



Age Friendly Principles and Guidelines for the Planning Authority

June 2021



The Government will:

Work to ensure that our ageing population has a range of options for living independently and that alternatives to long-term residential care to support ageing are in line with the policy statement 'Housing Options for Our Ageing Population'.

Programme for Government: Our shared future (July 2020)

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Preface

All 31 local authority areas have a formally adopted Age Friendly programme thus representing the first full national roll out of the model globally. In April 2019 Ireland became the first country to be fully affiliated with the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Global Network of Age Friendly Cities and Communities.

Ireland's Age Friendly Programme is now coordinated by Age Friendly Ireland, an appointed shared service of local government hosted by Meath County Council. The national Age Friendly Programme office brings together, supports and provides technical guidance to the 31 local authority led, multi-agency Age Friendly Programmes. At City and County level it is developed through cooperation and partnership of older people with government agencies and service providers working side by side. Under the leadership of the local authority Chief Executives and senior managers, governance is anchored in the multi-agency Age Friendly Alliances, supported by diverse and representative Older People's Councils engaged as co-design partners. The Age Friendly Ireland Alliances provide the collaborative framework to involve senior leaders from key stakeholders such as the Local Authority, HSE, An Garda Síochána, Chambers of Commerce, community sector, third-level institutions, and others, who have sufficient influence and resources to develop and deliver ambitious and collaborative Age Friendly Ireland Programmes.

In preparing the following guidelines Age Friendly Ireland is seeking to further develop the implementation model across all planning authorities. It is doing so in the context of the 2020 Programme for Government and the policy statement, *Housing Options for Our Older Population*.

Pending the issuing of specific statutory guidelines for Planning Authorities under Section 28 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, Age Friendly Ireland has prepared the following set of principles designed to assist Planning Authorities, specifically when reviewing the development plan. This advice has been prepared by Age Friendly Ireland following consultation with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and the Office for the Planning Regulator.

Introduction and back drop to the following guidelines

“If you design for the young you exclude the old, but if you design for the old you include everyone”

GLENN MILLAR

Director of Education and Research,
Canadian Urban Development Institute

The ageing of Ireland is recognised in the 2020 Programme for Government as one of the most significant societal developments the Country will have to encounter in the coming decades. Under most recent Central Statistics Office (CSO)¹ population projections, trends indicate that the number of people over the age of 65 is expected to reach up to 1.6 million by 2051, more than double the population in 2016. It is increasingly envisaged across public policy that people will be older, more active, better educated and actively seeking to be fully engaged with their lives and that of their families. The implications for public policy areas as diverse as housing, health, urban and rural planning, transport, policing, and the business environment are, as a result, considerable.

People, as they age, will want to stay healthy and independent, preferably live in their own homes and communities and keep to a minimum their use of in-patient and out-patient hospital services. As a consequence, it is Government policy, as delineated in the 2020 Programme for Government, to support older people to live with dignity and independence in their own homes and communities for as long as possible. In providing a more seamless and appropriate continuum of housing choices with appropriate supports for older people and a built environment that is attractive, accessible and safe, older people will be supported and motivated to enjoy more active, healthy and connected lives and to age confidently and comfortably in their community.

The local planning authority is central to the creation of the conditions necessary to enable this to be the case and given the central role planning plays in local government policy

development, generally, it is essential that planning policy is now developed with a clear focus on providing for an ageing population.

Ireland is the first country to have in place a whole of state approach to ageing with all local authorities now fully covered by Age Friendly strategies which, in turn, are largely embedded into their recently adopted local authority corporate plans. Within the international framework of the World Health Organisation model for Ageing and the local corporate framework of each planning authority, 31 City and County Age Friendly programmes across the State are implementing commitments to shared action plans in each planning authority area. These action plans address critical aspects of active life-living including the built environment, housing, health services, transport, and employment all of which are central to the proper planning and sustainable development of each city/county. In turn, these local actions are supported by the Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service Office based in Meath County Council, the Age Friendly Regional Development Managers and, in each local authority, an Age Friendly Programme Manager who is supported by a specifically appointed housing technician to provide guidance on housing for older people.

Health and wellbeing is fundamental to people of all ages and the role the local planning authority plays in implementation of their planning policies is central to the vision set out by government under the Programme for Government, as well as at WHO level. Furthermore, local government is responsible for actions and developments across their range of functions and responsibilities which, in practical terms, can mean older people, and indeed people of all ages, can have a good quality of life. In creating walkable, attractive communities and age friendly spaces, and by

1 CSO Population Projects 2017-2051

introducing actions to address participation and inequality, local authorities enable and facilitate people of all ages to enjoy healthier, more active and connected lives.

Under the leadership of the Chief Executives in all the Local Authorities in Ireland, governance at local level is anchored in multi-agency Age Friendly Alliances, supported by widely representative Older Peoples' Councils. In this the Irish local government system is acknowledged as taking a lead which the WHO would wish to see replicated across the globe. The local government system is, therefore, actively engaged with older people across Ireland and works with and through the Age Friendly Alliances to ensure that older people can become co-design partners in local policies impacting people of all ages. The challenge now involves substantial embedding of lifelong perspectives into local planning policy and the scaling up of the many local models of good practice within the system so that a consistent application of proven age friendly initiatives across the local government system is the norm.

This challenge is specifically addressed as a commitment to embedding an age friendly approach to public policy and public services delivery in the 2020 Programme for Government in accordance with the following objectives set out in the Programme.

