

Valuing Older People

The Mayor published his Older People Strategy, "Valuing Older People" on 18th September with a launch event at City Hall attended by representatives of LOPSG and other older people's organisations.

The Strategy builds on the Mayor's previous work with older Londoners and has been developed in partnership with older people's groups and key service providers across London, including a major consultation exercise earlier this year.



Ken Livingstone

In a city with over a million people over the age of 60, and almost a quarter of a million over the age of 80, the Strategy aims to challenge stereotyping of older people and provide a framework to develop a city in which older Londoners have the support they need to lead active, healthy and independent lives.

The Strategy focuses on four priority areas.

Challenging negative perceptions and promoting the contribution of older people. Taking action on pensions and income. Promoting good quality health and social care.

Supporting those valuable community services which can make so much difference to older people's lives.

The Mayor said "it is time to challenge negative perceptions about older people to make sure that their contribution to society and the economy is properly valued.

Eleven per cent of older Londoners are still in employment, they provide £500 million worth of free care for their grandchildren, and over two hundred thousand people aged over 60 do voluntary work in the wider community.

My strategy for older people in London will ensure that their needs and aspirations are integral to the planning and delivery of services across the city. Improving services for London's older people is not only a concern for those of us who are older now, but for the future generations too".

CAPITAL AGE WINTER FESTIVAL

Banish the Winter Blues!

**Thursday 8th February
12.00 noon - 5.00 pm
The Chamber, City Hall**

London's older people take Centre Stage with a rich feast of provocative dramatic performance and exhilarating music and song, directed by DAVID SLATER of Entelechy Arts

Invitations will be sent out nearer the time

**For further information contact
Anna Roberts on 020 7785 3870
anna.roberts@london.gov.uk**

The Mayor will also seek to influence government and other sectors to promote the interests of older people.

LOPSG has been working closely with the Mayor's Office throughout the development of this strategy, and looks forward to continuing this partnership to ensure its implementation.

Speaking on behalf of LOPSG at the launch, Eileen McNally said



Eileen McNally

" We feel this is a major milestone towards this city giving out a clear message that older people do matter and that their input into the economic, social and cultural life of London is recognised and valued.

We also recognise the immense challenges that face the policy makers. We are a diverse society and many older people face tremendous hardships, isolation and unhappiness through poverty, and ill health.

We at LOPSG will work with the Mayor's office in

ensuring marginalized groups have their voices heard. We also recognize that we need to work with other organisations, agencies and individuals who have the needs of older people at heart".

Mayor's Older People Strategy launched in Europe

For some years LOPSG has kept in touch with developments on older people's issues in Europe through membership of the London European Forum.

Earlier this year we were pleased to receive an invitation to take part in the Launch of the Mayor's Older People Strategy at the European Parliament on 11th October.

The Launch event was a reception held in the Parliament building attended by MEPs, EU officials and GLA officers from City Hall and the Mayor's Brussels Office. Jean Lambert MEP, a vigorous campaigner on older people's issues, hosted the Launch.



Entelechy Arts

An hilarious short play, entitled City Tales, challenging negative perceptions of older people was performed by Entelechy Arts, an older people's drama group from south London directed by David Slater.

We hope that this event will help to strengthen the link between older people's groups in London and across Europe.

Introducing Ellen Lebethe

Ellen Lebethe was elected on to the LOPSG Coordinating Committee at the AGM in August.

Ellen joined the pensioners' movement four years ago after retiring from teaching.

As a teacher, an NUT representative, and a school governor Ellen spent over 40 years working tirelessly for the right of all children to an education that will enable them to reach their full potential.

As a pensioner, Ellen is chair of the Lambeth Pensioners Action Group, and serves on the NPC BAME Working Party. She is actively involved in the campaign for the right of all pensioners to respect and dignity in their older age,

and is particularly interested in equality and diversity issues.



Ellen Lebethe

"As someone who spent the greater part of my life subjected to political, economic and social exclusion in the country of my birth, South Africa, I am acutely aware of the need for the empowerment of all older people and breaking down prejudices and discrimination that inhibit their right to a decent quality of life in their later years.

