

Carlow Age Friendly County

Strategic Plan 2017 – 2022



March 2017

CONTENTS

Foreword from Carlow Age Friendly County Chair.....	2
A Message from Carlow County Council.....	3
Executive Summary.....	4
Why an Age Friendly Strategy?	6
Age Friendly Ireland – The Story so far	8
Carlow’s Age Friendly Journey.....	8
Carlow’s Age Friendly Committee.....	10
Carlow Older Persons Forum.....	10
Carlow’s Age Friendly Strategy 2017-2022.....	11
Outdoor Spaces & Buildings.....	13
Transport.....	17
Housing.....	20
Respect & Social Inclusion.....	23
Social Participation.....	28
Communication & Information.....	31
Civic Participation.....	36
Community Support & Health Services.....	39
Strategic Implementation.....	46
Acknowledgements.....	47
Reference Documents	48

A Message from Carlow Age Friendly Committee

Carlow's Age Friendly Committee is very happy to introduce the new strategy for 2017-2022

I am very honoured to have been asked to chair this committee. From the start, it was very evident that the commitment of each and every member and the organisations they represent is to make Carlow a leading age friendly community both locally and nationally.

Facilitated participation has been a major part of developing the strategy including surveys and public meetings in both rural and urban communities. The success of this consultation was the very many people who came along to the meetings and shared their experience, thoughts and wisdom for the future for older people living and working in Carlow and County.

Carlow has made it's mark nationally by being the first county in Ireland to establish car parking spaces for older adults and is a measure of the success of the initiative that, in the last few years, other towns and villages have adopted this idea.

The further development of the Age Friendly Business Recognition Scheme is something I would like to see happening. It is accepted that we are continuing to work longer and any initiative that identifies areas where we can improve services and facilities in our town and county for our older adults is welcome.

In his message from Carlow Co. Council I am delighted that the Deputy C.E. Mr. Dan McInerney has reiterated the County Councils support for this strategy and he acknowledges the valued inputs from statutory, private, voluntary and community sectors. This commitment and interest will go a long way to ensure positive outcomes and improvements in all aspects of life in Carlow in the coming years.

I would like to thank all the members of Carlow Age Friendly Committee for their welcome and their valued input and commitment. A special thank you to our secretary Fiona Dunne and finally Margaret Moore for Carlow County Council for her boundless energy, good humour and commitment to the older communities in Co. Carlow.

I hope that all sectors of the community business, statutory and voluntary will find this strategy a valued resource for the continued development of services and facilities for older adults in Co. Carlow

Eileen Brophy
Chair- Carlow Age Friendly Committee



A Message from Carlow County Council

Carlow began its Age Friendly journey in 2011 and the benefits to date have been wide ranging and significant. In 2014 Carlow participated in the National Age Friendly Town programme and in 2015 was the first county in Ireland to launch Age Friendly parking spaces for older drivers.

While considerable advancements have been made, with the establishment of the Older Persons Forum and expanded community dementia services, as a local authority we understand the challenges and implications for public policy, and long term planning, as the proportion of older people in our society, continues to increase.

Recent research has revealed that the proportion of people, over the age of 75, was higher in Carlow, at 7.6%, than in the South East Region at 5.4% and the national average of 5.2%. All the evidence shows us that ageing is not just a health issue. While health is an important indicator of well-being, housing, transport, social activities and the environment all impact significantly on the health and well-being of our ageing citizens and society as a whole.

This new strategy is the culmination of consultation with older adults in Carlow Town and County and service providers from the statutory, private, voluntary & community sectors who seek to ensure that our society provides improved levels of well-being for it's older citizens.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who took part in the consultation process and participated in the survey. I would also like to commend members of the Carlow Age Friendly Committee who through their collaboration have enabled Carlow to continue on it's Age Friendly journey which will benefit everyone in the community for future generations.

I am confident that this, Carlow's second Age Friendly Strategy, will become a road map and resource for multiagency collaboration around the issues that matter most to older adults, ensuring that Carlow is a great place for it's citizens to grow old.


Dan Mcinerney,
Deputy Chief Executive



Executive Summary

Carlow became part of the World Health Organisation's Age Friendly City and County Programme in 2011. Since first consulting with older people across the county about what would make Carlow a better place to grow older in a lot has happened....

- A strong and vibrant Carlow Older Persons Forum with over 400 members has formed with the support of Carlow County Development Partnership.
- A large number of agencies who work with older adults have come together as the Service Providers Forum – including Carlow County Council, HSE, Family Carers Ireland, Gardai, Education & Training Board, Family Resource Centres, Day Centres / Nursing Homes, Carlow/ Kilkenny Contact and others. They have supported a range of projects involving joint working such as the Memory Matters programme – a 2 year initiative to help older people with dementia to be supported to live in their homes for longer rather than residential care.
- Carlow Town received the Age Friendly Town Recognition Award in 2015
- A Musical Memories Choir has been established in Sacred Heart Hospital and a beautiful Reminiscence Garden developed, supported by Friends of Sacred Heart Hospital and the Health Service Executive.
- A number of Age Friendly Car park spaces have been installed, specifically for older adults at key locations such as the Post Office, Supervalu supermarket etc.



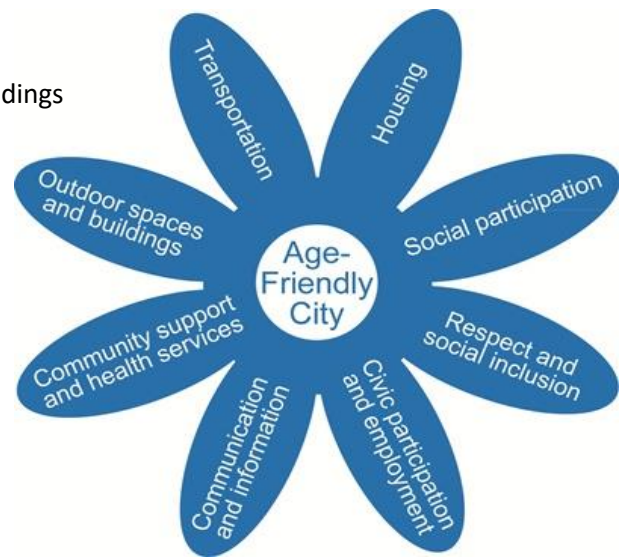
Launching the first Age Friendly Parking Space in Ireland, Kennedy Ave, Carlow.

- More physical activities are organised for older adults through County Carlow Local Sports Partnership.
- The 4 libraries across the county are fully accessible now and offer a wide range of services, courses and activities such as digital literacy, genealogy, creative writing, personal development etc.
- The countywide Care and Repair Service delivered by Carlow County Development Partnership has expanded and provides minor repairs and works from trustworthy maintenance people free of charge. They also provide a weekly contact call service.

- The rural bus services have been mapped across the county
- Carlow Tourism has published an Age Friendly Restaurant Guide for the county and delivered training for businesses about how to make their premises more age friendly.

The work of devising this second Carlow Age Friendly Strategy involved consulting again with older people and those who work with them across the county in terms of the 8 themes identified by the World Health Organisation :-

1. Outdoor spaces, physical environment and buildings
2. Transportation
3. Housing
4. Respect and social inclusion
5. Social participation
6. Communication and information
7. Civic participation and employment
8. Community supports and health services.



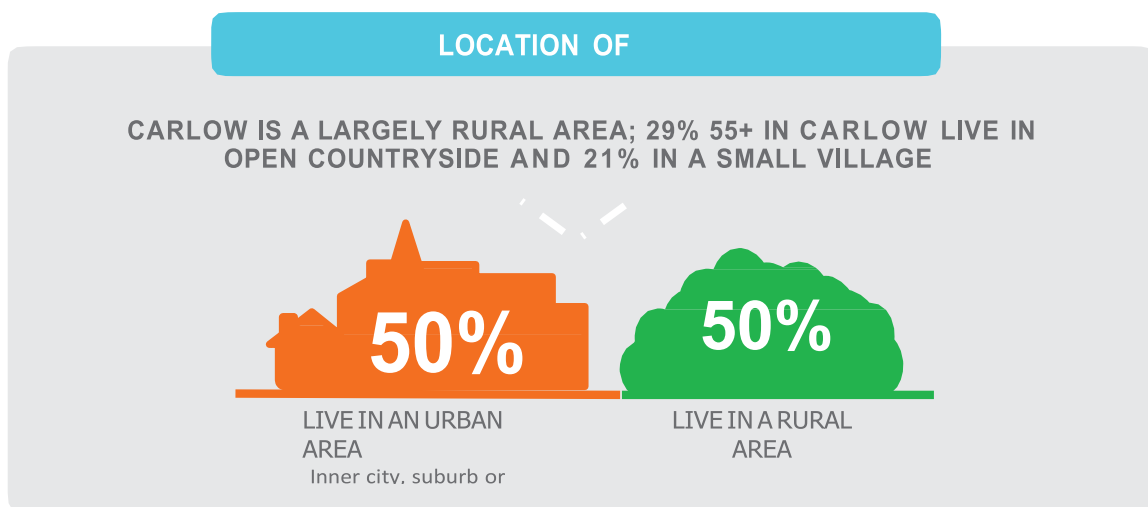
This new 5 year Strategy outlines short, medium and long term actions by stakeholders, building on what has been achieved to date, with greater emphasis on joint working. Almost 150 specific actions have been identified in this strategy to be implemented by all the partners, in relation to the 8 areas outlined above.

An annual operational plan will be produced which will also take into account new opportunities, policies and funding, that may evolve during the life of the strategy. This strategy and action plan and its implementation reflect the commitment of the committee and stakeholders to continue to develop Carlow town and county as great places to grow older.

Why an Age Friendly Strategy?

Although relatively young by EU standards, the population of Ireland is ageing. People are living longer and healthier lives. According to the Department of Health by the year 2036 the number of people aged 65 and older living in Ireland, is expected to increase by 250%. For Carlow this would mean that the older population of 6,211 in 2011 will increase to 29,225 in 20 year's time (CSO 2011)

Older people contribute significantly to society, as carers for their families, as volunteers in their communities and as a great source of social capital in this county. However this contribution is not universal. Some older adults in Ireland are socially and emotionally lonely, with 23% of men over 70 and 36% of woman over 70 living alone and often isolated in their communities.



