

Quality and Choice for Older People's Housing – A strategic framework
DETR: London January 2001

Attitudes and aspirations of older people

Staying Put/Moving On options

- A recent literature review²⁷ concluded that 'there is a large literature concerned with attitudes and aspirations of older people with regard to housing. As people get older, their housing situation becomes inextricably linked to their health and care. The research reveals a consistent commitment amongst older people to stay in their own home'. Anchor's recent survey, conducted by MORI, showed that 66% of older home owners wished to stay in their existing homes, while 30% preferred moving on options, mainly a move to smaller accommodation. Commentators²⁸ suggest there is substantial unmet demand for suitable small accommodation, particularly purpose build flats and bungalows.
- A 1996 NOP²⁹ survey explored the attitudes of older people to long term care and revealed a preference for living at home with assistance over other options and a preference for sheltered accommodation over living in a nursing home.
- One third of the respondents to another survey³⁰ said they would not like to move in any circumstances.
- However, of those people who had made a move to residential care, some found it more attractive than expected³¹ highlighting security, company and being looked after as advantages.

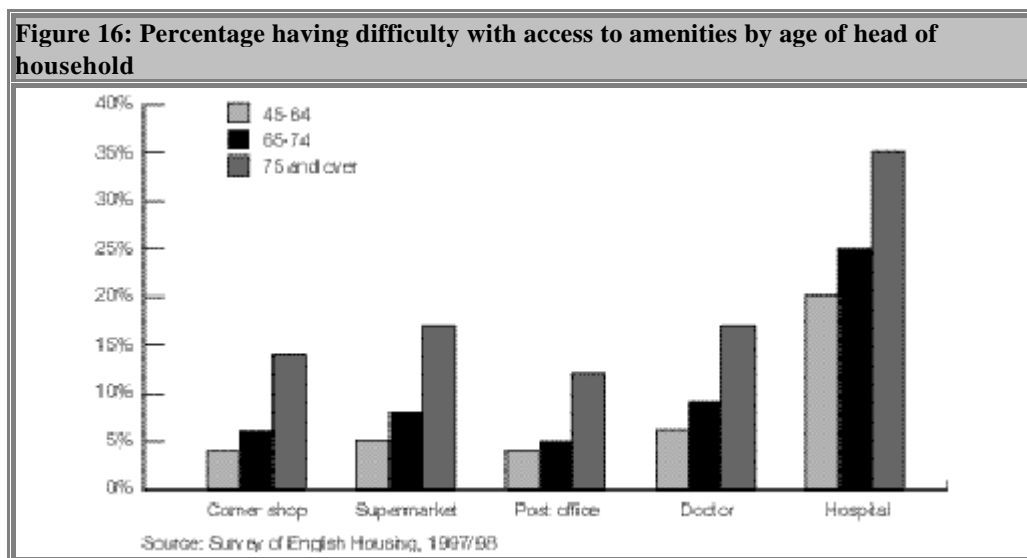
Older people's attitudes to where they live

- Little of the research carried out into resident's attitudes to their area and/or housing has focused on the attitudes of older people. Despite this, it is possible to draw some general conclusions.
- Analysis of the Survey of English Housing³² shows that general levels of satisfaction hold true across the vast majority of the population with only 10% or 15% of respondents expressing dissatisfaction with the area in which they live and a similar proportion raise concerns about particular problems with their area. On average around 80% of households are either very satisfied or satisfied with their area.
- Older people do not feature among groups that express the highest levels of dissatisfaction or the highest levels of concern about particular problems. However, it may be that older people are less likely to complain and more likely to describe their area and the services they receive as adequate.

- Groups in the population as a whole that express above average levels of dissatisfaction include: -
 - Households living in deprived areas.
 - Households living in a property in the lowest council tax band.
 - Households living in socially rented accommodation.
 - Households belonging to a minority ethnic group.
 - Households living in London or in the northern region³³
- Crime and vandalism are important concerns across all such surveys.

Concerns about access to services

- The one significant difference in the responses of older people from the rest of the population concerns issues of access to local services. Older households report much higher levels of difficulty in accessing local services compared with younger households. This is particularly problematic for people aged 75 and over.



²⁷ Attitudes and Aspirations of Older People: A Review of Literature, Annette Boaz et al., Univ. of Warwick for DSS, October 1999.

²⁸ Home Ownership in Old Age: The Future of Owner Occupation in an Ageing Society, Ray Forrest et al., Anchor, 1997.

²⁹ What do they really think?, NOP, 1996.

³⁰ Grey Matters, Sykes & Leather, 1997.

³¹ Home, Independence and Community Care, Time for a Wider Vision? Policy and Politics, 25(4), pp. 409-419 Means: 1997.

³² Housing in England 1997/98, The Stationery Office, London, 1999.

³³ Housing in England 1997/98, The Stationery Office, London, 1999.