



**age  
friendly**  
DERRY & STRABANE



**2016 - 2019**

**Outline Age Friendly Strategy for the  
Derry City and Strabane District**



2016 - 2019

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Derry City and Strabane District

## Foreword

As Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District Council I am very proud to support the Council's ongoing commitment to make the City and District an Age Friendly place to live and visit. I am delighted that the implementation of a Strategy that places a good quality of life for older people, has been placed high on the Council's agenda. By working collectively with all stakeholders and interested parties we can all do our part to ensure that this City and District is a great place to grow older.



I am very supportive of this initiative and our combined efforts to make the Council area a place where you can grow older without any barriers to living a healthy and fulfilling life and where you feel you are a valued member of society. In order to make our Age Friendly Strategy work, we need the support of all stakeholders to ensure that they deliver what is needed to make our City and District Age Friendly. Older people are at the heart of our communities, they are our teachers and influencers, they have worked tirelessly over the years to make us who we are. We have a responsibility to nurture their contribution to society to capture their knowledge and share their pride and love for where they come from by doing all we can to reduce loneliness and social isolation and get them more involved in the community.

Through this outline Strategy we hope to look at ways in which older people can have access to meaningful support, information and training and that we look at ways to eliminate the causes of inequality so that older people can have access to an environment that they feel part of.

By working together I truly believe we can achieve great things to make the Derry City and Strabane District Council area a place where older people feel engaged.

**Alderman Hilary McClintock,**  
Mayor of Derry City and Strabane District Council

# Strategic Context

The Public Health Agency (PHA) recognises the importance of older people being able to maintain active independent lives and strives to support this through a range of prevention and early detection high quality services which address inequalities and protect health.

Health improvement requires more than responding to ill health. The role of the PHA is to proactively address the causes and associated inequalities of preventable ill health and lack of wellbeing. This is challenging territory requiring a combined effort across the Health & Social Care sector with other partners such as our local communities, district councils, education and housing bodies, the PSNI and trade unions.

With an Ageing population, the PHA acknowledges the importance of keeping older people fit and well. This strategic plan will help facilitate the wider PHA Health Improvement work and more specifically the key priorities of the Regional Thematic Plan for Older People, which Age Friendly addresses, supporting older people to live full and purposeful lives remaining healthy and resilient for as long as possible.

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# Why Develop an Age Friendly Strategy for the Derry City and Strabane District?

The Derry City and Strabane District has many Age Friendly characteristics. The friendliness of its people and their generosity, proactive and inclusive community support, caring neighbourhoods and affordable friendly taxi services stand out as reasons why older people love living in this part of the world (Source: Age Friendly Consultations 2014).

However, the region also has a number of features that create significant hindrances or obstacles for older people which are likely to increase due to the changing demographic of the district. It is estimated that by the year 2030, 25% of the local population will be over 65 years of age and by the year 2037 the over 65's will outnumber the under 14's for the first time.

In preparation for this changing demographic, the Age Friendly process is designed to ensure the region is informed and ready to meet the changing needs, interests and aspirations of its citizens.

# What is an Age Friendly Community?

An Age Friendly community is one where older people are supported to age safely, enjoy good health and participate fully in their community.

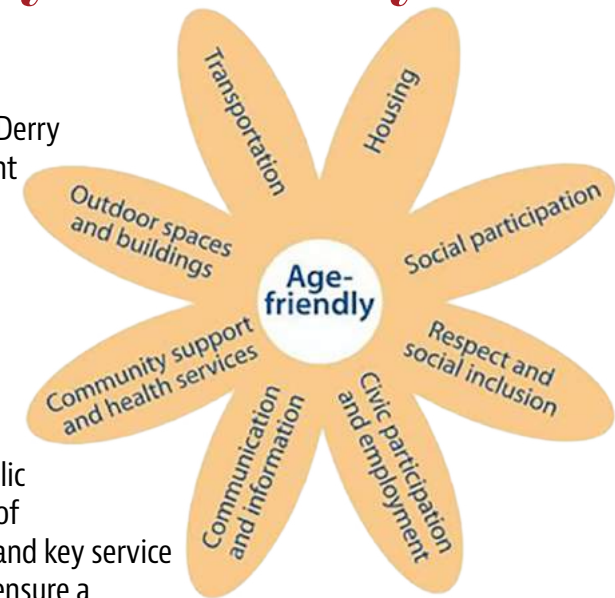
Through the Age Friendly process we aim to support those that provide services within the Council area to see themselves from the perspective of older people to help identify where and how they can become more Age Friendly.

