



South Tyneside Council



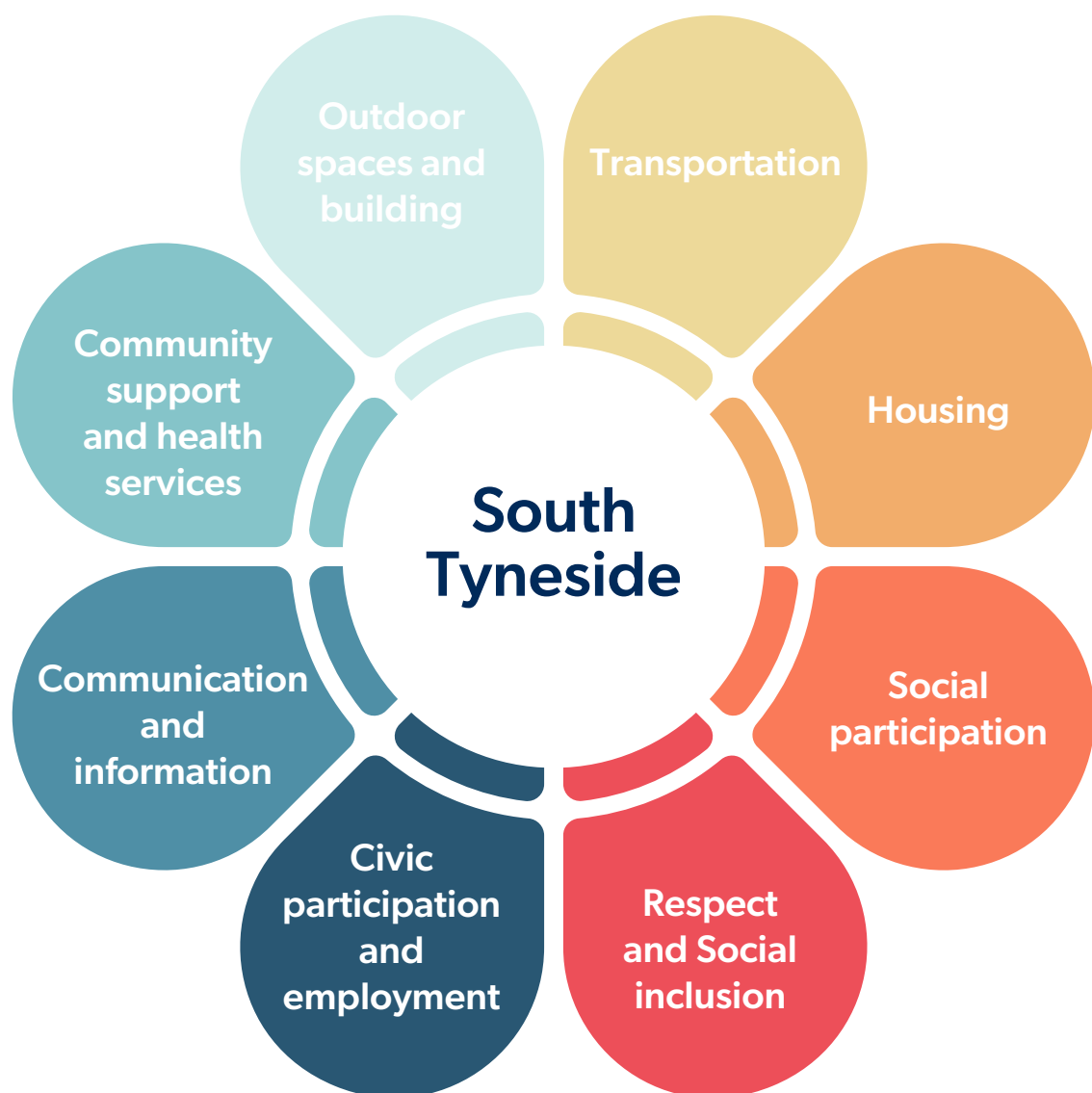
Age Friendly Communities Strategy and Action Plan 2024 - 2028

Spread the word!

**THIS IS
SOUTH
TYNESIDE**

An Age Friendly Community

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines an age friendly community as 'a place where people of all ages are able to live healthy and active later lives. These places make it possible for people to continue to stay living in their homes, participate in the activities that they value, and contribute to their communities, for as long as possible.'



Content Page

Page	Item
1	Front Cover Age Friendly Communities Strategy & Action Plan 2024 – 2028
2	An Age Friendly Community
3	Content Page
4	Foreword
5	An Age Friendly South Tyneside
6	Planning for an Age Friendly South Tyneside
7	What does South Tyneside need to do to become Age Friendly?
8	Steps Taken So Far
9	The Age Friendly Domains
10/11	An Age Friendly Baseline in South Tyneside
12	What did the South Tyneside baseline survey and validation events tell us?
13	Introduction to the Action Plan
14/15	Spaces and Buildings
16/17	Transport
18/19	Housing
20/21	Social Participation
22/23	Respect and Inclusion
24/25	Civic Participation
26/27	Communication and Information
28/29	Communities and Health
30	Measuring the impact of the Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan
31	References



Foreword

South Tyneside is recognised as having an ageing population meaning there will be more older people over the 10-20 years. These changes pose significant challenges to both health and social care. We need to take action to ensure we have the capacity to create environments in which all of us can flourish as we age, allowing us to lead healthy, active and engaged lives.

An ageing population also creates many opportunities and the wealth of life experience which an older population brings is something to be celebrated. How we grasp these opportunities depends on our ability to plan for the longer-term. We need to engage all stakeholders in bringing about changes in planning, health, housing, transport, safety and public space management. Improved collaboration amongst key agencies and communities is key to delivering the right environment for healthy ageing.

The publication of this strategy and action plan marks the beginning of a process that will see a coordinated approach being adopted by organisations and communities to create a more Age Friendly society. As Lead Member for Health & Independence, this is something I very much welcome. I look forward to seeing how this Strategy and Action Plan enable us, through increased collaboration, to make South Tyneside a great place to live and grow older.