More than one-quarter of people over the age of 50 have no income other than what they receive from the state².

“Over one-quarter of older households reported giving a financial or material gift worth €5,000 or more to one (or more) of their children within the last ten years. Of those households that gave money to children, the average is € 60,512. In addition, over one-third of older adults (36%) provide practical household help including shopping and household chores to their adult children and 47% provide care to grandchildren” (TILDA 2011 & 2014)

The self reported quality of life of older people peaks between 65-67 and declines rapidly after the age of 80³. Older adults, who are more socially active, engaged in volunteering or care for a grandchild reported a higher quality of life. More than any other age group not all older adults are the same and there are many health, social and economic inequalities.

These inequalities have yet to be overcome to ensure that all older adults have access to a healthy, active and fulfilling life as they age. This demographic change provides policymakers with many opportunities and challenges. Research is important and it is vital that we understand that not all older people are the same.

One of the main areas of concern for Ireland's ageing population is the rising cost of healthcare and the growing need for the provision of long term care in the community or in residential settings. The cost of the provision of healthcare is expected to rise from its current 6% of GDP to 11% of GDP by 2050 as the demand for services continues to grow in line with the growing older population.

While 75% of 55-69 year olds and 72% of people aged 70+ in Carlow self reported their health as good or very good, we also know that 25% of those 70+ have high blood pressure and 14% experience high cholesterol this compared to 51% and 37% nationally. 10% of Carlow older adults still smoke; this figure is less than the national average for the 55+ age group which is 14% (TILDA, 2013).



President Michael D. Higgins with ladies from Tullow Active Retirement Group at their annual outing in Mayo 2016.

Age Friendly Ireland - The Story so Far

Established in January 2014 as the successor to the Ageing Well Network, Age Friendly Ireland was an intermediary organisation which coordinated the National Age Friendly Cities and County Programme from 2007-2016. The Programme brought together supports and provided technical guidance for the adopting Local Authority. The multi-agency programme is now led by 31 local authorities with regional and national support groups meeting on a regular basis.

The Age Friendly programme now provides the links between the National Positive Ageing Strategy and the global Age-Friendly Cities guide, published by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 2007. This programme is implemented by multiagency working together across all the areas that impact on the quality of life of older people. The programme helps counties and cities to be more inclusive and ensure that older people are involved in the planning and delivery of solutions. The World Health Organisation identified 8 topics which impacted on older people all over the globe. These 8 topics or domains are what form the basis for consultation in Carlow and other counties and also form the framework of the Age Friendly Strategy.

Carlow's Age Friendly Journey

Carlow began its Age Friendly journey in 2011 and launched its first strategy in 2013. The launch took place following public consultation meetings with older adults and considerable consultation with stakeholders. Carlow was the fourth county to adopt the programme in Ireland.

With the commitment of senior decision makers Carlow's Age Friendly Committee has delivered a number of successful projects and initiatives over the years. Initially the programme was supported by Carlow Older Person's Network, an established group of service providers who supported activities for older people in Carlow for many years prior to the formation of the Carlow Older Persons Forum.

Carlow was the first county in Ireland to introduce Age Friendly Parking Spaces, and one of four national sites selected and supported by Genio and the HSE to undertake a two year community dementia research project. This project resulted in the development of a Musical Memory Choir and a Dementia Friendly Garden in the Sacred Heart Hospital. The project also delivered a Dementia Technology Library to support the memory clinic and those living with dementia in the community. St. Catherine's Community Services Centre, who deliver over 100 hot meals daily, developed and launched the Meals on Wheels Standard of Excellence Research document and a Self Assessment Framework for other meals on wheels providers, which was granted a national Age Friendly Achievement Award in 2016.

Since the start of the Age Friendly County initiative a number of national strategies and reports have also been published which support active healthy ageing for older people including:

Older People Strategy – An Garda Síochána 2010
Action Plan for Effective Local Government 2012 – Putting People First
National Carers Strategy 2012 – Department of Health
National Positive Ageing Strategy 2013 - Department of Health
National Dementia Strategy 2014 – Department of Health
Healthy Ireland 2013-2015 HealthService Executive
National Physical Activity Strategy Get Ireland Active 2016 - Department of Health
Listening to Older People: Experiences with Health Service 2015, - Health Service Executive
Housing For Older People: Future Perspectives - Age Friendly Ireland 2016
Positive Ageing 2016 National Indicators Reports Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative (HaPAI), - Department of Health

Carlow now looks to these national documents and the recently conducted Carlow Age Friendly Survey, which independently interviewed 256 older adults in Carlow about issues that affected their quality of life to develop it's new strategy. This survey was designed around extracts of the National Indicators Report (HaPAI) in order to benchmark Carlow's Age Friendliness against other counties surveyed. While the research has it's statistical limitations, because of the methodology and the sample size, it is still representative of a large, diverse and varied group of older adults in Co. Carlow. All the agencies providing support and services to older adults were also consulted in detail and their agreed actions are included in this document.



Eleanor and Mary from Kilkenny & Carlow Contact Befriending Service at an Information Stand at the Fairgreen Shopping Centre Carlow

Carlow's Age Friendly Committee

The Carlow Age Friendly Committee is a multi-agency voluntary partnership that works closely with older people in Co. Carlow to ensure that policies and plans reflect their needs. Meeting regularly throughout the year the committee holds the responsibility for the development and implementation of Carlow's Age Friendly Strategy and manages its progress annually through the publication of their annual report. Their plans are based on national and local research and are underpinned by the need for efficiency, cooperation and sustainability.

Members of the Carlow Age Friendly Committee at 1st January 2017:

Ms. Eileen Brophy, Independent Chair

Ms. Martha Jane Duggan, County Carlow Local Sports Partnership

Ms. Patricia McEvoy, Manager Older Person's Services, Health Service Executive

Ms. Teresa Hennessy, Senior Health Promotion Officer, HSE

Dr. John McHugh, Lecturer Carlow College

Mr. Joe Butler, Chair Carlow Older Persons Forum

Ms. Eleanor Doyle, Coordinator Carlow Kilkenny Contact Befriending Service.

Inspector Anthony Farrell, An Garda Síochána, Carlow.

Mr. Wayne Fennell, Vice Chair, Carlow Older Persons Forum.

Sergeant Louise O' Neill, Sergeant in Charge, Carlow Garda Station

Ms. Fiona Dunne, Community Education Officer, Kilkenny Carlow Education & Training Board

Ms. Regina Duane, Carlow Volunteer Centre

Ms. Fiona O' Toole, Staff Officer, Carlow County Library

Mr. Niall Morris, Director of Services, St. Catherine's Community Center

Ms. Annette Fox, Social Inclusion Specialist, Carlow County Development Partnership.

Ms. Margaret Moore, Community Section, Carlow County Council

Carlow Older Persons Forum

The Carlow Older Persons Forum was established in 2015 following a number of facilitated civic participation training programmes. With the support of the Carlow County Development Partnership the Forum has gone from strength to strength. The Forum represents the voice of older people at the decision making table with local government officials and other service providers. The Forum operates autonomously with an elected executive working in partnership with all stakeholders to make Carlow more age friendly. Since 2015 the Carlow Older Persons Forum has held seats on the Carlow Age Friendly Committee and the Service Providers Forum and more recently on St. Luke's Hospital Patients Forum. Membership of the Forum is free and all those living in Carlow Town and County over 55 years are invited to join. Older adults can contact the Carlow County Development Partnership for more information or the Public Participation Network administrator at Carlow County Council.

Carlow Older Persons Forum



Representatives from Carlow Age Friendly programme receive the Age Friendly Innovation Award from Age Friendly Ireland 2016

Carlow's Age Friendly Strategy 2017-2022

The World Health Organisation is the inspiration behind the age friendly movement which focuses on the eight topics as previous outlined. In addition in 2014 the Department of Health also established HaPAI (Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative) which developed, through research both nationally and internationally, a set of indicators which could be used across all communities in Ireland to measure and benchmark progress in the area of health and positive ageing. This important initiative coupled with the National Positive Ageing Strategy (NPAS) has been used by Carlow when developing their new Age Friendly Strategy which will cover the next five years.

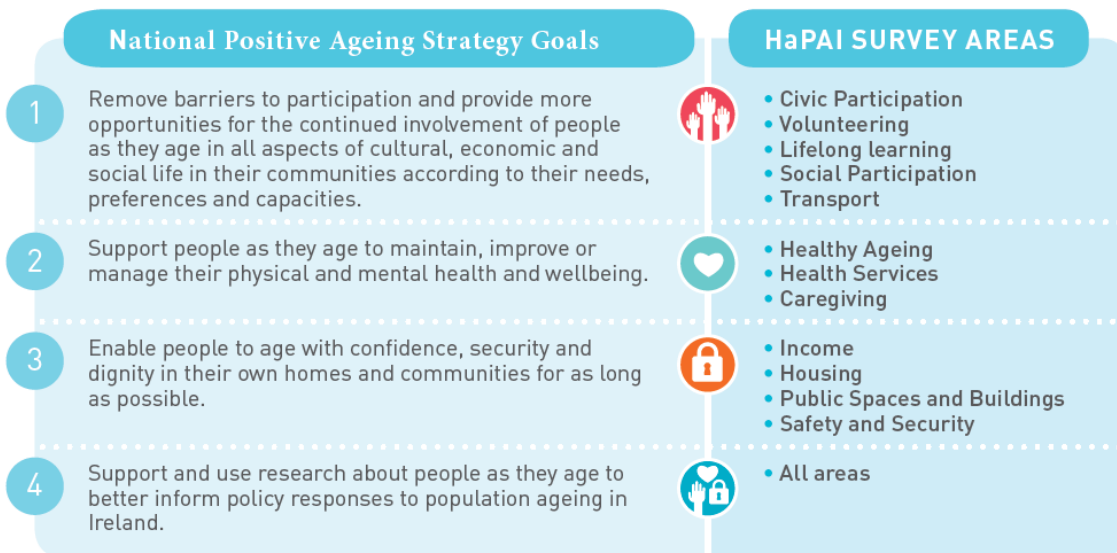
Finally and more importantly listening to issues that mattered to older people in Carlow through consultation and analysis and the information collected from 256 older people who participated in a survey in January and February 2017 formed the basis of the strategic action plans.