- ▶ To support older people to live in their own home with dignity and independence for as long as possible.
- ▶ To keep care close to home and expand the range of health and social care services in the community.
- ▶ To embed 'ageing in place' options for older people into the planning system as the county and city development plans are redrawn.
- ▶ Drawing on the Housing Need and Demand Assessments, to develop demographic reporting tools and population projections to gain a better national understanding of the needs and location of housing options for older people.
- ▶ To increase the provision of smaller homes in developments, ensuring that older people can remain within the communities they have lived within.
- ▶ To task local authorities to work with Approved Housing Bodies, co-operatives, private developers and Age Friendly Ireland on the development/redevelopment of older person housing.
- ▶ To maintain support for the Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme.
- ▶ To promote active retirement and positive ageing initiatives to tackle social isolation.
- ▶ To explore new digital skills for citizens, grant scheme focusing on one-to-one training.
- ▶ To ensure that older people who are at greater risk of fuel poverty and the respiratory illnesses associated with air pollution be prioritised in climate action and climate mitigation plans.
- ▶ To encourage book clubs for older people to tackle loneliness.

It should also be noted that the 2020 Programme for Government commits to the development of a Town Centre First policy, modeled on the scheme developed by the Scottish Government, and informed by the Town Centre First pilot project. Under this objective the Government is seeking to implement a strategic approach to town centre regeneration by utilising existing buildings and unused lands for new development and promote residential occupancy in Ireland's rural towns and villages. It is reasonable to understand that, as is the case in Scotland, our town and village centres will be fully age friendly and will progress towards universal design within the life of the 2020 Programme for Government.

In addition, the Programme provides for a series of commitments that will ensure Ireland will become an age friendly society underpinned by clear policy implementation across all levels of government and their respective policy platforms.

These commitments include:

- ▶ Supporting older people to live in their own home with dignity and independence, for as long as possible
- ▶ Enabling everyone to live longer healthier lives
- ▶ Allowing older people to stay close to their families and actively participate in their communities
- ▶ Embedding ageing in place options for older people, and
- ▶ Promoting active retirement and positive ageing initiatives to tackle social isolation.

Other programme objectives having an impact upon local development policy include addressing levels of obesity in Ireland through initiatives such as pro-active design of the public realm. Commitment to the principles of universal design also provided in the Programme.

Finally, a continuing commitment to the principles of sustainable communities including ***Housing Options for our Ageing Population*** may be correctly inferred from the Programme. In this policy statement a commitment to provision of various forms of housing for our older population is succinctly set out as follows:

1. Action 4.4 sets to ensure that 50% of apartments in any development that are required to be in excess of minimum sizes are suitable for older people/mobility impaired people and develop a template layout guide for same.
2. Action 4.6 calls for the introduction, in partnership with the construction industry, of measures to ensure that over a five year period housing delivery is increased to ensure that 30% of all new dwellings are built to incorporate universal design principles to accommodate our ageing population.
3. Action 4.7 commits to the establishment of methods to incentivise older people in public and private housing to right-size to appropriately sized units, if they choose to do so.
4. Action 4.12 calls for the issue of planning guidelines for the development of residential care homes and primary care centres to ensure that they are appropriately designed and located in areas with access to transport and amenities.
5. Action 5.9 seeks to ensure that developments (and specifically those for older people) are constructed in areas that are close to essential services, promoting the use of brownfield sites and explore the optimum locations that would lend themselves to becoming “age friendly neighbourhoods”.
6. Action 6.4 commits, in partnership with the Department of Justice, the Department of Housing, Local Government and

Heritage to develop National CPTED Guidelines for Planning.

Local Authorities in Ireland are now acknowledged by the WHO as taking a world-leading approach to age friendly actions, leading local public services to implement necessary actions to support our ageing communities. Examples of existing initiatives are set out in Annex B to these Guidelines but, from a planning policy perspective, include:

- ▶ Integration of Age Friendly thinking into the drafting, adoption and implementation of area and county/city development plans
- ▶ Embedding of an Age Friendly approach to the design of the local public realm
- ▶ Ensuring that the voice of older people is actively facilitated at planning workshops and other planning led public consultation actions
- ▶ Delivery of planning services in spaces that are appropriate to the needs of older people
- ▶ Ensuring that materials delivered by the planning sections are prepared with a clear regard to the needs of older people
- ▶ Provision of an accessible and transparent planning environment for older people

This document provides guidance on how a planning authority can continue to facilitate the above commitments as set out in *Housing Options for our Ageing Population* and in doing so meet the objectives and expectations set out in the 2020 Programme for Government. The following Guidelines have been written to primarily address the full application of planning services from policy development through development plans to the implementation of such plans in an Age Friendly context. This guidance provides a succinct list of suggestions and options where County/City or Area Development Plans can reflect an age friendly approach by ensuring that the plans concerned are future proofed for an ageing population. Implementation of such an approach

will thus increase accessibility and sustainability into the physical environs which ultimately will lead to an integrated service delivery across all local government services impacting an ageing population.

Implementation of the advice contained in this document will necessarily be focused on the planning process including the management of planning applications. However, it should not be seen as something isolated from the broader role which local government plays in ensuring the development of age friendly communities. Planners can be generally alert to the overall corporate commitment of their Council towards creating age friendly communities. As a consequence, they can approach their role through having a comprehensive understanding of both the corporate commitments of their local authority, as well as the objectives set out in the 2020 Programme for Government. Older people bring a remarkable resource to our communities, their experience and sense of community is vital to underpinning a sense of place and a sustainable future.

