

Introduction to the breakthrough project

Making Leeds the Best City to Grow Old in is one of eight breakthrough projects established to drive some of the work to fulfil our ambition for Leeds to be a city which is both compassionate and has a strong economy,

The breakthrough projects are designed to identify new ways of working within the council and with our partners to achieve the best outcomes for the city.

Crucially, we see this ambition as fundamentally connected to prioritising the needs of older people - a city which sees older people being valued and as assets. This is also reflected in the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2021. Creating an Age Friendly City where people age well is highlighted as one of our key priorities in the city-wide plan.

This is our second Making Leeds the Best City to Grow Old in Annual Report, and I am pleased to see how the breakthrough project has progressed since it began.

This work is vital for several reasons:

- We have an ageing population; the 2011 Census shows that there are almost 150,000 people in Leeds are aged 60 and over (accounting for almost 20% of the total population). This number will continue to increase with the number of people aged 50+ expected to rise to 256,585 by 2021, with those aged 80+ increasing to 39,091.
- Leeds older people have already told us that they want Leeds to be an Age Friendly City.
- Inequalities in health are a key issue for older people with ill health and social impacts affecting the poorest in the city disproportionately.
- Making Leeds the 'Best City to Grow Old' will have a hugely positive impact on our ability to deliver other breakthrough projects and supports an 'invest to save' approach, notably across health and social care.

Our approach one of citizenship. This means everybody can do something to support this project and help to achieve also the wider ambition we have set for the city. We are working across the council and with our external partners as we recognise that to achieve our ambition for Leeds to be the Best City to Grow Old in, this cannot be accomplished by the Council alone. Everyone has a part to play and everyone has a stake in making this city a place where our older people are seen as assets in our communities who are fundamentally valued.

In 2017 the council and Leeds Older People's Forum signed an important partnership with the Centre for Ageing Better which is bringing additional resources to the city to help us achieve our ambitions, and test out new ways of working, particularly in housing and community transport. Leeds was selected as a partner for the Centre for Ageing Better because of this breakthrough project, which demonstrates our commitment to making Leeds the Best City to Grow Old in.

Cllr Rebecca Charlwood