Given that 16% of Londoners are over 60 and includes minority and ethnic groups and recently arrived refugees and asylum seekers, the issue of inclusivity should be given greater prominence. The voice of all older people needs to be heard in the implementation of the Mayor's Older People Strategy, and in the decision making process in order that they may participate fully in all aspects of society.

I believe that to achieve inclusivity in the fullest sense of the word we

need to ensure that the Mayor's policies and strategies are firmly imbedded in his equality and diversity agenda for London.

As a committee member of LOPSG I hope to put my energy and experience into working towards the involvement of all older groups in initiatives that will make a genuine difference to their lives," said Ellen.

Mayor re-launches Resource Facility

On 23rd October Ken Livingstone officially re-launched the London Older People's Resource Facility at its new, more accessible, premises at 1 London Bridge.

The Mayor highlighted the need for increased services and support for older Londoners.

He said, "Older people's organisations play a vital role in keeping the concerns of older people in front of policy-makers and decision-makers. Yet to do that effectively, they need access to the most up-to-date information and resources, and that can be a difficult task.

This resource facility aims to provide older people's organisations with the practical support they need,

ensuring that their needs and aspirations are integral to the planning and delivery of services across the city.

Older people contribute enormously to London's economy, culture and history and it is time to challenge stereotypical negative perceptions and make sure older Londoners are properly valued.

I want to see increased services that support older people and allow them to retain their independence and maintain choice and control over their lives." The Facility supports



Participants at the Launch

older people's organisations by offering access to computers, Internet training, skills sharing sessions and providing key information on services for older Londoners.

Trained staff are available to help with enquiries.

For further information contact Anna Roberts, 020 7785 3870 anna.roberts@london.gov.uk

A message from Kurban Haji

Kurban Haji was Elected Vice Chair of the LOPSG Coordinating Committee at the AGM in August.

" I would like to thank you all for electing me.



Kurban Haji

I have lived in London for over 40 years, and for the last 30 years in Southwark, where I have always been involved in local issues as an active member of my neighbourhood tenants and residents association. I am also a trustee of Wolworth Garden Farm, a charity which trains unemployed people to gain a national vocational training qualification (NVQ) in gardening and helps them to find work. For the last 12 years I have been on the board of directors of Southwark Race and Equality Council.

When I retired, I joined Southwark Pensioners' Forum, and was elected to the management committee.

I also chair the South Asian Elderly Organisation based in Southwark.

I hope LOPSG will go from strength to strength. I believe that if we all come together we could do a lot more for older people in London."

Elsa Perez - A Profile

A phone call came from one of the dancers who had performed at the Capital Age Festival in August. She was ecstatic about the amazing work and kindness of one woman, Elsa Perez. How could we let people know what she was doing?



Elsa Perez, dancing

Eventually we tracked down Elsa. Let her tell you about herself.

"By the end of November I will have been involved in 37 dance events this year.

I really need to cut down.

I teach and perform Spanish, Portuguese, and Mexican folk dance and South African quadrille. Each October I help organise Dance Around the World, a wonderful two day festival, in which I also perform, help and lead workshops and organise the Sunday night Latin American Fiesta. I dance with Madinga Arts, usually to funky samba or salsa, at the Thames Festival, Latin American festivals, the Lord Mayor's Show, and out of London too.

My groups performed in the Mayor's Big Dance in Trafalgar Square, and at the Capital Age Festival, where I hosted one Dance Stage, at the Bloomsbury and Swiss Cottage festivals and for Black History Month and Celebrating Age events.

I forgot to tell you I am 71 years old. If you keep dancing regularly you can continue for a very long time."

Elsa's star performance, creativity and stamina demonstrates not only one exceptional individual, but also what people of all ages can do when they go all out to enjoy life.

Joan Bennetto, Director Capital Age Festival

The Tour de France Needs You

The Tour de France is coming to London next year on the 6th, 7th and 8th July. It is the biggest sporting event in the capital prior to the Olympics in 2012.