Older people were invited to participate through a number of channels and through engagement with service providers. 40% of the respondents were male and 60% were female. 35% of respondents lived alone while 46% lived with their partner/ spouse, 8% lived with adult children.(11% did not respond to this question) All respondents' replies were voluntary and confidential, some questions had a response rate of 90% and 2-3 questions had a response rate of 39%.

Combining international, national and local information and sound research in relation to older adults ensures that the voice of older people remains at the centre of all plans. The National Positive Ageing Strategy (NPAS) sets out a vision for Ireland, and this vision is one that the Carlow Age Friendly Committee are committed to;-

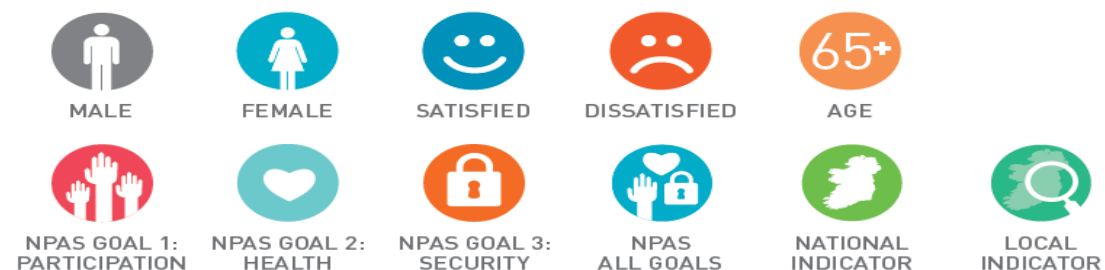
“.....a society for all ages that celebrates and prepares properly for individual and population ageing. It will enable and support all ages and older people to enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential. It will promote and respect older people’s engagement in economic, social, cultural, community and family life, and foster better solidarity between the generations. It will be a society in which the equality, independence, participation, care, self fulfillment and dignity of older people are pursued at all times”

National Positive Ageing Strategy 2013



The National Strategy is divided into the above four goals which are also reflected in the Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative survey (HaPAI). The Carlow Age Friendly Committee have taken these goals and the symbols and applied them to the planned actions under the World Health Organisation topics for the Carlow Strategy for the next five years. The symbols below are presented beside each action in the document.

KEY



Outdoor Spaces & Buildings



In a survey of 256 older adults conducted between January and February 2017, 82% of older people surveyed liked living in their neighbourhood a lot.

However only 13% of people were happy with the availability of seats and resting places; this is considerably less than other counties at 46%¹. 29% of those surveyed in Carlow were satisfied with paths and pavements v 60% in other areas and 25% are satisfied with traffic calming measures v 46% in other counties.

As expected access to toilets continues to provide a challenge in all areas of Ireland surveyed. The average rate of dissatisfaction nationally with access to toilets is 64% with some areas as high as 80%. 48% of older people in Carlow were dissatisfied with access to toilets while out and about. In general the levels of dissatisfaction with outdoor spaces and public buildings were higher among the 55 – 69 years age group, with those over 70 more satisfied. 67% of those surveyed were satisfied with the service provided by supermarkets and local shops and 59% were satisfied with access to green areas and parks and satisfaction with service provided by banking services was lowest at 53%.

Issues raised by Older adults

“Pedestrian crossings are too close to roundabouts for walkers and drivers”

“Dog fouling is a real problem and difficult for older people”.

“More suitable seating is needed and resting places including at bus stops”.

“The town centre is littered and very unpleasant in general”

“Age Friendly Parking spaces need to be expanded into other villages and areas”

“Lighting is really important, in housing areas and town”

“A lot of pavements are broken and damaged”

¹ National HaPAI Results 2016

Short Term Actions (2017)



Dog fouling on public pathways was identified as an area of major concern for older people. The **Environment Department of Carlow County Council** will try to tackle /improve this situation through the provision of an awareness campaign in Carlow Town. Older people will be invited to participate as well as the Carlow Older Persons Forum.



Carlow Older Persons Forum aim to increase the number of age friendly parking spaces in the centre of Carlow town and investigate the possibility of having free Age Friendly parking spaces for a number of hours on Thursday/Friday mornings to allow older people to collect their pensions. Carlow Older Persons Forum aim to identify and increase awareness of all public toilets, and encourage local businesses to provide free and welcoming toilet facilities to the older people of County Carlow, with the aim of creating a 'toilet trail' which will be readily available.



The **Transport section of the Carlow Local Authority** will consult, prepare and adopt a street furniture policy to ensure consistency and suitability of all street furniture including seating, bins, and signage.



Carlow Volunteer Centre will work with other agencies to support older adults use of Outdoor Spaces and Buildings. Currently, Carlow Volunteer Centre refers volunteers to a variety of organisations that are working towards the improvement or utilisation of outdoor spaces. These include but are not limited to An Gáirdín Beo, Carlow Sports Partnership, Delta Garden Centre and Environmental Clean Up Days.



Carlow Library Services will ensure all four branches are accessible, user friendly and welcoming. This will be achieved by:-

- Conducting age friendly audits and risk assessments of each library building.
- Providing age friendly areas in each library with appropriate seating, signage and materials.
- Ensuring all libraries are clean, pleasant and well maintained.

They will also ensure all libraries allow freedom of movement with non-slip floors and unobstructed passageways



Carlow County Development Partnership will aim to ensure that all of their events and training for older persons are held in accessible, security conscious buildings and community centres over the lifetime of this strategy.



Local Authority Engineers and Planners will ensure, when assessing planning applications that all new residential and commercial developments have adequate lighting to ensure public safety. They will also ensure when assessing applications for signage that being age friendly is a consideration.



County Carlow Museum will continue to provide their services in an age friendly way as outlined in their Age Friendly Charter including providing visitor chairs with fixed arms in each of the four display galleries and ensuring that staff will accompany visitors in the Museum lift for ease of movement between galleries.



The Community Section of Carlow County Council will ensure that Carlow County Council embeds Carlow Age Friendly principles in all its strategic plans, services and programme of works



The **Corporate Service section of the Local Authority** will aim to mainstream consciousness of age friendly design into all urban planning and design, including the public realm, transportation, open spaces, housing and other elements of Local Authority services. The section will deliver these changes through training of staff and ensuring that age friendliness remains foremost in designers mind working in conjunction with the Age Friendly Committee.

Medium Term Actions (2017)



Carlow Older Persons Forum, (supported by Carlow County Council) will carry out Age Friendly Walkability audits and continue to identify issues with uneven footpaths, signage, unsafe public spaces and environments.



Local Authority Engineers and Planners will incorporate relevant policies and objectives into Development and Local Area Plans to ensure future public amenities are age friendly. They will also ensure that the relevant policies and objectives are imported to ensure public spaces and buildings, lighting and signage is more age friendly.



The **Health Service Executive at St. Luke's General Hospital** will continue with its Age Friendly development plan and aim to conduct a dementia friendly audit.



Members of St. Luke's General Hospital, Age Friendly Steering group including Chair of Carlow Older Persons Forum following the hospital Age Friendly Walkability Audit 2016



The Health Service Executive will continue to work with the Carlow Hospice Group in 2017 to complete the refurbishment of the Palliative Care Suites at the Carlow District Hospital.

Long Term Actions (2020-2022)



Carlow Older Persons Forum will endeavour to work closely with planners and Carlow County Council to ensure that new builds and schemes are 'age proofed'.



Area Engineers, Transport and Planning sections of the Local Authority will also review policies during the lifetime of each Local Area Development Plan to ensure that age friendly spaces, buildings and public amenities are being imposed.



Carlow Older Persons Forum in partnership with Bank of Ireland Carlow aim to collaborate through its county-wide branches to make them more age friendly and inclusive by providing 'go-slow' lanes, access to machine training for older customers, and age friendly days with particular focus on customer service, more seating facilities inside and parking facilities outside etc.



Carlow's Age Friendly Parking Spaces

Transport

2

The percentage of older people driving in Carlow is high at 73%. Despite this 31% reported difficulty some or most of the time accessing social activities and 28% reported difficulties some or most of the time doing essential tasks and attending health appointments. Nearly 20% of those surveyed said they used a taxi in the last week, while nearly 5% said they used a tractor to access services. Over 40% of older drivers said they drive less than they did 5 years ago.

In Carlow 31% of older adults rated local public transport as good or excellent, this is lower than reported by TILDA (The Irish longitudinal Study on Ageing, 2014) who found 50% of people rated their local access to transport as good or excellent. On investigation only 14% of those living in rural areas of County Carlow or outside the county town rated public transport as good or excellent. Overall 35% of all older adults' surveyed were dissatisfied with the quality of public transport and considered it very poor.

Issues raised by older adults

“There is no taxi rank at Carlow Bus Stop it's too far to walk”

“Rural areas have no access to transport, Borris, Myshall, younger people have the same problem”.

“There is not enough disability taxis, people with a disability are really disadvantaged”.

“Information and timetables about routes is very difficult to access”

“Bus stops are not suitable with wind and rain blowing in and no seating”

“Bridge at train station in Carlow is a real issue for anyone with a buggy, wheelchair or an older person”.

“Publicity needed in relation to Ring-A Link bus service”

“We have nothing out in Rathoe, I cannot get to the shops anymore, I am house bound”

Short Term Actions (2017)



Carlow Older Persons Forum will continue to promote local and regional transportation services available to older people, such as Ring a Link, and pursue potential alternative transportation initiatives for older people.



The **Transport section of the local Authority** will review pedestrian crossing timings at all lights to determine if additional crossing time can be facilitated without causing excessive disruption to traffic flows.



The **Transport section of the local authority** will include a review of existing and additional age friendly parking spaces during the next Parking Bye-Laws review to ensure sufficient number and location of spaces. They will also consider location of set down only spaces for drop offs and collection.



