

THE REGION FOR ALL AGES:
*a vision for ageing and demographic
change in North East England*

DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN
2008 - 2011
(for consultation with partner organisations)

YEARS AHEAD

The North East Regional Forum on Ageing

CONTENTS

Foreword

1. **Executive Summary**
2. **Background to *Years Ahead***
3. **Demographic Change in the North East**
4. **The Strategic Opportunity**
5. **Strategic Priorities**
6. **Themes for Action 2007-09**
 - 6.1 **Introduction**
 - 6.2 **Implications of Demographic Change**
 - 6.3 **Productive Ageing and Employability**
 - 6.4 **Arts and Culture and Older People**
 - 6.5 **Older People and the Research Agenda**
 - 6.6 **New Task Groups on 'Health' and 'Transport'**
 - 6.7 **Forward Planning**
7. **Progress to date**
8. **Evaluation**
9. **Media and Communications**
10. **Governance and Resource**
11. **Appendices**
 1. **Membership of Partnership Board**
 2. **Demographic Change in the North East**
 3. **Membership of the Task Groups**
 4. **Framework for Evaluation of the Forum's Activities**

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The North East will be affected earlier and more extensively than other UK regions by demographic changes resulting from increased life expectancy and decreased rates of fertility. While this increased longevity represents an outstanding achievement, innovative policies and actions are required to grasp the social and economic opportunities afforded by an ageing population, to address the challenges posed by smaller numbers of young people and a reduced work-force, and to build a sustainable, flourishing region with a population age-structure significantly older than that experienced by previous generations.

1.2 Ageing of the population is often seen in negative terms. However, this trend affects all developed countries and has massive potential for economic growth. The House of Lords Science and Technology Committee (2005) 'found a generalised failure by industry and commerce to recognise the enormous potential of the market which older people represent – a market which is already large and continues to grow.' The North East has unrivalled scientific and technological expertise in ageing, in the health and wellbeing of older people, and in the societal impact of demographic change. These strengths, together with the social and intellectual capital of the region's older people, should be used to seize the economic opportunities and pioneer innovative, cross-generational approaches to ageing. This will require extensive and effective cooperation between many regional organisations.

1.3 *Years Ahead*, the North East Regional Forum on Ageing, was established in 2005 to influence key policy and decision makers concerned with demographic change and ageing, and to promote partnership working to advance such issues. It consists of a network of public, voluntary/community and private sector bodies operating at regional level and linked through a Partnership Board, of which half the voting representatives are older people appointed by their respective organisations.

1.4 We need to build on our successful early development, in which strong organisational links have been formed, mutual understanding developed, intelligence gathered, resources obtained, and partnership working established. Much of the activity of the Forum occurs through Task Groups composed of members of the Partnership Board and external members with special expertise, and set up to report and make recommendations on specific areas of interest within a limited time-frame.

1.5 Strategic priorities for the next two years are policy development and influence, and communication and promotion, particularly the dissemination and implementation of recommendations from the first six Task Groups which will be issued in 2008-09 and cover:

- 'Implications of Demographic Change' - the challenges and opportunities for public policy in response to demographic change within the region.
- 'Productive Ageing and Employability' - the importance and needs of the 50+ age group in addressing the prospect of a significantly smaller workforce.
- 'Arts and Culture and Older People' –increasing the involvement of older people as participants and audiences.
- 'Older People and the Research Agenda' - how to use the immense intellectual capital and experience of the region's older people and increase

their involvement at all stages in the research process, particularly the programmes on ageing in the Science City and Northern Way R&D initiatives.

- Two new Task Groups being established on 'Health' and on 'Transport,' which will report in 2008-09.

1.6 The Forum will build on the opportunities brought by the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, the new Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR), and the possibility of age discrimination being broadened from its current focus on employment and training. We will work within the recently established Coalition for Action on Diversity and Equality (CADE) to address issues around age discrimination and the exclusion of older people of all backgrounds.

1.7 The Board will continue to identify new initiatives and opportunities for policy development and partnership working, particularly in relation to the Regional Economic Strategy (RES), and will also review the organisation and working of *Years Ahead* including evaluation, governance, and financial planning. It will extend strategic planning from the current three years to at least a five-year projection.

2. THE BACKGROUND TO YEARS AHEAD

2.1 The North East is in an unprecedented position to lead the UK regions in addressing both the challenges of demographic change and the social and economic opportunities afforded by an ageing population. The region will be affected earlier and more severely than others from changes which include fewer younger people, a falling workforce and greatly increased numbers of older people (Appendix 2). As a consequence of these changes, the overall birth rate for the region has declined and older age groups constitute a greater proportion of the population. This requires innovative policy-making and action at regional level: to draw on the immense social and intellectual capital represented by older people, to enable them to contribute as fully as possible to their communities and the regional economy, and to support healthy, independent living for as long as possible. Success in addressing these issues will require partnership on an ambitious scale across numerous organisations and groups and between generations. *Years Ahead*, the North East Regional Forum on Ageing, was established to foster this partnership working.

2.2 The Forum was launched in early 2005 and brings together bodies concerned with the changing age-structure of the North East's population and with issues which influence the health and well-being of older people, including social attitudes and perceptions of ageing. It involves an open network of organisations working together through a Partnership Board. The initial membership of the Board, comprising equal numbers of older people representing organisations for older people, and representatives of key voluntary and statutory sector organisations in the region, is attached (Appendix 1).

2.3 The primary aim of *Years Ahead* is to influence regional policy and decision makers. It promotes common understanding of the key issues and trends around demographic change and an ageing population, and provides an effective alliance to review and inform regional planning and strategies. The Forum seeks to identify, share and promote best practice and innovation and to ensure consistency of approaches to ageing and older people. Through the substantial representation of older people and their organisations on the Partnership Board, *Years Ahead* encourages the involvement of older people in planning and delivery of regional policies and initiatives which affect their lives and families. Much of the work of *Years Ahead* is done by Task Groups which draw on the best available expertise from within the region and the experience and perspectives of older people to address specific issues. Current themes include:

- Implications of Demographic Change
- Productive Ageing and Employability
- Arts and Culture and Older People
- Older people and the Research Agenda
- Transport and Older People
- Health and Older People

Dissemination and partnership working to achieve the effective implementation of recommendations from these and future task groups form a key part of this Strategic Plan.

