

# CARMARTHENSHIRE AGEING WELL STRATEGY FORWARD PLAN



Heneiddio'n Dda  
yn Sir Gâr

Ageing Well in  
Carmarthenshire



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## 1. Foreword

Carmarthenshire is already taking important steps towards becoming an age-friendly county, with co-production underway and a growing number of organisations contributing to this shared vision. As we enter the next stage of our Age-Friendly journey, our focus is on deepening collaboration and ensuring that older people are listened to, valued, meaningfully involved and play a central role in shaping priorities. We are committed to ensuring that the Age-Friendly Action Plan is shaped by the lived experiences, priorities, and aspirations of older residents, achieved through genuine co-production and a wide mix of inclusive engagement methods.

By working closely with community groups, voluntary organisations, public sector partners, and trusted local networks, we will extend our reach and gather the voices of older people from all backgrounds, including those who are seldom heard. Through this collaborative, inclusive approach, Carmarthenshire will ensure that older people are not only consulted but are active co-creators of a more connected, supportive and age-positive county where everyone can live and age well. Together we will build a county that is inclusive, supportive, and shaped by the voices of its people.

## 2. Developing a plan

Developing an age friendly action plan is a key part of Carmarthenshire's vision of creating a county where older people can age well, safely, actively and with dignity.

To develop a fully rounded action plan, the process begins by working in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders, including older people from across the county, community organisations, local authorities, health and social care services and third sector partners to assess collectively what is working well, where gaps exist, and what matters most to our older residents. Guided by the World Organisation's eight age-friendly domains - Outdoor Spaces and Buildings; Transportation; Housing; Social Participation; Respect and Social Inclusion; Civic Participation and Employment; Communication and Information; and Community Support and Health Services – partners will work to co-produce a practical and inclusive action plan that sets clear, measurable priorities and shared responsibilities which reflect the voices of older residents.

Having carried out an assessment of the local area to understand the needs and priorities of older residents we are well placed to identify both the barriers and opportunities to healthy ageing in Carmarthenshire. From this position we will be able to craft an action plan which builds on the strengths of Carmarthenshire whilst also recognising areas for improvement.

To ensure that our action plan is effective it needs to be a living, evolving document that is reviewed, evaluated and updated regularly so that we can assess whether the actions remain relevant, responsive and impactful as our county's needs change over time. By centring the voice of older people at the heart of the design, delivery and review, Carmarthenshire's Age-Friendly Action Plan will help create a more inclusive, connected and supportive county for all generations serving as a blueprint for building a healthier, more inclusive and resilient county for people of all ages.

## 3. Co-production

Developing an action plan for an age-friendly Carmarthenshire cannot be done alone, just as we cannot deliver a more age friendly county alone. The crucial component in the whole age-friendly concept is the ethos of coproduction and collaborative working, between both organisations within the county and with the older people that reside here. Co-production

sits at the heart of Carmarthenshire’s journey to becoming an age-friendly county and ensures that the age-friendly action plan truly reflects the diversity of Carmarthenshire’s older population and captures the diversity of the support and services that organisations within the county can provide. To embed co-production meaningfully, we will continue to work side-by-side with older people, community groups, voluntary organisations, and public sector partners throughout every stage of planning, delivery, and evaluation.

We have already made inroads into co-production with numerous organisations contributing to the work that is ongoing in driving Carmarthenshire towards achieving age-friendly status. The baseline assessment carried out has formed the basis of the co-produced work. The table below sets out the organisations currently involved in co-producing an age-friendly Carmarthenshire:

<b>Organisations involved in Co-production of an Age-Friendly Carmarthenshire</b>	
<b>Carmarthenshire County Council</b>	Age Cymru Dyfed
<b>Hywel Dda University Health Board</b>	Dolen Teifi
<b>Mid &amp; West Fire &amp; Rescue Service</b>	Dyfed Powys Police
<b>People Speak Up</b>	Connecting Carmarthenshire
<b>Llesiant Delta Wellbeing</b>	Foothold Cymru
<b>Catalyst for Care</b>	Country Cars
<b>Living Well Centre Parc Dewi Sant</b>	West Wales Regional Partnership Board
<b>Tenovus Cancer Care</b>	Care and Repair Carmarthenshire
<b>Angor</b>	Pobl Group
<b>CETMA</b>	Carers Trust Crossroads West Wales
<b>Hwb Bach Y Wlad</b>	Bws Bach Y Wlad
<b>Cof Gâr</b>	Actif Sport and Leisure
<b>Smoking &amp; Wellbeing Services</b>	Carmarthenshire Libraries
<b>Trading Standards</b>	Carmarthenshire Social Prescribers
<b>Direct Payments Support Service</b>	Tumble Lindy Hop Jive
<b>Dinefwr Ramblers</b>	Be Well Team
<b>NEST Welsh Government Warm Homes Scheme</b>	Road Safety Team
<b>Social Care &amp; Health Protection Team</b>	Tŷ Golau
<b>Armed Forces</b>	Links
<b>Carmarthen Stroke Group</b>	Waiting List Support Services
<b>U3A</b>	Project 360 – Military Veterans Support

The continued development of an Age-Friendly Carmarthenshire will build on progress already made through partnership working and co-production with organisations and older residents. Moving forward, the focus will be on expanding engagement to reach a broader and more diverse range of voices, strengthening collaborative networks, and embedding age-friendly principles across planning and services. By continuously reviewing progress, identifying emerging needs, and fostering innovation, Carmarthenshire will ensure its age-friendly action plan remains inclusive and impactful, supporting older people to live, work and thrive in communities that value and empower them.

Continuing to develop co-production is essential to keeping older people remain at the heart of decision-making in Carmarthenshire. As the county evolves, new challenges and opportunities will emerge, and ongoing co-production ensures our age-friendly action plan stays relevant and responsive to these challenges and opportunities. It strengthens partnerships between the organisations already involved whilst also building trust and accountability with older residents. Continued development is essential as it also enables us to grow our current network, ensuring that we engage with even more organisations who have an important role to play in contributing towards the creation of an age-friendly county. By maintaining, expanding and continually developing co-production, Carmarthenshire can create sustainable, practical, and innovative actions that genuinely improve quality of life for older people across the county.

## 4. Co-ordination Plan

As part of our ongoing responsibility, we make a commitment to work alongside residents as we identify the priorities for creating an age-friendly county. We have developed an initial points of action plan with the aim of assisting us in the journey of establishing a solid foundation to further progress the work already commenced. The key points of action are:

## Points of action



The points of action plan above shows the steps that we will take in our drive to create an age-friendly Carmarthenshire; however, we know that there is more work to be done, therefore we will also strive to ensure as a continual commitment to residents, that we embed the following principles under each of the World Health Organisation's eight domains and consider these in all that we do.

## Our Principles

<b>Outdoor Spaces and Buildings</b>	All environments are welcoming and inclusive to support older people to feel safe and engaged within the county
<b>Transport</b>	Accessible, affordable and reliable transport options meet the needs of our older residents
<b>Housing</b>	Housing options meet the changing needs of older people so they can live safely and independently within the county
<b>Social Participation</b>	Accessible and inclusive opportunities for residents to be involved in ways that reflect their diverse interests
<b>Respect and Social Inclusion</b>	A culture that challenges ageism and promotes positive attitudes towards ageing so that older people feel valued and heard
<b>Civic Participation and Employment</b>	Skills and contributions of older people are recognised and valued, promoting meaningful employment, volunteering, flexible roles and inclusive engagement
<b>Communication and Information</b>	Clear, accessible and timely information in formats that meet the diverse needs of older people
<b>Community Support and Health Services</b>	Preventative care, wellbeing, community support and health services support older people to live healthy, independent lives

## 5. Areas for Improvement

The baseline assessment section of the strategy, in document one, discussed in greater depth the current position of the county under each of the eight domains of age-friendly cities and communities as outlined by the World Health Organisation. From this assessment, clear areas of improvement under each domain have been determined. Identifying areas for improvement helps Carmarthenshire focus its Age-Friendly Action Plan on the issues that matter most to older people. Recognising gaps across the eight WHO domains highlight the issues that most affect older people's quality of life. This helps us prioritise actions, allocate resources effectively, and focus on targeted improvements that will have the greatest impact. Understanding what isn't working helps partners recognise inequalities, unmet needs, and barriers across the county, whilst showing older residents that their concerns are heard, and their voices are central to shaping the plan. This ensures genuine co-production and supports our aim of building a Carmarthenshire where everyone can live and age well. The table below outlines the key areas for improvement identified through previous assessment work which will provide us with a framework in creating a future action plan:

Domain Area	Areas for improvement identified
<b>Outdoor Spaces and Buildings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toilet provisions are lacking throughout the county</li> <li>• More crossings on roads</li> <li>• Pavement and road need to be maintained</li> <li>• Access to leisure facilities needs to be more reasonable</li> <li>• Maintain and utilise community halls</li> <li>• Single ticket to cover all country parks throughout the county</li> <li>• Bus stop design/ suitability</li> </ul>
<b>Transport</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of accessible public transport options</li> <li>• Transport links to hospitals aren't sufficient</li> <li>• Frequency of bus services</li> <li>• Lack of transport information available</li> <li>• Train reliability</li> <li>• Lack of cycle ways</li> <li>• Roads are not in a good state of repair which is of particular concern where there are no pavements</li> <li>• Pavement parking prohibits their use for any other mode of transport/ travel/ activity</li> </ul>

<p><b>Housing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shortage of specialist housing options</li> <li>• Empty properties not being utilised</li> <li>• Planning delays for adaptations</li> <li>• Lack of affordable housing</li> <li>• Long waiting times to be allocated suitable accommodation</li> <li>• Planning decisions for adaptations can take a long time</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social Participation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of community facilities in some areas</li> <li>• Local attractions can be expensive - discount schemes would help</li> <li>• Facilities and programmes were closed during covid</li> <li>• Lack of transport options to enable participation in activities</li> <li>• Difficulty in finding information about available activities and events</li> <li>• The move to digitalise activities and share information excludes people</li> </ul>
<p><b>Respect and social inclusion</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too much reliance on social media can exclude older people</li> <li>• Mobile banking services are difficult to access</li> <li>• Lack of toilet provisions in remote areas</li> <li>• Services such as Post Offices and banks are lacking in rural communities</li> <li>• Basic services such as broadband are wanting in rural areas</li> <li>• Welsh language use in services has declined</li> </ul>
<p><b>Civic Participation and Employment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited number of events hosted which are aimed at older people</li> <li>• Opportunities to participate are limited</li> <li>• Need to improve job opportunities for older people</li> <li>• Lack of residents being made aware of available/ affordable groups for older people</li> <li>• Examples of good practice for older people should be shared and used as learning opportunities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Communication and information</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of signposting to activities</li> <li>• Fibre broadband provision is patchy</li> <li>• No single place listing services</li> <li>• Absence of a dedicated area on the council website noting services for older people</li> <li>• Improve communication and booking facilities for those without internet</li> <li>• Lack of communication events such as the annual ageing well event</li> </ul>

<b>Community Support and Health Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More proactive approach from the Health Board is required</li> <li>• More GP's required as access to GP's is often difficult</li> <li>• Long waiting lists to be seen</li> <li>• Surgeries have closed putting more stress on waiting lists</li> <li>• A lot of older people feel isolated due to lack of engagement</li> <li>• No mobile health units to provide people with blood pressure testing, and diabetes and blood tests</li> <li>• For immobile people access to hospitals can be difficult</li> </ul>
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## 6. Recommendations

The areas for improvement identified above help determine priority issues to be addressed, providing focus for future action plans. They allow evidence-based recommendations to be derived and developed in areas requiring further attention, ensuring actions address real needs rather than assumptions and to design practical actions that are achievable within local systems and budgets. Basing recommendations on lived experiences of people within the county strengthens co-production, ensuring that proposed actions genuinely reflect what matters to residents. As a result, the recommendations become more relevant, more effective, and more likely to deliver long-term improvements in wellbeing across the county. The recommendations identified form a framework for future action plans and are summarised in the table below:

Domain Area	Recommendations
<b>Outdoor Spaces and Buildings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain efforts for street and pavement repairs</li> <li>• Incorporate age and dementia friendly environments in new and refurbished public buildings</li> <li>• Review public convenience provisions throughout the county and engage older residents in any consultations</li> <li>• Review road safety and pedestrian crossing suitability</li> <li>• Ensure older people are engaged when designing and developing bus stops</li> </ul>

<p><b>Transport</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve and enhance Shopmobility provisions in town centres</li> <li>• Explore mobile facilities for more council services to assist those in rural areas not covered by public transport</li> <li>• Improve local and short-distance public transport offerings</li> <li>• Ensure that bus timetables are widely published and are accessible to all</li> <li>• Provision of adequate cycle ways as an alternative transport option</li> </ul>
<p><b>Housing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop more sheltered and extra-care housing, including affordable units, to match rising demand</li> <li>• Accelerate adaptive home renovation services and remove planning obstacles</li> <li>• Support and advice for older people in accessing smaller accommodation</li> <li>• Invest in care home improvements, whilst supporting those that want to remain in their own homes to do so for as long as possible</li> <li>• Ensure that suitable accommodation for older people is located conveniently near amenities, services and facilities</li> <li>• Use empty properties frameworks to repurpose homes for older residents needing accessible housing</li> </ul>
<p><b>Social Participation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue development of community connectivity, wellbeing and resilience programmes</li> <li>• Need to 'take stock' after covid and hear people's views on what's needed</li> <li>• Learn from innovation</li> <li>• Work to reinstate community facilities and programmes that were closed during covid</li> <li>• Develop transport links for rural communities to engage in activities</li> <li>• Enhance information on activities that are available and upcoming including on website</li> </ul>
<p><b>Respect and social inclusion</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve broadband availability across areas where this is problematic to aid with inclusion</li> <li>• Encourage and promote the Welsh Language and reverse recent decline in use</li> <li>• Improve understanding of and response to mobility issues faced by older people</li> <li>• Invest in alternative communication methods for those who don't wish to or are unable to engage digitally</li> <li>• Build on pilot initiatives e.g. intergeneration and kindness schemes to spread their benefits</li> </ul>

<p><b>Civic Participation and Employment</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engagement platform should be progressed with a potential early focus on older people</li> <li>• Reinstate a residents panel</li> <li>• Target older people for employment opportunities</li> <li>• Involve older adults in planning, policy and decision making</li> <li>• Promote age inclusive hiring practices and develop inclusive employment policies</li> </ul>
<p><b>Communication and information</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mitigate risk of older people being left behind by increased digitalisation</li> <li>• Establish news feed/ webpage for older people providing essential information</li> <li>• Improve engagement activities to make them accessible to older people and the needs of different communities across the county</li> <li>• Streamline existing forums to provide a representative and cohesive voice for older people</li> <li>• Underpin a co-productive approach to service development</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Support and Health Services</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build on and upscale current innovation and improvement programmes</li> <li>• Continue to develop technology-based support for older people in their homes</li> <li>• Involve older people in the design and co-production of services</li> <li>• Focus on reablement to help people regain skills and independence</li> <li>• Progress initiatives such as well-being hubs to provide integrated care for older people</li> <li>• Address long waiting lists for appointments and consider reopening closed surgeries</li> <li>• Better engagement opportunities to address isolation</li> <li>• Provision of mobile services to undertake basic health checks, such as blood and diabetes tests to ensure accessibility for all who require such services</li> <li>• Encompass hospitals and health care services stops in public transport route</li> </ul>

## 7. Conclusion

It is hoped that this strategy and accompanying points of action plan demonstrates our continued commitment to residents across the county to work together in creating an age-friendly Carmarthenshire.

This strategy along with supplementary supporting documentation will be submitted to the World Health Organisation alongside the application as the next step in Carmarthenshire's journey and objective to become an age friendly county which supports everybody to live and age well.

In conclusion, becoming an age friendly Carmarthenshire means more than meeting needs, it means recognising the value, dignity, and potential of our older residents. Through partnership, inclusivity, and shared commitment, we aim to create a county where people of all ages can thrive, participate, and feel a strong sense of belonging.