COUNTY WICKLOW

Age Friendly

STRATEGY

2017 - 2022

WICKLOW
Age Friendly County

WICKLOW
ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES

Contents

Welcome Note from the Cathaoirleach

I am delighted to launch the Age Friendly Strategy for County Wicklow.

The Wicklow Age Friendly Programme 2017 – 2022 is an excellent opportunity to enhance the quality of life for older people. I am confident that Wicklow is a great place to live in and to grow old in and this strategy represents our commitment to positive ageing.

As the population of County Wicklow's ageing population grows, so too do the challenges to our society. This document has an ambitious five year action plan based on the views and opinions of the older people which are at the heart and foundation of the strategy.

At the consultation stage, one group of participants put it wisely **"we need to plan not only for ourselves but for those who come behind us"**.

Cllr. Pat Fitzgerald

Foreword from the Chief Executive

As Chief Executive of Wicklow County Council and Chairperson of County Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance, it is a great honour for me to launch the Wicklow Age Friendly Strategy 2017-2022. I want to thank the members of the Alliance for their commitment in ensuring that this comprehensive strategy has been completed. The interaction of the group represented on the alliance augurs well for its implementation. My sincere wish is that the various strategies identified will be championed by the identified lead agencies for the benefit of the lives of older people in the County. Further, that it will promote an age friendly ethos across service provision in County Wicklow.

I would like to acknowledge that the older people of Wicklow are an extremely valuable resource, with huge levels of expertise and experience, which will contribute to the communities of Wicklow.

As this strategy is created by older people for older people it gives a valuable insight into their needs and expectations.

The Age Friendly Alliance is a strategic partnership for Wicklow which unites private, voluntary and community sectors, all with diverse initiates which have come together to work in the spirit of Age Friendly.

Bryan Doyle

Introduction

This is the first Age Friendly Strategy for County Wicklow.

The aim is to make Wicklow an age friendly county, a great county in which to live and grow old in, a county in which the health and well being of older people is promoted and maintained. A county in which all public service and private sector providers work in partnership to make Wicklow great. It gives commitments to improving infrastructure both physical and social as well as services and information provision in order to improve the quality of life of older people across the county.

In order for the strategy to be successful it is vital that it is a living document with constant implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Therefore, the monitoring and evaluation will have to be robust and rigorous and done on a phased basis to ensure that the milestones are met. Wicklow Age Friendly Strategy does not operate in isolation but is part of an international and national framework of policies and procedures. These include the following;

- Wicklow Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 – 2022

- Wicklow County Development Plan

- Healthy Ireland 2013

- National Positive Ageing Strategy, 2013

- National Action Plan on Social Inclusion, 2007 -2016

- National Carer's Strategy, 2012

- National Dementia Strategy, 2014

- Putting People First: Action Programme of Effective Local Government, 2012

- The Madrid International Plan of Action, 2002

- World Health Organisation's Global Age - Friendly Cities: A Guide, 2007

- Dublin Declaration

- Ireland: A Great Country in which to grow old;
  Age Friendly Ireland's Statement of Strategy 2015 – 2017.

For the purpose of this document, we consider older people as those aged 55+. As can be seen this strategy is informed and framed by a wide range of policy documents, however it is worth noting that the National Positive Ageing Strategy was the key policy which informed the development of this strategy. The National Positive Ageing Strategy provides the framework for planning and delivering for an ageing population nationally.

Why A County Wicklow Age Friendly Strategy:

Due to changes in health care and lifestyle people are living longer and healthier lives and are experiencing older age very differently from their grandparent's generation. This has contributed to a changed demographic profile both internationally and nationally. While the Irish Population in comparison to other European countries is young, there is a growth in the number of people aged 65 years and older. According to the Census of Population 2011 there were a total of 535,393 people aged 65 and over in the country, representing 11.7% of the population. It is estimated that there will be over a million people aged 65 and older by 2036.

While the fact that people are living longer healthier lives compared to the past is a welcome development, the growth in the older population raises a wide range of issues for policy makers, health providers, service providers and national government. There is a need for proper resourcing of local and national based initiatives that meet the needs of older people. The National Positive Ageing Strategy is the national blueprint/vision for embracing and planning for an ageing population. It contains the national goals and objectives required to promote positive ageing and meet the needs of older people. It also sets out the need for local partnership structures to compliment the national level activities. Age Friendly provides the links between the national, international (World Health Organisation, Global Age Friendly Cities guide 2007) and the local.

The Age Friendly Cities and Counties programme is Ireland's adaptation of the WHO's Age Friendly Cities and Communities model. The role out of the programme and it's coordination is overseen by Age Friendly Ireland. According to WHO (2007) an Age Friendly Society is one in which "service providers, public officials, community leaders, faith leaders, business people and citizens recognise the great diversity among older persons, promote their inclusion and contribution in all areas of community life, respect their decisions and lifestyle choices, and anticipate and respond flexibly to ageing related needs and

preferences. An Age Friendly Community supports and enables people to age actively through policies, services and structures which recognise that an older people have a wide range of capabilities and resources".

An Age Friendly place:

- Anticipates and responds to the needs and preferences of older people

- Respects their decisions

- Protects the most vulnerable

- Promotes inclusion

" Old age is like everything else. To make a success of it, you've got to start young "

Theodore Roosevelt

The programme recognises that older people with their life time of accumulated expertise, talents and wisdom are central to the process. It aims through a policy of cooperation and partnership to assist counties and cities to become age friendly by addressing the concerns of older people across nine themes outlined below;

1. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

2. Transportation

3. Housing (Older people stay living in their own homes and communities)

4. Social Participation

5. Respect and Social Inclusion

6. Civic Participation and Employment

7. Communication and Information

8. Community Support and Health Services

9. Safety and Security

Local Context

"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 the things everyone wants in their lives. The Age Friendly programme is a way of making those things becomes a reality for our counties and communities" (County Wicklow Network for Older People submission on the development of Wicklow Age Friendly Strategy).

On the 27th November 2014 Cllr. Christopher Fox signed the Dublin Declaration on behalf of County Wicklow. The signing of the Dublin Declaration was a commitment by representatives to a five year cycle of continual assessment and improvements to make their communities more age friendly. Therefore, as part of that commitment Wicklow County Council in partnership with various stakeholders have introduced the age friendly programme and principles for County Wicklow.

On the 12th November 2015 Wicklow started on its Age Friendly journey with the establishment and first meeting of the County Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance. Members of the alliance include Wicklow County Council, Bray Area Partnership, County Wicklow Partnership, County Wicklow Network for Older People, County Wicklow Citizens Information, the HSE, An Garda Síochána and Ring A Link. This is the first time that all the agencies have come together and committed to working together for the benefit of older people and to make County Wicklow a great place to live and grow old in. The Alliance is the high-level overarching strategic partnership that oversees the development and realisation of the goals and actions of this strategy.

The Alliance is chaired by Mr. Bryan Doyle, Chief Executive, Wicklow County Council and consists of the senior decision makers from each of the agencies who will be able to develop and deliver on the commitments in this strategy.

Wicklow Older People's Council

The older peoples council is the cornerstone of the age friendly programme. Since 2007 County Wicklow Network for Older People has been a representative voice for older people in County Wicklow. County Wicklow Network for Older People is open to all groups and individuals working in the interests of older people. County Wicklow Network for Older People has three seats on the Age Friendly Alliance to ensure that the commitments of agencies contained in this strategy are fulfilled.

Development of the Strategy

Throughout the making of the strategy the focus was on a strategy developed with and by older people in the county and not a strategy for older people. The views and opinions of the older people in County Wicklow are the foundation and the heart of this strategy. It presents a new partnership approach to meeting the needs of older people across the county. The underlying vision and aims of this strategy recognises that the older people in County Wicklow are not a homogenous group but have different needs and requirements which are influenced by age, health status, geography, background, disposable income and quality of life. Therefore in the development of this strategy it was recognised that a multi faceted approach and in some instances a geographically targeted approach is needed to support and facilitate older people to enjoy a good quality of life in their own area/community. As well as national policy and guidelines the development of the strategy has also been informed by the following;

- Consultation sessions with Older People – April 2015 – May 2016

- The Health and Positive Ageing Initiative Survey - HaPAI Survey

- Submission from County Wicklow Network for Older People

- Pre-budget Submissions from County Wicklow Network for Older People

- County Wicklow Network for Older People Strategic Plan

- Submission from Wicklow Dementia Support Group

- Wicklow Local Economic and Community Plan 2016 - 2022

- Census of Population 2011

During the period April 2015 to May 2016 there was an extensive period of consultations with older people and older person organisations to find out what older people wanted from an Age Friendly Strategy. The nine themes identified by Age Friendly Ireland provided a basis for the consultation and is consistent with other age friendly strategies that have been developed nationally. The consultations were designed to make sure all areas of the county were covered and that as wide a range of older people as possible were consulted especially more hard to reach older people. The findings from the consultation are included under each of the themes and has informed the priorities selected and actions included. During the consultations it was clear from the feedback that a lot of consultation on needs of older people had been conducted by the County Wicklow Network for Older People and that older people wanted action on their issues and feedback on what was achieved.

The consultation sessions were widely publicised in the local newspapers, parish newsletters, posters and on East Coast FM in order to ensure as many people as possible got the chance to contribute, We were conscious however, that a lot of the people who attended the round table consultations were linked to established community and older person groups and not necessarily hard to reach older people. We were also conscious that there was a gender bias, with significantly more women attending than men. In order to help address this situation individual consultations were carried out with older people in rural areas in person and by phone, links were made with wide range of community and voluntary groups with the support of the PPN and consultation was carried out with Men's Shed groups and sports groups. We do recognise that older people in more isolated rural areas and home bound older people are not necessarily well represented in this consultation. We also recognise that the added difficulties faced by older people experiencing multiple disadvantage ie: someone who is over 65 but also belongs to one or more of another socially excluded group e.g. disability (physical and/or mental), ethnic minority/gay/ living in poverty/homeless. Their needs and issues are particularly challenging and require a multi-dimensional, multi-agency approach.

As well as the consultation sessions, Wicklow Age Friendly supported the carrying out of a comprehensive survey - the Health and Positive Ageing Initiative Survey (HaPAI). The HaPAI survey was carried out by Amarach Research on behalf of the Department of Health in partnership with Age Friendly Ireland and the HSE and was funded by Atlantic Philanthropy. The Wicklow survey was part of a national survey that was carried out in twenty one local authorities' areas across the country. The aim of the survey is to provide

a baseline to enable measurement on the progress Ireland makes towards becoming an Age Friendly country and contained questions on the nine themes. The benefit of standardised questions across the different areas is that it will allow for comparison between areas and allow for comparison with the national average.

In Wicklow, 500 people aged 55 and older were interviewed for the 'Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative' (HaPAI) survey between July and December 2015. The HaPAI survey results have been weighted and analysed, they are presented in this strategy under each of the themes. The results of the survey will allow us to measure progress over time and are included in an appendix to this document. The results of the survey and the consultation have directly informed the actions and priorities outlined in this strategy. It was felt that it was important that both the results of the survey and the consultation were contained in this strategy as a mark of respect to the older people who generously gave of their time to take part in the process.

The ambitious nature of this strategy comes from the desire of participants in the consultation to make County Wicklow a better place to grow old in. During the consultation it was recognised that not everything could be achieved in the short to medium term but that it was important that issues were flagged and recorded as needing action in order to achieve progress on them in the long term. As one group of participants put it we need to plan not only for ourselves but for the older people that are coming behind us.

Vision and Core Values

Shared Vision

The vision of County Wicklow Age Friendly Strategy is to make County Wicklow a great place to grow old in and one in which older people are respected and valued.

The core values of this strategy are:

SOCIAL INCLUSION

Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance will work to promote the social inclusion of all older people and to ensure that the age friendly strategy benefits all older people in the county both rural and urban. There is embedded in this strategy a recognition of the diversity of older people in the county and this diversity is to be cherished and supported. There is also a recognition that people have a lot of value to add as they age in terms of knowledge, experience, skills.

Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance is committed to the creation and maintenance of safe accessible environments for all older people.

SUSTAINABILITY

Wicklow Age Friendly will strive to ensure that all the actions leave a lasting positive legacy ensuring that Age Friendly becomes a meaningful practice which is embedded in all the agencies and not a tick box exercise. Therefore we will work to make age friendly a way of life rather than just a programme, older people will continue to be at the heart of this programme.

BEST PRACTICE

Signing the Dublin Declaration committed us to a five year cycle of continual assessment and improvements to make the county age friendly. We will continue to learn from both international best practice and models of good practice developed by other Age Friendly Counties and Cities. We will cooperate and collaborate with other counties to ensure sharing of ideas and best practice. In this strategy there is a clear alignment with national policy aimed at meeting the local needs identified.

All of the agencies have committed to remaining engaged in the process and delivering on the actions and priorities outlined in this strategy.

RESPECT

Wicklow Age Friendly will endeavour to treat all citizens with and ages with respect and dignity. There is recognition of the continuing need to engage directly with older people in the development of policies that affect them.

Theme 1:

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Goal

To make outdoor spaces and buildings pleasant, clean, accessible and safe for older people, creating walkable communities and age-friendly spaces.

Overview

This theme refers to any part of the public open space or built environment where people live, work and recreate. The state of this environment can have both positive and negative impacts on our quality of life. Barriers in the social and physical environment can have an impact on older people remaining independent and active in their communities. This in turn can affect a person's physical and mental health.

Accessible open spaces and buildings with good infrastructure will improve the quality of life of people of ages and abilities.

HaPAI background in Appendix

What People told us

During the consultation sessions there was a general feeling of satisfaction and positivity about open spaces and buildings in their communities. Accessibility measures that have taken place were welcomed; however there was a feeling that smaller towns and villages had not been included in the delivery of accessibility measures. There was a feeling that the reduction in funding and the rationalisation of services has resulted in a reduction in the services which are available especially in the cases of banks and post offices with the development of automated services.

Traffic calming measures need to be increased in rural towns and villages. The development of green spaces in the towns/villages and appropriate seating and benches would help make the areas more age friendly. Tone zones could be incorporated into the green areas to promote physical activity.

Footpaths and Lighting

More public lighting is needed in villages, towns and in public places.

- Proper street lighting was seen as a major issue across all the consultations. Many older people especially in the smaller urban areas and rural areas stated that due to the lack of proper lighting they were afraid to walk on the footpaths or roads.

- Effective street lighting would help with both feelings of security and physical activity.

• Maintenance of footpaths was seen as essential to maintaining accessibility not only for older people but also people with a disability. There was a feeling in certain areas that cobble locking or aesthetically pleasing footpaths are put down but not maintained and become dangerous for older people. While in other areas there is a need to repair uneven, broken and obstructed footpaths.

• Scheme of winter maintenance and salting of footpaths for the winter months should be developed.

• Ensure that street works are done properly and service provider works are linked so that pavements/roads are not dug up/made unsafe unnecessarily and that once work is done it does not need to be re-done – Scarce resources should be used wisely and not wasted.

Buildings

• Ensure that derelict buildings are safe and not unsightly – Wicklow County Council should be responsible for this and have the power & means to hold landlords/landowners accountable for their land and buildings.

• Create an up to date derelict register.

• Owners should have to ensure that the facade of their building is maintained if the building is not being used.

Parking

• Access to parking areas, in some areas older people are paying for parking near their house despite having a parking permit as their parking space has been taken up by commuters.

• Easily accessible parking facilities for older people and people with disabilities.

Shops and Services

• The maintenance of shops, church, community centre, post office and other services in the local areas was seen as essential to the independent living of older people and the maintenance of these communities as viable communities.

- Some older people expressed the feeling that there was an onus on them and other people in the community to ensure that they used the local services or they would disappear.