3. DEMOGRAPHY OF THE NORTH EAST

3.1 The North East is the smallest of the nine English regions with a population of just over 2.5 million. It contains substantial areas affected by urban deprivation or rural isolation. According to the most recent projections (see Appendix 2 for details) summarised by the North East Regional Information Partnership (NERIP), the total population is predicted to grow by only 19,500 by 2029. Over the same period the 65-79 age group will increase from 321,000 to 432,000, while the 80+ group will rise from 107,100 to 194,500. The number of 15-64 years olds will fall to 1,538,400 or 60.1% of the regions population across this period compared to 65.6 % in 2004. A decline of 50,000 in the number of under 15's, down to 396,400 by 2020 is also predicted. Together, these projections indicate significantly increased pressure to support an older population, with fewer people in the workforce, fewer young people to enter the workforce, and a substantial rise in the numbers of the 'oldest old' who have the greatest needs for health and social care. These demographic changes will impact more sharply on the North East compared to the rest of England because of a trend, sustained in the last two decades, of net outward migration, primarily by the younger working age group, and lower rates of immigration from the EU and elsewhere.

3.2 While the people of the North East, like those of other UK regions, are living longer and healthier lives than previous generations, these demographic challenges are nevertheless compounded by the fact that the region has great health needs, with high levels of preventable disease and premature mortality in many wards. Despite recent progress in some fields, the North East could benefit more than any other English region from improvements in prevention of disease associated with poor diet and lack of physical activity, and from improvements in mental health. These and other health needs of the region are being addressed in an ambitious twenty-five year strategic plan, 'Better Health, Fairer Health' put forward by Public Health North East.

4. THE STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY

4.1 **Why ageing is a key strategic issue and about much more than 'social inclusion'**. The trend towards a static or declining population with an unprecedented proportion of older people is one which is occurring across the European Union as a whole as well as in other developed countries, and one which has major implications for growth in GNP. Increasing the participation in employment by older age cohorts, addressing the economic opportunities around 'the business of ageing', reducing the burden of chronic age-related ill-health and disability which exclude so many from productive ageing, and developing policies that allow people to reconcile family life and work (where older people have a major role in child-care and other forms of care) must be strategic priorities for all regions if they are to continue to flourish both socially and economically.

4.2 **The North East leading the way.** A number of factors could enable the North East to pioneer the changes that are necessary if these strategic challenges are to be addressed effectively. The fact that we will experience the consequences of demographic transition earlier and more severely than most other regions is one driver for action. The relatively small size of the North East's population and the strong

sense of regional cohesion and identity which stems from our common cultural heritage and experience are potential strengths for partnership working if the necessary vision and leadership can be fostered. In particular, the North East has outstanding strengths in science and technology relevant to the needs and opportunities presented by an ageing population.

4.3 World class research on ageing and the potential for economic regeneration.

The region is home to Europe's leading centre for research in gerontology, Newcastle University's Institute for Ageing and Health which has a unique 'Campus for Ageing and Vitality' under development. The Department of Health has recently awarded status to Newcastle as an NHS Centre of Excellence for Research in Ageing, the only one in this field and one of only two DoH specialist biomedical research centres located outside of the 'Oxbridge-London triangle'. The Region's 'Institute for Stem Cell Research and Regenerative Medicine' involves a major partnership between Durham and Newcastle Universities and the NHS, and has huge scientific and commercial relevance to future treatments for the common causes of chronic disease and disability in later life. The DoH national Clinical Research Networks for both 'Stroke' and for 'Dementia and Neurodegenerative Disorders' are coordinated from Newcastle (the latter in partnership with the Institute of Neurology, UCL). The outcome of a major bid to the Medical Research Council for an MRC Centre on Brain Ageing and Vitality is expected in February 2008. The region has identified the potential for knowledge-led economic development in the field of enabling and assistive technologies, based not only our academic platform in old-age medicine but strengths such as Northumbria University's excellence in design-research and Sunderland University's reputation in the field of accessibility to information and communication technology (ICT) by those with disabilities. These factors have led to the development of 'ageing and health' as major strands in the Science City and Northern Way R&D initiatives aimed at regional economic regeneration.

4.4 Using the intellectual and social capital of older people. Effective involvement of older people as major users of new products and services from these and other related R&D streams is essential to underpin successful commercialisation, and the work of *Years Ahead* suggests that many older people from across the region are keen to become involved. This will be facilitated by the relative strength and coordination of older people's organisations in the North East, as reflected in the membership of the *Years Ahead* Partnership Board. The vision is one of the North East pioneering a new 'culture of demographic change', with the social and intellectual capital of its older people playing an important role in regional development.

4.5 Promoting equality and diversity. Regional action on demographic change and ageing is also strategically important and timely in the context of the wider equalities agenda. Age discrimination in the work place has been outlawed by recent legislation and the new Commission for Equality and Human Rights (CEHR) brings together the six 'strands' facing discrimination i.e., age, gender, race, faith, sexual orientation and disability. While the structure of the CEHR body at regional level is still being decided, the North East has taken ground-breaking steps in commitment to the equalities agenda. These include: the establishment of the North East Equality and Diversity Board which involves the public, private and voluntary sectors, and has an emphasis on economic outcomes and social aspects, with a secretariat provided by Equality North East; and the VCS Equalities Coalition (CADE) which brings together

VCS infrastructure organisations and networks from across the six equality strands to forge a strong user-led voice on equality in the North East. In particular, the Coalition will support currently excluded people in their contribution to strategic bodies. *Years Ahead* will grasp the opportunities this will bring, to strengthen inclusiveness and partnership in meeting the regional challenges of demographic change and ageing.

5. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

5.1 *Policy Development and Influence:* Through awareness-raising, the promotion of research, age-proofing, and partnership involvement, *Years Ahead* will work to ensure that the key policies and decisions made by organisations across the region take into account the importance of demographic change and the opportunities and needs of older people. Particular attention will be given to the thematic issues covered by the *Years Ahead* Task Group reports and the recommendations which they contain, as outlined in Section 6.

5.2 *Communication and Promotion:* *Years Ahead* will improve public and organisational understanding on the issues of demographic change and ageing, highlight the scale of opportunities and challenges and the need for new approaches, and help more generally to change perceptions of ageing within the region. It will seek through awareness-raising of the Forum's work to be identified as *the* key promoter of partnership working in response to demographic change and ageing.

