

A photograph of four people walking on a construction site. From left to right: a woman in a white shirt and light trousers, an older man in a light blue shirt and jeans with a backpack, a woman in a black patterned top and dark trousers, and a man in a white shirt, tie, and light-colored vest. They are walking on a concrete path with steel structures in the background.

Age Friendly Bristol

Evaluation of a vision for the city

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Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
1. Introduction	5
2. The Age Friendly Agenda in Context.....	5
2.1 Cities and ageing populations	5
2.2 Creating a model for age friendly cities	6
2.3 The WHO Global Network for Age Friendly Cities and Communities.....	7
2.4 The UK Network of Age Friendly Communities	7
2.5 Leadership and Age Friendly Cities	8
2.6 Covid 19 – strengthening the case for Age Friendly Cities	8
3. Bristol as an Age Friendly City.....	9
3.1 Social change and political influence in Bristol.....	9
3.2 The role of the Bristol Ageing Better (BAB) Programme	10
3.3 BAB’s governance structure for age friendly work	10
3.4 Mapping the age friendly agenda in Bristol.....	11
5. Understanding Age Friendly Bristol in national context	16
5.1 Structure and governance of Bristol compared to other areas.....	16
5.2 The influence of Bristol Ageing Better’s age friendly work in national context	16
5.3 Putting Bristol in context: Understanding the importance of third sector action on the age friendly agenda	19
5.3.1 TSOs taking on a strategic mission.....	19
5.3.2 TSOs interpreting the WHO framework.....	20
5.3.3 TSOs building links between strategic agendas	20
5.3.4 TSOs supporting the voice of older people.....	20
5.3.5 TSOs keeping the age friendly agenda alive through austerity and change.....	20
5.3.6 TSOs finding synergies on funding and delivery with local authorities	21
5.3.7 TSOs bringing new ways of working through the National Lottery	21
5.3.8 TSOs maintaining engagement over time.....	22
5.3.9 TSOs and local government staff career connections	23
6. Conclusion.....	23
References	23

Executive Summary

In the past decade, the age-friendly city agenda has grown rapidly as an international movement, with increasingly diverse trajectories of development. According to the World Health Organisation, an age-friendly city and community is one in which policies, services, and structures related to the physical and social environment are designed to support and enable older people to “age actively” – that is, to live in security, enjoy good health, and continue to participate fully in society.

In 2018 Bristol became the 705th member of the World Health Organisation’s Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. This was followed in 2022 by the launch of the Age-friendly Bristol Action Plan and 'Rebuilding a City for All Ages - a Strategy for an Age-friendly Bristol': documents that set the scene for future age-friendly action in the city.

This evaluation report explores the development and implementation of the age-friendly city agenda in Bristol and shows Bristol’s leadership and links to the wider age-friendly movement in England.

The Bristol Ageing Better (BAB) partnership, set up by Age UK Bristol, led work to build the case for Bristol to adopt a city-wide age-friendly strategy and plan of action. BAB was funded by the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF) between 2015 and 2022, primarily with a focus on tackling social isolation and loneliness among older people, and set up the Bristol Ageing Better programme to take work forwards in collaboration with other local voluntary and statutory sector organisations. Comprising of a partnership of some 150 organisations, the age-friendly city agenda established by BAB was both a way to align the priorities and learning from organisations working in health and equalities, and a lens to identify opportunities to address the systemic factors that drive isolation and loneliness.

To develop the application for WHO age-friendly network membership status, the BAB team engaged in an extensive consultation and co-production exercise with older people across the city to develop a charter for age-friendly Bristol in 2017, and an age-friendly baseline and strategy in 2018.

The results of this engagement process directly informed the vision for an age-friendly city and the priorities for action in 2022. Owing to some extension funding from the NLCF in 2020 and 2021, BAB was able to develop a second iteration of its strategy and an accompanying action plan in 2022, with clear commitments to age-friendly streams of work and approaches to service delivery from public, private and third sector parties. This also allowed for the extensive learning and evaluation from the Bristol Ageing Better programme to be reflected in the local context set out in the new strategy, and for a recognition of the changes brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic.

A notable achievement of BAB has been that it convened a large number of community and voluntary sector organisations to help develop the strategy and action plan. This has included specific areas of project work with Bristol Older People’s Forum on transport and housing

During the course of this work, the BAB team have developed toolkits to help promote engagement from local businesses and at a neighbourhood level.

Over the course of the age-friendly work there have been changes in mayoral leadership and the composition of councillor members in the council. Under the elected Mayor Marvin Rees, the council has led the development of the One City Plan, an extensive process to create a unified vision for long-term priorities. Alongside other local governance changes, as well as changes to health service commissioning and the creation of the West of England Combined Authority in 2017, the BAB team have succeeded in maintaining a recognition of the need for a city focus on age-friendly issues.

Through exposing inequalities faced by older people alongside a rise in voluntary action in communities, the pandemic has propelled forward the case for creating age-friendly neighbourhoods.

Put into national context, Bristol stands out in the key role that third sector agencies have played in developing the age-friendly agenda in the city. It is one of a small number of areas where the application to become a member of the WHO network has been developed by a third sector-led partnership.

Age-friendly work in Bristol is well regarded by other age-friendly experts nationally. From the perspective of other areas, age-friendly work in Bristol is described as 'passionate', 'driven', 'mature', 'strategic', 'well run' and 'strongly engaged' with the interests of older people in the city.

Specific initiatives from Bristol that have been influential nationally include:

- Innovative methods for running consultation forums
- Organising a very large and diverse voluntary sector partnership
- Informing priorities and services through peer research
- Training on positive ageing and ageism
- City-wide communications through an older people's radio show
- Organising small grant schemes
- Adapting social prescribing models for older people's interests

Bristol provides a case study for how third sector agencies can provide a vital role in driving the age-friendly agenda forward. Working with local government and other stakeholders, the BAB partnership illustrates several ways of working that help make third sector action successful in this space. These include third sector agencies

- going beyond their specific remit to take a civic mission for the broad age-friendly mission
 - interpreting the WHO age-friendly framework to make it fit local needs and priorities for action
 - making connections with other strategic and thematic agendas, such as dementia-friendly cities and neighbourhood development
 - supporting and advocating for the voice of older people
 - keeping the age-friendly agenda alive during periods of austerity and change
 - finding synergies for funding and delivery with the local authority
 - introducing voluntary sector styles of working, such as coproduction and 'test and learn' approaches
- building on local expertise developed over long periods of practice

1. Introduction

In the past decade, the Age-friendly City and Community (AFCC) agenda has grown rapidly as an international movement, with increasingly diverse trajectories of development. An age-friendly city and community is one in which policies, services, and structures related to the physical and social environment are designed to support and enable older people to “age actively” – that is, to live in security, enjoy good health, and continue to participate fully in society (World Health Organization 2007).