Cllr Ruth Berkley
Lead Member for Health
& Independence

An Age Friendly South Tyneside

Working towards becoming an Age Friendly Community in South Tyneside aligns with both the South Tyneside Vision 2023-2043 [1], the priorities of the Health & Wellbeing Board 2022 [2], the Ageing Well section of the NHS Long Term Plan. [3] and Chris Whitty's recent report on Health in an Ageing Society. [4]

The Priorities of the South Tyneside Vision Are:

- Financially Secure
- Healthy & Well
- Connected to Jobs
- Part of strong communities
- Targeted Support to Make Things Fairer

The Priorities of the Health & Wellbeing Board Are:

- Best Start to life
- Good mental health and social networks across the life course
- Financial security to lead healthy, fulfilling lives.
- Safe & Healthy Place to Live, Learn and Work

Long Term Plan – Ageing Well

The NHS Long Term Plan includes a multidisciplinary approach, more say about the care received, more support for families and carers, rapid community response teams and more NHS support in care homes. [3]

Health in an Ageing Society

Chris Whitty has three asks:

- **To the public** – remember many people remain in good health as they age, straight forward measures such as being physically active, can prevent and delay disease.
- **To the policy makers** – recognise that many older people move to coastal or semi-rural areas where there are sparse services and transport links.
- **To the medical profession** – focus on multiple long-term conditions, rather than single ones. [4]

In South Tyneside, the population size has decreased by 0.2%, from around 148,100 in 2011 to 147,800 in 2021. However there has been an increase of 15.1% in people aged 65 years. [5]

It is essential that public services and the wider infrastructure can meet the needs of this ageing population.

In 2021 Lead Members agreed that South Tyneside should work towards the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Age Friendly Communities Status, and in doing so requested that an Age Friendly Steering Group be set up that reported to the then, South Tyneside Healthy Ageing Alliance. This South Tyneside's Age Friendly strategy provides a framework to help make the Borough a great place to grow old and an area in which everyone, regardless of age is valued and respected. It provides the structure for cross-sector cooperation, which is essential to improve the quality of life of our older population. The strategy is framed around the eight Age Friendly domains as described by WHO. [6]

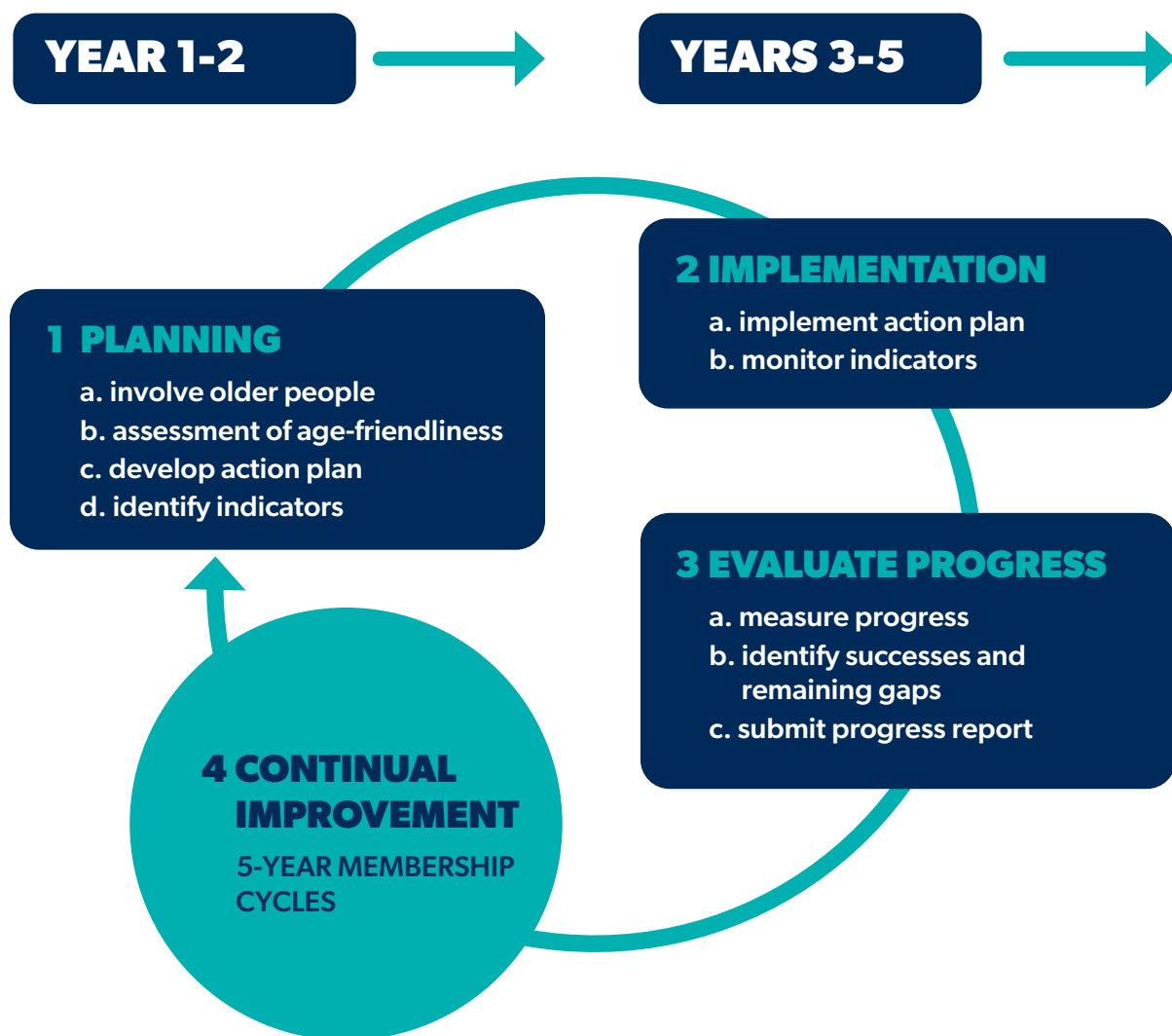
This Strategy and its associated Action Plan has been informed by direct engagement with older people, other key stakeholders, and service providers.

Age friendly communities have older people at the heart of the planning process and continue to involve older people throughout the five-year cycle and beyond.

Planning for an Age Friendly South Tyneside

There are four steps, set out by the WHO, that need to be taken to become Age Friendly. These are planning, implementation, evaluation, and improvement. [7]

Figure 1: The four-stage process





What does South Tyneside need to do to become Age Friendly?