- Customer service was seen as being vitally important, it was noted that some older people may require assistance when shopping in the cases of ill health, dementia or disability. It was also noted that some local shops and supermarkets do free home deliveries which enables an older person to go out and do their shopping and have the social interaction without having to worry about having to lift the shopping home. Shops that provide a good customer service to older people should be recognised and supported.

- Installation of hand rails and seating facilities in public buildings to improve access.

- Local shops and services can become increasingly important as one gets older because the distance one is able to travel is reduced.

- In rural areas it was pointed out that the local shop, church, library and post office not only provide a necessary service but also a central location in which older people can interact, meet friends and acquaintances in a safe relaxed environment. These locations as safe points for social interaction were seen as vitally important, they help reduce isolation and support independent living. The loss of a local service such as a shop was seen as having a major impact on the person's links to the local community due the reduction in social networks.

- In making decisions about the withdrawal of a service to a local community, the decision should take into account the social impact as well as the economic viability.

- Development of tone zones in urban areas for older people should be considered especially in Baltinglass, Blessington and Tinahely.

Litter and Waste Management

- Litter and waste management was seen as crucial in maintaining towns and villages as attractive and clean places to live.

- Dog fouling on the footpaths was seen as having a negative impact on the enjoyment and quality of life for all ages. Some people felt that there needed to be more education of pet owners and their responsibility to clean up after their pets.

- Some people felt that there were not enough street bins and they were not emptied regularly enough, especially outside of the main urban centres.

- Fly tipping in rural areas was highlighted by some as an increasing issue and there was a lack of information on who to contact to report it. It was also felt that it contributed to feelings of vulnerability and unease.

Theme 1: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Priority 1

A programme of walkability Audits will be initiated through the life time of the Strategy that will identify areas of the built environment and public realm where action is required to ensure that older people are afforded better access and inclusion. This will include addressing issues raised by older people such as access to toilets, building access, pedestrian crossings, poor footpaths, signage etc.

Priority 2

Building on the successful Bray Age Friendly Business Recognition Programme other towns and villages in Wicklow will be encouraged / supported to replicate and implement the Age Friendly Ireland Business Recognition programme. This will be supported by the Co Wicklow Economic Development Unit.

Priority 3

The Age Friendly Programme will encourage the use of best practice guidelines and practices from around the country in planning and development plans. Wicklow Co Co will identify an age friendly champion within each of its functions to advocate for Age Friendly principles in its work.

Priority 4

The Age Friendly Programme will in partnership with Wicklow Access Group promote the need for accessibility in all public buildings including post offices, banks, credit unions, shops, restaurants and other service providers. It will encourage and facilitate the the installation of age friendly seating, hand rails and other supports which will facilitate ease of use of services and open spaces.

Action Plan 1

ACTIONS - Samples Priority Actions/ Proposed Actions for Consideration

Priority Number	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Timeline	Measurable
1.1	Carry out walkability audits in towns and villages with the aim of improving accessibility for all	WCC	Access Officer, Wicklow Local Authorities Access Group	1 walkability audit in a town/village in each MD area to be carried out each year	Recommendations from audits to be considered/ included in relevant schedule of works
1.2	Where appropriate increase the number of anti litter and dog fouling signs.	Wicklow County Council	MD areas and Environmental awareness office/Waste Management Section	2017-2018	Increased signage and awareness of green walker schemes
1.3	Examine the frequency of the emptying of street bins to prevent overspill	Wicklow Co. Council	MD areas	2017	Increase awareness of "fix your street". Prioritise areas of concern. Examine possibility of solar bins.
1.4	Develop a partnership approach to tackle the issue of anti social behaviour in public spaces this is not a barrier for older people using public areas	An Garda Siochana	PPN, County Wicklow Network for Older People, JPC	2017-2018	Increased sense of safety and security amongst older people. Survey to be carried out in 2018 in conjunction with Health and Positive Aging.
2.1	One more town in Wicklow to become an Age Friendly Business Town	Wicklow Co. Council	Wicklow Economic Development Unit	2017-2022	Two towns recognised as Age Friendly

3.1	Ensure Age Friendly principles and approach is embedded in the County Development plan, Local Area plans town and village enhancement schemes. This will also include all future strategic and corporate plans	Wicklow County Council	County Wicklow Network for Older People	2017-2022	County Wicklow Network for Older People are proactively consulted in the development of plans.
3.2	Identification of Age Friendly Champion in all statutory agencies	Co. Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance, WCC		2017 - 2018	Champions identified
3.3	Promote awareness of concept of universal design among relevant agencies	Wicklow County Council	Co. Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance, Disability Access Group	2017-2022	Best practise and design
4.1	Facilitate development of green spaces and open spaces for recreation use - areas with potential for tone zones and age friendly exercise equipment	Wicklow County Council	Co. Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance, Wicklow LSP, MDs, CCSD/ LSP	2017-2019	Number of tone zones developed.
4.2	Work with area engineers to examine the possibility of installing more seating in public areas	WCC	County Wicklow Network for Older People, PPN, MDs	2017-2018	Increased appropriate seating
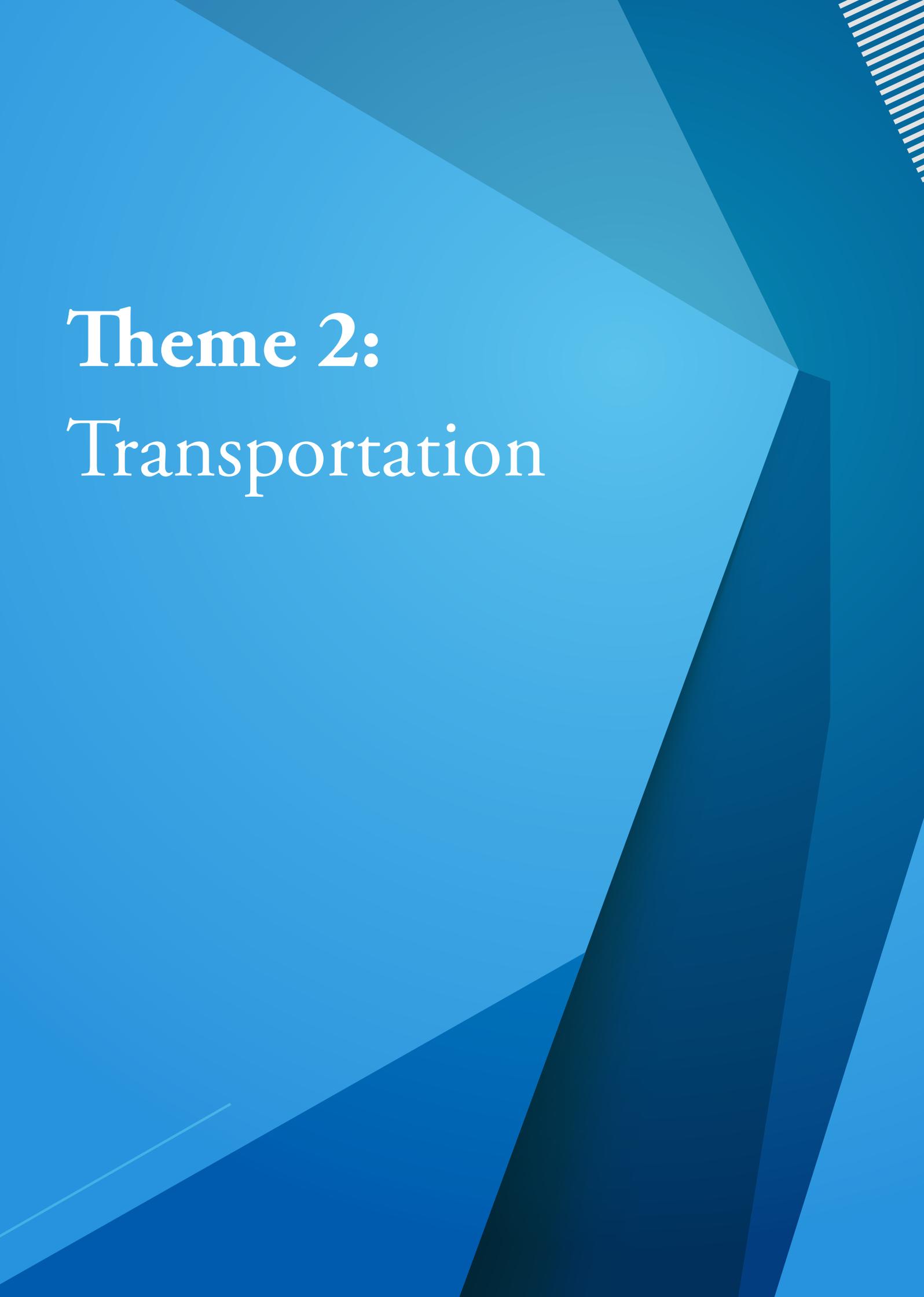
Theme 2:
Transportation

Goal

To promote safe, accessible, reliable and comfortable transport services for older people.

Overview

During the consultations and in meetings with older peoples groups across the county transport, lack of and access to, was the main issue for many older people. A large percentage of those participating in the consultations had their own means of transport, however there is a significant percentage of older people in the county that do not have independent means of transport. In a county like Wicklow with its mixture of urban and rural population, geography and location of services access to transport is required to take part in everyday activities such as going to the shops, post office, go to church and take part in social activities. There was a lot of concern among older people regarding access to doctors and hospital appointments using public transport. The rural transport scheme is seen as providing a life line to many older people across County Wicklow enabling them to participate in their communities and avoid them becoming prisoners in their own home. Informal transport links with lifts from family, friends and neighbours were also seen as offering a much needed life line to people without their own transport.

HaPAI background in Appendix

What People told us

Throughout the consultations access to public transport was a key issue which was highlighted as having a major impact on older people's quality of life. Access to transport determines what services and facilities that can avail of. Therefore having a major impact on older people's ability to engage in their communities. While it was mainly seen as a rural issue, it was also raised as an issue affecting people in towns (Bray and Baltinglass) where older people also experience accessibility problems as a result of lack of transport opportunities. Car ownership and dependency was high among participants, however it was noted that car ownership decreases with age. Even with the high level of car ownership participants remarked that the distance they travel has declined and that they tend to avail of services within their locality. Linkages between public transport and health services/centres were seen as both practical and essential for older people to attend appointments.

" Growing old is compulsory, growing up is optional."

Bob Monkhouse

Public Transport (Urban and Rural)

- The free travel pass was seen as vital to maintaining independence and availing of the transport facilities that do exist. There was some concern, especially in rural areas that the government would look to change the scheme and restrict use of the travel pass.

- It was felt that the Free travel pass should be accepted on all Bus Eireann and Dublin Bus routes, at the moment participants highlighted it cannot be used on the airport route.

- The development of the N11 has resulted in improved links between Dublin, Bray, Wicklow, Arklow and Gorey and this was welcomed as it meant shorter and safer commuting times. However there was a worry that with increased competition between Wexford Bus and Bus Eireann that some bus stops would be removed such as the one near Jack Whites and this would have serious implication for all that used the service. Participants noted that we need to keep the bus stops along the N11 and maintain the service in the towns along the route. There is a need to campaign to keep the bus stop at Jack Whites.

- In the rural areas public transport is severely limited and the rural transport scheme is seen as a lifeline. It was recognised that while the rural transport routes may not be economically viable they need to be maintained given their role in maintaining older people's independence and participation in everyday activities.

- The development of a shuttle/feeder mini bus service under the rural transport scheme between rural transport routes and Bus Eireann and train services should be explored. It was felt this could be piloted in South Wicklow and would be of benefit to both young and old alike. It would also give people more options and linkages to avail of hospital appointments and other medical appointments.

- Feeder buses around some of the main towns – Bray, Arklow, Baltinglass and Blessington was highlighted as a need. Bray Seafront, Sidmonton Rd, Meath Rd and Baltinglass town centres were areas that were highlighted as in need of transport links and were viewed as being ignored because they are urban areas.

- "Use it or lose it" was noted in terms of the rural transport scheme, there is a need for more publicity of the routes available under the scheme, so that people are aware of the routes and can access them.

- The Dart was seen a good and comfortable means of travel but if you don't live in Bray or Greystones you have to drive to access it. Shuttle bus linking to the DART stations would be useful.

Access to Medical Appointments

- Access to medical appointments using public transport was a major issue across the county. This issue was not just a rural issue but was also raised in Bray, Greystones and other urban areas. It was felt that the public transport system should connect with the hospitals in Dublin (Vincent's and Loughlinstown) and Wexford. Links to Vincent's hospital in particular was a major source of concern.

- It was also felt that hospitals in making appointments for older people should have staggered appointments rather than having all the older people coming for the same time. There should be an awareness of the distance people have to travel on public transport.

- Development of a volunteer car driving service for medical appointments similar to that used by Wicklow Cancer support was suggested. The

volunteer drivers for cancer appointments were seen as life savers and angels. This would need a coordinating point person who would have a list of volunteer drivers.

Social Inclusion

- Development of community bus/taxi service for older people based on a model similar to Easi Cabs Bray was identified as a need. This it was suggested would also reduce costs for the HSE in long term.

- However within rural areas it was noted that there was good practice in members of community groups giving lifts to people who don't drive, there was some concern about insurance cover and giving people a lift. It is worth noting that if you are not a member of a community group and don't have access to transport you are excluded.

- Within the towns the development of an evening transport scheme to community centres, Carnew Community Care, Mermaid Theatre and drop in centres would improve people's quality of life. This would allow for more social engagement, opportunities to participate in different activities and reduce social isolation. It was suggested that this could possibly be linked to a discount or loyalty scheme with local taxi/hackney providers, who would provide a discounted service to older people in their community.

- It was noted especially in the rural transport scheme and on some of the Dublin Bus routes drivers are aware of the needs of older people and use their discretion in collecting and dropping off older people such as waiting an extra minute to allow an older person get on the bus or disembark. It was noted this courtesy also helps prevent accidents.

Facilities

- During the planning of primary health care centres consideration should be given to the location of bus stops and shelters.

- Seating at bus stops where feasible should be provided. It was noted that this was an issue not only for older people but also people with children.

- Toilet facilities on buses travelling long distances should be provided.

- Clear printed timetables would help clear up some of the lack of information and concerns about bus times. If possible these timetables should also show links to other transport options for follow on journeys.

Traffic Calming and management

- The issues highlighted in this section are linked to theme one.

- Clearly marked pedestrian crossings – Carnew and Dunlavin were areas where this was highlighted in particular.

- Improvements to road infrastructure filling of potholes, improved street lighting and maintenance of footpaths were seen as necessary to enable people of all ages get around towns and villages.

- Traffic calming plans should take into account needs of older people.

- Parking in towns should be accessible and affordable. Parking near GP's, pharmacies etc.

- Cost of parking in hospitals is expensive and should be reduced for people that have to use the hospital/care centre on a regular basis.

Theme 2 - Transportation

Priority 1

- A transport thematic working group will be established inviting the key transport providers in the country to look at solutions that will address some of the key issues raised by older people. This will involve;

  - Looking at existing transport services (frequency, routes covered and access) with regards demographic spread and connectivity to main transport routes.

- Looking at innovative community transport initiatives that could be introduced within the county.

Priority 2

Key agencies such as Wicklow County Council, transport providers, the Gardaí Siochána, and the HSE will look at how traffic infrastructure can be planned and delivered better in relation to supporting people in getting to services. Areas that can be considered are;

- Traffic calming, location and suitability of pedestrian crossing, access to affordable parking.

- Appointment scheduling that fits into existing transport time tabling, dedicated parking bays close to entrances of buildings.

- A review of seating and shelters at bus stops to be undertaken and a programme of improvement / development initiated through the life time of the strategy.

Priority 3

- Transport providers will review and improve on the availability and access of printed transport timetables.