In this report we focus on the development of age-friendly work in Bristol between 2015 and 2022 and the successful application of Bristol to the World Health Organization’s Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities. During this period a Bristol partnership had received funding from the National Lottery Community Fund to run the programme Bristol Ageing Better, included in its programme framework a significant focus on strategic age-friendly work across the city.

To better understand Bristol’s age-friendly work in national context, we undertook interviews and focus group work with members of the UK Network of Age-friendly Communities. This network is supported by the Centre for Ageing Better to facilitate a community of practice platform for local areas to share successful approaches and discuss new ideas. We explored points of influence and comparison between Bristol and selected other areas in England¹.

2. The Age-friendly Agenda in Context

2.1 Cities and ageing populations

It is estimated that by 2050, two billion of the world’s population will be aged 60 or over (WHO, 2021), thanks in large part to our increasing ability to maintain good physical health well into older age (Kirkwood, 2017). But whilst being physically healthy is obviously beneficial in maintaining independence and continuing with daily activities, it is also well known that there are additional wider determinants and socio-ecological factors that can influence an individual’s quality of life for better or for worse (Dahlgren and Whitehead, 2021; Barton and Grant, 2006).

These factors can of course affect a person’s health and wellbeing at any age, but as we get older, we tend to become increasingly reliant on public and community services such as health and social care, transport, and housing, making good local infrastructure an equal priority for leading a happy and healthy life. In addition to this, older people have an increasing need to stay connected to others through digital technology, something which became more apparent during the Covid-19 pandemic. This requires individuals to not only have access to the right equipment, but also to be given the opportunity to develop knowledge in how to use it with confidence.

On a psychosocial level there are also significant considerations for older people related to personal wellbeing, including self-esteem, resilience, and maintaining a sense of belonging and purpose. Sustaining a sense of usefulness and being able to contribute to society in a meaningful way remains very important to people well beyond retirement age. Low self-worth can in turn affect an older person’s ability to stay connected to others, and limited access to resources or activities associated with these needs can potentially lead to social isolation and loneliness in later life.

¹ Alongside document analysis UWE’s research is based on multiple interviews with six members of the Bristol Ageing Better (BAB) team, four members of the BAB management group; 22 interviews and focus group events with members of the Network of Age-friendly Communities.

An additional consideration is that as people live longer, many increasingly express a preference for 'ageing in place', a term which describes the desire for people to remain living in their own homes and within their local communities for as long as is practicably possible. However, to do so successfully is somewhat dependent on there being good levels of community support and local services available, something which is often simply not the case (Jeste et al., 2016). In short, older people's health and wellbeing is shaped and influenced by multiple factors, from the built environment and local infrastructure to personal relationships, access to services, local community assets and even broader societal attitudes on ageing.

As a result, in recent years the focus of strategies for ageing well has moved towards creating more age-friendly human ecosystems that can address these issues across all aspects of life (Fulmer et al., 2020). The World Health Organisation (WHO) has responded to this by cultivating new approaches that encourage 'healthy ageing', and over the years this has developed into a global movement, the origins of which can be traced back to a UN resolution adopted by member states in the early 1990s (WHO, 1991). It is on these principles that the WHO's current Global Network of Age-friendly Cities is based.

2.2 Creating a model for age friendly cities

Age-friendly cities are based on holistic models in which it is acknowledged that all aspects of our human ecosystems interact to affect health and wellbeing, for good or for bad. These are referred to as socio-ecological models of health, as illustrated in Barton and Grant's 2006 Health Map (Figure 1).

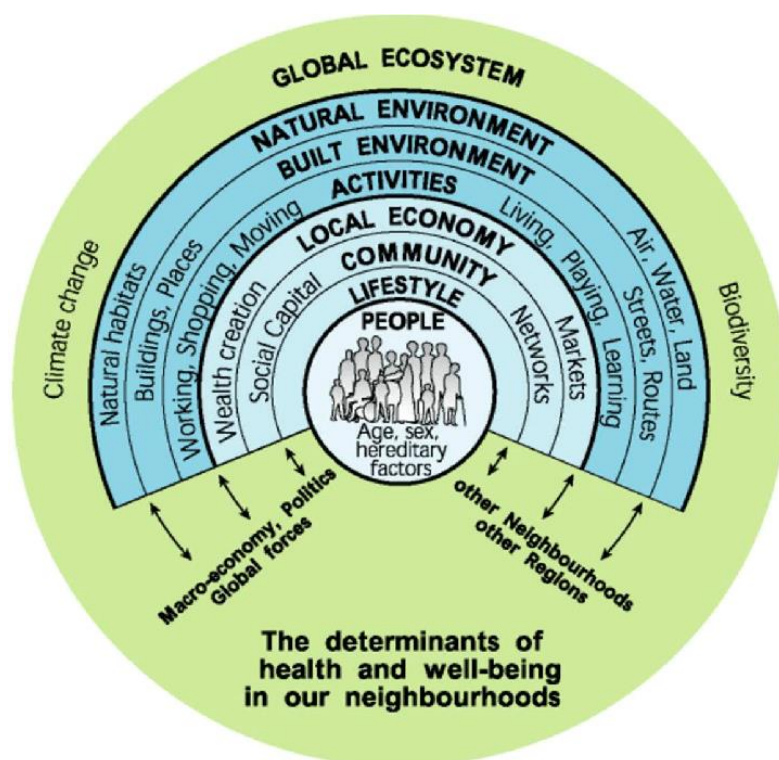


Figure 1 - 'The Health Map' (Barton and Grant, 2006)

What this model demonstrates so well is the concept that when social and political functions are effective and working in a person's favour, the conditions for a healthy and happy life can be more easily achieved; however, if such systems are not well established or are lacking, this can be detrimental to human health and wellbeing. This is the premise on which AFCs are founded, as these models aim to address and improve 'all aspects of the natural, built and social environment' for older people (Jeste et al., 2016; p.1159).

Furthermore, AFCs are not just beneficial for older people; it is known, for example, that people over 50 contribute significantly to the economy in terms of employment, informal caring arrangements, childcare and volunteering – in 2016/7 this amounted to £796 bn (Iparraguire, 2017). It is argued therefore that it is within *everyone's* interests to create and support AFCs: 'AFC initiatives have been launched with the aim of promoting physical and psychosocial wellbeing of older residents and improving the quality of life of the entire community.' (Jeste et al., 2016; p.1159)

However, research suggests that levels of age-friendliness can vary greatly from place to place, and where there are lower levels there is also a decreased sense of wellbeing amongst older people (Nieboer and Cramm, 2018). It is therefore important that communities actively address the unmet needs of older people whilst also creating and improving physical infrastructure, opportunities for social engagement, volunteering activities, and paid employment for older residents (Golant, 2016).

