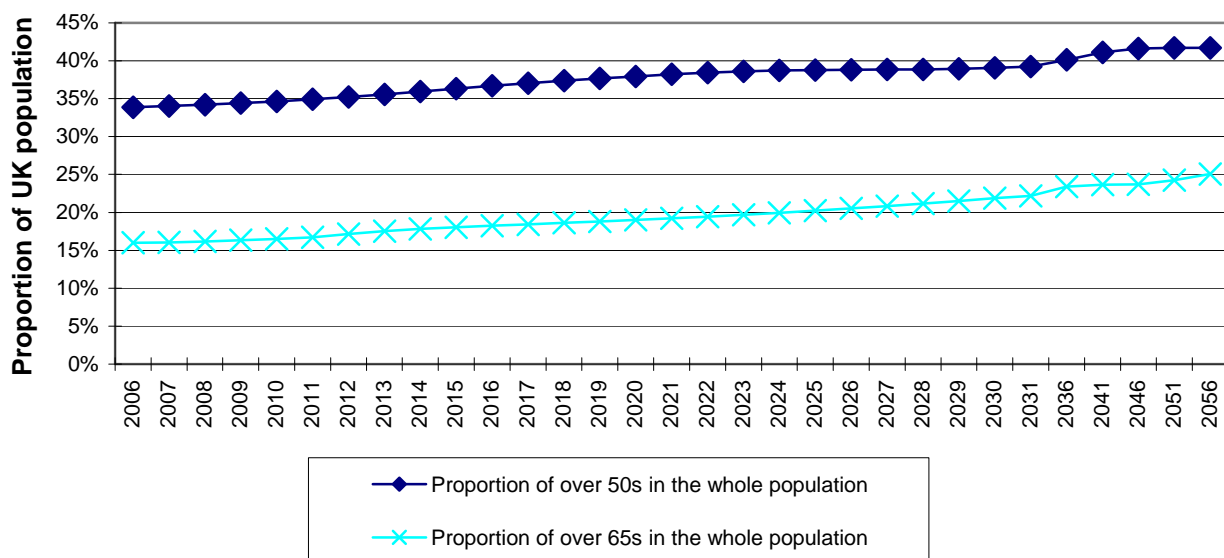


CREATING AN AGE-FRIENDLY SOCIETY

Our society is changing

- In 2007 people aged 65 and over outnumbered children for the first time.
- There are 11.2 million people aged between 49 and 63 in the UK. 5.7 million of these are women and 5.5 million are men.
- One in four children born today can expect to live to be 100.
- Today, we can expect to live, on average, a quarter of our lives in retirement.
- In 20 years' time, a quarter of all adults will be over 65 and the number of people over 85 will have doubled.

The proportion of older people in the UK is growing rapidly



Source: ONS population projections



People are living longer, healthier lives which benefits individuals, the economy and society

- People will have longer to spend with their loved ones, doing activities they enjoy later in life.
- Over half of people aged between 49 and 63 are looking to achieve as much in the next 20 years as they have in the last 20.
- Over half of people aged between 49 and 63 want to get fit by taking up Pilates, yoga or going to the gym.
- The number of people aged between 65 and 70 using the internet every day, or almost every day, is growing.

Age groups	Every day or almost every day			At least once a week (but not every day)			Once a month or less		
	2006	2007	2008	2006	2007	2008	2006	2007	2008
16-24	60	70	77	26	22	19	13	8	..
25-44	63	70	72	26	22	19	11	7	8
45-54	62	67	65	24	23	27	14	10	8
55-64	49	60	64	33	29	25	18	11	11
65-70	43	46	54	34	29	27	24	24	19

Source: Office for National Statistics (2008) National Statistics Omnibus Survey

Note: .. = Disclosive estimate

- People over 50 currently account for 80% of national wealth and nearly 40% of UK annual consumer spending. Higher numbers of experienced employees and a bigger base of entrepreneurs and consumers has benefits for the economy.
- People aged between 50 and 64 have the highest disposable income of any age group.
- Almost one third of unpaid carers in England are aged 60 or over.
- This unpaid work has benefits for communities and society as a whole. It is worth £24 billion a year: £3.9 billion caring for grand children, £5 billion volunteering, and £15.2 billion caring for frail, ill, or disabled adults.



But an ageing society presents us with challenges too

- 37% of those aged between 49 and 63 think the next 20 years will be worse than the last 20.
- 31% of those aged 80 and over felt discriminated against when trying to obtain quotations for motor insurance, travel insurance and car hire, compared with 2% of those aged between 30 and 49.
- The employment rate of those over state pension age is 11%, despite the fact that a majority of people say they would like to do some kind of work for longer than this.
- By 2031, 1.2 million people over 65 will receive care from their husband or wife.

Since 1997 the Government has done a great deal to create a more age-friendly society. We have:

- Provided over 60s with free prescriptions, free off-peak England-wide bus travel, free eyesight tests, free TV licenses for over 75s, help with central heating and insulation for Pension Credit recipients and free energy efficiency measures (including insulation) for those aged over 70.
- Increased the basic State Pension by 7% more than inflation.
- Introduced Pension Credit which ensures no pensioner need live on less than £130 per week, compared to £69 per week in 1997.
- Introduced Winter Fuel Payments of £200 for households with someone aged between 60 and 79, and £300 for households with someone aged 80 and over. Additional one-off Winter Fuel Payment will be repeated for winter 2009/10 to help pensioners during difficult times.
- Outlawed age discrimination and harassment in the workplace through the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006.
- Announced that from April 2011 grandparents and other adult family members looking after children aged up to 12 for 20 hours a week or more will get National Insurance credits towards the basic State Pension.



But we need to do more

- One in four people aged between 49 and 63 say they are experiencing age discrimination.
- 47% of people in this age bracket agree that discrimination in general will get worse as they get older.
- 93% of people in this age bracket agree that it is important for the Government to take action to tackle age discrimination.

That is why we published a new Equality Bill and are working on a new strategy for an age-friendly society

- The Equality Bill will ban age discrimination outside the workplace. It will not affect products or services for people where age-based treatment is clearly beneficial, for example, like flu vaccinations for the over-65s. The law will only stop age discrimination where it has negative or harmful consequences. 89% of people aged between 49 and 63 are in favour of the introduction of the Equality Bill to end age discrimination.
- The Bill will also put a new Equality Duty on public sector bodies. The Duty will mean that public bodies need to think about the needs of everyone who uses their services or works for them, regardless of their age. For example, a local council may put extra benches in local parks so people of all ages can enjoy parks too.
- The Government's strategy for an ageing society will set out our vision for a society for all ages. This will include measures to improve preparation for later life, encourage participation in later life, provide the right support to people, and deliver effectively. Addressing these areas will help individuals and society more widely, and ensure that we make later lives a time of opportunity for people to enjoy. The strategy will be published soon.

More information

For more information on the work of the Government Equalities Office visit www.equalities.gov.uk.

Alternatively you can contact our general enquiries line on 020 7944 0601 or email enquiries@geo.gsi.gov.uk.