- 1 Establish mechanisms to involve older people throughout the whole Age Friendly process.
- 2 Develop a baseline assessment of the age-friendliness of the area using the eight WHO domains.
- 3 Develop a borough-wide action plan and strategy.
- 4 Identify indicators to monitor progress against this plan.

Age Friendly Steering Group Reporting Mechanism

An Age Friendly Steering Group has been established and was reporting to the South Tyneside Healthy Ageing Alliance (STHAA). The STHAA Alliance has now amalgamated with the Long-Term Conditions Alliance to become the Living Well Alliance.

The Living Well Alliance has six themes – healthy communities, prevention, early identification, self-management, ongoing care and complex care. Age friendly communities is a natural fit with healthy communities and prevention. The Living Well Alliance has a real opportunity to take heed of Chris Whitty's three key asks.

Steps Taken So Far

Steps to become Age Friendly	What has happened in South Tyneside
Secure approval from senior leadership	In February 2022, South Tyneside Council wrote to the Centre for Ageing Better (CfAB) setting out its intentions to be recognised as Age Friendly.
Implement an Age Friendly Steering Group	In 2022, South Tyneside Council established an Age Friendly Steering Group to consider the evidence, develop a strategy and agree an appropriate action plan.
Consult with older people and establish an older people's council	The baseline survey was completed by 285 people between October 2022 and April 2023, with a further 50+ people attending four validation events across the Borough. The Age Friendly Steering Group agreed this was an appropriate mechanism to ensure the voices and experiences of older people are represented in the strategy and action plan.
Development of the Strategy and Action Plan	The draft plan was shared at a professional event in October 2023 to ensure that the key issues raised by residents aligned with key work plans across the system.
Local Sign Off	Was presented to the Health & Wellbeing Board in January 2024, along with an updated JSNAA for older people.

Feedback tells us, there is lot to be proud of.

“

The sea front beaches and parks are very well looked after and a pleasure to visit

”

“

Voluntary services are a credit to South Tyneside-great network

”

“

My wife and myself attend the gym and are made to feel welcome

”

“

The events, parades and activities are excellent

”

“

Have had good service from my GP since I moved here 2 years ago

”

The Age Friendly Domains

The WHO identifies eight domains that a locality can consider when developing their action plans. South Tyneside has considered and plans to include all eight. [6]

WHO describes the importance of these domains or themes as follows:

	Outdoor spaces and buildings	The outside environment and public buildings have a major impact on our mobility, independence and quality of life as we age. Outdoor spaces and buildings in an Age-friendly Community will strive to be safe, accessible and comfortable for people of all ages.
	Transport	Affordable, reliable and convenient transport options enable older people to get out and about and continue to do things that matter to them. Whether it's going shopping, meeting friends or attending an appointment, good transport is essential to everyone.
	Housing	The right housing and support can allow people to age comfortably and safely, in their community. Poor housing can have a huge impact on health, but when housing is considered as part of the age-friendly approach, it can help to maintain or improve physical and mental wellbeing, as well as social connections.
	Social participation	Participating in leisure, cultural and spiritual activities in the community is important for health and wellbeing, a sense of belonging and good relationships. Without social participation, people can experience loneliness and isolation. An Age-friendly Community will work to make sure activities available in their place are as financially, culturally and physically accessible as possible.
	Respect and inclusion	An Age-friendly Community enables people of all backgrounds to actively participate and it treats everyone with respect, regardless of age. Despite "age" being a protected characteristic, ageism is still prevalent nationally, and Age-friendly Communities seek to challenge this.
	Civic participation	Age-friendly Communities look to provide good-quality options for people in later life to continue to contribute to their communities. Those options can include paid employment or voluntary work as well as being engaged in democracy. Good-quality volunteering has a measurable positive impact on mental health. And paid work can benefit wellbeing as well as finances. Yet often, the opportunities for these diminish with age.
	Communication and information	Staying connected with events and people, and getting timely, practical information is important for all of us, especially as we get older. Age-friendly Communities seek to ensure information is accessible for those with varying resources and abilities – for example people who don't have English as a first language, are digitally excluded or have a sensory impairment.
	Community and health	As the older population grows, the need for community support and health services grows too. Alongside accessible and affordable health care services, community support and physical activity opportunities are strongly connected to good health and wellbeing throughout life. Some Age-friendly Communities incorporate their financial inclusion work in this domain, acknowledging the huge impact that financial instability has on quality of life and health.

An Age Friendly Baseline in South Tyneside

In 2021 the number of older people aged 65+ in South Tyneside was 30,847 (20.9%) and the number of older people aged 85+ was 3,843 (2.6%) [8] with projections suggesting that the number aged 65+ of 19.9% in 2018 will rise to 24.9% in 2043. [9]

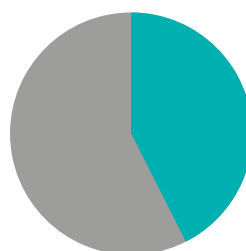
The shift in age structure, as more people live for longer, means that retirement, pensions and other social benefits, along with healthcare requirements, tend to extend over longer periods of time. In short, our society needs to plan for the needs of a much larger older population. This is not something that can wait. This is a pressing challenge that requires a thoughtful and comprehensive response.

Figure 2. Provides an Age Friendly profile for South Tyneside



Population 2021:

over 65	over 85
30,838	3,483
20.9%	2.6%

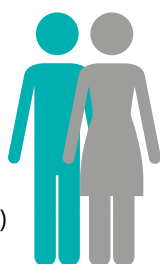


Population Projections over 65s

2018	2043
19.9%	24.9%

Life Expectancy at Birth 2018-20

Male	Female
76.4%	79.4%

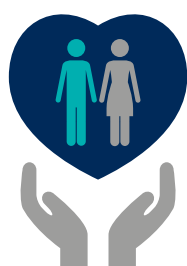


Life Expectancy at Birth 2018-20 (England)
Male 79.4% Female 83.1%

Recorded Crime

Victims of crime over 65 years

In the 12 months to July
2023, 989
crimes were reported in over 65s,
of which 3% were recorded as
serious crime



Healthy Life Expectancy 2018-20

Male	Female
57.3%	58.9%

Healthy Life Expectancy 2018-20 (England)
Male 63.1% Female 63.9%



Living in poverty, aged over 65 (2019)

8209
21.4%

Access to a car or van (2021)

Of the **22,371** households who did not have a car, **9,421** were over 65 years.