Carlow Volunteer Centre can support organisations working to complement transport infrastructure across Co. Carlow. It should be noted that current projects such as Care and Repair and potential pilots e.g. Health Link are dependent on core Human Resource support in the form of TUS, Rural Social Scheme or CE Scheme. Carlow Volunteer Centre can provide free information and training to any organisation utilising volunteers with regard to the Advertisement, Recruitment, Management, Supervision and Selection processes. Carlow Volunteer Centre will promote volunteer opportunities via I-Volunteers, Social Media and Traditional Media. A Garda Vetting service is also available from Carlow Volunteer Centre, should organisations wish to use it.



Corporate Services of the Local Authority will encourage the Municipal districts to provide additional age friendly car spaces in suitable locations for older drivers.

Medium Term Actions (2018-2020)



The **Health Service Executive** will work with the Carlow Age Friendly Committee to develop appropriate bus stops on the hospital campus and work with other transport providers including taxis to establish hospital and clinic connectivity with Carlow.



Carlow Older Persons Forum in partnership with Carlow County Development Partnership and supported by the Health Service Executive and the Patient Partnership Forum aim to set up and provide a dedicated 'hospital link' transportation service.



Carlow County Development Partnership will continue to work in partnership with other agencies to advance the provision of transport for older people including our local transport provider Ring a Link.

Long Term Actions (2020-2022)



The **Older Persons Forum** will continue to advocate for accessible and appropriate transport for older persons supported by Carlow County Development Partnership and other agencies who will continue to advance the provision of transport for older persons including local transport provider Ring a Link.



Local Authority Area Engineer and Transport section and Planners will review related policies during the lifetime of the Smarter Travel and other plans to ensure that age friendly elements and policies are being imposed.



Carlow's Rural Transport Service "Ring-A-Link"



Housing



26.3% of adults aged 65+ in Carlow County are living in private housing alone². 94 % of older people reported their homes were in good condition and only 22% of older people in Carlow had problems with the upkeep of their homes versus 31% in other counties surveyed.

27% of the over 70s group reported difficulties with maintaining their home but this is still considerably lower than many other counties. Only 5% reported difficulties keeping their home adequately warm because of damp or leaking walls or roof and 13% reported having no downstairs toilet, which is considerable higher than some counties where this figure is as low as 2%. 2% of the over 70s group have no access to an indoor flushing toilet.

Providing alternative accommodation as we age is not considered a very positive alternative by older people surveyed in Carlow. Adults over 70 want to stay at home and only 2% were positive about moving to residential care, this figure is 13% in Kilkenny. The least attractive options for this group is moving in with relatives (3%), followed by moving in with adults children (5%) or living with other older adults (6%).

When asked about security at home 43% of the over 70+ group felt very safe at home during the day but this figure drops to 27% at night. The 50-69 age groups appeared to be less concerned about their safety especially at night with 34% saying that they felt very safe at home at night.

Issues raised by older adults

“We need age appropriate secure accommodation in the town centre”

“Adaptation grants should be made available and easier to access by older people, more money needed in this area”.

“More opportunity should be available to swap / downsize accommodation if older people want”.


“Expense in making a home more age friendly is a challenge as it does not qualify for a grant”

² CSO 2011

HOUSING PREFERENCES



WE ASKED PEOPLE ABOUT THEIR PREFERENCES FOR HOUSING IF THEIR HOMES WERE NO LONGER SUITABLE FOR THEIR NEEDS

10%  **AGED 55+**
OF PEOPLE
would consider moving to an **ADAPTED TYPE OF HOUSING**

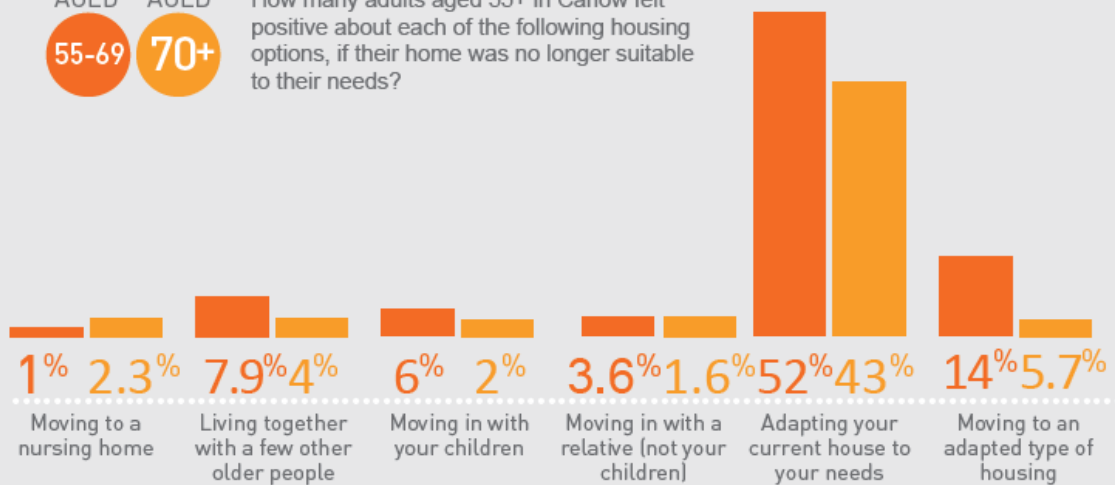
ADULTS AGED 55 AND OVER

in Carlow were most positive about adapting their house to their needs (48%) and were least positive about moving in with a relative other than their children (3%)



AGED 55-69
AGED 70+

How many adults aged 55+ in Carlow felt positive about each of the following housing options, if their home was no longer suitable to their needs?



Short Term Actions (2017)



Carlow Older Persons Forum supported by the 'Care and Repair' team will aim to identify the most vulnerable older persons in Carlow and provide appropriate support and interventions, signposts those to available services.



Carlow County Development Partnership will evaluate its Care and Repair Programme to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the clients and take on board recommendations (external consultation)



The **Health Service Executive** will continue to develop and promote the use of the assistive technology for older persons to remain living at home through the primary care network in Carlow.



The **Health Service Executive** will continue to promote The Memory Library facility available in Sacred Heart Hospital Carlow, through ongoing communication campaigns and promotions.



Corporate Services section of the Local Authority will task the Municipal District engineers and designers with keeping age friendly issues to the forefront (together with universal access) in their design of new and upgraded facilities. This section will also endeavour to have Local Authority property age friendly.

Medium Term Actions (2018-2020)



The **Older Persons Forum** will pilot the 'Wellbeing Program' for older people in County Carlow, with particular focus on rural areas and isolated older persons. The Forum will also explore the possibility of providing additional home support services with care and repair on a pilot basis.



Carlow County Development Partnership will continue to operate Care and Repair, subject to funding and in line with consultant recommendations. Currently there is a lack of support for older people living at home in terms of cleaning and housekeeping (strenuous jobs). Carlow County Development Partnership will aim to pilot a project in partnership with other agencies to address this.



The **Health Service Executive** will provide the “*Well Elderly*” programme which ran in Carlow in the past which incorporated the following:

- Advice on environmental adaptations
 - Equipment provision
 - Safety in the home
 - Energy conservation
 - Falls prevention
 - Tips on staying active and independent in retirement.
- It will be run over a 4 week period.

Long Term Actions (2020-2022)



Carlow Older Persons Forum supported by An Garda Síochána and the County Carlow Fire Service Department will collaborate with a particular focus on promoting safety and security within the homes of older people to encourage safety in the home and remaining there longer. The Forum will also advocate on behalf of older people in terms of legislation etc. relating to housing such as Fair Deal.



Carlow County Development Partnership will aim to expand the Care and Repair provision (subject to funding)



Social
Housing for
Older Adults
in
Leighlinbridge
Co. Carlow

Respect and Social Inclusion



25% of older adults in Carlow have experienced negative attitudes or behaviour towards them as an older person⁵ compared to an average of 13% in other counties. When the source of the ageism was explored over 100 participants did not respond to the source of the negativity. However, those who did respond identified young people as the highest source of negativity at 30%, followed by their community at 26% and Health Professionals at 20%.

PUBLIC ATTITUDES



WE ASKED PEOPLE ABOUT ATTITUDES OR BEHAVIOURS TOWARDS THEM AS AN OLDER PERSON



Issues raised by older adults

“Communities are not as age friendly, younger peoples respect for older adults is lacking on the streets and on transport”.

“Younger people need to visit older neighbours and volunteer with older people. Communities need to reach out to older people”

“Bob-A-Job needs to come back and have young people involved more with older people”

“Young adults need to understand it is not suitable for them to walk 6-7 abreast on the pavement, pushing and shoving each other”.

Short Term Actions (2017)



Carlow Volunteer Centre works to serve all under-represented groups including older adults. We do this by being an active participant on the Carlow Age Friendly Committee and Carlow's Social Inclusion Forum. We support Carlow Older Persons Forum in the recruitment of volunteers. In 2016, CVC were engaged in 15 outreaches across Co. Carlow as a means of engaging with older adults in particular in rural locations, with limited access to transport.



Kilkenny Carlow Education & Training Board will continue to work collaboratively with the members of the Social Inclusion Measures Forum to provide support to target groups such as older people and to work constructively on appropriate identified projects.



Health Promotion within the Health Service Executive will continue to offer training to those working with marginalised groups e.g. support Traveller training to promote health with other Travellers through Primary Healthcare Workers in their community and 'Engage' training in Men's health which builds capacity for health professionals and community workers to work with men in relation to health and social issues and a 10 day Foundation Programme in Sexual Health Promotion, for those who have an opportunity to promote sexual health and influence development of sexual health policies in their workplace.



Carlow County Development Partnership will continue its Care and Repair weekly 'check in' call. They will also continue to support the Older Persons Forum to continue their awareness raising and advocacy work.



The Arts Officer of Carlow County Council will create opportunities for intergenerational activities, such as long term programme initiatives, with older marginalised older people working with library services as a key point of access for artists and communities. They will also work across various sections of the local authority to maximise opportunity for the arts in Carlow.



The **Health Service Executive** through Service Providers Forum and Alzheimer's Society of Ireland will encourage and support the establishment of various group support meetings for individuals in both the early stages and late stages of dementia with an opportunity to meet others, exchange information and support in group discussions and social activities



The Health Service Executive will invite the Alzheimer's Society of Ireland Area Co-ordinator to join the Service Provider's Forum to ensure that the voices of those living with dementia in Carlow are included.