5.3 *Organisation and Working:* *Years Ahead* will ensure that the outputs from its work are clear and measurable, and develop and implement a robust framework for monitoring and evaluation the activities of the Forum. It will review and amend, as necessary, the governance and membership of *Years Ahead* to ensure representation by the most relevant organisations, appropriate diversity and geographical coverage, transparent mechanisms for appointments to the Partnership Board, and to ensure that stakeholders can play the fullest possible role within the Forum. It will seek funding to sustain the core functions of *Years Ahead* and develop projects arising from the recommendations of the Task Groups where this is appropriate.

5.4 *Promoting Equality and Diversity:* *Years Ahead* recognises that older people are not a homogeneous group. Every older person belongs to at least one other 'diversity strand' - disability, gender, race, religion and belief, and sexual orientation – and may be unfairly discriminated against because of their age and these other issues. The Forum is actively opposed to such discrimination and inequality, and in influencing regional policy and decision makers we will recognise this diversity and seek to include all groups. The Regional Development Agency's Equality and Diversity Board has provided *Years Ahead* with the opportunity to address age discrimination and the exclusion of older people as part of the VCS Equalities Coalition and in 2007/08 we will seek funding to:

- increase the diversity of older people that *Years Ahead* is engaged with, including those involved in the governance of the Forum
- raise the profile of *Years Ahead* amongst the VCS, private and statutory sectors, and the emerging regional structure of the Commission for Equality and Human Rights

- improve understanding by VCS organisations on the needs of the broad constituency of older people, which will influence their provision of services, engagement with communities, and their influencing of decision makers
- bring together a body of evidence on the differential impact of regional policies and strategies on older people from the perspective of different diversity strands
- increase the number of older people from diverse communities using VCS, private and public sector services for older people for the first time

These strategic priorities will be reviewed and amended as national policy, legislation, the CEHR's activities, and the Forum's own thinking on equality and diversity develops.

6. THEMES FOR ACTION 2008-2011

6.1 *Years Ahead* Task Groups will address regional issues affected by demographic change or concerned with the health and wellbeing of older people. This will include the interpretation and implementation of national policies at regional level and will also draw attention to local initiatives where these serve as models of best practice for the region. Specific actions will reflect the strategic priorities of the Partnership Board and, above all, will add value through partnership working. They will include a mixture of short, medium and long-term objectives. Activities will be realistic in terms of their feasibility and the resources required, and subject to robust monitoring and evaluation. The main strategic priorities for the next two years reflect the topic areas covered by the first round of Task Groups whose broad themes are set out below. Membership of the Task Groups is shown in Appendix 3.

6.2 *Implications of Demographic Change*

6.2.1 The group has addressed the specific question of 'What are the likely impacts of demographic ageing on the North East of England, and what challenges and opportunities will this present, particularly for public policy?' The report will aim to present ideas in a way that key stakeholders have perhaps not thought of before, at least, by challenging current perceptions of older people based on out-dated evidence. It will cover the ageing process (physically and mentally); gender differences; socio-economic factors, including discussion of the '*relatively poor*', those who are in an '*intermediate*' situation just above the benefits threshold, and the '*relatively affluent*'; ethnicity; and spatial issues, especially rural/urban comparisons, and their implications for access to services, and impact on leisure, citizenship etc. Given the more general nature of the issues being considered by this group, the conclusions and recommendations will provide a general landscape and inform much of the work of the other Task Groups, summarised below.

6.3 *Productive Ageing and Employability*

6.3.1 While the Regional Economic Strategy highlights the need to attract new workers to the region, the figures for worklessness in the 50+ age group in the North

East are the highest in the UK, and the Task Group report will emphasize the importance of offering opportunity for people aged 50+ to access new skills.

6.3.2 The need to encourage people into the growth areas of employment, and to train and skill them appropriately before redundancy is experienced, will require close working with employers and sector skills councils. Examples of good practice need to be promoted heavily within the region. Support should be directed to 'protect those already in work', alongside current efforts to tackle worklessness and assist those on incapacity benefit to re-enter the labour market.

6.3.4 'Age-proofing' of regional and sub-regional policy papers indicates evidence of ageism and the shortcoming of generic approaches to employment which do not take the account of the special circumstances of older people, as well as the need for regional policy makers to see demographic change as a key strategic issue.

6.3.5 The business case for employing older workers needs to be advanced both in relation to new age-discrimination law and, importantly, in relation to the immense human and social capital held by the region's older people. Given the regional emphasis on knowledge-led economic development related to ageing and health, there needs to be a clear regional strategy in place for utilising and transferring the intellectual and social capital of older people.

6.3.6 Employment of older workers needs to be considered alongside their major role as volunteers: it is not appropriate to view older people simply as a potential unpaid workforce for the voluntary sector or as replacement for statutory health and social care support where this is needed, but these roles need better support and recognition where they are required.

6.4 *Arts and Culture and Older People*

6.4.1 Public policy around the arts and cultural activity has had a strong 'inclusion' element directed towards young people, ethnic minorities and those with disabilities. Although older people form a large proportion of the public engaged with artistic and cultural activities, and there is increasing evidence for the benefits of this involvement on health and well-being, strategic bodies concerned with the arts and culture have tended not to address the needs of older people explicitly in their policies.

6.4.2 The *Years Ahead* Task Group has engaged with Culture North East (CNE) – one of the eight cultural consortia in the English regions charged by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to encourage cultural and creative activities in the region – and will develop a joint position paper on the opportunities for the regional cultural strategy around ageing. *Years Ahead* will put on a wider event for cultural organisations in the region to consider the challenges and opportunities around this theme.

6.4.3 Discussions with Museums, Libraries and Archives (MLA) North East have identified services useful to older people and high-lighted opportunities for cross-generational work, especially in terms of heritage. Volunteers play an important role in many organisations within MLA and new models of engagement to widen participation by older people need to be explored.

6.4.5 The need for new models of engagement which increase participation by older people was also high-lighted in discussion with Arts Council North East. The region has a history of innovation, and if new models/initiatives are successful they are likely to be taken up nationally. It is proposed that the Arts Council hosts an event for local authorities to showcase local strategies on ageing and demographic change.

6.4.6 *Years Ahead* sponsored a piece of work with 'Audiences North East', to look at reaching a wider group of older people including those who are socially excluded, and 'Equal Arts' has undertaken a mapping exercise of arts organisation in the region and what they offer in relation to the needs of older people.

