



# **Age Friendly**

Cities and Counties  
Programme Handbook

## About Age Friendly Ireland

Age Friendly Ireland is the home of Ireland's Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme. The Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme aims to make Ireland a truly great place in which to grow old. The Programme is built on the recognition of the valuable role that older people can and should play in shaping their communities for the better. The voice of the older person is at the heart of the Programme.



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- Gathering all existing information about older people in your city/county
- Consulting with a wide range of older people across your county/city
- Summarising and preparing consultation findings for discussion
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- Giving Feedback on Findings and Proposed Solutions to Older People

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- Keeping the Older People's Council vibrant
- Planning and Hosting a Strategy Review

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- Writing the Draft Strategy
- Setting Up the Older People's Council
- Getting the Alliance to agree to goals within the strategy
- Finalising and launching the strategy
- Affiliating to the WHO Global Network

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# INTRODUCTION:

- Foreword
- Users' Introduction to the Handbook
- The international Age Friendly concept and the programme in Ireland.

# Foreword, Brendan Kenny, Chair, Age Friendly Ireland and Assistant Chief Executive, Dublin City Council



## The Handbook

As many of you will know, the hosting of the national Age Friendly Cities & Counties Programme moved to a new organisation, Age Friendly Ireland, established in early 2014. Dublin City Council, on behalf of the Local Government sector, is delighted to be hosting this national programme office.

Since Louth launched the first county wide Age Friendly Programme in 2009 many of the frontrunner counties have made very considerable progress in implementing age friendly strategies. Together these frontrunner counties have developed a practical, yet effective blueprint for how best to establish

and implement a successful Age Friendly Programme. Indeed in developing its own Age Friendly Programme Dublin City has learned much from those frontrunner lead counties.

In Ireland, the Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme expanded rapidly during 2014. Sharing of practice and learnings across the now national network of Age Friendly Cities & Counties will therefore be of increasing relevance moving forward and in supporting those who are at the early stages in adopting the Age Friendly Programme. We are therefore very pleased to summarise and share, as part of this Handbook, what has been learned in respect of successfully setting up, designing and implementing an Age Friendly Programme.

The Handbook is written primarily to provide very practical guidance and to take the Age Friendly Alliances through the key stages involved in setting up and running an Age Friendly Programme. Its development has been informed through a case study process involving a number of the frontrunner Age Friendly Counties and with a further series of interviews involving a sample of Age Friendly Alliance members and the Local Authority

based Programme Coordinators that support these Alliances. Case studies of three counties are included as part of the document, with relevant examples and interviews featured throughout the stages. Appendices at the end of the Handbook include consultation experiences, further supportive templates, relevant references and useful links.

I am very conscious that this resource would not have been possible without significant input from across the Irish Age Friendly sector and beyond. The various contributors have been very generous with both their time and in the sharing of their experience and advice. This is greatly appreciated. Resources such as this, when combined with the Programmes growing scale and heightened level of underpinning rigour, will help to further enhance the Programmes positioning within a national context while also strengthening its alignment with key national policy goals and frameworks.

## The Age Friendly Programme

The Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme is part of an international effort, coordinated by the World Health Organisation (WHO). It is a global movement that is enabling older people to contribute to their localities and communities on every continent. The results are positive ageing, better cities and counties, and more relevant and effective local government, service delivery and

business opportunities.

Ireland's National Age-Friendly Cities and Counties Programme is part of this worldwide initiative which aims to make sure that as we age, we can all:

- have a real say in what happens in our own lives and what happens in the areas in which we live;
- enjoy good health, good services, and live in a safe environment;
- participate fully in everything that is going on in our communities, cities and counties;

That's the kind of older age that we all want for ourselves. The Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme provides a structure so that local authorities can take the lead on changing thinking about ageing, and how services are planned and delivered. Through this model, local authorities bring together older people, service providers and businesses in an Alliance that really works, and which:

- enables older people to live active and healthy lives, remaining in their own homes for as long as possible
- enhances service delivery without increasing expenditure
- brings about valued improvements in the quality of life for everybody in the community.

Traditionally, policy has viewed older people and population ageing solely as a challenge

## Ageing is changing

According to the Central Statistics Office:

- The average life expectancy for men in Ireland is 76.8 years and 81.6 years for women
- Life expectancy at 65 is rising faster in Ireland than anywhere else in the EU
- By 2041, there will be around 1.3-1.4m people in Ireland over the age of 65 – that's one out of every four people; of these, 440,000 will be ages 80 or more – that's four times as many as in 2006.

– particularly in relation to healthcare and pension costs. The Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme recognises what demographers might refer to as the “demographic dividend” in its response to these challenges. With their life time of accumulated expertise, talents and wisdom, older people are central to the process – their voice is at the heart of the Age Friendly design in every city or county.

Everyone hopes that as they grow older they will be supported to stay in their own home, be listened to and taken seriously, be able to work or volunteer, enjoy a good social life, and have access to good information and healthcare. Neighbourliness, a sense of belonging, feeling safe, feeling valued...these are things that everybody wants in their lives. The Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme is a proven, cost-effective way of making those things a

reality for our cities, counties and communities.

In the current economic and social climate no one organisation can be really effective on its own. The transformation of service planning, integration and delivery in a responsive and cost-effective way has become a must. Partnership, joint planning, collaboration, inclusion and cross-sector working are now critical for success.

The Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme offers a proven way of bringing diverse organisations, groups, services and businesses together to streamline their work, with the interests and needs of older people at their heart. When policies are reframed in this way, the whole community benefit. That's because what is essential for older people will, very often, be of benefit to everyone: everybody likes to have access to services

and leisure opportunities locally, near to where they live, and close to their social networks of family, friends and neighbours.

The Age Friendly Programme is underpinned by an approach where the plans are developed and agreed locally and where the agencies involved agree to be accountable to each other and to older people at local level. As such it has proved to be successful in achieving its aim of improving the lives of older people. This approach represents local government at its best and is a prime example of how we give effect to the need for integrated services, 'joined-up' thinking and planning at local level.

Through the Age Friendly Programme we can work together to ensure that we meet the challenges that lie ahead in a positive way that will improve the lives of our older citizens in the future.

I hope you find this Handbook to be of value when implementing your own Age Friendly Programme. The Age Friendly Programme will continue to grow and evolve in terms of sophistication and rigour. It is important therefore that this Handbook is part of an evolving resource of practice which will grow over time. All Programme partners have a responsibility to support the ongoing development of such a resource.

I would like to wish all of the partners continued success in the future, and I look forward to working closely with you, as part of the Age Friendly Programme, on behalf of older people across Ireland.

Best wishes,

**Brendan Kenny, Chair of Age Friendly Ireland.**

**The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines an “age-friendly” community as one in which all organisations, and everyone from all walks of life:**

- recognises diversity among older people
- promotes the inclusion of older people
- values their contribution to community life
- respects their decisions
- anticipates and responds flexibly to ageing-related needs and preferences.

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# Users Introduction to Handbook for Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme

## Welcome to the Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme Handbook.

Congratulations on joining this growing network of people working towards making Ireland a better place to grow old in. By bringing together a group of people committed to making their city or county age friendly, there is a real possibility to embed age friendly thinking into our society. Being part of this process is both exciting and daunting.

The aim of this guide is to offer practical support but also to inspire you on a journey towards making your city or county a better place to grow old in.

An effective approach to developing Age Friendly Cities and Counties throughout Ireland has been built up over the last five years. This handbook aims to give all those starting out and those in the midst of developing an Age Friendly City or County programme an understanding of this approach.

The four stages – Set Up, Consultation, Planning and Implementation - of developing an Age Friendly City or County will be carefully outlined across four chapters. At each stage, there is step-by-step guidance on what to do – whether it's making contact with senior managers asking them to join an Age Friendly Alliance or consulting with a group of older people or writing an Age Friendly strategy that will have real meaning for the older people in your county.

Throughout the handbook, we have included templates that will assist you in writing letters, press releases and invitations to launches. It's a dynamic process to be involved in and the further along the route, more people will become involved, providing leadership and direction.

For this handbook, we have drawn on the experience and expertise of Chief Executives and the local authority based Age Friendly Coordinators. We have also spoken to independent Chairpersons of Age Friendly cities and counties. And, most importantly, we have listened to the voice of older people through the Chairs of the Older People's Councils in various counties. The Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultants and the local authority based Age Friendly City and County Coordinators have also developed much of the reference materials for this handbook.

Ultimately, this handbook helps to build a confident group of decision makers amongst the older population who will continue to inform, influence and embed the collaborative cross-sector agency work that the Age Friendly programme has at its core. The sharing of best-practice will also become increasingly relevant as more counties join the programme. Resources like this one – and its companion document, The Story So Far sets the groundwork for those who use them to add to, update and develop into what will become an active repository of Age Friendly knowledge and practice over time.

## 1: Set Up

- Building Up the Age Friendly Agenda within the Local Authority
- Inviting senior managers to join the Age Friendly Alliance
- Keeping County Councillors informed about the Age Friendly programme
- Setting up the Age Friendly Alliance
- Organising and Hosting the launch of the Age Friendly Programme

## 2: Consultation

- Gathering all existing information about older people in your city/county
- Consulting with a wide range of older people across your county/city
- Summarising and preparing consultation findings for discussion
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## 4: Implementation

- Beginning to Implement the Strategy
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- Choosing a town to become the Age Friendly Town in your county
- Keeping the Older People's Council vibrant
- Planning and Hosting a Strategy Review

## 3: Planning

- Writing the Draft Strategy
- Setting Up the Older People's Council
- Getting the Alliance to agree to goals within the strategy
- Finalising and launching the strategy
- Affiliating to the WHO Global Network

# Introduction to the International Age Friendly Concept and how it has Developed in Ireland.

by **Sylvia Thompson, author of the Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme Handbook**



For the first time in human history, there will soon be more people over the age of 60 than children under the age of five. Alongside this huge change in the age of the world population is a global shift to city living. The awareness of these two global trends of population ageing and urbanisation prompted the World Health Organisation (WHO) to set up a global age friendly cities programme in 2005.

Launched at the World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the Age Friendly Cities programme immediately attracted enthusiastic interest from cities across America and Europe who were keen to find ways

to make urban living better for older people. Policy makers were also aware of the how the move to urban areas de-populated rural areas, leaving more older people living isolated lives.

A key realisation from the start was that older people – the majority of whom are active and engaged citizens – should be central to any strategic planning to improve their lives. Rather than seeing older people as a drain on government budgets, this new thinking firmly viewed older people as a resource for their families, communities and economies. An age friendly city was defined as an urban environment which encouraged active ageing by fostering safer, healthier and more engaged communities. In practical terms, an age friendly city adapts its infrastructure and services to be more accessible and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities (changing bus routes so that they pass hospitals and health centres, involving older people in plans for supported housing etc).

The concept of universal design is central to this process because a city which enhances life for older people also improves the mobility and independence of people with disabilities. Safe neighbourhoods allow children, young families and older people partake in physical, leisure and social activities with confidence. Families experience less stress when their older members have the community support and health services they need. The whole community benefits from the participation of older people in voluntary or paid work. And, the local economy profits from the patronage of older adult consumers.

The Age Friendly Cities programme was

developed across 33 cities throughout the world. Older people were asked to describe what made life easier or harder for them across a number of areas. Their feedback led to the development of an age friendly city checklist covering eight aspects of urban living where improvements could be made. These areas - 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 - then became the foundation stones for further development of the Age Friendly programmes around the world.

***“A key realisation from the start was that older people – the majority of whom are active and engaged citizens – should be central to any strategic planning to improve their lives.”***

Dundalk, County Louth was one of the original 33 cities that partook in the development of the WHO Age Friendly Cities programme in 2007. Rodd Bond, Director of the Netwell Centre at Dundalk Institute of Technology and Mary Deery, Age Friendly County Coordinator for Louth held countywide meetings with older people to find out what their needs were and how civic, health and transport leaders could meet those needs. Meanwhile, The Atlantic Philanthropies funded the new Irish think tank on healthy and active ageing called The Ageing Well Network. Headed up by Anne Connolly

and chaired by Don Thornhill, the Ageing Well Network set out an agenda for positive ageing by building relationships between academics, policy makers, captains of industry and service providers who had a vested interest in easing the transition to an ageing society.

By 2009, Dundalk was setting out its own blueprint for a county which encouraged active older citizens to be part of the decision-making process to make County Louth an age friendly county. Louth County Council became actively involved when the then County Manager,

Conn Murray endorsed the programme and appointed a staff member to support the development of Ireland's first Age Friendly County programme (see Louth case study in the case studies chapter of this handbook).

The time was right for the two organisations to come together to share their visions and spread the Age Friendly agenda to other counties. The Ageing Well Network was keen to develop the Age Friendly County programme in another county. Anne Connolly met with the Kilkenny County Manager, Joe Crocket, who gave his commitment to introduce the programme there. Soon, other counties also came on board – Kildare, Clare and Galway city and county.

The first international conference on Age Friendly Cities took place in Dublin in 2011.

Organised by the Ageing Well Network with the WHO and the International Federation on Ageing, it brought together senior managers in local government, policy makers and health service officials across the world. The Dublin Declaration on Age Friendly Cities and Communities was launched at the conference. A key document setting out an international and national commitment to the age friendly agenda, the Dublin Declaration was signed by 42 country representatives on September 28, 2011. These included 14 local authorities in Ireland. Signing the Dublin Declaration commits representatives to a five year cycle of continual assessment and improvement to make their communities and cities more age friendly.

The New Agenda on Ageing, the Ageing Well Network's comprehensive research document

***“Signing the Dublin Declaration commits representatives to a five year cycle of continual assessment and improvement to make their communities and cities more age friendly.”***

published in 2012 did exactly what its title promised – setting out a clear agenda for an Irish society accessible and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities. It contributed hugely to the development of Ireland's first National Positive Ageing Strategy the following year.

By 2013, there were 16 age friendly cities

and counties in Ireland. The Ageing Well Network capitalised on its growing success by organising a European Summit on Ageing during the Irish presidency of the EU. Building on the 2011 Dublin Declaration, a new document, the Dublin Declaration on Age Friendly Cities and Communities in Europe 2013 was signed by mayors/deputy mayors from cities and municipalities through Europe



at this event. In November 2014, all remaining local authorities in Ireland were invited to sign up to the Dublin Declaration.

In January 2014, The Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme and other associated activities were subsumed into Age Friendly Ireland. Similarly funded by the Atlantic Philanthropies, this new body was given the remit to support the completion of the national roll-out of the Age Friendly programme to all local authorities by the end of 2015. Like its predecessor, Age Friendly Ireland aims to make every county in Ireland a great place to grow old in. The organisational structure has matured to include a National Implementation and Integration Group and is governed by a board of senior executive and non-executive directors from the academic, local government, business, gardai, service provider and voluntary sectors. This group is chaired by Brendan Kenny, Dublin City Council's Assistant Chief Executive.

Age Friendly Ireland's core staff have been accommodated in centrally located offices by Dublin City Council and is currently supported by a small team of regional consultants who work with local authority staff to roll out the Age Friendly programme in every county of Ireland. The Age Friendly Ireland team is working to spread the word of Age Friendly Ireland to policy makers, industry leaders and service providers across Ireland.

**Sylvia Thompson is an author and journalist who writes mainly on health, social and environmental issues for the Irish Times.**

This handbook is an initiative of Age Friendly Ireland. It offers new and existing counties in the Age Friendly programme a step by step approach to becoming age friendly communities. Keeping the voice of older people central to the process of change and development is the most important element of the approach. However, another hugely important element is the involvement of key decision makers in all aspects of service provision and infrastructural development that impact on older people. Bringing these two groups of people together creates a new synergy which – when it works well – is both cost saving and life enhancing for everyone involved. The local authority is the catalyst for change whose key role is to bring together these two groups of people. A long term aim of the Age Friendly City and County programme is that older people will become part of the decision-making process on all aspects of their lives as they age. Read on to find out how you can contribute to this developing model of engagement to bring about an Age Friendly Ireland we can all be proud of.

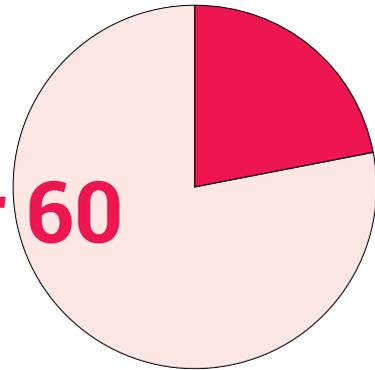
The November 2014 signing marked full engagement by all 31 of our local authorities to a common set of values and principles, and to a commitment to taking actions that will improve the quality of life of elder people in our cities and counties.

# Facts and Figures

**By 2030: 3 in 5**  
will live in cities

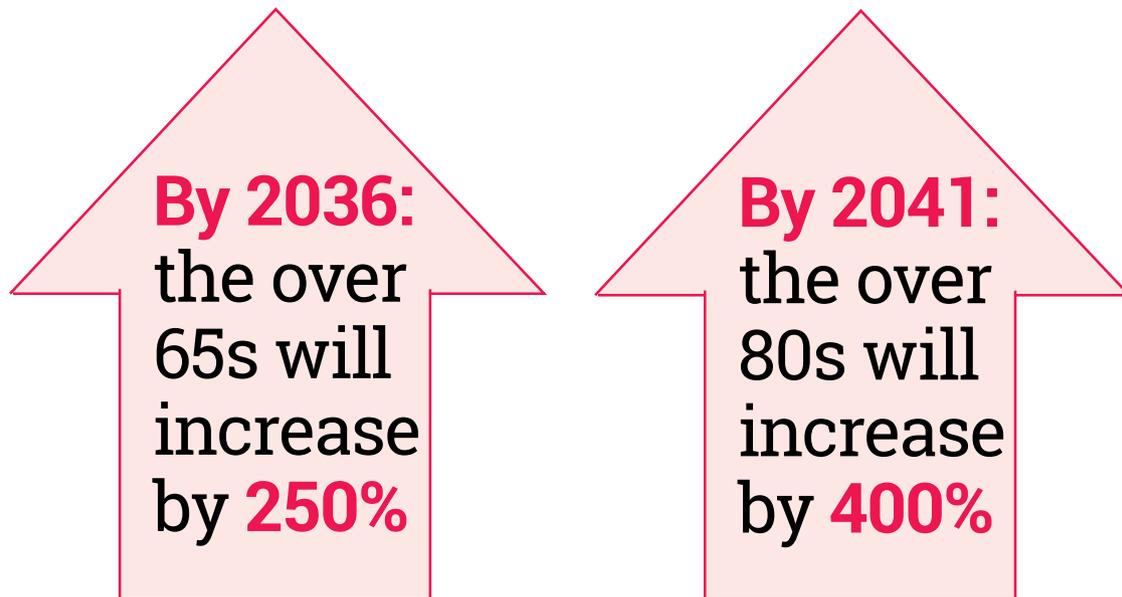


**By 2050: 22%** of the  
population will be **over 60**



By then, there will be **more older people than children** in the population. And older people will make up a **quarter of the total urban population** in less developed countries.

In Ireland



Contrary to popular perception, **only 5%** of this population **is frail**, the **majority of older people are active** if sometimes under-engaged citizens.



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# CHAPTER 1:

## Set Up

- Building Up the Age Friendly Agenda within the Local Authority
- Inviting senior managers in public, voluntary and state agencies to join the Age Friendly Alliance
- Keeping County Councillors informed about the Age Friendly programme
- Setting up the Age Friendly Alliance
- Organising and Hosting the launch of the Age Friendly Programme

# The Vision of the Age Friendly Movement in Ireland



***“The thing about the Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme is that nobody disagrees with it but you have to get the true value of it across to people and make it real.”***

Conn Murray was the first County Manager [now Chief Executive of Limerick City and County Council] to embrace the Age Friendly Counties programme. “It was very new. There was no blueprint and my initial intent was to gain as much information as possible in order to articulate the concept,” he says now reflecting on the programme five years later.

He believes that the community sector got the Age Friendly concept immediately but it took longer to gain engagement from the public sector. “We had to explain it more extensively to the HSE and the Gardai who have their own remits and budgets and are only answerable to their own line managers. There were three stages – first to engage with the programme, then to understand the concept of multi-agency collaboration and then to commit in a pragmatic way to do things.” He acknowledges huge support from the Ageing Well Network [now Age Friendly Ireland] during this process.

Conn Murray believes that the concept of Age Friendly Counties resonates hugely with so much of the work within county councils and the communities they serve. [Appointing a member of the Local Authority staff to administer the programme is crucial.](#) “The key here is to get the right person

who will be taken seriously because of his/her seniority but who also fits in terms of personality, capability and commitment to and understanding of the community."

He also argues that the Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme will work better if it doesn't become a mandated or legal responsibility of a staff member. "If we see it as someone's pet project or something that has to be done, it will lose something. The voluntary nature of the Age Friendly Alliance is significant: we have to ask ourselves on a daily basis – are we focused on people in the correct way? Are there gaps in what is being done for communities? The fact that people are invited to participate and shape and design the programme means they own it."

Conn Murray says that we must also realise that a lot of work is already being done in the voluntary and community sector for older people. "There was so much of this work that I wasn't aware of. It's important not to interfere with it but to support it with networks and publicise what is being done."

The Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme offers the structures, networks and recognition for this work". "Work such as

the Care and Repair in Dundalk or the Senior Helpline run by Third Age. The Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme offers them a chance to link together and learn lessons from each other."

He cites the Great Northern Haven housing project in Dundalk as a good example of different agencies working together. "It's about getting a better understanding of what each provides and supporting that so we can do things better. For example, at the Great Northern Haven, the local authority deals with the housing elements, the HSE deals with the care, the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland takes on the energy dimension and Age Friendly [through the Netwell Centre in Dundalk] looks at how people can be assisted in the long term to remain at home." The project allowed funding streams from each organisation to be combined.

Conn Murray believes another key to it working well is appointing a member of council staff as an administrator. "In Louth, I resisted money for additional staff because I felt it would be an additional cost, that I would become reliant upon and it wouldn't survive over time." He believes the long term sustainability of the Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme will depend on the local Authority Administrative Officer and

the Executive Committee of the Older People's Council. "It will be because the priorities of the older people remain the same over time."

One of the challenges within the Age Friendly Alliance is the turnover of personnel in the public sector. "I understand this on a personal level and it applies to different agencies. It takes time to develop trust and confidence and to build understanding and commitment. When the personnel changes, this makes these relationships more difficult which is reflected in the peaks and troughs of the programme across time."

Now Chief Executive of Limerick City and County, Conn Murray has recently set about creating an Age Friendly Alliance there. "It has been more difficult because of the rural/urban divide and having to get commitment from two chambers [city and county]." So far, he is building up the Alliance with representatives from the voluntary and community housing sector, the Irish Countrywomen's Association, the Irish Farmers Association, the Gaelic Athletic Association, the Gardai, the Health Service Executive and the hospital services. "I am still shaping and forming it," he confirms, six months into the process.

"The thing about the Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme is that nobody disagrees with it but you have to get the true value of it across to people and make it real."

## **Conn Murray's top 5 tips for starting an Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme.**

- 1.** Get a good understanding of what's happening in other counties.
- 2.** Take your time in working out what exactly you want from the Age Friendly programme. And, this includes finding out what structures within the local authority to draw on and what other strategies – Healthy Ireland, the National Positive Ageing Strategy must be considered.
- 3.** Make your Older People's Council as widely representative as possible and capable of voicing their views. Make sure you ask yourself; where is the voice of the older people? And what is that voice saying? This forum can then become the Older People's Council envisaged in the National Positive Ageing Strategy.
- 4.** Explain the Age Friendly Counties programme in detail to councillors because the future of the programme depends on political leadership at local level.
- 5.** The programme works best if managed by an Administrative Officer within the Local Authority.

## 1: Set Up

- Building Up the Age Friendly Agenda within the Local Authority
- Inviting senior managers to join the Age Friendly Alliance
- Keeping County Councillors informed about the Age Friendly programme
- Setting up the Age Friendly Alliance
- Organising and Hosting the launch of the Age Friendly Programme

## 2: Consultation

- Gathering all existing information about older people in your city/county
- Consulting with a wide range of older people across your county/city
- Analysing and prepare consultation findings for discussion
- Presenting the Consultation Findings to Age Friendly Alliance Meeting
- Seeking Feedback on Findings and Proposed Solutions to Older People

## 4: Implementation

- Beginning to Implement the Strategy
- Setting up Thematic Working Groups or a Service Providers Forum
- Setting up a Business of Ageing Forum
- Choosing a town to become the Age Friendly Town in your county
- Keeping the Older People's Council vibrant
- Planning and Hosting a Strategy Review

## 3: Planning

- Writing the Draft Strategy
- Setting Up the Older People's Council
- Getting the Alliance to agree to goals within the strategy
- Finalise and launch the strategy
- Affiliate to the WHO Global Network



## Introduction:

Setting up an Age Friendly City or County Programme is both an exciting and daunting task. Getting started on any project is always difficult but the keys to the success of most initiatives are courageous leadership, a keen understanding of the process involved and bucketfuls of enthusiasm. [Setting up an Age Friendly Alliance is the crucial step in the early development of an Age Friendly City or County Programme.](#) However, before you can take on the task of introducing the concept and process of an age friendly programme to potential members of the Age Friendly Alliance you wish to establish in your county, you need to re-read through the general introduction on “Age Friendliness”. You also need to read the message from Age Friendly Ireland’s Chairman, Brendan Kenny and the interview with Conn Murray, the first County Manager [now Chief Executive of Limerick] to embrace the Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme. This will help you understand the developments to date in Ireland. These introductory pieces will sit with you throughout the entire process – and the further along you are on the journey, the more you will glean from them. You can also dip in and out of the case studies at the back of this handbook, the interviews with Independent Chair of the Fingal Age Friendly Alliance, Nora Owen, the Age Friendly Coordinator in Fingal, Eithne Mallin and the Chair of the Older People’s Council in Kilkenny, Nora Webster at different stages throughout the process to see how other programmes were set up and developed.



## Task One:

### **Building Up the Age Friendly Agenda within the Local Authority**

The first task of the Age Friendly City or County Coordinator is to build a good relationship with the Chief Executive of your local authority. You have more than likely been chosen by him/her for this important role so that's a good start. The Chief Executive is the key senior figure who will approach leaders across the various sectors of society in your area to join the Age Friendly Alliance. He/she will also Chair the Age Friendly Alliance meetings.

