

# Age Friendly Training | Housing and Public Realm

## Summary

This National Training Programme includes new and existing material relating to the area of Age Friendly Housing. Drawing on universal design principles and referring to Part M requirements it will cover evidence and statistics on research on age friendly housing, models of excellence (existing and in development) and technical application. Among the material referred to will be the Universal Design Guidelines for Homes in Ireland (Centre for Excellence in Universal Design), recent policy developments in housing provision, a multitude of useful resources to support practical applicational and delivery of age friendly housing. The material will also draw on current thinking and refers to the common principles between provision for older people and people with disabilities. There will be a focus on the relationships between Local Authorities, Approved Housing Bodies and the private sector and how this might be further leveraged.

The second section of the training will focus on the public realm. Age friendly practices around public seating, toilets, parking, pedestrian crossings, parks and green areas, location of bins and security are covered. It will discuss the findings of walkability surveys and research across Ireland and summarise feedback from thousands of older people about the positive and not so positive elements of their everyday environment.

This training is currently very relevant given the vision of an Age Friendly Ireland in the Programme for Government 2020 and more significantly the signalled investment in Housing for All.

### PARTNERS:

City and County Management  
Association,  
Housing Agency,  
Centre for Excellence in  
Universal Design,  
Department of Housing, Local  
Government and Heritage  
Department of Health,  
An Garda Síochána



## Background

The Age Friendly Ireland programme has made significant progress over recent years in advancing the issue of creating an age friendly Ireland. This vision is emphasised in the 2020 Programme for Government: Our Shared Future. Following the establishment of age friendly alliances in every local authority, local strategies have been developed that are making a real difference to the lives of increasing numbers of older people. The findings assist relevant staff in improving the lives of older people at no or minimal additional cost through deliberate decision making at design stage. Age Friendly Ireland is offering the Housing and Public Realm training to relevant staff in various sectors including local government whose actions and decisions shape accommodation and public realm provision.

The Age Friendly Programme involves a multi-agency, multi sectoral approach to age related planning and service provision. The programme helps cities and counties to be more inclusive of older people by addressing their expressed concerns and introducing practical responses aimed at improving the quality of life of older people. In each local authority area, an Age Friendly Alliance is established, involving senior decision-makers from public (Local Authority, Health Service Executive, An Garda Síochána etc.), commercial and not-for-profit organisations. Through the establishment of an Older People's Council in each participating local authority.

## In Summary the training provides information on;

- National Policy| *Housing Options for our Ageing Population* (2019), *Programme for Government* (2020), *National Development Plan* (2018), *Housing for All* (2021).
- Key outcomes from the *HaPAI Research*, the *Rightsizing Research* (2020), consultation outcomes and findings from the original SLIOTAR research programme and recent research highlighting key recommendations for future builds in terms of physical, social, technological and cost considerations
- Technical guidance, including universal design and reference to the recent CEUD material on universal design, technical guidelines and Part M regulations
- Actions implemented including practical resources such as, age friendly homes website, roles of the AFHTA, suite of publications, including toolkits, checklists and guides.



- Case studies from across the country showcasing age friendly developments highlighting the utilisation of appropriate funding streams, practical implementation of universal design, models that support rightsizing and a blend of social and private options for older people.
- Overview of digital supports that enable older people to age in place
- A discussion around opportunities arising from the Programme for Government which has placed considerable emphasis on older persons housing and town centre rejuvenation.
- A module of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles delivered by our partners An Garda Síochána.

## Target Audience

This course aims to further equip interested parties with essential knowledge and skills to maximise the age friendliness of their environment, and to ensure effective planning for older people is adequately considered and addressed in housing policy formulation and implementation. An introduction on the day is normally provided by the Chief Executive as Chair of the Age Friendly Alliance. The following is a list of typical staff who have benefited from the workshop:

- Housing – Engineering, Architectural and administrative staff particularly those engaged in design and or working in housing/roads/municipalities (most minor works are designed locally, and these have the potential to really matter)
- Planning - Planners and administrative staff involved in planning consultations and policy making, particularly the County Development Plan
- Financial Managers, Housing practitioners and Clerks of Work
- Community staff including library and heritage and climate action personnel
- Elected members/ members of Older People’s Councils
- Training Officers
- Senior staff representatives (Director of Services) particularly those overseeing some of the above areas and/or engaged in policy making
- Access / Access Cert Officers
- Building Control Officers
- Social Inclusion staff
- Professionals focussed on sustainability issues
- Healthy Age Friendly Homes Co-ordinators

## Expected Outcomes from Training

- A deeper understanding of the how the regulations and guidance relating to housing and the built environment affect older people (and what older people say matters most to them).
- A fuller understanding of the current legislative and financial requirements relating to accessible housing and building design and increased awareness about the need for optimal responses over the coming years
- An appreciation of the principals of Universal Design and Lifetime housing and how local authorities, housing associations and private developers can cater for all potential users of dwellings (including domestic accommodation) including older people
- A reflection on learnings from national best practice, national policy and consultation and how it could be applied in their projects and in local policy making and implementation
- Developing plans, designs and product knowledge to produce more age friendly housing and public spaces

## Delivery

The Training workshop is delivered by Age Friendly Ireland's Principal Advisor on Housing and Public Realm. More than 1600 staff across the local local authority system have received the training, in addition, It has also been delivered to Government Departments, Approved Housing Bodies, Construction Industry Federation members, HSE personnel, An Bord Pleanala, National Transport Authority, etc with inputs to the RIAI, IPI and Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

**Age Friendly Ireland is a registered training provider with Engineers Ireland.  
The Age Friendly Housing and Public Realm training is CPD Approved.**

### For More Information

Age Friendly Ireland,  
Shared Service Centre  
Meath County Council  
Buvinda House  
Navan, Co.Meath  
T +353 46 9097000  
E [agefriendlyireland@meathcoco.ie](mailto:agefriendlyireland@meathcoco.ie)