2.3 The WHO Global Network for Age Friendly Cities and Communities

The WHO Global Network for Age Friendly Cities and Communities (AFCC) was first established in 2010, with the aim of "connecting cities, communities and organizations worldwide with the common vision of making their community a great place to grow old in" (WHO, 2022). The AFCC approach recognises the challenges that are faced by ageing populations and focuses on local level solutions that seek to address the myriad of issues that might be experienced in later life.

As such, the WHO AFC approach identifies eight 'interconnected domains' on which AFC work should be based (WHO 2022). These are:

1. Community support and health services
2. Transport
3. Housing
4. Social participation
5. Outdoor spaces and buildings
6. Respect and social inclusion
7. Civic participation and employment
8. Communication and information

The term 'interconnected' is particularly important in this context, as there is rarely a clear delineation between each domain and they frequently intersect, interact, or overlap (WHO, 2022). This, coupled with the fact that we know that there is an increasing desire for older people to grow old within their own communities, requires decision makers to make a paradigm shift in how they think about ageing. Strategies are therefore moving away from individual-level interventions towards more holistic community-based approaches (Jeste et al., 2016).

The overarching aim of the AFCC network is to create a more age-friendly world by inviting cities and communities to apply for recognised AFCC membership. In doing so a global group with a common cause has been established, consisting of city or community partnerships of people and organisations who are interested in finding evidence-based solutions to making communities more age-friendly. It is also worth noting that cities and communities do not join the network to gain age-friendly status, as the path to age friendliness is seen as an ongoing process rather than an endpoint. At the time of writing, 1,333 cities and communities in 47 countries worldwide are members of this network (WHO, 2022).

2.4 The UK Network of Age-friendly Communities

Within the UK many cities and communities have engaged in work to create age-friendly environments. Over 50 areas have joined the UK Network of Age-friendly Communities (UKNAFC), a group that is closely affiliated with the WHO global network and consists of cities and communities

that are already members, as well as those that are striving to join the global network in the future. This network is led and coordinated by the Centre for Ageing Better.

The purpose of the UK Network is to help drive the age-friendly agenda in the UK by sharing information and maintaining links with researchers; collecting and sharing evidence on what works; peer support and collaboration; and developing age-friendly policies at local, national and international levels (Rémillard-Boilard, 2018). To this end, the UKNAFC provides members with the opportunity to attend a range of regular meetings, workshops, events, and conferences throughout the year (Centre for Ageing Better UK, 2022).

2.5 Leadership and Age-friendly Cities

The WHO (2007) takes a community development approach to the development of AFCs, and as such the emphasis for leading such initiatives often falls to local government, members of the community, elected officials, advisory groups or steering committees, community groups or not-for-profit organisations (cited in Menec and Brown, 2018). It is a combination of these different individuals and organisations that coordinate the AFC strategy, and leadership and responsibility can shift over time as priorities change or individuals move on to other roles.

The cities and communities involved in the UK Network are no exception to this somewhat uneven approach to leadership, although whilst some are led by individuals and organisations from within the third sector, the majority are firmly embedded within local authorities. For those led by the third sector, the extent to which there is buy-in to the AFC agenda from the local authority or public health teams also varies from place to place. This is particularly important as it has been previously noted that without this buy-in, moving the AFC agenda forward is challenging, and support from the city, town or county's leadership is a necessary part of the AFC application process (Menec and Brown, 2018).

2.6 Covid 19 – strengthening the case for Age-friendly Cities

Whilst creating an AFC was high on agenda in Bristol before the start of the Covid 19 pandemic in March 2020, there is little doubt that the lockdowns and multiple levels of restrictions that were subsequently implemented had a major impact on how the work progressed, at least in the short term. However, the greatest impact was undoubtedly on older people themselves, who as a group were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic (Buffel et al., 2021).

For many, lockdown restrictions only served to exacerbate existing vulnerabilities and their susceptibility to loneliness and social isolation, as during this time many older people were advised to isolate due to the increased risks associated with the virus and older age (Mueller, McNamara and Sinclair, 2020). This in turn disrupted their routines and minimised opportunities for contact with others outside of the home. For some older people who had been actively engaged in activities in the community this was a cruel blow that had the potential to be both upsetting and stressful for those affected (Allison et al., 2021).

The pandemic also highlighted existing and increasing ageism (Fraser et al., 2020) as well as stark inequalities in the support and facilities available to older people, particularly in urban environments (Buffel et al. 2021). These inequalities, it has been argued, have led to many older people experiencing a 'double lockdown' associated with social distancing restrictions and social and spatial inequalities (the loss of community assets and services, for example), particularly for those living in lower socio-economic areas (ibid).

However, it can also be argued that now these factors have been exposed, there is an even stronger case than ever to ensure that recovery strategies are focused on building age-friendly neighbourhoods. As Buffel et al. point out, the pandemic may be the perfect opportunity to 'engage

in a radical rethink about the future shape of cities and communities' (Buffel et al. 2021, p.8) as part of the wider 'Build Back Fairer' agenda for reducing health inequalities in the aftermath of the pandemic (Marmot, 2021).

3. Bristol as an Age-friendly City

3.1 Social change and political influence in Bristol

Although the wider context and events influencing the age-friendly agenda in Bristol have been well documented elsewhere (Mackintosh, Jones and Beardmore, 2021), it is beneficial to briefly summarise the background to the BAB programme and the subsequent increased awareness of the age-friendly agenda in the city here. This is relevant as even prior to the programme being established in 2015, several factors influenced the organisational structure of BAB, and ultimately where responsibility for taking forward the age-friendly agenda in the city would ultimately lie locally. Of equal importance is that the evolution of age-friendly policies and structures varies greatly from region to region, therefore understanding local influencing factors is crucial to assessing barriers and facilitators to age-friendliness.

Bristol is a vibrant city in the south west of England with a relatively young age profile, a rising birth rate and good employment opportunities (Mackintosh, Jones and Beardmore, 2021). However, with rapid economic growth and a younger population comes high demand for housing which can lead to an increase in house prices and social and demographic change. For some older residents who have lived in the city for a long time this has contributed to a sense of disconnection from their surroundings, and in some cases a loss of local assets and services. As a result, many older people have found themselves 'priced out' of their local communities, living on lower incomes, sometimes isolated, and often surrounded by poor infrastructure (ibid).

Nationally, the 2010s saw a period of austerity and significant political and social change, all of which contributed to changing attitudes towards ageing and the kind of provisions that could and should be made available to support an ageing population (Mackintosh, Jones and Beardmore, 2021). Perhaps most significantly, following the formation of the Coalition government in 2010 numerous cutbacks were made to local authority (LA) services (despite significant effort being made to put power back into LA hands) with funding for services greatly reduced as a result (ibid). Within a Bristol context this meant that whilst a move towards local decision making initially saw the establishment of Neighbourhood Partnership areas – a positive step and the model on which many BAB activities were initially based – the scope of these areas was later significantly reduced in response to wider cuts to funding, and the programme had to adapt accordingly.