A close relationship between the Chief Executive and the Age Friendly City or County Coordinator is also crucial within the development of the five year corporate plans for County Councils. The aim to develop and implement an age friendly programme in the county/ city should also be included within the corporate plan.

Clear communication between the Age Friendly City or County Coordinator and the Chief Executive of the local authority is one of the most important foundation blocks of the programme.

Mary Deery is the Age Friendly County Coordinator in Louth County Council. She was the first Administrative Officer appointed by the then County Manager, Conn Murray to run an Age Friendly County programme. In 2009, Louth also committed to implementing the Age Friendly Strategy within its five year corporate plan (2010-2014) which resulted in a long standing and sustained commitment to the Age Friendly programme in the county.

Mary Deery has become a champion of Age Friendliness throughout Ireland and a great source of advice and experience for many others who came after her. She believes a good working relationship between the Chief Executive and the Age Friendly City or County Coordinator is hugely important.



**Mary Deery, Age Friendly County Coordinator in Louth County Council:**

*"The commitment from the County Manager is paramount. He/she is the most influential person to pull the Age Friendly Alliance together. The leadership and support given by the Chief Executive to the Age Friendly Coordinator in delivering the programme is often the critical success factor in the county."*



## **Task Two:**

### **Inviting Senior Managers Across Public, Voluntary and Community Sectors to Join the Age Friendly Alliance**

The process of setting up an Age Friendly City/County Alliance starts with a brainstorming session between the local authority Chief Executive, the Age Friendly City/County Coordinator and the Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultant to pinpoint the key leaders of the public, voluntary and community sectors within the county.

These potential members will be HSE managers, the Garda Chief Superintendent, the manager of the local transport operator and CEOs of various community and voluntary groups who work with and for older people in the county. The president or most senior academic of the local third level institution and the head of the Chamber of Commerce are other potentially valuable members of the Alliance. Members of the Executive Committee of the Older People's Forum/Council will also be asked to join the Alliance at a later stage but in the meantime, the Chief Executive should invite two older people onto the Alliance. An Age Friendly Alliance would ,

optimally, have between ten and 15 members.

Often, the Chief Executive will already know the senior managers of these public, voluntary and community sector organisations. If so, he/she can make an introductory phone call or promote the Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme at a public function. This initial contact will then need to be followed up on with a more detailed meeting to explain more

fully the Age Friendly programme.

It's important to point out that many of the goals of the Age Friendly programme will resonate with goals within their own plans and strategies. Participation in the Age Friendly programme can, in fact, help various organisations and agencies move forward with their own strategies for older people. The Garda Strategy for Older People is a case in point.



**Catherine McGuigan is the Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultant for the North East.**

*She has considerable experience in supporting the setting up of Age Friendly Alliances in Cavan, Donegal, Fingal, Meath, Leitrim, Louth and Monaghan. "It's very important to have the most senior member from each sector on the Age Friendly Alliance because it's a strategic group which requires its members to be both decision makers and in charge of budgets," says McGuigan.*

**Sarah Wetherald is the Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultant for the West.**

*"Age Friendly is a good news story. It's about smarter thinking and opportunities for people and organisations to work together and share resources. So many funding streams in the past have forced people to work independently rather than collaboratively. The Age Friendly programme provides the mechanism to redress this."*





The Age Friendly City or County Coordinator can also arrange one-to-one meetings with various senior managers to introduce them to the Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme.

The sample terms of reference for an Alliance in the Appendix for Chapter 1 are a useful source of information to bring to the first meeting with a potential Alliance member.

In some cases, the Age Friendly Coordinator can host a workshop for all prospective members of the Age Friendly Alliance. This workshop will introduce them to the

Age Friendly programme and explain the commitment required.

Sometimes, the initial informal contact between the Chief Executive of the local authority and the senior manager is a sufficient starting point. The Age Friendly City/ County Coordinator can then follow up with a letter requesting the senior manager to formally join the Age Friendly Alliance in your county/city. This letter is signed by the Chief Executive.

See overleaf a sample letter that you can use to request each specific senior manager to join the Alliance.



## **TIP:**

It might take a little while to get the senior managers of each sector to commit to joining the Age Friendly Alliance in your city or county. For many of them, it's a new concept – and everyone needs a bit of time to take on board new concepts. However, it's important that you follow up with them if you don't get an immediate response to your letter. Emphasise that the cross-sector, collaborative nature of the Alliance is the most significant element of the Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme. And while each member of the Alliance will have to bring some degree of trust to the table, the benefits of this cross-sector approach will emerge through the programme. Once, a number of senior managers have committed to the programme, the Age Friendly City or County Coordinator can start planning the launch of the Age Friendly programme.



## Sample Letter Asking to Join the Age Friendly Alliance

Dear,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me on (date) to discuss (County) becoming an Age Friendly County.

As I explained, each county's programme will be led by an Alliance, made up of the most senior decision makers from the key public, private and not-for-profit agencies. These individuals will commit to jointly planning and cooperating to achieve a strong and vibrant Age Friendly County Vision. From our experience to date, this can be a dynamic and very enriching process to be involved in.

Each Age Friendly Alliance is initially led by the Chief Executive of each local authority. The Chief Executive formally invites the HSE's Local Health Manager, Business leaders, the local Garda Chief Superintendent, a senior academic, directors of community and voluntary organisations to join the Alliance. The Chair of the Older People's Council automatically becomes a member of the Alliance. Interested members of the newly formed Local Community Development Committee are also asked to join.

As discussed at our meeting, I would like you to consider representing [organisation] on the Age Friendly Alliance. We believe that your contribution would be of huge significance in helping us develop a comprehensive Age Friendly vision for (county).

I take this opportunity to thank you again for giving me your time on (date) and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,



## Sample Letter Thanking Someone for Agreeing to Join the Age Friendly Alliance

Dear,

Thank you for agreeing to be a member of the Age Friendly Alliance in \_\_\_\_ At this stage, we also have agreement from ? and ? to join the Age Friendly Alliance. We are looking forward to gathering you all together to give you more information about how the Alliance will work and the exciting synergies that will develop through cross-sector collaboration. Working directly with older people themselves on solutions for problems that emerge is central to the entire process.

- An Age Friendly County is a place where all older people have a say in how their county develops. An Age Friendly County will have some/all of the following features:
- Good local transport that takes you where you want to go, when you want to go.
- Well lit public spaces, level footpaths, plenty of pedestrian crossing points, access to clean toilets and comfortable public seating in your town/village
- Access to good quality health-care either in your home or at the local health centre
- Opportunities to socialise and stay in touch with friends, family and neighbours
- Opportunities to stay working, set up a business, pursue further education or volunteer
- A sense of feeling safe in your home and when out and about
- Knowing what services are available and what social activities are held in your city/county

What's more, we believe that an Age Friendly City/County will benefit everyone in the community, not just the older people. Safe, friendly communities with good facilities are good places for children, young people and families of all ages.

We are planning to launch the Age Friendly County Programme on ? We hope to have all members of the Alliance in place to attend this launch and attend a short meeting of the Age Friendly Alliance beforehand. Are you available to attend this meeting at ? and stay on to attend the official launch at ?

Please let me know as soon as possible of your availability,

Yours sincerely,



## Task Three:

### **Keeping County Councillors informed about the Age Friendly programme**

It's most important to introduce the Age Friendly City or County programme to the elected representatives not least because the County/City Councillors have to ratify the programme before the City or County can adopt it. City/County Councillors often have very good direct contact with the public and can inform people about age friendliness and what it might mean in terms of improvements to infrastructure, housing and transport links within their area. City and County Councillors also have a keen interest in following developments in their area so offering them twice yearly updates on the progress of the Age Friendly programme will also be important. They can also be instrumental in encouraging service providers and other agencies to follow through on their commitments to the Age Friendly programme.

The Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultant has experience of making a power point presentation to county/city council meetings and can fulfil this role. The Chairman of the Council can be approached in advance to include the Age Friendly programme as an item on the agenda. The Age Friendly City/County Coordinator can also encourage County/City Councillors to become involved with the Age Friendly programme by spreading the word about the formation of the Older People's Council. Some of them will then choose to promote the programme in their newsletters. They can also be called on as facilitators for consultations with older people.



## Task Four:

### Setting Up the Age Friendly Alliance

Once you've got all members to agree to join the Age Friendly Alliance, you can then set up its first meeting. It's the job of the Age Friendly City or County Coordinator to write, with the Chair/Chief Executive, the agenda for each meeting and keep records of minutes from these meetings.

Often, the first meeting of the Alliance is organised to coincide with the launch of the programme. For instance, hosting a breakfast meeting with all members of the Alliance in advance of the formal launch of the programme can be a good idea. However, sometimes, Age Friendly City/County Coordinators like to have an introductory meeting with all the Alliance members in the local authority building before the launch. At this meeting, the Alliance members commit to keeping elected representatives informed about progress of the Alliance.

At the first Alliance meetings, members must commit to building a relationship with the Local Community Development Committee, to supporting the Older People's Council – particularly in relation to achieving membership of the Public Participation Network and to making a submission to the multi-annual Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) of the Local Community Development Committee. The meetings themselves are usually held in the County Council buildings and last about two hours.



#### **TIP:**

The terms of reference for the Age Friendly Alliance in the Appendix for Chapter 1 should be given to all members of the Alliance at the first meeting.



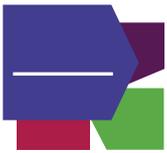
# **Sample Agenda of the First Age Friendly Alliance Meeting**

## **Agenda**

**Meeting XXXday XX1st MONTH 2014, 10.30 – 1.00pm, LOCATION**

**Chair: Insert name**

- 1.** Age Friendly Cities & Counties Programme Introduction
- 2.** Terms of Reference review and adoption
- 3.** Plan public launch
- 4.** Consultation with older people: agree the approach
- 5.** Budget discussion
- 6.** General updates from Members and AOB
- 7.** Date for Next Meeting



## Other Considerations for the Alliance

The terms of reference of the Alliance will be tailored to the individual needs and environment within each local authority, and can change to respond to new developments. Given the Local government reform currently underway, the Chairs of the current set of Age Friendly Alliances have recently recommitted their alliances to

- Develop a coordinated reporting relationship with Council members, (e.g. annual/biannual presentation) in order to keep elected representatives apprised of the progress of the programme
- Develop a coordinated and defined relationship with the relevant Local Community Development Committee (LCDC). This may include the submission of the Age Friendly Strategy for consideration and where appropriate formal adoption
- Support the relevant Older Peoples Council/Forum in securing effective alignment with the Public Participation Networks (PPN)
- Inform through the preparation of a relevant submission, the development of the multiannual Local Economic and Community Plan, (LECP) to be prepared by the new LCDC's.



### TIP:

Ask the Alliance members to nominate people from their organisations to an implementation group. The Age Friendly County Coordinator won't be able to organise the launch and run the consultations alone. These people are likely to be health promotion officers in the HSE, community crime prevention officers within the Gardai, social inclusion officers in the local authority and other staff members in voluntary agencies.



## Task Five:

### Organising the Launch of the Age Friendly County Programme

This will be the first public event for your Age Friendly City or County so it requires a lot of careful planning. The first thing you need to do is make a comprehensive list of all the people you'd like to attend. Get access to databases of all community and voluntary organisations dealing with older people in your county. A database of these organisations may be available in the county council or in each library in the county. They may also be available through the Public Participation Network and/or from local service providers. Ask members of the Alliance to give you access to people to invite to the launch. Compile a list of all business leaders in the county particularly those selling services, consumer and lifestyle products relevant to older people. Get contact details for all managers/patient liaison officers in public and private nursing homes and health centres, day care centres and any other groups providing services to older people in the county. These will include transport providers, meals on wheels, bridge clubs, sports clubs, active retirement groups, church communities, etc. Make sure to include all county councillors and senior executives from the County Council on your invite list.



### People:

Informing as many people as possible that their county is embarking on an Age Friendly programme is hugely important to the later development of the Age Friendly City and County programme in your area. Work out your final invite list and arrange a meeting with the Chief Executive to ensure you haven't forgotten any key people.



## Guest Speaker:

Choosing an appropriate guest speaker is possibly the most important organisational detail for your launch. Brainstorm on local and national well known people who have links to your county. For example, actress, Maureen O'Hara launched the Age Friendly programme in County Kilkenny. Saxophonist, Paddy Cole was the popular champion of older people who launched the programme in his native Monaghan. Check with people in sports clubs and arts organisations for suggestions of a suitable guest speaker. Make contact through email or telephone and find out if he/she is willing to do the honours. Don't finalise your date until you've confirmed your guest speaker and checked that the date doesn't clash with another big event in the county. You should also check the county calendar to see if the launch of the Age Friendly programme might coincide with a complementary event. For instance, hosting the launch of the Age Friendly programme in your city/county during Positive Ageing Week or Bealtaine would help improve its public profile.

## Venue:

Choosing a venue and a suitable time to hold the launch of the Age Friendly programme in your county is another important dimension that requires careful planning. Is there a hotel with adequate parking that is a central location in the county? Is there a large community venue (for example, a local sports and leisure centre) that might be more affordable? Is there an arts centre with an open plan foyer that will hold the number of people you expect to attend? Can people get to the event on public transport? Is it wheelchair accessible? Once you've chosen your venue, think carefully about a time that will suit everyone – older people in particular. Late morning can be a good time to host a gathering. Consider holding it at a time when older people come into the town/city anyway. Consider that you'll need about an hour for all speeches and then about another hour for refreshments. If you can provide lunch, that's an added incentive for people to come and mingle after the official business is over.



*"It is generally good practice to invite an additional speaker who has experience of the Age Friendly programme. This could be a Chairperson of an Older People's Council or a member of another Age Friendly Alliance such as someone from the HSE or the Gardai,"* says **Catherine McGuigan, Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultant**



### **Sending Out Invitations:**

It's worth employing a graphic designer to create an interesting invite to the launch of the Age Friendly programme in your county if funds allow. Alternatively, you can adapt the sample invite to the Cavan Age Friendly programme launch.

Now is also a good time to order the Age Friendly banner for your launch. Once you've finalised your venue, time and guest speaker, you just need to get access to the Age Friendly Ireland logo from a member of the Age Friendly Ireland team to use on all official documents and publicity material. You may have already used a generic version of the logo on your letters of request to potential Alliance members but really this is the first time that you'll have your county emblazoned across the brightly coloured multi-petal logo (see note on branding guidelines in appendices). Make sure to ask your guests to rsvp – by email or text preferably. You can send the invitations by post and/or by email – which ever suits your audience best. Make sure to call various active retirement organisations and clubs close to the launch date to make sure older people in your area are comfortable to attend.

Check that they have transport to the launch and if not, see if you can arrange a local transport operator to pick up and drop people home afterwards. Some rural transport operators will be available to do this if you coincide the launch with the day they bring people into the town/city.

\* sample Invitation to the launch of the Cavan Age Friendly programme is in the Appendix for Chapter 1



## **Contacts With The Media:**

It's a very good idea to nurture relationships with key journalists/broadcasters at the start of the Age Friendly process in your county. Make a comprehensive contact list of writers/editors of newspapers, free sheets, local and national radio stations, online news sites. Write a press release for the launch (see panel for specific tips for writing a press release) with the time, day/date and venue of the launch in crystal clear text. Make sure to have your contact details (email, landline and mobile number) clearly written at the end of the press release. **Send out the press release about a week to ten days before the event – ideally a few days after you have sent out all your invitations.** Ask all members of the Alliance to include information about the launch on their individual websites/newsletters and/or noticeboards. Ask them to spread the word about the launch. Publicise it through the County Council meetings and through various business networks.



## **Prepare Speeches:**

Sometimes, guest speakers prefer to speak off the cuff, drawing on their experience and natural charm to woo their audience. However, many are happy to have some key information to draw on for their speech. You can give guest speakers both the general handbook introduction and Brendan Kenny's message to read in advance of the launch. You can also say that you're willing to put together some notes in advance that can be drawn on if desired. It's also best to clarify to the speaker that you will be including a quote or two from him/her in the press release and go through these quotes in advance.



## **Photographers:**

If possible, have your own photographer take a few photographs at the launch that you can send out later that day to local and national media. Employ a photographer who has good charisma and can take informal as well as formal shots. The media always prefer the informal shots – taken when people are chatting and at ease rather than posing for a photograph. You will need the more formal photographs for publication in your own newsletters and later publicity.

## **Writing Press Releases.**

It's best to have a defined style for press releases as it both saves time and allows you to have a consistent message sent to all media throughout the Age Friendly programme in your county. You can draw on the introduction to this handbook and Brendan Kenny's message about the programme. You can also use quotes from the Chief Executive and the Guest Speaker in advance of the launch. You will have to write two press releases at this stage – one promoting the launch and one reporting on the launch. Be aware that many journalists will draw directly from these press releases for their reports and may not attend the event at all. For this reason, it is vital that everything is accurate and your information about the national organisation, Age Friendly Ireland and the Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme is clear and concise.

## **Notes for Press Release for Launch of Age Friendly Programme in Your County/City:**

You will have to write a pre-launch and a post-launch press release. Each should include the following description of an age friendly programme. The pre-launch press release can be shorter with precise details of the venue, time and those attending. You can add quotes from the guest speaker, the Chief Executive of the County Council and any other key speakers in your post-launch press release.



## Notes for Press Release

An Age Friendly County is a place where all older people have a say in how their county develops. An Age Friendly County will have some/all of the following features.

- Good local transport that takes you where you want to go, when you want to go.
- Well lit public spaces, level footpaths, plenty of pedestrian crossing points, access to clean toilets and comfortable public seating in your town/village
- Access to good quality health-care either in your home or at the local health centre
- Opportunities to socialise and stay in touch with friends, family and neighbours

- Opportunities to stay working, set up a business, pursue further education or volunteer
- A sense of feeling safe in your home and when out and about
- Knowing what services are available and what social activities are held in your city/county

What's more, we believe that an Age Friendly City/ County will benefit everyone in the community, not just the older people. Safe, friendly communities with good facilities are good places for children, young people and families of all ages.

Today, we are here to celebrate the launch of the programme. Quotes here from guest speaker/ Chief Executive of local authority, other guest speakers (eg Alliance member).

For more details, Contact ??

## Support Your Guest Speakers

Encourage your guest speaker to be available for phone/radio/tv or in person interviews about the launch of the Age Friendly Programme in your county/city. Make a series of bullet points that your guest speaker can choose to draw on if desired but encourage him/her to speak personally about the experience of growing older in Ireland. And, be there in a supportive role if and when interview opportunities arise. Most people are a little nervous when speaking to the media, so well placed encouragement and reassurance will go a long way to make the occasion enjoyable for everyone. The Foreword from Brendan Kenny is a useful source of speaker notes.



## Final check-list before the launch

- Confirm speakers, upload presentations, set up a desk where people can leave their contact details.
- Check that the Age Friendly Cities and Counties banner/ pull up stand for the county is ready for placing in a prominent spot.
- Check that all materials available on the day are appropriately branded
- Organise to have a photographer (preferably professional, if budgets allow) on hand to take good quality pictures of the event
- Make sure to have a range of documentation relating to the programme available for attendees to take away, in particular the brochures detailing the programme description
- Invite other organisations to display materials relevant to older people
- Make sure to write and send out your pre-launch and post-launch press releases



## **Ask yourself the question: What sort of place would I like to grow old in?**

### **A place**

- Where I can engage and participate fully in everything that is going on in the community
- Where I can easily get to where I want to go, when I want to go
- Where I can access great quality healthcare and other services without difficulty
- Where I can have a say in what happens in my county or city if I wish to
- Where I feel safe and secure
- Where I can live a healthy and active life
- Where young and old interact and get along

## The Launch of the Age Friendly Programme in Your County

The launch of the Age Friendly programme in your county is a celebration of what's to come. Now is the time to spread the message about the Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme and the excitement surrounding the launch of the programme in your county.



### Final Words

Some counties have used the launch of the Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme as an opportunity to have a consultation with older people. If you decide to do this, you will need much more careful advanced planning for your launch. Use the following section in conjunction with the launch planning for your first consultation if this is the case.

If you decide to host a consultation at the launch of the programme, you will also have to do a lot of research into what's already available in the city/county for older people. Knowing in advance which organisations/state agencies provide which services to older people makes the consultation a much more worthwhile process for everyone. You can share information with people about services they may not know about and you can also find out the genuine gaps in the services which will need to be addressed by the Age Friendly programme.



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# CHAPTER 2:

## Consultation

- Gathering all existing information about older people in your city/county
- Consulting with a wide range of older people across your city/county
- Summarising and preparing consultation findings for discussion
- Presenting the Consultation Findings to the Age Friendly Alliance Meeting
- Giving Feedback on Findings and Proposed Solutions to Older People

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## The Experiences of an Independent Chairperson: Interview With Nora Owen, Independent Chairperson Of Fingal Age Friendly Programme



***“The key to achieving  
the aims of the Age  
Friendly Strategy...”***

The former Minister for Justice and Fine Gael TD for Dublin North, Nora Owen was asked to become the independent chairperson of Fingal Age Friendly programme in September 2011. “To be honest, I didn’t know much about the county’s age friendly programme when I was first asked to be chair,” she says.

Since then, Nora Owen has become an active and energetic promoter of age friendliness throughout Fingal and beyond. “When I got involved the consultations had already taken place and the Age Friendly strategy was written. There was a good rounded committee [Age Friendly Alliance] in place with representatives from the Gardai, the HSE and the senior citizen’s forum [Older People’s Council in Fingal],” she explains. Aware of the significance of genuine engagement of senior managers in each sector, she used her personal contacts to ensure that the HSE became fully involved in the process. “The advantage of an independent chairperson is that it can lift the Age Friendly strategy out of the Council so that it’s not just another policy area that might or might not work. The chairperson needs to encourage proactive involvement from all the senior

managers and there is a need for quarterly meetings to give everyone a group to report back to."

The key to achieving the aims of the Age Friendly strategy is for it to be "embedded" and "mainstreamed" within the organisations that support it. "We found that transport was an issue for Fingal and we have addressed that. Now, housing is emerging as an issue – up to now, the Council wasn't building anything so now, we need to look for some interesting models for housing for older people. For example, rather than setting aside a percentage of units for older people, the Council could consider buying a building and adapting it for use like what developed in MacAuley Place in Naas, County Kildare."

The Older People's Council (or Senior Citizens Forum, as it is known locally) in Fingal is active and engaged with the age friendly agenda, according to Nora Owen. "The fact that they sit on the committee [Age Friendly Alliance] with us gives status to the group and allows discussion of important issues to be brought to the table. For example, it creates a dynamic between the Gardai, the HSE and older people when problems are discussed at these meetings."

Nora Owen is however concerned that the Age Friendly branding isn't well known among the general population. "I think it has been difficult to pull out the "unique selling point" of the "Age Friendly" message. Personally, I'd like to see signs on the way into places like Galway

and Fingal with the Age Friendly logo on them. That would encourage people to ask what it is and look it up to find out more," she says.

"I'd like to see every Age Friendly county in Ireland with the Age Friendly logo on the board welcoming people to the county. We also need more consciousness-raising on the benefits of universal design."

Back in Fingal, she is however very pleased to see Beaumont Hospital and Dublin Airport taking on the Age Friendly agenda. "I think airports are unfriendly because generally people are nervous on arrival, worrying whether they have all their cases, tickets and passports. A large percentage of passengers is over 55 and having seating on the long corridors to flight gates is important."

Hosting public events to highlight the commitment of places like Beaumont Hospital and Dublin Airport are, according to Nora, great ways to increase public awareness of age friendly initiatives.

And, small things make a difference too. "Whenever I go to an event, I spec the room, looking for seats to go sit on before the speeches begin. Whether people have thought of providing seats at public launches or not are some of the things you notice as you get older. It's still quite ad hoc, it would be great if people thought of what older people need automatically in their planning. This is really what we're aiming for."

## 1: Set Up

- Building Up the Age Friendly Agenda within the Local Authority
- Inviting senior managers in public, voluntary and state agencies to join the Age Friendly Alliance
- Keeping County Councillors informed about the Age Friendly programme
- Setting up the Age Friendly Alliance
- Organising and Hosting the launch of the Age Friendly Programme

## 2: Consultation

- Gathering all existing information about older people in your city/county
- Consulting with a wide range of older people across your county/city
- Summarising and preparing consultation findings for discussion
- Presenting the Consultation Findings to Age Friendly Alliance Meeting
- Giving Feedback on Findings and Proposed Solutions to Older People

## 4: Implementation

- Beginning to Implement the Strategy
- Setting up Thematic Working Groups or a Service Providers Forum
- Setting up a Business of Ageing Forum
- Choosing a town to become the Age Friendly Town in your county
- Keeping the Older People's Council vibrant
- Planning and Hosting a Strategy Review

## 3: Planning

- Writing the Draft Strategy
- Setting Up the Older People's Council
- Getting the Alliance to agree to goals within the strategy
- Finalise and launch the strategy
- Affiliate to the WHO Global Network

## Introduction

The launch of the Age Friendly programme in your county is a celebration of what's to come. Now is the time to spread the message about Ireland's national Age-Friendly Cities and Counties programme and the excitement surrounding the launch of the programme in your county. Have some material available so that people can bring home flyers and leaflets with contact details and the Age Friendly Ireland website.

### Consultation

Consultation with older people in your city/county is probably the most important aspect of the entire Age Friendly programme. *Capturing the voice of the older person is key to the entire process and it's important to remember that the eight original WHO themes were developed following consultation with older people in the original group of Age Friendly cities.*



### Task One:

#### **Gather all existing information about older people in your city/county**

It's essential to gather all existing data about older people in your city/county – how many there are and where they live. The Central Statistics Office will give you a demographic picture of your city/county. Pobal will also have maps of age distribution in each county. Find out from the Social Inclusion Officer at the



local authority if previous studies of services/ amenities for older people have been carried out. Get copies of the Garda Older People's Strategy and any regional documents from the HSE and other service providers such as local transport initiatives which target the older population. Gather information about clubs, societies, libraries and organisations

which hold all sorts of classes – from computer classes to bowling competitions. Make contact with active retirement groups and national organisations such as Age & Opportunity to get a full picture of what exists and doesn't exist for older people in your city/county.



## TIP

Some counties did extensive data-gathering before their consultations. For example, Kilkenny did a baseline study to find out what life was like for the over fifties in Kilkenny. Other counties, such as Limerick worked with an academic to profile the county in advance of the consultation. This gave the Age Friendly County Coordinator useful information on what already existed or didn't in terms of services for older people in advance of the consultation.



