



South Dublin County Older Person's Council is a group that represents the voice of all older people across the county.



Background:

In September 2011 South Dublin signed up to the World Health Organisation Dublin Declaration on Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme. A World Health Organisation (WHO) initiative

The WHO Guidelines for Age Friendly Cities/Countries, sets out specific themes, which are relevant to counties and communities of all sizes. The Themes include:

- Communication and Information
- Housing
- Transportation
- Respect & Social Inclusion
- Outdoor Spaces and Public Buildings
- Community Support and Health Services
- Security and Safety
- Social Participation
- Civic Participation & Employment

How does a County become Age Friendly?

An Age Friendly County is created by consulting, building and implementing an Age Friendly Strategy in collaboration with key stakeholders in the county including older people.

A successful strategy is one that includes older adults at all stages of the development of the plan, that highlights actions relevant to the needs of older people in the county and that improve the quality of life of older adults.

***“The population of South Dublin continues to grow, and with that growth comes an increase in the number of older people living in our County. People are now living longer and healthier lives, and want to be active and participate in their communities”
Mayor of South Dublin County Council ,
Cathal King 2012***

Following a process of consultation the first South Dublin Age Friendly County Strategy was launched in 2012. An Age Friendly County Alliance of key stakeholders was established with the responsibility to ensure that the actions contained in the plan were implemented. In addition, South Dublin County Age Friendly Programme created the South Dublin County Older People's Council to represent the voice of the older person in the county. The chair of the Older People's Council sat alongside representatives of the member agencies on the South Dublin County's Age Friendly Alliance

The first South Dublin Age Friendly County Strategy was implemented between 2012 and 2015. In 2020, South Dublin Age Friendly Programme revised its strategy and created a new plan to cover the period 2020 to 2024

In 2022, South Dublin Age Friendly undertook to review the Operations and Structures of the South Dublin County Older People's Council (OPC). This brochure sets out the process undertaken and highlights the actions that the new OPC will implement over the lifetime of the group.

SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY OLDER PEOPLE'S COUNCIL:

Covid-19 impacted heavily on the lives of older people over the last three years. Older People's Councils (OPC) too were forced to think differently about how they communicated both with each other and with the wider older community.

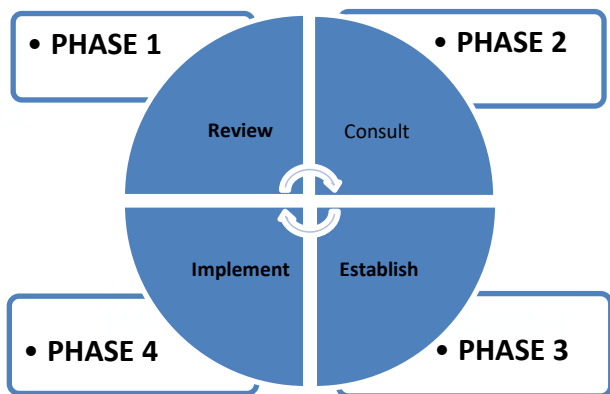
Establishing a new South Dublin County Older People's Council

Realising the impact the pandemic had on older people, South Dublin Age Friendly County Programme undertook to support its Older People's Council to participate in a process to Review its Operations and Structures.

The aims of the Review Process were to:

- Engage with current OPC members to review the past
- Consult a wider cohort of older people in the county
- Support the establishment of a strong and more diverse Older Person's Council
- Provide training for new OPC members
- Develop a new OPC Action Plan
- Implement the Action Plan

Process:



PHASE 1 - REVIEW

South Dublin County OPC members welcomed the opportunity to participate in the review process.

In 2022, nine of the current OPC members took part in a series of workshops in order to:

- Consider current OPC practices
- Carry out a SWOT analysis, highlighting what works well and what changes are required in the future
- Consider next steps.



PHASE 2 – CONSULTATION

As part of the Review Process a number of actions were carried out to ensure that a wider group of older people were consulted.

Questionnaire

Members of the South Dublin OPC assisted with the creation of a questionnaire to find out the views of the wider Older population in the county, The findings were analysed and used to feed into the development of the new action plan.

Public Consultation Event – September 2022

“Empowering Older People and better Communication are key to ensuring that older people have their say”

Mayor of South Dublin County Council, Cllr Emma Murphy, 2022

With the support of the South Dublin County Age Friendly Alliance and staff of South Dublin County Council, the OPC hosted a public consultation event in the Maldron Hotel, Tallaght on 27th September 2022.

Over 60 older people registered for the days event\ Mayor of South Dublin County, Cllr Emma Murphy, welcomed everyone and thanked them for giving of their time to the valuable process. She told participants that she was looking forward to hearing the outcomes of the day's event. She highlighted some of the age friendly initiatives currently being rolled out in the county.