Another significant change to the local political environment came with the introduction of the role of an elected City Mayor in 2012 following a central government policy for local voters to choose elected mayors in selected cities. This addition has been particularly influential on the BAB programme at a political level and broadly speaking there has been good support for BAB from within City Office ever since the first mayoral elections, which has contributed to the success of the age-friendly agenda in the city. Having solid political backing from the mayor and the LA resulted in council staff being invested in the BAB programme from the outset (Mackintosh, Jones and Beardmore, 2021).

With the election of Mayor Marvin Rees in 2016 came a renewed focus on younger people and families, but the mayor has remained invested in the age-friendly agenda and over the years BAB has been able to provide input on ageing policy in the city which has been included in the One City Plan. However, despite ongoing political support, keeping older people high on the agenda of the

City Office remains a challenge amid the multitude of additional priorities faced in a city as large and diverse as Bristol.

3.2 The role of the Bristol Ageing Better (BAB) Programme

Established in 2015 and funded initially for five years (later extended into a sixth year), BAB was a partnership of organisations led by Age UK Bristol and funded by the National Lottery Community Fund to the sum of £6 million as part of the Fulfilling Lives: Ageing Better programme. Partners on the BAB programme included some 150 organisations from across Bristol's voluntary, statutory and commercial sectors, some of whom were working directly with older people, whilst others had a wider remit (BAB, 2022).

BAB's aim was to directly address issues associated with loneliness and social isolation amongst older people in the city through a range of activities, using a 'test and learn' approach which allowed the programme to be both experimental and exploratory in its scope. In doing so, the programme promised to 'deliver effective services, share their knowledge of what works, and be noticed by the people who matter' (Age UK Bristol, 2022). This included the development of a small grants scheme to fund activities for and by older people, community development projects in specific geographical areas and for specific communities, social prescribing and mental health and wellbeing services, as well as care home and intergenerational activities.

The BAB programme and its activities were evaluated by a team of researchers at The University of the West of England (UWE Bristol) in partnership with a group of peer Community Researchers (CRs), all of whom lived locally and were over the age of 50 themselves. The evaluation reports for these activities and services can be found online in BAB's [Evaluation and Learning Hub](#). Although the BAB programme is now complete, Age UK Bristol continues to use the learning from the programme to advocate for age-friendly policies and infrastructure in the city.

3.3 BAB's governance structure for age friendly work

Although well supported politically and with buy-in from the local authority, BAB's work was led by Age UK Bristol, a local and independent charity focused on working with older people in the city.

BAB began life as a small group of people and organisations who came together from across the city to focus on creating the original funding bid. The National Lottery required the initial phases of the bid to be led by local authorities. The original group that created the bid was led by a Programme Manager in Bristol City Council's Adult Social Care service and included the CEO of Age UK Bristol, a local consultant with extensive knowledge of older people's issues, and a representative from Bristol Older People's Forum. As the team drew closer to securing the funding from the National Lottery Community Fund, the organisation that would later become known as BAB grew into a citywide partnership of organisations and community representatives, and Age UK Bristol was officially elected by the voluntary sector as the host for the programme's ongoing commissioning and management. An informal steering group was subsequently established, and a Programme Board created to further develop the funding bid.

To reflect the diverse make-up of Bristol's voluntary sector, Age UK Bristol's intention was for BAB to deliver very little of the project 'in house' and as such much of the work was commissioned out to local partners, taking a whole system approach. Bristol has historically always had a strong third sector (of which Age UK Bristol is part) and although there was an official commissioning process for the work, a collaborative approach was taken and organisations encouraged to bid for the work in partnership with others locally. This collaborative approach is something which stayed at the heart of BAB's ethos, from its inception until its recent closure in March 2022.

When the city applied to join the WHO Age-friendly Cities and Communities network in 2018 they were only the second organisation to apply who were not led by a local authority. It has been suggested that applicants who are led by a mayor and a local authority tend to have easier access to funds in order to further the agenda; however, for those outside of City Office this becomes more of a challenge. As a result of this structure and by being external to the council, BAB found it needed to take on more of a lobbying role to access similar levels of support and funding.²

I think it works because it gives us an opportunity to lobby and that I think, is the thing that I like [...] that the idea of using this to evolve and inform the council and to change their opinions is attractive and it works well for us. I think it may have been different if you if you were running the programme slightly differently [...] But the idea for us is that we use this as a vehicle so actually we can say to adult social care, how are you making adult social care in Bristol more age-friendly? And we can use those domains, we can use the examples that we got from other areas of the city and put the pressure on and then actually start to have that dialogue. First BAB Programme Manager, August 2018³

We're talking about the strategic elements of systems change, because this isn't about getting a rosette and calling yourself a lovely, friendly city. This is about continuously striving to make sure that all the people are considered when you're making decisions about the infrastructure of your city. First BAB Programme Manager, August 2018

The result of an election can have an impact on the future of city projects such as age-friendly, either because a completely new mayor and administration is elected - perhaps with some very different ideas for the future of the city - or because a mayor is re-elected on a revised manifesto. The BAB programme took place during the term of two different mayors, and as such a significant task for the BAB programme was maintaining buy-in from the council and City Office amid these differing priorities.

3.4 Mapping the age-friendly agenda in Bristol

Work began on developing an age-friendly agenda for Bristol from BAB's inception in 2015, and over the years BAB held various events and produced multiple publications with an age-friendly focus (a timeline for which can be viewed in Figure 4).

The original idea for applying to become a WHO age-friendly city came from close associations between a consultant who had been part of the original BAB bid and a public health lead who was working on the ageing agenda in Manchester City Council. However, the work was ultimately led by an age-friendly lead appointed by Age UK Bristol.²

In October 2015, BAB hosted its first Age-friendly conference in the city which aimed to bring together a range of individuals and organisations to discuss issues affecting older people, and to develop possible solutions and ideas for how they might be taken forward. This event was structured around the WHO's eight domains, and participants – many of whom were older residents living in Bristol – were able to contribute to discussions and give their views on specific issues (BAB, 2022).

One of the first age friendly documents produced by BAB was the 'Charter for an Age-friendly Bristol', a document launched by the Deputy Mayor at the Central Library on 21st June 2017. Working with partner organisations and older people and drawing on information gathered through a series of surveys and focus groups, the charter lays out nine visions that could make Bristol an age-

² First BAB Programme Manager, November 2019

³ First BAB Programme Manager, August 2018

friendly city (Figure 3). Whilst Bristol-specific, these visions are also based on the WHO's eight domains.