The World Health Organisation's (WHO) Age Friendly model identifies eight key themes that are vital to establishing an Age Friendly Community.

## Age Friendly: The Story so Far.....

In September 2013 the Legacy Derry City Council made a commitment to becoming an Age Friendly City by signing the WHO Age Friendly Declaration.

From this commitment the Age Friendly Partnership was developed. Derry Healthy Cities with support from the Public Health Agency began a process of engagement with older people and key service providers within the district to ensure a process which is participatory and involves older people in influencing the policies that affect them.



# Council Amalgamation....

At the beginning of the Age Friendly process the amalgamation of the Strabane District Council and the Derry City Council was imminent, therefore it was agreed that both areas of the newly established Council District would be involved in the Age Friendly process.

To achieve this consultation with older people and service providers from across both District areas took place.

# Consultation....

This extensive consultation with older people focused on the 8 key themes identified by WHO (detailed on page 5) and identified a number of key facts about the lives of older people. One of the most notable findings being that older people, within this region are keen to be consulted with and provided with follow up information.

All those involved in this consultation process stated that this region is a great place to grow older. It was agreed by all that they liked living in their homes and if they had the choice to live elsewhere would choose to remain where they are. It was also found that there was a positive correlation between being associated with a group or community association and feeling involved and leading active lives in communities.

Older people that took part in the consultation clearly take their safety and health and wellbeing very seriously, and take the necessary precautions to protect themselves and their homes. They appreciate healthcare professionals and others visiting them in their communities to talk to them about safety, condition management and prevention.

# Work supported by the Age Friendly Partnership:

- Ongoing development /facilitation of the Age Friendly Partnership which brings together organisations to identify and promote best practice;
- Ongoing engagement and consultation with older people/ older peoples groups and follow up feedback sessions;
- Establishment of the Mighty Oaks, who are Age Friendly Ambassadors i.e. older people that support the Age Friendly Process;
- Conference considering policy context and best practice;
- Thematic engagement sessions where older people have the opportunity to present their views to service providers e.g. Transport providers;
- Walkability audit of Derry City Centre / Ebrington and Strabane Town to inform policy makers.



## Charter of Commitment outlining how services and service providers can become Age Friendly



- Specific Campaigns to promote Age Friendly work e.g. Age Friendly Libraries / Businesses; and development of a charter to raise awareness and promote best practice.



## Launch of Age Friendly Libraries for Derry City & Strabane District

# Age Friendly Strategy

The Derry City and Strabane District Age Friendly Strategy 2016 -2019 has been developed:

**Vision:** To make the Derry City and Strabane District Council, both rural and urban areas, a great place to grow old where everyone is valued and respected across all ages.

**Aims:** To enhance the quality of life for older people through improved opportunities for health, participation and security.

“ An age Friendly City [and District] encourages active aging by optimising opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age ”

WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION

# Commitment....

The Derry City and Strabane District Strategy sets out **12 strategic goals** across **8 themes** which will contribute to the achievement of making the District Age Friendly.

The following **values** underpin the work carried out by the Derry & Strabane Age Friendly Partnership to achieve these goals.

**Inclusive and people centred:** We are committed to including older people in decision making processes about issues that affect their lives.

**Partnership:** We are committed to working together to deliver coordinated services and support to meet the needs of older people.

**Communication:** We are committed to communicating in a clear and accessible way.

**Innovation:** We will use innovative methods and approaches to ensure that the Derry City and Strabane District continues to be a great place to grow old.