## Task Two:

### Planning and Hosting Consultations

Some counties choose to do their first consultation at the launch of the Age Friendly programme.

This is a good idea as you have a willing audience keen to find out more about the Age Friendly programme and the consultation itself gives people an extra focus at the event.

This will be the first consultation of many in your city/county as those who attend the launch are already the most willing and enthusiastic group of older people in the county. You will have to plan several other consultations in various towns and villages throughout the county. You will also have to make contact with staff of nursing homes, day centres and volunteers with Meals on Wheels.

The aim is to reach as wide and varied a group of older people as possible to find what would make their lives easier and help them to become more involved in social, economic or voluntary activities in their communities. Read on to find out how to make your consultation a genuine and sincere gathering of information from older people on what it's like to grow old in your city/county.

Making contact with older people in Your County: You will need to draw on various contacts throughout the city/county to put together a comprehensive list of people to invite to consultations on the Age Friendly programme. These include active retirement groups, sports clubs, craft and hobby clubs, tidy town committees, etc as well as all residential and day care centres for older people in the county. Once you have a comprehensive database of organisations/groups of people you wish to invite to consultations (don't forget to draw on your initial invite list for the launch), your next task is to make contact with them.



## Sample Letter Inviting People to the Consultation

Dear

We would like to invite you to be part of a county/city wide consultation process to make ... an Age Friendly City/County. If you haven't already heard about the launch of the Age Friendly programme in ?.., the following is a brief introduction.

An Age Friendly County is a place where all older people have a say in how their county develops.

An Age Friendly County will have some/all of the following features.

- Good local transport that takes you where you want to go, when you want to go.
- Well lit public spaces, level footpaths, plenty of pedestrian crossing points, access to clean toilets and comfortable public seating in your town/village
- Access to good quality health-care either in your home or at the local health centre
- Opportunities to socialise and stay in touch with friends, family and neighbours
- Opportunities to stay working, set up a business, pursue further education or volunteer
- A sense of feeling safe in your home and when out and about
- Knowing what services are available and what social activities are held in your city/county

What's more, we believe that an Age Friendly City/County will benefit everyone in the community, not just the older people. Safe, friendly communities with good facilities are good places for children, young people and families of all ages.

Ireland's national Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme is part of this worldwide initiative which aims to make sure that as we age, we can all:

have a real say in what happens in our own lives and what happens in the areas in which we live, enjoy good health, excellent services, and live in a safe environment, participate fully in everything that is going on in our communities, cities and counties.

Please come along to the Age Friendly city/county consultation in .... on .... and share your thoughts, feelings and opinions with us,

Your sincerely,



## Sample Poster for Advertising the Consultation



# Is County Dublin a good place to grow old in?

Is your town/village a safe and sociable place to live in?

Do you have access to the health and public services that you need?

Do you have input into decisions about your locality?

**We would like to hear your views on these and other important aspects of every day life.**

Please join us on ? in ? and bring a friend.  
Contact Details.



### **What County Louth did:**

“

**Mary Deery, Age Friendly Coordinator in County Louth** set the bar high with the wide ranging consultations that took place in Louth, Ireland's first Age Friendly County.

*“We held consultations with older people's groups in Drogheda, Dundalk, Ardee and the Cooley Peninsula. People were invited from older people's groups, advocacy groups and voluntary services,”* explains Deery.

”

Mary Deery put together a toolkit of the entire Age Friendly County programme in Louth which won a Taoiseach's Public Service Excellence Award. This is available on [www.agefriendly.ie](http://www.agefriendly.ie) Follow the

links to Louth, How to become an Age Friendly County/ Resources and then the entire toolkit is in a pdf file. It has lots of detail on the consultation process that many will find useful.

“

**Sarah Wetherald, Age Friendly Regional Consultant** *“Some counties will need to set up an implementation group to work on the consultations as the Age Friendly County Coordinator won't necessarily have sufficient resources to do it alone. In these cases, the Age Friendly Alliance members will request a staff member to work with the Age Friendly County Coordinator to plan and host the consultation. These people are likely to be health promotion officers in the HSE, sergeants within the Gardai, social inclusion officers in the local authority and other staff members in voluntary agencies.”*

”



## Planning Dates, Times and Venues for Consultations:

For each local consultation, plan to use an accessible venue (hotel, community/ arts centre or sports club) and hold the consultation at a time that will suit the majority of older people. This is particularly important for people who have to ask for lifts or use public transport to attend the consultation. Consider also whether you need to offer transport to some people who might otherwise find it impossible to attend the consultation in their area.

## Themes for Consultation:

The World Health Organisation has set out eight Age Friendly themes to define the quality of everyday life for older people. These eight themes are Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, Transportation, Housing, Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, Civic Participation and Employment, Communication and Information, Community Support and Health Services. To make these themes more meaningful, Age Friendly Ireland has expressed them in terms of the desired outcomes and safety was added as an additional desired outcome.

### See below the themes to be explored in consultations:

**Outdoor Spaces and Buildings:** To be enabled by the built and social environment AND To feel and be safe at home and out and about.

**Transportation:** To get where we want to go when we want to.

**Housing:** To stay living in our own homes and communities.

**Social Participation:** To participate in social, economic and public life.

**Respect and Social Inclusion:** To be truly valued and respected.

**Civic Participation and Employment:** To continue to learn, develop and work.

**Communications and Information:** To have the information we need to lead full lives.

**Community Support and Health Services:** To lead healthier and active lives for longer.



Now, it's wise to keep these eight themes in mind before/during and after the consultation as many of them will form the core themes for your strategy. However, it's also important to realise that each group of older people will only be asked to give their views on one or two themes at any one given consultation – depending on the setting for the consultation. In Limerick, the consultations were broken down to four combined themes.

## **Round Table Consultations:**

The round table format is possibly the most fluid and creative form of consultation. You need to set out tables in advance with about eight seats at

each table. It's probably best if the facilitator and recorder sit at opposite sides of the table – in case either one needs clarification on an issue raised.

Generally speaking, it's best not to interrupt the flow of opinions and thoughts once participants stay on topic. Each table should have about 10-15 minutes to speak about each theme with the maximum of three themes per group. Ask one participant to be the time-keeper so that discussion doesn't go over 15 minutes per topic.

**There are four key questions that are used to stimulate discussion – What is good about your county/city? What is not so good? What can you do to improve it? What can agencies/services do to improve it?** These four questions are to be posed in the context of each of the eight themes.

## **Facilitators for the Consultations:**

Facilitating an Age Friendly Consultation session is a gentle art. It requires communication skills to encourage people to share their views yet not to allow any one individual dominate the group or get side-lined/stuck on one particular issue. Suitable consultation facilitators include members of the Alliance or frontline staff from their services who they deem appropriate, leaders of voluntary or active retirement groups and staff in the local authority with community and/or social inclusion briefs. Many of these individuals will have previous experience getting information and opinions about environmental, social or health issues in their locality.

Once you choose your facilitators, it's essential to arrange a time to brief them on the Age Friendly City and County programme and explain their role as facilitators at the consultation in advance of the event. \*There is a facilitators guide to questions in the Appendix to Chapter 2.

“

**Pat Doherty, Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultant for Dublin and the East Coast** says, *“it's very important to get the right people to facilitate the round table discussions because it impacts on the feedback given. Some people pick up on nuances of points raised and find out how strongly they are felt within the group while others don't”.*

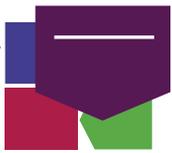
”

### **Consultation Recorders/Reporters:**

The role of the recorder/reporter for consultation is equally important to that of the facilitator. The key role of the recorder is to write down clearly what is raised in the consultation without interpreting or editing it in any way. Abbreviations can be used once clarity is kept. *It's very important to include*

*direct quotes on issues raised by older people as some of these will be used in the Age Friendly Strategy to highlight the voice of older people in the process.*

The sample recording sheet in the Appendix to Chapter 2 gives space for the themes covered across the four key questions asked by the facilitator during the consultation.



Once you choose your recorders, it's essential to arrange a time to brief them on the Age Friendly City and County programme and explain their role as recorders at the consultation in advance of the event. Some

Age Friendly Coordinators organise a workshop for facilitators and recorders in advance of the consultations to make sure everyone fully understands the process.

## **Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme – Recommendations for Public Consultation**

### **Setting up the consultation**

- The aim should be to consult with a balanced representation of older people in the area. Therefore it would be important to achieve a balance of geographical spread, urban/rural, gender, age, disability level, and socio-economic factors.
- Particular efforts should be made to ensure that the people consulted include the 'hard to reach' eg people with varying levels of disability and those in residential care etc
- Achieving representation on the basis of socio-economic characteristics is best done through the location of the consultation session rather than asking potentially intrusive questions about personal income.
- Ideally, experienced facilitators should be found to carry out the sessions

### **Recording the session**

Each session should be recorded and transcribed. A written record should be kept

which details the following

- Number, date and location of the session
- Number of people who attended, breakdown by gender, age, socio economic profile (if possible) and if they have a disability, if appropriate, ideally
- Names of facilitators and note takers
- Quotes from speakers on each of the topic areas
- The aim should be to include the broad range of opinion rather than seek consensus among participants

The views of family carers should also be sought – this may be done as a dedicated consultation session or as a topic within one session.

The WHO Global Age Friendly Cities 'Vancouver protocol' provides recommendations on carrying out focus group consultations and includes a focus group questionnaire, an analysis guide and results summary sheet for the focus groups, declaration of consent form, and participant information sheet.

[http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20AFC\\_Vancouver\\_protocol.pdf](http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Microsoft%20Word%20-%20AFC_Vancouver_protocol.pdf)

## Special Interest Consultations:

Consultations can also take place in residential or day care settings once permission is sought from both the older participants and the care centre manager. In some cases, patient advocates or relatives of those using the services can join the consultation – especially when older people with dementia are unable to speak out for themselves.

- There is a template for one to one consultations in the Appendix to Chapter 2. This is particularly useful for facilitators and recorders in advance of consultations – whatever the size and venue.
- There is a brief to facilitators on consultation in the Appendix to Chapter 2 which can be sent out to active retirement groups or

other groups to give them a flavour of the consultation process before they attend.

Some Age Friendly City/County Coordinators have also held focus group consultations and on the street consultations using surveys. The format of all these consultations is simpler and less formal with only the most suitable topics kept for discussion. On street surveys were developed and used and found to be particularly useful in urban areas. The information gathered in focus groups and street consultations is just as relevant as the larger scale consultations because it is coming from older people who are often harder to reach and yet have issues that need to be addressed.

See the Appendix to Chapter 2 for a sample of on street consultation

“

### ***The Age Friendly Coordinator in Clare, Michael Neylon***

*organised consultations with older people in five locations throughout the county between autumn of 2011 and summer 2012. “We ran a huge promotional campaign through active retirement groups, active ageing groups and met with about 20 groups. The HSE also gave us the opportunity to speak with people in day and residential centres,” explains Neylon. People who needed it were given free transport to attend the consultations. Over 400 people in total attended.*

”



**Sarah Wetherald, Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultant**

*believes strongly in making the consultation as wide and varied as possible. "Consider asking public health nurses to find out what their clients think. Also use alternative methods, for example ride the rural transport bus. And consider talking to secondary school students to find out what ageing means to them - how do they see their grandparents? What would they like to be different when they grow old? It's also very important for Alliance members to attend consultations to hear first hand what people feel."*



**TIP:**

Sometimes, it's interesting to hear briefly from an older person in another county where the Age Friendly programme is further advanced. This, however would require advanced planning so ask the Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultant if there is someone appropriate who might be willing and able to attend the consultation and describe his/her input and experience. This will help to bring the concept alive at the event.



**Timeframe:**

It's very difficult to quantify how much time organising and hosting consultations will take. Most people find that there is a seasonality to hosting events and the autumn and springs months will draw the largest numbers.

# The Consultation: On The Day

## **Introduction:**

The Age Friendly Coordinator and/or the Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultant will give a warm welcome to those who attend the consultation followed by an introduction to Age Friendly Ireland and the Age Friendly City and County programme. At this stage, either person can briefly describe the role of the Age Friendly Alliance and who the members of it are. It is however very important to explain the role of the Older People's Council and ask people to contemplate signing up for it – either at the end of this meeting or in the near future. Then, it's best to get started as people's energy levels tend to wane as time goes on.

## **Consultation:**

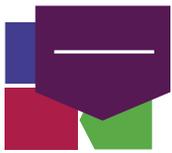
For Round Table consultations, explain to the older people that each table will discuss two themes over the course of the consultation and they can choose which table to sit at. The themes will range across the eight WHO Age Friendly themes - from transport to housing to social participation to community support and health services to outdoor space and buildings (refer back to original list). Draw on one or two of the eight WHO Age Friendly themes for each table heading and use questions to help people get into the topic. Remember the four key questions are: What works well in your county/city? What improvements could be made? What can you yourself do to improve things? What can others do to improve things? Check the aforementioned facilitators' guide to key questions to ask older people in the consultation.

## **Data Collection and Recording:**

The key role of the recorder/reporter is to compile a clear, succinct record of the points raised at the consultation. The Template for Recording Consultation Results in the Appendix for Chapter 2 can be used or you can create a similar sheet with more space to elaborate on each theme discussed. The recorder is usually the person giving the feedback at the end of the session. However, if one of the participants is keen to take on this role, feel free to offer this. Remember, the whole focus of the Age Friendly programme is to give older people a voice in everything that affects/ impacts on their lives. Ask the recorder to check through the information gathered and hand it over to you at the end of the consultation.

## **Wrapping Up the Consultation:**

Asking people to brainstorm on what ways their lives could be better is a demanding and challenging endeavour. So, make sure to thank people sincerely for engaging with the questions asked of them.



Acknowledge their contributions and let them know that feedback will be available on possible solutions to some of the issues raised. At this point, the Regional Consultant of Age Friendly Ireland or the Chief Executive of the local authority might like to say a few words. Again, the emphasis is on how important it is for older people to have a say in their lives to make their county a better place to grow old in.... Remind those present to fill in their contacts details if they are interested in joining the Older People's Council, see Expression of Interest form in the Appendix for Chapter 2.



## TIP:

Always be clear as to the outcomes of these consultations. Make sure participants know they are not creating a wish list for organisations to respond to and that it is critical that the community plays its part. **Try not to record an issue without discussing a solution.** Be clear that this is about things that affect the ageing community and not individuals ie it is the condition of roads and walkways, not the pothole at the end of my drive.



## Task Three:

### **Summarise and prepare consultation findings for discussion**

It's very important to keep all information gathered from the consultations. This information from older people is the most important data with which to build your Age Friendly Strategy. The views and concerns of older people are put together under the eight WHO themes, using a spread sheet. Then, typically the top three concerns are drawn out as priorities to be addressed by the Age Friendly Alliance. The summary of concerns with possible solutions are then brought back to the older people at the first meeting of the Older People's Council.



## Leitrim Age Friendly Consultation: Theme – Community Support & Health Services Outcome-Lead Healthier and Active Lives for longer

What is Good?	What can be Improved?	What can you do?	What can Agencies do?
<p>-Our Ladys's Hospital, Manorhamilton is very good with an excellent quality of care: however.</p> <p>-The day centre in Carrigallen is very good. It prevents social isolation, transport is provided, it deals with a broad spectrum of need, and people can attend 3 times a week and shop as well as attend to medical needs.</p> <p>Home Support/ Home helps</p> <p>-Housing -Meals on Wheels -Informal Carers/ Brokerage -Choice -Huge bank of knowledge/ Wisdom -LDC – good support to Travellers Public Health Nurses -Good GP services with long hours -6 monthly check up</p>	<p>-Request for more 'talk therapy' and it can be difficult to access services. Need for early intervention- as early as primary school.</p> <p>-Greater availability of specialist services at local Health Care Centres. Transport costs an issue.</p> <p>-Develop services and support for people at critical times such as bereavement /emigration</p> <p>-Creative support systems within communities such as transport for visiting the pub or using pension day as a social link for older people</p> <p>-Community Alert to be county wide &amp; Personal Alarms for all who need them</p> <p>Extend 'Now Doc' across the county to give weekend cover</p> <p>-Home help services to be given time to talk –not just provide basic services</p> <p>Fear of Cuts (especially rural transport)</p> <p>-Not enough Social Car scheme</p> <p>-Vulnerable people not heard</p> <p>-Reduced Gardai presence</p> <p>-Community Welfare Officer – weekly clinic</p>	<p>-Set up groups such as Health Age in Carrigallen – linked nationally via Active Retirement Ireland.</p> <p>-Bring young and older people together through community activities eg drama, football etc</p> <p>-Develop the use of PHNs with neighbours to identify &amp; link isolated older people to the community.</p> <p>-Community Alert to be county wide &amp; Personal</p> <p>Expansion of social car scheme interagency collaboration – develop collaborative teams</p> <p>-Better communication from agencies to older people</p> <p>Visiting sick people at home</p> <p>-Join Active Age- Organise socials with Bingo, Whist, Keep fit, Morning Activities</p>	<p>-Ensure good quality community based day care is available.</p> <p>-Provide home support that recognises a social aspect i.e. Befriending service/ Phone service</p> <p>-Provide current hospital based services in the local community eg chiropody, blood clinics etc.</p> <p>-Ensure information re support &amp; services is readily available for older people, family &amp; friends.</p> <p>-Ensure services such as banks &amp; Post Offices are maintained in rural areas</p> <p>-Distribute information – Fair deal</p> <p>-Funding should follow person.</p> <p>Review/Assess needs- determine hours based on need</p> <p>-Fully Functioning Primary Care centre</p> <p>-Mobile banks/post offices</p>



## TIP:

Give yourself adequate time to read through well-written and organised reports from the consultations (eg from Clare and Leitrim). This will save you time in the long run as it will allow you to carefully bring together all the significant comments garnered at the consultation under the eight WHO Age Friendly themes. Some Age Friendly City or County Coordinators employ a consultant or researcher to collate all the records from the various consultations and place them appropriately into the eight WHO Age Friendly themes.

*County Clare Experience:* **The Age Friendly Coordinator in Clare, Michael Neylon** put together all the concerns people raised at the consultations into what he called, the *Consultation Outcome Report*. He used the eight WHO themes to draw together people's comments and added very specific problems highlighted in towns and villages of County Clare.

The County Clare document also included well chosen quotes from older people which drive the message home very clearly. For example, in the section on communication and information, one participant said, "mobile phones and personal alarms are great for confidence" while another said, "Older people at home love the radio. It is company and a great way to find out what's happening." In the section on Respect and Social Inclusion, one participant neatly encapsulated an untapped resource in the community when she remarked, "senior people with skills and craft ideas should notify the schools and spend an hour a week teaching." Another said, "we need our own 'hub', a place we can call our own – a youth club for the ageing." These points may seem small at first but they tap directly into the aspects of daily living that can enhance an older person's overall quality of life. Older people in County Clare also called for better transport links, more efforts to keep people in their own homes for as long as possible and opportunities to socialise.



## Task Four:

### **Presenting the Consultation Findings to the Age Friendly Alliance Meeting:**

Make contact with the members of the Age Friendly Alliance to arrange a meeting to discuss the information gathered at the consultations. This is a very significant meeting of the Alliance so emphasise the importance of finding a time that each member of the Alliance has about two hours available to listen to the concerns of older people. It might also be a good idea to invite an Alliance member from another county that has completed its strategy to this meeting.

Gaining insight from those who have already been through the process can prevent mistakes and give insight into pitfalls before they occur.

Ensure the Chief Executive is also available to attend this meeting in full. Brief the Chief Executive in advance on the most important issues/concerns raised by the older people at the consultation. It will be the role of the local authority Chief Executive to ask the members of the Age Friendly Alliance to seek solutions to these concerns. The collaborative cross-sector sharing of issues and search for solutions is the most significant activity of the Age Friendly Alliance. Drawing on the group, it can lead to creative, cost-efficient solutions for each agency.

### **Agenda for Post-Consultation Age Friendly Alliance Meeting**

The principal item on the agenda is to hear the concerns of older people as voiced through the consultation. The Chief Executive (briefed by the Age Friendly City/County Coordinator) will present these findings and ask each member of the Alliance to respond where appropriate.... It is at this point that some of the synergistic, cross-sector collaboration can begin to surface for the first time.



The responses from the Alliance members to the issues raised by the older people will form the basis of the draft strategy.

See the Leitrim Draft Actions created at Alliance Meeting in response to consultation feedback in the Appendix for Chapter 3.



## Task Five:

### **Giving Feed back on Consultation Findings and Proposed Solutions to Older People**

Giving feedback to the older people who were involved in the consultation is the next step in the process and also the key to seeing who is interested in joining an Older People's Council in your city/county. *Following on from the Alliance meeting, it's very important to give those who partook in the consultations some feedback on the progress... If possible, arrange two to three follow-up meetings in key locations at suitable times.* You might already have asked older people to leave their contact details following the consultations. So at these feedback sessions, it's also an ideal opportunity to invite them to join the Older People's Council in your area.

Publicise these meetings in advance in local libraries, through local radio stations, local newspapers and through the various community, social and sporting organisations who first publicised the consultations. These meetings are a reminder of the issues raised and another opportunity for people to raise further concerns about different aspects of their everyday lives. It's important to have someone to record any extra feedback from this session – even though it isn't a formal consultation.



*County Clare Feedback to Older People: **Michael Neylon, Age Friendly Coordinator in County Clare** invited older people to a Tea Dance in the Woodstock Hotel in Ennis in May 2012 to discuss the findings and work out which ones deserved to be prioritised. "We had organised for about 150 people to come and 300 turned up. We set up eight tables under the WHO themes but only five were filled which in itself showed the priorities of older people in County Clare," says Neylon.*



## TIP

Plan Your Timeframe Carefully. One suggestion is to plan the consultations over two months (Spring or Autumn are ideal times). Use the following two months to collate and record all your findings – and have at least one Alliance meeting during this period. Then, give those who attended the first round of consultations an opportunity to hear feedback over the next two/three months. Plan another Alliance meeting at the end of these feedback sessions. Start writing the Strategy with the aim to launch it one year after the Age Friendly programme was launched.



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# CHAPTER 3:

## Planning

- Writing the Draft Strategy
- Setting Up the Older People's Council
- Getting the Alliance to agree to goals within the strategy
- Finalise and launch the strategy
- Affiliate to the WHO Global Network

## Keeping Up The Momentum Of An Age Friendly County Programme: Eithne Mallin, Age Friendly Coordinator In Fingal Speaks Frankly About Her Experience.



***“Mainstreaming pilot projects is one of Mallin’s key concerns...”***

Eithne Mallin firmly believes the best way to keep up momentum is dynamic and engaging events for older people in the county. “The Senior Citizens Forum in Fingal host monthly meetings and they also get involved in things like the walkability survey in Beaumont Hospital and Dublin Airport,” says Mallin. The Men’s Shed group in Baldoyle is also very active and has made contact with all the Men’s Shed groups in County Louth.

Fingal County Council Community Division provides the Senior Citizens Forum with the support of a Community Development Officer and an annual budget to support their monthly meetings, their annual general meeting and an information seminar. The Forum invites speakers to their meetings. For example, Dr Kate Irving, a lecturer in Mental Health Nursing at Dublin City University was the principal speaker at the Fingal Senior Citizens Forum AGM and conference entitled “Feed The Brain and Feed The Body” in May, 2014. A dietician from Keelings fruit and vegetable producers in St Margaret’s also spoke at the event.

The Fingal Age Friendly programme also organised a review of their strategy two years into the programme. “We looked at our achievements to date and decided to focus on a couple of

actions for 2014–2017. This process was facilitated by Age & Opportunity and was carried out with the Alliance, the Fingal Senior Citizens Forum and across the different departments in Fingal County Council," explains Eithne.

"The older people and the members of the Alliance couldn't believe how much had been achieved over the two years," adds Mallin. She believes the review was particularly important to coincide with the new structures within the local authorities. "We felt it was good to revise and re-affirm things especially in the light of the establishment of the Local Community Development Committee and the setting up of the Public Participation Network, the Local Community Development Committee and other changes within the HSE."

Eithne says it's important that key people from these groupings are part of the Age Friendly Alliance.

Mainstreaming pilot projects is one of Eithne's key concerns. It's great when an age friendly project such as the health, fitness and wellbeing course at the Institute of Technology (IT) in Blanchardstown starts but to make it sustainable is trickier.

"The students of the sports development course set up a health, fitness and wellbeing course for older people as part of their course work. Transport is a big issue for older people when accessing lifelong learning opportunities in third level colleges. We got support from Blanchardstown Youth Service, the Gardai and the rural transport programme 'Nifti' who provided transport for older people who needed it. We issued certificates to about 50 people who took part," she explains. However, each year, the funding had to be worked out between the IT and Fingal County Council. "If courses like this one are to be mainstreamed, they need a constant funding source and different agencies have to

***"It's very important to embed the Age Friendly message into other structures and having someone with the experience of Nora Owen has been a huge asset. Her name alone has been able to open doors and she has a great ability to direct and engage the Alliance members."***

make them part of their agenda," says Mallin.

Her next task is to host an Age Friendly conference with another older person's agency. "We are planning a conference with Age & Opportunity, Age Friendly Ireland and Dublin City University - all of whom are members of the Fingal Age Friendly Alliance. I'd like the

Senior Citizens' Forum and Fingal Age Friendly Alliance to co-host this event," she says. Planning events such as this re-energises people and helps gather momentum. Eithne would like to see various members of Fingal's Age Friendly programme set the agenda for the conference with workshops showcasing projects done throughout the programme.

## 1: Set Up

- Building Up the Age Friendly Agenda within the Local Authority
- Inviting senior managers in public, voluntary and state agencies to join the Age Friendly Alliance
- Keeping County Councillors informed about the Age Friendly programme
- Setting up the Age Friendly Alliance
- Organising and Hosting the launch of the Age Friendly Programme

## 2: Consultation

- Gathering all existing information about older people in your city/county
- Consulting with a wide range of older people across your county/city
- Summarising and prepare consultation findings for discussion
- Presenting the Consultation Findings to Age Friendly Alliance Meeting
- Giving Feedback on Findings and Proposed

## 3: Planning

- Writing the Draft Strategy
- Setting Up the Older People's Council
- Getting the Alliance to agree to goals within the strategy
- Finalise and launch the strategy
- Affiliate to the WHO Global Network

## 4: Implementation

- Beginning to Implement the Strategy
- Setting up Thematic Working Groups and Providers Forum
- Setting up a Business of Ageing Forum
- Choosing a town to become the Age Friendly Town in your county
- Keeping the Older People's Council vibrant
- Planning and Hosting a Strategy Review

## Introduction

At this stage, you will be gathering more support and enthusiasm for the Age Friendly programme in your county. The Age Friendly Alliance will be developing a clear idea of the valuable work that can be achieved through cross-sector collaboration.