She also indicated that she and her colleagues on South Dublin County Council would be keen to support actions that would improve the lives of older people in South Dublin County.

There was an excited buzz in the room as everyone got down to discussing matters of concern to older people. There were 9 tables each discussing one of the key World Health Organisation Liveability topics, (Social Participation & Employment was amalgamated with Civic Participation and Climate Change was included).

They also discussed what they thought an age friendly village / Neighbourhood looked like and what kind of climate change actions older people would like to see rolled out at local Level.

PHASE 3 - CONSULTATION

ESTABLISHING A NEW OLDER PEOPLE'S COUNCIL



On October 2022, the newly established South Dublin County Older Peoples Council (OPC) met for the first of a series of workshops to consider:

- Induction Session – Meet & Greet
- Roles & Responsibilities of Older People's Council members
- Age Friendly Older People's Council guidelines and training
- Terms of Reference for the group
- Consider feedback from wider consultation process
- Agree Actions for the new Older People's Council group

From the outset of the journey, both past OPC members who participated in the review process and newly elected members of South Dublin County OPC, embraced the opportunity to deliver on and implement a new action plan for older people living in South Dublin County.

This new 'Action Plan' includes the views from all the older Adults In the county involved in the consultation process outlined, and is aligned to the South Dublin County Age Friendly Strategy.

PLANS FOR SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY

All of the actions outlined in the Plan will require the commitment and support of the Age Friendly Alliance member agencies, Older People's Council members and the wider Community of older people.

OLDER PEOPLE'S COUNCIL (SDC OPC) FLYER

At a very early stage in consultation, it was highlighted that the wider older people in South Dublin County were not aware of the work of the South Dublin County Older People's Council.

To remedy this, as their first action the OPC has undertaken to develop an Information sheet to Ensure clear communication which sets out **Who** they are and **What** they intend to do on behalf of the wider older community across the County.

Who We Are
The South Dublin Older People's Council is made up of members over 55 years from some of the many community groups across South Dublin County. We are supported by the South Dublin County Council's Age Friendly County Programme and the Age Friendly Ireland National Programme.

Aims
Our aim is to represent the views of older people in South Dublin County and to influence and inform policy and planning county-wide, as well as delivering on local initiatives. Working with South Dublin County Council and the South Dublin Age Friendly County Alliance we aim to:

- IMPROVE the lives of older people in South Dublin County
- INFLUENCE decision makers and service providers
- Be the **VOICE** for older people in matters of concern to them
- Have an **INPUT** to decisions being made about older people.
- Create countywide **LINKS** and **NETWORKS**
- Provide **INFORMATION** relevant to older people

Your Voice Matters
We aim to build a strong unified Older People's Council which will be a truly representative voice for older people in South Dublin County

For more information contact us on:
☎ comdevof@sdbulincoco.ie
☎ 414 9270
OR
pick up a copy of the new South Dublin County Older People's Action Plan in your local library.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone who took part in this Age Friendly County project.

We are hugely grateful to former members of the South Dublin County Older People's Council for all their hard work and commitment to the work of the Older People's Council over the last few years. We thank them for taking part in this review journey with us.

Thanks are also due to all of the older people's groups across the county who played a part in the wider consultation process giving of their time and opinions.

A big thank you to Age Friendly Alliance members and Staff of South Dublin County Council for their Positive Commitment to the project.

As the newly elected Members of South Dublin County Older People's Council, We look forward to working with you all to fulfil the actions that are outlined in this brochure.

Yours Sincerely

Mary Lyons – Chairperson

South Dublin Older People's Council

Paula Swayne - South Dublin County Age Friendly Programme Manager

Action and Implementation Plan

PHASE 4 - IMPLEMENTATION

OUTDOOR SPACES & PUBLIC BUILDINGS

Aim at County Level:

Identify and address issues for older people relating to Outdoor Spaces and Public Buildings.

Key challenges identified during consultation with older people in South Dublin county:

“The Council has done a great job with public amenities in the county, but not everyone has access to them”

“Not all public amenities are maintained to the same standard, some areas look quite neglected”

Actions:

- Identify  villages and submit to age friendly town selection process
- Conduct & Support Age Friendly Walkability surveys in identified designated areas



HOUSING

Aim at County Level:


Ensure that appropriate housing is provided that meets the needs of older people.

Key challenges identified during consultation with older people:

“We want to remain in our own communities with our neighbours and friends around us for support”

“I’m happy with where I live at the moment, but what if I can’t drive anymore, public transport isn’t great”

Actions:

 1-2 years

- Explore housing needs for older people through new initiatives
- Invite Age Friendly Housing Specialist to attend OPC meeting and to Annual General Meeting
- Provide OPC representatives for Housing Committee
- Undertake rightsizing study visits
- Raise the level of awareness of housing opportunities for older people

Work in Progress on all actions



SAFETY & SECURITY

Aim at County Level:

Identify and address issues for older people regarding Safety and security in their homes and communities.