# Summary of Themes and Goals

## Theme 1: Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

1. Improved outdoor spaces and places so older people can be more comfortable when spending time outdoors.

## Theme 2: Transport

2. Accessible transport to ensure access to health services and ability to participate in social and cultural activities and employment.
3. Recognition that transport is an essential part of older people's lives and ensure this is prioritised at local and national level.
4. A greater equity of services in accessing transport in rural areas in the Derry City and Strabane District and an ambition that older people living in rural communities will be less disadvantaged when accessing services.

## Theme 3: Housing, Safety & Security

5. A home and community environment which supports older people to:
  - live as independently as possible and ensure they receive support where necessary;
  - live safely and without fear of crime;
  - access appropriate information and supports to help keep them safe.

## Theme 4: Social Participation

6. People as they age can participate in social, cultural, educational, recreational and leisure activities that keep them involved, connected and informed.
7. Increased opportunities for intergenerational and cross community interactions.

## Theme 5: Communication & Information

8. Older people have the information they need to keep them informed, connected and engaged.

## Theme 6: Civic Participation & Employment

9. Older people can participate fully in social, economic and public life.

## Theme 7: Respect and Social Inclusion

10. Increased respect and recognition of older people by valuing their knowledge and skills and acknowledging the valuable contribution they make to families, communities and civic society.

## Theme 8: Community Support and Health Services

11. Older people age healthily through a healthy lifestyle, access to appropriate services and informed choice.
12. Older people have improved mental and emotional wellbeing through reduced isolation and loneliness.

# Theme 1: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

## What we want to achieve?

Improved outdoor spaces and places so older people can be more comfortable spending time outdoors

## Currently working well:

The recent development of outdoor spaces and green areas has had a positive impact with older people.

Investment in both outdoor lighting and pavements was regarded as positive.

Both Derry City Centre and Strabane Town Centre were regarded as well maintained, with a **“great atmosphere”** and a high concentration of areas to rest along the Quay area and Guildhall Square of Derry and on Main Street Strabane and surrounding areas.

## Issues raised:

- Access to toilets needed within public areas throughout the district.
- Additional crossing points needed including drop kerbs and audio signals.
- Awareness needed of current accessible crossing points and their location.
- Adequate, appropriate bus shelters in specific locations.
- Ensure dog fouling removed.
- Even footpaths and pavements to ensure safety.



- Need for green and open spaces to be well lit with appropriate amenities to ensure feelings of safety.
- Shops and retailers are made aware of barriers for older people e.g. moving around the shop or lack of appropriate seating.
- Street lighting is patchy in certain places should be white, not orange, as it makes it difficult to see.

### **Actions:**

- Continue to engage with older people so issues are identified as they arise;
- Continue to advocate for the inclusion of an Age Friendly accessible approach within the Derry City and Strabane District Community Plan.
- Advocate for services and departments to adopt an Age Friendly Approach e.g. in relation to:
  - Roads
  - Street lighting
  - Green spaces
  - Bus shelters
  - Toilets
  - Seating
  - Planning
- Work with other agencies to identify appropriate ways of making citizens aware of accessible amenities in the district.

# Theme 2: Transportation

## What we want to achieve?

Accessible transport to ensure access to health services and ability to participate in social and cultural activities and employment.

Recognition that transport is an essential part of older people's lives and ensure this is prioritised at local and national level.

A greater equity of services in accessing transport in rural areas in the Derry City and Strabane District and an ambition that older people living in rural communities will be less disadvantaged when accessing services.

## Currently working well:

- Bus service within Derry City was regarded as efficient.
- Bus pass regarded as very useful and opened up travel and cultural experiences for older people allowing them to travel across Northern Ireland and all of Ireland for those with a senior bus pass.
- Community transport regarded as an excellent service.

## Issues raised:

- Improved bus access, linked to both locations and times of available buses and costs associated with community transport.
- Make it easier to access transport support e.g. simplified booking system for community transport.
- Information relating to route timetables and community transport needs to be more accessible and easy to understand.
- Lack of understanding of the needs of older people by bus drivers can impact on safety e.g. when drivers move off too quickly.
- Ensure priority seating is kept clear or available for those that need it.
- Parking can be problematic in the City Centre.