The Age Friendly City/County Coordinator will now be moving into the planning phase with new champions ready to work towards making the city/county an age friendly one.



## Task One:

### Writing the Draft Strategy

The first big task here is to put together a draft Age Friendly Strategy for your city/county. Different cities and counties went about this task in different ways. Essentially, what you need to do for a draft strategy is to lay out the main points raised from the consultation into the eight WHO themes alongside the proposed solutions from the members of the Age Friendly Alliance. Presenting this information in a clearly written document that is accessible to all is essential.

As you draw up your draft strategy under the eight WHO age friendly themes, it's important to clearly note what's working and what isn't. And, have another section for solutions to the key concerns raised by older people. These solutions can include both suggestions from the older people at the consultations and commitments for cross-sector collaborations raised at the Alliance meeting. Some strategy commitments will also require a response from one agency in particular (eg the HSE, the Gardai)

Others will demand a more shared collaborative approach with agencies working



together. This is one of the real points of added value that the Age Friendly programme brings to the table and will need to be teased out further at Age Friendly Alliance meetings and workshops before the strategy is finalised.

The Age Friendly City/County Coordinator will often need to facilitate discussion about the proposed solutions with different agencies. This is a time consuming and demanding

yet crucially important stage of development of the Age Friendly programme. It requires cross-agency agreement about what can be included as practical solutions to issues such as housing, transport and health service delivery in the city/county. *The Age Friendly Coordinator will need to speak with frontline staff as well as Alliance members to clarify smart short, medium and long term goals for the future strategy.*



**Pat Doherty, Age Friendly Regional Consultant for Dublin**

*says, "The Age Friendly Programme Coordinator requires many skills at this point – He/she needs to be a facilitator, an administrator, a mediator, a negotiator and an innovator. He/she is the person who keeps all the senior managers on the Alliance in touch with each other and with what older people have said to finalise the goals of the Age Friendly strategy. The Age Friendly Coordinator must then ensure that the goals are acted on within the defined timeframe."*



Once you've got your draft strategy written and printed (in advance of being published as a finished document), you need to have an

Alliance meeting and a meeting of the Older People's Council to sign off on it.



## Task Two:

### Set Up the Older People's Council

Bringing older people together to check through the draft strategy is best done in the context of the first formal meeting of the Older People's Council. Use the event as an opportunity to celebrate growing old in your county as well as a way of checking with older people that their concerns have been raised and will be prioritised in the forthcoming Age Friendly Strategy. Invite people to register as members of the Older People's Council on the way into the meeting.

Choose a local well known local person or champion of older people's issues and ask him/her to come along to the event. Make sure to invite everyone who has expressed an interest in joining the Older People's Council. Advertise the event in local press, publicise it on local radio and send posters to all your contact organisations, asking them to put them on their noticeboards. Write a press release to send out on the morning of the first meeting.

Have a photographer lined up to take a few photographs to send to local press later in the day. In many ways, a lively photograph with a carefully worded caption would be the best publicity from the event as you will aim to have wider coverage of the forthcoming strategy launch.

The Older People's Council is the cornerstone of the entire Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme. Having older people involved in the Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme is essential to ensure that organisations respond to the real concerns and issues of older people, rather than what they identify them to be. The Age Friendly City/County Coordinator will already have a list of people interested in joining the Older People's Council, following on from the launch of the programme and the various consultations. There are a few different ways of publicising that the Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme is setting up an Older People's Council.

#### How the Older People's Council was formed in County Louth:

In County Louth, Mary Deery and Rodd Bond organised a separate consultation process to set up the Older People's Council. " We conducted an audit of all



parishes to establish a database of older peoples groups and groups which provided NGO services to older people. On completion of the audit 4 consultation sessions were held and the constitution of the Forum was agreed to be representative covering the following sectors: Older people's groups, advocacy groups for older people, nursing homes (management & residents/relatives forum) and Individuals" says Deery.

"We were trying to get as inclusive a voice as possible and capture the diversity of that voice. We also wanted to reach the really vulnerable older people," says Bond.

At each workshop, people registered their interest in becoming members of the Older People's Forum. Mary Deery then contacted everyone to invite them to the first meeting of the Older People's Forum. She also sent out

the proposed constitution of the Older People's Forum in advance of the meeting. At the first official meeting of the Older People's Forum, an Executive Committee was elected and formed. While the County Louth model of forming the Older People's Council is excellent in its inclusivity, it may be difficult for other counties to have the same amount of time to dedicate to the process. The standard advice now is to make a call out to all the organisations that older people are involved with (use the same list as you had for the launch of the programme) to come to the first meeting of the Older People's Council.

At that meeting, you will have an opportunity to explain the Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme again – as well as sharing the results of the consultation. We will look at how to organise the first official meeting of the Older People's Council in the next chapter.



**Sarah Wetherald, Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultant** suggests that older people who want to

*become active members of the Older People's Council can be offered training in getting their message across through the new national partnership with Age & Opportunity. "Giving older people a chance to find their voice and influence change through personal development training is very beneficial. It's worth seeing what kinds of training is available in your county or city."*





## **Sample Agenda for the Older People's Council:**

- 1.** Welcome and thank you for coming.
- 2.** Introduction to the Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme (draw on previous notes for consistency)...
- 3.** Guest speaker (possibly a Chairperson of an Older People's Council in another county)
- 4.** Discussion of issues raised at consultation across the various WHO themes with proposed solutions alongside them.
- 5.** Feedback on issues raised and any new issues.
- 6.** Nominations for membership of the Older People's Council Executive Committee
- 7.** Refreshments and music/comedy/drama act.



## Sample Press Release for the Launch of the Older People's Council:

Date here



### **VOICE OF OLDER PEOPLE IN COUNTY XXX HEARD LOUD AND CLEAR**

Today saw the inaugural meeting of the XXX County Older People's Council.

The group has been established under the auspices of the XXX Age Friendly

Programme to put the voice of older people central to decision-making process that affect everyday living in the county. The people who gathered here today will contribute to an Age Friendly Strategy for the county.

**The Chair of the XXX Age Friendly Alliance, Chief Executive XXX** said: "We in County XXX have embarked on a journey to make xxx an Age Friendly county/city. We have spent the past number of months listening to older people across the county. We now know what matters to the older members of our communities on issues such as public transport, access to quality healthcare, opportunities to socialise and stay connected, and public spaces where they can walk and talk and feel safe.

Chair of the Older People's Council for the Age Friendly Counties Programme in XXX

XXX is one of XXX counties in Ireland that are part of the Age Friendly Counties Programme. The Age Friendly County Programme is working to make Ireland one of the best places in the world in which to grow old. The Programme aims to see all older people living in Ireland enjoying a good quality of life and participating fully in their communities.



## Task Three:

### **Getting the Alliance to agree to goals within the strategy**

This is another highly significant meeting of the Alliance, following on from that held to discuss the initial findings from the older people's consultations. The members of the Age Friendly Alliance will have had time to reflect on what older people said and be considering solutions to concerns raised at the consultations. **Getting commitment from the most senior managers of the agencies and services on the Alliance is the foundation to building and sustaining a healthy Age Friendly programme.**

This meeting will give them a chance to firm up these suggestions and put them into a short, medium or long term goal or plans within the strategy. Often, other meetings that frontline staff from the various organisations attend as well as the senior managers are necessary before these goals can be formally agreed on. This is also a good time for the Age Friendly Alliance members to think about how they will form working groups to move forward on these plans and report back to the Alliance meeting. There will be more detail on forming these working groups in the next chapter.



## **Example of a Working Document to Inform Debate to Develop a Draft Strategy – County Leitrim Age Friendly Alliance**

### **Proposed Layout of Strategy**

- 1.** Foreword (by Chief Executive)
- 2.** Introduction
- 3.** Description/Details of Consultation
- 4.** Summary of key findings
- 5.** Thematic/Outcomes layout which includes a relevant quote from consultation, issue raised, proposed action, lead agency and partner agencies



## Working Document

Theme	Draft Proposed Solution	Lead Partner	Suggested Partners
Outdoor Spaces & Buildings	<p><b>Age Friendly Towns</b></p> <p>Linked to the process of reviewing the County Development Plan, Leitrim County Council will carry out pilot Age Friendly planning exercises in selected towns in the county. These exercises will use information already gathered from Disability Audits and will involve Active Aged groups, disability groups and a range of community players in carrying out "Walkability Audits" and Council Planning staff in carrying out public consultation to inform "Accessibility Development Plans" to underpin the Age Friendly Towns initiative. Other agencies will be invited to participate in this exercise as appropriate. A Steering Group, with representation drawn from Alliance members and partners, will be developed to oversee the project, which will aim to attain Age Friendly Town Charters (as benchmarked within the Age Friendly Towns and Counties programme) for the selected towns. It will also include a recognition of best age friendly practice through age friendly Principles – Longer term roll out to other selected towns in the county.</p> <p><b>The HSE will aim to make their current and new public buildings, such as Day Care Centres &amp; Local Health offices, age friendly by adopting universal design guidelines for new developments. This will encompass the wider access including transportation, information as well as the physical environment. Best practice can be shared with other agencies in a bid to ensure age friendliness across all buildings for older people</b></p>	<p>Leitrim County Council</p> <p>HSE</p>	<p>Older People's Council and Active Aged groups</p> <p>HSE – OTs, PHNs and Primary Care Teams</p> <p>Local business community</p> <p>Other agencies as appropriate</p> <p>Age Friendly National Programme Older Peoples Council</p>



## Working Document

Theme	Draft Proposed Solution	Lead Partner	Suggested Partners
<b>Community Supports &amp; Health Services</b>	<p><b>Advocacy, Development, Community Safety and Information support for Vulnerable Older People</b></p> <p>Provide a dedicated resource to support the provision of a range of advocacy, support for befriending services (provided by both paid workers and volunteers), community safety and information services for older people, particularly vulnerable older people. Negotiations between HSE and Leitrim Development Company are ongoing to finalise the details of this. (The brokerage role described in the job description previously circulated has international recognition and there is an opportunity to be a lead county in its roll out and scaling out nationally). It is envisaged that this resource will link with and add value to a range of existing services including:</p>	HSE / Leitrim Development Company / An Garda Siochana	IFA Leitrim County Council Older People's Council and Active Aged groups Citizen's Information Service Leitrim Calling
<b>Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>An Garda Siochana's Operation Doras initiative (this is a community policing initiative focused on North Leitrim, which has seen Gardai visiting 1,700 residents in the past year). Possible alignment to the Crime Prevention Ambassador Programme</li></ul>	Gardai	Muintir NaTire Leitrim County Council
<b>Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>An Garda Siochana's proposed roll out of the Bogus Callers Scheme (as piloted in counties Louth and Cork)</li></ul>		Leitrim Development Company
<b>Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>An Garda Siochana's proposal to hold advice clinics in community centres</li></ul>		Older Peoples Council
<b>Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Community Text Alert schemes in North and South Leitrim.</li></ul>		
<b>Social Participation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Leitrim County Council's Area Wardens will also link into the initiative. IFA will also link in with this by informing its more vulnerable members of the various agency support that is available and refer them, if the individual farmers are willing.</li></ul>		
<b>Information &amp; Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Links will also be established with the Citizen's Information Service.</li></ul>		





**Catherine McGuigan, Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultant** suggests that one to one meetings with senior managers might be necessary to get firm commitment to goals within the strategy. "A workshop style Age Friendly Alliance meeting is also useful. At this meeting, the Alliance members bring along frontline staff members to ensure that the commitments to the Age Friendly Strategy are filtered across the organisations strategic goals and aims."



## Task Four:

### **Finalise and Launch the Age Friendly Strategy**

At its best, the Age Friendly Strategy will incorporate the hopes and aspirations of your county/city for the future. It will encapsulate how it will be a great place to grow old in. For these reasons, it is important to take enough time to write it well. Draw on any extra support you'll need to carry out this task. For instance, the Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultants may be able to offer help or advice on writing the strategy. Some times an external consultant/researcher can be sought to support the writing of the strategy.

“

**Catherine McGuigan, Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultant.** *“I consider the best layout of a strategy to follow the WHO themes. Then, under each theme, there should be a quote from an older person specific to that theme, the desired outcome, the issues raised, the proposed solutions with relevant commitments from the agencies and service providers. There also can be a timeline – which express the short, medium and long term goals within each potential solution.”*

”

It's a good idea to look through many of the Age Friendly Strategies already published on [www.agefriendlyireland.ie](http://www.agefriendlyireland.ie). The Louth Age Friendly Strategy ([www.agefriendly.ie](http://www.agefriendly.ie)) is a particularly good example to study before writing your own. It has a very clear style – a short section on “What You Have Told Us Are the Challenges” followed by short, medium and long term plans to find solutions. One significant point to note is that many of the first counties who wrote strategies used the

eight WHO Age Friendly themes as the chapter headings. The defined style now is to use the nine Age Friendly Ireland outcomes as chapter headings. The recently published Dublin City Age Friendly Strategy has used the nine Age Friendly outcomes in a shorter, clearer version as themes throughout the document. **The Dublin City Age Friendly Strategy 2014 – 2019 is on <http://www.dublincity.ie/agefriendlycity>**



## Ten Steps to writing an Age Friendly Strategy

- 1.** Start with a concise background on our ageing population and message of an Age Friendly Ireland (refer to general introduction).
- 2.** Use specific details about your own county's profile – percentage of older people, percentage of older people with disabilities, rural/urban spread of older population. This information is available from the Central Statistics Office and in other county publications.
- 3.** Highlight the good things about the county – areas in which it already excels.
- 4.** Then, introduce the Age Friendly City and County programme and what it aims to achieve.
- 5.** Use the eight World Health Organisation themes as your chapter headings alongside the Age Friendly Ireland desired outcomes and a relevant quote from an older person.
- 6.** Use lots of local photographs throughout the document. For example, older people at the launch of the programme, Alliance members, local older people's groups, etc.
- 7.** Find out if there has been research into the significance of these issues and include a reference to it if so. For example, the Clare Age Friendly Strategy refers to the Liveable Communities for All Ages report which states, "when older adults have to limit or stop driving, they can experience a drastic decline in mobility that can put them at greater risk of poor health, isolation and loneliness". It's the voice of experience like this that drives the search for solutions and commitments from the Age Friendly Alliance.
- 8.** Include some discussion on proposed solutions to the concerns raised
- 9.** Clearly lay out the short, medium and long term plans/goals as solutions to the issues raised under each heading. Some counties have chosen to outline the planned actions to each theme in the appendix rather than clearly laying out plans in each chapter. While this keeps the broad thrust of the issues in each chapter, it can leave the reader at a loss for practical solutions. However, some Age Friendly Coordinators prefer this approach as it separates the broad strokes in the strategy from the Action Plan to be followed by the various working groups.
- 10.** Use the Age Friendly County Logo on the cover and where appropriate within the document.



## TIP:

Aim to write the draft strategy within a week or two and ask key people to read it before finalising the document with your Alliance. The Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultant, one or two members of your Age Friendly Alliance – including a senior manager in the local authority, the Chairperson of the Older People's Council should then read and give feedback on the strategy before its final sign off. This is an ideal time to update City/County Councillors on the progress and content of the Age Friendly Strategy

Once you're happy with the final version of the strategy, contract a design team, to design and print the strategy.



## Task Five:

### **Planning and Hosting the Launch of the Age Friendly Strategy**

This is another occasion for celebration and a chance to host a social event for older people in the city/county. It's also an opportunity to inform people of the range of commitments that members of the Age Friendly Alliance have made to improve the lives of older people in the city/county.



It's important to realise that most people are interested in getting things done rather than planning how and when to do them. So, get ready to explain that the Age Friendly County/City is a long term approach to having older people's voices central to decision-making on issues that affect daily life in the county – health and transport and environmental infrastructure.

Also, plan your event carefully to get as many people as you can along to the event.

The spring and autumn months can be good times for a strategy launch as it's a time when people are settling in to new routines. Make sure the date suits all your speakers before booking the venue.



### **Lining Up Your Speakers**

Choose a guest speaker – if possible the person who was your local champion at the launch of the Age Friendly programme in your city/county.

Ask the Chairperson of the Older People's Council to speak at the event.

Ask the Chief Executive to speak at the launch. Ask him/her to also approach some members of the Age Friendly Alliance to see who's best to speak at the event.

Ask the City/County Mayor if he/she will officially launch the strategy.

### **Planning the Launch Event Itself**

Refer to the notes on organising the launch of the Age Friendly County's Programme in Chapter One.... See overleaf the sample press release for the Launch of the Age Friendly Strategy in Your City/County



## **Dublin Aims To Be an Age Friendly Capital City**

The Dublin City Age Friendly Strategy 2014 - 2019 is an initiative designed to create a capital city where older people are valued and respected. It seeks to improve the quality of lives of people over the age of 55 in Dublin city. This strategy is being implemented by the Dublin City Age Friendly Alliance. This Alliance is an inter-agency group, led by Dublin City Council. This is part of a national Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme spear headed by Age Friendly Ireland.

Dublin's Lord Mayor Christy Burke, will launch this initiative on Wednesday 10th September 2014 at 3pm in City Hall, Dame Street, Dublin 2. The Lord Mayor will be joined at the launch by fellow speakers Minister Kathleen Lynch TD, Minister of State at the Department of Health with responsibility for Primary Care, Social Care (Disability and Older People) and Mental Health, and Ms. Ellen Reddin, a representative older person who sits on the Older Person's Council in the North West area of Dublin City.

Lord Mayor Christy Burke, Chair of the Dublin City Age Friendly Alliance said, "An age friendly capital city is an aspiration which must be realised. As statistics show our older population is increasing which has major implications for service providers and the long term planning of Dublin city. I am very pleased that Dublin City Council in conjunction with its key statutory, private and community partners are so actively involved in implementing Dublin City's Age Friendly Strategy. This is Dublin's opportunity to have consideration for our older citizens and to learn from their life experience."

Minister Lynch said, "In 2013 the Government published the National Positive Ageing Strategy and launched Healthy Ireland, a national framework that aims to increase the health and wellbeing of people at all stages of life, including old age. Positive ageing and healthy ageing are in everyone's interest and the Dublin City Age Friendly Strategy is one of the many ways that we as a society will realise the aims and aspirations of these two vital national documents. I am heartened to see the high level of partnership involvement from the public, private and community and voluntary sectors in this initiative. A partnership that I know is being reflected in other counties and cities around Ireland. I wish Age Friendly Ireland and the Age Friendly City and Counties



Programme continued success. The Government is fully committed to supporting and encouraging all stakeholders in this journey."

The Dublin Age Friendly City Programme was established in February 2013. The Dublin City Age Friendly Alliance, an inter-agency planning Alliance, has been established to oversee the implementation of the initiative at city level. The programme is being rolled out via local alliances, in each of the five Dublin City Council's administrative areas in the city. Each Alliance comprises statutory, non-statutory, voluntary, educational and business groups and is led by Dublin City Council. Older people will also be represented on each Alliance through the Older Peoples Councils.

Dublin City Age Friendly Strategy 2014 – 2019 sets out specific actions to be taken under nine Strategic Goals that target areas designed to improve the quality of life of older people in Dublin city. This strategy is a direct response to the views gathered from 1500 older people over the age of 55 years in Dublin city. The model has been adopted from the World Health Organisation's model of Age Friendly Cities and Communities Programme. This is part of the national roll out of Age Friendly Cities and Communities by Age Friendly Ireland.

The Dublin City Age Friendly Strategy 2014 – 2019 will be available from Wednesday 10th September 2014 on <http://www.dublincity.ie/agefriendlycity>

### **For further information contact:**

Dublin City Council Media Relations Office T (01) 222 2170  
Dublin Age Friendly City Co-coordinator, Community and Social Development, Dublin City Council,  
T 353 1 222 XXXX

### **Notes to the editor**

The Dublin City Age Friendly Strategy 2014 – 2019 outlines the vision, mission, values and strategic goals of the Dublin Age Friendly City Initiative together with the actions which will be undertaken to achieve each goal. It will drive the implementation of the initiative over the next five years and sets out the key actions to be taken in nine areas:

- 1.** Outdoor space and buildings
- 2.** Transport
- 3.** Home and community
- 4.** Information
- 5.** Safety
- 6.** Learning, development and work
- 7.** Social, economic and political life
- 8.** Health and active living
- 9.** Value and respect

The Dublin City Age Friendly Strategy 2014 – 2019 will be available from Wednesday 10th September 2014 on <http://www.dublincity.ie/agefriendlycity>



## Dublin City Age Friendly Alliance

The Dublin City Alliance is the collaboration of a number of organisations who will work together over the next five years with a focus on improving the quality of lives of older people in Dublin city. Older People themselves are central to this process through membership of Older Peoples Councils and Age Friendly Alliances.

For more information on **Dublin Age Friendly City Alliance members** [click here](#)

## What is the Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme?

The Irish Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme is based on the World Health Organisation model which encourages communities to support and enable people to age actively by developing policies, services and structures which recognise that older people have a wide range of capabilities and resources. *The programme defines an age friendly city as one which anticipates and responds to the needs and preferences of older people, respects their decisions, protects the most vulnerable and promotes inclusion.*

The programme commenced in Ireland in 2009 with Louth becoming the country's first age friendly county. To date, 26 local authorities have signed up to the initiative and it is expected that by mid-2015 all 31 local authorities will have launched or committed to launch an age friendly strategy.



## Task Six:

### **Affiliate to the WHO Global Network**

World Health Organisation (WHO) Affiliation: One of the key components of participation in the Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme is affiliation to the World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Network of Age Friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC). This affiliation gives international recognition to the work that we are doing here in Ireland. Membership of the Network allows cities and communities across the globe to:

- Connect with a global network of ageing experts, including senior officials, programme managers, researchers and older people themselves.
- Stay informed about Age friendly City and Community projects, meetings and events.
- Guidance on approaches for developing and implementing Age Friendly City and Community approaches.
- Access to good age friendly practices.
- Share own progress and learnings and support other to do the same.
- Be inspired by what others have achieved.



## **Affiliation to the Global Network of Age Friendly Cities and Communities is currently broken up into three distinct phases:**

- **Planning (Phase 1)**
- **Implementation and Monitoring (Phase 2)**
- **Evaluation of Progress (Phase 3)**

Each Phase sets out a number of key milestones which must be met in order to proceed to the next phase in the Network cycle.

### **Phase 1:**

Currently, affiliation to the Global Network at Phase 1 level requires a city or county to complete the following application form (which can be downloaded here [http://apps.who.int/datacol/survey.asp?survey\\_id=599](http://apps.who.int/datacol/survey.asp?survey_id=599)) and have committed to working towards the following

### **Phase 2:**

A City or County seeking to progress from Phase 1 to Phase 2 must have reached certain of these key criteria. The City or County must have:

- Established a way of involving older people in all stages of the process of making the city or county more age friendly – this is done through the establishment of an Older People's Council
- Conducted a comprehensive and inclusive study of issues facing older people in the city or county – this is done through your City/County wide consultation process
- Developed a plan based on the consultation findings - this is achieved through the drafting and publication of your Age Friendly Strategy
- Identified ways to monitor progress against this plan.

## **How to go about affiliating**

An Age Friendly Ireland staff member can assist you in preparing your application to affiliate to the WHO Global Network for either Phase 1 or Phase 2. The staff have access to application forms, templates for reporting and samples of applications from other cities and counties.



## Final Words

The working groups are made up of members of the Alliance who commit to finding solutions to the key issues outlined in the Strategy document. There have been two main approaches to working groups developed so far. The first establishes thematic working groups or Fora with members of the Alliance working together to find solutions around a specific theme, for example transport or housing. The second approach is to set up a service providers' forum. The service providers working group seeks solutions by directly drawing on the knowledge and experience of senior managers on the Alliance to find practical solutions together to various issues. How to develop a service providers' forum is outlined in Chapter 4. Most counties also set up a business of ageing forum. The Business of Ageing Forum can have a wider membership – business people in the county, members of the Chambers of Commerce, etc – as well as some of the members of the Alliance. The next chapter will focus on setting up these working groups as well as other ways to keep the momentum alive once the formal structures have been set up.



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# CHAPTER 4:

## Implementation

- Beginning to Implement the Strategy
- Setting up Thematic Working Groups or a Service Providers Forum
- Setting up a Business of Ageing Forum
- Choosing a town to become the Age Friendly Town in your county
- Keeping the Older People's Council vibrant
- Planning and Hosting a Strategy Review

## **Living The Age Friendly Programme:**

Nora Webster, outgoing Chair of the Older People's Forum in Kilkenny.



***"I liked that the Age Friendly programme was inclusive with all the service providers working with older people – not for older people."***

Nora Webster is an excellent example of active citizenship. Following her retirement, she returned to education, completing a degree in Community Development at NUI Maynooth. She was already a volunteer with the Senior Help Line and Victim Alliance when she first heard about the Age Friendly programme in Kilkenny. "I went along to the meeting in a local hotel. It was well publicised and there were representatives from local businesses and the local authority. After that, I attended the consultation. At this meeting, people were invited to join the Older People's Forum."

"Initially, I didn't think anything would come of it. I had been to county consultation meetings before and they just died down but this time, I got really interested. I liked that the Age Friendly programme was inclusive with all the service providers working with older people – not for older people."

Nora Webster became the Chairperson of the Older People's Forum in Kilkenny in 2010. The Executive Committee of the Older People's Forum was formed in 2011. "We realised that we couldn't get anywhere with the larger

group. So the Executive Committee meets monthly and we take our mandate from the bigger group which meets twice yearly. It works very well." She received a Kilkenny Person of the Year Award in 2013 for her outstanding work in the community.

Members of the Older People's Forum Executive Committee are on decision making groups on housing, access and the provision of health services for older people in Kilkenny. Nora Webster says that this is a critical aspect of the programme. "Kilkenny city has changed – particularly the public areas and access to information. I feel older people have become a real part of the decision-making and planning process whether it's a County Development Plan or a site for a new seat."