Inviting the Deputy Mayor to the launch of the charter proved to be a very successful way to ensure that there was good buy-in from City Office. Indeed, it was at this event that the Deputy Mayor confirmed that Mayor Rees would commit to signing the letter of support for the application to become a WHO AFC. This commitment also raised BAB's profile within the council and led to BAB having direct access to council officers who would later be key players in supporting the age-friendly agenda.³

Following publication of the charter, in the summer of 2018 two consultation events were held, one with a focus on transport, the other on housing. These were interactive, workshop-style events at which older people were able to have their say on the future of transport and housing in the city. Barriers, things that were already working well, and possible ways forward were all identified (Table 1), and the outcomes and learning from these events fed into the first iteration of Bristol's Age-friendly Strategy (2018-2022).

Older people were always at the heart of the BAB programme, and the then Age-friendly Project Worker conducted ten formal focus groups with 125 older people across the city prior to the submission of Bristol's AFC application. These focus groups again explored the eight domains, as well as specific issues and concerns for older people living locally. From these discussions priorities were identified that would become the key messages for inclusion in Bristol's Charter for an Age-friendly Bristol and the 2018 strategy.⁴

Figure 2 - Nine visions for an Age friendly Bristol, taken from A Charter for an Age friendly Bristol, 2017

Nine Visions for an Age friendly Bristol, 2017

- Older people in Bristol have access to all available forms of transport and are confident in getting around the city.
- Older people in Bristol have accommodation that meets their needs.
- Older people in Bristol feel heard and have a say in decision making on things that affect their lives.
- Older people in Bristol can access the work and volunteering opportunities that they want.
- Older people in Bristol can access available activities when and where they want.
- Older people in Bristol can access outdoor spaces and buildings that meet their needs.
- Older people in Bristol are connected to their local community; they are respected and included in society.
- Older people in Bristol are able to stay connected and can access relevant information that they require.
- Older people in Bristol have access to appropriate health, social care and wellbeing services.

⁴ Second BAB Programme Manager, August 2018

Table 1- Possible Ways Forward for Bristol's Housing and Transport. Consultation Events, 2018

What are some possible ways forward for housing and transport in Bristol? (2018)	
Transport	Housing
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Improve the transport information available 2. Age-friendly training for those who interact with customers 3. Improve the infrastructure of bus stops, benches and toilets 4. Joined up working among community transport providers 5. Extend the free older person's bus pass before 9am 6. Support older drivers to feel more confident when driving 7. Improve the accessibility of pavements 8. Improve the cycling infrastructure further 9. Match volunteer drivers with individuals who need transport 10. Improve the availability and awareness of safe journey cards 11. Encourage a change in travel etiquette 12. Maximise the use of minibuses 13. Introduce an age-friendly standard for taxi companies 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Having a 'one-stop-shop' where older people can talk about their housing options 2. Encouraging older people to think about their housing options before they need to 3. Challenging stereotypes and creating a cultural shift in housing attitudes 4. Developing a shared vocabulary 5. Training for staff and volunteers in supported housing settings 6. Facilitating supported housing residents to support each other 7. Improving the home adaptation process 8. Undertaking further research

In November 2018 the city's application to join the WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities was accepted, making Bristol the 705th member to join the network. To join the network, applicants must write a baseline assessment for the city of community in question and devise a strategy that addresses age-friendliness within the context of the eight domains.

The WHO application also requires written support from the mayor, outlining the community's commitment to becoming age-friendly (Menec and Brown, 2018). Such a letter was written and signed by Mayor Marvin Rees and is included in the inaugural Age-friendly Strategy document. Most recently, age-friendly objectives have been directly included in the Council's One City Plan – a long-term strategic document for improving the city between now and 2050 (Bristol City Council, 2021). These are reflected in the Age-friendly Bristol Action Plan (2022) that represents a major achievement in terms of setting out responsibilities for action across the city council, community and voluntary sector, academic and business communities, and the West of England Combined Authority.

Since the launch of the 2022 strategy and action plan, Age UK Bristol has led a number of pieces of work included in the action plan. These include:

- Delivering age-friendly workshops for the West of England Combined Authority, focusing on age-inclusive work culture, recruitment and retention of older workers, and supporting workers to plan for the future, as well as providing an age-friendly lens to the combined authority's Good Employment Charter
- Coordinating an Age-friendly Communication & Information Action Group, a group of older residents who have been helping to make information from Age UK Bristol, the NHS, Bristol

City Council and others more accessible and inclusive. The group has also co-created easy-read guides to services and IT courses and drop-ins, and advised local media platforms on representation and age-friendly language and imagery

- Co-facilitating monthly Challenging Ageism workshops with Bristol Older People’s Forum, to raise awareness of ageism and age inequality among professionals working with older people
- Creating resources – including some in commonly-spoken foreign languages – for distribution at information points and by volunteers at the autumn Covid-19 vaccine booster clinics
- Working with Bristol City Council to improve waste services – providing guidance on age-friendly communications about recycling and waste collection, and exploring options to improve infrastructure for blind and partially sighted people

Since the BAB programme completed in March 2022, the NLCF have continued to fund a ‘Good Practice Mentor’ post at Age UK Bristol to deliver the above work as well as sharing learning from the Bristol Ageing Better programme with public and VCSE sector commissioners and delivery partners, and supporting age-friendly work in neighbouring local authorities. This includes collaborating with Voluntary Action North Somerset on their inaugural event to secure political commitment and begin work on an application for WHO membership.

A further VCSE development influenced by the legacy of the BAB programme is the formation of the Bristol Ageing Better Alliance (BABA), a collaboration between six organisations (initiated by Age UK Bristol) which have been working strategically together since the formation of the Support Hub for Older People at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic. The alliance is developing its own strategy based on age-friendly principles, and forming closer links between the member organisations’ services as well as exploring possibilities for future joint working, sharing good practice locally and with academic institutions. BABA members are currently working collaboratively on two key challenges where it is hoped that a practical response will also further inform its strategic work. The two areas of focus are hospital discharge support and our response to the cost of living crisis. The aim is to bring the combined experience of each BABA member to bear on these challenges, working co-operatively to ensure a strong response from the voluntary sector for older people.

In addition, large-scale political changes affecting the commissioning of health and social care have highlighted the need for the application of a local age-friendly framework. The transition from Clinical Commissioning Groups to Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) has prompted both changes to NHS priorities and local decision-making, at the same time as new investment in pilot projects to identify successful approaches to ‘ageing well’ under three pillars: urgent community response, enhanced health in care homes, and anticipatory care. The latter is focused on avoiding health crises; meeting the needs of older people with long-term health conditions earlier, and providing community-led support where appropriate. Not only is the learning from local Ageing Better programmes relevant, but applying the age-friendly lens highlights the intersection of socio-economical factors such as housing, social contact, poverty and the built environment in determining levels of health and social care need. There will be an ongoing role for voluntary sector organisations not only to deliver community programmes to address health inequalities, but to bring learning from age-friendly models to cross-sector working groups identifying key priorities for Integrated Care commissioning and delivery, either through the Integrated Care Board or the various Locality Partnerships in the area.