## Actions:

- Engage with transport providers and provide opportunities for older people to raise their concerns.
- Advocate for transport providers to provide customer service training for staff focusing on the specific needs of older people.
- Advocate for an equitable transport service across both urban and rural areas of the district.
- Raise concerns regarding appropriate and accessible parking facilities.

# Theme 3: Housing, Safety and Security

## What we want to achieve?

A home and community environment which supports older people to:

- live as independently as possible and ensure they receive support where necessary;
- live safely and without fear of crime;
- access appropriate information and supports to help keep them safe.

## Currently working well:

In general it was agreed that access to high quality housing within the district was available.

## Issues raised:

- Fear of crime was a recurring issue with a need for information from relevant organisations on how to take the necessary precautions to protect self and homes.
- Clear information and communication e.g. home modifications and timescales, statements, letters etc.
- Information on reputable safe trade-persons.

## Actions:

- Work with housing providers to identify opportunities where issues relating to housing can be shared and addressed.
- Advocate for the provision and promotion of appropriate information on how older people can keep themselves safe.
- Advocate for housing providers to ensure that older people are kept informed, in an appropriate manner, about changes that affect them.



# Theme 4: Social Participation

## What we want to achieve?

People as they age can participate in social, cultural, educational, recreational and leisure activities that keep them involved, connected and informed.

Increased opportunities for intergenerational and cross community interactions.

## Currently working well:

- Access to local groups and activities.
- Cross community and intergenerational opportunities that help to break down barriers and reduce fear.
- A range of activities (varied by location).
- Having a range of services coming to local groups and centres e.g. advice services.

## Issues raised:

- Insecure funding impacts upon the vital activities and services needed and depended upon.
- Continuation of activities.
- Need for more opportunities for connecting with groups and individuals from across a range of communities including younger people.
- Need to be consulted on activities provided.
- Support to develop digital skills to improve ability to connect.

## Actions:

- We will engage with service providers, including those providing social, cultural, educational, recreational and leisure activities to ensure they take the needs of older people into account when planning events and activities.
- We will seek to identify opportunities for intergenerational interactions.
- We will champion for opportunities for older people to access training in the use of technology.



# Theme 5: Communication and Information

## What we want to achieve?

Older people have the information they need to keep them informed, connected and engaged.

## Currently working well:

- Having access to community groups or centres where information on local services and activities can be accessed.

## Issues raised:

- When communicating with older people there is a need for a range of communication methods to be used e.g. flyers and email, shop notice boards, social media etc.
- Information provided can be difficult to read. Don't overcomplicate things and use simple language, without jargon.
- More information / access to information about things that are happening across the district and Age Friendly places to eat.
- Loss of the post office as a meeting point and somewhere community information could be displayed about things that are happening across the district.
- Need for follow up to consultations outlining actions and developments.
- Groups need support to share learning and ideas so older people can have access to successful programmes and services.

## Actions:

- We will work with our partners and continue to engage with older people to identify the most appropriate communication methods.
- We will develop guidance for other service providers on appropriate methods of communication.
- We will explore the potential of creating a sustainable communication portal which can be accessed by older people across urban and rural areas of the district.
- We will seek to develop sustainable communication and information hubs within neighbourhoods and communities.



# Theme 6: Civic Participation and Employment

## What we want to achieve?

Older people can participate fully in social, economic and public life.

## Currently working well:

Opportunities to actively and meaningfully volunteer.

## Issues raised:

- Support to develop the skills to participate in social, economic and public life.
- Provide information on how and where to participate in social, economic and public life.
- Need for an accessible communication process to raise concerns with local Councillors e.g. regarding rubbish, poor lighting and uneven pavements
- Promotion of job opportunities for older people.

## Actions:

- We will promote the value of older people in the workplace and the value and importance of pre-retirement preparation.
- We will encourage volunteering agencies to identify and promote volunteering opportunities for older people.
- We will advocate for the promotion of part time work and information for older people on how to start a business or turn a hobby into a business venture.
- We will explore the potential for developing a local mechanism for older people to engage with elected representatives.



