



# Age Friendly Anglesey Baseline Assessment



# Age Friendly Anglesey Baseline Assessment: Age Friendly Communities Engagement Programme

## Context

In October 2021, Age Cymru Gwynedd a Môn and Medrwn Môn were jointly commissioned by the Isle of Anglesey County Council to lead on an Anglesey Engagement Programme. The work had two aims;

1. To collect the thoughts, opinions and experiences of the residents of Anglesey to help shape Anglesey County Council's application to the World Health Organisation to have Anglesey officially recognised as an Age Friendly Community
2. To collect the thoughts, opinions and experiences of the residents on the four key aims of the Strategy for an Ageing Society, in order to create a localised strategy for Anglesey

This report focuses on the engagement programme carried out by Age Cymru Gwynedd a Môn from October 2021 – April 2022, primarily led by the Anglesey Community Hub Liaison and Support Officer.

Our Engagement Programme combined both aims, with work, through the key themes, focused on identifying a) what's working well in the community b) what needs to be improved c) what's working well elsewhere which could be replicated.

## Scoping Work

To effectively carry out the Engagement Programme it was agreed to firstly identify what existing relevant engagement work was already out there, and for any further engagement work to complement rather than duplicate that. This scoping work took place from November 2021 – January 2022.

## Steering Group

To identify the existing work in place and to shape our Engagement Programme a Steering Group of key stakeholders was formed. Members included:

- Sioned Young, Anglesey Community Hub Liaison and Support Officer, Age Cymru Gwynedd a Môn (Chair)
- Aled Evans, Business and Development Manager, Age Cymru Gwynedd a Môn
- Brian Jones, Strategy Co-ordinator for Older People, Anglesey Council

- Osian Elis, Assistant Manager, Gorwel
- Seiriol Edwards, Third Sector and Community Well-being Officer, Medrwn Môn
- Delyth Owen, Community Involvement Officer, Medrwn Môn
- Anne Jones, Local Asset Coordinator, Medrwn Môn
- Sheree Ellingworth, Local Asset Coordinator, Medrwn Môn
- Chris Thomas, Anglesey Older People's Council Representative
- Arwel Jones, Principal Development Officer, Anglesey Council Housing Services
- Llio Rowlands, Anglesey Council Housing Services
- Eban Geal, Exercise Referral Professional (Dementia), Môn Actif

The Steering Group met virtually on three occasions: 02/11/21, 12/01/22 and 31/03/22, and communicated regularly on e-mail. The Steering Group supported in;

1. Recognising and sharing any relevant existing engagement work
2. Give advice on steps forward
3. Support the work of spreading the word about the work, through their networks and by supporting individuals to take part

## Background Research

Through the initial scoping work, the following existing work was identified and put into consideration when shaping our Engagement Programme;

- Anglesey Housing Assistance Programme Strategy Consultation 2022 to 2026
- Your Service, Your Say
- Age Cymru Community Calculator (Anglesey)



Community

Calculator - anglesey cymunedau oed gyfeil



cyflwyniad

- North Wales Population Needs Assessment:  
[Population-Needs-Assessment-April-2022-Final-2.1.pdf \(northwalescollaborative.wales\)](#)
- Age Cymru Lockdown Survey (Anglesey)
- Gorwel Service Reviews 2021 Older People Floating Support, Anglesey
- Age Friendly Communities Presentation (Ynys Môn) Môn Together (May 2012)



AFC POWER POINT 4  
May 2012- FINAL.ppt

- Ynys Mon Age Friendly Communities Final Report (2014)



- Canolfan Beaumaris Community Consultation (Ongoing)
- Anglesey Wellbeing Assessment  
[3-4-9-70-1-Anglesey-Well-Being-Assessment.pdf \(llesiantgwyneddaron.org\)](https://www.llesiantgwyneddaron.org/3-4-9-70-1-Anglesey-Well-Being-Assessment.pdf)

There were also several good practice examples shared of other worldwide communities who had successfully become Age Friendly Communities. Reading this work helped to shape the methodology for our Engagement Programme.

Scoping work identified several areas where effective engagement work had already taken place, with inputs from the Anglesey Council Housing Services and Gorwel providing detailed findings from their service users.

## Methodology

As agreed by the Steering Group, the Engagement Programme was structured to include both quantitative and qualitative methods of engagement. Paper and Digital Questionnaires were formed, and a combination of in-person and virtual Focus Groups were arranged.