The **Health Service Executive** will work with other Age Friendly Committee members to promote the welfare and safeguarding of vulnerable older persons at risk in line with the Health Service Executive Safeguarding Vulnerable Persons at Risk of Abuse National Policy Dec'14 The Health Service Executive will work with An Garda Síochána and other key stakeholders to ensure that appropriate information and education is available. The Gardai will liaise with Public Health Nurses to ensure vulnerable older adults are included in any crime prevention or other initiatives which would impact on their wellbeing and safety, identifying those at risk of abuse or

neglect.



The Community Section of Carlow County Council will support the Carlow Age Friendly committee and sub-committees in it's County strategy and Carlow Town Strategy implementation



County Carlow Local Sports Partnership will work with local fitness centres and providers to collate a directory of physical activity opportunities for older adults. They will also arrange training opportunities for people in the fitness industry to aid sustainability and increase capacity in physical activity for older adults.



County Carlow Local Sports Partnership will explore the possibility of developing a community coaching programme aimed at older adults and will develop links with IT Carlow to incorporate the older adult population into the practical sessions completed by the relevant course groups.



Carlow County Library Service will promote access for older people and increase the number of older people using the service. They will update stock collection regularly with relevant stock such as audio books, large print and other resources. They will also provide spaces for Age Friendly events and activities to welcome older people and introduce them to library services where possible.



Carlow County Library Service will provide Age Friendly Services in all branches and promote the library as a safe, accessible and welcoming environment for older people whilst engaging with the local communities and groups to help prevent social isolation in service areas and throughout the county.

- Consult with older people when considering existing and new library services.
- Continue the Library Link service in partnership with County Carlow Development Partnership
- Develop the Outreach Library service to include five locations per branch around the county.
- Contact all nursing homes regarding block loan facility for care givers and provide same as requested.

Staff will be made aware of the needs of older people and services they require from the library space.



An Garda Síochána will continue to work with older victims of crime to minimise effects of events including providing information about Victim Assistance and other local services. An Garda Síochána also plan to provide updates on progress of investigations and inform victims through timely communications. They will also work with the Older Persons Forum to establish a Crime Prevention Ambassadors programme with a group of 10-15 older ambassadors.



Corporate Services section of the Local Authority will listen to and meet the representatives of the age friendly movement and the Carlow Older Persons Forum. They will also provide the opportunity for representatives of the Age Friendly Committee and the Carlow Older Persons Forum to address the Joint Policing Committee and Municipal Districts on relevant topics.

Medium Term Actions (2018-2022)



Carlow Older Persons Forum will collaborate and work with local businesses to promote awareness of the importance of having an age friendly business and encourage all local businesses to become more age friendly through the Carlow Older Persons Forum age friendly business programme.



Carlow County Development Partnership will outreach in the community in partnership with other agencies and promote intergenerational and intercultural projects.



The **Health Service Executive's** Mental Health and Wellbeing nurse for Travellers will promote positive mental health and well being, and better access to health service provision for Travellers over 55, who need additional supports for their mental health in association with the Carlow Traveller Community Health Project and the Traveller Men's Health Project, based in St. Catherine's Community Services Centre.



The **Health Service Executive** will deliver a Traveller Specific Chronic Conditions Programme to the Carlow Traveller Community Health Project and Traveller Men's Health Worker which include the 'Ticker' Heart Health training, and Traveller specific training on each of the following: Asthma; diabetes (Type 2) National Screening Programme; Substance Misuse and Mental Health to promote better health and wellbeing among Travellers over 55 in Carlow.



The **Health Service Executive** will support care services to access training for care staff and develop an LGBTI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender / Transsexual and Intersex) friendly care environment as recommended in the Rainbow Report – LGBTI Health needs and experiences and Health Sector responses and Practices in the Health Service Executive South East region published by the Child & Family Agency 2015 Dublin, Niall Crowley.



The **Health Service Executive** will support the roll out of Intercultural Awareness training in Health & Social Care Settings for staff working with older persons care settings.



Kilkenny & Carlow Contact Befriending Service are committed to working with Age Friendly committee members in Carlow to further develop an integrated approach to identifying and engaging with socially isolated older people in the community, especially those older people living alone.



VISUAL will continue to provide accessible age-friendly cultural activities and will consult with older people to devise new and inclusive activities and explore intergenerational projects. VISUAL will also carry out an audit on the building and facilities to ensure they are fully accessible and age friendly.

Long Term Actions (2020-2022)



The **Carlow Older Persons Forum** will continue to lobby for inclusion of older people in all services, intergenerational awareness and understanding and the establishment of concrete strategy to reach older persons suffering exclusion and isolation.



The Arts Office and the **Arts Action Groups** will be developed in key identified sites that will co-curate and co-commission work that directly investigates local issues whilst providing a platform for commissioning high quality artistic participation. This model will support and build artistic ambassadors in Carlow and have a sustainable legacy for future shared collaborations. A series of artists commissions and interventions will take place over an 18 month period by experienced local, national and international socially engaged artists. An interagency approach will be undertaken in an area on the fringes of Urban Carlow Town which is a low socio economic area. An intergenerational approach will be taken to this programme.



Kilkenny & Carlow Contact Befriending Service will continue to build relationships over the duration of the strategy in the community, target older adults who live alone and provide information to rural communities, isolated farmers and their partners via Irish Farm Families & Social Affairs Committee of IFA.



Carlow County Development Partnership will work with other agencies to ensure that older people are included and valued through outreach countywide, provide support to the Older Persons Forum and advocacy.



The **Environment Department of the Local Authority** will endeavour to engage with older adults when considering plans that require public consultation over the lifetime of this strategy.

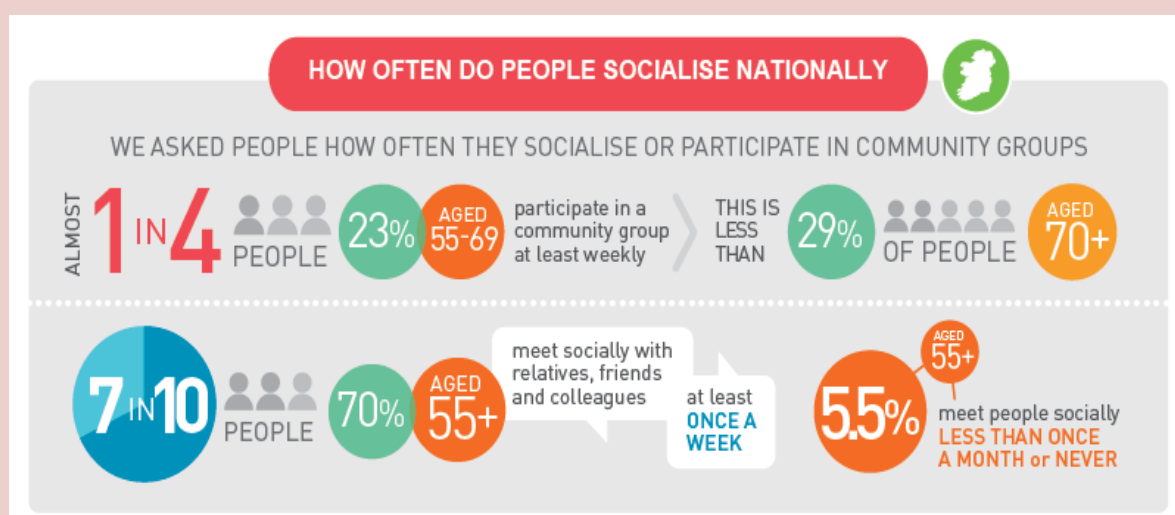
Pat Dunne, Denis Murphy, and George Nolan, from Bennekerry Carlow, at the Active Retirement Ireland Annual Bowls Competition Mayo.



Social Participation

5

Social participation in Carlow is lower than the national average with 36% participating in community groups at least one a month versus 49% nationally (The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing, TILDA 2014). When we investigated this, older people in Carlow told us that the social activities in Carlow do not interest them; this was reported by 37% of survey participants. 25% said the cost of activities was too high and a further 25% said they could not get to the venue where the activity was taking place. 32% attended an active retirement or sports group on a weekly basis while 61% of those surveyed met with family and friendly weekly.



Issues raised by older adults

“Activities are not advertised enough, and transport is difficult”

“Taxi from Sue Ryder in to Carlow is €8.00 this is too much”.

“Ring-a-Link is not always available you have to register and it only runs at certain times which does not always suit socialising”.

“The cinema is so cold in the afternoons when offers are on”

“Parking is still an issue especially at the train station its €4 and sometimes there is no parking available”.

“Active retirements groups are very good, so are Men’s Sheds but we need one in Borris”

Short Term Actions (2017)



Carlow Older Persons Forum supported by Carlow County Development Partnership, Carlow Regional Youth Service and Carlow Men's Shed will run an intergenerational cross-cultural "adopt a granny and granddad programme" so that older generations through hand-written letters, may interact with and communicate with school children who do not have grandparents and also improve respect and understanding across the generations.



Kilkenny & Carlow Contact Befriending Service will continue to recruit volunteer Befrienders with a particular focus on those over 70 living alone in rural areas supported by Public Health Nurses and other service providers.



Carlow Volunteer Centre plays a central role in the social participation of older adults, by supporting members of the public including older adults seeking to volunteer, helping them to identify volunteer opportunities suitable for them and referring them to the volunteering organisation. Follow up contact is provided. In addition, Carlow Volunteer Centre promotes social participation of older adults as volunteers are referred to volunteering organisations that support social participation. These include but are not limited to Kilkenny & Carlow Contact, Day Care Centres (different locations), Meals on Wheels, St. Fiacc's House Sue Ryder Foundation Volunteer Management Training is also available for organisations that depend on volunteers. Carlow Volunteer Centre has successfully supported the referral and placement of Transition Year students from St. Leo's College in St. Fiacc's House Griaguecullen as part of the Enrichment programme. St. Fiacc's house has and continues to be a hub of intergenerational conversation, learning and fun between young students and older adults with the support of Carlow Volunteer Centre and St. Leo's College.



The **Kilkenny Carlow Education and Training Board**, Community Education Facilitator will continue to work with older peoples groups to identify and meet their training needs within budgetary constraints.