***"It took a lot of time for officials within the local authorities to take the Older People's Forum seriously and to take our issues on board. We have had to follow up a lot. We also needed to understand how things worked in terms of timeframes and plans."***

She admits though that it takes time to get things done. "It took a lot of time for officials within the local authorities to take the Older People's Forum seriously and to take our issues on board. We have had to follow up a lot. We also needed to understand how things worked in terms of timeframes and plans. Our main issues are transport, public toilets and bus shelters with seating. We have achieved a lot but transport is still proving to be a difficult issue – we need more buses from the outskirts of Kilkenny into the city."

Overall though, she would advice older people to get involved with the Age Friendly programme. "You can be part of the process of making change for the better in your city or county. You get a great satisfaction out of that. You don't realise until you are involved that you have such an amount to give. By coming together and talking about issues as a group, each issue is voiced. Though it can be a slow process, you can get things done and you get a great sense of achievement from it."

## 1: Set Up

- Building Up the Age Friendly Agenda within the Local Authority
- Inviting senior managers in public, voluntary and state agencies to join the Age Friendly Alliance
- Keeping County Councillors informed about the Age Friendly programme
- Setting up the Age Friendly Alliance
- Organising and Hosting the launch of

## 2: Consultation

- Gathering all existing information about older people in your city/county
- Consulting with a wide range of older people across your county/city
- Summarising and prepare consultation findings for discussion
- Presenting the Consultation Findings to Age Friendly Alliance Meeting
- Giving Feedback on Findings and Proposed Solutions to Older People

## 4: Implementation

- Beginning to Implement the Strategy
- Setting up Thematic Working Groups or a Service Providers Forum
- Setting up a Business of Ageing Forum
- Choosing a town to become the Age Friendly Town in your county
- Keeping the Older People's Council vibrant
- Planning and Hosting a Strategy Review

### Planning

- Writing the Draft Strategy
- Setting Up the Older People's Council
- Getting the Alliance to agree to goals within the strategy
- Finalise and launch the strategy
- Affiliate to the WHO Global Network

## Introduction:

At this stage, the structures for the Age Friendly programme in your city/county will be in place. The Strategy is also written and published and will act as your guiding document over the next two to three years. Essentially, the strategy contains the short term goals (which should be achievable within the next year), the medium term goals (which should be achievable in the lifetime of this strategy over the next two to three years) and the long term goals which will remain your aspirations for the next strategy. The big tasks at this stage are all about achieving these targets and keeping up the momentum of both the Age Friendly Alliance and the Older People's Council.



## Task One:

### Begin Implementing the Strategy

The Alliance meetings will have gathered a momentum of their own at this stage with senior managers across the sectors getting to know each other and finding new ways to solve issues that older people have raised in their communities.

Setting up working groups which will report directly to the Alliance meeting about their progress is a key feature of this stage of the Age Friendly programme in your city or county. Sometimes, the Alliance will invite a speaker to make a presentation on a relevant topic which will inform the various working groups. For example, the HSE made a very comprehensive presentation about older people's services in Clare and the issue of elder abuse at a meeting of the Clare Alliance meeting. The importance of presentations like these is that they give the Alliance members a clearer picture of what's happening so that they can see what is needed within the county for older people – ie they can spark off collaborative actions within the Age Friendly Alliance.

See below a sample agenda and comments from that Alliance meeting.



## **Sample Agenda of Age Friendly Alliance Meeting in Clare**

**1.** Minutes of last board meeting and matters arising

**2.** Items for Any Other Business later in meeting

**3.** Matters for discussion (abridged)

Report from Older People's Council and links to key agencies

Possible links between Age Friendly and new council structures

Report from Implementation Team Meeting (this is the working group within the Clare Alliance which has undertaken to follow through on commitments made by the Alliance members)

Board's key objectives for three-year term

Presentation from Primary Care Team in Clare

**4.** Matters for Decision (abridged)

Approval of Older People's Council terms of reference

Approval of Age Friendly Clare banner

Appointment of Alliance member to Audit committee

Invite Ennis Chamber of Commerce Representative to join the Alliance as an interim representative of Business of Ageing Forum in Clare

**5.** AOB

**6.** Setting a date for next meeting

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**Gerry Kelly is the Chairman of the Age Friendly programme in Clare.** *“An Age Friendly Alliance starts to have a whole new perspective when the different agencies begin to realise the benefit of working together. In Clare, we have a three year plan with 55 actions. In the first year, we set out what we want to achieve. Having a good working model is the most important first step. We have a number of positive things happening already and there is great flexibility in the system to allow solutions to evolve by themselves.”*

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**Michael Neylon, Clare Age Friendly Coordinator** adds. *“The roles of Gerry [Kelly] – the Chairperson of the Alliance Board and I is to challenge the members of the Alliance to identify ways they can deliver on the actions in the strategy. For example, the Gardai says that they have no extra money but they have willing personnel who will interact with older people in the county.”*

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**Former Minister for Justice and TD for Dublin North, Nora Owen** is the independent chair of the Fingal Age Friendly programme. Aware of the significance of genuine engagement of senior managers in each sector, Nora has used her personal contacts to ensure that the HSE became fully involved in the process. "The advantage of an independent chairperson is that it can lift the Age Friendly strategy out of the council so that it's not just another policy area that might or might not work. The chairperson needs to encourage proactive involvement from all the senior managers and there is a need for quarterly meetings to give everyone a group to report back to," says Owen.

The key to achieving the aims of the Age Friendly strategy is for it to be "embedded" and "mainstreamed" within the organisations that support it. "We found that transport was an issue for Fingal and we have addressed that. Now, housing is emerging as an issue – up to now, the Council wasn't building anything so now, we need to look for some interesting models for housing for older people. For example, rather than setting aside a percentage of units for older people, the Council could consider buying a building and adapting it for use like what developed in MacAuley Place in Naas, County Kildare."





## Task Two:

### Setting Up Thematic Working Groups or a Service Providers Forum

The second task at this stage is to set up working groups with clearly defined goals to achieve. Some counties choose to have thematic working groups to implement the Age Friendly Strategy. Other counties use their existing Implementation group or have opted for a Service Provider's Forum which will be covered in the next section.

The Age Friendly City/ County Coordinator and the Age Friendly Alliance must decide which working groups are required to achieve the goals in the strategy. For example, are transport and housing the key issues that need to be addressed immediately?

Deciding who becomes a member of the working group is a key task for the Chairperson of the working group. It's very important to have the service providers and service users represented as well as any voluntary agency that is involved with the area. For example, the Active and Healthy Ageing Action group in County Louth has representatives from private and public nursing homes, the Alzheimer Society, the HSE co-ordinator for older people and the voluntary group working with older people in the county. All working groups will also have a member from the Executive Committee of the Older People's Council.

Make sure to get people on your working group who can make decisions and have budget control over necessary changes to the area under discussion. Often, it's not about extra costs but about changing around what already exists so that it suits older people better. The Age Friendly programme itself doesn't introduce a new budget but by reconfiguring existing resources and sharing budgets to better match what older people want, really significant improvements can be made.

So what's needed most at this stage is Alliance members who are willing to develop new ways of delivering existing services that will benefit older people



most. Encouraging joined up thinking between agencies can deliver innovative solutions that work for everyone. For example, the Health Route to Beaumont Hospital was developed as a response to the need for older people to get to hospital appointments. The HSE and a local transport provider teamed up to fund a bus route and timetable that suited the older people best. Similarly, a group of older people from the Older People's Council in a number of counties volunteered to become Crime Prevention Ambassadors. They were subsequently trained by the Gardai to visit older people in rural areas who needed reassurance and advice on staying safe in their homes. (See case histories at the end of this handbook for more examples of what cross sector collaboration has delivered in some counties).

Some counties such as Louth have developed active working groups on transport, housing and communications. The key is to choose a chairperson who is passionate about reaching the goals of the working group. The Louth Age Friendly County Transport Group is an example of a working group focussed on achieving very practical goals.

The aim of the Louth Age Friendly Transport Group is "To strengthen existing and develop new local transport networks/services for the benefit of older people, as a result to make local communities more inclusive using existing public and private transport operators."

Andy Cullen, recently retired Assistant Secretary in the Department of Transport, is the Chair

of the Transport Working Group in County Louth. He works with all the different transport providers in County Louth to see whether routes can be changed to accommodate the needs of older people in the county. "We need to have better use of existing funds so that older people's voices are heard when routes are worked out. There is no shortage of transport capacity, local cars and mini buses, it's more about mobilising them. It's about finding ways for people to get to the post office to pick up their pension or go to watch a GAA match. I'm still as excited about this work four years after joining the Age Friendly county programme."

Andy Cullen is also Chair of a regional transport group. He believes the county has the transport capacity to meet the needs of the people but it's just a question of getting the services/volunteers to the right people at the right time. "We are not reforming Irish society from the top down. It's a bottom up approach within County Louth. The key questions are; Can we make a difference to people's lives at a local community level? Can we meet the transport needs of older people in County Louth? Recent changes in the National Transport Authority of Ireland has prompted Cullen to push for representatives from Louth Age Friendly Alliance on new regional committees which will develop routes to hospitals, day centres, town centres, etc.

\* There are terms of reference for a Thematic Working Group included in the Appendix for Chapter 4

## Setting Up a Service Providers Forum

Some counties such as Kilkenny opted to set up a Service Providers' Forum instead of thematic working group to achieve the goals of the Age Friendly Strategy. Many counties rely on their already established Implementation group. The idea behind this approach is that all the decision makers appoint frontline staff members to carry through on the commitments within the Age Friendly strategy. These front line staff members report back to the Age Friendly Alliance meetings on progress.

Take Kilkenny as an example of this approach. The Service Providers Forum was set up in 2010 specifically to deliver the objectives of the Age Friendly Strategy in Kilkenny. Members of the Older People's Council were invited on to the forum alongside senior managers and front line staff. Several initiatives have been developed through the forum. These include the Elderly Medicine Early Review and Liason for Discharge (EMERALD) which offers early physiotherapy, occupational therapy and other geriatric interventions to frail older people who are admitted to hospital. Falls assessment clinics, memory clinics and a Parkinson's disease clinic are other new initiatives set up by the HSE in recognition of gaps in the services highlighted by the Age Friendly programme. The Service Providers Forum members; consultant geriatrician, Dr Emer Ahern, head of the Older People's Services in the HSE, Patricia McEvoy and Health Promotion Officer, Teresa Hennessy are also all members of the Age Friendly Alliance in Kilkenny.

\* There are terms of reference for a Service Providers Forum in the Appendix for Chapter 4



## Task Three:

### Setting Up a Business of Ageing Forum

A Business of Ageing Forum is another key part of the Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme. Essentially, a Business of Ageing Forum is about bringing key members of the business community together to make the county more age friendly in terms of doing business. It will be of interest to retailers, hoteliers, sports clubs and owners of restaurants and cafes. See County Louth Case study for an



example of how The Economic Forum in that county developed an Age Friendly Business Plan with leadership from the former IDA Director, Padraic White and Director of the Netwell Centre at Dundalk Institute of Technology, Rodd Bond.



**Rodd Bond, Director of the Netwell Centre at Dundalk Institute of Technology** explains, *“Louth already had an integrated economic plan for the county which meant that Age Friendly could align as another pillar alongside sustainable energy, foreign direct investment, cultural activities, agricultural and food production and education and training. With this recognition, the age friendly agenda becomes more central, animating all the other pillars and become embedded in the long term economic thinking of the county. It becomes the positive economics of living longer”*



### **Making Contacts With Businesses:**

The Age Friendly City/ County Coordinator can initiate contact with key people either informally or formally [adapt template of letter inviting people to join the Age Friendly Alliance] Kilkenny is one of the counties in Ireland which developed a strong supportive programme for businesses to become age friendly. An award scheme was developed to celebrate the businesses that made the most efforts to make their businesses age friendly. The Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultant may be a useful resource here in terms of suggestions to meet members of Business of Ageing Forums in other counties. Find out if it's possible for a Business of Ageing award winner from Kilkenny to come and make a presentation at your Alliance meeting.

There are terms of reference for a Business of Ageing Forum in the Appendix for Chapter 4.



## TIP:

Making your business more age friendly is advantageous on several fronts – economic, social and environmentally. The Age Friendly Business Recognition Scheme acknowledges efforts businesses make across four areas – the physical environment, the lighting, the noise levels and customer services. See [www.agefriendlyireland/nationalinitiatives/agefriendlybusinessfor](http://www.agefriendlyireland/nationalinitiatives/agefriendlybusinessfor) for more details. For an example of a business that won an award, read about how the Ormonde Hotel in Kilkenny became the first hotel in Ireland to win an Age Friendly hotel award.

[www.agefriendlyireland/portfolio-item/age-friendly-business-award](http://www.agefriendlyireland/portfolio-item/age-friendly-business-award)



## Task Four:

### Choose a town to become the Age Friendly Town in your county

Some counties choose to focus on one or two towns in the county to become Age Friendly Towns. *So far, over twenty counties in Ireland have chosen to develop one town as an Age Friendly town.* Aisling Costello, Head of Projects in Age Friendly Ireland runs the Age Friendly Towns project.

“There is a specific process to go through to become an Age Friendly town. It gives people a great opportunity to see changes on the ground in a shorter length of time,” says Costello.



## **Case Study: Castleblaney became an Age Friendly town as part of the Monaghan Age Friendly Programme**

This was partly because many of the older people who took part in the consultation process at the launch of the Age Friendly programme in Monaghan came from Castleblaney. They said that they didn't feel safe walking in the town and were often confused by signs when driving into the town. For these reasons, the Age Friendly Alliance opted to put Castleblaney forward as the pilot town in County Monaghan to develop as an Age Friendly Town. A planner was employed to work on improvements that could be made in the town. He carried out a walkability audit which highlighted lack of signage, seats and poor pedestrian access to some services and businesses. The survey specifically highlighted where seating was needed most. Town councillors endorsed the plan and ringfenced funding for seating in the future. New wooden seats were made by the Monaghan Men's Shed group and installed in key locations. The County Council reduced the speed limit within the town to 30 kmph to make the town safer for cyclists and walkers of all ages. Ballybay and Clones will now work towards becoming age friendly towns.



***Declan McKernan is an engineer in Monaghan County Council.***

*He worked with planner, Seamus Furlong to make Castleblaney an Age Friendly Town. "The Age friendly town initiative was a rare opportunity for collective thinking. The local authority, the Gardai, the VEC [now Education and Training Board], social services, HSE and various community groups came together with the Age Friendly Alliance to look at Castleblaney Town. The aim was to develop a simple and common sense approach in making Castleblaney a more accessible and easier town to get around - either for doing business or to enjoy a simple stroll. "I sat on the steering group and it was an eye opener to learn what the real issues are for people.*



The walkability audit was a great success: It turned out to be a 'snag list' of what improvements could be done to the footpaths, signage, bus stops, seating and crossing points that would allow the town to become more user friendly.

However it wasn't all about concrete and kerbs, far from it, as the delivery of quality health services, feeling safe and making a meaningful contribution to community life were also key objectives. For example, giving people living in isolated areas easier access to the town through the introduction of neighbourhood car schemes, getting volunteers to act as community alerts for bogus callers, considering group purchases of home heating supplies to cut down prices were all issues that were raised and addressed. Finding opportunities for older people to interact with younger generations also became one of our goals.

Having the planner, Seamus Furlong assigned to Castleblayney broke down the barriers of 'them and us' to seek a common goal. To be honest without Seamus's lead, it would be difficult to see how the initiative could have been as successful as it was.

Ballybay and Clones are now in the process of following Castleblayney's approach in making their towns Age Friendly. It's an opportunity for those towns to develop a strategy that has actual achievable outputs that doesn't require large financial outlays. It's a chance to make all our lives a little bit better."



## Task Five:

### Keeping the Older People's Council Vibrant

It's important to keep in mind that older people in your city/county will be most interested in the Age Friendly programme when they begin to see results. The Story So Far, written by Sinead Shannon, Research Manager in Age Friendly Ireland is a very useful publication to read at this point.

At this stage, the Age Friendly City or County Coordinator will be working directly with the Executive Committee of the Older People's Council to organise events. This handbook should be made available to anyone who is actively organising meetings and events of both the Older People's Council and the working groups set up by the Age Friendly Alliance.



***Eithne Mallin, the Age Friendly Coordinator in Fingal***

*firmly believes the best way to keep up momentum is dynamic and engaging events for older people in the county. "The Senior Citizens Forum in Fingal host monthly meetings and they also get involved in things like the walkability survey in Beaumont Hospital and Dublin Airport," says Mallin. The Men's Shed group in Baldoyle is also very active and has made contact with all the Men's Shed groups in County Louth.*



Fingal County Council provides the Senior Citizens Forum with an annual budget to support their monthly meetings, their annual general meeting and an information seminar. The forum invites speakers to their meetings. For example, Dr Kate Irving, a lecturer in Mental Health Nursing at Dublin City University was the principal speaker at the Fingal Senior Citizens Forum AGM and conference entitled "Feed The Brain and Feed The Body" in May, 2014. A dietician from Keelings fruit and vegetable producers in St Margaret's also spoke at the event.

### **The Executive Committee of the Older People's Council**

This is a smaller group of people who volunteer or are elected onto the Executive Committee to work towards making the city/county Age Friendly. Members of the executive will meet a minimum of four times a year, attend Age Friendly Alliance meetings, participate on boards and report back to the Older People's Council on the Age Friendly programme in the county. The Executive Committee of the Older People's Council will also put together a submission – in consultation with the Older People's Council – to the Local Community Development Committee.

Some counties also allocate a part time administrator to the Older People's Council Committee.



#### **TIP:**

The national partnership between Age Friendly Ireland and Age & Opportunity (mentioned in Chapter Three) also means that member of the Older People's Council can avail of training on becoming agents for change, making public presentations, establishing groups etc. This training can also help the Older People's Council continue to grow and develop, encouraging new members to join and share their voice of experience with the Age Friendly programme. The aim of the Older People's Council is always to have as wide a representation of older people in the city/county as possible.



## **Information:**

The meetings of the Older People's Council ought to be held at least once a year throughout the lifetime of the strategy. It's an opportunity to update older people in the city/county on achievements to date within the county. It's crucial that older people know what's happening in their locality – what initiatives have started and are planned. For example, the meeting can have details of all computer classes throughout the county. People can also be informed about befriending initiatives, new initiatives from the HSE, the Gardai, the local authority and any other organisation relevant to the daily lives of older people. If older people see the Older People's Council as the place to keep up to date on what's happening in their area, the Older People's Council will be stronger and more dynamic as a result. It is crucial that the Age Friendly City or County Coordinator and the Executive Committee of the Older People's Council keep informed and collate all relevant flyers and information sheets for distribution at Older People's Council meetings.



## **Guest Speakers:**

It's also an opportunity to invite representatives of different groups to make a presentation. Get a sense of what's most important to the older people in your area. For example, a talk from a community Garda might be something many are interested in or a talk from a librarian about Information technology classes offered in the local libraries. Older people's groups which are already active or developing in your county/city might like to introduce themselves to the Older People's Council. These can range from Physical Activity Leaders, trained by Age & Opportunity to Crime Prevention Ambassadors trained by the Gardai. These presentations offer older people an opportunity to keep up to date on what's happening and share this information with their peers.

At each event, it's important that older people get a chance to air their views about what's working well and what isn't so that this information can be fed back to the Age Friendly Alliance as future goals. It's essential to have one shared meeting a year between the Older People's Council and the Age Friendly Alliance so there is a flow of information maintained between each group. This generally happens at the AGM of the Older People's Council.



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Mainstreaming pilot projects is one of **Eithne Mallin's** key concerns. It's great when an age friendly project such as the health, fitness and wellbeing course at the Institute of Technology in Blanchardstown starts but to make it sustainable is trickier. "The students of the sports development course set up a health, fitness and wellbeing course for older people as part of their course work. We provided transport for some older people who couldn't drive themselves to the IT in Blanchardstown and we issued certificates to about 50 people who took part," explains Mallin.

However, each year, the funding had to be worked out between the IT and Fingal County Council. "If courses like this one are to be mainstreamed, they need a constant funding source and different agencies have to make them part of their agenda," says Mallin.

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## **Celebrations:**

It's always important to celebrate achievements to date. So, having an active group of older people who come to meetings is worthy of celebration in itself. Asking these people to bring along a friend each time they come can spread the net further. Having a social element to each Older People's Council meeting also adds to the enjoyment of the event. See if your Older People's champion is free to attend, especially if he/she is an entertainer (musician, poet, comedian, etc).

## **Invite Members To Join Boards:**

Bringing older people into the decision making process on issues relating to their every day lives is a key element of the Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme. Often, the members of the Executive Committee of the Older People's Council will put themselves forward to join boards. However, it's always useful to have a few extra volunteers who would be willing to stand in if someone is ill or take over if other commitments prevent that person from continuing on the board. For example, in Kilkenny, members of the Older People's Forum Executive Committee are on decision-making groups for housing, access and the service provider's forum. Nora Webster, the Chairwoman of the Older People's Forum in Kilkenny says that this is a crucial aspect of the Age Friendly programme there.



**Nora Webster:** *"The city has changed – particularly the public areas and access to information. I really feel older people have become a real part of the decision and planning process whether it's a County Development Plan or a site for a new seat but it does take time to get things done."*



In County Clare, members of the Older People's Council have also been invited to senior Gardai team meetings. John Kerins, the Garda Chief Superintendent in County Clare says that this has been a very positive development for all involved. "It allows older people to have access to a wide range of Gardai across the county so they can raise local issues with them. It's a great way for the Older People's Council to influence how the Gardai develop their policies."



**TIP:**

It's very important that the Older People's Council can embrace and celebrate the work of all groups of older people. Because the Older People's Council has a role in decision-making in the county, other older peoples groups can become involved as a means to influencing policy decisions in various sectors. Keeping in touch with all older people's groups in the county is also important in terms of knowing what issues are facing different groups of older people. Inviting members of Older People's Councils in other counties is a good way of sharing the experience of being part of an Age Friendly programme.



## **Task Six:**

### **Planning and Hosting a Review of the Strategy:**

Planning and hosting a review of the Age Friendly Strategy is another key marker for an Age Friendly City or County. It's an important event that can be used to reflect on achievements to date, note where things haven't progressed as well as expected and plan for the future. This event should be open to older people who have participated at any stage in the lifetime of the strategy. So, get your invite lists out from the programme launch, the consultations, the strategy launch, the Older People's Council meetings and any other events that were held over the last three years or so. Refer back to your earlier notes on planning the programme or strategy launch for tips on choosing the right time/day (Fridays aren't good for many older people, for example) and venue that will suit people best. Make sure all, or a majority, of your Alliance members can attend too.

### **Setting the Agenda for the Strategy Review**

The Age Friendly City/County Coordinator works with the Chairperson of the Older People's Council and the Age Friendly Regional Consultant to plan the agenda for the strategy review. It would also be beneficial for the Chairpersons of the working groups to attend this planning meeting. Decide who will speak about the achievements to date and who will outline the goals that haven't yet been reached. This would also be a good time to get feedback from The Older People's Council on what they feel has been achieved and what remains to be done. You can refer back to the consultation chapter for guidelines on how to run another consultation with this amalgamated group of people.

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The Fingal Age Friendly programme also organised a review of their strategy two years into the programme. “We looked at our achievements to date and focused on key actions for 2014–2017. This process was facilitated by Age & Opportunity and was carried out with the Alliance, the Fingal Senior Citizens Forum and the different departments in Fingal County Council,” explains **Eithne Mallin, Age Friendly Coordinator in Fingal**. “The older people and the members of the Alliance couldn't believe how much we had achieved.” Mallin believes the review was particularly important to coincide with the new structures within the local authorities. “We felt it was good to revise and re-affirm things especially with the establishment of the Local Community Development Committee and the Public Participation Network and other changes within the HSE.” Mallin says it's important that key people from these groupings are part of the Age Friendly Alliance. *“It's very important to embed the Age Friendly message into other structures.”*

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## **Sample Agenda for an Age Friendly Strategy Review**

- 1.** Welcome by the Chairperson of the Alliance and the Chairperson of the Older People's Council.
- 2.** Summary of achievements to date from the Age Friendly Strategy by the Age Friendly City or County Coordinator with specific mention on how the feedback from older people informed these practical initiatives.
- 3.** Specific presentation from a working group that has made significant and lasting impact on the every day lives of older people in the county.
- 4.** Presentation by a cultural, sporting or voluntary agency about their work and how older people can get more involved.
- 5.** Consultation with older people on outcomes of the strategy (as per original style consultations)
- 6.** Closing remarks from the Age Friendly coordinator and sincere thanks to all for attending.
- 7.** Light entertainment and/or refreshments.

## Case Study: Monaghan Strategy Review

Monaghan County held a strategy review in 2014: Bernie Bradley, Age Friendly County Coordinator introduced the event with this remark. "The most successful actions in the county have been based on what older people said they wanted. At this review, we want you to be frank about what still needs to be done. Nothing is too local or too personal: if it's affecting you, it's affecting other people and we won't be upset by criticism."

She then asked older people to consider the following two questions during the round table consultation.

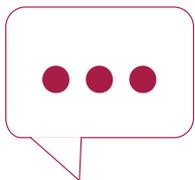
1. Do you think the Age Friendly programme has made a difference to the lives of older people in County Monaghan?
2. Are there any issues affecting older people in the county that should be addressed by the Age Friendly Counties programme?

\* People attending the meeting were also given the opportunity to bring issues directly to the Age Friendly County Coordinator rather than through the consultation process.

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**Bernie Bradley, Age Friendly Coordinator in County Monaghan.** *"It's important for people to feel that what they suggest is followed up on. One of the keys to the success of our strategy is that we asked older people what they thought was the solution. The public sector approach is often about the problem but the people who experience the problem always have the best solution."*

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## Closing Remarks:

Rodd Bond is the Director of the Netwell Centre in Dundalk and one of the first people to bring the Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme to Ireland. "In some ways, we are still struggling to further develop the idea of multiagency collaboration as the way forward to find solutions," says Bond. "You need to be creative and open within your area and encourage other people to also be creative and open before you can find solutions. While we may not have joined up thinking yet at national level, it is beginning to emerge at local level. As we dissolve the silos, we need new ways of organising common agendas."

"The first Louth Age Friendly strategy looked at low-hanging fruit that the different agencies could do more easily," says Rodd Bond. "Our second strategy will have to look at real shifts in how services are run for older people and how older people embrace greater empowerment to shape their own, more personalised engagement. We have to ask ourselves though whether we would be having these conversations at all if Age Friendly Ireland didn't exist"

"At the end of the day, the Age Friendly City and County programme is an opportunity and a space for dialogue, collaboration [to problem solve] and an emerging connectivity [to find solutions]," says Bond.