Unclaimed Pension Credit 2023 Estimates

2672
(Approximate one third)
Equivalent to
£32/week



Living Alone
Aged over 65 (2021)

10,482
15.4%

Internet use, over 65 years (2013)

Most likely

Surrey

Least likely

**Tyne
& Wear**

Civic Participation

Undertaking caring responsibilities Over 50s

**14% provides
unpaid care**

Of which 38% provide 50
or more hours per week.

Economically
Inactive due to
retirement (2022)

6.7%



Falls (over 65s) 2021/22



2236 per 100,000
injuries due to falls in
people 65+

Adult care service users who have control
over their daily lives

70.8%

Adult care service users who have as
much social contact as they would like

30%

Adult carers who get
as much social contact
as they would like

15%



Dementia Prevalence 2020
Aged 65+

3.98%

Dementia Prevalence 2020
(England) **3.97%**



What did the South Tyneside baseline survey and validation events tell us?

Domain	Feedback
 Outdoor spaces and buildings	Public spaces are easy to visit, green spaces are well looked after, and street lighting is generally good. • Would like more benches, litter bins and public toilets. • Want to feel safer when out and about, with better footpath accessibility.
 Transport	Some choose to drive because public transport can be problematic. Examples include: • Difficulty booking a journey due to digital technology or a disability. • Getting to the bus stop requires more places to sit or shelter. • Booking a journey varies because of changes to or their ability to read the timetables. • Difficulties getting on, taking a seat, or knowing when to get off public transport.
 Housing	The majority would like to stay in their own home as they age but believe they will need help to make it suitable and are not sure what help is available. • A need to make better use of touch points to instigate future proofing. • South Tyneside needs different types of housing such as more family homes and bungalows.
 Social participation	There is a good range of affordable activities. Lots of supportive organisations • Would like more opportunity to contribute to what is going in the area. • More opportunities to mix with others.
 Respect and inclusion	There are opportunities for younger people and older people to learn from each other. Not everyone can make their voice heard. Older people sometimes feel that others talk down to them or address their family/carer not them.
 Civic participation	There are opportunities to volunteer. There are educational classes but they need to be at different times. Need more suitable employment opportunities for older people.
 Communication and information	There is information available, but there could be more. Information needs to be simple. Don't over rely on IT for everything
 Community and health	A good sense of community, but less pride in the area than there once was. Shops generally make older people feel welcome, but there could be a better choice of shops. Can be hard to find out about entitlements. Hard to book a GP and dental appointment. Some people don't know how to find out what care is available.

Whilst there is a lot to be proud of, there are areas that could improve.

"If you are not internet savvy or don't have access to it, it is difficult to find out information"

“

Too much dependence on online bookings for GP appointments, many old people are not IT literate and never will be

”

"More warden patrols to curb anti social conduct"

"Kerbs + paths terrible for zimmer frames + mobility scooters"

“

Trying to get help for our elderly loved one's is extremely depressing and stressful.

”

"Need to have more accessible toilets. Public buildings need to have more dementia friendly signage and visual cues"

"I have good neighbours, but there isn't a sense of community in my area."

Introduction to the Action Plan

The Age Friendly Action Plan 2024-2028 contains actions that have been coproduced. Many of the issues raised align with strategic goals of the council and its partner organisations, including the Integrated Care Board (ICB), Sunderland and South Tyneside Foundation Trust (SSTFT) and the Community & Voluntary Sector.

An event was held in October 2023, with the aim of aligning what residents said as part of the baseline survey, with existing pieces of work that are being led by partner agencies.

The Age Friendly Steering Group will monitor these actions against an agreed set of indicators and will report to the Living Well Alliance.



Outdoor spaces and buildings

Vision

Older people in South Tyneside can access outdoor spaces and public buildings that meet their needs.

Background

We want older people in South Tyneside to be able to visit outdoor spaces and public buildings. To do this we need to encourage people to remain mobile and ensure there is good access. By thinking about the way, we design urban spaces we also foster a sense of belonging and connectedness.

Well-designed places have individual characteristics which work together to create its physical character. The ten characteristics in the national design guide, help to nurture and sustain a sense of community. They all contribute towards the cross-cutting themes for good design set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. [10]

For older people this means removing barriers that prevent them from using and enjoying the spaces available. Adequate provision of well-maintained toilets, sufficient places to sit and rest, accessible paths and the removal of clutter on the pavements, are regularly cited as problems that can become increasingly challenging as people get older.

Key Priorities

- Increasing access to public realm such as seating, bins, and toilets
- Improving access by tackling pavement obstacles.
- Improving the feeling of safety.
- Ensuring older people are offered the opportunity to contribute to public spatial planning.

Key Indicators

- Development of a coproduced age friendly check list.
- Complete five accessibility audits.
- Improvements to public realm
- To develop a simple process for capturing the number and types of queries related to footpaths and lighting and providing feedback.
- To develop a simple process to provide older or disabled residents with an update on the impact of antisocial behaviour (ASB) tools.
- Support/encourage residents to establish neighbourhoods watch schemes in three areas of South Tyneside that will help reduce antisocial behaviour.

Agreed Actions

1. To coproduce an age friendly accessibility checklist, used to ensure that outdoor spaces and public buildings consider the needs of older people (and in doing so meet the needs of others such as those with a disability)

This checklist will be adapted for the other relevant section/s of this plan.

Lead: Sense Ability Matters

2. To secure funding to undertake 5 accessibility audits, in conjunction with those with different lived experience, based on the agreed age friendly checklist. Examples may include Town Centres, Transport Hubs, College Sites, Sample Routes and Other Buildings such as Museums or Welcoming Places.

These audits can also be adapted for the other relevant section/s of this plan.

Lead: Sense Ability Matters

3. To use the information from the audits to drive improvements in public realm, such as toilets, litter bins and seating over the lifecycle of this plan. Where possible to also work with businesses and the voluntary sector, as well as outdoor spaces and public buildings.

Lead: Communities and Place

4. To ensure members of the public know they can report concerns with paving or street lighting through the South Tyneside Council website (<https://southtyneside.gov.uk/article/7729/Report-an-issue>)

For the Highways Team to ensure there is a mechanism in place, so that residents are provided with the information they need to understand what action can or can't be taken because of their enquiry.

To ensure that local organisations are aware of this website and can support digital access where necessary.