Action Plan 2

Priority Number	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Timeline	Measurable
1.1	Carry out transport audit with all providers to ascertain how the needs of older people can be best met. Make results available on website and in print.	Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance	CWNOP, Transport Providers, Wicklow Co. Co.	2018	Gaps and results printed
1.2	Raise awareness of the rural transport scheme and make available printed timetables	Ring a Link	CWNOP	2017-2018	Increase awareness and increase in people using service
2.1	Ensure the visibility of street and road signs	Wicklow Co. Co.	CWNOP, MD, Roads	2017-2022	Signs visible & hedge cutting as appropriate
2.2	Ensure that pedestrian crossings are clearly marked and are in appropriate locations.	Wicklow Co. Co,	CWNOP, MD	2017-2020	Safer crossings, decrease in accidents

Priority Number	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Timeline	Measurable
2.3	Explore the possibility of the development of a community car transport scheme for hospital and medical appointments	Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance	Bray Area Partnership, Co. Wicklow Partnership, CWNOP	2018	Improved transport access and transport opportunities
2.4	Develop shelters and seating at Bus Stops as required, especially at health centres,	Bus Eireann	Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance	2018-2020	Number of bus shelters put in place
2.5	Campaign for the maintenance of bus stops along the N11 and at St. Vincent's Hospital	CWNOP	HSE, Age Friendly Alliance	2017-2018	Maintenance of bus stops
2.6	In partnership with Road Safety Authority to organise an education programme on "Safer Roads for Older People"	RSA	WCC, An Garda Siochana	2017-2018	Programme developed and circulated to representative bodies.
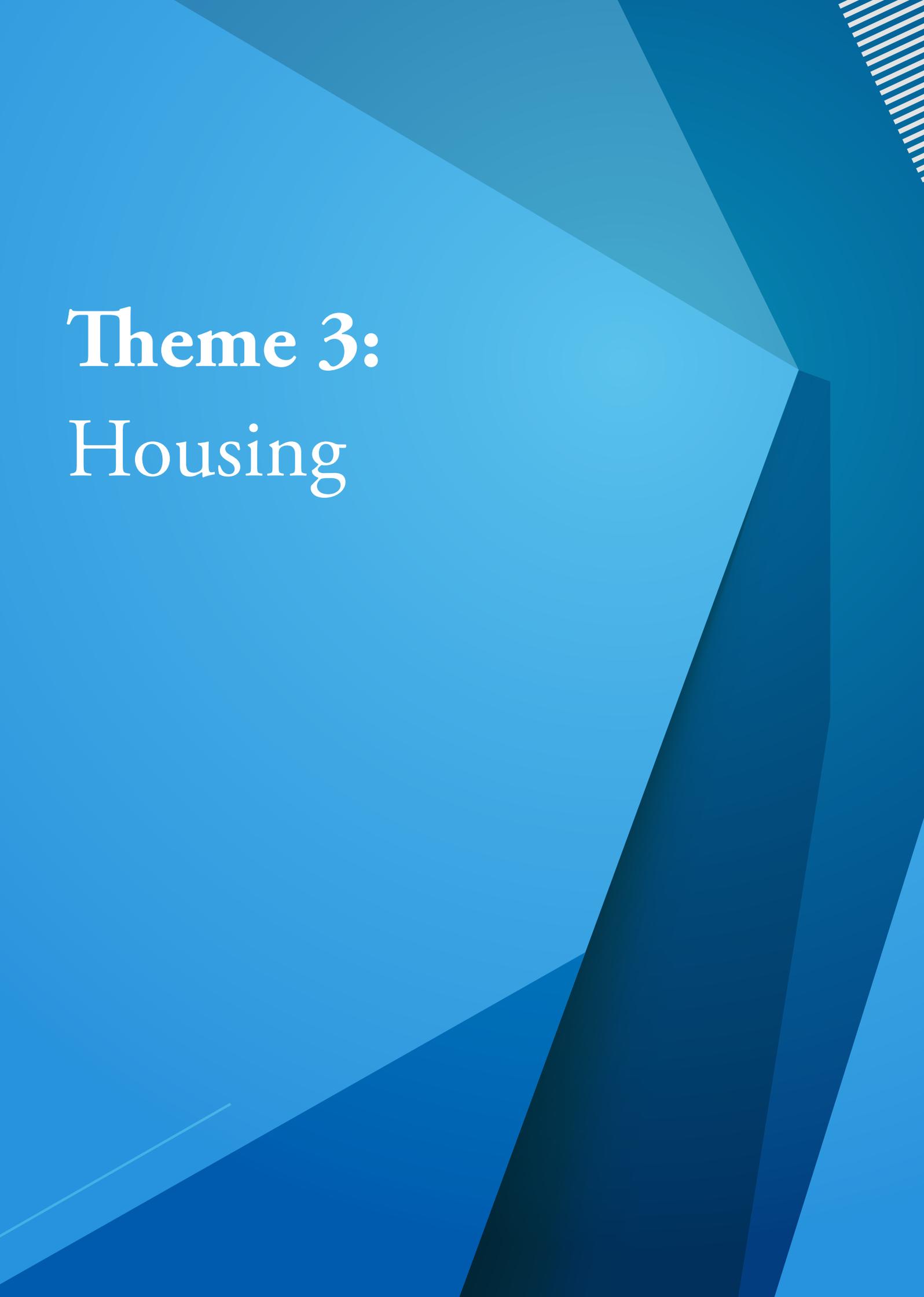
Theme 3: Housing

Goal

To provide a more seamless and appropriate continuum of housing choices and options for older people.

Overview

The theme of housing cannot be viewed in isolation but needs to be viewed in tandem with the other themes as there are a wide range of issues that can affect one's ability to live in one's own home. While there was a high degree of satisfaction with housing conditions, the consultation highlighted the needs for and availability of support services was seen as a key determinant in how long a person could live independently on their own. The need for a continuum of housing option was a clear theme during the consultation.

What People told us

The overwhelming majority of participants would like to remain in their own home as long as they live. However it was recognised that this was not always possible, older people would like to go into sheltered housing or care within their community and not have to go somewhere that is a distance away from family, friends and what is familiar. During the consultation the importance of lifelong housing in the design of houses came across as very important so that houses can be adapted to meet a person's requirements as they go through the different life stages.

Housing Continuum

- It was felt that while the main priority was to support an older person to remain in their own home a continuum of housing types should be developed in communities rather than the sole option being going into a nursing home.

- Sheltered accommodation would enable people to live in their own communities with the social benefits of being near friends and family. Carnew Community Care and Courtown nursing home were given as examples of good practice.

- Grants for housing adaptations as people become frailer and in need of assistance were seen as a key priority. The housing adaption grants are vital so that people can adapt their own homes to meet their changing needs and

get work such as safety hand rails, lowering work stations, stair lifts, ramps and walk in showers completed.

- Housing Adaption Grant scheme should be person focused so that it meets the needs of the person requiring the adaptation. More flexibility in the housing adaption grants schemes was advocated for as there is a feeling that the scheme is inflexible and the Department/Council have a set view of the adaptations that should be done and do not take the persons views or requirements into consideration.

- Care and repair programme should be extended county wide at the moment only older people in Arklow and Bray areas can be benefit from this service through Homelink and Arklow Community Action.

- Care and repair programme could be included as part of the social inclusion community activation programme operated by Bray Area Partnership and County Wicklow Partnership. Older people stated that housing maintenance and repair was becoming a bigger issue as they got older. They noted that it was possible to get someone in for the big jobs but it was for the small jobs such as changing a light bulb, cleaning gutters, heavy lifting and garden tasks etc that assistance was required with.

- If the Care and Repair scheme was operated at a county wide level by the Partnership companies or Homelink people felt that they could trust the people on the people on the scheme as they would have been vetted.

- County Wicklow Volunteer centre was also highlighted as possibly having a role in developing a database of people who would provide services to older people on a voluntary basis or at minimal cost.

- With the reduction in allowances the cost of keeping a home warm on a pension was seen as difficult. Bray Area Partnership's Warmer Homes programme was seen as beneficial to older people. However it was felt that it should available to all older people and should be publicised more.

- Quality nursing home and respite centres were seen as hard to access due to waiting lists.

Safety

- Good neighbours and a sense of community were seen as contributing to feeling safe in one's own home.

- Community Alert and Text Alert schemes were highlighted as schemes which benefited older people and helped reduce concerns.

- Winter months were seen as the time of year people felt more vulnerable and isolated especially in rural areas.

- Actions need to be taken to ensure people feel safe in their own home including information provision, support for personal alarms, external lighting and extension of community and text alert schemes.

- Participants want to get the landline allowance reinstated as some had got rid of their personal alarms as they no longer had landlines and there is a perception that personal alarms will only work if you only have a landline.

- Mobile phone coverage level in the county differs in different areas and by network. Some of the more rural areas were highlighted as having poor mobile phone coverage.

- Newspaper headlines of older people being targeted in their own homes in both national and local media increased feelings of insecurity and nervousness especially among older people living alone. Some older people in the county feel like a prisoner in their own home after dark due to what they see as the rise of anti social behaviour in both urban and rural areas.

Support Services:

- Home help is an essential service which allows older people to remain independent in their own home. However there is a feeling that it is underfunded and the home help providers should be able to provide more hours. A number of participants spoke about receiving one hour which they did not feel was sufficient. There was also a feeling that the nature of home help had changed and become more medically focused i.e. getting the person into and out of bed.

- Home help should be an integrated package of supports with the one "carer" providing the range of supports to the person rather than having two or three people calling to the same person. It was felt this would cut down on overlap and reduce travel expenses.

- A postal or home delivery system for medicines in partnership with pharmacies should be developed especially for older people in rural areas.

- The services provided by day care centres were seen as essential supports for older people such as meals, physiotherapy and chiropody. However day care services were seen as being very patchy and not available to all older people.

- Older people value the meals on wheels service and there is a desire to have a county wide service. The meals on wheels service is highly dependent on volunteers and is not available in all areas. The role volunteers' play in providing supports for older people such as meals on wheels cannot be overestimated.

Community

- Good neighbours were seen as an essential part of making an area age friendly. Neighbours and family visiting older people in their own homes and also in nursing homes is valued and helps reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness. A community visiting or befriending service for older people was proposed.

- Community services such as post offices, library, grocery shops, hairdressers/barbers, pharmacies and doctors were seen as not only making an area age friendly but as a liveable community. Concern was expressed at the decline of services resulting in a weakening of traditional community structures and supports. People noted that they now have to travel further to avail of services that used to be locally available.

- Public buildings such as libraries should be utilised to provide meeting spaces for active retirement/friendship groups and the delivery of computer classes.

- Rural transport should link up with community services.

- A reduced rate for businesses starting in rural areas was highlighted as a way of keeping rural communities viable. It was suggested that this could be used to specifically support businesses that met the needs of targeted groups such as older people.

Communications:

- Leaflets and advice on housing grants and support should be available to older people. During the production of information leaflets every effort should be made to ensure that they are in plain English.

- The provision of information should be accurate and timely.

Theme 3: Housing

Priority 1

Co Wicklow Housing Adaptation Grants Schemes to be reviewed and the process streamlined and where blockages are identified new processes put in place. Information on how to access LA and other housing adaptation grants to be widely made available to older people groups and services supporting older people.

Priority 2

Care and Repair service to be expanded to all parts of the county and a programme of promotion of the service is undertaken.

Priority 3

Wicklow Co. Co. will work with housing providers to identify areas where Housing with Support schemes can be developed. Any developments will consider the findings and recommendations from the 'Dublin City Demonstration Project' as per the Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness, 2016 (DHPCLG).

Action Plan 3

Priority Number	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Timeline	Measurable
1.1	Review of Housing adaptation grant scheme with a view to ensuring that it is person centred	Wicklow County Council	CWNOP, Department, Co. Wicklow CIS	2017-2018	Review of guidelines to make forms more accessible.
2.1	Examine the provision of care and repair in the county with a view to developing the model throughout the county	Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance	Bray Area Partnership, CWP, CWNOP,	2017-2019	Model for County wide scheme to be developed.
3.3	Promote the Better Energy Homes scheme and the Warmer Homes Scheme. Ensuring that older people have access to information on the schemes	Bray Area Partnership	Co. Wicklow CIS	2017	Increased awareness on schemes
3.4	Ensure the dissemination of the Be Winter Ready booklet through older person groups	Wicklow County Council	Co. Wicklow CIS, CWNOP	2017	Increased access to be winter ready booklet
3.5	Work to promote awareness of the Personal Alarm and pendant Scheme.	Bray Area Partnership, County Wicklow Partnership	Co. Wicklow CIS	2017-2019	Increased awareness and take up of alarm and pendant schemes

Priority Number	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Timeline	Measurable
3.6	Tenant support officer to work with older tenants to determine what supports are required following an allocation of a local authority dwelling and to work with existing tenants.	Wicklow County Council	HSE, Dept of Social Protection, County Wicklow Network for Older People	2017-2018	Development of better links between housing and older tenants
3.7	Work with the HSE to examine how Primary Health Care Services in the County can be developed and supported to provide a range of programmes/ services to older people in order to avoid the need for hospitalisation and support them to live at home as long as possible.	HSE	County Wicklow Network for Older People, Wicklow Co. Co. Bray Area Partnership, Co. Wicklow Partnership	2017-2019	Reduction in non essential hospital visits.
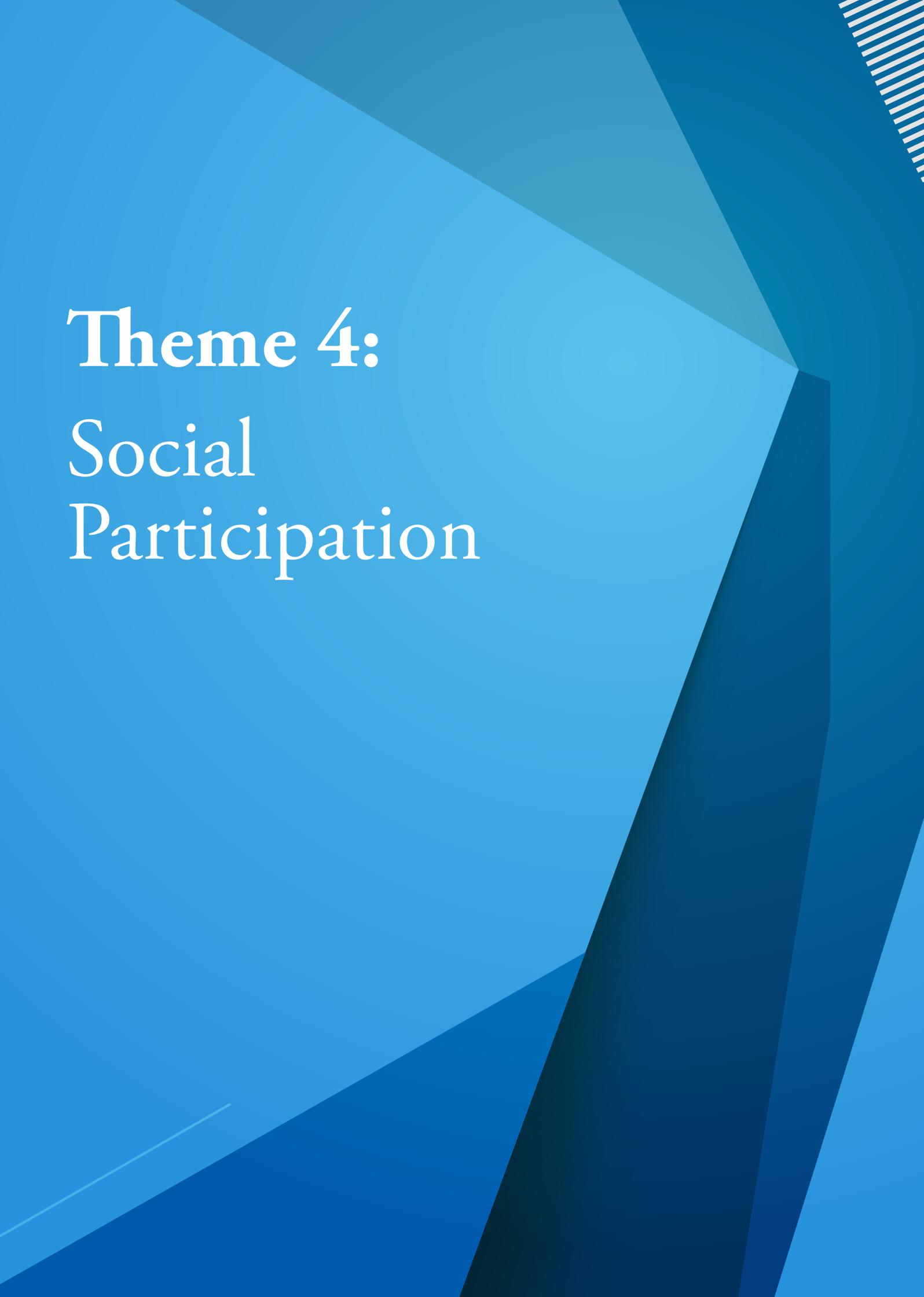
Theme 4:
Social Participation

Goal

To provide opportunities for older people to stay connected and to play an active part in social networks.