6.4.7 The 'Arts and Culture and Older People' Task Group Report will contain specific recommendations across a wide range of issues including the timing of performances and opening hours; the need for partnership working to identify and promote what is available; actions to increase the involvement of older people as participants and in project design; training and investment in older people as a central part of the volunteer workforce; the extent to which social services could use arts and cultural activities in the region to help their work; and the development of explicit strategies around inclusivity to address the needs of older people.

6.5 Older People and the Research Agenda

6.5.1 The North East has a substantial programme of biological, medical and social research activities related to ageing, the health and wellbeing of older people, and the societal implications of demographic change. This research is undertaken by the five regional universities, the NHS Trusts, and many other public sector, voluntary sector and commercial organisations. The scale and importance of these activities are reflected, for example, by the inclusion of 'ageing and health' as a major theme in the R&D programmes for the regional Science City and Northern Way initiatives.

6.5.2 The importance of involving end-users in the research process is now widely recognised and there are numerous papers outlining policies and guidance for practice. Despite the substantial programmes of research on ageing within the region, engagement of users tends to be piecemeal and project specific, with relatively small numbers of people involved. There is a need to develop mechanisms to engage with a wide range of older people from different socio-economic groups across the region. *Years Ahead* has been approached in relation to developing user involvement in major initiatives such as the ageing and health strand within Science City and the Department of Health centre of excellence in ageing research being established in Newcastle.

6.5.3 One proposal from the Task Group will be to consider establishing a 'research and development resource' of older people who are informed and engaged in research activity. This would probably take the form of a regional panel consisting of a representative sample of older people with a range of ages, socio-economic situations and localities, including vulnerable, hard to reach and marginal groups.

6.5.4 Innovative approaches to disseminating research findings will be developed and a web-based resource is one suggestion to highlight research findings and facilitate

links on ageing research across sectors and across the region. Stronger links between the research community and ‘older people’s champions’ within NHS Trusts and Local Authorities will facilitate the translation of research evidence in relation to improvements in health and social care services.

6.5.5 Participation of older people in the research process on the scale envisaged will require education and training to ensure they are equipped with the skills needed for effective involvement. This process is not ‘one way: the involvement of older people as consumers in relation, for example, to the conception, design, development and trialling of enabling and assistive technologies to reduce dependency and improve quality of life is considered essential to the commercial success of new devices or systems.

6.6 New Task Groups on ‘Health’ and ‘Transport’

6.6.1 Two new Task Groups are being developed in 2008. A ‘Health’ Task Group was set up in 2007 which will review and inform regional policy and strategy relating to the health needs of older people. Terms of reference will be developed in collaboration with the Strategic Health Authority. Preliminary proposals from the Partnership Board are that Physical Activity/Sport should be considered as a separate issue in consultation with Sport England NE, and that the Task Group will focus on three areas: implementation of ‘A New Ambition for Old Age’ (DoH, April 2006); examining the negative aspects of ageing that impact on health, including barriers such as social exclusion and age discrimination, and the extent to which effective strategies to address these are in place; and a review of the opportunities and obstacles to developing and delivering enabling and assistive technologies – a key part of the regional Science City ‘ageing and health’ programme.

6.6.2 It is proposed to develop a Task Group on ‘Transport’ in collaboration with the Transport Operations Research Group at Newcastle University. A comprehensive review is provisionally planned to include: rural versus urban issues; access to private and public transport; access in relation to social inclusion and essential care; awareness raising of both providers and users; access to concessionary fares by different age groups and the associated benefits; new technologies and networks in relation to older people.

6.7 Forward Planning

6.7.1 *Years Ahead* will use the extensive information networks accessed through the Partnership Board, to identify new opportunities and external initiatives at the earliest possible stages, so that where possible, the Forum is positioned in advance of implementation and can influence outcomes.

6.7.2 The Forum will engage with key stakeholders and policy makers in private, voluntary and public sectors eg ‘Dignity Champions’ from the NHS Trusts and Local Authorities in the region, to inform issues relating to Local Area Agreements.

6.7.3 The Partnership Board will consider – particularly in the context of Task Group recommendations – whether there are key regional agencies and organisations that are not currently represented and how this can be best achieved.

6.7.4 The Forum will plan a range of approaches to underpin this networking and partnership working, including presentations to key agencies, conferences and workshops on major issues, and events for older people and their organisations.

7. PROGRESS TO DATE (2005-7)

Reports on progress to date along with the key reports and recommendations from the *Years Ahead* Task Groups will soon be available on our website:

www.YearsAhead.org Priorities over the first two years were aimed at:

- Engagement and Consultation
- Policy Development and Influence
- Communication and Promotion
- Establishing the Forum and the first Task Groups

A summary of these activities is provide in Annex 4

8. EVALUATION

Years Ahead is primarily an “influencer” and an “enabler” and most of the outcomes from the work of the Partnership Board will be influenced by other organisations and variables. Nevertheless, it is essential that *Years Ahead* is accountable to its stakeholders and its activities are evaluated against its objectives. The draft framework for the monitoring and evaluation of the activities of the Forum at Appendix 5 will be discussed by the Partnership Board in November 2007 with the aim of implementation by Spring 2008.

9. MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

Years Ahead will seek additional resource to fund Public Relations support to improve communication. It will aim to increase the influence of *Years Ahead* in the North East by raising awareness of the Forum’s work so that it is seen and known as *the* organisation which fosters partnership working at the regional level on issues related to demographic change and ageing. It will improve understanding within the region of the key issues; galvanise other institutions into recognising the need for a new approach; communicate the benefits of participation to stakeholders; and help more generally to change perceptions of ageing within the region. Efforts will focus initially on areas covered by the Task Group reports. By the end of 2008 we anticipate that there will be awareness amongst most regional media and some national media of the existence of *Years Ahead* and that the North East is at the leading edge of age-related policy development and implementation. This will increase the number of organisations and older people engaged with the work of *Years Ahead*.

10. GOVERNANCE AND RESOURCE

10.1 The early development phase of *Years Ahead* has established that there is significant need for the Regional Forum on Ageing and major potential for partnership working to establish the North East as a pioneer in addressing the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population. In light of this experience, a working group was set up to review: governance arrangements, including membership of the Partnership Board and Planning Group; to ensure equality and diversity, representation by the most relevant organisations, and appropriate geographical coverage; a transparent mechanism for the selection/election of members, and to consider defining categories of membership so that individuals as well as their constituent organisations can play the fullest possible role in *Years Ahead*. The recommendations of the working group are attached (Appendix 6) and these will be implemented by Spring 2008.

