

A year in review: our impact in 2018-2019



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Transforming later lives

The age profile of our society is changing rapidly. The number of people aged 65 and over will increase by more than 40% within 20 years, and the number of households where the oldest person is 85 and over is increasing faster than any other age group.

But millions of us risk missing out on a good later life. Currently 1.9m – some 16% - of people aged 65 and over live in relative poverty, and a further 1.1m million people have incomes just above the poverty line. Data suggests this inequality is widening.

In July 2018, following an extensive and collaborative process, we launched a bold vision to transform people's experience of later life. Our new strategy, **Transforming later lives**, has a specific focus on helping people who are approaching later life – almost a quarter of the population – and those who are at risk of missing out on a good later life.

We want more people to be in fulfilling work, in good health, living in safe, accessible homes and connected communities.

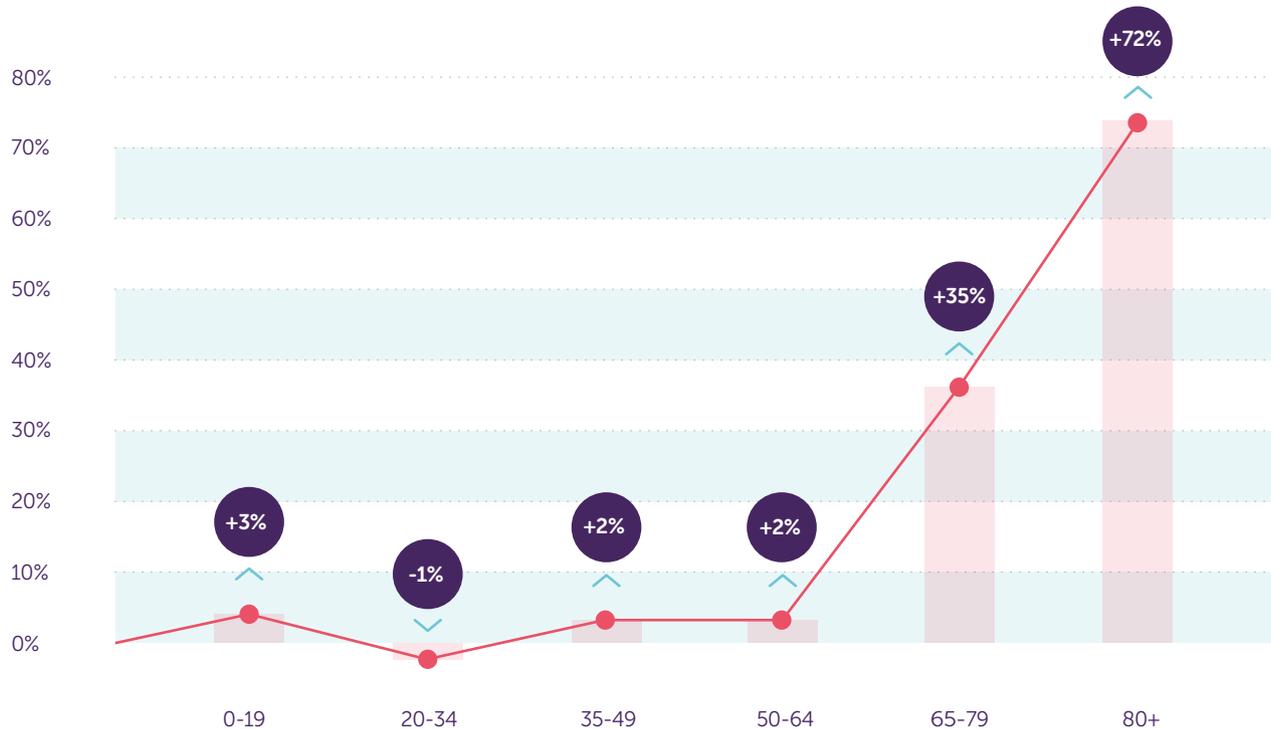
A portrait of Anna Dixon, Chief Executive of the Centre for Ageing Better. She has short, grey hair and is smiling. The background is a solid blue-grey color.

“We continue to work in partnership with a diverse range of organisations and could not have done any of this without their support. Thank you to our partners in Greater Manchester and Leeds, central and local government, and expert independent bodies. Together we can secure a better future for everyone.”