We combined the eight Age Friendly Communities domains and four key aims of the Wales Strategy for an Ageing Society to create questions under the following five categories:

- Health and Wellbeing
- Housing
- Transport
- Public Spaces
- Community Life
- Ageing Well

Utilising the Anglesey Community Hub Liaison and Support Officer's established relationships with Community Hubs, it was agreed that we would target the majority of Focus Groups to take place within Community Hubs. Through previous engagement work we were also aware that since the pandemic, Community Hubs have become a pivotal link with older people in the community in terms of information and support. We aimed for this in turn to lead to us reaching more older, isolated individuals in the community, and to offer the chance to share their thoughts in a trusted, local location.

We publicly launched the Engagement Programme in late January 2022, and collaborated with both Steering Group members and further external stakeholders to engage with participants.

For the work an Equality Impact Report was prepared. We also followed guidance documents by the Ombudsman and the Commissioner for the Welsh Language to ensure the Engagement Work was fairly carried out in both Welsh and English. Participants were also offered the opportunity to share their thoughts on how the local strategy under consideration could be complied or modified so that it would have positive, or more positive, effects on not treating the Welsh language less favourably than the English language.

## Focus Groups

In total 15 Focus Groups were held between 01.02.22 and 26.04.22. Fourteen were held in-person within Community Hubs, with one held virtually over Zoom.

The Focus Groups were advertised in various different ways including on Social Media, Door-to-door leafleting, Noticeboards, E-mail Invitations, and direct referrals from Steering Group Members.

On some occasions, Focus Groups were arranged to coincide with existing meetings/events. These included the Bryngwran Focus Group, which took part during the village's monthly Community Afternoon Tea; and Gwalchmai Focus Group, which took place during the Gwalchmai Older People Group's fortnightly session. This proved successful in attaining a large number of participants. Participants were informed beforehand that the events/meeting would include a Focus Group.

A small budget was allocated to each Focus Group to support with getting people to attend, to which the Hub Coordinators were free to choose how was best to spend the money. Many chose to allocate the money to cover the cost of light refreshments. Other fees included Room Hire, and transport costs to support people to reach the venue.

Here is a list of all Focus Groups. A full, detailed report for each Focus Group is available to view in the report's attachments:

- HWB Cemaes – 01.02.22
- Knit & Natter, Holyhead – 08.02.22
- Gwelfor, Holyhead – 15.02.22
- Canolfan Beaumaris (x4) 15.02.22, 22.02.22, 24.02.22, 26.02.22
- Older People's Council – 18.02.22 (Zoom)
- Canolfan Henoed Gwalchmai – 22.02.22
- Neuadd Llanddeusant – 23.02.22
- Iorwerth Arms, Bryngwran – 25.02.22

- Neuadd Llanfaelog – 16.03.22
- LlanNi, Llannerchymedd – 05.04.22
- Neuadd Llaingoch – 11.04.22
- Caffi Mechell, Llanfechell – 26.04.22

Focus Groups had a total of 168 participants.

All Focus Groups, with the exception of Gwelfor and Beaumaris (15.02.22) were led by the Anglesey Community Hub Liaison and Support Officer. Focus Group structure varied depending on the group. On some occasions, the Focus Groups were advertised as more of an informal drop-in session and so separate flip-chat papers on each key theme were set out, and participants encouraged to note their thoughts, opinions and experiences on post-it notes.

In the majority of Focus Groups a more formalised structure was followed, with the Officer facilitating a group discussion. On all occasions participants were properly informed of the purpose of the work and what we would do with the information received. All responses were collected anonymously, and individual Focus Group reports were made available to the participating Community Hubs to use the learning to help influence their own work going forward.

A full outline of the structure for each session can be seen in the individual reports.

## Questionnaires

Both paper and digital questionnaires were created and circulated widely. Steering Group members and external stakeholders supported with the work of sharing the questionnaires. Questionnaires were also left at all Focus Group venues to target those in the community who were unable to attend, and those who wished to share any additional thoughts not said in the Focus Group.

A total of 45 questionnaires were completed. A full report of their responses is available to view in the additional attachments.

The number of questionnaire responses was fewer than expected, though through feedback this was identified to be for two key factors;

- High number of questionnaires by various organisations in circulation at the same time, giving a sense of questionnaire overkill.
- The questionnaire itself was quite extensive. Despite efforts to reassure participants that they did not have to complete all sections, the volume of information requested did put some off.