Lead: Highways

5. Continue to make best use of antisocial behaviour (ASB) tools such as Community Trigger. In addition to encourage a minimum of three local neighbourhoods to become neighbourhood watch areas.

Lead: Community Safety Partnership – Community



Transport

Vision

Older people in South Tyneside are encouraged to remain active, by participating in active travel and having access to suitable public transport, that they are confident to use.

Background

Transport is a crucial component of an age-friendly environment. However, it is important to remember that when taking one form of transport, other types of travel and transport are often involved.

For instance, when planning a walk catching a bus or driving may be needed to get to a chosen venue. When taking a bus, walking, or using a wheelchair may be required to get to the bus stop. Having somewhere safe and dry to wait for the transport of choice is important. When taking the bus, train, or metro, being able to read and understand the timetable and being able to pay for the journey may also be challenging.

Age-friendly transport means giving people choice about their transport options. There also needs to be flexibility to accommodate changes in circumstances brought on over time such as disability, disease, or bereavement.

But remember, older people are also keen cyclists, walk leaders, drivers, and transport workers. They are contributors to, not just users of the transport system.

Key Priorities

- Provide more active travel opportunities to help people remain physically active.
- Ensure that information is available so that people can plan their journey.
- Make it easier for people to book their journey of choice.
- Ensure that transport workers are trained to anticipate and meet older people's needs.
- Improve access to vital appointments at the hospital.

Key Indicators

- To refresh the physical activity strategy using the sector led improvement (SLI) approach.
- Raise the profile and access of the 'plan a journey website'
- Review the training offered to transport providers to ensure they are they aware of the needs of those with additional needs.
- To improve the travel reimbursement process for those attending hospital appointments

Agreed Actions

1. Refresh the physical activity strategy, specifically looking for opportunities that enable older people to remain physically active. This will include a dedicated section on falls prevention. All age groups will also be encouraged to take part in active travel.

Lead: Public Health

2. Ensure that local people are aware of Transport North East's plan a journey website (<https://travelinenortheast.info/>) and ensure that organisations are aware of this information and can support people to use it.

To work with Transport North East / Nexus to help them continually improve the information that is available.

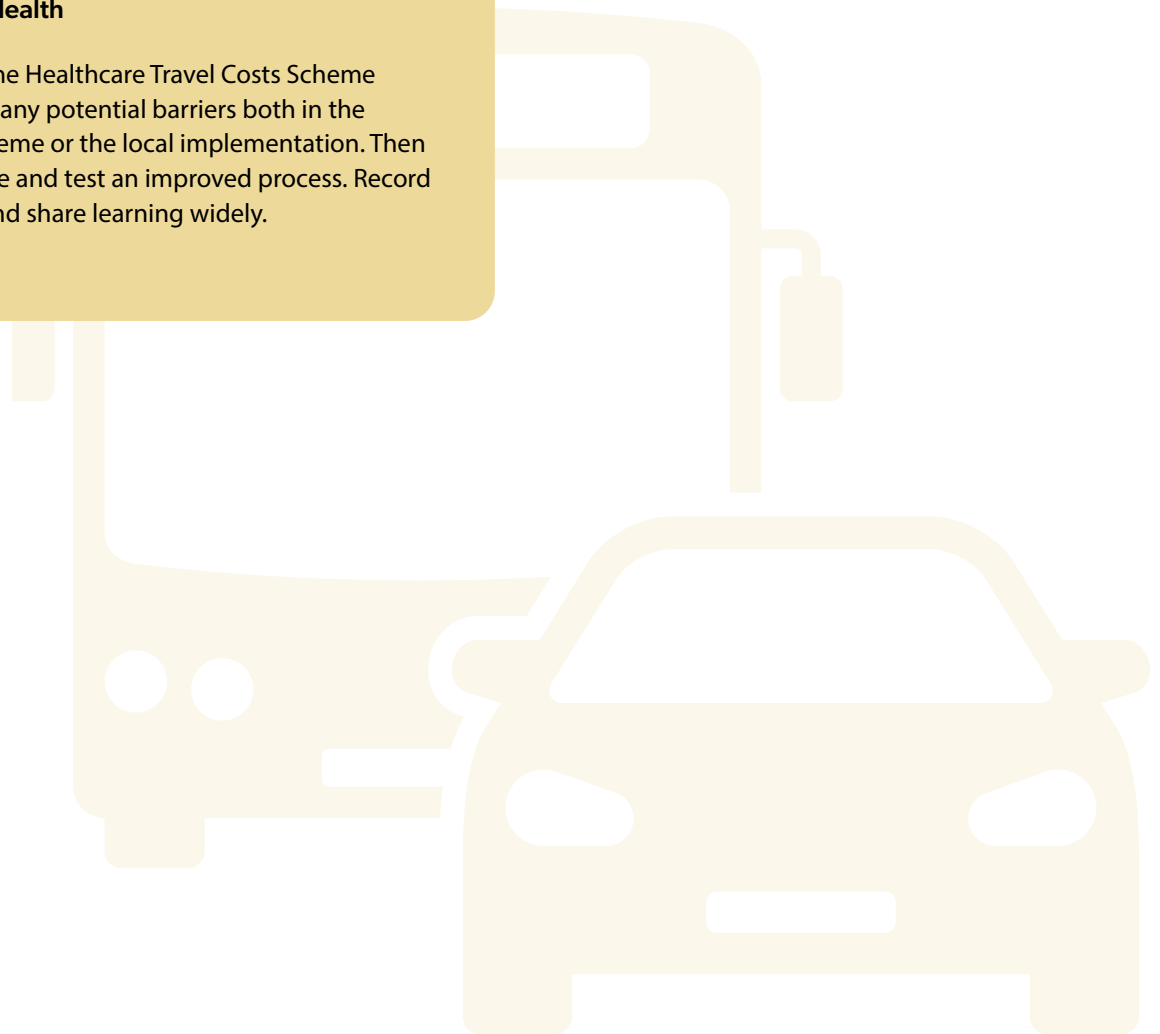
Lead: Transport Team and Sense Ability Matters

3. To work with Transport North East / Nexus to explore what training is available for transport workers that ensure they are aware of the needs of those with additional needs.

Lead: Public Health

4. To explore the Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme process and any potential barriers both in the national scheme or the local implementation. Then to coproduce and test an improved process. Record outcomes and share learning widely.