More specifically, Age Friendly Ireland wishes to draw attention to Part V provisions under the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2018, which require Planning Authorities to consider:

- ▶ the existing need and the likely future need for social housing
- ▶ the need to ensure that housing is available for persons who have different levels of income
- ▶ the need to ensure that a mixture of house types and sizes is developed to reasonably match the requirements of the different categories of households, as may be determined by the local authority, and including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities, and
- ▶ the need to counteract undue segregation in housing between persons of different social backgrounds.

Guidelines to inform Development Plans

Introduction

The development plan is the most public manifestation of a planning authority when it comes to policy to develop an area sustainably. It is spatially focused on the current and, most importantly, the future environment and socio-economic context. In that regard having a clear and coherent understanding of current and future demographic conditions is a minimum requirement to ensuring that the policies and objectives of the plan are robust, resilient and appropriate to addressing short, medium and long-term challenges and opportunities across our communities.

Part V of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2018 requires planning authorities to include a Housing Strategy as part of the statutory development plan. The purpose of the Housing Strategy as set out in Section 94(1) of the Act above is to

ensure that the proper planning and sustainable development of the area of the development plan provides for the housing of the existing and future population of the area.

Moreover, under Section 94(3), in preparing the Housing Strategy, planning authorities must take into account the need to ensure that a mixture of house types is developed to reasonably match the requirements of different categories of households

including the special requirements of elderly persons and persons with disabilities.

In a nutshell, the development plan needs to set out the approach the planning authority will take in making sure the evolving and distinct housing needs of all households in its area will be met into the future and across the demographic, type and tenure spectrum.

Considerable progress has also been made in ensuring that sustainability is embedded into the planning and sustainable development policies of all planning authorities. The move to providing a local, regional and national planning hierarchy based upon meeting future demographic needs is now fully integrated in the Irish Planning System with the adoption of the National Planning

Framework and the underpinning Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies of the Regional Assemblies.

Oversight and accountability have also been strengthened to ensure that the public can have confidence that the legislative and policy context for planning is properly applied in the planning functions of local authorities.

The establishment, by Government, of the Office of the Planning Regulator has now put in place a rigorous yet fair process of independent assessment of planning authority development plans. This will ensure that such plans meet the statutory

obligations placed on local authorities including those pertaining to planning for age friendly futures under the provisions of Part V of the Act.

The approaches set out in this document, in relation to integrating age friendly principles into the next generation of development plans, can be considered by the OPR in the implementation of its own independent approach and methodologies in the assessment of whether or not planning authorities have met the relevant requirements of the Act, as set out above.

Therefore, addressing a lifelong approach in spatial policy, underpinned by an Age Friendly perspective, is now clearly stated as a Government Priority under the 2020 Programme for Government and fully provided for within the National Planning Framework and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies and oversight functions of the OPR.

In addition, local planning is supported by a set of national planning guidelines and regulations in building control which are fully aligned to the following guidelines. These specific Guidelines are issued on a non-statutory basis as all local authorities in Ireland have already committed to the principles of the Dublin Declaration on Age Friendly Cities and Communities in Europe 2013. This Declaration is set out

fully in Annex A to these Guidelines. The application of these principles to all policy development in local government is, therefore, a commitment which should be fully met. As a consequence, these guidelines could be a central feature to the drafting, at all stages, of a city/county or area plan. As such the principles, as set out in the Declaration, should form a starting point as development plans are being initiated.

In addition, the Local Government Reform Act, 2014 recognises the central role of the Corporate Plans adopted by the members of each authority. Corporate Plans across local government now set the overall strategic direction for all aspects of policy development and implementation in each local authority. There is a statutory responsibility to ensure that all policies of a local authority are underpinned by direct reference to the Corporate Plan. Essentially all local authority corporate plans now make a specific acknowledgement and commitment to age friendly objectives at corporate level. There is, therefore, a requirement, in regard to all policy initiatives, to address, specifically, corporate commitments on age friendly initiatives in addition to the commitments signed up under to the Dublin Declaration. **This includes all policies developed as a Planning Authority.**

Making a development plan with an Age Friendly focus

As noted earlier, pending the issuing of specific statutory guidelines from the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage, the following principles and guidelines are to assist in the development plan making process which, once adopted, can enable the provision of age friendly housing options.

A development plan is the principal public statement of policy issued by a planning authority in regard to the future development of an area, city or county. It is, in effect, the framework within which to plan ahead for the spatial developmental needs of the many diverse and evolving communities that are now an inherent and central part to life across the State. While the immediate focus on each plan

will be for a 6-year period, the decisions associated with the implementation of such plans are multi-generational.

The plan(s) are adopted by the elected members as representatives of all the people in those communities. Young and older people and how they live will be important from an elected members perspective and consequently at the heart of all such plans. It is, therefore, a *sine quo non* that the strategic thinking associated with the preparation of such plans should place older people (and the demographics of growing older) at the heart of the processes and stages involved with their preparation.

A key starting point in the preparation of the development

plan is advance work – well before the publication of statutory notices announcing the commencement of the review – in connection with writing of the Housing Strategy under Section 93 of the Act.

Housing Needs Demand Assessment (HNDA) approaches will inform a statistical quantification of household formation trends over the lifetime of the plan and beyond, and the segmenting out of specific housing needs likely to arise that also take account of wider regional and national trends and policies.