The quality of the questionnaire responses received however was very strong, with participants taking the time to provide detailed responses.

Demographic of respondents (of those who chose to complete the Equality Monitoring Form) were 66% Female/ 37% Male, 50% Had a Disability, and 32% were Carers. 59% of respondents were aged between 65-74 years old, with 18% aged between 55-64 and 14% aged 75 and above.

## Walkability Tool

Highlighting the variety of engagement methods undertaken during this process, Medrwn Môn focused mainly on utilising the Walkability Tool. The Walkability Tool invites members of the community to walk around their communities whilst discussing and identifying local assets and issues. The Community Involvement Officer worked with the Local Asset Coordinators from the Medrwn Môn Social Prescribing project to plan and carry out: 22 walks across 5 Wards on the Island with over 100 individuals participating.

The walks were complimented by the online questionnaire and the conversations were all reported on printed Walkability toolkits. Links to the toolkit were shared with community councillors and local groups to encourage more people to take part.

## Key Findings

Below are the key findings and overarching themes from the Engagement Programme, split into the separate categories of questions asked.

Many of the responses identified key localised issues, which are available to view within the individual Focus Group, Walkability and Questionnaire reports (available on request).

## Health and Wellbeing

The three most discussed topics under this category were as follows:

### 1. Difficulty in accessing GP appointments

This was a common issue raised in several communities. Many invited the welcome return of in-person consultations. Several noted to have been left feeling like a burden, and scared to ask for help.

### 2. Impact of the loss of NHS Ear Wax Removal Service

There were numerous cases of individuals reporting the impact of the loss of the NHS Ear Wax Removal Service. Impacts included the financial challenges of paying up to £80 for the service, and a loss of confidence and mobility to those no longer able to access the service on the NHS.

### 3. Lack of Mental Health Support

Several reports of long wait times for access to Mental Health Support, or not knowing how to access the support if required.

## Housing

The three most discussed topics under this category were as follows:

### **1. Not enough adequate housing for everyone**

Many shared their experiences of families and young people in particular having to move away from the area due to the current housing market. Concerns were raised over the long-term impact this will have on Ageing Well, including lack of local family support for older adults requiring care, and the economic impact.

### **2. Anglesey Council's Sheltered Housing very suitable for an Ageing Population**

Several good stories were shared by Anglesey Council Housing Services Tenants. These particularly highlighted the suitable adaptations in place to support independent living in older age, and the gardening services provision.

This feedback was shared with the caveat that the provision is good, when people can access it. The Engagement Programme also identified several individuals who have been on long waiting lists to be relocated into Sheltered Accommodation.

### **3. More information required to support older people living in their own homes (e.g. maintaining your garden, fitting adaptations etc.)**

Where provision is strong for those living in Council Sheltered Accommodation, individuals who own their own home reported it difficult to know where to access the services and support to make suitable adaptations in their home to support independent living in older age. With the increasing cost of living, many also reported to be unable to afford those costs themselves.

## Community Life

Testament to the fact that Focus Groups took place within Community Group settings, this was the most discussed topic.

The three most discussed topics under this category were as follows:

### **1. A need for offline resources to help people know what's going on**

Many reported that they were most informed about what was going on during lockdown, thanks to community leafleting and posters. Ideas of how to utilise that included introducing a community newsletter, frequent distribution of flyers, and better utilising



community noticeboards were all offered as ideas by participants of ways to improve the provision of offline information sharing within communities.

Those with no affiliations with Community Hubs found it particularly hard to know what's going on in the community and who should they ask to find out.

## **2. A strong community spirit in several communities**

This was reported in several Focus Groups, with the pandemic having played a key role in bringing communities closer together. Many successful community initiatives and volunteering projects which could be replicated elsewhere on the island were shared.

## **3. Big interest in intergenerational work and community gardening projects**

These were two topics of great interest in most communities. The main factors which held communities back from starting such projects were a lack of information of what's available, and funding to start the projects.

## **Transport**

The two most discussed topics under this category were as follows:

### **1. Poor bus provision in North Anglesey**

This was one of the most discussed topics from respondents living in North Anglesey. Many reported to have lost their independence and have feelings of loneliness and isolation due to the current ineffective provision in place.

Particular examples included the lack of any provision on Sundays, and the weekday provision in place restricting individuals to live an independent life and age well.

Those with access to a car and living in North Anglesey often noted how they couldn't foresee themselves being able to live an independent life without a car.