The **Health Service Executive** will promote and empower older people to remain socially engaged within their own community through existing structures, processes and networks.



County Carlow Local Sports Partnership will work with Age & Opportunity to organise Go for Life Games, Go for Life Sports Taster and Go for Life Physical Activity Leader Training. They will also conduct an audit of Indoor Bowls clubs, identify issues arising and offer support where appropriate.



County Carlow Local Sports Partnership will develop walking, swimming, cycling for all age groups and taster sessions for particular sports that aid functional fitness e.g. indoor rowing. They will also support and collaborate with local clubs to promote Age Friendly sports clubs – a particular focus for 2017 will be to link with the Health & Wellbeing Officers in the local GAA clubs and the GAA County Board.



Health Promotion within the Health Service Executive will link with the library service, and community organisations in promoting, recruiting for and delivering programmes to older adults such as Age & Opportunity's Taking Stock and Ageing with Confidence 8 week programmes, both in Carlow town and in rural settings.



Carlow County Development Partnership will continue to inform older people of activities/training etc. through Care and Repair, company website, PPN newsletter and the Older Persons Forum. Carlow County Development Partnership will outreach in partnership with other agencies.

Medium Term Actions (2018-2020)



Carlow Older Persons Forum assisted by Carlow County Development Partnership aims to reach out to older persons, particularly older men, living in rural areas of Carlow, provide them with necessary information and links to service providers, promote the benefits of active participation in the community and encourage more social participation, while reducing social exclusion and loneliness.



Kilkenny Carlow Contact Befriending Service will work with the Carlow Older Persons Forum, community groups and voluntary agencies in Carlow to facilitate access for older people to participate in social activities which they have identified as being of interest to them.

Long Term Actions (2020-2022)



Carlow Older Persons Forum will continue to promote and encourage growth of services and activities for older people, participation in active retirement programmes, and new countywide initiatives for older people in Carlow.



Carlow County Development Partnership will conduct research to establish the incidence of social exclusion and participation in Carlow town and county.

Participating at the Age Friendly Consultation in Leighlinbridge, Co. Carlow February 2017



Communication and Information

6

Accessing information continues to be a challenge for older people in Carlow and is common in all areas of the strategy, Housing, Transport, Public Participation etc. National TV is the most common way in which older adults receive information at 82%, with 66% accessing information through newspapers. Local radio at 59% in Carlow is lower than the national average of 77%. 52% of those over 55 use the internet which is higher than the national average of 48%.

In Carlow as in other counties over 55% of people over 70 do not use the internet⁹; however of those who do 80% use it to access information and news. If we examine the 55-69 age group only 17% do not use the internet with a lesser dependence on landlines, Parish Newsletters, Community Notice boards and Citizens Information. Nationally more than 61% of people aged 55-65 have low literacy skills and some have low numeracy skills.

Issues that older adults raised

“Carlow Train station is unhelpful, timetable is impossible to read, very bad communication from Irish Rail”.

“A monthly Pop up Café with information just for older people would be good like Mensana”

“HSE and other agencies need to provide information for people who cannot read”.

“Council needs to clearly sign where Age Friendly Parking is”.

“A weekly column in the Nationalist by older people for older people”

“Make it easier to contact service not just an automated machine”

Short Term Actions (2017)



Carlow Older Persons Forum aims to set up an age friendly, easily accessible website for all older persons, which will contain details of the age friendly strategy and its goals, all services, activities and events of interest to the older person and annual updates and reports of progress etc.



Carlow Volunteer Centre as part of its communication plan is committed to developing and expanding its use of traditional media as a means of engaging with older adults. Carlow Volunteer Centre has increased its coverage in local newspapers in 2016. For the lifetime of this plan Carlow Volunteer Centre plans to engage more with local radio and parish newsletters as a means of communicating with members of the public and older adults in particular. Carlow Volunteer Centre actively promotes across all media volunteering by people of all ages.



An Garda Síochána in their weekly and monthly local radio contribution will include one item of interest for older adults including driving conditions, behaviours towards older drivers and other areas of interest. 90% of older adults listen to the local radio and this medium will be used to maximise ongoing policing message.



An Garda Síochána will also engage in a “Know your Neighbourhood Garda” road show, which will be a targeted community engagement with 10-15 Gardai visiting and introducing themselves to communities. This will increase trust and confidence by lessening the fear of crime.



The **Health Service Executive**, Health & Wellbeing Division will support the roll out of “Making Every Contact Count- MECC” which is an approach to behaviour change which will use the thousands of day to day interactions that the Health Service Executive and other organisations have with people to encourage behaviour change and have a positive effect on health, such as smoking cessation and alcohol reduction.

County Carlow Women's Health Night Event



Residents and Staff from St. Fiacc's House, enjoying a St. Patrick's Day church visit



Kilkenny Carlow Education Training Board is committed to providing information and education programmes information in an age friendly format.



The **Health Service Executive** will design and produce a new patient leaflet for primary care teams in order to enhance knowledge of services and awareness of how to access Health Service Executive Primary Care services i.e. Public Health Nurse, Occupational Therapy, and Physiotherapy.



Carlow County Development Partnership will continue to inform older people through Care and Repair, parish newsletters and mainstream media. Carlow County Development Partnership will continue to support Carlow Older Persons Forum in their communication strategy, written, oral and on line.



The **Health Service Executive** will continue the roll-out and development of <http://www.yourmentalhealth.ie/> and #Little Things Campaign, to promote positive mental health.



County Carlow Museum will continue to provide their services in an Age Friendly way as outlined in their Age Friendly Charter including providing high contrast of colours on information panels for ease of reading.



The Arts Officer will ensure that a basic effective communication system reaches people of all ages and all on line content is updated and user-friendly.



The **Health Service Executive** will co-coordinate through SAGE briefing sessions in the Carlow area on the Assisted Decision-Making (Capacity) Act 2015. The ADM (Capacity) Act 2015, passed into law in December 2015, is the statutory duty to use a human rights based approach to support decision making. This legislation has implications for a broad range of professionals, frontline service providers, voluntary and community organisations and businesses.



The Chief Super Intendant of **An Garda Síochána** will assign an Older Person's Champion within the force who can be a touch point for older adults and their groups.



Health Promotion will work with library Services and other stakeholders to provide educational and information support about health and wellbeing and work to ensure maximum dissemination of promotional material and information on National Screening Services such as Breast, Cervical and Bowel Screening as well as glaucoma for diabetics.



Carlow Library service will actively communicate information on services, facilities and programming in a strategic and focused manner including:-

Update community information notice boards regularly with Age Friendly information and library services.

Highlight and promote library services using relevant organisations.

Make staff aware of the needs of older people and the services they require from library space.

Circulate information highlighting appropriate events and services to all active retirement groups in the county.

Visit some Carlow town and county active retirement groups to detail services. Provide weekly updates on events and services through parish notes / local notes / local radio.

Display posters / flyers in parish centres countywide

Develop a section on their website to provide links to relevant sites whose focus will be on older people.



The Community Section of Carlow County Council will widely distribute information on a regular basis in a suitable format including texting rather than just other social media formats.



Kilkenny & Carlow Contact Befriending Service are committed to distributing information and giving support to older people on any issue which may support them to live independently in their own home and community.



St. Catherine's Community Service Centre, Bagenalstown Family Resource Centre, Forward Steps Tullow and others will provide computer training to older people who have never used the internet to allow them access services online under the Digital Skills for Citizens programme.



An Garda Síochána will launch an Age Friendly Text Alert System in consultation with Carlow's Older Persons Forum.



Community Assistant Directors of Public Health Nursing and Sergeant Hud Kelly, Muinebheag, attending the Leighlinbridge Consultation

Medium Term Actions (2018-2020)



Carlow Older Persons Forum aims to collaborate with public bodies and service providers to make their services more age friendly, particularly those who use technology to engage with and communicate information to older people. The Older Persons Forum aims to advise them in relating to older people and their needs.



Carlow Older Persons Forum supported by Carlow Citizens Information Service and Money Advice and Budgeting Service (MABS) aims to address the significant problem that older people have accessing information on rights and money issues and concerns of privacy in relation to such matters and encourage older people to use these services.



Carlow County Development Partnership will pilot a text information service to all OPF members to be expanded subject to outcomes.



The **Health Service Executive** will introduce measures to promote a better understanding of dementia including modifiable risk factors and work with partners to ensure that the stigma sometimes associated with the condition is reduced.



The **Health Service Executive** will work in partnership with the National Dementia Office to map existing services within Carlow/Kilkenny and the wider Community Health Organisation (CHO5, Carlow/ Kilkenny, Waterford, Wexford and South Tipperary). This information will be used to inform the implementation of the National Dementia Strategy, with specific focus on integrated services, supports and care for people with dementia and their carers. The data will also inform service planning and assist in developing a directory of dementia specific services in every county. It will also provide a baseline from which to conduct further research into dementia specific services available in the community.

Long Term Actions (2020-2022)



The **Age Friendly Committee** will ensure that there is an Age Friendly Communication Strategy in all service providers and stakeholders in Carlow town and county.



Carlow County Development Partnership will support the Carlow Older Persons Forum to develop and design their own age friendly website, produce their own publications and use technology to reach those experiencing isolation.



Corporate Services section of the Local Authority will support all publicity campaigns of the Carlow Age Friendly Committee across the lifetime of this strategy.

Carlow Men's Shed Group attending Volunteer Day Celebrations



Civic Participation & Employment



Carlow has high levels of older volunteering with 30% volunteering weekly and 37% volunteering monthly v 28% nationally. 38% of respondents said they were happy with the level of volunteering they did while over 46% said they did not know. A further 12% said they would like to increase their volunteering with 4% wishing to decrease their level of volunteering.



64% of those surveyed said they were retired and 40% said they had retired earlier than expected. In the last 12 months 45% of respondents had contacted their local or national politician and a further 31% said they offered their opinion in an official capacity as an older person. However the response to this question was low with only 36% of respondents completing the question about political and civic activities.

Issues raised by older adults

“Older adults should be able to work if that is their choice, some people don’t want to retire”.

