

## **Leading agencies form national coalition for active ageing E**

**H**elp the Aged and a number of leading charities have joined up to champion the positive benefits of regular exercise in combating conditions such as osteoporosis, stroke, heart disease, obesity and diabetes.

The coalition, which includes Help the Aged, Age Concern, the British Heart Foundation, the British Geriatrics Society and the Central Council for Physical Recreation (an umbrella organisation for sport and recreation) aims to convince the Government to better communicate the benefits of regular exercise among the over 50s by stressing that it also reduces social isolation, immobility and disability.

Statistics suggest that 81 per cent of men and 87 per cent of women aged 55 and over do not get the recommended levels of physical activity to benefit health. Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt Hon Tessa Jowell MP, gave a statement in support of the coalition.

There is growing evidence to suggest that diseases and conditions that cause loss of function and independence in later life may be preventable. The coalition will raise awareness of this and provide a single voice to give leadership, direction and coherence to the development of opportunities for all older people to become physically active.

**Gemma Lass**