10.2 A major priority will be to seek continued funding for the core work of *Years Ahead* from March 2008, and to develop a robust financial plan to enable the Forum or its constituent partner organisations, to meet the costs of potential new activities arising from the recommendations of the Task Groups.

Appendix 1

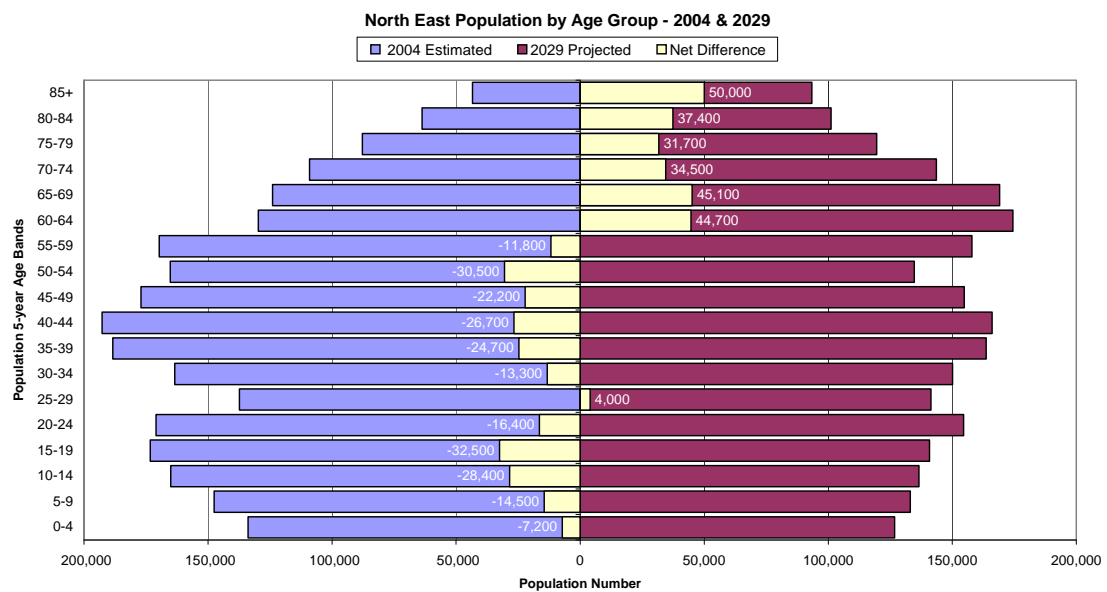
Membership of the Partnership Board

Age Concern North East	Pamela Denham
Alzheimer's Society - Northern Region	Neil Shashoua
Arts Council England North East	Caroline Burden
Association of North East Councils	Nicholas Baumfield
Care Services Improvement Partnership (CSIP)	Elaine Wallace
Equal Arts	Debbie Smith
Gold Collective Club	Alice Thwaite
Government Office North East	Anne Linsley
Help the Aged	Kirsten Wright
Jobcentre Plus (District Manager)	Kate Adams
Middlesbrough Association Community Council	Steve Martin
National Pensioners Convention	Margaret Woods
NE OPAG	Robert Pinkerton
	Cal Carruthers-Watt
	Audrey Lax
	Audrey Pepper
	Elsie Richardson (Vice Chair)
	Jim Edwardson (Chair)
	Jeff Featherstone
Newcastle University	Peter O'Brien
NHS North East (SHA)	Bob Bell
North East Assembly	John Berry
North East Pensioners Association	Norman Jemison
	Mike Lazzari
One North East	Dave Allen
Sports England NE	Alex Pirrie
T.Y.P.T.O.W	Lynne Corner (Coordinator)
<i>Years Ahead</i>	

Appendix 2

Demographic Change of the North East 2004-2029

The population of the North East is expected to remain fairly static over the next twenty-five years, with the revised¹ projected increase in population being only 19,500 from its estimated level in 2004 of 2,542,200, an increase of only 0.8% compared to 11% nationally. However the static nature of the population disguises large variations in population growth and decline across different age groups. For example the sixty plus age group are expected to *increase* by over 244,000 individuals whereas the numbers of individuals under the age of twenty-five are expected to *decrease* by around 100,000.



The above chart illustrates the distribution of the population by five-year age group for the North East of England. The left-hand (blue) bars illustrate the estimated population levels for the region in 2004, the right-hand (burgundy) bar illustrates the project population in 2029 and the middle (yellow) bars illustrate the net difference in the age group.

The chart clearly illustrates the substantial growth in the numbers of older people and in contrast the decrease in the number of younger members of the population (with the exception of 25-29 year olds which display a small increase.) In summary: -

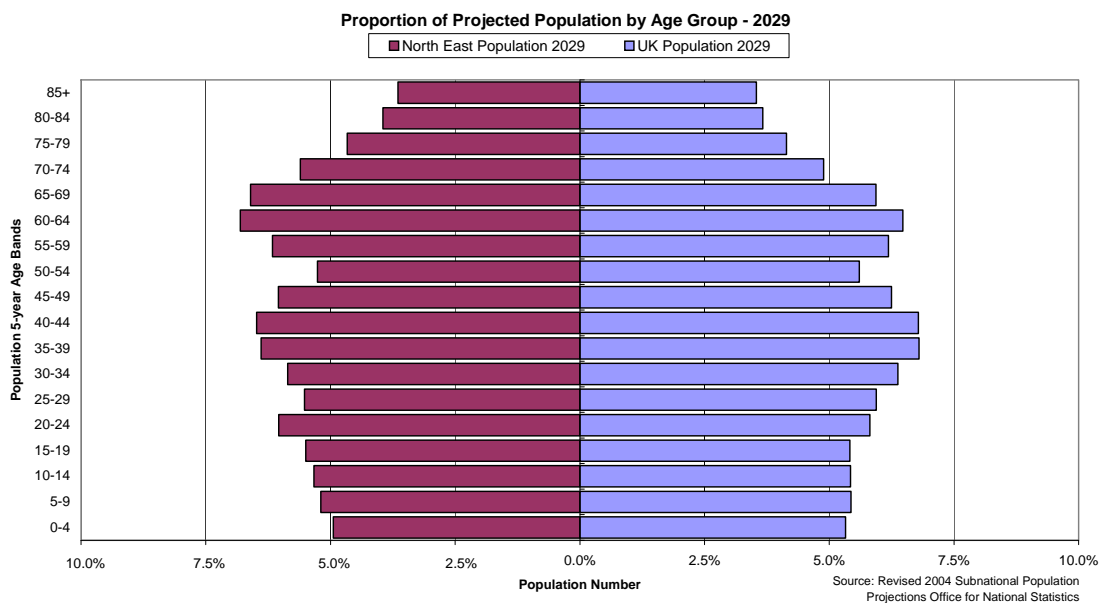
- The numbers of individuals under the age of fifteen is projected to fall by 50,000 from 447,000 to 396,400 between 2004 and 2029
- The number of the working age population (15-64 year olds) is projected to decrease by 129,000, falling from 1,667,800 people in 2004 to 1,538,400 people in 2029
- The number of individuals in the 65-79 age groups is projected to increase steadily over the next twenty-five years, from 321,000 in 2004 to 432,200 in 2029 – an increase of 111,300 individuals