Put simply, it is critical to note that this preparatory work should seek to identify the rates of household formation across the age spectrum. Understanding and projecting forward trends relating to housing types and tenures, present estimates of the numbers of housing units by type and tenure likely to be needed over the lifetime of the plan and, specifically, housing for older persons and an age friendly society.

With the benefit of the above baseline analysis, each subsequent development plan review stage can be informed by action specific age friendly principles as follows.

Review of previous Plan and Preparation of Issues Papers

Current national planning guidelines require completion of a review of an out-going plan and the issue of discussion papers to commence the process of drafting of a new plan. Ideally such undertakings, having regard to the principles and objectives of the Programme for Government and *Housing Options for Our Ageing Population* should specifically address the principles of the Dublin Declaration with the objective of understanding the extent to which previous development plans have sought to impact on the ageing and older population. Given existing population trends a separate issues paper focused on ageing and age friendly needs should be prepared for each local and county/city development plan

process. The papers should be drafted with specific reference to the bulleted objectives set out earlier in this guidance document. Such papers should ideally address issues around the quantification of housing needs for older persons and likely changes in the extent of same over the lifetime of the plan. Informed by that estimation of need, the application of lifelong design thinking, as set out in the *Guidelines on Universal Design* issued under the Housing Agency, *Housing for All* and *Housing Options for our Ageing Population*, issued by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and, the Department of Health.

The issues set out in these should be brought to the attention of local communities, developers and other stakeholders in the provision of physical and social infrastructure.

Engagement with the relevant Age Alliance, Older Persons Council and Public Participation Networks on issues concerning the needs of an ageing population should also be specifically addressed at this point in the preparation of a development plan.

Reports on same should be placed before the elected members alongside the existing statutory suite of documents such as the relevant environmental assessments.

Preparation of a draft Plan

If the above is completed in stage 1 the work of ensuring that the principles of the Programme for Government as well as the Dublin Declaration will be a natural follow on in subsequent stages. That noted, there are specific thematic inputs which could be considered. These are further developed in the following section. In broad terms, however, it is reasonable to expect that across all chapters of the relevant draft plan, regard to demographic factors covering the full life cycle will be addressed in line with current and any future statutory guidelines, including the policies and objectives of the relevant regional spatial and economic strategy and councils' own local economic and community plan.

The additional expectation in regard to this specific set of guidelines is that there is targeted acknowledgement of age friendly practices being incorporated into the core strategy and related objectives as well as development principles of a forthcoming draft plan.

On the issue of the draft for consultation, the Council should use the Older Persons Council and the Alliance as a minimum reference point for consultation on older persons. There will also be other possible consultative platforms to which older persons might be engaged and, where possible, these should be used to underpin the primary reference points set out earlier. It is important to make sure that all engagement ensures that older people are properly facilitated to make their inputs so that any material produced and distributed, and any centres used for consultation are Age Friendly.

It is important to once again highlight the fact that ageing factors have to be embedded into the draft plan. This should have a transparent relationship to the draft plans development control policies, the objectives in regard to housing and social conditions, transport, provision of health and social care facilities and such other aspects as will impact or potentially impact the lives of older people, including those in the community currently and those who will be in the community as the population ages.

Inputs from the older person's constituency should also be specifically addressed in the Chief Executives Report to the Members.

Addressing alterations

Any alterations to the draft plan, where there is a clear impact on older people or on future older people, should be addressed in the next consultative round in a manner similar to the process undertaken for the initial round of consultations.

Addressing Themes and objectives in the draft plan

All development plans, notwithstanding their technical nature, are structured to be as accessible as possible in accordance with current national statutory guidelines. Plans will consist of chapters addressing particular themes and policy areas, in particular housing as set out in the Housing Strategy. Plans will also clearly include a core strategy. In both instances, and generally throughout the plan itself, objectives will be set out which are both strategic and specific. All plans, as a consequence, should have a specific over-arching chapter addressing policy for an ageing/older population. In addition, within each thematic chapter there should be a cross

referencing section ensuring that older persons' perspective and future policy needs are appropriately addressed. This would allow for a fully integrated policy approach to seeking a coherent policy approach to achieving a sustainable, age friendly, community.

In addition, specific consideration, within the draft thematic policy chapters and where they will impact on the lives of our ageing population, should be clearly provided within each chapter.

Theme | Demographic Trends

Population Change and Trends

Informed by the quantification of housing needs and their spatial and temporal distribution through the Housing Strategy required under Part V of the Act and the Core Strategy required under Section 10 of the Act, the plan must identify ageing population trends/cohorts that are reflected throughout the county/city and ideally broken down by municipal districts, towns and rural areas.

As a consequence, forward profiling of a development plan area in terms of ageing is critical to create the platform for sustainable development of that area. Use of data sources, such as HaPAI, is available to planners through Age Friendly Ireland to enable development of such profiles.

OBJECTIVE

To consider the ageing demographic (55+) in the County/City/Area by implementing the relevant actions within the Age Friendly County Strategy which should be cross referenced in the draft plan. It should be noted that ageing is not uniform in its physical, social or emotional form and, therefore, different experiences of ageing may require different policy actions. Living alone needs should be addressed within a likely wider ageing population set of needs. Each, in turn, will also need to be correlated to the differing needs of the planning authorities' geographic areas (safety issues; loneliness; access to services, housing, etc.)

