AGE FRIENDLY
Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough

ARMAGH CITY, BANBRIDGE & CRAIGAVON

Age-Friendly Strategy & Action Plan
2022-2025

SUMMARY DOCUMENT

Why an age-friendly strategy and action plan?

An age-friendly community is one in which people of all ages can live healthy and active lives and where everyone is treated with respect, regardless of their age.

As we all live longer, there are huge opportunities to create vibrant communities, develop life-long interests and aspirations and support diversity. After all, streets that are good for walking aids are good for prams and buggies.

But we need to be prepared to manage the challenges and unlock the potential of our ageing population. We need to help people stay connected, healthy and independent and provide choice, dignity and support for those who can no longer look after themselves.

Being age friendly is not a defined state, and it does not have an end point. Rather, it is a journey along which we will continue to adapt to support the health and wellbeing of older people. However, there is

a process and structure to becoming age friendly. According to the World Health Organisation, an age-friendly place must:

- Establish mechanisms to involve older people throughout the age-friendly process
- Develop a baseline assessment of the age-friendliness of the area under eight domains or areas
- Develop a three-year action plan
- Identify measurements to monitor progress against the plan

The eight age-friendly themes are:
- Social participation
- Respect and social inclusion
- Civic participation and employment
- Communication and information
- Community support and health services
- Outdoor spaces and buildings
- Transportation
- Housing

VISION

People in the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon area are valued regardless of age and are supported to age well and with confidence

The following strategy and action plan has been developed by the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Age-friendly Alliance, following extensive consultation with people aged 50 and over living in the Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon borough, and aims to benefit everyone living, working and visiting the area as they grow older. We have also considered a number of other relevant strategies and policies in place across NI including the draft NI Programme for Government Strategy, Active Ageing Strategy 2016-22 and Connected - A Community Plan for Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon 2017-30.

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

Everything that we do will be underpinned by four cross-cutting themes.

INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE

We are all growing older, but for some people, this will be more challenging. We will consider the different wants, needs and abilities of all our residents as they get older. And we will take practical steps to ensure that those most at risk of missing out can benefit as fully as possible.

COLLABORATIVE

Age-friendly is about partnership or working better together. We will pool the collective influence, resources and expertise of the Age-friendly Alliance so that our work has a bigger impact for the people we want to benefit.

PROACTIVE

We will work together to identify new issues – and opportunities – and seek to come up with solutions. We will also seek to influence regional strategy and decision makers.

MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT

The Age-friendly strategy and action plan is based on what local people told us matters most in their lives. We are committed to continuing to engage with people in a meaningful way so that what they say helps shape how we deliver the actions in this action plan.

AGE-FRIENDLY STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN
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Outcomes - the high level changes which the programme aims to achieve

As people told us what mattered most in their lives or where they would like to see greater improvement, we developed five outcomes and supporting actions.

Outcomes

How the Age-friendly Alliance might achieve this

Outcome 1:

As we get older, we enjoy good physical and mental health

Scope and collaborate to promote physical activity

Scope and collaborate to promote good mental health and wellbeing

Promote opportunities among Alliance members and allied organisations for accessing funds, training and support to deliver projects and activities which meet the needs of older people, some which will have a specific focus on men

Guided by PHA and partners, annually and ad hoc during the year, share information on health issues, relevant services, development opportunities and involvement potential within areas such as alcohol, tobacco, mental health

Outcome 2:

As we get older, we participate meaningfully in community life

Scope and promote opportunities of volunteering for older people and in support of older people, including digital skills

Establish and promote a sustainable network of providers and community navigators, social prescribers and similar individuals to enable referrals and partnership working in the delivery of a range of services

Support and promote the work of the Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon Loneliness Network to encourage people to connect with each other

Support and promote the work of the ABC Intergenerational Network to help increase capacity and raise awareness of the benefits of intergenerational practice

Promote dementia-awareness training for all front-of-house staff in Alliance partners

Build understanding and commitment among local service providers such as banks, dentists and shops to define methods to assess the age-friendliness of their facilities and to provide age-friendly environments and services

Secure commitment of Alliance partners to define methods to assess the age-friendliness of their facilities, public spaces such as parks, town centres and community and leisure centres. Where appropriate, work in partnership to take action to address issues

Build understanding and commitment among care homes and their local communities to enable residents to continue to participate in community life

Outcomes

How the Age-friendly Alliance might achieve this

Outcome 3:

As we get older, we are heard, valued and respected and involved in decisions that affect us

Explore options for a process and guidelines to enable people over 50 to be engaged in dialogue and consulted on plans, policies and strategies that affect them and to ensure they are enabled to influence decision making and to receive feedback on their contributions

Connect older people to influencing structures they can join and the decisions they can influence, eg. Older Peoples Networks, Patient & Client Council, Pensioners Parliament

Consider use of Participatory Budgeting initiative to support engagement activities

Carry out an age-friendly survey every 3 years and share results widely including with targeted dissemination for older residents

Ensure that the needs and aspirations of older people are consistently considered by identifying (and training where appropriate) champions for older people

Support and build capacity of ABC Seniors Network to help the group represent the voice of older people in the Borough

Guided by PHA and partners, annually and ad hoc during the year, share information on 'Patient & Public Involvement' opportunities

Outcomes

How the Age-friendly Alliance might achieve this

Outcome 4:

As we get older, we are supported to retain independence

Develop a communications campaign which challenges the stereotypes of growing older and promotes positive ageing and well being

Connect older people to services that will enable them to live independently for longer in their own homes

Connect older people to NIHE, Housing Associations and providers to influence the development of appropriate housing options for different ages and needs

Explore partnership initiatives to expose and support older people to access public and community transport

Connect older people to training and support to help improve digital inclusion

Outcome 5:

As we get older, we are well informed about things that matter to us

Agree a communications plan for Age-friendly Alliance members and supporters to publicly demonstrate their commitment to age-friendly and a means to disseminate actions of the Plan

Map existing services and activities (by WHO age-friendly domains) and co-design a mechanism/s to publish and maintain the information.

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council
Old Armagh City Hospital | 39 Abbey Street | Armagh | BT61 7DY
📞 0330 056 1011 | 📞 07825 010630
✉ agefriendly@armaghbanbridgecraigavon.gov.uk