Anna Dixon, Chief Executive, Centre for Ageing Better

The age profile of the population is changing

Projected population change
(2016-36)







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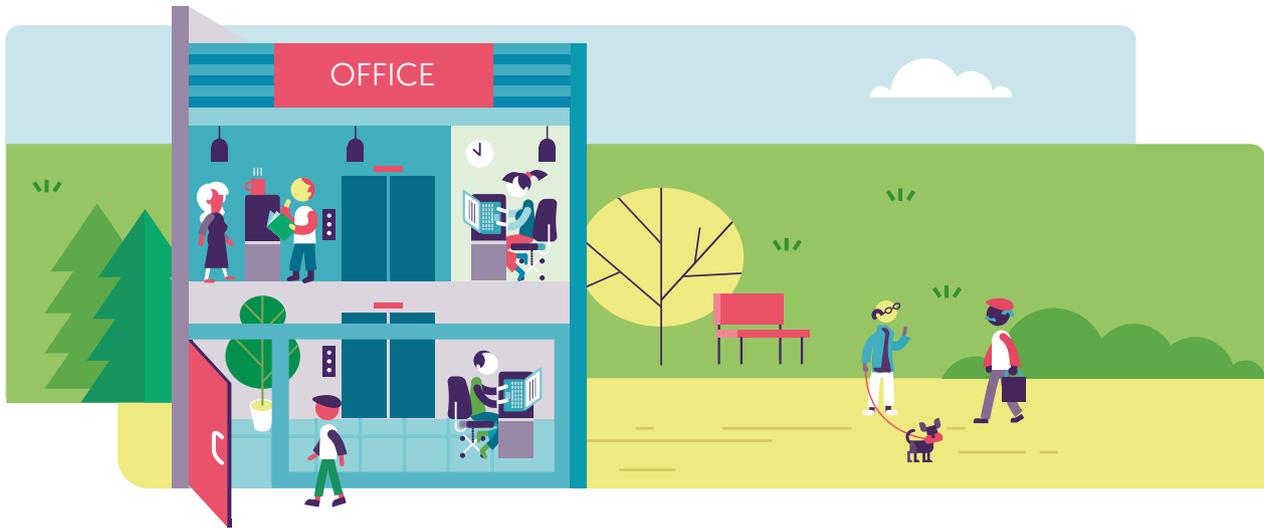


Fulfilling work

We published our guide **Becoming an age-friendly employer**, which set out five actions employers can take to improve the way they recruit, support and retain older workers. These cover flexibility, recruitment and health at work. This guide is our catalyst for influencing large employers and generating a movement for change in the business and public sectors.

We used this guide extensively through the year in discussions with employers and government, including with the Flexible Working Task Force, and the Women and Equalities Committee inquiry into older people in the workplace and in the job market.

We worked with four national employers and service providers to set out the lessons from their pilots of the 'mid-life MOT' scheme. Our report **Developing the mid-life MOT** offers insights from the pilots, which saw Aviva, Legal & General, The Pensions Advisory Service (TPAS) and Mercer trialling a package of support to help staff plan and prepare for the future.



We published our **Health warning for employers** report in April 2018. This summarised the key findings from our research with Greater Manchester, and informed the design of the Working Well Early Help service for over 50s. The report highlighted that older workers are more likely than younger workers to be managing multiple long-term conditions and that health conditions are the main driver of older workers exiting the labour market before they reach state pension age.

Our partnership in Greater Manchester enabled us to continue to work to tackle inequalities and develop and test new and innovative approaches to supporting people aged 50 and over back into work.

We called on Government and employers to do more to improve workplace-based prevention and management of health conditions; many small and inexpensive adjustments can provide a huge benefit to people who want to continue working in later life.

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Safe and accessible homes

We continued to produce influential insights on home aids and adaptations. Our **Homes that help** research explored the lived experiences of individuals who use home adaptations, and practitioners who work alongside them, and showed how changes in the home can improve quality of life.

In October we released our **Adapting for ageing** report, in collaboration with Care & Repair England. This review explored innovative approaches by local areas in delivering home adaptations for residents and encouraged councils to learn from each other's good practice.

Local areas have already begun to implement the best practice we identified. For example, Leeds City Council are using it to inform their Health Needs Assessment and Milton Keynes Council are investing an extra £500,000 in home adaptations. There has been an active exchange of information between the 24 providers included in the report, and they have received enquiries from across the country.