Theme | Housing and Community

Implementation of age friendly policies

Given that an age friendly strategy will have been adopted by each Council and/or referenced in the relevant corporate plan, it is important to reflect the objectives of one, or both, in the development plan. Specific objectives relating to each thematic area of the development plan, i.e. housing and community, transport etc, should ensure that where concomitant objectives are set out in either the corporate plan or age friendly strategy, these should clearly be set out in the development plan in so far as they have a land use impact. In this regard planners should be alert to the need to embed within their development control provisions a requirement that in the case of bespoke housing for older people, a minimum of 1.5 bedrooms be conditioned for each older person housing unit approved.

OBJECTIVE

To ensure consistency in policy across the council policy arena. Reference around provision for nursing homes/step down facilities/independent living units and where these should be located; the appropriate size; etc., in line with national policy should be highlighted along with the urban realm guidelines of Age Friendly Ireland.

Housing for older people in new residential development in cities, smaller towns and villages:

In addition to the minimum bedroom development control recommended above, it is important to ensure that new residential development in cities, towns, villages and rural areas should take into account universal design, layout, character and scale. In line with the objectives of the 2020 Programme for Government such services should be located within close proximity to services and should present as a high-quality living environment. Specific guidance on this is already available through Age Friendly Ireland and the Centre of Excellence for Universal Design.

OBJECTIVE

To facilitate the development of housing for older people across the cities, smaller towns and villages as well as rural areas which is appropriate in order to improve the quality of living for our ageing population. Any new residential development should be fully aligned to the targets of national policy as enumerated under Housing Options for Our Ageing Population:
Policy Statement or any subsequent guidance or national policy issued by the Department for Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

Application of Universal design standards to housing

A development plan is expected to set out expectations in regard to standards for the construction of housing. In line with the objectives of the Programme for Government it should be a reasonable expectation that there would be a commitment to seeking a universal design for such housing to provide age friendly standards to occupancy of all housing to be given effect over time. In addition, the planning authority should commit to the examination of sites close to existing services and urban centres which might be suitable for older persons' accommodation and highlight same for those seeking to develop such housing in the area. Furthermore, it is recommended that the design principles developed by Fingal County Council should be appropriately interpreted to suit local conditions but, in general, should condition the following controls for **all** planning consents:

- ▶ Providing wider external and internal doors
- ▶ Providing capped electrical points for future installations
- ▶ Inserting sockets at the top and bottom of stairs and including two-way or three-way switching
- ▶ Providing CAT 5 Cabling
- ▶ Consideration of easy control and use of systems and the capability to integrate smart technology, energy efficiency and security systems or assistive technology
- ▶ Provision of lever door handles and taps that are easier to use
- ▶ Ensuring entry level toilets are sufficient for the future installation of a walk-in shower including walls and below ground drainage
- ▶ Locating the main bathroom immediately adjacent to the main bedroom with a "soft spot" for future installation
- ▶ Check for "hard spots" in the ceiling to allow for a hoist track to be installed supported by ceiling construction
- ▶ Providing a beam at ceiling level ground floor as part of the rear wall to allow for future extension

OBJECTIVE

To achieve age friendly housing over time.

Social Housing for Older People: Refurbishment and Replacement Dwellings

The Council will encourage and facilitate Age Friendly policies, where appropriate, in the refurbishment and adaptation of existing housing stock and other structures in cities, towns and rural areas and in certain cases the replacement of existing dwellings. Housing stock within the ownership of the council will, as resources allow, be refurbished/adapted to allow for age friendly use.

OBJECTIVE

To implement Age Friendly policies in the refurbishment/adaptation of existing housing stock and to consider the needs of the older generation in terms of design and lifelong living.

Social Integration

Local government provides many platforms for encouraging engagement across various age groups. A section addressing social inclusion or social integration should highlight role of the older population and the application of the Age Friendly Strategy.

OBJECTIVE

Increase intergenerational opportunities between younger and older people and provide more opportunities to promote positive engagement across diverse groups.

Civic Engagement

All County/City/City and County Councils have adopted the WHO Age Friendly City and County Programme. The Age Friendly core principle seeks to hear the voice of a diverse range of older people to ensure that services can be delivered within a responsive cost-effective framework.

OBJECTIVE

The Council will support the aims of the relevant County Age Friendly Strategy and will ensure that the local Older Peoples Council, and other appropriate older persons fora is/ are encouraged to participate in the planning authority consultation processes leading to the adoption of a local/county/city development plan.

Theme | Employment and Enterprise

Employment and Enterprise

Encourage the utilisation of existing knowledge and expertise by providing employment opportunities for the older generation in areas such as research and development, tourism, arts, cultural and leisure, and such other areas as identified in consultation with the Age Friendly Alliance and Older Persons Council. Regard to the objectives of the Local Economic and Community Plan should also be applied in this particular instance.

OBJECTIVE

To ensure there is an adequate amount of full and part time employment opportunities for older people across all key industries in the county/city/area.

Theme | Health

The provision of accessible healthcare facilities near to places of population growth and a growing ageing dynamic in our local populations may include health centres, day centres, primary care centres, community nursing units, family resource centres, nursing homes/convalescent homes, community residences, activation centres and residential facilities for children and adolescents.

These facilities require locations which are fully integrated within existing and future ageing communities and are easily accessible through public and local transport options. In addition, consideration should be given to including, as a planning consent policy, the application of the Age Friendly Hospital Model to relevant planning applications for a hospital and other healthcare facilities. Provision for accessible transport should also be a feature of any planning considerations and this should be set out in the planning consent policy of the Council.

OBJECTIVE

Implement the Age Friendly Hospital model across all healthcare facilities in so far as is practical.