It is free to the public, with large crowds expected to see this cycling extravaganza.

The organisers are looking for volunteers, of all ages, to act as marshals. Marshals will help to create a safe and enjoyable environment for spectators to view the event on Saturday 7th and Sunday 8th July 2007 when the prologue and first stage take place. They will be needed along the route to assist with managing crossing points, controlling and assisting the crowds of spectators, and ensuring that cars do not try to use closed roads.

There is no way of getting closer to the

action of the Tour than being involved in putting on the show.

Both experienced and first-time volunteers, of all ages, are welcome. Marshals will work in pairs and receive training prior to the event.

If you are interested in volunteering, or would like more information, visit www.tourdefrancelondon.com or write to Sarah Bradshaw, Transport for London, Windsor House, 42-50 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0TL.

London Older People's Resource Facility

The Resource Facility is now firmly established in its new premises at 1 London Bridge.

Our official launch event was held on 23rd October, attended by the Mayor, LOPSG and representatives from

over 50 older people's organisations.

Anyone interested in finding out more about what the facility can offer should contact me to arrange a time to visit. We can then look at your requirements and discuss how the Resource Facility might be able to help.

An autumn programme of information and skills sharing sessions has now been finalised, and includes basic computer skills, producing a newsletter and the chance to find out more about working with LOPSG. Please contact me for details.

I am always keen to hear from anyone interested in facilitating a future session.

Topics requested most frequently include fundraising, setting up an older people's organisation and basic computer skills.

Facilitators will receive full support from the Resource Facility in promoting and preparing their session.

Anna Roberts
Senior Project Officer

020 7785 3870
anna.roberts@london.gov.uk

www.lopsg.org.uk

The website of the
**London Older People's
Strategies Group**

Our website offers a growing one-stop resource for information on what LOPSG is, what we are doing, future activities and links to member organisations' websites.

It also offers an opportunity for you to list your events on the Members Noticeboard. The internet is growing all the time, and promoting your events on the web will help raise awareness of your work among a wider audience.

To place a free notice, email **secretary@lopsg.org.uk** or call the Older People's Resource Facility on 020 7785 3870.

You can also download LOPSG documents and back issues of *Strategy* from the website.

Why not log on today

**How to join, or find out more about
LOPSG**

As the principal forum for older Londoners' consultation with the Mayor, we are always looking to extend our membership, and particularly to encourage the involvement of representatives across the wide spectrum of London's communities and ethnic groups.

Membership is free, and is open to individuals, and representatives of London organisations. All members receive notice of LOPSG meetings, the quarterly newsletter *Strategy*, and documentation relating to Mayoral policy.

If you, or your organisation, would like to join, or find out more about LOPSG please contact Graeme Matthews (Secretary) 01895 631905 or Anna Roberts (Senior Project Officer, London Older People's Resource Facility) 020 7785 3870 or anna.roberts@london.gov.uk or visit our website at www.lopsg.org.uk

Diary Dates

**Thursday 8th
February**
*Winter Festival
City Hall*

Friday 2nd February
*Participants' Meeting
1.15 for 1.30
Rooms 4 & 5, City Hall*

Friday 27th April
*Participants' Meeting
1.15 for 1.30
Rooms 4 & 5, City Hall*

**Monday 9th July
Fifth London Older
People's Assembly**
10.30 to 4.00, City Hall

Sunday 19th August
*Capital Age Festival
2.00 to 6.00
Bernie Spain Gardens
South Bank*

Friday 31st August
*LOPSG AGM
1.15 -3.40
Rooms 4 & 5, City Hall*

**London Older People's
Resource Facility**

Second Floor
Downstream Building
1 London Bridge
London SE1 9BG

Tel: 020 7785 3870

Strategy is the quarterly newsletter of LOPSG. Views expressed in **Strategy** do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or of LOPSG. You may contact the editor at strategy.editor@lopsg.org.uk