Figure 3 - Timeline of Key Age Friendly Events and Publications

2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch of the Bristol Ageing Better programme • Age friendly conference held
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Evaluating Age friendly Bristol: Proposed Way Forward' UWE document published
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Charter for an Age friendly Bristol' published
2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age friendly Homes and Age friendly Transport consultation events held with older people • Bristol becomes the 705th member of the WHO's Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age friendly Neighbourhood and Age friendly Businesses Toolkits published
2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covid 19 pandemic; lockdowns and restrictions begin. • 'Supporting older customers during Covid-19' business guide published • UK AFC Network meetings move online
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Towards an Age friendly Bristol?' UWE report published • A Strategy for an Age-friendly Bristol 2018-2022 produced
2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of the Age-friendly Bristol Action Plan and 'Rebuilding a City for All Ages - a Strategy for an Age friendly Bristol'

5. Understanding Age-friendly Bristol in national context

5.1 Structure and governance of Bristol compared to other areas

This section presents findings on how BAB's AFC work fits into the wider context of work in this area across England. It draws comparisons between Bristol and other places and shows the influence that Bristol's approach has had elsewhere.

Areas seeking to become more age-friendly have all embarked on journeys unique to their specific geographical contexts. Nevertheless, Bristol's situation has some similarities with other members of the age-friendly network in terms of the highly active role of community and voluntary agencies. The National Lottery's Ageing Better programme provided a strong stimulus to many of the fourteen grant holding areas to develop an application to the WHO network. With funding directed primarily towards third sector agencies it was not surprising that much of the capacity to develop applications came from these agencies. This pattern is set out in the table below that shows the governance structures of the areas we used to compare with developments in Bristol. While activity in areas such as Isle of Wight and Sheffield were largely third sector-led, other areas such as Greater Manchester have had longer term leadership through local government, specifically teams working in public health. Other areas have a more complex history, for example local authority leadership in Newcastle has fluctuated with the changing fortunes of local politics and funding streams. While the formal commitment of local government leaders is needed for an age-friendly application to the WHO, it was notable that this sample of UK member areas all had ongoing third sector involvement even where this was not immediately visible in publicity. This involvement appears to be widespread, as one member of the Centre for Ageing Better stated:

I think it could be as much as 50%, where most of the impetus came from the charitable sector and then and then it was sort of a ritual act to rope in support from the local authority. [CfAB1]

5.2 The influence of Bristol Ageing Better's age-friendly work in national context

The feedback through interviews and focus group with national network members on age-friendly work in Bristol was highly positive. From the perspective of other area leads, age-friendly work in Bristol is described as 'passionate, 'driven', 'mature', 'strategic', 'well run' and 'strongly engaged' with the interests of older people in the city.

Bristol has been quite strategic in its approach. For Bristol, it's not just about doing stuff. It's about making sure that the stuff that you do matters. [Newcastle]

Bristol's large public forums have been exciting to watch. [Isle of Wight]

Specific initiatives from Bristol that have been influential nationally include:

- Methods for running consultation forums
- A very large and diverse voluntary sector partnership
- Peer research
- Training on positive ageing and ageism
- Older people's radio show
- Small grant schemes
- Adapting social prescribing models for older people's interests

Table 2. Summary of the comparator areas

Area	Population	Year joined WHO network	Governance structure	Additional notes/points of interest
Brighton & Hove	290,395	2013	Led by a senior public health manager, supported by a multi-agency steering group of council staff, key local agencies and older people's groups'	Focus on positive ageing rather than crisis prevention Focusing on challenges of an ageing population. One of the first members of the network.
Hackney	280,000	2020	Coordinated through policy and strategic delivery division of the local authority, with older person's panel and voluntary sector representation body. Mayor appointed a councillor as Mayoral Adviser for Older People Part of the National Lottery Ageing Better programme	Hackney Older Citizens: 'creating focused working groups around communities of interest. Bringing in partners and older people's groups along those working groups to work on commitments by domain area instead of a large steering group that does everything.' Origins in older people and housing agenda
Isle of Wight	139,000	2016	Project worker employed by Age UK Isle of Wight and later partially seconded to the Council. Part of the National Lottery Ageing Better programme.	Implementing an internal age-friendly employment action plan (to benefit older workers at IOW Council) based on CFAB's toolkit for age-friendly employers Have created training, toolkits and clearly applicable models for use by businesses and public/health sector, including Age-friendly training (completed by all drivers on the island's main public bus service), Age-Friendly GP Surgeries toolkit and the introduction of a 'time for you' age-friendly till at a large branch of Tesco on the island.
Liverpool City Region	906,400	2020	Led by Liverpool City Region combined authority	Working on a digital strategy for the region as part of the economic recovery from COVID. Held age-friendly focus groups (recruited through 8 VCSE organisations operating in the region) to inform the region's Spatial Development Strategy Within the region, Liverpool joined the network in 2014 and also has a project workers and age-friendly strategy based at the council, and Sefton joined in 2018 and has a project worker based at a voluntary organisation.

Manchester City and Greater Manchester Combined Authority	2750000 [553,230]	2010	<p>City-level work led through a population health team in Manchester City Council working with partners across neighbouring councils.</p> <p>Overseen by a steering group and advised by the Age-friendly Manchester Older People's Board</p> <p>Long history of an Age-friendly Manchester assembly with CVS representation which has met every 2 months since 2004</p> <p>Greater Manchester also hosts a programme funded by the National Lottery Ageing Better programme, titled Ambition for Ageing and delivered by infrastructure organisation GMCVO. This is aligned with the age-friendly priorities set out before the Ageing Better programme, and has funding until March 2023 to deliver three age-friendly projects.</p>	<p>Created an Age-Friendly Equalities Impact Assessment for use by local government workers to ensure services and strategic planning does not pose barriers for older people</p> <p>Also awarded over 50 community groups with awards as part of Agefriendly Neighbourhoods Network run by the council</p> <p>Currently implementing its second 10-year action plan (first on which was published 2017)</p> <p>Since the Greater Manchester Combined Authority has become a member of the WHO network in 2018, can influence larger scale infrastructure such as transport and housing.</p>
Newcastle	453,500	2014	<p>Lead based in a voluntary sector (the Elders Council), which is comparable in structure and purpose to Bristol Older People's Forum.</p> <p>Initial impetus through a cabinet councillor with responsibility for the ageing portfolio, but subsequently transferred over the voluntary sector for leadership (a complex process)</p>	<p>Have focused most of their age-friendly work on public spaces, working with members to produce audits of the city centre, parks and supermarkets (see here: https://bit.ly/3yR3TvT).</p> <p>Have also done projects similar to work done in-house by BAB including an Age Proud poster campaign.</p>
Sheffield	584,000		<p>Age-friendly work has been led through a housing association with influence of a lead academic in the city.</p> <p>Part of the National Lottery Ageing Better programme. In 2022, Ageing Better work handed over to the Local Authority after the completion of the NLCF-funded Ageing Better programme</p>	<p>Age-Friendly is part of the legacy work of Age Better in Sheffield</p>
Sunderland	342,427		<p>Age-Friendly & Ageing Well working group sits under the local authority's Health & Wellbeing board.</p> <p>Influences Council grant funding from an Age-Friendly perspective, including supporting the capacity of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic organisations working with older people to apply for Council funding.</p>	<p>Recently awarded funding to set up an 'Older Champions' project - delivery plan currently being written.</p>