Theme | Rural Development

Urban and Rural Transport

Bus services play a vital social role in our connecting urban and rural communities, linking rural areas with settlements and essential services, such as healthcare facilities. The 2020 Programme for Government fully acknowledges that this is the case. As a consequence, the transport chapter in the relevant draft plan should ideally make reference to the appropriate design of bus stations/ stops and other facilities. In addition, the likely future design of transport networks (including Bus Connects Initiatives across the State) will need to be alert to the ageing of the relevant populations and objectives in this regard may need to be considered. Development of public accessible services in Ports and Airports should also be required to follow the guidance on AGE Friendly Airports prepared by Age Friendly Ireland.

OBJECTIVE

To improve the effectiveness of transport services for older people.

Rural/Urban Regeneration

The National Development Plan provides funding towards the renewal of Ireland's cities, towns, villages and rural areas. Policies underpinning such renewal should reflect commitment to application of universal design and the recommendations in these guidelines generally.

OBJECTIVE

To improve the effectiveness of urban/rural renewal for older people.

Theme | Recreational Facilities & Tourism Product

Provision of Public Open Space & Recreational Facilities: Encourage, where appropriate, better use of existing outdoor, recreational and tourism facilities and assist in the provision of new such facilities.

OBJECTIVE

The Council should prepare walkability audits of public spaces and buildings in towns and villages, where appropriate, throughout the county/city. Such audits will inform the development of the public realm and conservation plans, as appropriate. The objective should be to ensure that the development/redevelopment of all public spaces should take into account, and design for, older people's needs or have particular zones with a particular focus on older people and their needs.

Urban Recreation and Parks

There are public parks throughout the country, many of which now incorporate tone zones that provide areas of exercise equipment to improve their recreational value. Their continued development should ideally be included as an objective in the plan.

OBJECTIVE

The Council shall seek to increase the number and use of zones with a particular focus on the older population and intergenerational programmes.

Sustainable Tourism

Any future investment in tourism and economic development will recognise the considerable volume of older customers and the economic opportunity this presents.

OBJECTIVE

The Council will support the business community to support older people as both producers and consumers through programmes such as the Age Friendly Recognition process, Senior Enterprise, Senior Entrepreneurship and opportunities for age friendly industries.

Managing Planning Consultations and planning consent

On a day to day basis the planning authority will have engagement with local communities and individuals as well as those proposing various development initiatives and projects in their area. In such instances those undertaking engagement/consultation, including preliminary consultations on proposed developments, should retain a clear understanding of the objectives of the relevant development plans, including those relating to sustaining an age friendly approach. This means that facilities and materials, as noted above, should be inclusive of an age friendly approach. In addition, it should mean that age friendly thinking should be fully embedded into all consultations and guidance issued by the planning authority and its staff. This should also apply in the case of the Local Community Development Committee and its work.

In providing advice to proponents for development every effort should be made to explaining the corporate commitment of the local authority to the creation of an age friendly society.

Planners, in this regard, should draw upon the guidance on the public realm prepared by the local authority system as a central platform for applying age-friendly practices across the State².

Age friendly implementation is, therefore, not just restricted to the role of the planning authority.

² <http://agefriendlyireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/AFI-Walkability-Report-LR-18615-23-6.pdf>

Conclusion

These guidelines are issued by Age Friendly Ireland as part of an on-going initiative of the local government system in Ireland, to fully implement the commitment of the system towards implementation of the Dublin Declaration as well as having regard to the objectives of the 2020 Programme for Government and *Housing Options for our Older Population*.

The essential message within this guidance is that the Irish local government system is playing a central role in equipping Irish society to fully use the opportunities that come with having an ageing population which is fully engaged and integrated with succeeding generations. Thinking on how to meet the future needs of our communities is an essential feature of the planning process. The simple non-statutory guidance above, if applied, will enable the planning system to acknowledge the role which our older people can play in the future, reinforcing the importance of having an active older community at the heart of the many cities, towns, villages and rural places of a vibrant and sustainable Ireland.

Annex A: Dublin Declaration

On the occasion of the 'EU Summit on Active and Healthy Ageing', held in Dublin, Ireland on the 13-14 June 2013, under the Irish Presidency of the European Union, we, the mayors and senior political representatives of European cities, municipalities, communities and regions unanimously declare the following:

Values and principles of action

1. We draw on the inspiration of the WHO policy framework on active ageing in which active ageing is defined as 'the process of optimising opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age, allowing people to realise their potential for physical, social and mental well-being throughout their lives and to participate in society according to their needs, desires and capabilities, while providing them with adequate protection, security and care when they require assistance. (Active Ageing: A Policy Framework, Geneva 2002. WHO.)
2. We fully endorse the principles and actions of the strategic priority area of Age Friendly, supportive environments within the WHO Strategy and action plan for healthy ageing in Europe (WHO Strategy and action plan for healthy ageing in Europe, 2012-2020), the UN Principles for Older Persons and their emphasis on independence, dignity, self-fulfilment, participation and care (United Nations Principles for Older Persons, 1991), and the priority directions of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing promoting older persons and development, advancing health and well-being into old age and ensuring enabling and supportive environments (Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002)
3. We acknowledge the value and contribution of the WHO work with cities towards age-friendly communities, and WHO guidance to help cities and communities become more supportive of older people by addressing their needs across eight dimensions: the built environment, transport, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication, and community support and health services; and we will adopt these guidelines as they are adapted to fit the European context. (WHO Age-Friendly Cities Guide, 2008)
4. We understand the relevance to our work of the WHO European policy framework supporting actions across government and society for health and well-being, and acknowledge the four priority areas encouraging: a life-cycle approach and empowering people; tackling Europe's major health challenges; strengthening people-centred systems; and creating resilient communities and supportive environments.