# Theme 7: Respect and Social Inclusion

## What we want to achieve?

Increased respect and recognition of older people by valuing their knowledge and skills and acknowledging the valuable contribution they make to families, communities and civic society.

## Currently working well:

- Derry City and Strabane District is a good place to live and grow old.
- It is a great family place and a generous place.

## Issues raised:

- Promotion of the valuable and positive contribution older people make to society.
- Increased opportunity and awareness of cross community and intergenerational activities.
- Support to ensure all can become involved with community groups and organisations.
- Promote mutual value and respect across generations.

## Actions:

- We will promote the valuable and positive contribution older people make within our society.
- We will produce guidance for programme co-ordinators on providing suitable activities and promote the delivery of activities.

# Theme 8: Community Support and Health Services

## What we want to achieve?

Older people age healthily through a healthy lifestyle, access to appropriate services and informed choice.

Older people have improved mental and emotional wellbeing through reduced isolation and loneliness.

## Currently working well:

- Access to community transport to assist with medical appointments.
- Range of health programmes available e.g. winter health are enjoyable and excellent.



## Issues raised:

- Concerns regarding the impact of loneliness and isolation on health and emotional wellbeing.
- Concerns regarding changes to medication and a need for increased communication and information.
- More opportunities to meet and speak with healthcare professionals and organisations within community setting to discuss issues that affect older people.
- Information on how and where to access health checks outside GP surgery.
- Consideration given to reducing cost of leisure facilities to promote active aging.

## Actions:

- We will work with our partners to promote awareness of health and wellbeing programmes and campaigns among older people e.g. the Take 5 Ways to Wellbeing / access to exercise and leisure facilities.
- We will explore the potential for Age Friendly neighbourhoods within our locality to address issues related to loneliness and isolation.
- We will continue to work with our partners to advocate for Age Friendly and Dementia Friendly health care settings.
- We will advocate for and seek to identify means of informing older people of changes to their medication.

# Summary of Actions

|     | Action  | Term   | Year |
|-----|---|--------|------|
| 1.1 | Continue to engage with older people to ensure issues are identified as they arise.   | Medium | 2    |
| 1.2 | Continue to advocate for the inclusion of an Age Friendly accessible approach within the Derry City and Strabane District Community Plan.   | Short  | 1    |
| 1.3 | Advocate for services and departments to adopt an Age Friendly Approach e.g. in relation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roads</li> <li>• Street lighting</li> <li>• Green spaces</li> <li>• Bus shelters</li> <li>• Toilets</li> <li>• Seating</li> <li>• Planning</li> </ul> | Long   | 3    |
| 1.4 | Work with other agencies to identify appropriate ways of making citizens aware of accessible amenities in the district.   | Medium | 2    |
| 2.1 | Engage with transport providers to identify opportunities for older people to raise their concerns.   | Medium | 2    |
| 2.2 | Advocate for transport providers to provide customer service training for staff focusing on the specific needs of older people.   | Long   | 3    |
| 2.3 | Advocate for an equitable transport service across both urban and rural areas of the district.  | Long   | 3    |
| 2.4 | Raise concerns regarding appropriate and accessible parking facilities.   | Medium | 2    |

|     | Action  | Term   | Year |
|-----|---|--------|------|
| 3.1 | Work with housing providers to identify opportunities where issues relating to housing can be shared and addressed.   | Short  | 1    |
| 3.2 | Advocate for the provision and promotion of appropriate information on how older people can keep themselves safe.   | Medium | 2    |
| 3.3 | Advocate for housing providers to ensure that older people are kept informed, in an appropriate manner, about changes that affect them.   | Medium | 2    |
| 4.1 | We will engage with service providers, including those providing social, cultural, educational, recreational and leisure activities to ensure they take the needs of older people into account when planning events and activities. | Short  | 1    |
| 4.2 | We will seek to identify opportunities for intergenerational interactions.  | Medium | 2    |
| 4.3 | We will champion for opportunities for older people to access training in the use of technology.  | Medium | 2    |
| 5.1 | We will work with our partners and continue to engage with older people to identify the most appropriate communication methods.   | Short  | 1    |
| 5.2 | We will develop guidance for other service providers on appropriate methods of communication.   | Short  | 1    |