Our research influenced a review of Government capital grants and revenue funding. We were pleased to see the Government pledge an extra £55 million for the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG), and a further £37m announced as part of the 2019/20 Policy framework for the Better Care Fund.

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We have influenced Design Council's Spark Programme and the National Housing Federation Greenhouse project as they develop products that make living at home easier. Our evidence has been used to design invisible adaptations, which they are now prototyping with housing associations.

Our campaign for a much greater proportion of new housing to be mandated as accessible started to take shape in 2018/19. We sent a public statement to the Home Builders' Federation (HBF), co-signed by other major influencers in the housing sector. This led to a huge amount of support from many local areas looking to push forward their accessible housing proposals. We were also part of the working group with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to review Part M of the Building Regulations and pushed for minimum mandatory accessibility standards for all new housing.

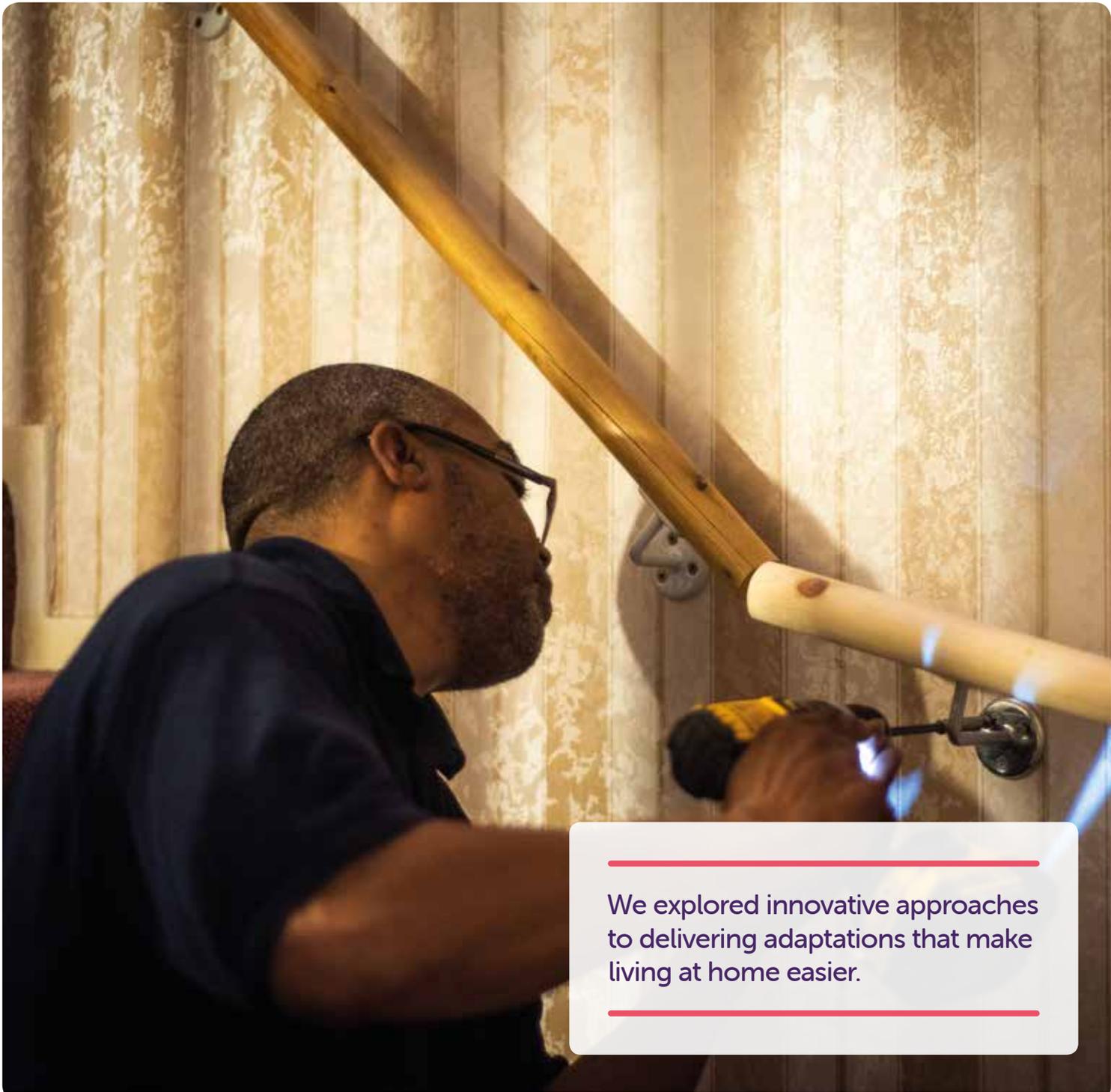
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We funded a report into **Rightsizing: Reframing the housing offer for older people**, which examined the kinds of homes older people live in across the UK, the type of moves they make, and the reasons why. The report called for local authorities, planners and developers to shift their emphasis from downsizing to 'rightsizing', when it comes to planning housing provision for older people.