He sees the programme as being more successful with agencies that have a county by county structure (eg the Gardai) but less successful with agencies whose management straddle several counties. "With the on-going re-design of our health system at all levels, there is a need for greater flexibility to accommodate continuous changes within the organisation of our health services partners. In relation to health, the future lies in strengthening the links and co-ordination between home, community and hospital-based services, centred on personal empowerment and choice.

Regional collaborations between adjoining Age Friendly counties, can be a very effective mechanism to address both quality and scale." says Bond.

However Bond believes the fact that the Age Friendly Counties programme is not legally part of the County Council structure is an advantage. "I think if it was legally dictated, the spirit through which it operates would be undermined," says Bond.

Looking into the future, Bond suggests that in five years time there will be a different

level of awareness and attitude about Age Friendly initiatives. "You shouldn't need the specialised structures anymore because age-awareness and acceptance will be embedded into everyone's thinking and actions. The implications for older people is that they will no longer be seen as a marginalised group - as we address an inclusive society for all ages." The key learning for everyone, according to Bond is that older people themselves should be the first point of call on everything not a technical guide or a book.

## Going Forward

1. It's very important that Age Friendly City or County Coordinators can network with other Age Friendly City and County coordinators. This can be done informally through personal contact or formally through the regional meetings that are organised by Age Friendly Ireland.
2. There is also website through which Age Friendly City and County Coordinators can ask each other questions about the process of becoming Age Friendly.
3. There is also a support team through the Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultants.
4. There is a process of reporting back on the progress of each county to Age Friendly Ireland. This helps to develop the repository of knowledge on the progress of the Age Friendly programme throughout Ireland.
5. Writing Annual Reports are also a valuable way to keep goals alive and report on the progress to date.



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# Case Studies

- Monaghan
- Clare
- Louth

# Monaghan Age Friendly County Case Study

## Introduction:

One of the smallest counties in the Republic, Monaghan is best known for its hilly landscape. Like all of Ireland, it has become more urbanised in recent years yet the rural farming community is what still defines Monaghan most. The population is ageing but resilient in the face of recent emigration of young people. Both proud and courageous, Monaghan people maintain close links with Northern Ireland with commercial and family ties often straddling counties in both jurisdictions.

## Monaghan Facts and Figures

- The population of County Monaghan is 60,000.
- Fourteen per cent of the population is aged 65 and over (7,460).
- Twelve per cent (7,000) of the population has a disability, 46 per cent of whom are 65+.
- Seven in ten people in Monaghan live in rural areas.
- One in three people over 65 live alone, many of them in the countryside.
- Farming and food industry are the main economic activities.
- Unemployment currently stands at about 10 per cent.

## First Steps: How the Age Friendly Alliance was formed in Monaghan

Monaghan was one of the first counties in Ireland to embrace the Age Friendly ethos and agenda. Catherine McGuigan, Age Friendly Ireland's Regional Consultant introduced the programme to the County Manager who agreed to adopt it. Following further presentations about the programme by McGuigan, Monaghan County Development Board and the Monaghan County Council adopted the programme in August 2011.

At this point, the County Manager appointed Bernie Bradley, an Administrative Officer at the local authority to manage the Age Friendly programme in Monaghan. Together with McGuigan, Bradley identified potential members for the Age Friendly Alliance in health, transport, education, community, county councilors and the Gardai. On behalf of the County Manager, they invited the most senior people in Monaghan in each of these sectors to join the Alliance. Often, McGuigan met these individuals to explain the Age Friendly ethos and encourage them to become involved.

*"It's very important to have the most senior member from each sector on the Alliance because it's a strategic group which requires its members to be both decision makers and in charge of budgets," says McGuigan.*

The Age Friendly Alliance with representatives from the Gardai, health, transport and education and community held its first official meeting in September 2011, hours before the Monaghan Age Friendly programme was officially launched. Bernie Bradley made contact with every community and voluntary organisation in Monaghan to invite them to the official launch of Monaghan's Age Friendly County programme. Many County Councils hold a database of these organisations which is a useful to draw on when planning these events.

*Bradley contacted managers of nursing homes, public health nurses and other healthcare professionals, librarians, county councilors etc in an attempt to draw in as wide a group of people as possible.* McGuigan and Bradley spoke about the Age Friendly programme on local radio stations and publicised the launch in parish newsletters and local newspapers. About 200 people attended the official launch of the programme in September 2011, no doubt partly drawn to the event by the presence of the nationally renowned saxophonist, Paddy Cole.

*"We were delighted to have local musician, Paddy Cole at our launch. He relaxed people and made the event more informal," says Bernie Bradley. As well as celebrating the beginning of something new, the launch was a perfect opportunity to capture the views of older people on how Monaghan fared as a county to grow old in.*

Bradley and McGuigan had prepared their questions in advance: What are the key issues facing older people in Monaghan? What are the important issues the Age Friendly programme should address? What are the examples of good practice in the county? "It was also important that the people understood that the Age Friendly County programme wouldn't displace anything that they do already or replicate other work. It's all about giving people a voice and putting a structure around it so that their voices are heard," adds McGuigan.

Members of the Age Friendly Alliance acted as facilitators at round tables with older people from the county. This provided a perfect opportunity for those planning services to tease

out the key issues that impact on the daily life for older people living in Monaghan. People spoke frankly about what Age Friendly could address and what was already working well in the county.

"The older people were very solution focused which meant we made good progress from the start," says Bradley. "The public sector often focuses on the problems but the people who experience the problems are always the ones who have the best solution," she adds. All those who attended the launch were asked to consider joining an Older People's Council. To this end, they left their contact details so Bradley could invite them to a meeting to elect people onto the Older People's Forum and its Executive Committee in the near future.

## **How the Older People's Forum was Set Up**

To gather as widely representative a Older People's Forum as possible, Bernie Bradley invited older people in rural parts of County Monaghan to focus groups to outline the ethos of Age Friendliness and invite them to join the forum. Bradley realised that it would be a great help to have a Coordinator of the Older People's Forum in Monaghan. She approaches the Director of Services for community and enterprise within Monaghan County Council to get funding to employ someone one day a week. This funding was granted and then Bradley recruited the coordinator of the Community and Voluntary Forum to administer the Older People's Forum on this basis. [Bradley suggests the local authority should continue to employ a part-time co-ordinator for the Older People's Forum through the new Public Participation Network which will replace the Community and Voluntary Forum].

This Coordinator then organised the first annual general meeting of the Monaghan Older People's Forum in the Garage Theatre in Monaghan in September 2013. Over 100 people attended the event – many of them delighted with the opportunity to get together and keep up to date on what was happening in Monaghan. Members of the Executive Committee of the Older People's Forum were elected at this event.

Safety and security of older people was considered to be a key area to address by the Age Friendly Alliance. Many older people were fearful of burglary even if statistically, they were less likely to be targeted than other age groups. However, this fear was in itself something that needed to be dealt with. As part of the Gardai's Older Person's Strategy, Crime Prevention Ambassadors (see interview with Sergeant Pat O'Connell below) committed to visit older people in their homes. PJ Harte, Chairman of the Older People's Forum was one of those trained to become a Crime Prevention Ambassador. He says that the group has done about 100 visits to older people's homes in the county. "I just cannot emphasise enough how much I enjoyed all my visits to my older neighbours. It was marvellous to chat and laugh and brighten another persons' day, he says.

Harte is also very pleased with the other developments in the county. These include new transport links to hospitals and the computer training for older people. "We have had a big uptake in our social media training in libraries. With the emigration of their children and grandchildren, many older people want to communicate through skype and facebook," he says.

Another aim of the Age Friendly programme is that older people's voices are more prominent in debate and discussion about policies that impact on their lives. In Monaghan, the Community and Voluntary Forum has a representational nomination policy which encourages its members to join boards of significant organisations. This policy encouraged members of the Older People's Forum to be nominated and voted onto the boards of the Joint Policing Committees, Monaghan Sports Partnership, Monaghan Integrated Development, the Baltibus Rural Transport programme and Comhairle na nOg. Simply being on the boards raises the profile of older people's issues for each organisation.

## How the Strategy was Developed and the Working Groups Set Up

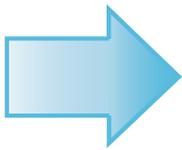
Bernie Bradley and Catherine McGuigan wrote the draft strategy for the Age Friendly County programme in Monaghan, drawing on all the issues raised during the consultation process. Monaghan's Age Friendly Strategy was officially launched in June 2012 and was attended by a wide group of local organisations and older people and Jan O'Sullivan, the Minister of State for Housing and Planning in the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government.

Then, the real work began. Members of the Alliance opted to go on working groups to tackle specific tasks. For example, one working group was set up to make Castleblayney an Age Friendly Town, another to offer better transport links – particularly to hospitals and day care centres, another to find new ways of tackling crime and another to provide older people with information about everything from welfare entitlements to computer training courses. The progress to date has been very impressive (see panel).

## How the First Review was Planned

Bernie Bradley organised the first review of Monaghan's Age Friendly County programme in May 2014. Members of the Older People's Forum and members of the Age Friendly Alliance met in Castleblayney. It was almost three years since the programme began and while there were a lot of achievements in that time, everyone agreed that there were areas which could be improved.

*"The most successful actions have been based on what older people said they wanted. We always said that nothing is too local or too personal. If it's affecting you, it's affecting other people,"* says Bradley. Attendance was a bit lower than expected (Friday is not a great day to gather a crowd, one person quipped) but the feedback was strong. Most people agreed that better communication about what's available in Monaghan is what was most important now. "We need to inform everyone about our services – on our website, with leaflets, on the radio," says P J Harte.



## Where To From Here

Bernie Bradley is pleased with the progress to date but willing and enthusiastic to achieve more. She is currently putting together a plan to improve communications of the programme to a wider audience. "We are also hoping to recruit a development worker to help drive the programme further. We also need to develop more awareness of the very practical needs of some older people and we plan to recruit a graduate planner in the Ballybay/Clones area to make them Age Friendly Towns."

Letting people know when road and building works will be carried out in their areas and explaining how to pay household charges and understand new water meters are simple examples of keeping people in the loop which makes all the difference.

"It's important for people to feel that what they suggest is followed up on, says Bradley. The recent appointment of a Manager for Older Persons within the HSE for Monaghan and Cavan was also seen to be nationally significant. "This is the first time a senior officer has been given responsibility for this important area," says Bradley.

## Monaghan Age Friendly County Initiatives

**Castleblayney as an Age Friendly Town:** Many of the older people who took part in the consultation process at the launch of Age Friendly programme in Monaghan came from Castleblayney. They said that they didn't feel safe walking in the town and were often confused by signs when driving into the town. For these reasons, the Alliance opted to put Castleblayney forward as the pilot town in County Monaghan to develop as an Age Friendly Town. A planner was employed to work on improvements that could be made in the town. He organised older people in their conduct of a walkability audit, which highlighted lack of signage, seats and poor pedestrian access to some services and businesses.

The survey specifically highlighted where seating was needed most. Town councillors endorsed the plan and ringfenced funding for seating in the future. New wooden seats were made by the Monaghan Men's Shed group and installed in key locations. The County Council

reduced the speed limit within the town to 30 kmph to make the town safer for cyclists and walkers of all ages. Ballybay and Clones will now work towards becoming age friendly towns.

### **New Transport Links:**

The working group on Transport was led by Pdraig Smith from Baltibus, the local transport provider. The group sent out a transport survey to find out which specific transport links needed to be improved. Over 500 older people responded to the survey and following on from this better bus routes to and from hospitals in Cavan, Louth and Dublin and a day care centre in Drunkill were developed with new more convenient bus stops put in place. Finding ways to give more transport options to people living rurally remains a key concern for the transport working group which has been one of the most successful initiatives in County Monaghan. The group is currently checking what bus services have free time or space that could be made available.

### **Better Safety and Security:**

The Gardai trained Crime Prevention Ambassadors to visit isolated older people and suggest simple security measures to make their homes safer. On their visits, the ambassadors also distributed personal alarms and small plastic bottles that people can store all their medical records in for use by emergency services if necessary. These crime prevention ambassadors are members of the Monaghan Older People's Forum, who themselves benefit from the experience. The programme is currently being considered for use throughout Ireland.

### **Less Social Isolation:**

Monaghan Positive Age set up a "Good Morning" service which involves calling people on a regular basis. Members of the Older People's Forum also operate a "Bring a Friend or Neighbour" scheme to local events and activities. And, Monaghan Community and Voluntary Forum publishes a weekly newsletter of community events. The Garage Theatre invites older people to become volunteers in exchange for free tickets to shows. Monaghan Sports Partnership has trained 22 people as Physical Activity Leaders for active retirement and other groups around the county. However, the most successful programme of all has been the Men's Sheds, which has given older men the chance to socialise while making things of benefit to the towns and villages in Monaghan. The Men's Shed initiative was set up by the Cavan and Monaghan Enterprise and Trade Board. It continues to expand to more towns and villages across the county and there are plans to employ someone to coordinate the programme.

## What Those Involved Have to Say About Monaghan Age Friendly County Programme

Declan McKernan is a senior engineer in Monaghan County Council. He worked with planner, Seamus Furlong to make Castleyblayney an Age Friendly Town. "The Age friendly town initiative was a rare opportunity for collective thinking. The local authority, the Gardai, the VEC [now Education and Training Board], social services, HSE and various community groups came together with the Age Friendly Alliance to look at Castleblayney Town. The aim was to develop a simple and common sense approach in making Castleblayney a more accessible and easier town to get around - either for doing business or to enjoy a simple stroll.

"I sat on the steering group and it was an eye opener to learn what the real issues are for people. The walkability audit was a great success: It turned out to be a 'snag list' of what improvements could be done to the footpaths, signage, bus stops, seating and crossing points that would allow the town to become more user friendly.

However it wasn't all about concrete and kerbs, far from it, as the delivery of quality health services, feeling safe and making a meaningful contribution to community life were also key objectives. For example, giving people living in isolated areas easier access to the town through neighbourhood car schemes, getting volunteers to act as community alerts for bogus callers, considering group purchases of home heating supplies to cut down prices were all issues that were raised and addressed. [Finding opportunities for older people to interact with younger generations also became one of our goals.](#)

Having the planner, Seamus Furlong assigned to Castleblayney broke down the barriers of 'them and us' to seek a common goal. To be honest without Seamus's lead, it would be difficult to see how the initiative could have been as successful as it was. Ballybay and Clones are now in the process of following Castleblayney's approach in making their towns Age Friendly. It's an opportunity for those towns to develop a strategy that has actual achievable

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outputs that doesn't required large financial outlays. It's a chance to make all our lives a little bit better.”

Pat O'Connell, Sergeant for Cavan/Monaghan who worked on the Crime Prevention Ambassadors programme. “We identified the older people who were isolated in the county through our Older People's Register. Then we recruited volunteers through the community alert groups and the Older People's Forum in both counties. Each volunteer had to be Garda vetted before they could become a Crime Prevention Ambassador.

Then we gave the volunteers a three to four hour briefing session, explaining how they would become a local link in the community to deliver crime prevention advice. The whole initiative is in line with the Garda Older Persons Strategy which focuses on community engagement and crime prevention. The idea is that the Crime Prevention Ambassadors can feed back information to the Gardai about anti-social behaviour or where the Gardai need to patrol more. There is a lot of things that we might not be aware of.

Each Crime Prevention Ambassador is given high-vis jackets and crime prevention packs to give to the people they visit. This includes advice on how to keep your house secure, contact numbers of Gardai and other community services and panic alarms if needed. Being involved in the Age Friendly Counties programme meant that we could quickly take the lead on this project. It is currently being evaluated for potential roll-out on a national basis.”

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# Clare Age Friendly County Case Study

## Introduction

Blessed with a unique landscape and lively towns and villages on the Atlantic seaboard, County Clare is a much loved Irish county. It is a county that has lived through waves of emigration but has also experienced immigration – people settling from other European and African countries, returned emigrants and even people migrating from other parts of Ireland. County Clare relies heavily on its tourism industry – and the aeronautical industry at Shannon has given the county a special status historically which has helped the local economy hugely.

### Clare Facts & Figures

- The population of County Clare is 117,196.
- Thirteen per cent of the population is aged 65 and over (14,519).
- One in three older people live alone and another 30 per cent live in a two person household where both people are aged 65 +
- Ten per cent of the population has a disability, 36 per cent of whom are over 65.
- One in three people in Clare live in rural areas.
- Clare has moved from a predominantly agricultural county to one reliant on the aeronautical industry and the financial and technological services which have built up around it.
- Unemployment stands at 9%.

## **First Steps: How the Age Friendly Counties Programme was launched in Clare**

In 2011, Anne Connolly from the Ageing Well Network [now Age Friendly Ireland] met the County Manager in County Clare, Tom Coughlan to explain the Age Friendly Counties Programme. There was some effort made to create an Age Friendly Alliance and begin the programme with back-up through the local authority. However, it didn't quite get off the ground.

A second effort was made to kick-start the programme with a new Administrative Officer, Michael Neylon from Clare County Council. This time, the match worked because Neylon was able to provide good administration with 25 per cent of his time allocated to the Age Friendly programme. He also had a background in community development and research and crucially, he was the co-author of *Our Elders*, a study of the post-Independence generation in County Clare. Based on interviews with over 80 older people, this became the baseline study of older people in advance of the consultation process.

The Clare Age Friendly Counties programme was launched on September 27, 2011.

## **How the Strategy was developed**

Michael Neylon organised consultations with older people in five locations throughout the county between autumn of 2011 and summer 2012. "We ran a huge promotional campaign through active retirement groups, active ageing groups and met with about 20 groups and 500 people in total. The HSE also facilitated conversations with people in day and residential centres," explains Neylon. People who needed it were given free transport to attend the consultations. Over 400 people in total attended.

Neylon then put together all the concerns people raised at the consultations into what he called, the Consultation Outcome Report. He used the eight WHO themes to draw together people's comments and added very specific problems highlighted in towns and villages of County Clare. He then invited those interested to a Tea Dance in the Woodstock Hotel in Ennis in May 2012 to discuss the findings and work out which ones deserved to be prioritised. "In one area we had organised for about 150 people and 300 turned up. We set up eight tables under the WHO themes but only five were filled which in itself showed the priorities of older people in County Clare," says Neylon.

Following this second level consultation, Neylon edited the results and put together

the Clare Age Friendly Strategy, drawing on extensive national and international background information. The Clare Age Friendly Strategy was launched in September 2013 by high profile Clare hurler and television commentator and manager of the Clare hurling team, Ger Loughnane. "We decided not to provide free transport to this event in the West County Hotel, Ennis because Loughnane was already a draw for people. We had 250

rsvps but 600 people turned up," says Neylon. The County Manager, county and town mayors and representatives from the HSE and Clare Local Development Company all spoke at the launch. "We also had promotional stands from all the not-for-profit associations in County Clare which was very successful," explains Neylon. A call out to those who would like to join an Older People's Council was made on the night.

### **How the Age Friendly Alliance was formed**

In Clare, the Age Friendly Alliance was formed after the initial consultation with older people. Members included representatives from Clarecare home help providers, the Gardai, Clare Older People's Council, Caring for Carers Ireland, the Health Service Executive and Clare Community and Voluntary Forum and Clare Local Development Company, which had commissioned the Our Elders report. Gerry Kelly, retired Assistant Garda Commissioner became the independent Chair of the Clare Age Friendly Alliance when the strategy was launched in September 2013. At that time, Pat Shannon from Caring for Carers Ireland volunteered to become the Coordinator of the Implementation Group.

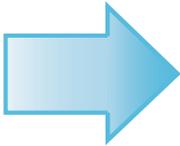
### **How the Older People's Forum was Set Up**

It took some time for the Older People's Forum to get on its feet in County Clare. This was not due to lack of enthusiasm on the part of the older people who chose to get involved. It was

however due to a lack of experience of setting up structures before doing things. "We found the structures very cumbersome. It has taken me a year to to get my head around it and my background is in nurse management. All that seemed to be happening was to form another committee," says Stella O'Gorman, Chair of the Older People's Council in Clare. She explains

how the group organised a Tea Dance and invited all the local councillors running for election in May 2014. "Almost half of the candidates turned up and they spoke for two minutes each before getting some very searching questions from the older people who attended," says O'Gorman. The group are starting work on a Trusted Tradesperson's Directory.

Michael Neylon adds that the people who joined the Older People's Council in Clare received some training from the Clare Local Development Company. This organisation also provided administrative back up for the Older People's Council and funding to get started. "They are an interesting group. They had no experience of working outside their immediate community before this and therefore found the structures and processes frustrating. That said, the Older People's Council have recently signed off on their terms of reference, having had six drafts before they agreed on them.



## **Where to From Here**

It has really only been in the first half of 2014 that the Clare Age Friendly programme is settling into its workload. "We have our senior staff from various sectors on our Alliance now. We have our Older People's Council ready to go and we have an implementation team (Service Providers Forum) made up of frontline staff from the HSE, the Gardai, the Local Authority, Caring for Carers, Clare Care and members of the newly formed Public Participation Network,"

"The key to it working is that it's a two way process. It's from the ground up and from the top down so we get support from Age Friendly Ireland yet we are driven by what people in County Clare need," says Gerry Kelly, Chair of the Clare Age Friendly Alliance. According to Kelly, what is needed most now is an awareness campaign so people in Clare know what's going on. Creating awareness among the agencies that they have common aims is also important. They are beginning to have a whole new perspective on working together. And the benefits are enormous if we get it right," says Kelly. "We have a three year plan now with 55

actions. This year is crucial as we have to set up a good working model to move forward with."

Michael Neylon adds, "My role and Gerry's role is to challenge the members of the Alliance

to identify ways that they can deliver on the things we need. *The key is to deliver on local initiatives.*" For example, Pat Shannon has undertaken to map out the various Information Technology courses available to older people in County Clare.

***"We have a three year plan now with 55 actions. This year is crucial as we have to set up a good working model to move forward with."***

At a recent Alliance meeting, it was evident that there is an appetite for collaboration. Already, the Gardai in County Clare invite members of the Older People's Council to their senior management team meetings. This allows older people to talk directly to senior gardai across the county about any issues in their areas. The Older People's Council would also like community gardai to give talks to their local groups.

The HSE also made a presentation at that meeting, explaining the future planning for primary care and home care support services

in the county. A social worker spoke poignantly on the prevalence of Elder Abuse.

Finally, Michael Neylon set himself the task of setting up a Business of Ageing Forum in County Clare. Making contact with the Chambers of Commerce and asking Age Friendly Ireland to make a presentation to local businesses is the next step required. Sarah Wetherald, the Age Friendly Ireland regional consultant said that Age Friendly Ireland can provide back up support for Neylon as he sets about this next ambitious task in a county already primed to become more age friendly.

# Louth Age Friendly County Case Study

## Introduction:

Louth is the smallest county in Ireland but its position just North of Dublin and South of County Down means that it is uniquely linked to commercial and community activity in both the Republic and Northern Ireland. The Cooley Peninsula to the East of the county has a history of sheep farming and also attracts both local and international tourists. The middle of Louth has its own strong agricultural tradition with rich pastureland and cereal crop production.

## Louth Facts and Figures

- The population of County Louth is 120,000.
- 13 per cent of the population is aged 65 and over.
- 13 per cent of the population has a disability, one third of whom are 65+.
- Dundalk and Drogheda are the two largest towns in Ireland.
- 28 per cent of people over 65 live alone, many of them in the countryside.
- Financial services and food production are the main economic activities.
- Unemployment currently stands at about 11%.

## Background

Louth holds the proud distinction of being the first Age Friendly County in Ireland. In many ways, pioneering projects led first by architect and academic, Rodd Bond in the Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT) and later embraced by Louth County Council are the seedbed for Age Friendly Ireland as it stands today.

It all started when Rodd Bond nominated Dundalk as one of 33 cities around the world to partake in the World Health Organisation Age Friendly Cities study in 2006-2007.

The age friendly cities concept encourages active ageing by identifying and improving social and environmental infrastructure to make life easier. This includes everything from ensuring people have transport to community events to putting in seats on streets and lengthening the pedestrian crossing times at traffic lights. But, the key to it all is to ask older people what they want rather than make any assumptions about what is needed.

In 2008, just as Rodd Bond was submitting his research on Dundalk to the WHO, the Ageing Well Network was being established in Dublin. The new network was searching for a pilot county to test out its approach to develop age friendly communities. "In many ways, we were an agenda looking for a structure and the Ageing Well Network [now Age Friendly Ireland] was a structure looking for an agenda," says Rodd Bond, who set up and

became Director of the Netwell Centre at DKIT as research hub for the projects.

The eight aspects of city life as defined by the WHO Global Age Friendly Cities became the eight topics to be used in all Age Friendly Counties as a starting point for consultation and the themes for the Age Friendly County Strategy.

## First Steps: How the Age Friendly Alliance was formed in Louth

As Rodd Bond became more involved – developing the Netwell Centre at DKIT as the research base for the Great Northern Haven housing project (see panel) and other age friendly initiatives, he realised he needed to get the County Council involved. He met with the then County Manager, Conn Murray who recognised the Age Friendly concept sat well with the social, economic and cultural agendas of the county.

In 2009, Conn Murray then gave responsibility for the Age Friendly County programme to Mary Deery, Administrative Officer in Louth County Council. This gave Rodd Bond both administrative back-up and a colleague with whom to bring the Age Friendly message out to the people. "The commitment from the Chief Executive is paramount. He/she is the most influential person to pull the Age Friendly Alliance together. The leadership



and support given by the Chief Executive to the Age Friendly Coordinator in delivering the programme is often the critical success factor in the county," says Mary Deery.

Louth County Council committed €25,000 to the Age Friendly Ireland County programme from 2009 to 2013 and seventy-five per cent of Mary Deery's working hours to the project. Meanwhile, Conn Murray set about making contact with senior managers in the Health Service Executive and the Gardai to build an Age Friendly Alliance in County Louth. He already had Rodd Bond and the president of DKIT ready and willing to be members of this new alliance.

The Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland also became founder members of the Age Friendly Alliance in County Louth, such was their involvement in developing the energy dimension of the Great Northern Haven housing project. The former County Louth president of the Irish Farmers Association, a member of the Irish Council for Social Housing and three members (representatives from Age Action Ireland, the nursing homes sector and Meals on Wheels) from the fledging Older People's Forum also joined the Alliance. A member of the Ageing Well Network [now Age Friendly Ireland] also joined the Alliance. Conn Murray even invited Cardinal Sean Brady into his office to discuss the programme which resulted in an openness from parish priests to have details of Age Friendly events published in parish newsletters throughout the county. "Conn Murray did a lot of this kind of rallying

of the troops for Age Friendly beyond the membership of the Alliance," says Deery.