Overview

A review of the literature in relation to social participation and older people shows that active social participation has positive impacts on health and well being. It provides a feeling of being part of a community, family or network. Therefore social participation in older age has a positive impact on quality of life as well as physical and psychological health. Social participation and health have a symbiotic relationship; an older person's feeling of health/well being has an impact on the level of active and passive social participation while active social participation can increase a person's sense of health and well being. It is worth noting that the level of social participation is dependent on the level of social resources and support available to the older person. These resources include access to transport, information, sense of security and finances.

What people told us

A high degree of importance was placed on a good sense of community with proper community facilities such as community halls and coffee shops. It was expressed that active participation in the community helped foster not only a sense of belonging but also identity and facilitated intergenerational activity. During the consultation it was clear that the older people were willing and able to use their skills and experiences to enhance their communities and to improve the quality of life for all. However it was also noted that leadership and voluntary activity in community groups should not be just left to older people but should be for people of all ages. As one participant summed it up by saying "There is a belief that you older people have loads of time now that you are older or retired and can volunteer for everything, sure what else would you be doing".

Community Groups and Social Events

- Throughout the county there is a wide range of community and voluntary groups which older people actively participate in these include the GAA, Active Retirement, ICA, Friendship Groups, Social Dancing, book clubs, art and crafts groups, drama groups tidy towns, etc. However it was recognised that in some areas especially rural areas there is not as much choice and an older person needs access to transport to get involved.

- During the consultation sessions it became apparent that some older people were reluctant to join local community groups because they were relatively new to the area and were not sure if they would be welcome.

- The consultations sessions also highlighted that networking and sharing information between community groups was poor, with members of some groups saying that they would have helped another group out if they knew when they were organising an activity. It was suggested that a calendar of events for a local area should be developed and displayed in an appropriate public building such as a library or a post office. It was also suggested that there should be an overall development committee for an area which would be a central hub for sharing information locally. However some participants felt this would be placing an extra burden on already overworked volunteers. The role of the PPN and the Volunteer Centre in supporting or developing networking opportunities should be explored.

- Communications between branches of the same organisation such as Active Retirement should be enhanced to facilitate interaction between older people from different areas.

- Church for mass and services was seen as a valuable opportunity for social participation. A number of areas have developed a tradition of tea/coffee in local coffee shop/church hall or community centre after church during the week to increase social participation. This could be replicated around the county with minimum cost.

- During the consultation the issue of isolation among older men was raised as a serious issue. Projects and groups which encourage participation among men should be focused on. Suggestions included support for Men's shed and the development of a policy for community gardens/ allotments as a way of involving men was put forward as possible actions to include men.

- While some sports do facilitate older people to continue playing and remain engaged it was felt that more should be done to ensure that older people remain physically active. The view was expressed that when you get older you go on committees but do not remain physically active, GAA Healthy Clubs initiative was seen as a way of getting people back active.

Theme 4: Social Participation

Priority 1

Raise awareness of the community grant scheme among groups representing older people.

Priority 2

Identify gaps in social supports for specific groups (e.g. men, travellers and migrants) and support local groups to introduce new initiatives or adapt existing supports to meet these gaps.

Priority 3

Develop a range of physical activity programmes for older people throughout the county.

Priority 4

To work with the PPN to develop a template / process for the gathering and sharing of information at a local, MD and county level of community supports available to older people.

Action Plan 4

Priority Number	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Timeline	Measurable
1.1	Explore funding opportunities for community based initiatives aimed at older people	Wicklow Co. Co	CWNOP	2017-2018	Increased number of funding opportunities available
2.1	Raise awareness of the training the education opportunities available to older people	KWETB	Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance	2017-2018	Increase number of participation in courses.
2.2	Develop more opportunities for inclusion of people with dementia such as choirs, social groups, arts and music.	Dementia group	WCC	2017-2019	Number of new opportunities for people with dementia
2.3	Develop opportunities for intergenerational gardening activities in community, building on existing models of community gardening in the county.	CWNOP	WCC	2018-2020	Number of gardening initiatives developed.
2.4	Provide community leadership courses for all community groups	KWETB	WCC	2017-2019	Number of community groups trained
2.5	Work with social enterprises to expand and develop initiatives aimed at facilitating social engagement of older people	Wicklow Age Friendly	Homelink, Easicabs	2017-2019	Improved access to facilitate socialising.
3.0	Develop range of physical activity programmes for older people throughout the county	Wicklow Local Sports Partnership	CWNOP	2017-2022	Increased number of older people participating in sports and physical activities
4.0	Work with PPN to develop template for sharing information	WCC, PPN	CWNOP	Ongoing	New websites for age friendly, develop use of e-bulletins

Theme 5:
Respect and
Social Inclusion

Goal

To combat stereotypes, myths and negative views on ageing and prevent prejudice and discrimination against older people.

Overview

As is summarised in the goal, this is about ensuring that older people are truly respected and valued. During the consultation it was noted that this theme is closely linked to the previous theme of social participation because if an older person cannot participate in the life of the community they are socially excluded and at a high risk of isolation and loneliness.

What people told us

Older people in general feel included as part of their community and neighbourhoods. Good neighbours and a sense of community identity are essential to this and it was noted that both are important to developing a sense of inclusion and identity regardless of what age you are. Identity with place was seen as being very important. However it was noted that the issue of respect had changed from what it used to be and there was less respect for institutions, public officials and people of all ages.

Community Identity:

- In order to develop a community identity a community needs a space which is accessible to all the community regardless of age and ability. It was highlighted that community halls/meeting spaces should be developed in all communities.

- Proper sustainable planning to ensure community space is provided in all new developments.

- Development of Tus, Rural Social scheme or supported employment programme to provide people with employment opportunities and to ensure community halls are managed properly and open to all groups.

- Promotion of intergenerational activity through community sports days or community fun days in which all the area can come together and get to know each other.

- Computer training in public buildings or community halls for older people so they can access information on their local area and stay up to date. It was suggested this could be undertaken as a project either by schools or youth groups. This would also assist intergenerational activity.

- Explore the establishment of an overall development committee for an area or a community newsletter. Older people are involved in a wide range of community and voluntary groups however there was a feeling that groups sometimes operate in isolation and in some instances an older person would like to support an activity being organised by another group but don't know it is on until too late.

Isolation

- As was mentioned previously older people want to remain in their own homes and communities, however due to circumstances older people can become housebound or have to go to a care centre. Development of a befriending or a call service which would contact older people who are housebound once a week would help reduce isolation and exclusion.

- People living with dementia and their carers can become isolated and excluded due the stigma associated with dementia and the need to care for the person with dementia. Models of good practice should be developed in the county and support provided for the Dementia Awareness group.

- Provision of dementia awareness programme to help reduce level of stigma and feelings of isolation.

- Development of day services such as Carnew Community care, drop in centres would help reduce isolation. Transport to daily services in towns may be a barrier for people in rural areas.

- Churches are a valuable source of social interaction and the development of having a cup of tea/coffee and chat after mass/service either on the church property or community centre should be encouraged. It was noted this is already happening in some areas but should be widened out.

- During the consultation a high degree of emphasis was placed on the importance of family connections in remaining involved. Isolation can occur when a family moves away or is estranged.

Stereotyping

- The media was seen as portraying a very negative image of older people both nationally and locally, describing older people as "coffin dodgers" or bed blockers. This negative stereotyping needs to be tackled.

- Development of media campaign or regular feature in local media on positive images/ stories of ageing. This would counteract the negative stories in media about overcrowding in hospitals due to ageing population.

- Older people value their own home, some participants felt that there was a push to get older people to downsize to two bed houses or flats as they were blocking the way for younger people. It was felt that this should be a choice and pressure should not be put on anyone to move out of their home to make way for a younger person.

- Perception that because you are older you have loads of time and nothing to do. Due to financial pressures parents do not have the option to remain at home, grandparents take on childminding duties, school runs etc. It was also noted that some older people provide a valuable caring service for other older people.

- Development of a recognition scheme to recognise the voluntary caring role of older people.

- Invisibility, some older people expressed the feeling that as you became older one became invisible.

Communications and Knowledge Share

- There is a need to develop way of sharing information between groups in a community.

- Development of intergenerational programme of knowledge transfer. It was recognised that young people have skills which the older people want to acquire especially in relation to IT. While older people life experience and skills for trades such as wood working, stone masoning, construction, crafts, tailoring etc. which may be valued by young people. This possibly could be developed as part of the community education programme in an area.

- It was noted that men are more reluctant to engage and a tailored programme should be developed for older men. This could possibly be developed through the local Men's Shed groups.

Intergenerational Activity

- In general there was there was a feeling that there was a positive relationship between older people and young people in the county. However it was felt that this could be strengthened through intergenerational activity which would help break down perceptions and improve communications. Older people can feel nervous when they have to pass a group of young people hanging around on a street. It was noted that this is down to a fear that they may do something, even though the young people may be doing nothing. It was felt that facilities should be developed for teenagers so they have something to do and somewhere to go.

- Development committees and management committees sometimes have an older membership. Older people expressed the opinion that some of these committees should encourage younger members and this would improve communications and develop a better understanding of the requirements of different groups.

Businesses

- Older people felt there was a need for improved customer service among some businesses. It was felt that some businesses had improved such as the pharmacies with the development of consultation rooms. However it was felt that businesses such as banks and public bodies were pushing technology and automated answering services. Older people value the human contact.

- Roll out of Age Friendly Business recognition scheme around the county. At the moment it has been rolled out in Bray and it was felt it should be rolled out around the county.

- Customer relation training for frontline staff dealing with older people.

- Provision of seats in supermarkets/ banks it was felt would benefit not only older people but also mothers and people with mobility difficulties.

- Maintenance of services in local areas is very important to older people. Development of a discount for off peak use for recreational services or special deals targeted at older people would encourage people to go in and use a service. Some recreational facilities offer aqua aerobics or exercise classes for older people, theses are highly valued and should be promoted. This it was felt would lead to increased social participation.

Theme 5: Respect and Social Inclusion

Priority 1

Education providers work together to develop a programme of education and lifelong learning for older people across the county and to promote such programmes.

Priority 2

To ensure maximum use of community spaces around the county and facilitate use by older peoples groups and establish activities aimed at older people.

Priority 3

Support the establishment of befriending services (visiting or call service) specifically aimed at isolated / housebound older people throughout the county.

Priority 4

Encourage the use of positive images and good-news stories of older people.

Priority 5

Promote intergenerational engagement activities throughout the county.

Action Plan 5

Priority Number	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Timeline	Measurable
1.1	Promote a programme of education and lifetime learning	KWETB, Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance	WCC	2017-2020	Number of new courses available to Older people
2.1	Promote use of community spaces by older people and representative groups	WCC, Wicklow Local Sports Partnership	County Wicklow Network for Older People	2018-2022	Number of events at community spaces aimed at older people.
2.2	Promote and facilitate the Bealtaine Festival	Wicklow Arts Office, Wicklow Library Service	County Wicklow Network for older people	2018	Number of events in Bealtaine
3.1	Support establishment of befriending services (visiting or call service)	Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance	WCC	2018-2019	Development of befriending service
4.1	Encourage use of positive images and good news stories of older people	CWNOP	Wicklow local media	2017-2018	Increase in positive stories
5.1	Promote intergenerational engagement activities	Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance	WCC	2017-2018	Number of intergenerational events

Theme 6:

Civic Participation and Employment

Goal

To increase employment, volunteering and civic participation among older people.

Overview

A lot of value is placed by older people on civic participation and it was interesting to note that some tend to be active members of more than one group such as the Active Retirement and the ICA. It was recognised that in many areas of the county there is a lot of opportunities to participate but transport and health issues were raised as blocking some older people getting involved.

Regarding employment there was a strong feeling participation in employment after 65 should be a choice and not a requirement. Older people have a wide range of skills and expertise which could be utilised by businesses but many are reluctant to take on an older person as an employee.

What people told us

Volunteering

- As was borne out in the HaPAI survey older people are active volunteers and willing to give of their time and expertise to support a community organisation. For some volunteering was seen as providing a social outlet and structure and was seen as enjoyable. The range of organisations that older people volunteer with is considerable and includes sports clubs, cancer support groups, ICA, Men's Sheds, meals on wheels, church groups, tidy towns, local drama groups, community development groups, quilting groups etc.

- For those involved in volunteering most found it enjoyable, however some of those not involved stated that "Sure no one would want me I am too old". There may be a role for County Wicklow Volunteer Centre in promoting volunteer opportunities for older people.

- The range of opportunities for people to volunteer in some areas can be limited especially in rural areas.

- There is a need to promote the range and type of volunteer opportunities available, as people have different lengths of time available due to other commitments such as caring and childminding. Some older people would like to volunteer for a specific purpose or length of time rather than getting involved in something that is indefinite.

- As was mentioned in the theme Respect and Social Inclusion older people suggested that people of all ages should be encouraged to get involved in committees rather than it being seen as the domain of one age category. They pointed out that by having all age groups involved, it leads to more intergenerational activity and a stronger community group. This also helps develop a sense of community identity and pride.

- Participants suggested that prior to retiring, people should be encouraged and facilitated to get involved in volunteering, therefore when they retire they will still have an involvement in an organisation. Some people noted that when you retire you can feel isolated as points of social contact are cut off.

- Meals on wheels was seen as both providing an essential service and an opportunity to volunteer and help other older people. It was noted that with groups like meals on wheels the person receiving the service benefited from the social contact but the volunteer also benefited from being out and meeting people.

Employment

- Older people should have the choice to stay in work past retirement age if they want and at least until the age that the pension payment is activated. Older people pointed out that remaining in employment can have both physical and mental health benefits. While most of the participants were retired, a number were still working as self employed or as consultants and felt they benefited from remaining involved in the companies they established.

- Older people should not have to sign on for social welfare for one year after retirement; there should be no gap between work and pension payments. Participants questioned why older people were being forced to sign on for a year now as the bridging pension had been removed.

- Experience gained over a lifetime in the labour force should be valued and older people pointed out that this should be tapped into as a resource especially for people starting a business. Development of a team of older mentors who on a voluntary or cost basis would provide support to entrepreneurs should be explored.

- Older people commented that many employers will not take anyone on over the age of 60, despite the experience they might have. It was felt that this was ignoring the wealth of experience and talents older people have especially in the area of customer service which could be of tremendous benefit to companies.

- It was noted that coming up to retirement, possibly the bridging year between 65 years and 66 a person should be facilitated to work a shorter working week to get used to not going into work.

Lifelong Learning:

- It was recognised that the ETB's offer a wide range of courses through community education. It was felt that these should be promoted more to older people.

- New technology courses could be offered through the ETB's community education programme.