“Older people need to get more involved in workshops and consultations (like this)”

“Older people should use their voice more and object to planning and issues that affect them”

Short Term Actions (2017)



Carlow Older Persons Forum will continue to work to promote the various programmes available to all older people in Carlow. Particularly, Carlow Older Persons Forum will work with service providers to provide information about opportunities available to the older person after retirement including volunteering with CVC.



Corporate Service of the Local Authority will provide pre-retirement planning to all interested staff who are interested in retirement planning.



Carlow Volunteer Centre will continue to promote older adult's civic participation through volunteering by ensuring that their service is accessible to older adults. Carlow Volunteer Centre through their active participation and membership of Carlow Age Friendly Committee will also remain informed of potential opportunities for them to promote and support the civic participation of older adults. Carlow Volunteer Centre will continue its support of the Carlow Older Persons Forum in the referral of volunteers and in the capacity building of the Carlow Older Persons Forum to develop and maintain an effective volunteer management programme.



Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board will actively support older adults who are unemployed, looking to change career path or return to the workforce in gaining the information they will need to assist them to identify their up skilling and training needs to reach this goal.



Carlow County Library Service will provide an informal environment for those who wish to learn new skills. Programme development will include events around national initiatives such as Bealtaine that encourage older people to access computers, learn computer skills and encourage lifelong learning. The action plan includes:-

- Host and deliver ICS Skills Benefit4 beginner computer classes.
- Library Tours provided by staff re resources available both print and online. Tours of Local Studies section will also be provided.
- The Work Matters library collection pilot project will be extended to all branches providing business and employment support in partnership with Carlow Local Enterprise Office.
- Comprehensive annual Bealtaine programme will be delivered collaboratively with a range of organisations providing a range of activities across the library network.
- Movie clubs, book clubs and weekly Irish circles will be programmed.

The above actions will continue to be delivered throughout the duration of the strategy.



Carlow County Development Partnership through its SICAP (Social Inclusion and Community Activation) programme will continue to support community groups, e.g. Carlow Men's Shed, to develop social enterprises such as community benches. Carlow County Development Partnership will continue to support Carlow Older Peoples Forum to advocate on their own behalf.



The **Local Enterprise Office** provides a variety of economic development and business support services with a variety of user groups. Support decisions and supports are

provided on the basis of commercial evaluation of a project. All services are available for older persons and the LEO Offices will continue to support self-employment options for older people.



The **Environment Department of the Local Authority** will engage with older adults to offer advice and support in terms of waste minimisation and cost effective measures to dispose of domestic waste. Advice will also be given in relation to recycling.

Medium Term Actions (2018-2020)



Carlow Older Persons Forum will continue to work with service providers to promote lifelong opportunities, civic participation opportunities, education opportunities, and employment opportunities for the older people in Carlow. Carlow Older Persons Forum is committed to promoting equal opportunities in the workplace for ageing employees and will work with local businesses to support older employees.



Through a partnership approach **Carlow County Development Partnership** will promote civic engagement and voter participation e.g. Advocacy programme with Carlow College. Carlow County Development Partnership will highlight the benefits of older workers to business and industry through the Age Friendly Business group. This will be delivered with the Older Persons Forum.

Long Term Actions (2020-2022)



The **Older Persons Forum** aims to explore through research the number of older people involved in education or work and who are engaged in their communities through civic participation with the support of Country Carlow Development Partnership.



**Chief Super Intendent, Dominic Hayes,
Making a House Call**

Community Support & Health Services



While health inequality is evident across different groups of older people, in general older people in Carlow self reported as being healthier than in other areas. 55% of over 70s reported good or very good health v 59% in other counties. 72% of the 55-69 age group reported their health as good or very good.

However we know that the age group over 80 and over 90 has significantly increased care needs. Almost 50% of those surveyed over 55 had received a diagnosis of arthritis while another 46% suffered from high blood pressure. 91% of over 70s had visited their GP in the last 12 months while this figure dropped to 78% for the 55-69 age group. Only 8% of 55-69 year olds used the service of their Public Health Nurse, while 33% of over 70s did. Of the services that they did not receive those surveyed said Chiropody (40%) Dental (30%) and Physiotherapy (26%) were the services they felt they needed most.

5.4% of people in Carlow over 55 smoke (national average 14%). Older smokers (65 and over) are the least likely to attempt to quit (just 37% have tried in the past year) despite being the most vulnerable to the harmful effects of smoking. 69% of the 55-69 age group did 150 minutes of exercise per week, and 49% of the over 70s group. 73% of older adults cared for another person and this was equal across both age groups.

Issues raised by older adults

“Small procedures should be available in the local areas”

“Signage needs to be improved in the new section of the Hospital (St. Luke’s)”

“Men’s Health check up service needed locally”

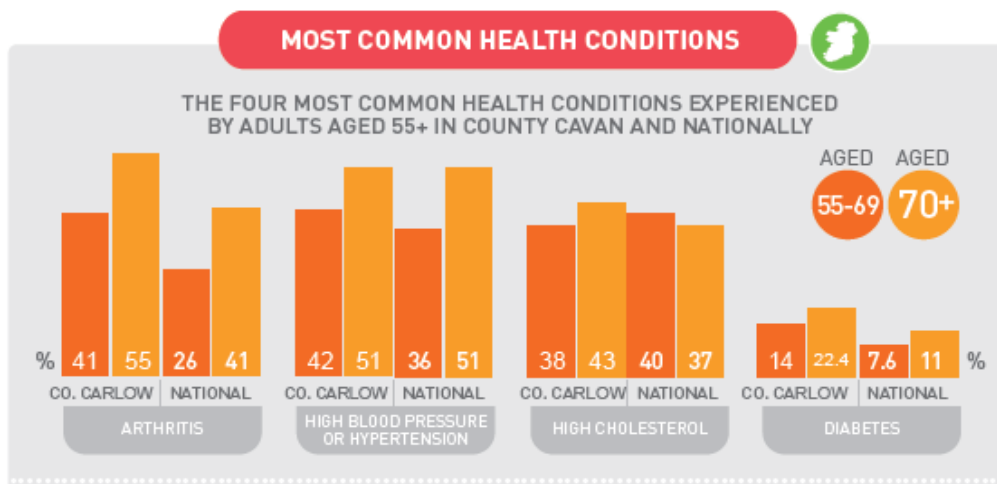
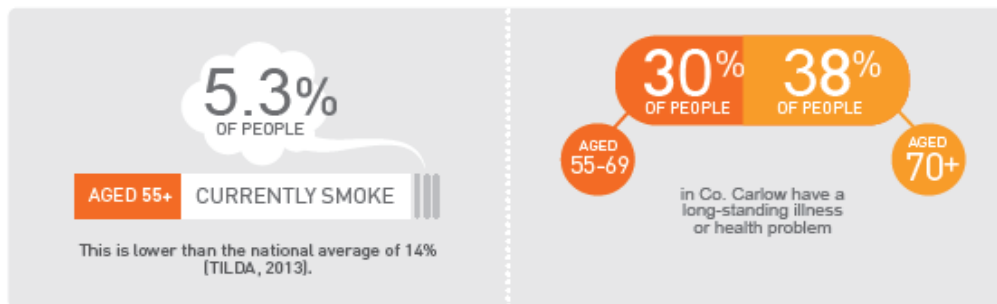
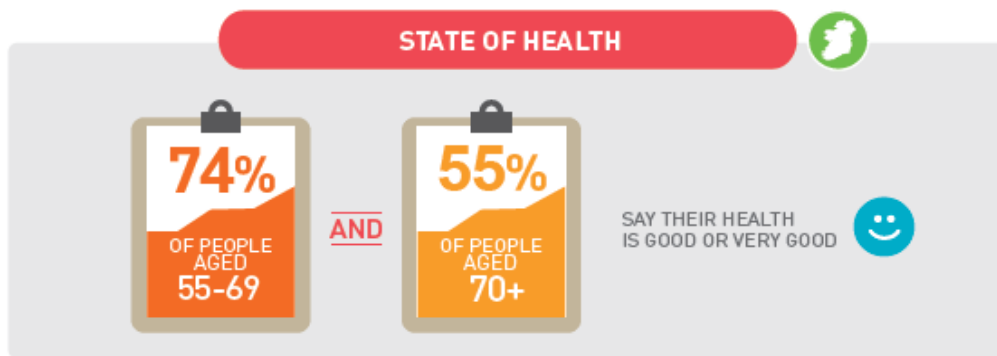
“More people living on their own need to take responsibility for their own health”

Breast check age limit should be expanded”


“Buddy Bench – a seat to healthy chat”


Health Service is excellent once you get in; the Care Doc service is very good.


Providing your own transport from St. Luke’s A&E to Waterford is not easy for an older person



Short Term Actions (2017)

- 

The Health Service Executive Older Persons Service will implement a revised model of Homecare in collaboration and consultation with the National Clinical programme for Older Persons, National Older Person’s office and other divisions within the community Health Organisation, hospital groups and older people. This is directly in response to the National Positive Ageing Strategy 2013 goal 3 “enabling people to age with confidence, security and dignity in their own homes and communities for as long as possible”
- 

The Health Service Executive Older Persons Service will build capacity and reform existing Service Providers by reviewing unmet need in local communities in the areas of Day Care, Meals on Wheels and other community support services.
- 

The Health Service Executive will continue to support the development the Day Hospital and Memory Clinic at Sacred Heart Hospital to ensure that older people from Carlow can have access to a comprehensive geriatric service.



St. Luke's General Hospital will continue to provide its Geriatric Emergency Medicine (GEMS) team whose aim is to:

- To provide access to Comprehensive Geriatric Assessment (Multidisciplinary) for patients over 75 years old presenting to ED and AMAU (Acute Medical Assessment Unit).
- To improve functional outcomes for older people attending the hospital
- To increase discharges from acute floor and reduce numbers of patients admitted
- To reduce re-attendance rates of non-admitted patients
- To reduce Length of Stay of admitted patients
- To reduce readmission rates
- To reduce the institutionalisation of older people



The Health Service Executive will support, directly and indirectly, through the Service Providers Forum, the roll out of the national advocacy programme, SAGE (Sage Support and Advocacy Service for Older People) into the community to ensure older adults have access to supports and information and an independent advocate volunteer that will support their independence and wellbeing.