|     | Action   | Term   | Year |
|-----|--|--------|------|
| 5.3 | We will explore the potential of creating a sustainable communication portal which can be accessed by older people across urban and rural areas of the district. | Long   | 3    |
| 5.4 | We will seek to develop sustainable communication and information hubs within neighbourhoods and communities   | Long   | 3    |
| 6.1 | We will promote the value of older people in the workplace and the value and importance of preretirement preparation.  | Long   | 3    |
| 6.2 | We will encourage volunteering agencies to identify and promote volunteering opportunities for older people.   | Medium | 2    |
| 6.3 | We will advocate for the promotion of part time work and information for older people on how to start a business or turn a hobby into a business venture.        | Long   | 3    |
| 6.4 | We will explore the potential for developing a local mechanism for older people to engage with elected representatives   | Medium | 2    |
| 7.1 | We will promote the valuable and positive contribution older people make within our society.   | Long   | 3    |
| 7.2 | We will produce guidance for programme coordinators on providing suitable activities and promote the delivery of activities.                                     | Short  | 1    |

|     | Action   | Term   | Year |
|-----|--|--------|------|
| 8.1 | We will work with our partners to promote awareness of health and wellbeing programmes and campaigns among older people e.g. 5 ways to wellbeing / access to exercise and leisure facilities | Medium | 2    |
| 8.2 | We will explore the potential for Age Friendly neighbourhoods within our locality to address issues related to loneliness and isolation  | Long   | 3    |
| 8.3 | We will continue to work with our partners to advocate for Age Friendly & Dementia Friendly health care settings   | Long   | 3    |
| 8.4 | We will advocate for and seek to identify means of informing older people of changes to their medication   | Long   | 3    |

# Groups Consulted:

- 1 Active Citizens Engage
- 2 Age Concern
- 3 Cost Club
- 4 Derg Valley Care
- 5 Diamond Diners (Claudy)
- 6 Donemana Senior Citizens Club
- 7 Enagh Seniors Group
- 8 Getting on Well (Bogside)
- 9 Glen Older Peoples Group
- 10 Health for life (Old Library Trust, Creggan)
- 11 Newbuildings Luncheon Club
- 12 Newbuildings Women's Group
- 13 Northside 50+
- 14 Rathmor 50+
- 15 Sion Mills Community Forum
- 16 Strabane & District Caring Services
- 17 Strabane Community Project
- 18 Strathfoyle Women's Group
- 19 The Plum Club (Plumbridge)
- 20 The Recycled Teenagers (Gobnascale)
- 21 U3A Foyle

# Thanks

With thanks to the Mighty Oaks and the Age Friendly Steering Group who participated in the development of this strategy and who we work in partnership with to make Derry & Strabane a great place to grow older!

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Andrew Patton</b>       | Mighty Oaks                              |
| <b>Karen Scrivens</b>      | Mighty Oaks                              |
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| <b>Rose McCormick</b>      | Mighty Oaks                              |
| <b>Siobhan Sweeney</b>     | Public Health Agency                     |
| <b>Shauna Houston</b>      | Derry Healthy Cities                     |
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| <b>Seamus Donaghy</b>      | Derry City and Strabane District Council |
| <b>Joanna Boyd</b>         | Derry City and Strabane District Council |
| <b>Gerry Deeny</b>         | NIHE                                     |
| <b>Dubheasa Gallagher</b>  | Alzheimer's Society                      |
| <b>Kay Devine</b>          | Health and Social Care Board             |
| <b>Majella Magee</b>       | Western Health & Social Care Trust       |
| <b>Marirose Cunningham</b> | North West Volunteer Centre              |
| <b>Richard McClelland</b>  | PSNI                                     |
| <b>Terry Butler</b>        | Translink                                |
| <b>Sabrina Lynch</b>       | Old Library Trust                        |
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Registered with The Charity Commission  
for Northern Ireland NIC101856