- ETB's should consider recruiting older people as tutors to teach skills/crafts that are in danger of dying out. This could possibly be done as part of a community heritage programme. It was felt this would particularly suit men who did not want to engage in formal classes.

Theme 6: Civic Participation and Employment

Priority 1

To develop new volunteer options where gaps are identified and promote existing volunteering options for older people. To promote opportunities for intergenerational volunteering.

Priority 2

Encourage businesses to introduce age friendly workplace practices.

Priority 3

Establish a volunteer business mentoring programme.

Action Plan 6

Priority Number	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Timeline	Measurable
1.1	Support the continued development and expansion of County Wicklow Network for Older People as the representative body for all older people across the county.	Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance	County Wicklow Network for Older People	2017-2018	Number of new members to Network
1.2	Map existing intergenerational activities and develop and explore development of a skills exchange programme	Age Friendly Alliance	WCC and CWNOP	2017-2020	Development of exchange programme and baseline activities
2.1	Work to promote volunteer opportunities for older people	County Wicklow Volunteer Centre	County Wicklow Network for Older People	2017-2018	Number of volunteer opportunities aimed at older people
3.1	Building on existing models of good practice in the County such as Homelink, Easi Cabs and Carnew Community Care to develop a programme of interventions aimed at improving participation of older people and tackling isolation in both urban and rural areas.	Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance	WCC, CWNOP, HSE	2018-2022	Development of programme aimed at tackling isolation
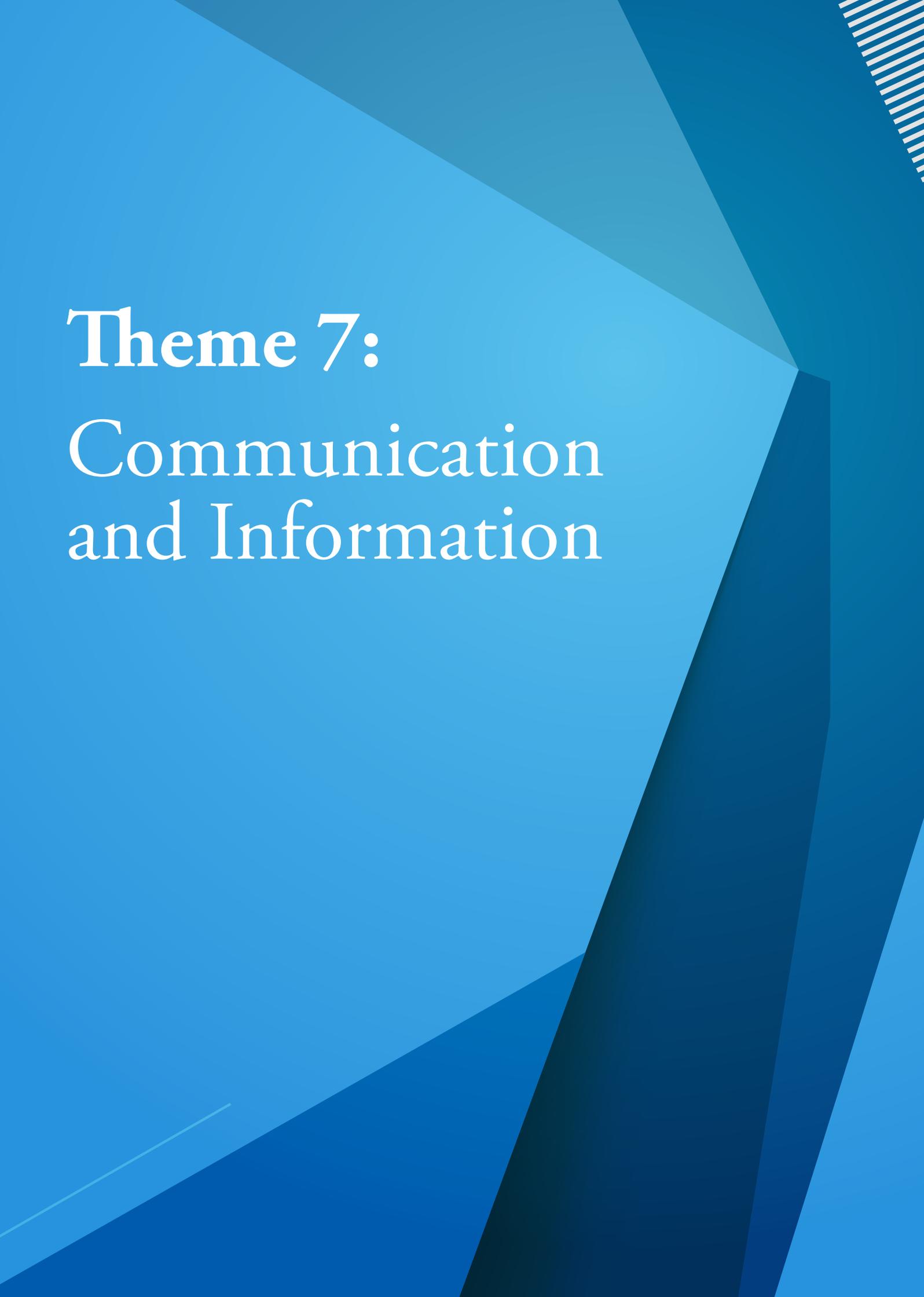
Theme 7:

Communication and Information

Goal

To ensure that older people can access timely, practical, accurate information about what is happening in their communities.

Overview

The lack of communications, access to timely, accurate and reliable information was seen as a significant barrier to older people in County Wicklow availing of services and entitlements. The poor level of communications was a major concern at all the consultations and it was noted that it was increasingly difficult to get accurate information on entitlements and services. The lack of accessible published information is causing major hardship with older people pointing out that everything is now on the internet but a significant number of older people do not have access to the internet or know how to find the information they need on it. In discussions on all the other themes the lack of information and proper communication came up as an issue. Access to practical information is essential to staying connected with people, community and events, which is vital for active ageing.

Word of mouth was flagged as the most valued and preferred source of information with local radio and newspapers also playing a significant part in older people getting information. The importance of community notes and community information shows on local radio as source of information for older people cannot be over estimated. The importance of local radio as a source of news and information was especially important to people who were housebound and people with impaired mobility.

Citizen's information service was also seen as a vital service as the information was provided by a real person who was helpful, patient and had access to information on line.

The lack of good communications was also seen a very difficult issue to resolve, with no clear answer/solution coming through from the consultation.

What People told us

Entitlements and services

- Since the advent of computers and information technology everything we need has been moved online and there is not enough accessible printed information on services and entitlements.

- There is particular concern about the lack of information on health issues and entitlements for people living with particular health issues such as Parkinson's and Dementia.

- Development of information leaflets on health services and entitlements for older people in the county should be examined. It was noted that it was difficult to get information on health services when one is outside the system but that when one is availing of the system it tends to be very good.

- Receiving the information from a real person is very helpful and allows for clarification.

- It was recognised that there are a wide range of groups and organisations doing excellent work on behalf of older people but a lot of older people are not aware of them. This is especially the case for the most vulnerable and excluded older people. Need for development of directory of services and community organisations that support older people.

- Older people value person to person contact. Automated answering services are major source of anger. One participant noted that if you do not fit into a set box it is very difficult to know which button to press

- Letters from public/state bodies do not always clearly show where/who it is from. Addresses should be clearly highlighted at top of correspondence.

- Garda text alert scheme was seen as a valuable service but there was a lack of information on it. Leaflets on the text alert scheme that could be given to older people in stations or by older persons group would be very beneficial.

- Service providers should have communication plans that take into account the needs of older people.

- Information that is provided by statutory organisations should be in plain English , as concern was expressed about the amount of jargon that is included, which blocks people accessing entitlements. Development of advocacy and support service for older people such as sage should be facilitated and supported.

- Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance to work closely with statutory agencies and partners to ensure that guidelines on communications are developed to ensure that vulnerable and isolated older people have access to the information they require to live full lives.

Financial Services:

- Older People value one to one contact. The introduction of the new technology in banks for lodgements and withdrawals has made some older people nervous about lodging their pensions. A number of older people pointed out that they would bypass the machines when possible and approach a teller that they knew to do their business.

- The policy of some banks of only accepting cash and coin lodgements on certain days of the week has increased feelings of insecurity. Participants feared they could be more vulnerable going into a bank as criminals would know they had cash on them. There is a need to work with the banks for development of customer charter for older people; this is a seen as a national and not just a local issue.

- There should be no minimum amount of money that can be withdrawn from a personal account. Older people were nervous about the imposition of minimum amounts of cash that could be withdrawn in branch.

Information Technology

- In many rural areas and the smaller towns there is a lack of access to publically accessible computers. Libraries provide an important resource where older people can get access to a computer and go online.

- Development of links between schools and older person groups to provide a programme of one to one training on mobile phones, e mail, internet, tablets and computers should be developed. Older people would prefer where possible to receive training on their own devices, as it was noted that when you receive training in a class on a pc it can be difficult to understand the lesson at home when using a tablet.

- Rural broadband in some parts of the county is poor and needs to be improved.

- Public buildings should be used to provide the technology training in order to minimise cost.

Sources of Information

- Parish newsletters, local newspapers, East Coast FM, Community groups are valuable sources of information on community activity.

- Information should be provided in plain English in an easy uncomplicated way using larger prints.

- Post offices and libraries are seen as valuable points of information both through meeting people and also to get information leaflets.

- Rural post offices should be maintained, as an essential rural service.

- Citizen's information centres were cited as an extremely valuable source of information and assistance with form filling. It was also noted that the volunteers with CIC are professional and well trained and some are older people themselves which makes it easier for other older people to communicate their issues.

- Citizen information booklets were seen as reliable and impartial. Where possible citizen information stands should be developed in public buildings such as libraries, county council offices and post offices.

- Opening times of CIC offices and their location needs to be publicised. Citizen information offices should be located in central accessible location.

- Development of mobile Citizens Information Service should be explored to provide a drop in service for older people.

- Development of links between the library service and Citizens Information Service should be developed.

- Transport is a major issue across the county; participants noted that is very difficult to get accurate printed timetables and information on routes or services that are available. They noted that you are referred to a website to check. It was also noted that when there is a change to a service the change is reported on the website but this information is not always printed out for service users to read.

- Many areas of County Wicklow have a vibrant community and voluntary basis, however there is a need for communication of their activities with the general community and with other groups/organisations. Local notice boards should be developed in all towns, villages. These notice boards should be located in central accessible locations or libraries.

- Development of local newsletters or information leaflet at a regional or municipal district level should be examined.

- A role for PPN in working with community and voluntary groups to share information and develop model of best practice was identified.

Theme 7: Communications and Information

Priority 1

Promote organisations, agencies and businesses to use guidelines around the use of 'plain English' in information and literature produced both on line and in print.

Priority 2

Develop a directory of services and activities aimed at older people in County Wicklow.

Priority 3

Promote the establishment of 'Community Cafe' model across the county. (Community cafe – similar to Alz Cafe – monthly social gathering where OP come and meet reps from key agencies and have themed inputs).

Priority 4

To work with financial services in the county to develop an age-friendly customer service approach.

Priority 5

Promote the development of 'older person sections' in local print and radio media.

Action Plan 7

Priority Number	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Timeline	Measurable
1.1	Alliance members will work to ensure that all their application forms and service guides are in line with NALA (national adult literacy agency) guidelines	Member organisations of the Age Friendly Alliance	WCC/ CWNOP/ NALA	2018-2019	Number of new application forms developed
2.1	Develop an older persons Age Friendly community information guide in plain english.	County Wicklow Network for Older People, Co. Wicklow CIS	Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance	2018-2019	Development and publication of guide.
2.2	Improve awareness of the range of services provided by CIC and MABS and their delivery of services particularly with regard to accessibility of services to citizens	Co. Wicklow CIS	Wicklow Age Friendly Alliance	2017-2018	Number of promotional campaigns

Priority Number	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Timeline	Measurable
2.3	Promote and develop IT and lifelong learning courses of interest to older people	WCC, KWETB,	Member organisations of the Age Friendly Alliance	2017-2019	Number of courses run
3.1	Promote establishment of "Community Cafe" similar to Alzheimers cafe in Bray	WCC, LCDC, CWETT, Dementia support group	WCC	2018-2020	Number of new "cafes" opened
4.1	Work with financial services to develop age-friendly customer service approach	CWNOP	WCC, Town Teams	2018-2019	Number of financial services approached
5.1	Engage with print media and local radio to proactively promote a positive image of older people	County Wicklow Network for Older People	Local Print Media, Radio	2017-2018	Number of positive news stories run
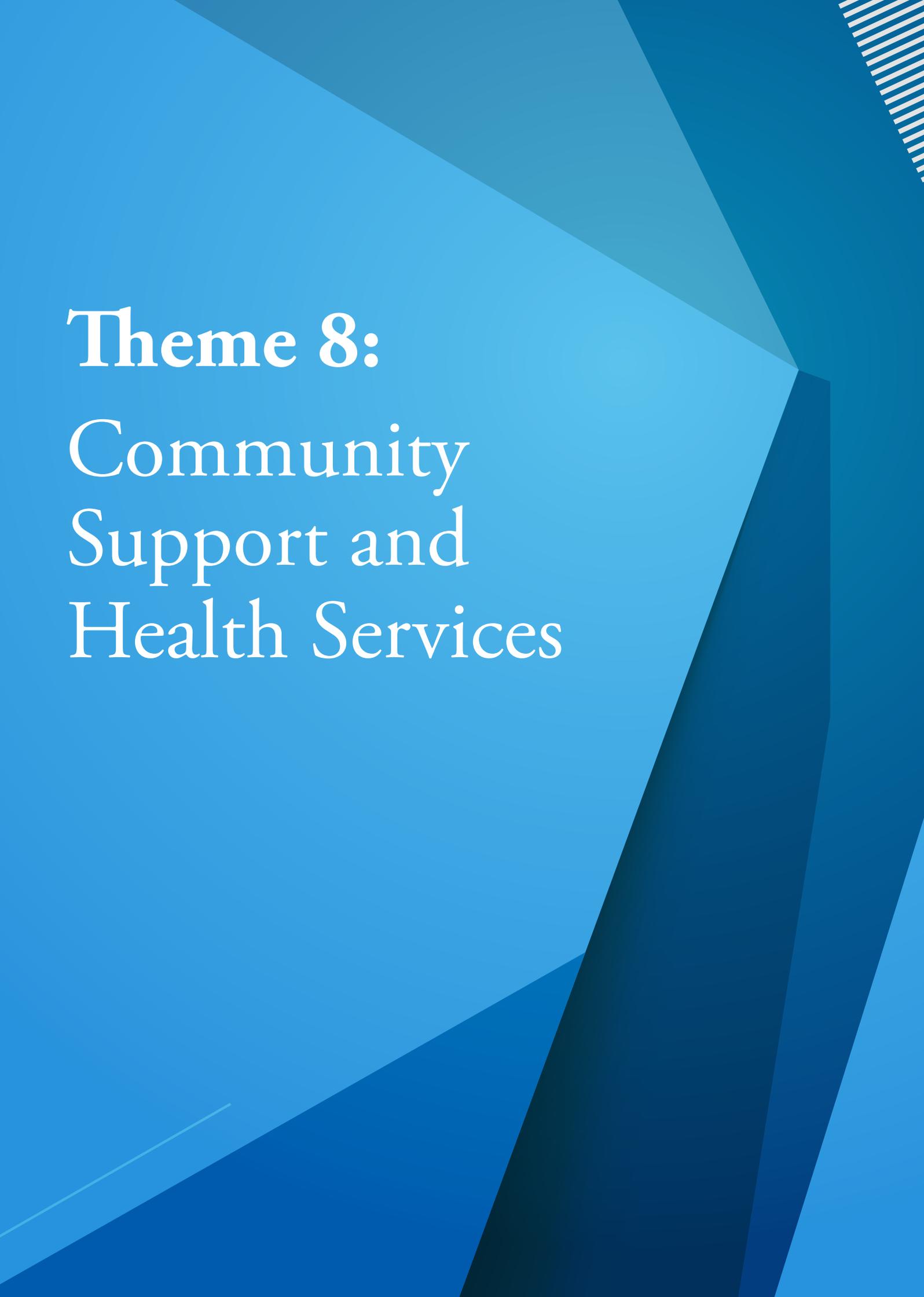
Theme 8:

Community Support and Health Services

Goal

To provide older people with easily accessible health and community services and with help access to everyday activities, high quality home care and residential facilities.