These positive links were substantially due to the regular and active contributions of Age UK Bristol staff to network meetings, special network events, as well as direct advice to other areas. The BAB learning and evaluation website was also commented on as a very large and comprehensive set of resources. One interviewee recognised that work in Bristol was ambitious and took on challenges of working across a range of very diverse interests.

5.3 Putting Bristol in context: Understanding the importance of third sector action on the age friendly agenda

To understand more specifically how third sector agencies contribute towards age friendly agendas, we set out eight themes that arose from our research with the wider AFCC Network. The themes show how much of the learning in Bristol has been replicated in other parts of the country.

5.3.1 TSOs taking on a strategic mission

There are a range of circumstances in which the AFC agenda originally took root in local areas. In many instances apart from Bristol, third sector agencies were early adopters of the overall vision and initiated key inception meetings. For example, in Sheffield South Yorkshire Housing Association in partnership with the local Age UK undertook the baseline assessment for the WHO application.

While third sector organisations are often seen as having a very specialised field of interest, Bristol illustrates how a third sector partnership adopted a systemic perspective. In these cases, third sector bodies took on a broad strategic civic mission for the whole area, rather than acting for narrow sectional interests of the agency.

In Bristol this is illustrated by attempts to adopt a whole-city approach to issues around coordinating community development, where a partnership led by third sector partners scoped out and coordinated a city-wide programme of Community Development for Older People projects that complemented the current all-age community development infrastructure delivered by the city council, housing associations and VCSE organisations. In other cities, third sector led partnerships are working across neighbour partnerships, tackling ageism or on green space agendas. Brighton and Hove local authority has collaborated with third sector partners to develop commissioning strategy has been adopted for health promotion work with older people. Others also took on an expansive role. For example, Sheffield housing association interpreted the age-friendly agenda in terms of all-age friendliness.

The Age-friendly team in the IoW found that they had to show the practical importance of age-friendly work to engage decision makers in their local authority:

Ag-friendly is big beast to get your head round. When I had meetings with [local authority] directors in the early days I got 'So what, what is in it for us, why would we want to be involved in this?' It took little bit of convincing: once we'd got significant quick wins people could actually do something tangible with it [IoW -persuading LAs. [Isle of Wight⁵]

Based upon feedback, Isle of Wight have focused on topical issues such as work with local supermarkets to improve the shopping checkout experience for older people. This helped the team build their credibility on specific short-term issues, which allowed them to move on to wider issues around, for example, ageism in retail settings.

⁵ The identity of the places that interviewees represent is reported. Quotes that are anonymised are primarily from participants in the AFN focus group event.

5.3.2 TSOs interpreting the WHO framework

In many areas the WHO framework has been perceived to be complex and unwieldy, leading to efforts to streamline and simplify the approach. Places such as Sunderland and Greater Manchester for instance have simplified the framework to focus on aspects such as tackling ageism in the organisational practices of partnership-based service commissioning and development:

I feel that third sector agencies have been good at translating the WHO framework to fit the local context. [anon1]

In Sunderland the local authority lead officer with previous career in the voluntary sector used her insight to simplify the WHO framework into neighbourhood model in order to match the priorities within the council's neighbourhood directorate.

5.3.3 TSOs building links between strategic agendas

Many leads both in the third sector and local government described how they been active in finding connections between age-friendly work and other cross-cutting agendas. For example, dementia-friendly work and action to address frailty were particularly relevant for several areas that sought to obtain greater engagement with NHS and adult social care services (Liverpool, IoW and Brighton)

Where the local political leadership was less focused on older people's issues, some areas wove age friendly work into neighbourhood and community development or emphasised all-age-friendly agendas.

5.3.4 TSOs supporting the voice of older people

Third sector agencies were perceived by local authority staff to be well placed to engage with the interests of older people:

[Third sector agencies are] so valuable, they are the on the ground people working with older people and serve local forums which feed into the Greater Seniors Forum. [anon3]

A strength of third sector agencies is their ability to act as the voice of older people. [anon5]

Third sector agencies were also well placed to get the views of older people listened to within local authority decision making processes:

It's possible that you can come to the council with a bit more clout if you're bringing constituents to speak with you as a charitable body. You can say 'Look, they're saying X Y and Z. Why aren't you responding?' You actually can have more influence. Whereas council officers might be not listened at all. [Sunderland]

In the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, there was a perception that not much could be done without the voluntary sector especially regarding engagement with the perspectives of diverse groups of older people:

During Covid the groups that I was working with kind of gelled together during that period. [Liverpool]

5.3.5 TSOs keeping the age-friendly agenda alive through austerity and change

As local authorities have faced austerity and capacity issues (including recently during the pandemic), third sector partnerships took on the role of leading older people's consultation and strategic processes.

For example, in Bristol as financial cuts to local authority finances started to bite by 2015, the local authority lost a key position concerned with surveying the views of the local population. Bristol Older People's Forum (a Charitable Incorporated Organisation led by older people and with a

membership of over 3,000 Bristolians) and Age UK Bristol took on a greater role in annual surveys and the interpretation of local demographic, needs and service use data

The Bristol Ageing Better team also took on major consultation work with older people. This involved taking a wider view than a concern with local services to the future for age-friendly strategy in the city more generally. This work involved engaging cross sections of the public and diverse third sector organisations. Here there are some similarities to Brighton and Hove where a partnership with the Older People's Council allowed the development of different topic-based groups.

However, it is also worth noting the precarity of many voluntary sector agencies to contribute over time. For example, in Newcastle, a lead voluntary sector agency went into administration and had to pass over coordination of age-friendly work to another agency.