¹ Revised 2004 Sub-national Population Projection from the Office for National Statistics
<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/statbase/Product.asp?vlnk=997>

- The number of individuals aged eighty and over will also increase greatly (87,400) across the period, increasing in number by 82% from 107,100 to 194,500 in 2029

The effects of an aging population will impact on the North East of England more rapidly than other regions of England because of the demographic distribution of the population. During the 1980 and 1990 the North East experience significant levels of outward migration of population, that at its peak resulted in annual net outward migration of an estimated 9,000 individuals, predominantly the younger working age population, seeking employment elsewhere. As a consequence of this mass exodus, there has been a greater decline in the overall birth rate in the region than that at the national level, while the older age groups have become a more dominant proportion of the overall population distribution.

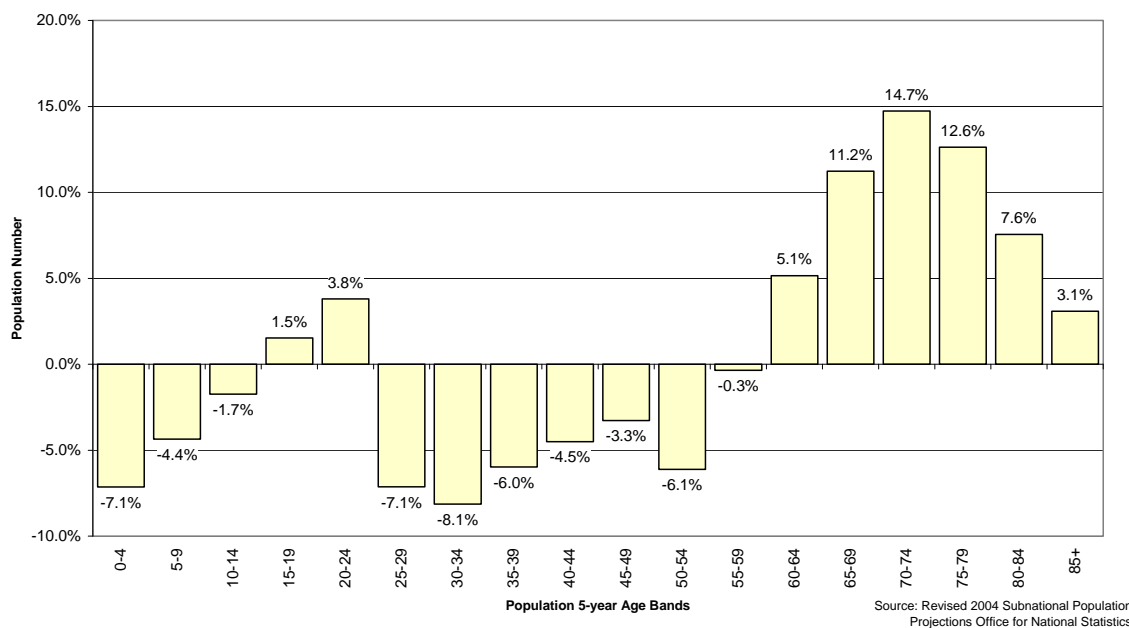
The following chart illustrates the future impact of the demographic distribution of the North East compared to the UK population in 2029. The left-hand bars illustrate the projected proportions of the regional population by five-year age groups, while the right-hand bars illustrate the UK distribution. The chart illustrates that for each age band over 65 years of age there is a greater proportion of the population in the North East than in the national population, while there is a smaller proportion of 25-54 year olds and 14 years & under in the region.



The trends of the increasing “aging population” has greater impacts on the demography of the North East compared to the national average as discussed earlier. The following chart illustrates this variation from the national average, where each bar represents the regional variation by age group after applying the national demographic distribution to the projected population total of North East in 2029.

The chart reveals that there it is projected that there are fewer children in the region under the age of fifteen years, with over 7% less under four-year olds than the national average. Similarly there are fewer individuals in each of the age groups of the working age population, peaking at nearly 8% less in the 30-34 year age group.

Population Distribution by Age Group 2029
Variation of North East from UK Average



The North East population in 2029 is projected to have a greater number of individuals in each of the over-sixty years age groups than the UK distribution, the largest being for the 70-74 year age group with the projected number being nearly 15% higher. The projected levels of individuals for 15-19 years and 20-24 years age groups are also greater than the national distribution.

Rebecca Hulbert
Michael Jackson
North East Regional Information Partnership
November 2007

Appendix 3

Membership of the Task Groups

DEMOGRAPHIC AGEING: IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC POLICY

Tony Chapman	Chair, Teesside University
Chris Anderson	Government Office North East
Lynne Corner	<i>Years Ahead</i>
Rebecca Hulbert	North East Regional Information Partnership
Michael Jackson	North East Regional Information Partnership
Romi Jones	Age Concern
Mike Lazzari	Regional Development Agency -One North East
David McFarlane	Future Matters
Rob Mitchell	Association of North East Councils
Elsie Richardson	<i>Years Ahead</i>

PRODUCTIVE AGEING AND EMPLOYABILITY

Alan Geron	Chair, Age Concern
Tony Chapman	Teesside University
Lynne Corner	<i>Years Ahead</i>
Keith Frost	Third Age Employment Network (TAEN)
Gill Hewitson	ONE
Janis Jones	Employers Coalition
Simon Lindsay	Learning Skills Council
Suzanne Moffat	Newcastle University
Elsie Richardson	Years Ahead
Patricia Whaley	NIACE