Overview

Across the county older people want to remain living independently in their own home and in their own community. Health and community support services are vital to ensuring this and independence for older people in the community. The geographical nature of County Wicklow in terms of its landscape and location creates worries for older people in terms of transport to health services and accessing health services. The development of new and the maintenance of existing local health and support services is of vital importance to older people. Along with transport, access to timely and appropriate health services was the main concern for older people during the consultations.

What People told us

Hospital Services

- The lack of a hospital in County Wicklow was a major source of concern.

- In general people who had experience of being in a hospital were positive towards the hospital and complimentary of the professionalism of staff. There were a number of issues that were flagged as needing improvement

  - Hospital appointments too early in the morning. It was noted that older people would have to arrange transport to an appointment in a Dublin hospital early in the morning and would still be in the waiting room in the afternoon as a number of older people would be called for the same time. It was highlighted that appointment times should be staggered and consideration should be given to where the person is living, for example for an appointment at 8 am an older person would have to leave home around 6am.

  - Consideration should be given to the time older people are discharged from hospital at. Some older people spoke of being discharged from hospital in the late evening and having no way to go home.

- Lack of communications between hospital and district nurses/ staff in the county. Information not being shared by hospitals with frontline staff leading to increased paperwork.

- Lack of information on hospital services available. Some participants in the consultation had believed Loughlinstown hospital was closed completely and were going to St. Vincent's or James when they could be treated more quickly in Loughlinstown.

- GP's should refer person to the appropriate hospital closest to where they live.

- Transport should be available to hospital that is in the persons area. It was noted that HSE transport was available to Dublin hospitals but not to Wexford hospital

- Staff shortage of frontline staff in hospitals was identified as undermining quality of care and creating waiting lists.

  - Participants noted that the length of time in a session they were receiving services such as physiotherapy had been reduced due to the number of patients the physiotherapist had to see. This led them to have to go for longer or remain in hospital for longer.

- Waiting lists for appointment for surgery for issues such as hip replacements was seen as being too long and led to the person getting worse and requiring more treatment in the long run. The same issue was raised in terms of eye, ear and throat issues

- Health insurance was seen as vital; otherwise a person had to wait an inordinate amount of time. It was pointed out that rising costs of insurance making it prohibitive for a person on their own depending on the state pension.

- Consideration should be given to the length of time a person has been paying health insurance. Some participants pointed out that they had paid health insurance of over forty years but were no longer able to afford it and the previous year's paying in counted for nothing.

- There is concern about the bypassing of hospitals such as St. Vincent's by bus routes. Bus stops at hospitals should be maintained

- There was a feeling that there was age discrimination in medical treatment in hospitals. For example stopping mammogram screening at the age of 64.

Community Supports

- A broad welcome was given to the development of the primary care centres across the county. They were seen as offering more services locally which was seen as vital. However there is a lack of information among older people on the services that are available in the Primary Health care centres. Also concern was expressed that there was a lack of information on what services are planned to go into the proposed new primary health care centres.

- GP's are the first point of health care contact for older people in the community and older people are generally happy with the care they receive. Yet it was pointed out that there was a reduction in the number of GP surgeries located in communities as GPs come together in bigger surgeries.

- Concern was raised about Caredoc and access to GP's after 5pm. This was a common issue raised around the county in both urban and rural areas. It was noted that in a lot of areas it was not possible to get an appointment with a GP after 4.30pm. The main concerns about the Caredoc were the following

  - The Caredoc's in some areas come from outside the area and do not know the geography of the county.

  - The Caredoc can take too long to reach from certain areas as they tend be located in the main urban centres.

  - It is difficult to get a Caredoc to do a home visit; they are quicker to refer a person to accident and emergency.

  - Lack of Caredoc facility between the hours of midnight and 6 am.

- First Responders service seen as vital and its development around the county should be supported by HSE.

- Lack of support for carers in the community. If an older person is cared for by a family member or friend in their own home it can be very isolating. It was noted that this was particularly true for people who looked after people with dementia due to the lack of support services and respite care.

- Respite care services in the community need to be developed, at moment there is a waiting list for people to avail of the service. This requires extra resourcing at a national level.

- There should be a direct link between respite and convalescence services and hospitals for older people who could be discharged from hospital but are not able to adequately look after themselves initially at home. This would help reduce the number of older people being readmitted to hospitals and having to stay in hospital longer than necessary.

- Development of Dementia awareness in the community is needed.

- Wicklow Age Friendly should support the work of Wicklow Dementia Group and the development of the Wicklow Dementia Strategy.

- Meals on Wheels was highlighted as an extremely valuable service which should be supported by statutory bodies. Extension of the meals on wheels to areas that it is not currently available should be examined.

Pharmacies

- Introduction of a cap on prescription charges initially with a view to abolishing them. Prescription charges were viewed as being expensive for older people on a set income who in many instances have to get a number of medicines. Older people on a medical card should not be prevented getting the medicines they require due to prescription charges.

- Older people are very happy with the service they receive from their pharmacist. The development of the consultation rooms in recent years was welcomed as was the development of the home delivery service by a number of pharmacies.

Day-care and Drop in Centres

- The day-care centres and drop in centres, (where they are available in the county) are highly valued. Carnew Community Care was highlighted as a model of good practice which should be developed around the county.

- Development of day care or drop in centres for people with dementia should be developed. This would allow carers time off to do other things.

- The need for sheltered housing units around the county was identified as a major need. These units could possibly have communal kitchen and recreational areas, as well as providing a central location for older people to avail of health services.

- Drop in centres should be developed in areas where they are not available. It was suggested that the service could be developed within community centres where an older person could drop in during the week for a "cuppa and a chat". The community centre would receive a grant for providing the service.

Home help

- The home help service is valued and seen as an essential service helping older people maintain independence in their own home. A number of suggestions were made for improving the service.

- It was felt that the home help had moved from the original model of assisting a person to live with dignity in their own home to a more medical model where the home helpers are restricted in the work they can do.

- Reduce the level of bureaucracy associated with the scheme and reduce the restrictions on people to offer more help to the older person.

- Increase the time allocated from one hour. In some cases older people have more than one person coming in on a one hour basis i.e. a person to assist them getting out of bed in the morning and into bed in the evening. They then have a second person calling to ensure they have breakfast etc. This was seen as wasting time travelling whereas the one person could have done the whole lot if they were given more time to spend with the person.

- Need proper resourcing to develop an effective home help service.

- Training and supports for people involved in home help to deliver service to people with dementia or Parkinson's.

- It was felt that home help and primary health care should be properly resourced and be the first level of health service the older person deals with. This would assist in reducing the number of older people having to go to hospital or nursing homes and save the HSE finances in the long term.

- Difficulty in knowing the difference between home help and home care packages.

Education and Physical Activity

- One of the fears raised during the consultation was the fear of tripping or falling and breaking a bone. Some participants were aware of the HSE Fall Prevention Programme. Due to the importance of fall prevention and the need for older people to maintain a healthy lifestyle, the Falls Prevention Programme should be rolled out around the county in a partnership between the HSE and County Wicklow Network for Older People. Creating awareness of fall prevention would hopefully increase the knowledge on falls and reduce the number of falls, therefore promoting independent living as falls can undermine a person's confidence in living alone.

- Older people want to remain physically active and be pro active in maintaining their health and wellbeing. Participants valued the Go For Life Games and the Physical Activity Leaders programme (PALs).

  - Go For Life Games should be rolled out around the county in partnership with Age and Opportunity and Wicklow Local Sports Partnership.

  - Further role out of Physical Activity Leader programme to train leaders in partnership with community groups and Wicklow Local Sports Partnership.

  - Promotion of healthy active communities in partnership with PPN.

- A lot of value was placed on healthy eating to sustain health. However a number of people mentioned about getting out of the routine/habit cooking for one. Roll out of the Healthy Food programme was suggested as a way of introducing health recipes that would be easy to do.

- The ICA, Active retirement and friendship groups were seen as playing an important part in promoting exercise, healthy living and social engagement among members. It was noted that older men were not as engaged as women in these groups. Education and exercise programmes should utilise links with these groups and be targeted at meeting the needs of older people.

- KWETB community education courses such as painting, ceramics, etc. which were run in partnership with older people groups were extremely valued. These courses offered older people the opportunity to develop a skill and engage with other people. Consideration should be given to development of courses aimed at older men such as woodcraft, gardening.

- Walking was seen as a way of keeping healthy and it was highlighted that there are a wide range of walks around the county. Need to promote the Sli na Slainte routes and lowland routes around the county. There are a number of walking groups for older people in the county; however there is a need to promote these groups to other older people.

Theme 8: Community Support and Health Services

Priority 1

HSE to review existing community health supports and services (day care and home help) aimed at older people around the county to identify gaps and the development of targeted measures.

Priority 2

HSE (Area 6 and 7) will work with the HSE quality Improvement division to address issues that arise out of the annual County Wicklow Network for Older People Listening Meetings.

Priority 3

Develop physical activity programmes for older people around the county (also in theme 4).

Priority 4

Support the implementation of the Co. Wicklow Dementia Strategy throughout the county.

Priority 5

Advocate with national HSE regarding resource allocation for Home Care / Home Help / Health Aids (hearing aids, mobility appliances etc) for older people in both CHO Area 6 and 7).

Action Plan 8

Priority Number	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Timeline	Measurable
1.1	Assess where the meals on wheels service is available in the county and expand where possible	HSE	County Wicklow Network for Older People	2017-2019	Increase provision of meals on wheels
1.2	Wicklow HSE to work in partnership with County Wicklow Network for Older people in the provision and expansion of older person related health services based on models in Donegal and Waterford and link to positive aging week	HSE	County Wicklow Network for Older People, LSP	2017-2018	Development of partnership model of service delivery
2.1	Roll out the Falls Prevention Programme	HSE	County Wicklow Network for Older People	2017-2018	Rollout programme across County
3.1	Support and facilitate the development of sports groups aimed at older men using the OBAMA group as model	Wicklow LSP	Bray Area Partnership, County Wicklow Partnership	2017-2018	Number of new groups developed or expanded
4.1	Support the implementation of Co. Wicklow Dementia strategy throughout the county	CWNOP, Dementia group	WCC	2017-2018	Implementation of dementia strategy
5.1	Streamline home help/home care for older people in both CHO Area 6 and 7	HSE	WCC	2017 – 2018	Inclusion of essential service into homecare/ Home help subject to resources.
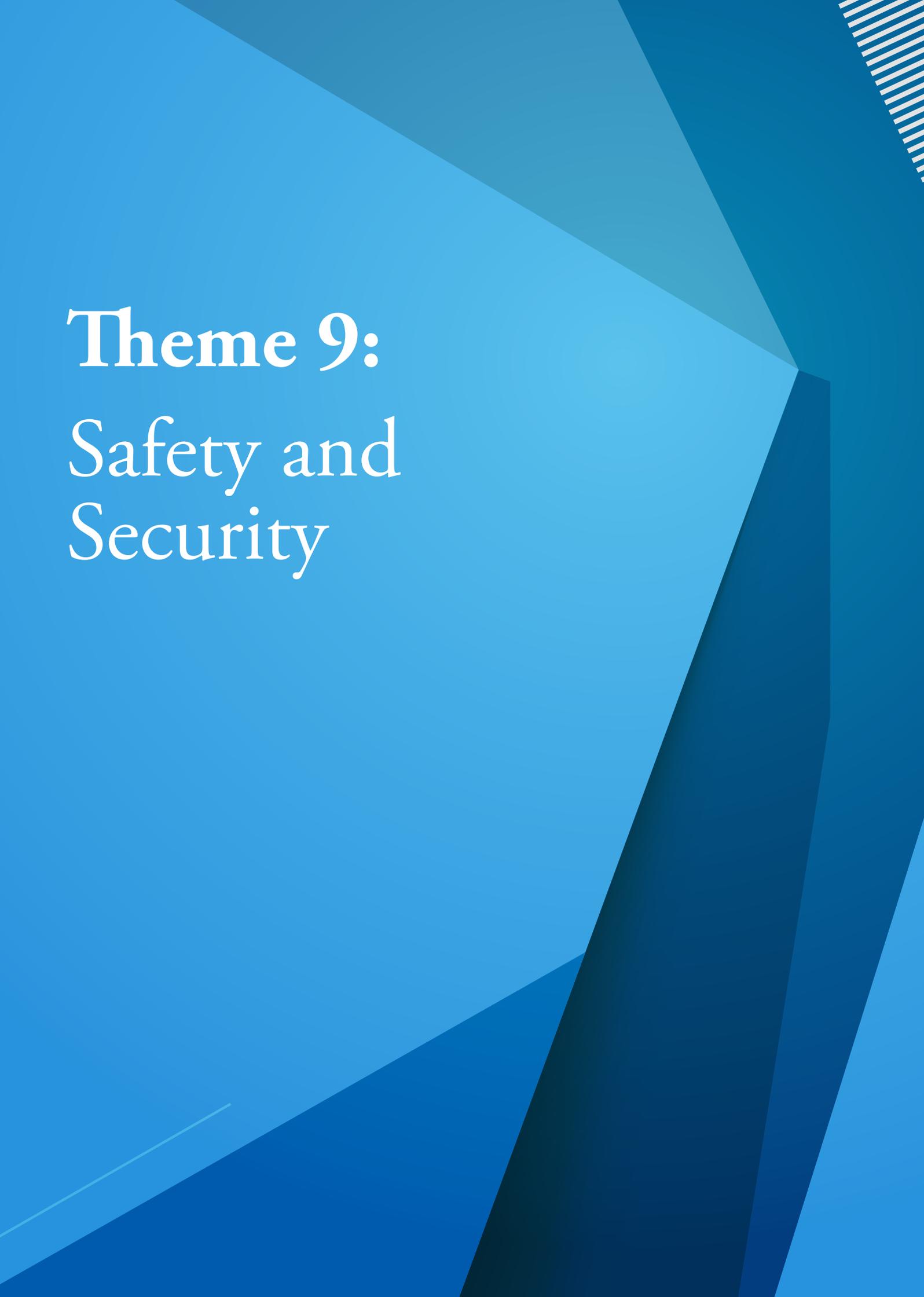
Theme 9:

Safety and Security

Goal

To promote an environment in which older people feel safe and secure both at home and out and about in the community.

Overview

During the consultations it was clear that older people in County Wicklow value that the work the Gardai do in the community and have a lot of respect for frontline Gardai. However there was a feeling that the number and visibility of the Gardai had reduced significantly over the last number of years resulting in a heightened sense of insecurity and fear. The majority of participants would like to remain in their own home. The option to stay living in one's own home was seen as being impacted on by feeling safe and secure at home. This was raised as an issue in both rural and urban Wicklow. Some participants noted some of their friends had moved into nursing or care homes because they were afraid to live alone. Crimes such as assault, theft, scams and burglaries impact on older people's confidence and their sense of security and can result in the decision to enter long term care. Senior alert schemes and rural alert schemes are crucial for older people's well being in terms of feeling safe. Cuts to the household package (discontinuation of subsidy for landline rental) and cost of monitoring has put this service beyond the reach of some older people.

What People told us

- A safe and secure physical environment is vital for older people to do everyday activities and engage in society.

