

Ageing Population

Driver – Social

Related Drivers – Anti-Social Behaviour, Equality, Diversity Human Rights, Mental Health, Neighbourhood Policing, Recession, Youth Crime, Efficiency, Demand Management, Flexible Working, Public Confidence in the Police

Background

The UK population aged over 65 has grown by 31% whilst the population aged under 16 declined by 19% over the past 30 years.¹ It is forecast that by 2026, 10% of the population will be over 75 and many will have caring needs. Two thirds of women carers and less than three quarters of male carers are in currently in employment.²

The ageing population will mean shrinking recruitment pools leading to more competition between industries for available talent.

Older people in the community often feel more at risk of being a victim of crime than other groups and need reassurance that they are in fact in a low risk group according to Home Office research.³ This said, older people can play a valued and respected role in communities. Some of the issues cited that will affect police service to this group are:

- Access to services and barriers to such access including rurality and mobility
- Communication at all levels, utilising all mediums thereby enhancing engagement with older people.
- The need to take cognisance of physical, sensory, or mental impairment.

Potential Skills Needs

Communication skills – to communicate with older members of the community

Community policing skills –encourage more people to become involved in crime reduction alongside operational policing tasks

Customer service skills – delivering a consistent high quality service

Equality and diversity skills –to treat people appropriately and sensitively as well as better understand the cultural issues of the communities they serve

Partnership working skills – to work effectively with other agencies to a common goal and standards

Relationship building skills – to engage with the community and older people to maintain public confidence

‘Soft’ skills – personal qualities and interpersonal skills necessary to effectively deal with the public

Victim and witness care skills –to treat victims and witnesses appropriately and sensitively

¹ Office of National Statistics website - <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?ID=949>

² [Home Office, APA, Police Federation, ACPO & HMIC \(2007\) *The Flexible Working in the Police Service*. London: COI.](#)

³ [Chivite-Matthews, N. & Maggs, P. \(2002\) *Crime, Policing and Justice: the experience of older people – Findings from the British Crime Survey*. 08/02, London: Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate.](#)