In 2012, representatives from the Louth Leader Partnership and the Vocational Educational Committee [now the Education & Training Board] joined the Age Friendly Alliance in County Louth.

The Louth Age Friendly County programme was officially constituted at a meeting of the County Development Board [now the Local Community Development Committees] before the public launch in November 2008.

"Louth already had an integrated economic plan for the county which meant that Age Friendly could become another pillar alongside sustainable energy, foreign direct investment, cultural activities, agricultural and food production. With this recognition, the age friendly agenda becomes more central, animating all the other pillars and become embedded in the long term economic thinking of the county, it becomes the positive economics of living longer" says Rodd Bond. For instance, the Louth Economic Forum developed an Age Friendly Business Plan for the county with leadership from former IDA director, Padraic White and Rodd Bond. This group then reported back into the Age Friendly Alliance.

Adding an Age Friendly dimension was also significant in other partnerships. "Jobs, social deprivation, youth unemployment were the priorities in County Louth. The Louth Leader

programme [defunct from December 2014] and the Louth Peace Partnership didn't have older people as a target group. In one way, that became our advantage because we could write the agenda for older people on these two programmes," explains Mary Deery. The Louth

Age Friendly Alliance met in advance of the programme's official launch in the county. "We held a facilitated session to identify our core function which is to put older people at the centre of decision making," says Mary Deery.

## **How The Age Friendly Counties Programme was launched in Louth**

Rodd Bond and Mary Deery organised the official launch in the Fairways Hotel, Dundalk in November 2008. As well as introducing the programme to a wider audience, they used the occasion as an opportunity for widespread consultation around the eight WHO Age Friendly themes: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings, Transportation, Housing, Social Participation, Respect and Social Inclusion, Civic Participation and Employment, Communication and Information, Community Support and Health Services.

About 180 people attended the launch. This included older people from local community groups, representatives from local businesses, churches, the HSE and the local authorities and the Age Friendly Alliance members. As it was the first county to launch the Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme, it also attracted representatives from Dublin including the Assistant Secretary at the Department of Transport and the national representative for The Atlantic Philanthropies. All those who attended partook in the consultation.

After the official launch, Bond and Deery contacted a wide range of groups throughout the county to find out what older people wanted and needed most. "We held consultations with older people's groups in Drogheda, Dundalk, Ardee and the Cooley Peninsula. We went to talk to people in retirement villages, nursing homes and in all disability centre," explains Deery. This consultation process continued for the next year and was developed into the "Your Views" document.

## How the Older People's Forum was Set Up

In County Louth, Mary Deery and Rodd Bond organised a separate consultation process to set up the Older People's Forum. "We conducted an audit of all parishes to establish a database of older peoples groups and groups which provided NGO services to older people. On completion of the audit 4 consultation sessions were held and the constitution of the Forum was agreed to be representative covering the following sectors: Older people's groups, advocacy groups for older people, nursing homes (management and residents/relatives forum and Individuals)" says Deery.

"We were trying to get as inclusive a voice as possible and capture the diversity of that voice. We also wanted to reach the really vulnerable older people," says Bond.

At each workshop, people registered their interest in becoming members of the Older People's Forum. Mary Deery then contacted everyone to invite them to the first meeting of the Older People's Forum. She also sent out the proposed constitution of the Older People's Forum in advance of the meeting. At the first official meeting of the Older People's Forum, an Executive Committee was elected and formed.

## How the Strategy was Developed and the Working Groups Formed

Following on from the consultation with older people through the county, Mary Deery and Rodd Bond wrote the draft strategy, drawing together all the points raised by people at the consultations into the eight WHO themes. "We then held round table consultation on the draft strategy with various groups," explains Deery. The Louth Age Friendly County Programme Strategy was officially launched in November 2009 one year after the launch of the programme. It was not until August 2010 that Catherine McGuigan, the Age Friendly Regional Consultant was appointed to develop the programme in the North East. "I took the model and Mary Deery, Rodd Bond and Conn Murray taught me how to run with it," says McGuigan. Deery embraced the support of McGuigan and has remained a champion of the Age Friendly Ireland ethos ever since.

In Louth, Mary Deery set up working groups under the health, housing, transport, safety and security, information and communication and sports and activities themes. "We felt that it would be a much better use of people's time to have action-focused thematic groups which finish once the action is completed. The reality is that each problem requires an integrated response from different sectors. Having thematic working groups – rather than for example service provider's working groups allows us to span all the experiences of older people and garner responses from the various agencies," says Deery.

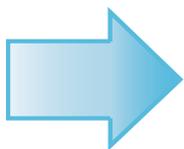
The transport, housing and communications working groups have been the most active in County Louth. In many ways, this reflects where the greatest need was felt in the county. "The main objective is to see the implementation of the strategy so some of them have a finite group of things to achieve," says Deery. "So, for instance, once we agreed on our branding and developed our website, the communications group disbanded.

We had some difficulty with the health working group due to changes in personnel within the Health Service Executive," explains Deery. Annual reports were produced in 2010 and 2011.

Andy Cullen is the Chair of the Transport Working Group of the Louth Age Friendly

County programme. He is also Chair of a regional transport group. He believes the county has the transport capacity to meet the needs of the people but it's just a question of getting the services/volunteers to the right people at the right time.

"We are not reforming Irish society from the top down. It's a bottom up approach within County Louth. The key questions are: Can we make a difference to people's lives at a local community level? Can we meet the transport needs of older people in County Louth? Recent changes in the National Transport Authority of Ireland has prompted Cullen to push for representatives from Louth Age Friendly Alliance on new regional committees which will develop routes to hospitals, day centres, town centres, etc.



## Where To From Here: The First Review of Louth Age Friendly Counties Programme

The first review of the Age Friendly Strategy in County Louth was held in January 2013. "We had consolidated what is being done for older people within the HSE, the Gardai and the local authority but we realised that we needed to create greater awareness of what we are doing," says Deery. Changing personnel with both the local authority and the HSE slowed down progress in some working groups. "We need the HSE to re-commit to the original actions and this has been a challenge for us since we started," she adds.

"In some ways, we are still struggling to further develop the idea of multi-agency collaboration as the way forward to find solutions," says Bond. "You need to be creative and open within your area and encourage other people to also be creative and open before you can find solutions. While we may not have joined-up thinking yet at national level, it is beginning to emerge at local level."

"The first strategy looked at low-hanging fruit that the different agencies could do more easily," says Rodd Bond. "Our second strategy will have to look at real shifts in how services are run for older people. We have to ask ourselves though whether we would be having these conversations at all if Age Friendly Ireland didn't exist"

"At the end of the day, the Age Friendly County programme is an opportunity and a space for dialogue, collaboration [to problem solve] and an emerging connectivity [to find solutions]," says Bond.

He sees the programme as being more successful with agencies that have a county by county structure (eg the Gardai) but less successful with agencies whose management straddle several counties. "With the on-going re-design of our health system at all levels, there is a need for greater flexibility to accommodate continuous changes within the organisation of our health services partners. In relation to health, the future lies in strengthening the links and co-ordination between home, community and hospital-based services, centred on

personal empowerment and choice. Regional collaborations between adjoining Age Friendly counties, can be a very effective mechanism to address both quality and scale." says Bond.

However Bond believes the fact that the Age Friendly Counties programme is not legally part of the County Council structure is an advantage. "I think if it was legally dictated, the spirit through which it operates would be undermined," says Bond.

Looking into the future, Bond suggests that in five years time there will be a different level of awareness and attitude about Age Friendly initiatives. "You shouldn't need the specialised structures anymore because age-awareness and acceptance will be embedded into everyone's thinking and actions. The implications for older people is that they will no longer be seen as a marginalised group - as we address an inclusive society for all ages." [The key learning for everyone, according to Bond is that older people themselves should be the first point of call on everything not a technical guide or a book.](#)

## **Louth Age Friendly County Initiatives**

### **The Great Northern Haven:**

A purpose built block of 16 apartments in a regenerated area close to the town centre, the aim of this project is to incorporate adaptations – many of them technological – to

allow people to live in their homes as long as possible. To this end, the apartments in the Great Northern Haven have multiple sensors to detect if individuals fall or require help. The project is part of a long term research project based in the Netwell Centre in DKIT.

### **Cultaca:**

These two fulltime employees of the Netwell Centre in DKIT are unique facilitators for older people in County Louth. Their role is one of enabler rather than doer. Based on a Dutch model, the Cultaca offer whatever support an older person says he/she needs. This can mean anything from finding out about and applying for social welfare entitlements to organising transport to a bingo session. The Cultaca has built up a team of 50 volunteers to visit larger numbers of older people. The Cultaca programme is funded by The Atlantic Philanthropies and the HSE and is part of the Nestling research project at the Netwell Centre. [www.netwellcentre.org](http://www.netwellcentre.org)

### **The Men's Sheds:**

Now a countrywide phenomenon, the Men's Sheds flourished in County Louth with financial support from the International Fund for Ireland. The International Fund for Ireland paid the salary of one administrator

who oversees the organisational work with three volunteers. One hundred and fifty men use the Men's Sheds in Dundalk, Drogheda and the Cooley Peninsula.

### **Good Morning Louth:**

Supported by the HSE and the Netwell Centre, Good Morning Louth is a free confidential telephone service for people over 65. Its aim is to check in on people to make sure they are safe and well. There is a system which alerts a neighbour or family member if the call is not answered. It is staffed by local trained volunteers, many of whom are retired themselves. Older people who use the service, can choose to receive calls whatever day and time they decide.

### **Ardee Age Friendly Town:**

Ardee was the first age friendly town in Ireland. Businesses, service providers and older people were interviewed in 2010 by a planner to see what was needed to make Ardee more age friendly. The Louth Older People's Forum made a submission to Louth County Council during the production of the Ardee Area Development Plan. New bus stops, new benches, longer pedestrian lights and a new walkway between a retirement community and the main street were installed.



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# Appendices

## Templates

- Set Up
- Consultation
- Planning
- Implementation



## **Chapter 1 Set Up**

Sample Letter Asking to Join the Age Friendly Alliance\*

Sample Letter Thanking Someone for Agreeing to Join the Age Friendly Alliance\*

Age Friendly Alliance - Terms of Reference

Sample of Agenda of First Alliance Meeting\*

Example of an Invitation to the Launch of an Age Friendly Programme  
'Invitation to Cavan Age Friendly Launch '

Example of Material for Distribution at Launch Age Friendly  
Launch Brochure

Example of Speeches From the Launch of the Age Friendly Programme  
'Speech by Cllr. John Sheahan',  
'Speech by Cllr Leddin At Age Friendly Event' in Limerick

Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme Branding Guidelines

\* In Chapter 1



## **Sample Terms of Reference for Age friendly Alliance:**

The Age Friendly City/County Alliance is a strategic partnership for the county that brings together the statutory, private, voluntary and community sectors to create new initiatives and services and enhance those that already exist for older people in their communities. The key of the Age Friendly Alliance is the cross-sector co-operation to find ways to improve the lives of older people in terms of their health, their housing, their social and personal wellbeing in their communities. When different sectors come together, a new synergy can be created so that services support each other rather than compete and new models can be developed that are both cost-effective and life-enhancing.

The role of the Age Friendly Alliance is to develop and implement an Age Friendly City/County Strategy. Its members include the heads of all key groups and organisations who share a common commitment to make a great county for all its citizens to grow old in. They have been selected on the basis of having the influence and resources to be able to develop and deliver an Age Friendly County Strategy.

The Age Friendly Alliance is often the first time that such a wide range of partners work together for the benefit of older adults. It is hoped that the richness of their experiences will bring a fresh approach to shaping the Age Friendly Strategy and working on an Action Plan to commit to necessary changes identified in the strategy

### **The benefits that this Alliance can bring will be to:**

- Bring together partners who do not normally work together to achieve more than they can achieve alone for the older people of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Coordinate and simplify existing partnerships and strategies where necessary.
- Enable fresh opportunities to be identified

### **Objectives**

#### **The objectives of the Age Friendly Alliance are to:**

- Make\_\_\_\_\_ the best possible place to grow old in so that it becomes a desirable location, enjoyed and appreciated by older people and their families for its great quality of life.



- Increase the participation of older people in the social, economic and cultural life of the community, for everyone's benefit.
- Lead the way in demonstrating the processes that are required, the benefits to be gained and lessons to be learned from implementing an age friendly initiative. This sharing of information as the programme develops is hugely important.
- Encourage others to develop supports and services which are more responsive, caring, professional and accessible to older people. The model of working in cooperation with all agencies and local communities is the most important aspect to promote.

## **Meetings**

- The Alliance shall meet a minimum of four times a year
- Ideally meetings should be scheduled for the year to ensure full attendance.
- The quorum at all meetings of the Alliance shall be 50% of the full membership. If at any time, there is not a quorum present, the meeting shall not proceed.

## **Alliance principles**

**The Alliance is based upon the principles of opportunity, inclusion, participation, equality, seeking to:**

- Achieve the full potential of \_\_\_\_\_ as an Age Friendly City/County whilst enhancing the richness of our history and environment.
- Recognise and celebrate the many opportunities for \_\_\_\_\_ as an Age Friendly City/County.
- Ensure a better quality of life for older people in \_\_\_\_\_ now and for generations to come.
- Have a shared commitment to the concept of an Age Friendly City/County
- Recognise that this is a process resulting in action and change
- Have an awareness of the potential to save money when agencies work together to deliver services to older people



**The Cavan Age Friendly Alliance would like to cordially invite you to attend its launch event**

The Cavan Age Friendly Alliance is a partnership of senior representatives of public sector agencies, older people's representatives and other organisations who are working together to develop Cavan as an age-friendly county.

**Friday 20 April 2012**

**Cavan Crystal Hotel**

10.30 am	Tea and coffee on arrival
11 am	Event starts
1–2 pm	Lunch
2-3 pm	Consultation session with older people

Speakers will include Jack Keyes (Cavan County Manager), Catherine McGuigan (North East Age Friendly Initiative), Leo Kinsella (Health Service Executive), Sean Kilbride (GAA Social Inclusion Initiative) and Bob Gilbert (Cavan 050 Network).

To book a place at this event please contact Emer Coveney in Cavan County Council on (049) 437 8581 or email [siu@cavancoco.ie](mailto:siu@cavancoco.ie)  
Alternatively, contact Iris O'Callaghan in Breffni Integrated on (049) 433 1029 (Ext. 1) or email [locallaghan@breffniint.ie](mailto:locallaghan@breffniint.ie)



The **Cavan Age Friendly Alliance**  
is made up of the following organisations:



Cavan Over 50s  
Network



Department of Health



North East Age-  
Friendly Initiative



Gaelic Athletics Association



Féidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Health Service Executive

Health Service Executive



Cavan Local Authorities



An Garda Síochána



County Cavan Vocational  
Education Committee



The Netwell Centre



The Ageing Well Network



**The Cavan Age Friendly Alliance members are:**

An Garda Síochána



Cavan Local Authorities



Cavan Over 50s Network



Co Cavan Vocational Education Committee



Department of Health



Gaelic Athletics Association



Health Service Executive



North East Age Friendly Alliance



The Ageing Well Network



The Netwell Centre



Secretariat: Social Inclusion Unit  
Community and Enterprise  
Cavan County Council  
Courthouse, Cavan  
Telephone (049) 437 8581  
Email [siu@cavancoco.ie](mailto:siu@cavancoco.ie)



**Welcome to the launch of the  
County Cavan Age Friendly Initiative  
Friday 20 April 2012  
Cavan Crystal Hotel**

“You are never too old to set another goal  
or to dream a new dream.”

C.S. Lewis





## Cavan Age Friendly Initiative

The Cavan Age Friendly Alliance is a partnership of senior public sector decision-makers, older people's representatives and other organisations who are committed to delivering on actions that will make County Cavan age-friendly.

“An age-friendly city encourages active ageing by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age. In practical terms, an age-friendly city adapts its structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of older people with varying needs and capacities.”

**World Health Organization**

This initiative has largely been prompted at local level by the work of the Cavan 050 Network, whose members have been involved in research and other projects since 2008 to identify and address older people's issues in Cavan.

## Regional and Global Context

Nationally and globally, the proportion of older people in our population is growing. According to the World Health Organization, the number of people aged 60 and over as a proportion of the global population will double from 11% in 2006 to 22% by 2050. By then, there will be more older people than children (aged 0–14 years) in the population for the first time in human history.

Now is the time to take steps to ensure that our communities are fully inclusive of older people.

## Areas of Work

Cavan's age friendly work will be delivered with reference to the World Health Organization's guidelines for age-friendly cities, which are based around the eight themes of:

- 1 Outdoor Spaces and Public Buildings
- 2 Transportation
- 3 Housing
- 4 Respect and Social Inclusion
- 5 Social Participation
- 6 Communication and Information
- 7 Civic Participation and Employment
- 8 Community Support and Health Services

## Our commitment to including older people

The Cavan Age friendly Alliance recognises that older people are a resource for their communities, rather than a burden on society. Older people have much to contribute socially, economically and culturally.

In seeking to create an age-friendly county, the Alliance members are giving a formal commitment to improving the social inclusion of older people in Cavan.

A detailed strategy will be published later in 2012, outlining specific projects to achieve our goal of an age friendly Cavan.





# **Speech By Cllr. John Sheahan, Cathaoirleach of Limerick County Council at Age Friendly Event**

## **Mayor, Manager, A Chairde Go Léir,**

It's not often that we see such a cross section of the community as we have here today represented at a single event. I think it's fantastic that all the main agencies and people from every corner of Limerick have turned up for the launch of the Limerick Age Friendly Programme.

Personally, I am delighted to be able to represent my fellow Members of Limerick County Council and of course, the people of County Limerick here in Adare this afternoon.

I am already on record in pledging my support for the initiative that we have gathered here today to launch. The Limerick Age Friendly Programme is being developed in the context of the growing international awareness of the need to plan for an ageing population. Since 1950, for example, the average life expectancy at birth increased by 20 years globally and by 10 years in Europe where it is expected to increase a further 10 years by 2050.

Despite having one of the youngest populations in Europe, CSO figures show that the percentage of Ireland's population aged 65 years or over increased by 14.4 per cent between 2006 and 2011. Closer to home, the average age of a person living in Limerick in 2006 was 35.6 years of age in 2006 compared to 36.5 years of age just five years later in 2011.

Furthermore, the number of people aged 65 years or over in Limerick City and County in 2011 was 12.2% compared to the national average of 11.7%.

It is clear, therefore, that the roll out of the Limerick Age Friendly Programme is both urgent and timely. As life expectancy increases the onus is on society to adapt in a manner that provides older people with the physical, economic and cultural opportunities to ensure they enjoy the best quality of life.

All the great societies of the world down through history have placed great value on the wisdom and life experience that their elders brought to their communities.



The development of an Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan in Limerick must be reflective of the positive contribution that a healthier and more active ageing population can make to our community and our society in general.

By having the key statutory, and community not-for-profit organisations working together, we can achieve our objectives.

Of course, the period of community consultation that will take place across the city and county in the coming weeks and months will dictate the nature and scale of the final strategy that is developed.

During this consultation period, the Limerick Age Friendly Alliance will be tasked with finding out what projects are currently working well in Limerick and what the key issues are facing people as they age.

Most importantly, the Alliance – comprising many of you gathered here today – will be looking at how organisations and communities can work better together to create a more age friendly environment for all.

Ireland's ageing population will present a huge challenge for society if we do not collectively address the issue now.

By signing up to Ireland's national Age-friendly Cities and Counties programme (AFCC), a scheme that promotes inclusiveness and

partnership - Limerick is committing itself to establishing a City and County where older people can live full, active and healthy lives.

At the end of this public consultation process, we will be well placed to draft an Action Plan and Strategy that outlines how Limerick can set about declaring itself as an Age Friendly Community. That is a community that gives all people a real say in what happens in their own lives and what happens in the areas in which they live.

It was once said that any society will be judged by how it looks after its elderly and other vulnerable groups.

As Cathaoirleach of Limerick County Council, I would urge all of you present here this afternoon to play your part in getting communities throughout Limerick to participate in the forthcoming consultation process.

An age friendly community benefits people of all ages and makes Limerick a better place to live in.

I look forward to progress being made in this regard during the next few months.

Thank you."

**Cllr. John Sheahan**  
**Cathaoirleach, Limerick County Council**



## **Speech by Cllr Leddin at Age Friendly Event**

### **“Cathaoirleach, Manager, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am delighted to be able to join you in Adare this afternoon.

This gathering marks the beginning of a process that will see a coordinated approach being adopted by Limerick organisations and communities to creating a more age friendly society.

This is something I very much welcome not only as Mayor of Limerick but also as a citizen who is conscious of the responsibility of the powers that be to cater for all members of our local community.

It's heartening to see so many organisations and sections of the community represented here today.

This excellent turnout will give us all confidence as we seek to join the growing international movement towards creating age friendly communities.

I know, as a long time public representative, that collaboration amongst key agencies and communities is key to delivering a comprehensive and effective strategy of this nature.

I am particularly delighted to see that Limerick City & County Council is playing a central role in its development.

As Mayor of Limerick, I am very proud of what Local Government has achieved for the City and County.

Despite the fiscal constraints faced by the local authority, the level and quality of services provided to the public has been largely maintained.

The level of engagement with communities the length and breadth of Limerick also remains central to the Council's policy making process and overall delivery of services.

I urge all of you here today to adopt this form of public engagement and consultation as you seek to develop an age friendly programme.

The main question we need to ask and discuss today is: What can we do to make Limerick a more age friendly county?



I know that the World Health Organisation defines an "age friendly" community as one in which service providers, public officials, community, and business leaders and citizens promote the inclusion and contribution of older persons in all areas of community life.

To develop an age friendly community we must first examine the physical, social and cultural environment in which our older citizens live in.

By doing so, particularly through the public consultation process that will begin in the New Year, we will be able to move closer to developing an age friendly community, policies, programmes, services and infrastructure.

The Limerick Age Friendly Alliance that has been established will be the driving force behind this Programme.

Your spirit of collaboration and cooperation will be crucial over the course of the Programme.

Once again, and on behalf of the people of Limerick City I want to congratulate you all for attending today's event as by doing so you have expressed your support for the establishment of a more age friendly environment for all.

A rapid growth in the ageing population across the world represents one of mankind's greatest triumphs, but it also puts an onus on society to put in place a programme and the structures to deal with such a seismic change.

Here in Limerick, at least, we are working towards developing such a programme.

Go n'eiri libh agus go raibh maith agaibh."

**Cllr. Kathleen Leddin**  
**Mayor of Limerick**



## Branding Guidelines

Age Friendly Ireland has developed a brand that represents the Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme which is clear, colourful and relates to the core objective of the programme.

The brand comprises an image of 8 coloured petals, each one representing a theme of the WHO Age Friendly Cities Network - 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. The brand also includes the tagline: To make Ireland one of the best countries in the world to grow old in. This tagline encapsulates the aim of the programme and complements the visual element of the brand. This image and tagline combined create a most impactful brand that is gaining recognition across the country at speed.

## Logos

Once agreement has been reached to adopt the programme, each county will receive its own Age Friendly County logo for use throughout the lifetime of the programme. (See sample county logo below)



The Age Friendly Cities and County logo (see above) should appear on all materials produced under the auspices of the programme, i.e. Consultation documentation, Strategy document, Alliance, Older People's Council, Business of Ageing, Service Providers Forum meeting documentation. The logo should also appear on materials directly linked to the programme, or entered into in collaboration with other partner organisations in the area.

All logos are designed centrally in the interest of maintaining brand consistency across the programme. Guidelines for the use of logos are available from the Age Friendly Ireland head office. A generic 'Ireland's Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme' logo is available for use for initiatives or publications which are not specific to the programme in one county (see above).



## **Chapter 2: Consultation**

Sample Letter Inviting People to the Consultation\*

Sample Poster for Advertising the Consultation\*

On Street Age Friendly Questionnaire

Facilitators Sample Consultation Questionnaire

Sample Recording Sheet Template for Consultation

Template for Recording Consultation Results

Expressions of Interest for Older Peoples Council

Report on Leitrim Age Friendly Consultation Results\*

Consultation Outcomes Report from Clare - see web

\* In Chapter 2

Recommendation for Future Consultation



# On Street Age Friendly Questionnaire

## How good is your town for older people?

Hello I am with the Age Friendly Programme. This programme wants to help improve the quality of life for people living in towns in Ireland. As part of this we need people to tell us what it is like to live in and use this town. I have a short questionnaire and I wonder if you would help me by spending ten minutes telling me your views on the town.

You don't have to answer all the questions and you may stop at any time. Any information we collect will be treated confidentially.

## Would you be willing to take part?

Yes

No

## 1. Are you male or female?

Male

Female

(planner complete)

## 2. Which of the following statements most applies to you?

I live in the town.

I visit and use the services in the town regularly, at least once a month.

I rarely visit the town, or this is my first time here.

## \*\*\*FINISH AND THANK YOU FOR TAKING PART\*\*\*

## 3. It is important for us to understand the issues for people of different ages, so I hope you don't mind me asking which of the following groups includes your age?

55 to 59

60 to 64

65 to 74

75 to 84

85 +

(Tilda & Census 2011)



#### 4. How is your health in general?

Excellent  
(Tilda)

Very Good

Good

Fair

Poor

#### 5. How would you rate your quality of life?

Very poor  
(Slan 02, Slan 07)

Poor

Neither good nor poor

Good

Very good

6. TOWN CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

7. Interviewer's name: \_\_\_\_\_

**For the following statements could you please tell me whether you agree or disagree with them? You also have the option to answer don't know or not applicable, if needed.**

	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know	N/A
<b>8. Lead healthier and active lives for longer</b>				
I am able to access good quality GP services.				
There are fitness and exercise classes I could take part in, if I wanted.				
The cost of any healthcare I need is not a problem.				
I find it easy to get enough exercise most days.				
Note any comments or strongly expressed feelings on this topic:				



	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know	N/A
<b>9. Stay living in our own homes and communities</b>				
I am confident I will get the supports I need to stay living in my home as I get older.				
My home could be easily adapted to my needs as I grow older.				
There is a good sense of community in this area.				
Note any comments or strongly expressed feelings on this topic:				
<b>10. Get to where we need to go when we need to</b>				
Transport wise it is easy for me to get into the town centre.				
Public transport gets me where I need to go.				
It is easy to find parking near the town centre.				
The price I pay for parking can stop me coming into town.				
I am happy with the standard of bus stops in town.				
Note any comments or strongly expressed feelings on this topic:				
<b>11. Be enabled by the built and social environment</b>				
I am happy with the number of public benches and rest areas in the town.				