RESEARCH AND OLDER PEOPLE

Jan Reed	Chair, Northumbria University
Lynne Corner	<i>Years Ahead</i>
John Bond	Newcastle University
Vera Boulter	Elders Council, Newcastle
Glenda Cook	Northumbria University
Charlotte Clarke	Northumbria University
Audrey Lax	<i>Years Ahead</i>
Karen Pettett	Age Concern
Elsie Richardson	<i>Years Ahead</i>

ARTS AND CULTURE AND OLDER PEOPLE

James Wright	Chair
Lynne Corner	<i>Years Ahead</i>
Jim Edwardson	<i>Years Ahead</i>
Sally-Jane Norman	Culture Lab - Newcastle
Fran O'Brien	Age Concern, Newcastle
Elsie Richardson	<i>Years Ahead</i>
Sharon Taylor	Arts Council North East
Alice Thwaite	Equal Arts
Mike White	University of Durham

Appendix 4:

DEVELOPMENT AND ACTIVITIES OF YEARS AHEAD (2005-07)

1. The launch of *Years Ahead* at the Stadium of Light, Sunderland, in January 2005 attracted over 180 participants. Although *Years Ahead* is not primarily a membership organisation, a contact base of 350 individuals and organisations and subsequent events have allowed us to build up a profile of the key priorities for older people in the North East.
2. A Steering Group responsible for the pre-launch development of *Years Ahead* was dissolved following the formal establishment of the Partnership Board and the election of Professor Jim Edwardson and Mrs Elsie Richardson respectively as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Forum. The Partnership Board has met on average, six times a year with four meetings to undertake general work of *Years Ahead* and two 'away days' to consider specific issues such as the themes of Task Groups and development of the Strategic Plan. In addition, a small Planning Group meets at least once before each Board meeting to plan the agenda, special events and assist with general administration, financial planning and oversight of *Years Ahead*.
3. Funding for the appointment of a part-time Regional Coordinator for *Years Ahead* and running costs for an initial two-year period have been obtained from One North east through an application submitted by the Regional Office of Age Concern. Also, The Vice Chancellor of Newcastle University agreed that the Institute for Ageing and Health would support the work of *Years Ahead* through provision of an office and infrastructure, including employer responsibility for staff recruited on external funding obtained by the Forum.
4. Dr Lynne Corner, an experienced social gerontologist who has previously held a Alzheimer's Society Research Fellowship award was appointed to the post of Regional Coordinator. In addition to generally administering and coordinating the activities of *Years Ahead*, Dr Corner has worked extensively with the older people on the Partnership Board to promote understanding of roles and responsibilities, and the effective representation of older people's organisations within *Years Ahead*, and to ensuring that the views and priorities of older people are clearly heard by the Board.
5. In April 2006 *Years Ahead* held a joint half-day conference with the British Geriatric Society at the Sage, Gateshead, with the theme 'Improving the Health and Wellbeing of Older People: Some Wider Perspectives' which attracted a strong attendance from older people and health and social care professionals from the region.
6. A *Years Ahead* website and Newsletter are being established with additional funding obtained from the Sir James Knott Trust.
7. During 2006-07, four Task Groups met covering the areas of the Impact of Demographic Change; Productive Ageing and Employability; Arts and Culture and Older People; and Older People and the Research Agenda. The preliminary recommendations from these Task Groups were published and discussed at the *Years Ahead* Annual Conference held on 7th June 2007 and feedback will inform the final recommendations. In addition two further Task Groups covering Health, and

Transport and Older People are being established to report in 2008. Their remit and terms of reference are currently under consideration.

8. *Years Ahead* has contributed formal responses to a wide range of regional plans and policies. The experience and resources of the Regional Development Officer for Age Concern North East provide important support to the partnership Board in understanding policy issues and formulating these responses. A strong recurrent point made by *Years Ahead* is that demographic change and the health and wellbeing of older people should not be seen only as an 'inclusion issue' for the region: the growth of the number of older people is a major strategic issue with considerable social and economic consequences

Regional responses delivered by Age Concern and *Years Ahead* acting together in 2005 – 2007 include:

- *Years Ahead* together with Age Concerns in the region and CSIP submitted a detailed response to the Strategic Health Authority's plan 'Better Health, Fairer Health' based on consultation with a large number of organisations concerned with demographic change and the health and well-being of older people.
- *ONE Regional Economic Strategy* – full responses in 2005; second round consultation in 2006; and RES Action Plan Consultation in 2007: *positive outcomes* include more references to older people and demographic change and the importance of planning for these; representation on the ONE Equality and Diversity Board to promote the age strand; major involvement in events around equality and diversity issues; and better links with NERIP including 'age-proofing' of reports
- *North East Housing Board Housing Strategy* – full response in 2005; stakeholder contributions in 2006; review 2007; attendance at health Impact Assessment of the Housing Strategy 2007: *positive outcomes* include better links with NEHB; more information in the review regarding demographics and the need for planning for change, including links with transport
- *Regional Assembly Spatial Strategy for the North East* – full response in 2005 and via comments to VONNE for the Examination in Public: *positive outcomes include* campaigning by Age Concern on transport issues and setting up *Years Ahead* Task Group on Transport to report in early 2008
- *Sport England North East Regional Plan for Sport and Physical Activity 2004-2008* – full response in 2004: *positive outcomes* include better links with Sport England including their representation on the *Years Ahead* Partnership Board; inclusion in dissemination of their Active People Survey findings; consultation by ONE on cultural volunteering programme, and on volunteer contribution to the 2012 Olympics
- *Arts Council 'Arts, Health and Well-being: A Strategy for Partnership 2004* – full response to national strategy 2004: *positive outcomes* include the *Years Ahead* Task Group on Arts Culture and Older People and partnership working with Arts Council North East and Culture North East

9. Increasingly, *Years Ahead* is being recognised as a body which can effectively speak and influence at regional level on issues related to demographic change. Thus, for example, *Years Ahead* is represented on bodies such as regional CSIP Older Peoples Programme and the Learning and Skills Equality and Diversity Group.

Engagement with Culture North East has led to a number of actions, including a joint position paper on 'the Culture of Demographic Change'. *Years Ahead* has been asked to take a lead role in developing public, patient and carer involvement for initiatives such as the ageing and health strand within Science City, and the DoH centre of excellence for research on ageing. Further strengthening of such representative roles for *Years Ahead* forms a key element of the action plan.