We explored innovative approaches to delivering adaptations that make living at home easier.



Healthy ageing

Working with the Chief Medical Officer's Expert Group of researchers, and in partnership with Public Health England (PHE), we published new evidence on the best exercise to improve strength and balance, which gained widespread coverage.

Following this, we released our report **Raising the bar on strength and balance: The importance of community-based provision**. The report highlighted that programmes designed to boost the muscle strength and balance of people at risk of falls and injury are not being prioritised by the NHS and local authority commissioners. As part of this we worked closely with 14 local areas to help them improve referral pathways and commissioning of local programmes.

We were also proud to announce the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with Public Health England. Through a five-year strategic partnership, we will work together with PHE in using evidence-based public health interventions to help people maintain their ability to do the everyday things they want to do as they age.

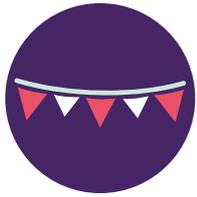
On national policy, our insights were fed into the development of the NHS Long Term Plan. We were also involved in early discussions to help shape the Prevention Green Paper to focus on ageing.

We announced a five-year strategic partnership with Public Health England.





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Connected Communities

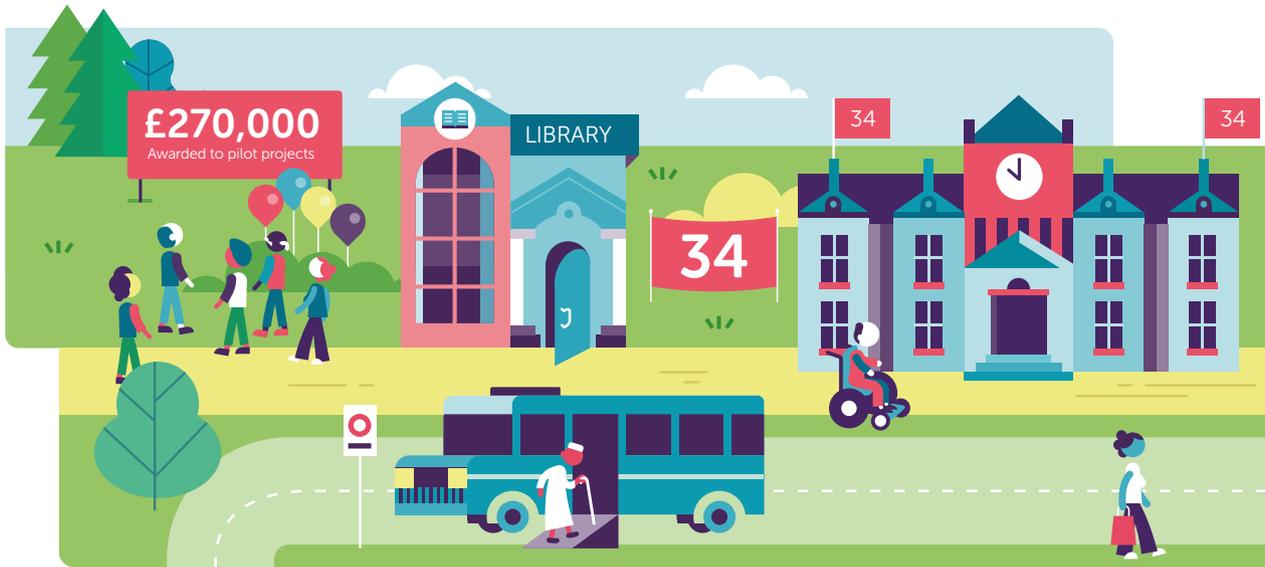
We launched our first ever grant programme, with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. Together we awarded more than £270,000 to five projects to pilot, develop and share new approaches to age-friendly and inclusive volunteering.