- Crimes such as assault, theft, scams and burglaries impact on older people's confidence and their sense of security and can result in the decision to enter long term care.

- Senior alert schemes and rural alert schemes are crucial for older people's well being in terms of feeling safe.

- Cuts to the household package (discontinuation of subsidy for landline rental) and cost of monitoring has put this service beyond the reach of some older people.

- Changes in policing means that older people do not have an opportunity to get to know the community Gardai.

- The most frequent complaint regarding policing is the lack of Garda presence on the ground, not only in rural areas but also in towns. Older people in particular would like to return to the situation which existed years

ago when the local Garda lived in the community, were known to everyone and everyone knew the local Garda. Simply put, there is a demand for more community Gardaí.

- Participants felt that they were less safe in their own homes than they were five or ten years ago. It was noted by participants in Bray especially that it was all well and good for older person groups such as the County Wicklow Network for Older People groups organising activities for older people but it wasn't much good if they were afraid to leave their home. Increased Garda visibility would help alleviate this.

- It was also noted that the reporting of crime in the media has contributed to some older people feeling like prisoners in their own home especially in winter months. This leads to increased isolation and social exclusion.

- There was also a feeling that the perpetrators of crimes against older people get more support than the victim. Once the crime is recorded and investigated no cognisance is given to the impact of the crime on the older person. Development of victim support service would be beneficial. Also keeping the older person informed of how an investigation is progressing would be appreciated. A number of older people noted the lack of information following the reporting of an incident was frustrating and would possibly lead them to not reporting an incident in the future due to the perceived lack of follow up.

- It was recognised that due to reduction in numbers of Gardai response time can be longer. However it was noted that there should be flexibility given to Gardai to go across geographical boundaries to the scene of a crime or an incident if they are closer to the area. This was raised as a particular issue in South Wicklow where it was pointed out that especially at night Gardai have to travel a distance to a burglary etc. as local rural stations are not manned while there is a Garda station just a few miles down the road that is unable to respond.

- Older people are not immune to the effects that illegal drug abuse has on communities and a number of respondents during the consultation raised the issue of drug abuse and the impact it has on their communities and families.

- Older people felt that drug dealing had become more pervasive and affected all areas of the county especially the main towns, resulting in increased anti social behaviour. One participant commented that a few years ago all you had to worry about was a person being drunk now you don't know what they are on. It was felt that increased resourcing should be given to the Gardai to tackle the issue of drug dealing.

- While many older people feel safe in their own homes and communities, there was a feeling that the sense of security had declined.

- It was felt that in order to tackle issues there needed to be a strong relationship between the Gardai and the community with mutual respect.

- Good neighbours and a sense of community were also vitally important with good neighbours helping ease people's minds that they had someone they could call on if they were in trouble.

- In order to have faith and trust in the system it was felt that there should be appropriate punishment for the perpetrators of crimes against older people because it can damage not only property but shatter their independence and peace of mind resulting in them living in fear.

- Proper public lighting and footpaths in towns and on approach roads would improve feelings of personal safety access. There was a feeling that if an area is properly lit up there is a less likely chance of something happening. Also properly maintained footpaths and public lighting would help alleviate the fear of falling and improve access to and around the towns for people of all ages.

- Fear of rogue traders is a growing issue. There was a proposal for the development of a Garda vetted tradesperson scheme. It was felt this could possibly be done by the Gardai in partnership with Bray Area Partnership and County Wicklow Partnership as part of the development of a county wide Care and Repair programme. This would have the benefit of putting older people's minds at rest and creating a database of reliable trade's people.

- Due to changes in bank policy regarding lodgements and withdrawals it has become more difficult for older people as they prefer to deal with a cashier. There is a concern that older people are holding more money at home than they need making them more vulnerable. There is a role for County Wicklow Network for Older People in communicating older people's concerns to the banks and lobbying for better customer service.

- Development of an interagency approach to identify vulnerable and isolated older people with development of methods to engage them in the community was seen as an area which should be developed.

- County Wicklow Network for older People should work with the Gardai to increase awareness of personal and property safety measures.

Recommendations from Older People

- Increase Garda presence in the Community: a more visible presence of the Garda in the community, with a good local knowledge of the area, is of considerable importance to older people.

- Proper resourcing for Gardai both in terms of personnel and equipment.

- During Garda training incorporate a module or section on dementia awareness and dealing with a person with dementia.

- Work with the County Council and other appropriate bodies to develop CCTV facilities both in urban and rural areas. Special consideration should be given to areas off motor ways.

- Support and encourage the development of Neighbourhood Watch schemes. The building of relationships between older people and the Gardai is important; there should be an exploration of possible funding mechanisms for senior alert schemes.

- Support safety initiatives such as the installation of security locks through voluntary groups like HomeLink and Care and Repair, Door Stop Scams through groups like County Wicklow Network for Older People.

- Development of links between Garda and community groups with presentations by Crime Prevention Officers would be beneficial to older people. The presentations or talks should also include safety in the community as well as the home.

- Promotion and advice on Community alert and text alert schemes. Encourage the establishment of Community Alert schemes in locations where it is not currently established.

- Continued development of the Joint Policing Committee within the County. As part of its remit it should look at the policing needs of older people.

- Active participation of An Garda Siochána in County Wicklow Age Friendly Programme and Age Friendly nationally.

- Provide appropriate and timely support for victims of crime whose lives can be devastated by such events.

- Ensure that victims of crime are kept fully aware of all legal developments in relation to their cases – trial dates, trial results, release of offenders etc.

- Draw up a register of older people living alone, especially in isolated areas and put in place a scheme whereby Gardaí can make regular checks on them.

- Provide for flexibility in responding to incidents so Gardai from another area can respond if they are closer.

- Support the development and promotion of a panic alarm scheme that is available to all older people.

- Continuously strive to develop and strengthen the relationship between Gardai and older people.

Theme 9: Safety and Security

Priority 1

Roll out a programme of crime prevention talks around the county promoting the uptake of crime prevention measures (bogus caller cards, spy holes, text alerts, message in the bottle) with older people on a one-to-one basis and with OP groups.

Priority 2

Supporting and encouraging Neighbourhood Watch schemes throughout the county, encouraging older people to get involved in HWS and for communities to look out for vulnerable older people within their area.

Priority 3

Work towards increasing Gardaí resources within the county being cognisant of areas (both urban and rural) with high population of older people.

Priority 4

Each sub-division/Gardaí station within Wicklow to have a dedicated older person liaison officer.

Action Plan 9

Priority Number	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	Timeline	Measurable
1.1	Support and facilitate older people's engagement with Gardai through crime prevention talks and events	CWNOP	An Garda Siochana	2017-2019	Number of talks/ events held
1.2	Through building and open space design attempt to minimise opportunities for anti-social behaviour.	Wicklow County Council	Approved Housing Bodies	2017-2022	Implementation of best practise in design of open spaces.
2.1	Raise awareness of crime prevention measures – property and person as well as neighbourhood watch, community alert and theft shop	An Garda Siochana	CWNOP	2017-2018	Number of Talks/ information/ awareness events provided
3.1	Try to increase gardai resources within Wicklow	Gardai	WCC/JPC	2017-2020	Number of extra gardai
4.1	Each subdivision/ garda station to have a dedicated older person liaison officer	Gardai	WCC	2017-2018	One dedicated liaison officer in each station

In Conclusion

I would like to thank everyone who contributed in any way to the making of this document and especially all those involved in the consultation process. I would like to acknowledge the hard-work and dedication of Garvan Hickey in the preparation of this document and finally a word of appreciation to the Age Friendly Alliance for their direction and support.

An integral part of the County Wicklow Age Friendly Strategy is continued assessment of the strategy. A quarterly report will be provided to the Age Friendly Alliance to assure members on the delivery of actions. The quarterly reports in turn will form the basis for an annual report to be made publicly available.

We hope that the County Wicklow Network for Older People is used to identify new issues and challenges which can be incorporated into the living document that is the County Wicklow Age Friendly Strategy.

For more information on the Age Friendly Programme in Wicklow, or to get involved, please contact the Wicklow Age Friendly co-ordinator, CCSD, Wicklow County Council.

Phone 0404 20100 ext. 2311

E-mail: agefriendly@wicklowcoco.ie

Appendix:

Demographics & HaPAI Findings

DEMOGRAPHICS

According to the Census 2011 County Wicklow's population stood at 136,640 an increase of 8.3 percent on the 2006 figure or an actual increase of 10,446. The Wicklow increase is slightly below the rate of increase which occurred for the province of Leinster which was 9.1 and nearly the same as the increase in population of the State of 8.2 percent.

It is worth noting that the there have been differences in the population growth in the different age categories as outlined in Table 1.

TABLE 1
County Wicklow Population Change by Age Cohort 1991 – 2011

Age	1991	1996	2002	2006	2011	% Change 1991 - 2011
0 - 14	27,384	25,585	25,826	27,137	31,172	13.83
15 - 24	15,753	16,968	17,641	17,767	16,514	4.83
25 - 44	27,596	29,349	34,694	40,331	41,609	50.78
45 - 64	16,716	20,361	25,082	28,442	32,344	93.49
65 years and over	9,816	10,420	11,433	12,517	15,001	52.82
Total	97,265	102,683	114,676	126,194	136,640	40.48

While the overall population of the county grew over the period, the level of growth differed across the age cohorts. The number of people in the age category 45 – 64 grew by approximately 93.49 percent while the population in the age category 65 years and older increased by 52.82 percent.

TABLE 2
Persons by Older Age Category

Age Category	Wicklow	Leinster	State
60 – 64 Years	6,639	111,770	218,786
65 – 69 Years	5,372	88,075	173,638
70 – 74 Years	3,757	66,721	131,190
75 – 79 Years	2,633	51,035	102,036
80 – 84 Years	1,731	34,680	70,113
85 Years and Older	1,508	28,177	58,416

TABLE 3
Older Age Categories in County Wicklow Main Urban Settlements 2011

Town	Total	65 Years and Older	% Population Aged 65 Years and Older
Bray	31,872	3,616	11.35
Greystones	17,468	1,771	10.14
Arklow	13,009	1,339	10.29
Wicklow	10,356	1,087	10.50
Blessington	5,010	251	5.01
Rathnew	2,964	140	4.72
Baltinglass	2,061	215	10.43
Rathdrum	1,586	228	14.38

TABLE 4
Age profile 65 and over

Census 2011 Co. Wicklow	Numbers			% of population
Population 65 and over	15,001			10.98% of total Co. Wicklow population.
Population 55 and over	28,963			21.2% of total Co. Wicklow population (Of the population aged 55 years and older 13,855 are male and 15,108 female). In 2011 there were 11 aged 100 or older in County Wicklow.
65 and over by sex and age group	65-74	4466 Male	4663 Female	57% of those 65 and over are women 102,036 70,113
	75-84	1961 Male	2403 Female	
	85 and over	441 Male	1067 Women	
Private Household Types	65+	13,954		93% of those 65 and over live in private households, of these 25.3% live alone
	One person	3,527 of these 2,360 are women		
Disability 65 and over	5,713			Approximately 38% of those 65 and over
People with dementia	1124 (estimate Wicklow LHO area)			Number of people with dementia estimate to increase by 19% by 2016 (Pierce et al 2013) meaning approximately 1,437 people with dementia will live in the Wicklow LHO in a years time

TABLE 5
Age Profile in 2006 and 2011 (Census 2006 and 2011)

Census 2006	Total	Census 2011	Total	% change in total
65- 74	7,269	65-74	9129	+ 25.5%
75-84	3979	75-84	4364	+ 11%
85 and over	1,269	85 and over	1508	+19%

TABLE 6
Age dependency ratios in 2006 and 2011 for selected areas.

Area	2006			2011		
	Total	Young (0-14)	Old (65 Years and over)	Total	Young (0-14)	Old (65 Years and over)
Wicklow	45.8	31.4	14.5	51.0	34.5	16.6
Meath	45.8	34.2	11.7	51.7	38.3	13.5
Kildare	42.7	32.9	9.8	48.0	36.3	11.7
Leinster	43.5	29.1	14.4	47.3	31.5	15.8
State	45.8	29.7	16.1	49.3	31.9	17.4

Source: Census of Population 2011, Profile 2 Older and Younger

Table 6 outlines age dependency rates. The age dependency rate is the ratio of the old and young population to the population of working age. There was increase in the age dependency rate for the State over the five year period from 45.8 in 2006 to 49.3 in 2011 an increase of 3.5 percent. While the old dependency rate which is the older population as a percentage of the population of working age increased from 16.1 to 17.4.

In the case of Wicklow there is an increase of 5.2 percent in the age dependency rate in the period 2006 to 2011. The young dependency rate increased by 3.1 percent to 34.5, while the old dependency rate increased by 2.1 to 16.6.

The 2011 Census of Population shows that the 65 years and older age cohort has increased rapidly in County Wicklow. This age category now represents 11% of the total population living in the county. While this is a relatively low rate, the 7th lowest in the State, there are signs of high levels of increase within this cohort. Since 2006 this cohort has increased by 19.8%, the 6th highest rate of increase in the State. As such, there will be a requirement for an increasing level of older person's related social services in coming years.

Map 1: Percent of the Population Aged 65 Years and Older
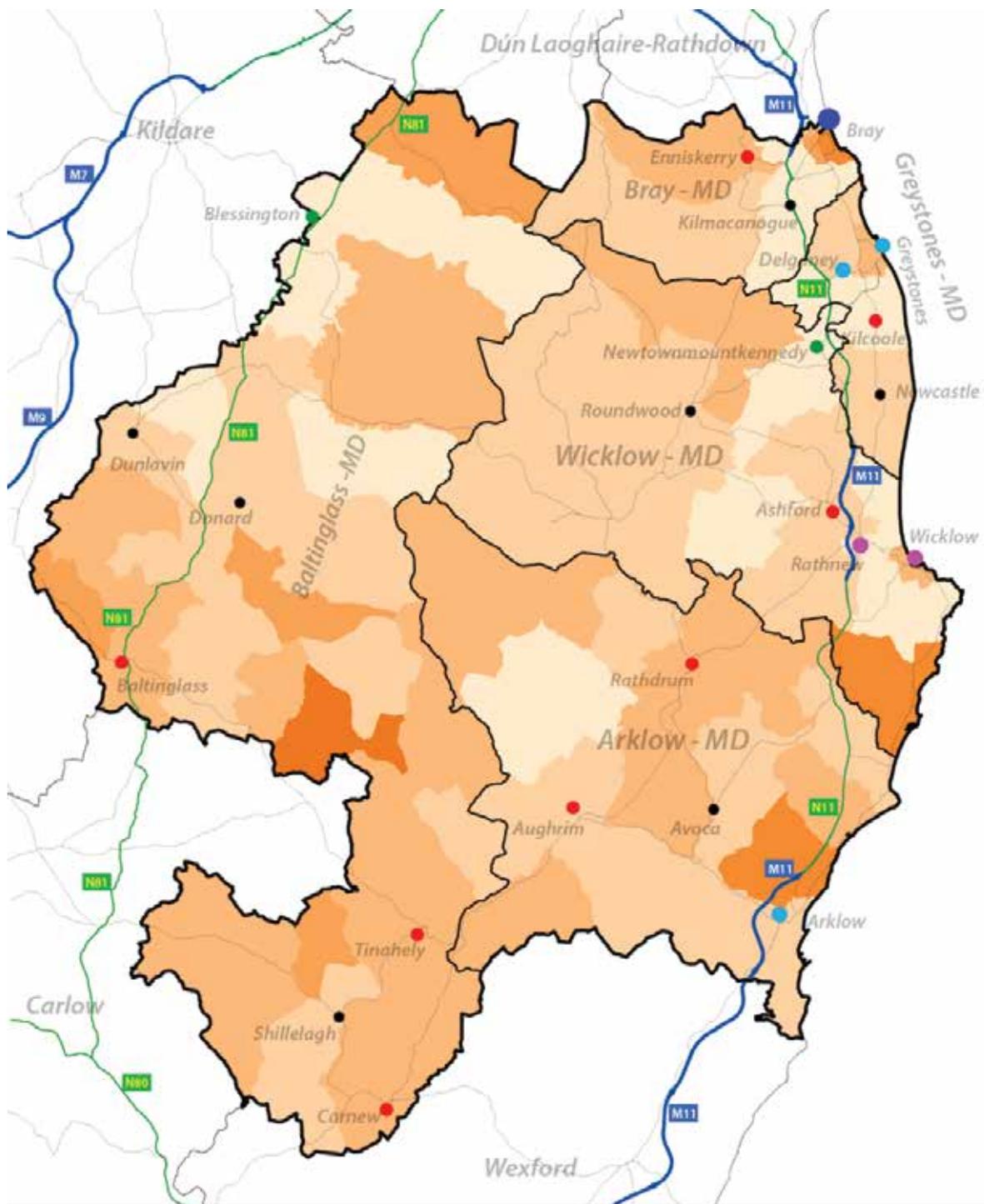
HaPAI Findings: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Access to services

- A majority of people (64%) have no difficulty accessing essential services (such as shopping, the Gardai, postal, banking, transport, or health services).