(Health 2020: a European policy framework supporting actions across government and society for health and well-being, WHO, 2012)
5. We recognize the synergistic work of the WHO European Healthy Cities Network and the WHO Global Network of Age Friendly Cities and Communities, and endorse the Page 2 of 5 principles and core values related to equity, empowerment, partnership, solidarity and sustainable development contained in the Zagreb Declaration for Healthy Cities. (Zagreb Declaration for Healthy Cities. WHO 2009)
6. We fully encourage and support the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP on AHA), and the partners' commitments to the goal of increasing by two years the average healthy life years (HLY) of EU citizens by 2020 through improving the health status and quality of life of older people and the efficiency and sustainability of health systems and through fostering the competitiveness of EU industry for innovative age and health related products and services. (Taking forward the Strategic Implementation Plan of the EIP on AHA, European Commission, 2012)

7. Within the EIP-AHA, and based on the work of the WHO towards age friendly, supportive environments, we fully support the D4 Action Plan for Innovations in Age Friendly Buildings, Cities and Environments, and in particular, the creation of a thematic network of major cities, regions and municipalities committed to deploying innovative approaches to make the environment more age friendly, including the use of ICT solutions. (D4 Action Plan: Innovations in Age Friendly Buildings, Cities and Environments. EIP (AHA D4 Action Group, 2012)
8. We draw great encouragement from the achievements of EY2012, the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between the Generations, which has promoted active ageing in the three areas of employment, participation in society and independent living, empowering people to remain in charge of their own lives for as long as possible.

Opportunities and Challenges

9. Building on the Dublin Declaration on Age Friendly Cities and Communities 2011, and the principles, values and approaches of the above strategies, frameworks, declarations, guidelines and initiatives, we recognise that:
 - ▶ Where we live, our physical, social and cultural environment, greatly impacts upon how we live and age. The significance of 'place' in all our lives cannot be overestimated. The built environment and neighbourhood networks impact on the quality of all of our lives and can make the difference between independence and dependence for all people, but especially for those growing older. Place is inseparable from our sense of identity and this is true for people of all ages, including older people.
 - ▶ Cities must equip themselves with the necessary means, resources and systems of distribution to promote equal opportunities, well-being and participation of all citizens, including their older citizens. While the trend of urbanisation continues to grow, many older people in Europe live in rural and sometimes remote Page 3 of 5 communities. These communities must also develop the capacity to promote the health, well-being and participation of their older citizens.
 - ▶ An age friendly environment, in accordance with the WHO Strategy and action plan for healthy ageing in Europe, 2012-2020, is one in which service providers, public authorities, community leaders, faith leaders, business people and citizens recognise the great diversity among human beings and the importance of health to them, promote their inclusion and contribution in all areas of community life, respect their decisions and lifestyle choices, and anticipate and respond flexibly to their needs and preferences.
 - ▶ Planning for environmentally, economically and socially sustainable communities is a crucial concern for all government levels, and such planning needs to take account of the ageing of populations and the role older people can play as a key resource in meeting their specific needs. Mechanisms to ensure the active voice of older people in planning and decision-making are vital to achieving solutions that are age friendly.
 - ▶ Older people are a bounty to European society, and it is important to recognise this value and to build on the strengths of the bonds of solidarity between the generations in Europe where people of all ages have a positive view of one another and where there is consensus between generations on the way forward.
 - ▶ Actions to make the European Union age friendly can reinforce many dimensions of the Europe 2012 - 2020 strategy towards smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. There is significant opportunity to build on the EU's innovation and competitive strengths in ICT for inclusion and e-health to accelerate the deployment of new processes, products and services that enhance the quality of life and health of older people in European cities and communities, while improving the effectiveness and sustainability of our health and social care systems.

- ▶ Within Europe, building on the work of the WHO on age friendly policies, as well as building on and bringing together ongoing innovative work in public transport, ICT, and smart cities, that this declaration can underpin a future cooperation agreement forming an EU Covenant on Demographic Change.

Commitments

10. Therefore, the undersigning cities and communities make the following commitments that shall be known as the ‘Dublin Declaration on Age Friendly Cities and Communities in Europe 2013’, and they commit in the first place to:

- I. **Promote** the ‘Dublin Declaration on Age Friendly Cities and Communities in Europe 2013’ (Dublin Declaration 2013) in appropriate national and international forums, fostering the maximum adherence possible to its values, principles and premises, in terms of plans, programmes and resources, in order to implement Page 4 of 5 the commitments in this Declaration within a reasonable period of time.
- II. **Collaborate** with all relevant regional and local stakeholders to support the full application of the pledges in the Dublin Declaration on Age Friendly Cities and Communities in Europe 2013, including cooperation with the WHO European Regional Office and its Network of Cities committed to developing age friendly environments as part of the WHO Global Network of Age Friendly Cities and Communities. This will involve commencing a multi-year cycle of continual assessment and improvement to make their environments more age friendly.
- III. **Communicate** through local and regional channels and networks between the various cities and communities to stimulate and support advances in the promotion of equal rights and opportunities for older citizens and to share learning about advances in policies and practices which improve their lives. Supporting Pledge 11. The undersigning cities and communities also pledge, where it is within their area of responsibility and economically feasible, to further the following specific actions, and to incorporate them into key planning instruments to strengthen long term sustainability:
 - ▶ Promote among the general public **awareness of older people**, their rights, needs, and potentials, and highlight the positive social, economic and cultural contribution they make.
 - ▶ Ensure that the views and opinions of older people are valued and listened to and that structures and **processes of citizen-centred engagement** are developed to ensure that older people have an adequate involvement in decision making and are actively involved in the design and creation of innovation and change.
 - ▶ Adopt measures to develop **urban spaces and public places** that are inclusive, sharable and desirable to all, including older people, and ensure that publicly used buildings promote the dignity, health and well-being of users of all ages, and are fit for purpose to meet the changing needs of an ageing society.
 - ▶ Promote and support the development of neighbourhoods and communities for all ages that are diverse, safe, inclusive and sustainable, and that include **housing** for older people that is of the highest quality. Particular attention should be given to the needs of older people in assisted living, residential care and nursing homes where their dignity and autonomy is at greater risk.
 - ▶ Work to establish public transport systems that are available and affordable to all, including older people, and are ‘seamless’ within and across the various modes of transport that exist. The transport systems should also promote and facilitate personal transport use, such as cycling and driving by older people. As Page 5 of 5 these become more difficult, personal alternatives such as affordable taxis and car-pooling, which interconnect with the public system, should be made available.

- ▶ · Promote the participation of all, including older people, in the social and cultural life of their community by making available a diverse range of events and activities that are accessible, affordable and tailored to be inclusive of them and promote their integration into the community. This should include the promotion of intergenerational activities.
- ▶ · Promote and support the development of employment and volunteering opportunities for all, including older people, and recognise their positive contribution, and include the provision of lifelong learning opportunities in order to empower older people and promote their autonomy.
- ▶ · Ensure that a comprehensive and integrated range of affordable, easily accessible, age friendly and high quality community support and health services is available to all, including older people, to include health promotion and prevention programmes, community-based support services, primary care, secondary acute hospital, rehabilitation services, specialist tertiary, long-term residential and compassionate end of life care.

Dublin, 13 June 2013

Signatures of City Mayors, Communities and Regional and Local Government

Annex B: Local Government Age Friendly Initiatives

- ▶ Provision of alternative housing models so that older people can age comfortably in their own community - joint Policy Statement “Housing Options for our Ageing Population”, Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and Department of Health.
- ▶ Creation of systems which allow for effective local integration of formal and informal systems of care in order to maximise older people’s quality of life and sustain independence and control – Healthy Homes Programme |Phase 1, Department of Health | Sláintecare & Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service| Meath County Council.
- ▶ Training for architects, planners and engineers on age friendly housing and public realm design so as to facilitate these key professionals in supporting older people to live independently. This training has been delivered to the relevant staff in every local authority area across Ireland. The Housing and Public Realm training is now available for delivery online with a module from An Garda Síochána on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design and a module on Universal Design from the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design, NDA.
- ▶ The roll out of Age Friendly Towns. There are 50+ Age Friendly Towns across Ireland, this process involves a dedicated planner carrying out extensive data collection including research, mapping, surveying and consultation with local older people. From this research an Age Friendly Action Plan is produced and is implemented. This process informs the Area Development Plan.
- ▶ Provision of accessible information via ‘one stop shop’ kiosks/information desks, Directories of Services and simplified local authority application systems on housing options, grants, and services.
- ▶ Crime Prevention Ambassadors’ programme, providing peer to peer Garda trained home safety audit programmes so that isolated older adults can receive advice about how to make their homes safer.
- ▶ Delivery of transport services to hospitals, primary care clinics and shopping centres; customised bus routes, community car schemes, shuttle and lift services, to provide access to in and out-patient services, support independent living and older people in staying socially and civically connected.
- ▶ Developed Age Friendly Hospital guidelines to support local hospitals in identifying and adhering to age-friendly standards which contribute to their more ‘age-aware’ and efficient running.
- ▶ Development of Age Friendly Primary Care Guidelines, providing guidance on how to develop Primary Care Centres with Age Friendly features and principles, making sure that new facilities are prepared for and able to respond to population ageing.
- ▶ Implementation of hospital discharge protocols which ensure that necessary community-based supports are in place for older people to effect successful discharge and stay living at home - Healthy Homes Programme |Phase 1, Department of Health | Sláintecare & Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service| Meath County Council.
- ▶ Provision of physical activity training and education programmes which support improved health status and lower rates of hospital admissions, e.g. Sport Ireland and Local Sports Partnerships Older Adult Home Exercise Plan, Go for Life, Exwell, Siel Bleu.
- ▶ Over 50 walkability audits completed nationally. Walkability programmes identify and address the quality and continuity of pavements, number, safety and timing of pedestrian crossings and other barriers to mobility across the public realm thereby increasing older people’s facility, confidence and motivation to enjoy more active and connected lives. A recent Age Friendly Walkability Audit of Athboy included a dementia focus which will help to inform the development of the town in an accessible and inclusive manner for all people as they age, including those with cognitive and sensory issues.

- ▶ Provision of outreach, befriending and intergenerational skills exchange programmes to provide opportunities for older people to play an active part in social and civic networks.
- ▶ Delivery of Age Friendly Business Recognition Programme which supports local businesses in adopting positive ageing practices. Number of National Brands, including Bank of Ireland, Vodafone, Delata Hotel Group, Cara Pharmacy, FBD Insurance, Boots and Member First Credit Union have participated and completed the Age Friendly Business Recognition Training.

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