



Strategy for Older People (SfOP) in Blaenau Gwent

In 2003 the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) launched the Strategy for Older People in Wales. The Strategy acknowledges the vital role that older people play in society and offers clear direction to help everyone confront ageism and other discrimination against older people; tackle stereotypes of old age and improve the engagement with and participation of older people in our communities.

The Strategy concentrates on key themes of:

- Valuing Older People – promoting positive images of ageing and giving older people a stronger voice in society.
- Changing Society – promoting and developing older peoples capacity to continue to work and learn for as long as they want and to make an active contribution once they retire.
- Living Longer and Healthier Lives – promoting the health and well being of older people.
- Coping with increasing dependency: Housing, Social Care and Health – promoting the provision of high quality services, living independently in suitable and safe environments and improvements in service responsiveness and
- Implementation – seeing the SfOP as a catalyst to bring about change, innovation and improvement in services for older people and allowing for effective planning for an ageing population.

The Strategy is set in a 10 year framework of action and is now in its second phase of implementation guided by WAG's publication of Living Longer / Living Better 2008 – 2013. Within this phase of the strategy the aims are refined to build on the accomplishments of the first phase. It calls on renewed efforts from local authorities and their partners and emphasises the need for 'the mainstreaming' of older people's concerns across all policy areas – within a continuation of the themes of:

- Valuing Older People: Maintaining and Developing Engagement.
- Changing Society: The Economic Status and Contribution of Older People.
- Promotion of Well Being and Independence Initiatives.
- Making it Happen – the Implementation of the Strategy.

Local Authorities have lead responsibility in taking forward the strategy in partnership with other key local agencies through 50+ Network arrangements. Each local authority is required each year to produce an annual development plan in agreement with its partners and produce a report on activities at the end of each financial year.

Within Blaenau Gwent, Clive Phillips is the Strategy Co-ordinator – Older People Services and is immediately responsible for coordinating the implementation of local development plans.

In relation to involving people (aged 50+) a 50+ Reference Group has been established. This group normally meets monthly for discussions, presentations and information from the 50+ Network.

The 50+ Network partnership (voluntary and statutory agencies) asks for views to help plan its activities. It represents those views as fairly as possible in decision making processes.

In regard to the promotion of learning activities for people (aged 50+), responding to adult education requirements, promoting the concept of University of Third Age and Creative and Culture Club initiatives, Mary Eveleigh is the Older People Learning Co-ordinator (part time) and may be contacted for information and advice.

Contacts

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