The footpaths are well maintained in this town.				
The street lighting is good in this town.				
Cars parking on footpaths can be a problem.				
There are well-maintained green spaces in the area.				
I am happy with the public toilets in this town. *(CODE N/A IF NO PUBLIC TOILETS)				
There aren't any good places to go for walks in the town.				

Note any comments or strongly expressed feelings on this topic:

## **12. Feel and be safe at home and out and about.**

I would feel safe to go walking in my neighbourhood after dark.				
I am happy with the Garda presence in this area.				
I know what to do to stay safe in my own home.				
I worry a lot about being a victim of crime.				
I feel safe alone in my home at night.				

Note any comments or strongly expressed feelings on this topic:



	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know	N/A
<b>13. Have the information we need to live full lives.</b>				
If I wanted to, I would find it easy to find out about local events that are happening.				
It is difficult to find out what services and entitlements I am eligible for.				
I have used services, like the library or citizen's advice office, to find information in the past year.				
I use the internet to find information.				
Note any comments or strongly expressed feelings on this topic:				
<b>14. Be truly valued and respected</b>				
I think the businesses in this town make an effort to make older people feel welcome.				
I don't have enough opportunities to interact with younger people.				
Older people are given opportunities to contribute to the community.				
Note any comments or strongly expressed feelings on this topic:				



	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know	N/A
<b>15. Participate in social, economic and public life</b>				
There are opportunities for me to volunteer, if I want to.				
The town has most of the shops and services I need.				
This area has enough clubs and societies to participate in.				
There are plenty of possibilities to be able to mix with other people in this town.				
It would be a benefit to me if there was a drop-in centre for older people to meet and socialise in. *(CODE N/A IF A DROP-IN CENTRE ALREADY)				
Note any comments or strongly expressed feelings on this topic:				
<b>16. Continue to learn, develop and work.</b>				
If I wanted to continue learning, there are courses available to me.				
Note any comments or strongly expressed feelings on this topic:				
*may already be one in the specific town and record as agree if using it.				
<b>17. Now we are almost finished. Can you tell me what you think the town does best for older people?</b>				
<b>18. Could you now tell me what the town could do better?</b>				
<b>Thank you very much for helping with this research</b>				



# **Facilitators Sample Consultation Questionnaire**

## **Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme Guide for Facilitators at Consultations**

Outlined below are the key areas we would like to hear your views on today and there is an extra category for anything you may wish to add that is of importance to you.

Underneath each heading are some suggestions on points for discussion, please feel free to include other points or ignore any points which you have no views on. Thank you for taking the time to discuss these aspects of everyday living.

### **The Questions**

We would ask you to take 40 minutes to discuss as a group the topics and answer the following 4 questions under each topic:

1. What works well in XXX?
2. What improvements could be made in XXX?
3. What can you yourself do to improve XXX?
4. What can others do to improve XXX?

### **Round Table Arrangements**

You will meet a facilitator at your table who will help you work through the topic questions and keep to time. There will also be a person with flipchart there to record your views. In the last five minutes of the consultation, the facilitator will ask you to prioritise the three most important things that would make XXX an Age Friendly County.



## **1. Physical Environment, Outdoor Spaces, Public Services, Transport**

- How accessible are the public spaces where you live? – eg is the street lighting strong enough? Is there adequate public seating and clean, even pavements?
- Are there safe public transport/pedestrian routes to parks and gardens?
- Do you have information on and input into Town Planning?
- Do you have access to good quality consumer goods and services?
- Do you feel safe where you live and when out and about in your community?

## **2. Transportation**

- Is there adequate public transport and car parking in your town/village?
- Is the traffic flow manageable? For example, is there time allowed for crossing at traffic lights/pedestrian crossings?
- Is public transport affordable? Is there clear information on timetables, etc?
- Is there adequate public transport at the weekend?
- Are there good connections between local towns and villages?
- Are the rural transport services/city services adequate?

## **3. Home**

- Do you wish to remain in your home when you are less mobile and in need of support?
- Do you have access to quality supported and sheltered housing?
- Is there access to residential homes for those who need them?
- Is there access to nursing homes for those who need them?
- Is there access to home supports and home help for those who need them?
- Are there affordable housing options for those who need them?



#### **4. Social Participation**

- Are you able to attend local events and activities?
- Can you afford to attend local events and activities?
- Are you kept up to date on what's on, when and where?
- Are you happy with the range of events?
- Are the activities and events held in local amenities?
- Is there sufficient outreach to those who are isolated?

#### **5. Respect and Social Inclusion**

- Are you asked your views on what public, voluntary and commercial services exist in your area?
- Do the services and products that exist suit you?
- Are staff members courteous and helpful?
- Is the profile of older people in local media positive or negative?
- Are there intergenerational opportunities in your community?
- Is there educational awareness on ageing?
- Is there recognition of older people in the community?

#### **6. Civic Participation and Employment**

- Are there opportunities for older people to set up businesses?
- Are there opportunities for older people to remain working after 65 if they so wish?
- Are there opportunities for flexible working?
- Is there information on income and entitlements?
- Are there opportunities for volunteering and mentoring?



## **7. Communication and Information**

- Do you know what's going on in your county?
- Is information about public service widely available?
- Is information about voluntary services easy to get?
- Does the media (local papers, radio, etc?) have useful bulletins on local events/activities?
- Does your local library have up to date range of leaflets/information on all the above?
- Are telephone answering services automated?
- Have you got all the information you need re citizens/consumer rights?
- Have you access to internet services and can you use them?
- Are you kept up to date on the Age Friendly programme?

## **8. Community Support and Health Services**

- Are there local initiatives to promote healthy living?
- What facilities and supports exist for older people living with chronic health conditions?
- Have you access to good quality health care facilities and services in your local community?
- Have you access to good hospital services in the county?



# Template for Recording Consultation Results

Facilitator: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel No \_\_\_\_\_

Recorder: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel No \_\_\_\_\_

Venue: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

How many in group? \_\_\_\_\_

Gender balance \_\_\_\_\_

## **Topics discussed: please tick (check order is same throughout)**

Physical Environment, Outdoor Spaces and buildings

Transportation

Home

Social Participation

Respect and Social inclusion

Civic Participation and Employment

Communication and Information

Community Support and Health Services



**What works well in XXX?** *Please head each column*


**What improvements could be made in XXX?** *Please head each column*


**What can you yourself do to improve XXX?** *Please head each column*


**What can others do to improve XXX?** *Please head each column*


Please record any issues that came up that were not dealt with or any comments about the process and level of discussion that was achieved:

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**Thank you for recording this session- please ensure that this record sheet is handed to a meeting organiser at the end of the consultation.**



# Older People's Council Expression of Interest Form

I \_\_\_\_\_ would like to express my interest in finding out more about the development of the Older People's Council in Sligo.

I \_\_\_\_\_ would like to be part of the information network for the county and receive information on relevant programmes and projects under the Age Friendly Initiative.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Townland: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Chapter 3: Planning**

Template of an Agenda for the Older People's Council\*

Sample Press Release for Launches of the Older Persons Council\*

Example of a Working Document to Inform Debate to Develop a Draft Strategy – County Leitrim Age Friendly Alliance

Sample Press Release for Launching Age Friendly Strategy\*

Dublin City Council – Age Friendly Strategy 2014 – 2019 – see web

\* In Chapter 3



## **Chapter 4: Implementation**

Sample Agenda for Age Friendly Strategy Review\*

Sample Agenda for Age Friendly Alliance\*

Older People's Council - Terms of Reference

Business of Ageing Forum - Terms of Reference

Service Providers Forum - Terms of Reference

Sample Terms of Reference for a Thematic Working Group –  
Cavan Monahan Example Transport Working Group

Implementation Group Sample Terms of Reference

\* In Chapter 4



# Older People's Council – Terms of Reference

## Aim

The Older Peoples Council is, in many ways, the key group of the Age Friendly Counties Programme. It brings the concerns and experiences of older people to the Alliance and the voice of older people to the decision making process of the Age Friendly Initiative throughout the City/County.

## Purpose of the group:

- Ensure that older people in ----- participate in the decisions which affect their lives.
- Provide an active channel of communication between the Older Peoples Council and the Age Friendly Initiative.
- Provide the opportunity to comment on and influence Age Friendly City/County strategies, plans and projects.
- To work cooperatively and represent the views of older people at local, regional and national level
- Identify and inform key actions for implementation with the Age Friendly City/County Alliance and strive to achieve a number of the objectives in the Age Friendly City/County Strategy as a Council.
- Monitor the arrangements across the county in relation to implementation of the Age Friendly City or County Strategy.
- To represent the views of older people, and keep older people up to date on key Age Friendly County initiatives and structures.



### **Membership of the Council:**

Membership will be made up of individuals and group representatives who submit a membership form and will be representative of the city or county as a whole; both rural and urban and strive to achieve a gender balance across the county.

### **Executive Membership:**

The Chair of the Group should be:

- Independent of the agencies involved with the Age Friendly Alliance.
- Elected by members of the committee and re-appointed bi-annually
- Supported by a formally elected vice chair (who must likewise be independent of the agencies involved with the Age Friendly Programme)

### **The Chair is responsible for:**

- Chairing both the Older People's Council and the Executive of the Older People's Council.
- Ensuring the needs of all ages are addressed through the agenda and conduct of the meeting
- Facilitating consensus decision making amongst members as best as possible.
- Representing the collective views of the Older People's Council on the Age Friendly City/ County Alliance.



### **Public Relations Officer role:**

- Work with the Steering Group of the Age Friendly Alliance to ensure regular articles are put into local paper.
- Ensure there is a section on the Executive meeting agenda to gather news and events from around the City/County regarding activities for older peoples.
- Work with local news paper to make this section more user friendly for older people.
- Ensure local media outlets are used to provide positive and interesting information with regard to older people.
- Keep information leaflet up-dated.

### **Secretariat:**

The secretariat will be provided by the Age Friendly City/County Alliance – the purpose of the Secretariat is to:

- Build, maintain and support the Older Peoples Council.
- Take responsibility for general administration for meetings, booking venues, preparation of minutes, agenda etc to the Chair for approval.
- Executive Committee of the Older Peoples Council

### **Purpose of the Executive:**

- To actively organise meetings and ensure widespread participation within the county.
- To organise annual general meeting(s) and ensure all members receive updates and information in relation to the Age Friendly City/County Initiative.



### **Membership of Executive:**

- The Chair, Vice Chair and PRO will be core members of the Executive.
- The Chairperson will convene meetings with the support of the Steering group secretariat.
- Interested parties may be co-opted onto the Executive in relation to specific projects and if the full group is in agreement.
- The appropriate number of Executive members ranges from 12 to 20 members, depending on the population of the county and other relevant considerations.

### **Meetings:**

- Meetings of the full Council will take place at least once a year.
- Meeting agendas to be sent out prior to the meeting for comment by members.
- The Chairperson can convene a meeting outside of the bi-annual meetings if deemed necessary.
- The Executive will meet at least four times per year.

### **Terms of office:**

- Members of the Executive will serve a term of 2 years to ensure that there is consistency in work undertaken for a period of time.
- Members can serve two terms consecutively if re-elected.
- At the end of this term, all of the Executive Committee members will step down and the Forum will nominate new Members.
- If a Member fails to attend two meetings of the Executive without giving notice he/she will face automatic removal from the Executive.

**Quorum** - half the membership plus one.



# Business of Ageing Forum – Terms of Reference

## Background

Europe's ageing population is an economic and social opportunity. By 2020, 25% of the EU's population will be over 65. Older Europeans will be healthy and active for longer and they will participate in employment/voluntary work for longer.

The Business of Ageing Forum is an informal partnership of like minded businesses working together to create a positive action plan for a sustainable age friendly business environment throughout \_\_\_\_\_ City/County.

## Purpose

The Purpose of the Age Friendly Business Forum is:

- To create a business leadership group that will inform and engage with the Age Friendly County Strategy on relevant economic matters.
- To create a shared business and economic vision of \_\_\_\_\_ as an Age Friendly County
- To cooperate with other local and national agencies to maximise an age friendly business environment which delivers high quality services to the older consumer
- To ensure an effective, integral link with \_\_\_\_\_ businesses and all supporting agencies.
- To develop new and enhance existing services and products aimed at encouraging older people to take up services, to visit, to work and to live in \_\_\_\_\_
- To make \_\_\_\_\_ a great place to grow old in, enjoyed and appreciated by everyone for its quality of life.

## Opportunities/Scope

The Business of Ageing Forum will explore all the potential opportunities and agree an action plan for specific members to pursue.



These may include:

- Senior Enterprise, Entrepreneurship & Employment
- Indigenous opportunities: 'Age-aware' businesses throughout the County
- FDI opportunities - Technologies for 'longer living'
- Collaboration between the public and private business support organisations and among businesses themselves.
- Development of an Age Friendly Business Charter for use by all approved members
- Creation an older consumer panel in collaboration with The Older People's Council that will inform the action plan on an ongoing basis.
- Devise an agreed cross sector business plan over the short, medium and long term

### **Membership of the Forum**

Membership is open to all businesses operating in the County. Members must be interested in developing as an Age Friendly Business.

Members will commit time and resources to achieving the aims of the Forum

### **Structure**

The Business of Ageing Forum will:

- Establish a Forum Executive which will comprise of a Chairperson and Secretary and will have a membership that is representative of cross sector of services and business groups
- The Forum Chair will sit on the Economic Forum and will represent the Business of Ageing Forum
- Task Groups will be formed in order to achieve specific aims of the Forum in relation to industry specific initiatives and representatives from the broader group will be invited to work on these task groups
- Economic Forum (subject to resource availability) will issue the minutes and agenda in advance of each meeting and provide secretariat support when required
- The Chairperson will be elected annually by the members and must be a representative of the business community and sit on the forum representing a business interest.



# Service Providers Forum – Terms of Reference

## Purpose

The \_\_\_\_\_ Age Friendly Alliance is a strategic partnership for the county of \_\_\_\_\_ that brings together the statutory, private, voluntary and community sectors; so that different initiatives and services support each other, working together to more effectively meet the needs and aspirations of older people in \_\_\_\_\_ through the development of the Age Friendly Strategy.

The role of the Alliance is to develop and implement a \_\_\_\_\_ Age Friendly Strategy. Its members include the heads of all key groups and organisations who share a common commitment to make \_\_\_\_\_ a great county for all its citizens to grow old in. They have been selected on the basis of having the influence and resources to be able to develop and deliver an Age-Friendly County Strategy.

This will be the first time that such a wide range of partners will have worked together for the benefit of older adults in \_\_\_\_\_. It is hoped that the richness of their experiences will bring a fresh approach to shaping the Strategy and Action Plan.

The benefits that this Alliance can bring will be to:

- Bring together partners who do not normally work together to achieve more than they can achieve alone for the older people of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Coordinate and simplify existing partnerships and strategies where necessary.
- Enable fresh opportunities to be identified

## Context:

Age Friendly Ireland believes that when the needs and wishes of older people are known, much can be done to significantly improve services and supports without substantial additional cost. Local authorities and providers from all sectors can forge new partnerships which will align and mutually reinforce their services, identify and fill gaps, and minimise duplication.



## **Terms of Reference**

In carrying out its work as a Forum representing service providers to older people, the Forum will aim to:

### **Share information about service provision and plan service provision in a more linked-up, integrated way in order to optimise the use of resources**

The Forum will ensure that service roll-out and, in particular, any new service developments are fully informed of the current range of services delivered, to ensure that, over time, service gaps are filled and duplication of service is eradicated. This ultimately will generate efficiencies, improve the speed and quality of delivery but most importantly promote the quality of life for those receiving the services

### **Provide up to date information to older people in an accessible format**

The Forum will ensure that information on services, policies and activities provided to older people by the County Alliance and other agencies is accurate and up to date;

### **Engage directly with older people**

The Forum will engage in a structured way with older people to listen to their opinions, concerns and needs and use this information in the development and evaluation of their services to ensure that the needs of older people are met; and,

### **Involve service providers in influencing policy**

The Forum will gather the opinions, concerns and needs of service providers in order to influence the policy decisions of the Alliance and policy-making at national level.

### **Encourage Regional Support**

The Forum will meet Fora from other regions to share experiences about services which are more responsive, caring, professional and accessible and how cross-sector collaboration can enhance services and community life.

## **Membership**

The Service Providers Forum which brings together those organisations in the Public, Voluntary and Private Sectors with an interest in improving the quality and responsiveness of services to older people



The core membership of the Service Provider Forum will be those proposed in Appendix A.

The Chairperson will be elected by the forum and will represent the forum at the \_\_\_\_\_ Age Friendly County Alliance.

Membership will be reviewed every 12 months.

## **Administration**

The administrative function of the Service Providers Forum will be supported by the \_\_\_\_\_ and this support will be reviewed as the Forum develops.

The Age Friendly County Coordinator will be responsible for managing the development and implementation of the Age Friendly County Strategy and part of this role will be to support the development of the Service Providers Forum.

## **Meetings**

The Forum shall meet bimonthly.

All meetings shall be scheduled and diaried 12 months in advance to ensure full attendance.

The quorum at all meetings of the Forum shall be 50% of the full membership. If at any time, there is not a quorum present, the meeting shall not proceed.

## **The Forum principles**

The Forum is based upon the principles of opportunity, inclusion, participation, equality, seeking to:

- Achieve the full potential of \_\_\_\_\_ as an Age Friendly County whilst enhancing the richness of our history and environment
- Recognise and celebrate the many opportunities for \_\_\_\_\_ as an Age Friendly City/County
- Ensure a better quality of life for older people in \_\_\_\_\_ now and for generations to come
- A shared commitment to the concept of \_\_\_\_\_ an Age Friendly City/County
- Clarity about what the commitment means in practice
- Recognition that this is a process resulting in action and change



# **Sample Terms of Reference for Thematic Working Group – Cavan & Monaghan Age Friendly Transport Working Group**

## **Terms of Reference**

### **Meetings**

- Meetings will be held on a bi monthly basis
- Duration 1.5 hours
- Project Timeframe – Minimum 2 Yr
- Secretariat: Monaghan County Council
- The quorum for a meeting shall be one third, plus one
- Location of Meetings: Alternate between Cavan and Monaghan

### **Membership:**

Padraic Smyth (Chairperson) Baltibus Monaghan Rural Transport Manager  
Dara McGabhainn Monaghan Community Forum  
Mae Murphy Monaghan Older Peoples Forum Nominee  
Josie Brady Monaghan Older Person's Forum Nominee  
Sgt Tony Campbell Cavan/Monaghan Gardai  
Helena O'Reilly Cavan/Monaghan HSE  
Deirdre Byrne Cavan/Monaghan ETB  
Bernie Bradley Monaghan County Council (Age Friendly County Co-Ordinator)



Adrienne Burns Monaghan County Council – IT/GIS  
Bob Gilbert Cavan Older Peoples Forum  
Rita Jordan Cavan Older Peoples Forum  
Emer Coveney Cavan County Council (Age Friendly County Co-Ordinator)  
Collette Burns Cavan County Council – IT/GIS  
Aodhan Hudson Cavan Older Person's Forum  
Ken MacPhearson Bus Eireann - Regional

- The Working Group Partners have been identified by the Alliance
- Co-option of partners with special expertise will be undertaken where appropriate

### **Partner Role:**

- To commit to finding resolutions to the Transport Issues as identified in the Age Friendly Strategy of both Monaghan and Cavan
- To be open, where possible to incorporate recommendations from the group, into your organisation, that will support solutions to the issues
- To provide to the working group, information from your organisation, that will assist in the development and planning of solutions
- To bring the ethos and viewpoint of your organisation to the solutions development process
- Collaboration with other themes and actions from the strategy where possible

### **Actions per Strategy**

- Limited access to rural transport in some areas;  
Identify gaps and possible solutions
- Lack of awareness of available transport;  
Develop Awareness Raising Campaign through Partners



- Lack of Transport to Activities & Events;  
    Develop a system with Community Groups to organise transport to events
- Availability of School Transport out of hours;  
    Investigate potential to use for older people
- Future Planning, Collaboration & Communication;  
    Board Representation, Public Consultation
- Lack of Integration;  
    Integrated working group to develop & implement co-ordinated approach to all transport needs
- Urban transport route
- Review and seek to expand volunteer car scheme
- Explore hospital link service to Cavan General from Cavan Town
- Piloting of additional rural transport services
- Other Actions that arise from future consultation

**These Terms of Reference will be reviewed periodically.**



# Sample Terms of Reference Implementation Group – Galway Age Friendly Initiative

## Membership of Implementation Group

Membership of the Implementation Group is drawn from the statutory and community & voluntary sector. Most Alliance member organisations are represented at implementation level. For Galway, these members include:

Galway Sports Partnership	Galway Local Authorities
M Curley & J Craughwell	C Mc Quillan & S Lawless
Health Promotion Unit	Cope Galway
E Fanning/LCorbett	Anne Kenny
Galway VEC	Galway City Partnership
Eni Donnacha	Maeve Murray
Co-ordinator for Older Peoples Services HSE	Croi na Gaillimhe
JJ O Kane/D Quaid	L Needham
GRD	Udaras
D Gleeson	T O Conghaille
Comhar na nOilean	Carers Groups
M ni Mhaoilain	Representatives from key agencies/ groups working directly with older people*
Forum Connemara	Galway Community & Voluntary Forum
Y Keane	D Feeney and Frances O Reilly
Gardai	
M O Dwyer	

**\* Membership : recommend that the membership is revised with a view to including representatives from key groups who work closely with older people.**

The Implementation Group will be chaired by (tbc at next meeting) and the Deputy Chairperson will be proposed and agreed by the Implementation Group. Membership will be reviewed every 12 months.

The Implementation Group will be supported by the Age Friendly County Programme (West) Officer



and will report to the Alliance. The Secretariat to the Group will be provided by Galway County Council.

## **Reporting**

The Implementation Group will report to the Alliance Board at its scheduled meetings. The report will be delivered by the Chair of the Implementation Group.

## **Key Roles**

- Supporting the Alliance in officially launching the programme in the county
- Preparation, promotion and roll out of the community consultation
- Preparation of the consultation report
- Mapping of existing programmes and projects which respond to priorities and identification of gaps
- Proposals and suggestions of new actions and exploration of how future work can be done in partnership
- Working closely with the relevant Older People's Council to develop effective programmes
- Launching the strategy
- Ongoing implementation of actions within the strategy
- Preparation of annual report
- Public promotion of the Age Friendly programme

## **Meetings**

The Implementation Group shall meet bi-monthly. The quorum at all meetings of the Group shall be 50% of the full membership. If at any time, there is not a quorum present, the meeting shall not proceed.

## **Proposed Programme of Work**

- Briefing Seminar on Consultation – February 2012
- Public Consultations over 4 weeks beginning 12 March 2012, ending 30 April
- Preparation of Consultation Report June 2012
- Preparation of 1st Draft of Strategic Plan July 2012
- Present final plan to Alliance Board July 2012
- Development of Older People's Council – June/July 2012
- Launch of Strategic Plan – September 2012



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# Glossary of Terms

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# Glossary of Terms

**Age Friendly City/County Coordinator:** This person leads out the age-friendly city or county programme. He/she is appointed by the Chief Executive of the local authority to set up the programme and liaise with members of the Age Friendly Alliance and the Older People's Council. The job requires good networking and administrative skills.

Over time, it is important that the Age Friendly City /County Coordinator delegates tasks to members of the Age Friendly Alliance and/or the Older People's Council while holding on to a coordinating and overseeing role.

**Age Friendly City or County Alliance:** The Age Friendly City or County Alliance is the group of senior managers from local government, health, transport and voluntary services, the Gardai, third level institutions and other sectors dealing with older people.

**Older People's Council:** The Older People's Council (sometimes called the Older People's Forum) is a group of older people in the city/county who have volunteered to become part of the Age Friendly City or County programme. Once formed, the Older People's Council elects an Executive Committee, the Chairperson of which sits on the Age Friendly Alliance.

**Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultants:** The Age Friendly Ireland Regional Consultants play a supportive and guiding role to the Age Friendly City and County Coordinators.

**Public Participation Network:** The Public Participation Network (PPN) is a grouping of people from various community and voluntary agencies in your county or city.

Essentially, it exists to offer the public a means to interface directly with the local authority and fulfils the role previously undertaken by the Community and Voluntary Forum. They offer local groups an opportunity to have input into decision making in their city/county. Groups that join the PPN also have access to networking, training and updates on grant schemes.

It is important that the Age Friendly City or County programme has a representative on the Public Participation Network. For instance, this can be a member of the Age Friendly Alliance who also heads up a voluntary organisation working with older people.

The Chairperson of the Older People's Council would also ideally be a member of this network.

**Local Community and Development Committee:** The Local Community and Development Committee (LCDC) has both statutory and non-statutory members. Set up in 2014, it has its own budget to allocate to various community and development projects in the county which it does through its Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP).

It's important that the statutory members of the LCDC are very familiar with the Age Friendly programme in your city or county. It would also be advantageous to have a non-statutory member who is a member of the Age Friendly Alliance and/or the Chair of the Older People's Council on the Committee.

The WHO checklist for Age Friendly Cities and Counties: Following consultation with older people in the first 33 Age Friendly cities, the World Health Organisation developed an age-friendly checklist covering eight aspects of urban living where improvements could be made. These themes are 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. They have since become the foundation stone for further development of the Age Friendly programmes around the world.

**The Dublin Declaration:** The Dublin Declaration is a document which commits local authorities to a five year cycle of continual assessment and improvement to make their communities and cities more age friendly.

*Looking into the future, Bond suggests that in five years time there will be a different level of awareness and attitude about Age Friendly initiatives. "You shouldn't need the specialised structures anymore because age-awareness and acceptance will be embedded into everyone's thinking and actions. The implications for older people is that they will no longer be seen as a marginalised group as we address an inclusive society for all ages." The key learning for everyone, according to Bond is that older people themselves should be the first point of call on everything not a technical guide or a book.*

**– Rodd Bond, Chair, Louth Age Friendly County Alliance**



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