Lead: STSFT





Housing

Vision

Older people in South Tyneside have suitable accommodation that meets their individual circumstances.

Background

Work undertaken by the Centre for Ageing Better and Care & Repair England found that over two million people aged over 55 are living in England, in a home that endangers their health and wellbeing. Of the 4.3 million homes classed as non-decent (hazards such as excess cold, or potential for a fall), almost half are occupied by someone over the age of 55. [11]

It is estimated that the cost of poor housing to the NHS alone is £1.4 billion a year, and a £4.3 billion investment to repair all non-decent homes would be repaid in just eight years [12]

Adaptations and maintenance

A report by the Centre for Ageing Better and the University of West of England, Bristol shows that minor home aids and adaptations can greatly improve quality of life for people who are losing mobility. Studies show that people's difficulties with 'Activities of Daily Living' can be reduced by 75%, these include washing, bathing, going to the toilet, dressing, and eating. Home aids and adaptations can also increase people's ability to perform everyday activities by 49%, and reduce depressive symptoms by 53%. [11]

Key Priorities

- Ensure older people can access support and information to make an informed choice about where they want to live.

- Ensure older people can access support and information to make an informed choice about housing adaptations.
- Refresh the accommodation strategy to ensure that South Tyneside plans for an ageing population.

Key Indicators

- To provide timely information and support enabling people to review where they want to live as they age.
- To implement and evaluate AskSARA, an online self-help guide that provides expert advice and information on products and equipment for people of all ages who want to stay independent in and outside of their home.
- Refresh the accommodation strategy.
- Completion of the Healthy Homes pilot and evaluation

Agreed Actions

1. Ensure that South Tyneside residents can access timely support and information to enable them to make an informed choice about where they want to live. Utilising touch points, such as a change in health, retirement, or loss of a partner, to generate conversations that enable people to future proof their older age.

Lead: Housing Strategy Team

2. To implement and evaluate AskSARA, an online self-help guide that provides expert advice and information on products and equipment for people of all ages who want to stay independent in and outside of their home.

Ensuring that other agencies are promoting this service.

Lead: Adult Social Care

3. To refresh the accommodation Strategy, to ensure that affordable, quality housing with appropriate care and support will be available to people of all ages suitable to meet their needs. Utilise opportunities to develop properties that meet Stirling Gold Standards for dementia where identified and Part M of the Building Regulations in terms of accessibility where able.

Lead: Accommodation Strategy Board

4. To complete the healthy homes pilot and based on the evaluation from Northumbria University look to embed a sustainable model that defines the home as a health care enabler.

Lead: Healthy Homes Executive



Social participation

Vision

Older people in South Tyneside can access suitable activities where and when they want.

Background

Participating in leisure, social, cultural, and spiritual activities in the community, as well as with family, promotes independence and helps establish supportive relationships.

There are triggers that can arise in later life such as becoming a carer, retirement, changes in health or mobility and bereavement. Older people can also encounter feelings of social exclusion due to ageism and or other discriminatory factors.

Public and VCSE organisations can create opportunities to help overcome these challenges, however by involving those who seek to benefit, these opportunities are more likely to be sustained. People's social lives should not become narrower as they get older; they should be able to participate in events and activities at different times of day with people of all ages and find meaningful ways to spend their time.

Before the covid-19 pandemic, about 1 in 12 people aged 50+ in England were often lonely. This is equivalent to around 1.4 million people. Age UK estimates that this will increase to around 2 million by 2026 [13].

More than a million older people say they go over a month without speaking to a friend, neighbour, or family member. [14].

Key Priorities

Increase visibility of small local opportunities, including those led and coproduced with older people.

Support people of all ages to increase intergenerational participation in their neighbourhoods.

Make it easier and more enjoyable for older people to remain active and connected.

Key Indicators

- Report annually on Plinth
- Report annually on the microgrant and other funding opportunities to support older people.
- Provide an annual overview of how national days have been utilised to celebrate older people.
- Report annually on intergenerational opportunities

Agreed Actions

1. To utilise 'Plinth' to increase the visibility of local opportunities, including those led and coproduced with older people. Ensuring activities/events are applicable to a wide age profile and consideration is given on location, cost and time of day.

Lead: Inspire South Tyneside

2. To continue to promote external funding opportunities through FundingNet and disseminate local microgrant funding, to provide transparent and accessible ways for community groups to access funding, providing opportunities for participation in a range of activities including cultural and physical activity programmes.

Lead: Inspire South Tyneside

3. Seek additional funding, to expand the way in which we use national days to celebrate older people.

Lead: Age Concern Tyneside South (ACTS)

4. To continue to coproduce different ways of promoting intergeneration opportunities.

Lead - Public Health



Respect and inclusion

Vision

Older people in South Tyneside are connected to their local community; they are respected and included in society.

Background

In a culture that reveres youth and often fears the ageing process, older people can feel both stigmatized and ignored. When ageing is seen as a burden, conflict between generations can prevent older and younger people from enjoying positive social interactions and can heighten age discrimination and loneliness.

Many older people would like more choice around how to spend their leisure time, but those on low incomes or living in areas with less social capital can find it challenging to find inclusive opportunities. [15]

Key Priorities

- Ensuring all older people are given access to neighbourhood support and empowered to connect with others in their area.
- Reducing the use of ageist language and stereotyping
- Increasing older people's opportunities to engage in activities that interest them.

Key Indicators

- Implementation of an age friendly checklist across different organisations.
- Impact of age friendly cultural standards in museums
- The number of people attending awareness raising sessions, provided by dementia ambassadors to become dementia friends.
- Number of challenging ageism workshops delivered.

Agreed Actions

1. To utilise the checklist developed in the open space section, to ensure that South Tyneside is a friendly and welcoming place for everyone, including age friendly, dementia friendly, disability friendly etc.