Key challenges identified during consultation with older people:

“A lot of young people were their hoods up and scarves around their mouths, it makes us feel anxious”

“Generally we feel safe in our homes and Communities during the day but we are less confident being out and about at night”

Actions:

 1-2 years

- Invite members of An Garda Síochána to an OPC meeting to discuss safety and security concerns
- Provide representatives on Joint Policing Committees

Achieved: Met with An Garda Síochána



CLIMATE CHANGE

Aim at County Level:

Identify ways that older people can make a contribution to the climate action agenda, Explore opportunities to benefit from the knowledge and life experiences of older People.

Key challenges identified during consultation with older people:

“Older people are good at doing their bit for the environment. We’re the generation that don’t like to waste anything”

“I’d like to see more community garden /allotment schemes in the local area, it’s a great way to bring the Community together”

1-2 years

Actions:

- SDC OPC to host series of information workshops on topics such as Upcycling / Recycling and Energy Saving tips and advice for older adults
- Identify key energy action speakers for Annual AGM



CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EMPLOYMENT

Aim at County Level:

Increase the scope for older people to participate in employment and volunteering opportunities in their communities and promote awareness of the role that older people have to play.

Key challenges identified during consultation with older people:

“I got more involved in my community through my club, but I think there are people who might need buddy supports, to enable them to get involved”

“I feel like I still have a lot to give to the community”

1-2 years

Actions:

- Increase the level of awareness within the older community in relation to what the county/local community has to offer
- Promote & Support older adult groups to apply for SDCC Community Grants Scheme

Work in Progress on all actions



RESPECT & SOCIAL INCLUSION

Aim at County Level:

Explore opportunities for older people to engage with their communities.

Key challenges identified during consultation with older people:

“A lot of older people are lonely”
“We would like to see more intergenerational projects undertaken at local level to encourage greater respect and understanding between younger and older people”

Actions:

1-2 years

- Identify the issues that older people face on a daily basis through ongoing meaningful consultation
- SDC OPC to be invited to consider all SDCC & Age Friendly Alliance members strategies/plans to ensure age friendly principles have been applied
- Identity an Age Friendly Ambassador for the county

Work in Progress with ongoing meaningful consultation



ACHIEVED:

Age Friendly Ambassador for South Dublin. Professor Rónán Collins –Director of Stroke Services / Consultant Physician in Tallaght University Hospital

TRANSPORTATION

Aim at County Level:

Identify transport issues for older people and look at opportunities to deliver a more integrated service that addresses the needs of the older community

Key challenges identified during consultation with older people:

“On the whole public transport is good in South Dublin County but cross-county transport links need to be addressed”

“I don’t know what I am going to do when I have to stop driving, public transport is not good where I live”

Actions:

1-2 years →

- Collaborate with key age friendly alliance members to explore possibilities of a community car scheme within the county.
- Identify areas that need age friendly car parking facilities and submit to SDC Age Friendly Alliance for consideration.

ACHIEVED: 7 Friendly Parking Bays installed at Adamstown Youth & Community Centre, Firhouse Community Centre, Knockmitten Youth & Community Centre, Quarryvale Youth & Community Centre & South Dublin County Council HQ

COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION

Aim at County Level:

Identify and use effective methods and channels of communication with older people through a collaborative approach among agencies, service providers and voluntary & community organisations

Key challenges identified during consultation with older people:

“We recognise that how we should communicate with Older people has changed greatly over the last decade”

“No one size fits all, We need to look at a variety of ways to keep older people informed on matters of concern to them”

Actions:

1-2 years →

- Develop an information flyer on the role of the Older People’s Council and circulate to the wider older community.
- Collaborate with Age Friendly Alliance members to explore opportunities to raise awareness
- Use local media radio and news items to keep older adults informed
- Collaborate with South Dublin Public Libraries to host a series of information workshops relevant to the needs of older people

Work in Progress on actions

ACHIEVED: Information Flyer on the Role of the Older People’s Council

COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES

Aim at County Level:

Identify and address ways that older people can Maintain good physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Key challenges identified during consultation with older people:

“We think the HSE text messaging appointment confirmation service is great, but we would like more human contact made available to older People”

“When I retired I felt my life was over, I think we need more pre retirement support to prepare us for the next stage in life”

“Older people in South Dublin County often find it difficult to communicate with Health Service Providers. Automatic phone lines and online services are frustrating”

Actions: set out for year 2