Carlow Volunteer Centre will continue to support organisations by the referral of volunteers, provision of information, training and capacity building in the area of effective Volunteer Management. Carlow Volunteer Centre continues to promote volunteer opportunities and promote the positive impacts of volunteering via traditional media to reach older people. Carlow Volunteer Centre provides this service to a range of existing organisations which support older adults for example Day Care Centres, Carlow Libraries, Meals on Wheels, St. Fiacc's House. Carlow Volunteer Centre supports other organisations across the Disability, Mental Health and Social Inclusion sectors.



Carlow County Development Partnership will continue to operate the Care and Repair programme. They will also continue to support the Carlow Older Persons Forum in its work with the Health Service Executive and other stakeholders



St. Catherine's Community Services, and other providers in Carlow, will continue to coordinate the provision of Monitored Alarms to older people in Carlow enabling them to feel secure and remain in their homes independently.



Kilkenny & Carlow Contact Befriending and Support Service will form partnerships with local Public Health Nurses and community groups who provide alarms in Carlow Town and County to ensure that older people will be able to access Socially Monitored Alarms and any additional telecare devices to encourage ongoing independent living.



St. Catherine's Community Services Centre and other Meals on Wheels providers, will help meet the need of older people to live independently through the provision of Meals on Wheels. **St. Catherine's** will do so directly and via Outreach services such as Leighlinbridge and Fenagh in collaboration with Public Health Nurses. They will also promote and support other Meals on Wheels services in Carlow to adopt the Quality Standard framework to help services develop and benchmark their service.



Patricia Morrin-Deay Meals on Wheels Chef & Kitchen Manager at St. Catherine's Community Services Centre following their award winning achievements.



The **Health Service Executive** will progress the Respiratory COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) and Asthma Integrated Care initiative across Carlow / Kilkenny with the aim of providing support for up to 24 GP practices across the two areas.



The **Health Service Executive** will establish and maintain a register of patients with COPD / Asthma within the Clinical Nurse Specialist caseload and facilitate the development of registers within GP practices in Carlow.



The **Health Service Executive** will deliver a Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) led clinic COPD / Asthma clinic. The CNS will focus on patients over 16 with a confirmed diagnosis of COPD/Asthma who are poorly managed as evidenced by their attendance with an Asthma exacerbation, GP/Out of hour's service, Emergency Department and or admission to hospital in the previous 6 months. Each patient will have a comprehensive assessment including a spirometry test and in conjunction with MDT individual care plans will be developed. Patients with specific symptoms will be provided with specific symptom management strategies.



The **Health Service Executive** will deliver 4 physiotherapy pulmonary rehabilitation programmes weekly for people with COPD in Carlow and Kilkenny. Each programme will provide for 10 people attending, this will include 2 groups attending twice weekly in Carlow over an 8 week period. Each group has an exercise session twice weekly and one educational session. Pre and post programme assessments are done on an individual basis for each person and every person has an individualised plan.



The **Health Service Executive** will enhance the Respiratory Integrated Care programme in Carlow through the provision of Occupational Therapy education on fatigue management and energy through the delivery of one session on each of the 2 pulmonary rehabilitation programmes to be delivered in Carlow.



The **Health Service Executive** will progress the Heart Failure clinical programme with the aim of providing support to up to 24 GP practices as follows:

- The Health Service Executive will provide a point of care testing for natriuretic peptide and ECG within GP practices.
- The Health Service Executive will set up referral pathway for heart failure patients for the Virtual Heart Failure Clinic in St Luke's Hospital which will provide support and guidance to GP in managing heart failure patients.



The **Health Service Executive** will assist participating GP practices in setting up a register for Heart Failure patients.



The **Health Service Executive** will complete recruitment of a second Clinical Nurse Specialist post in Carlow / Kilkenny in 2017



Carlow Older Persons Forum will continue to collaborate with service providers, particularly the Health Service Executive, to help provide information of services to the older population and to those who are most isolated. Carlow Older Persons Forum will continue to work with all service providers, particularly the Health Service Executive to improve facilities.

Medium Term Actions (2018-2020)



Carlow Older Persons Forum will continue to participate on and develop its links with the patient partnerships in Kilkenny and Waterford, to advocate for Hospital Link and to put older person's needs at the front of the Health Service Executive agenda.



The **Health Service Executive Older Person's Service** will develop guidelines to integrate physical activity into long-term care in both Sacred Heart Hospital and Carlow District planning and practice in all residential care centres in collaboration with Physiotherapy. These guidelines will be available to private nursing homes in the area also. This is in line with the National Guidelines for Physical Activity for Ireland which recommends that older people (aged 65+) engage in at least 30 minutes a day (or 150 minutes a week) of moderate physical activity, with a focus on aerobic activity, muscle strengthening and balance. Regular physical activity reduces the risk of chronic diseases such as coronary heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, stroke, cancer, osteoporosis and depression. In addition for older people in particular, regular physical activity reduces the risk of falls and resulting injuries as well as improving cognitive function. Nursing home residents are at the highest risk of falls, fractures and osteoporosis (CARE Pals)



The **Health Service Executive** will ensure the provision of counselling services to those that require it via:

1) Counselling in Primary Care Service which is a free confidential HSE professional counseling service offering short term counselling for medical card holders. Referrals are made through Carlow GPs.

2) The Self-Harm Intervention Programme (SHIP) which is a free confidential Health Service Executive professional counselling service offering short term counselling to individuals aged 16 and over who are experiencing suicidal ideation or the impulse to self-harm. Referral is through a person's GP or other medical professional.

3) Bereavement Counselling for Traumatic Deaths. Referral is from a G.P. or other Health Professional e.g. Psychiatrist, Psychologist, Social Worker or other Counselling Service. It is for age 16 and up with or without medical card and the individual can avail of 12 sessions. There is no charge. The individual must however be bereaved through the following circumstances: suicide, homicide, road traffic accident, industrial/agricultural/domestic accident or drowning.



The **Health Service Executive** through the Carlow /Kilkenny Service Providers Forum will promote positive mental health for older people and provide guidance and support on how best to look after your mental health in line with research which shows that there are five key issues that can impact on the mental wellbeing of older people being discrimination, participation in meaningful activities, relationships, physical health and poverty.



The **Health Service Executive** will deliver Audiology services which are responsive to local needs which will include: a) Deliver a weekly minor hearing aid repair clinic in Waterford and b) Deliver a weekly ear mould clinic in Waterford both of which are accessible to residents of Carlow.



Carlow County Development Partnership will continue to explore 'Hospital Link' and other innovative options to assist older people.



The **Service Providers Forum** supported by the Health Service Executive will review possible community projects including dementia and age specific spaces and activities using available networks and resources, in gardens and secure spaces which are accessible and cater for all ages and are dementia friendly.



The **Health Service Executive** will ensure clear integrated care pathways for all older persons who require health services including those living with dementia is available, and assistance is provided to GPs and to those living with dementia and their families and carers to identify and access local service and supports.



The **Health Service Executive** through the community dietetic services in Health Promotion will deliver a structured patient education for people with Type 2 diabetes (Xpert Programme) which is usually late onset and therefore more prevalent in older adults.



The Health Service Executive Older Persons Service will progress the Health Service Executive national plan for the local designated care centre for older persons within the community in line with Capital expenditure Plans for 2021 and in line with Health information and Quality Authority (HIQA) Standards and Health Act 2007 (registration of designated centres for older people) Regulations 2015.



The **Health Service Executive Older Person's Services** will build capacity of older people to maintain their health and wellbeing through existing structures such as Service Providers Forum and Carlow Older Persons Forum. They will also continue to implement the actions from the National Dementia and the National Carer's Strategy through existing processes and structures within Carlow.



Bingo in St. Fiacc's Day Care Centre Graiguecullen, Carlow



The **Health Service Executive** acute services and community services will continue to work collaboratively to support earlier discharge from hospital supported by rapid response community teams, to minimise hospital stays for older adults.



St. Luke's Hospital Health Service Executive will establish a Frailty Unit in the acute hospital to ensure older vulnerable adults are fast tracked through Accident and Emergency through a "comfort clinic" setting, reducing hospital admissions and supporting assessment and treatment in an appropriate way.

Long Term Actions (2020-2022)



Carlow Older Persons Forum will continue to promote active participation in age friendly health and recreational facilities and activities that local services provide. OPF assisted by Carlow County Development Partnership will develop a regional forum to agitate on behalf of older persons.

Strategic Implementation

Governance & Structure

The Carlow Age Friendly County Committee is responsible for the strategic direction and policy development of age friendly policies and practices in Carlow. The Service Providers Forum supports the work of the committee and forms part of the implementation group of the committee. All members of the committee and their respective teams are involved in the delivery of the strategic plans both individually and collectively. All committee members work closely together with a multitude of stakeholders at municipal and national level to continue to future proof Carlow to make sure it is the best place in which to grow old.

Annual Operational Plans

It is recognised that this strategy is a living document, and new opportunities, policies, and funding may evolve during this period of the strategy. The committee also recognises that the plan is subject to external factors at a national and international level which may influence the plans delivery. For this purpose the plans are reviewed on a rolling basis and delivery is reported on annually.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The committee will use the following methods to evaluate and measure the plan's progress;

- Quarterly meetings with members providing updates on their individual actions.
- Production of an Annual Report which will detail the progress of specific actions against the short, medium and long term objectives.
- The Carlow Age Friendly Committee is responsible for the delivery of the county Age Friendly Strategy which is an action of the Local Economic Community Plan (LECP) and will report to the LECD bi-annually on the progress of the strategy's implementation.
- The Committee will work with Age Friendly national structures to identify and measure age friendly indicators as the HaPAI Project develops.

This strategy and the action plan, the means by which it will be implemented, reflect the commitment of the committee and stakeholders to continue to develop Carlow town and county as a great place to grow old.

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Midge	Nolan	Community Section Carlow County Council
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Janette	O'Brien	Environmental Awareness Officer, Carlow County Council
Arlene	O'Connor	Executive Planner, Carlow County Council
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Anthony	Farrell	Inspector An Garda Síochána, Carlow & Kilkenny Age Friendly Champion
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John	Shortall	Acting County Librarian, Carlow County Council

Influencing Strategies and documents

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