### **2. Need for printed bus timetables**

Several individuals reported to not being online and so requested the return of printed, up-to-date bus timetables.

### **3. Bring services to people**

Where many find it difficult to access in person services such as healthcare in hospitals and information and advice by charities and organisations, many welcomed the idea of resolving the transport issue by bringing services to the community, rather than taking the people to the services, particularly in rural communities.

## Public Spaces

The three most discussed topics under this category were as follows:

### 1. Dog Fouling

This was a common issue in most communities. Where some reported to have enough bins, the overarching issue was the lack of accountability and enforcement of the law on the dog owners.

### 2. Cars parking on pavements

This was a challenge identified in both rural and urban settings. We received several stories of the impact car parking on pavements had on the older population in particular, including blocking the safe route for those in mobility scooters.

### 3. Stricter traffic calming measures required in rural villages

Many noted challenges with speeding traffic through rural villages, in particular heavy farm traffic. Most communities who noted this stated that they had campaigned with the Council to have traffic calming measures introduced, though none were successful. The majority reported that they had been unsuccessful in seeing changes being made, having received the feedback that there hadn't been enough accidents to warrant any changes.

## Ageing Well

The two most discussed topics under this category were as follows:

### 1. Difficulty accessing information if not online

Many reported to not know where to turn for information and advice in terms of Ageing Well, in particular of which is accessible offline. These included what's on in the community, benefits and advice, and specific information in relation to ageing well.

### 2. Many not yet planning for Later Life

When asked if they felt they had the suitable resources in place and felt confident for Later Life, many shared that they had not really considered later life or planning for it.

Suggestions for moving forward include more work to be done to promote the importance of later life planning. This is testified by several stories received of individuals who had lost a partner suddenly and were now facing challenges with loneliness, finance and confidence.

## Quotes

Here are a few examples of what people told us during the engagement programme. We have tried to include a balance of positive comments, and some of the issues identified under the six key headings.

### Health and Wellbeing

“In my experience the health and care system supported my ageing mother in her final weeks. Can’t fault the support we were given as a family” (HWB Cemaes)

"Too much reliance on digital technology. Older people are getting more used to it but usually prefer face to face. A potential here for health and social care inequality."  
(Neuadd Llanfaelog)

“Social care in our communities is important-if you are leaving hospital there needs to be adequate care at home” (Talybolion)

### Housing

- On the whole, I think Anglesey manages its elderly population well. My experience of living in sheltered accommodation has been excellent. I have been in my bungalow for almost 20 years. (JM Llanfairpwll)
- “The island is sold as a satellite, either live here and go elsewhere to work, to work from home, or to buy a second home and use it to build up your pension.” (Older People’s Council)
- “Many empty holiday homes, making it lonely in winter.” (Lligwy)

### Community Life

- "There's lots to be learnt from small communities who work together." (Neuadd Llaingoch)
- "When I took a fall last month, more than one local person came over to my home the following week to check if I was okay. I feel like local people really care about each other and I am very proud to be a part of that." (Anonymous)
- “I can feel isolated at times but I travel on public transport and to voluntary work which alleviates isolation. The local community is quite friendly but I feel that it would

be better if there were more activities that pull people together.” (Online Response, LL60 Postcode)

## Transport

- “We are lucky to have the Benllech Good Turn scheme.” (Lligwy)
- “Most bus services are regular and are used often.” (Ynys Cybi)
- “Fear of isolation due to no access to transport” (Talyblion)
- “I know of several elderly people who were still driving competently locally as a result of the pandemic they have lost confidence and will not drive again. There needs to be consideration about how they will travel in the future.” (Llanfairpwll)
- “Bus timetables not accessible or the writing is too small to read.” (Bro Aberffraw)

## Public Spaces

- “Cars parking on pavements is a constant issue.” (Clwb yr Henoed, Gwalchmai)
- “A child-minder I know with a double buggy had to push the children through the road as there was no way of passing on the pavement due to the parked cars.” (Neuadd Llaingoch)
- “Need more allotments. Currently oversubscribed but are a great way of getting people together” (Neuadd Llaingoch)
- People are proud about where they live and feel it is generally clean and tidy. It would be nice if nature organisations would come along and do some community activities on the local green. (Bro Rhosyr)
- Not a lot of public seating. A seating area by the post office would be nice as the square is the hub of the community. (Online Response)

## Ageing Well

- “Activities to keep people healthy and active are vitally important. Leisure Centres and Community Hubs are ideal for a range of activities.” (Llangefni)