Lead: Sense Ability Matters

2. To monitor the impact of age friendly cultural standards in museums and use those findings to influence other venues. [16]

Lead: TWAM

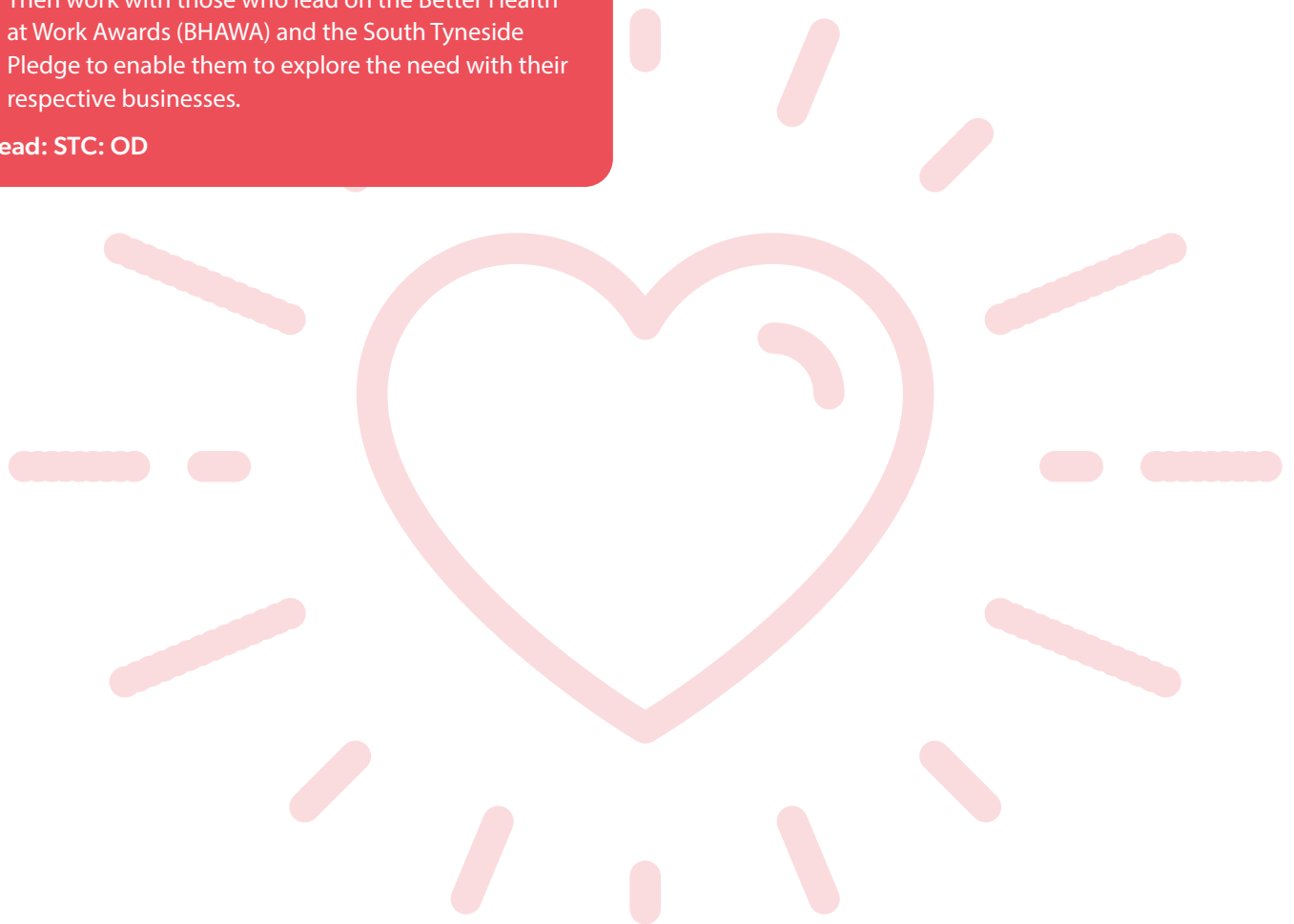
3. To increase the number of people attending awareness raising sessions, provided by dementia ambassadors to become dementia friends. [17]

Lead: Alzheimer's Society

4. Explore the need for Challenging Ageism Workshops across South Tyneside Council.

Then work with those who lead on the Better Health at Work Awards (BHAWA) and the South Tyneside Pledge to enable them to explore the need with their respective businesses.

Lead: STC: OD





Civic participation

Vision

Older people in South Tyneside feel heard and have a say in decision making on things which affect their lives, including the ability to access appropriate work, volunteering opportunities and lifelong learning.

Background

An age-friendly community provides opportunities for older people to contribute in different ways, this includes volunteering and paid employment. Some older people work because they enjoy it; however, others need to carry on working as a financial necessity.

Healthy life expectancy in South Tyneside is below retirement age, so it is important to bear in mind that even a stable job which an older person wishes to continue with, may become challenging before reaching eligibility for their pension.

Key Priorities

- Increase opportunities for volunteering and community contributions.
- Provide tailored support to older jobseekers to help them find suitable, secure employment for as long as they choose.
- Protect older people's health and wellbeing at work
- Improve opportunities for older people to be involved in local decision-making.

Key Indicators

- Use the Plinth portal to increase volunteering opportunities.
- South Tyneside Council to sign up to the Age Friendly Employer Pledge
- The number of Better Health at Work Awards (BHAWA) and South Tyneside Pledge companies that sign up to the Age Friendly Employer Pledge
- To report annually how the voice of the older person is heard when key decisions are being made.

Agreed Actions

1. To utilise the Plinth platform to promote and increase volunteering opportunities for all.

Then where possible to report specific take up by older people.

Leads: Inspire

1. South Tyneside Council to sign up the Age Friendly Employer Pledge [18], then encourage other employers to also sign up through the Better Health at Work Awards (BHAWA) and the South Tyneside Pledge

Lead: South Tyneside Council

2. To consider the best forum and/ or process, to ensure that older peoples voices are heard, when decisions are being made.

Lead: Age Concern Tyneside South





Communication and information

Vision

Older People in South Tyneside can stay connected and access the information that they need to make informed choices.

Background

Staying connected is vital for active ageing. Whether that is to other people, to events & activities or to timely practical information.

Digital exclusion is a significant factor which prevents older people receiving the information they need. One-to-one support is often needed to allow older people to get online, but it is also important to recognise that a significant number of older people are not currently interested in using the internet or improving their digital skills. Other barriers to getting online include fears around privacy as well as cost.

Printed information available in public places and delivered via newsletters, reach older people who otherwise might not be aware of social activities, local information, and important campaigns, such as scams awareness.

Key Priorities

- In South Tyneside we use a better u (ABU) approach to prevention [19]. The ABU principles stress the importance of a personalised, proactive, and fair approach, which aligns with the council commitment to proud values.
- Supporting older people to increase their digital skills and confidence so they can do what they need to online.
- Joining up groups, organisations, and services that are available to older people so that information can be more easily found.