5.3.6 TSOs finding synergies on funding and delivery with local authorities

From the perspective of local authorities, third sector agencies are often able to tap into alternative funding sources and to be more responsive to emerging issues:

[Third sector agencies] are able to receive alternative sources of funding and work in a different way to local authorities. [anon4]

The older people's assembly has driven the Age Friendly agenda. [Local authority] Public Health are supportive, and Council has signed up to our AF Charter, but they haven't had any capacity. [anon6]

Two-way communication between [the] local authority and third sector has helped promote wider national campaigns at a local level. [anon2]

In Hackney, collaboration with the third sector from perspective of the council "The voluntary and community sector is so key in terms of the services they provide to residents...we work really hard to build upon some of the amazing work that the VCS has done and how we apply that within the council and across the system" However for Hackney, the LA has been very limited what it can do. It is limited to 'enabling' rather than 'funding'.

Manchester's vision has been to create an AFM 'family' of many actors capable to embracing the age friendly agenda:

It's about trying to create those partnerships and those relationships between services, the voluntary sector, housing providers, academia, and trying to get an age-friendly lens applied to policy and processes of service delivery. [Manchester]

Relationships with local authorities often shift over time as funding opportunities shift. In Sheffield, the third sector agency was seeking to hand age-friendly work to a local authority "in the best shape we can," whereas in Newcastle lead responsibilities have move from the local authority to third sector agencies.

5.3.7 TSOs bringing new ways of working through the National Lottery

Funding through the National Lottery and local philanthropic sources has stimulated specific interpretations and styles of working on the age-friendly agenda. Ageing Better Fulfilling Lives programme sought to take a longer perspective on programme design, in contrast to some of the shorter-term funding programmes of the past.

The National Lottery funding processes have pushed forward co-production across multiple aspects of decision-making. The National Lottery has also promoted a test and learn methods – in other words a more experimental approach to develop and review potential solutions. In Hackney the interviewee felt that age-friendly work had become more strongly embedded following NLCF-funded

work in the area. Finally, the NLCF and the Centre for Ageing Better also encouraged knowledge transfer between areas through its networking activities.

Therefore, there was a widespread observation that National Lottery support had accelerated age-friendly work through the Ageing Better programme, the Centre for Ageing Better endowment, and many of its others grant funding schemes:

Places with funding from the National Lottery just have a whole other level of resource [compared to those without. [Newcastle]

The Centre for Ageing Better's UKNAFC had helped bring together different areas to learn from each other:

It's valuable to us to meet and talk to and share experiences with other people. And often you know, we think we've been around a bit, but you'll meet other people, and you think: 'Wow, I wish we did that. I wish we thought to that. We're going steal that off you!' [anon4]

5.3.8 TSOs maintaining engagement over time

One widely reported challenge is that third sector agencies encounter difficulties obtaining consistent engagement from public service officers and elected members. Bristol shares similar experiences to other areas on consistent engagement from health service representatives of the clinical commissioning group. Rotation of staff in the local authority often means that there is a lack of consistency leading to delays in agreements on how to coordinate activities and communications. Many partnerships have struggled to obtain legitimacy in decision making forums around areas such as transport – a critical long-term area for change.

The framework for cities that are working on a longer-term vision – such as Bristol's One City Plan -is not necessarily well configured to accommodate issues specifically of concern to older people. This was possibly a reflection of the priorities of leading politicians on other agendas such housing for younger people or services of early years childcare. Third sector agencies concerned with older people's interests therefore had to modify their local authority 'ask', for example on emphasising intergenerational actions or local high street developments for greater local access:

We were proliferating different competing strategies, and trying to bring them all together under one strategy. That worked quite well for a while, but when political support was severely weakened (when the lead councillor that we had was no longer on cabinet) the ageing portfolio was never reinstated. [Newcastle]

Frequently the age-friendly agenda is held together by a core of highly motivated individuals who sit in a range of positions from councillors, leading officers or leads in the voluntary sector. Sunderland emphasised the importance of cultivating leadership on the issue through local councillors; importance that was painfully highlighted when a supportive councillor died, leaving a vacuum of support among elected members. BAB's experience is that the support of the Cabinet lead member for Health & Social Care, who is also Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board, has helped to maintain support for the age-friendly agenda.

Continuity of focus in the context of a shifting political priorities was reported to be a major challenge for many areas:

It can be a challenge to "keep age-friendly, even as a term, you know front and centre"

You knew this thing "Let's now go on to something else and call it something different you know, political game that shows you know, in the sense that can go on and I can, I can see that every community will have the same challenge at some point. And that thing about, you know what looks most attractive, what's the big sexy story at the moment and the politicians going after that" [CfAB2]

In this context, third sector agencies can act as ‘flame bearers’ for age-friendly agendas during periods where local political priorities are focused elsewhere.

5.3.9 TSOs and local government staff career connections

Our interviews highlighted the complex governance connections between third sector and local authority leads, not least owing to personal biographical connections, inter-dependencies, alliances, and close service commissioning links.

For example, one local authority lead officer had spent many years in the voluntary sector before moving into her current role. She felt that she brought a style of working that introduced a fresh approach to the work of the local authority. Her focus was mainly on letting third sector agencies take on more of the leadership and public engagement work partly because of their skills of agencies in doing this and their capacity to make diverse connections as trusted intermediaries.

In an alternative case, which echoes BAB’s experience, a chief executive of a leading CVS who was central to the AFCs development, had previously had leading role in the local authority and felt that she was able to use her connections and insight to shape LA decisions better from the outside. She described how she never felt better able to act strategically than when she had stepped out of local government. One interviewee described the contrasting but complementary positions of public service and third sector staff:

For the voluntary and community sector, it might be 'how do I leverage support from the council?' Whereas, for me it might be how do I leverage support within areas of the council to think about this as their priority? [Hackney]

6. Conclusion

This report shows how age-friendly work in Bristol has a history of development that preceded the period before 2015 when, with funding through the NLCF, the BAB partnership committed to help Bristol apply for WHO Age-friendly City status. While Bristol has a relatively young demography compared to other areas in the UK, work on the age friendly agenda for Bristol has demonstrated the significance of the issue and its intimate connections to other strategic priorities for the future of the city.

A number of factors contribute towards the successful application for WHO status and the embedding of age-friendly action in the city. Not least there have been long term contributions by leaders in community and voluntary organisation and in the city council. These individuals managed to organise the interests of groups of older people through formal and informal processes to define priority areas for action in the city. The timing of the National Lottery Community Fund’s Ageing Better programme has accelerated these developments through dedicated resources. Broadly the arguments for prioritising age-friendly issues have been successfully incorporated into long term strategic plans for the city. BAB have successfully managed to develop the original 2018 WHO application in 2022 through demonstrating the combined roles and responsibilities of the public, private and third sector parties. The policy context for age friendly work remains mixed and often very challenging, not least due to adverse economic conditions. However the work put in place between 2015 and 2022 places strong foundations for the future of Bristol as an age-friendly city.

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