Appendix 5

YEARS AHEAD – GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

Report from Governance Working Group (Revised November 2007)

1. The Working Group was set up to review the governance arrangements for *Years Ahead* in the light of the Forum's experience since its establishment in 2005. The aim is 'to ensure representation by the most relevant organisations, appropriate geographical coverage of the region, a transparent mechanism for the appointment of Partnership Board members, and to consider defining categories of membership so that individuals as well as organisations can play the fullest possible role in *Years Ahead*.' The Working Group consists of Ken Brown, Pamela Denham, Jim Edwardson (chair), Audrey Lax and Elsie Richardson, with Lynne Corner in attendance.
2. It is agreed that the term 'governance' should include the organisational and constitutional arrangements for *Years Ahead*, including mechanisms for the appointment of organisations and their representatives to the Partnership Board and Planning Group, arrangements for general administration, categories of membership, and procedures for the evaluation of the Forum's activities.
3. The appointment procedures for Partnership Board members will take into account the importance of diversity and equality, the experience of individual applicants, the relevance and strength of nominating organisations and the support they will provide, the need for a good geographical spread across the region of Board members and their organisations, and the need for continuity and sustainability as Board membership changes with time.
4. It is accepted that the breadth of the Partnership Board needs to be expanded, without increasing the overall size of the Board (currently 25 including an independent chair) or reducing the strength of representation by older people's organisations. It is agreed that this should be done by recognising three categories of organisation represented on the Board, comprising:
 - (i) Eight older people with voting powers, nominated by and representing **older people's organisations**, such as the 13 Older People's Advisory Groups (OPAGs) within the region; North East Pensioners Association (NEPA) and other organisation representing retired people etc
 - (ii) Eight representatives with voting powers, nominated by **organisations with an interest in age-related issues and demographic change**, including VCS bodies such as Age Concern, Alzheimer's Society, Help the Aged, WRVS; bodies representing other strands within CADE; commercial sector bodies such as CBI, Chambers of Commerce; social enterprise organisations such as Anchor Housing; universities and other educational institutions; and other relevant organisations.
 - (iii) Eight non-voting representatives of co-opted **statutory sector bodies** chosen by the Partnership Board comprising:

- One North East (ONE)
- Government Office North East (GONE)
- Association of North East Councils (ANEC)
- Culture North East (CNE)
- North East Regional Information Partnership (NERIP)
- Learning and Skills Council (LSC)
- Strategic Health Authority (SHA)
- DWP/Job Centre Plus

(NOTE: if DWP/JCP assumes strategic responsibility for issues relating to older people and demographic change within ONE, this would allow for the inclusion of a further statutory board, eg the Regional Housing Board)

5. This arrangement, while reducing the number of older people's organisations represented on the Partnership Board **will maintain the 50:50 parity in voting strength** which is an important feature of *Years Ahead*. Also the number of older people on the Board is likely to be increased through the representatives of the VCS and related organisations, many of whom are retired.

6. It is proposed that recruitment of representatives from both the older people's organisations and the VCS and other relevant bodies) is generally done through advertisement, as is the case for 'Future Years' (the Yorkshire Regional Forum).

7. Application will involve a standard application form for all individuals, including a specific nomination section to be completed by the organisation concerned, and a request for references. The application form will allow candidates and their organisations to demonstrate their commitment to issues around ageing and demographic change, equality and diversity, improving links between partnership organisations etc, and will also determine whether the candidate is interested in other kinds of involvement with *Years Ahead*, such as Task Groups.

8. Appointment of Board Members will be by a Panel consisting of the Chair of Years Ahead (see 10 below); the Chair of another Regional Forum on Ageing; and an independent assessor approved by the Partnership Board.

9. In the interests of equality and diversity, the appointment procedure will not involve formal interview, but candidates and a representative from their sponsoring organisations may be asked to have informal discussions with the Appointment Panel where this is appropriate.

10. It is proposed that the non-voting representatives of co-opted statutory sector organisations should be appointed by the organisations concerned. This will be done through a direct request from *Years Ahead* to the chair/CEO of the relevant body, stressing that the representatives should be both able to represent the organisation at strategic level and clearly identified as the main channel of communication between the stakeholder body and *Years Ahead*.

11. An independent Chairperson for *Years Ahead* will be sought through advertisement and **interview** by a Panel consisting of the Chair of another Regional Forum on Ageing and two other members, one nominated by the representatives of

the Older People's organisations represented on the Board, and the other by the representatives of VCS and related organisations on the Board. While it is likely that the successful applicant will be a member of organisations with a stakeholder role in *Years Ahead*, it is stressed that **the Chair is appointed to act in an independent capacity**. The appointment of the Chair of *Years Ahead* will take place early in 2008 as a prelude to the appointment of other Board members under these new governance arrangements.

12. The Vice Chair will be appointed from amongst the other Board representatives by the voting members.

13. Representatives of the older people's and non-statutory sector organisations will serve for three years and can stand for a maximum of two such terms, subject to re-appointment by the procedure set out in 7 and 8 above. The Chair and Vice Chair will also serve for three years and can stand for a maximum of two such terms, subject to the procedures set out in 10 and 11 above. The period from 2005-2008 during the initial phase of *Years Ahead* will count as service in this respect.

14. It is proposed that the current Board will retire in Spring 2008 but that all members will be encouraged to re-apply if they so wish, and that sufficient of the existing Board members will be re-appointed under the new procedures to maintain continuity and sustainability.

15. Voting Board members appointed in 2008 will serve initially for a period of one, two or three years (to be determined by lots) so that there is subsequent **annual election of one third of such members** to the Board, to sustain the input of 'new blood' to the work of *Years Ahead*).

16. The term of appointment for non-voting members from the co-opted statutory sector organisations will not be specified since the role of such members may form part of their job description. However, the organisation will be approached every three years to ensure that it is satisfied with the arrangement.

17. The composition and remit of the Planning Group will remain unaltered, comprising the Chair, plus two representatives from each of the three categories of member organisation (=7 members).

18. The Partnership Board will be able to co-opt additional members (for designated periods) who can make an exceptional contribution to the work of the Board either as an individual or representing specific regional organisations.

19. As at present, *Years Ahead* will encourage individuals and relevant organisations to 'join' as affiliates who will receive newsletters, invitation to events, etc.

20. Application forms, advertisements and other papers relating to the appointment of Board members will be approved in advance by the Board.