- “The elderly are losing out, they don't want to bother people to find out what's on, but don't know how to access information if they don't want to be online.” (Knit & Natter, Holyhead)
- “Mon CF and Gorwel are great at helping us to know how to access support.” (Knit & Natter, Holyhead)
- “Jimmy O’Toole Centre and CAB have been great to turn to if I ever need information.” (Neuadd Llaingoch)
- “I worry about where I will live independently within my community as I age if all small houses are bought as second homes?” (Neuadd Llanfaelog)
- “It would be beneficial to have an information booklet when retiring that includes different services.” (Clwb yr Henoed, Gwalchmai)
- “Didn’t ever consider later life until I had an emergency operation and they warned me about the potential that I wouldn’t survive. That made me think that I needed to make a will.” (Neuadd Llaingoch)

## Summary

The majority of people who participated in the Engagement Programme were positive about their local communities. Many felt that, although Covid has introduced many changes to our daily lives, in some regards it has brought communities closer together. Having said that, there needs to be a focus on tackling loneliness and isolation, by providing a range of activities for people to socially interact.

Access to Health and Wellbeing services varied significantly from one community to the next. The past few years have seen developments in accessing GP appointments, health and wellbeing consultations online. This has benefitted many people who used to have transport issues, or unpaid carers who used to put their own health and wellbeing needs to one side, because they couldn’t find anyone to provide care whilst they attended an appointment. Those who haven’t benefitted from the digital developments are those who are digitally excluded. The general feeling was that there needs to be adequate provision for those who require face to face appointments, as well as those who require online appointments. Paper copies of information flyers also need to be available to support those who do not wish to be online, or are currently unable to be due to a number of factors, including cost, access to a device, internet signal, lack-of skills or knowledge.

Housing concerns were very clear, with a strong objection to the potential threat of holiday homes taking over communities, leaving many houses empty for half of the

year. As a result of many second homes it was felt that young people are often unable to find a first home, and inevitably have to move away. This can have a detrimental effect on community life and the Welsh language. It was also clear that people wanted to remain in their own homes, within their own communities, and unless suitable housing and transport provisions were available, they wouldn't be able to do this. Planning for the future was seen as vital, in order to support ageing well, and this included suitable housing, strong networks of support, and a positive approach to both ageing and retirement. For too long later life and retirement have been viewed negatively as stages of decline and dependency, rather than an opportunity to live a rewarding and fruitful third age.

Community transport remains an issue, especially in rural areas. Bus provisions are very limited in rural areas, and this ultimately can have effects such as decreased participation and social interaction. Fear of isolation due to no access to transport was presented in the Talybolion Ward. The gap in transport provision for those rural areas is further highlighted by the positive comments that have been presented by areas that have a regular bus service, or a community transport scheme in their area. There are increased opportunities for participation and interaction for residents due to good transport provision in areas such as the Lligwy Ward who said "We are lucky to have the Benllech Good Turn scheme" and Holyhead who said "Most bus services are regular and are used often."

Our Public Buildings and Outdoor Spaces are considered very important to community life. There's a strong desire to see our Leisure Centres and Community Hubs developing into both Dementia and Age Friendly buildings. Outdoor spaces are also seen as vitally important for providing opportunities for people to remain active, and experience social interaction. There are many health benefits experienced when contributing to developing or maintaining a community garden or allotment. The positive impact it has on mental and physical health has been highlighted by many individuals on the Island. Outdoor community spaces can provide a great location for intergenerational work within communities.

It's clear from the engagement that as we focus on becoming an Age Friendly Island, we can positively contribute to all the key areas discussed within the engagement programme. The World Health Organisation's eight domains, will be covered through the work plan to ensure that we respond positively and proactively to the concerns and comments presented during the engagement programme. Age friendly changes will be achieved through effective partnership work, and it's imperative to recognise and appreciate the partnership work that has gone into this engagement programme that offers us a foundation on which to build. Our sincere thanks to all those who participated during the engagement programme, and to Age Cymru Gwynedd a Mon, and Medrwn Mon for their continued partnership work and support.

## Additional Documents Available on Request

- Individual Reports for each Focus Group
- Summary of Questionnaire Responses (Welsh and English)
- Age Friendly Communities Engagement Programme Presentation

For any further information in relation to this Engagement Programme, please contact Sioned Young on [sionedyoung@ynysmon.llyw.cymru](mailto:sionedyoung@ynysmon.llyw.cymru)