- Essential services; 16% had great difficulty accessing essential services (compared to 21% in other areas) and 20% had some difficulty (compared to an average of 28% in the other areas surveyed).

- Social Services; In Wicklow 13% had great difficulty accessing social services and 21% had some difficulty. In the other counties surveyed 13% had great difficulty and 24% had some difficulty accessing social services and so Wicklow is similar to the average in relation to social services.

- In other counties, the numbers with great difficulty accessing essential services increases with age – 26% of those aged over 70 had great difficulty accessing essential services while for those age 55-69 the figure was 19%. In relation to social services, again we see that a higher number of over 70s have great difficulty accessing such services although it is still relatively small at 17%, the figure for the 55-69 age group was 10%.

- No Difficulty; A majority of people (64%) have no difficulty accessing essential services (such as shopping, the Gardai, postal, banking, transport, or health services) and 66% had no difficult accessing social services. This compares to 50% of those surveyed in other areas who reported no difficulty accessing services.

- Essential services refers to postal services, banking services, public transport, Local Health services (GP, pharmacy etc), supermarkets or other shops, local Gardai/Garda station.

Because Wicklow covers both rural and urban areas, the services we asked about were sometimes not available within a 15 minute walk of respondent's homes, where respondents lived in open countryside or small villages. When we excluded those who did not have local access to services we found that;

- 31% had difficulty accessing the garda station.

- 24% had difficulty accessing local health services.

- 23% had difficulty accessing banking services

- 23% had difficulty accessing a community centre or other venue

- 28% had difficulty accessing public transport

- 36% had difficulty accessing cinema or other form of entertainment

- 21% had difficulty accessing a park or green area

- 21% had difficulty accessing supermarkets or shops

Social or recreational facilities refer to cinema, theatre or other entertainment, recreational, park or green area, community centre or other venue, cafes and restaurants, public library.

Most difficult to access

The services that older people found most difficult to access were:

- Public Transport; 21% of the full sample reported difficulty accessing public transport (some or great difficulty) There was no significant age difference in relation to this question. A further 26% said that the service was not available to them and this was higher among those aged over 70 (30%).

- Full banking services; 23% of those aged over 55 reported a difficulty. Among those aged over 70, 26% reported a difficulty (11% had great difficulty and a further 15% had some difficulty. The European Quality of Life survey asked this question in 2012 and found that 14% had a difficulty accessing banking services.

- Gardai; 31% reported a difficulty (15% great difficulty and 16% some difficulty) but 58% said that the services could be accessed easily.

- Local Health services; While the majority reported that these services could be accessed easily (53%) 23% reported that they had some or great difficulty accessing health services locally.

- Cafes and restaurants; 15% reported a difficulty but 23% said that the service was not available.

The service that was easiest to access was the community centre or other venue where you can meet friends – only 8% reported a difficulty.

Satisfaction with aspects of the built environment

- General appearance; 73% of Wicklow people are satisfied with the appearance and upkeep while in the other counties surveyed 84% were satisfied (Mayo it is 97%). Only 18% are dissatisfied in Wicklow – in other counties this was 11% on average.

- In general – satisfaction with the appearance and upkeep was high in most areas in every area; the lowest level of satisfaction was 63%.

- Accessible toilets: Many of those living in rural areas did not respond to this question but of those who did 56% of people are dissatisfied with the availability of accessible toilets, while in the other areas that figure was 64%. Only 25% of people are satisfied with this service. The availability of toilets tends to be an issue for every area, but there is a wide range of variation between counties, dissatisfaction ranged 46% in one area to 80% in another.

- Seats and resting places – just under half (41%) of people in Wicklow are happy with the availability of seats and resting places – lower than the average in other counties 46% were satisfied and 40% were dissatisfied. The availability of seats and resting places is also showing a consistent pattern with satisfaction levels as low as 23% in one area. The average for the 10 areas is 46%.

- Traffic calming; 47% are satisfied with the availability or effectiveness of traffic calming measures and only 37% are dissatisfied – this compares to 46% satisfied in other areas and 40% dissatisfied.

- Paths and pavements – In Wicklow 53% are satisfied with paths and pavements, this is lower than in other areas (60%). 32% were dissatisfied with paths or pavements compared to 29% in other areas.

HaPAI Findings: Transportation

Transport use

- The majority of respondents (67%) are current drivers (drove themselves in the past week), About three quarters (74%) of those in the 55-69 age group drove themselves but only 56% of those aged 70+. Many had reduced their driving in the past five years – 20% of the over 70s and 17% of those aged 55-69.

- By comparison in the other counties 79% of those in the 55-69 age group drove themselves in the past week and 59% of those aged 70+.

Transport problems

- Nearly half of all people never have any problems with doing essential tasks because of transport (43%), a further 22% rarely had a difficulty. However, 22% had difficulty some of the time (25% of the over 70s) because of transport and a further 13% had problems more frequently (most or all of the time).

- In Wicklow across both age groups, only 7% reported a difficulty 'most' and all of the time. However, when we looked at people who were not drivers, the numbers who experienced a difficulty rose to 19%.

Rating of public transport

- A majority of people are unhappy with public transport - 52% rated it poor or very poor. Nationally when the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA) asked this question in 2011, 35% of people rated transport in their area as poor or very poor.

- In other counties, more than half of people are very happy with public transport (65%) and a reasonably small number of people (13%) feel that it is very poor or poor. This varies quite a bit throughout the country

- 21% of people had some or great difficulty accessing public transport (10-15 minutes walking distance from their home) and the figure was slightly higher for those aged over 70 (19%) a further 26% said it was not available within walking distance of their home.

- People in the over 70 age group have greater difficulty doing what they want to because of transport issues - 12% have problems socialising most of the time or all of the time and a further 18% have problems some of the time.

HaPAI Findings: Housing

Problems with accommodation

- Housing conditions and facilities in Wicklow are generally good. Only 15% of people had problems with the facilities in their homes. This is defined as shortage of space, home too big, indoor flushing toilet, bath/shower, downstairs toilet, outside space. 85% had no difficulties. 91% had no difficulty with conditions and only 9% had some difficulty.

- Conditions; 91% had no difficulty with conditions and only 9% of people aged 55-69 and 7% of people aged 70+ have problems with housing conditions (such as rot in windows and floors or leaks in walls or roof).

- Of the full sample (those aged over 55), 22% have difficult with housing upkeep; this breaks down into 12% who have difficulty carrying out the maintenance or upkeep themselves; 8% of people have difficulty with the costs of upkeep and a further 7% have a difficulty to some extent.

- Only 11% people aged 55+ had difficulty keeping their house adequately warm in the last 12 months. However, this is higher than the EQLS (2012) average of 5%.

Housing preferences

- When asked about their attitude to different options if they were no longer able to remain in their homes, people were most positive about adapting their current home to their needs. 45% of over 70s and 47% aged 55-69 were positive about this option. However, 37% of the full sample were negative about this (41% of over 70s and 35% of the 55-69 age group).

- The level of positivity toward other housing options was lower; Only 23% of those in the 55-69 age group and 17% of the over 70s were positive about moving to an adapted type of housing; (72% of over 70s were negative about this option and 63% of those aged 55-69).

- In other counties, people in the over 70 age group were more negative about moving to an adapted type of house (62%) is the average.

- The majority of Wicklow people were negative about living together with a few older people (63%).

- A higher proportion were negative about moving in with their children (72%) and only 14% were positive about this option. In other counties 66% were negative about moving in with children and 16% were positive. It shows considerable variation across the country with negativity towards this option ranging from 48% in one county (Kildare) to 85% in another (Wexford).

- The attitudes to nursing home admission were similar - 76% were negative about moving to a nursing home - only 14% were positive. In other counties this was 79% negative and 11% positive.

- Finally moving in with a relative (not a child) received the least number of positive responses – only 9% favoured this option and 77% were negative about this.

- In other counties we saw a similar pattern - people are most positive about adapting their own homes and most negative about moving to a nursing home although moving in with a relative seems to be a worse option for people in some counties.

HaPAI Findings: Social Participation

- Wicklow people are generally satisfied with their opportunities for social participation - 70% of people aged over 55 meet socially with friends, relatives or colleagues at least once a week, this compares to 68% in other counties. Only 10% meet socially less frequently than once a month (or never), almost the same as in other counties (9%).

- Most people are satisfied or very satisfied with the availability of social contacts (65% satisfied and 21% very satisfied) and only 8% are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

- Social participation in Wicklow is just below the national average - 45% of people participate in a community group at least once a month of whom 27% participate weekly. The national average (TILDA 2014) for participation in a community group at least once a month is 49%.

- Those in the younger age group (55-69) have a slightly lower level of weekly participation in community groups - 25% compared to 30% of those over 70 and a lower level of regular socialising 67% compared to 77% among the over 70s.

- Only 6% of people feel lonely 'often' and a further 17% feel lonely some of the time.

- Just over one fifth (21%) of people aged 55+ reported that the social activities available in Wicklow do not interest them.

- 22% say that they don't have any interest in attending social activities (regardless of what is available) and this is higher among the over 70s (27%).

HaPAI Findings: Respect and Social Inclusion

- Nearly one third (32%) of adults aged 55-69 volunteer at least once a month and 19% of them volunteer at least once a week. Among those aged 70+ 18% volunteer at least once a month and 11% volunteer at least once a week.

- A majority (88%) are satisfied with amount of volunteering they do, only 5% would like to increase their volunteering and 7% say they don't know.

- Most people are satisfied with the range of volunteering opportunities (56%) but 24% don't know if they are satisfied.

- Most people have never personally experienced negative attitudes or behaviour towards them as an older person. Only 6% said that they had had such an experience. Overall, the most common source was from younger people (4.6%).

HaPAI Findings: Civic Participation and Employment

Educational Participation

In Wicklow there were no gender differences in the number of people reporting no barriers to education. However there was a slightly higher number of people – particularly women who reported difficulty

Ageism

- Only 6.1% of Wicklow participants reported that they had experienced negative attitudes or behaviour due to their age. In other areas 12.8% of participants (over 1 in 10) reported that they had experienced negative attitudes or behaviour due to their age.

- The most common sources of negative attitudes and behaviour in Wicklow were younger people (4.6%), followed by the people in your community (2.6%). In other areas the most common source of negative attitudes and behaviour was also younger people (6.1%), followed by those providing services in the financial sector.

Volunteering

- Nearly one third (32%) of adults aged 55-69 volunteer at least once a month and 19% of them volunteer at least once a week. Among those aged 70+ 18% volunteer at least once a month and 11% volunteer at least once a week.

- This is similar to other counties where 35% of the 55-69 age group and 20% of the over 70s volunteer at least monthly.

- This proportion varies across the 10 counties: 22-40 % age 55-69 and from 9-25% (age 70+)

Satisfaction with Volunteering

- Most people are satisfied with the range of volunteering opportunities (56%) but 24% don't know if they are satisfied. A majority (88%) are satisfied with amount of volunteering they do, only 5% would like to increase their volunteering and 7% say they don't know.

HaPAI Findings: Communication and Information

Sources of information

- Local radio and national TV are the two main sources of information for older people in Wicklow. 99% get information from national TV and 90% of people get their information from local radio and this is almost the same for both age groups.

- Word of mouth is another good source of information, particularly among those in the 55-69 age group – 64% get information by word of mouth while among those age over 70 this is 68%.

- Only 43% of get their information from the internet – 50% in the 55-69 age group and 29% of the over 70s.

- 61% use the mobile phone to get information, and this differs by age, 65% of those aged 55-69 get information by mobile phone but for over 70s it is only 52%.

Internet access and usage

- There is a clear age difference in access to the internet between the age groups – 92% of people in the 55-69 age group and 77% of people aged over 70 have access to an internet connection.

- 55% of the 55-69 age group and 28% of those aged over 70 use the internet daily or almost daily. This differs from the average in other counties;

46% of those aged 55-69 and 17% of over 70s and use the internet daily or almost daily.

- More than half of the over 70s (53%) say that this is not applicable to them but only 29% of the 55-69 age group gave this response. In the other counties this was higher among over 70s (64%) and 28% of 55-69.

Difficulty with information

- Very few people report difficulty getting information about local events or activities – only 4% of our respondents had difficulty, 3% have difficulty getting information on health or social care and about health entitlements.

- This compares to 9.8% in other counties who report difficulty getting information about local events or activities –10.8% have difficulty getting information on health or social care and 7.7% have difficulty getting information about health entitlements.

HaPAI Findings: Community Support and Health services

Health

- More than half of people aged over 70 have two or more doctor-diagnosed conditions (55%). The figure for those aged 55-69 is 38%.

Assistance with Health

- Mobility support needs; 21% of people aged 70+ need help with their personal mobility and 91% of them received this help.

- Housekeeping support needs; 26% of people aged 70+ need help with housekeeping and 95% of them receive this assistance.

- Personal care needs; Few people have any personal care needs (10% of the full sample) but this is higher for those aged 70 and over (19%). 95% of those aged 70+ who need assistance with personal care received this assistance.

Health Behaviours

- 67% of people say that their health is good or very good. This differs by age - 24% of those aged 55-69 report very good health and this drops to 16% of those aged over 70

- 11% of people aged over 70 say that their health is bad or very bad, compared to 6% of those aged 55-69.

- 15% of people aged 55 and older in Wicklow are current (daily or occasional) smokers; this is the same as the national average in TILDA. (TILDA 2014) Slightly more men than women are daily smokers – 17% of men and 11% of women smoke on a daily basis.

- 51% of adult aged 55 to 69 and 32% of adults aged 70+ reporting doing at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity per week. This is slightly lower than the national average of 53% in the 55 to 69 age group and 34% of the over 70s. (TILDA 2014)

- 39% of people aged 55-69 and 46% of people aged 70+ in Wicklow have a long standing illness or health problem. Among these people, 29% of the over 70s and 20% of the 55-69 age group are severely limited in their everyday activities because of this health problem.

- 88% of people are satisfied with the opportunities for sport/recreation in their area.

HaPAI Findings: Safety and Security

- In general, the majority of older people feel very safe. However 18% of people in Wicklow have had an experience that left them concerned for their safety. The majority of these (60%) reported that it had happened only once but 23% said it happened 2-3 times.

- In Wicklow 81% feel very or fairly safe out and about at night and 11% feel unsafe. By comparison in the other counties 63% feel safe or very safe out and about at night and 19% feel unsafe

- There is a gender difference in the perception of safety - 45% of men feel very safe out and about at night but only 34% of women. There is also a small age difference in feeling very safe out and about at night 36% of those aged over 70 feel very safe but 41% of those aged 55-69 do so.

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