The projects in North Yorkshire, Oxfordshire, East Sussex, Kent and London each received just over £50,000 and we are providing them with additional non-financial support. They will use the funding to develop good-practice approaches that will help to promote and sustain voluntary and community activity for people aged 50 and over, with a focus on those who might face barriers to taking part.

This includes people in formal volunteering roles as well as those who may help their friends and neighbours in other ways.

The fund was launched following our [Age-friendly and inclusive volunteering review of community contributions in later life](#). It found that many older people face barriers to taking part or staying involved, which can get worse if their circumstances change.

In Greater Manchester we co-sponsored a guide on age-friendly transport, which has been taken forward as recommendations for the city region's Transport Strategy.



Through our partnership with Leeds City Council and Leeds Older People's Forum, we developed innovative approaches to tackling social, economic and health inequalities in later life across Leeds. We supported the development of a new model for community transport, which West Yorkshire Combined Authority has committed funding to further develop and pilot over 2019/20. We are also scoping a framework for an evaluation of the Leeds Neighbourhood Networks.

This year, we grew the UK Network of Age-friendly Communities from 19 to 34 members. We held our second Age-friendly Communities Conference in Liverpool, which was attended by 30 member communities and was an opportunity to connect, share learning, ideas and best practice.

We helped to fund projects that will promote and sustain voluntary and community activity for people aged 50 and over.



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Other significant areas of work

The State of Ageing in 2019

In March we launched our flagship report '**The State of Ageing in 2019**', giving a snapshot of what life is like for people aged 65 and older today, and explored the prospects for people currently in their 50s and 60s.

Our launch event convened experts across government, health, media and charities. We will monitor the measures we included in the report and track these against the changes we seek to bring about over the next ten years.

Industrial Strategy Grand Challenge on Ageing

We gave significant policy development support to the Government's Industrial Strategy Grand Challenge on Ageing (which is designed to stimulate innovation in products and services for an ageing population).

We developed the Healthy Ageing Challenge Framework, to inform the Healthy Ageing Challenge Fund.



We hosted a breakfast debate, with Caroline Dinenege, Minister of State at the Department of Health and Social Care, exploring the opportunities that the 'grand challenge' of an ageing population presents.

We completed our work on digital capability for people in later life with the Good Things Foundation, culminating in a practical guide to helping older people use the internet.

An illustration of a vibrant community scene. On the left, a two-story office building with a red sign that says 'OFFICE' is shown in cross-section. Inside, several people are working at desks, some using computers. Outside the office, a person in a wheelchair is walking, and a blue car with a wheelchair accessibility symbol is parked. A person is riding a bicycle, and another is walking a dog. In the background, there's a park with trees, a lake with a duck, and a person walking. On the right, a dark purple banner with white text says 'Transfo later'. Below the office, a white box contains the text 'Fulfilling work' and a paragraph. At the bottom, another white box contains the text 'Safe and accessible homes' and a paragraph. The bottom of the image shows a row of colorful houses, a cafe with a sign that says 'CAFE', and people sitting at a table, walking, and sitting on a bench. The overall style is flat and colorful with a focus on accessibility and community.

Fulfilling work

Influencing employers to improve the way they recruit, support and retain older workers – including flexibility, recruitment and health at work.



Safe and accessible homes

Finding innovative approaches for local areas to deliver home adaptations for residents and encouraging councils to learn from the good practice we identified.

Transfo
later

CAFE



Healthy ageing

Working closely with 14 local areas to help them improve referral pathways and commissioning of local strength and balance programmes.

arming
lives

Connected communities

- Awarding more than **£270,000** to five projects to pilot, develop and share new approaches to age-friendly and inclusive volunteering.
- Increasing the UK Network of Age-friendly Communities from **19 to 34** areas.

£270,000
Awarded to pilot projects

34

34

34

CINEMA

LIBRARY

WALK-IN CENTRE



**A year in review:
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The fact that we are living longer is a great achievement. But making the most of these extra years requires fundamental changes across society. There is much to gain if we take action now, but also much to lose if we fail.

We want everyone to have a better later life. If we work together we can achieve it.

This report is available at www.ageing-better.org.uk | For more info email info@ageing-better.org.uk



The Centre for Ageing Better received £50 million from The National Lottery Community Fund in January 2015 in the form of an endowment to enable it to identify what works in the ageing sector by bridging the gap between research, evidence and practice.