

Baby boomer deaths to reach peak in 2044



Most people born during the postwar baby boom can expect long lives
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Kaya Burgess

Deaths of baby boomers will peak in 2044, nearly a century after the birth rate spiked, analysis has shown.

Those born during the postwar baby boom are often a source of jealousy to later generations, with many lucky enough to have enjoyed the swinging Sixties, free university education, a house price boom and

generous pensions. They can also expect long lives.

The age someone born between 1946 and 1964 is expected to be at their death is about 88 for men and 90 for women — slightly older for those born near the end of the boom.

The Times has analysed projections from the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The data predicts that 1,641 men and 1,258 women who were born in 1946

will die this year, as will 393 men and 280 women born in 1964.

By analysing these predictions for those born in each year between 1946 and 1964, *The Times* has found that 29,471 baby boomers are likely to die this year, 58,759 will die in 2029, and 104,443 in 2039. That generation's deaths will reach a peak in 2044, when 113,336 people born between 1946 and 1964 will die.

The baby boom produced two



spikes. The first, in 1947, delivered 881,026 births, after soldiers returned from the war. The second was in 1964, with 875,972 births. The biggest boom in the last century occurred after the First World War, with 957,782 births in 1920.

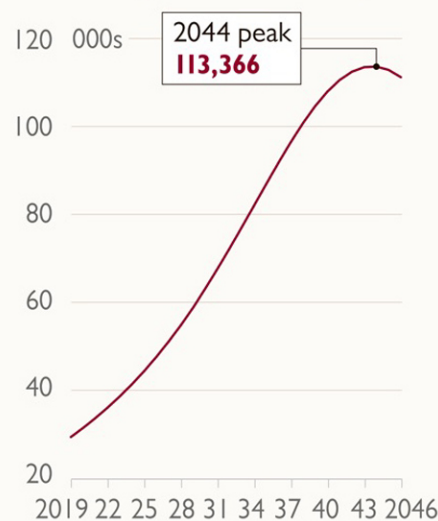
The birth rate fell during the late 1960s, falling further after the Abortion Act of 1968. There have been two lower spikes since, in 1990 and 2012, with 706,140 and 729,642 births respectively.

Younger generations hoping to get on the property ladder with the help of a bequest from parents may have to wait for the generation to die. Property industry insiders suggest that Britain does not have a strong downsizing culture and there are too few retirement homes — most such housing was built in the 1970s and 80s and is not luxurious enough to entice affluent baby boomers to leave their family homes.

Ian Mulheirn, of Oxford Economics, a consultancy, said he did not believe that enough baby boomers would downsize or move to retirement homes to substantially boost housing supply or reduce house prices. Their

Generational decline

Number expected to die each year



(Baby boomers: People born between 1946 and 1964)
Source: Times analysis of ONS data

children will “have to wait until interest rates globally start to rise and, [then] high levels of house prices will be unsustainable”.

Lawrence Bowles, of Savills, the property firm, said developers were building retirement homes at an accelerating rate, but it was a long way from what is needed to meet the demographic need and chunk of retirees that is coming.”

Many baby boomers will want retirement housing that pro-

vides more comfort and luxury than previous generations could afford. “The stuff we are seeing developed is more aspirational and less functional,” Mr Bowles said.

The Times reported last month that baby boomers continuing the hedonistic habits of their youth are helping to drive a rise in the number of older drug abusers, with 7,800 people over 55 taken to hospital with drug-related mental or behavioural disorders in 2017 — an increase of 465 per cent on the previous decade. There were 2,500 people aged 55 and above who sought treatment from cannabis misuse, up 250 per cent over the same period, and 2,900 seeking treatment after using opiates.

The total of annual deaths is expected to peak in 2060 with the population predicted to be 76 million and 824,000 people expected to die, compared with 598,000 deaths predicted for this year out of a population of 66 million. ■