- Continuing to ensure free newsletters and helplines are available to all older people who benefit from them.

Key Indicators

- Complete a JSNAA on information and advice.
- Increased opportunities to increase digital inclusion.
- Report annually on the information and support available to carers on carers.
- Increased take up of pension credits.

Agreed Actions

1. To undertake a piece of work, including the development of a Joint Strategic Needs and Assets Assessment (JSNAA), to ensure that information and advice is produced in a meaningful way, that then runs through this strategy as a consistent theme.

Lead: Adult Social Care and Public Health

2. Continue to provide opportunities for older people to improve their digital skills and to support those who don't have or want digital access.

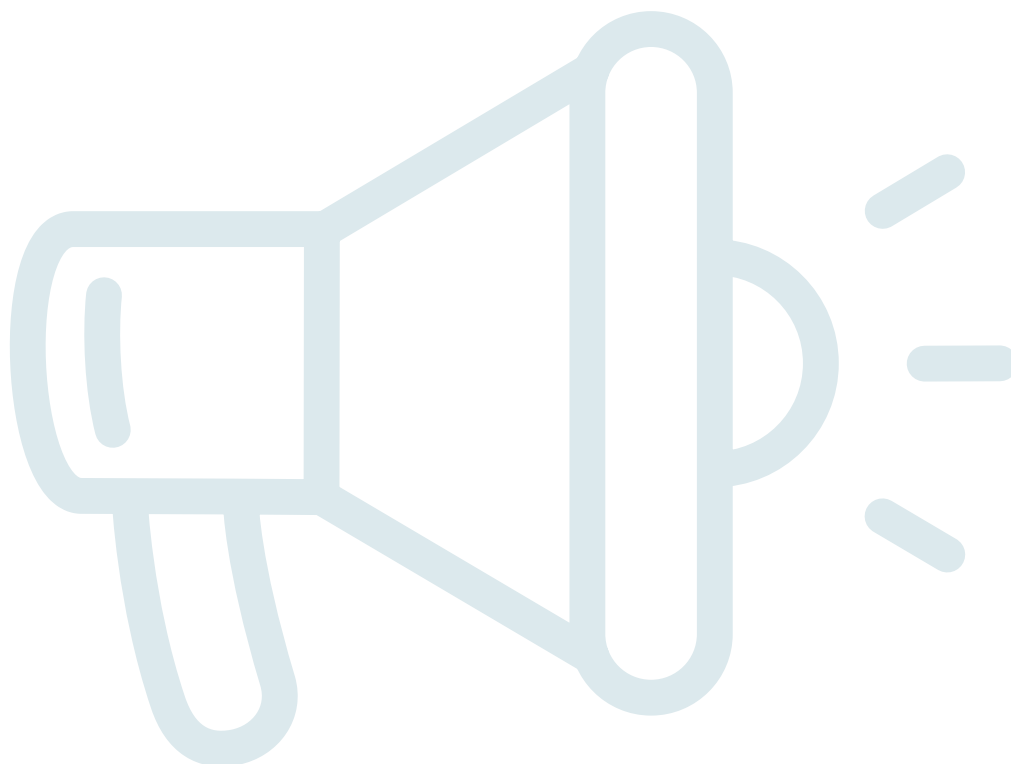
Lead: Inspire Diginet / Anti-Poverty Coordinator

3. Carers have access to the information and support they need now and in the future

Lead: South Tyneside Council

4. To ensure that the people who need to be targeted about their entitlements (including pension credit) know what services and organisations there are to support them. To have a better understanding of why those who need this support don't access the help provided.

Lead: Anti-Poverty Monitoring Officer and Welfare Support





Community and health

Vision

Older people in South Tyneside have access to appropriate health, social care and wellbeing services.

Background

Health and social care tailored to older people's needs are vital in maintaining wellbeing and independence. Prevention is paramount, then services and referral pathways need to be joined up to encourage early interventions.

Adult social care is under a great deal of pressure, which can put a strain on carers and leave older people at risk.

The pandemic has impacted older people's health in many ways, including physical deconditioning, food insecurity, late-stage diagnoses, and social isolation. Recognising these issues is a crucial part of rebuilding both physical and mental health. [20]

Key Priorities

- Increasing the accessibility of activities that maintain independence.
- Identifying those at risk of frailty or are frail and offering a range of support.
- Providing support to those living in poverty
- Ensuring older people have access to the health and social care support that they require.
- Encourage people to take part in / remain physically active to improve their health and wellbeing.

Key Indicators

- Annual report of the programmes that help people remain independent.
- Identify and support those experiencing falls.
- Number of older people being referred to talking therapies.
- Implementation of the Sheffield sexual health charter.
- Annual report on access to primary care

Agreed Actions

1. Through the Living Well Alliance to review the range of programmes that are available to support older people to remain independent for longer, ensuring there is value for money and opportunities to expand the offer as funding allows – for example escape pain.

Lead: Living Well Alliance

2. Through the Living Well Alliance, to improve outcomes for those at risk of or experiencing falls and frailty, potentially using the joining the dots blueprint.

Lead: Living Well Alliance

3. To work with the age friendly community theme leads, to raise awareness of mental health in older people, leading to an increase in the number of people who are referred to talking therapies or other organisations that can offer appropriate support.

Lead: Mental Health Alliance

4. To implement Sheffield's sexual health charter for older people

Lead: Sexual Health Alliance

5. Support service providers to deliver practical help to those experiencing poverty including food, fuel, and income.

Lead Poverty Group

6. To continue to make health care accessible, by offering both face-to-face and on-line appointments, whilst helping older people navigate and book their appointments.

Lead: ICB

Measuring the impact of the Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan

The actions set out on pages 14 – 29 have been developed and agreed with the appropriate organisation.

Likewise, the indicators and reporting mechanisms have also been agreed.

The Age Friendly Steering Group has requested that at each of their six weekly steering group meetings, they will invite one-two leads to talk about progress in some detail.

A reporting template is still to be developed.

Ongoing consultation and feedback

The Age Friendly Steering Group also needs to agree a process to ensure that older people remain at the heart of this strategy and action plan. Ensuring that we continue to seek their views and that we listen, learn, and adapt over the duration of the plan.

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