Plan for developing age-friendly communities in Flintshire

2023

Sir y Fflint
CYMUNEDAU OED-GYFEILLGAR

Flintshire
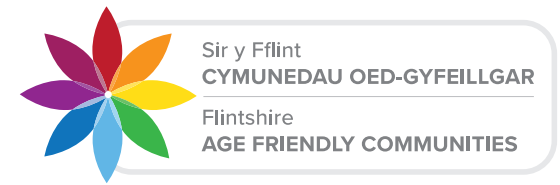**AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES**

Cymraeg

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
Gweler y dudalen Gymraeg ar ein gwefan.

This document is also available in Welsh.
See Welsh page on our website.

CYNGOR
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COUNTY COUNCIL

The concept of age-friendly cities or communities was developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) as part of a global initiative to identify the changes needed for cities and communities to adapt to and benefit from ageing populations.

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AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

What are age-friendly communities?

An age-friendly community creates an environment that enables people of all ages to age well by providing opportunities to be healthy, active and get involved in community activities. They are particularly important for enabling older people to feel valued and respected and to:

- **get out and about**
- **do the things they want to do**
- **stay informed**
- **lead healthy and active lives**
- **have their voices heard**

The Older People's Commissioner for Wales has committed to support age-friendly communities to be developed throughout Wales. Through the implementation of its Age-friendly Wales strategy, Welsh Government is encouraging local authorities in Wales to work with the Commissioner to become age-friendly. The process of becoming age-friendly involves individuals, local groups, services, and businesses working together to make positive change to enable everyone to age well.
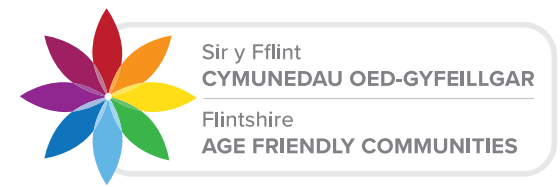
How have we identified the priorities and actions for age-friendly community development in Flintshire?

The Ageing Well team in Flintshire County Council Social Services for Adults undertakes continuous engagement with older people across the community, building strong relationships and enabling ongoing dialogue and sharing of ideas to support the development of age-friendly communities. This enables us to understand existing priorities, identify emerging priorities and work with partners and local communities to develop initiatives that will make our communities great places to grow older.

Summary of what people have told us

Through our conversations with older people and others in the community we learned the following are priorities:

Community facilities and activities for people of all ages

Accessible, clean outdoor spaces, improved parking, and more toilets

More community involvement in enhancing the outdoor space including protection/increasing biodiversity

Better, more frequent public transport, particularly in rural communities

Flexible transport to attend medical, social appointments and essential shopping

Increased housing options to meet the needs of older people

Information about services and support to enable people to remain in their own home

Activities for people of different ages, abilities, interests in the community

Intergenerational activities/events to build respect between generations

Improved perception of community safety and increased neighbourliness

Increased opportunities and support for volunteering, employment, and training

Stronger links between organisations to understand local needs and build community resilience

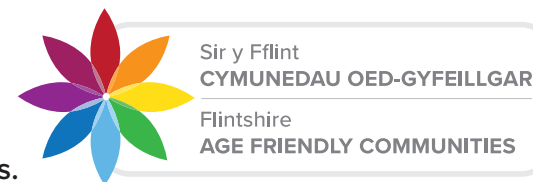Accessible information about services, activities, and events in a range of formats

Support to help people get online including training, digital equipment, Wi-Fi access

Increased availability of health and wellbeing services particularly in rural communities

Support for people who need it most to maintain independence including older people, people with disabilities, carers, people with mental health issues

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The World Health Organisation identified eight themes that influence the age-friendliness of communities.

The sections below provide a brief overview of existing age-friendly activity and highlight actions that will make communities better for everyone. There is often a cross-over bringing age-friendly benefits across multiple themes.

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Outdoor spaces and public buildings

Create accessible and well-maintained communities that enable people to stay connected, participate in social activities and access local services and facilities.

What is happening now

✔ People are working together to increase the use of community centres and village halls and encourage wider appreciation and use of outdoor space.

What will make things better

❖ Service providers working closely with residents, community groups and visitors to improve access to public buildings, enhance biodiversity and increase use of outdoor spaces for people of all ages and abilities. This includes community centres, leisure facilities, toilets, recreation spaces and footpaths.

❖ Implement Flintshire's public toilet strategy to ensure adequate access to clean, safe, accessible, and sustainable toilets where they are needed.

❖ Development of town centre regeneration Place Making plans that identify issues that people and places are experiencing (such as public and greenspaces, vacant shops, accessibility and commercial and housing needs) and inform an action plan and vision for each town centre.

Transport

Provide a range of affordable, reliable, and convenient transport options to enable older people, including those in rural communities, to easily engage with community activities.

What is happening now

✔ Community transport services connect villages and communities with little or no public transport to local transport hubs, retail, health services. Partners are working with community groups to raise awareness of these services and advocating for citizens to raise issues to improve access in and around communities.

What will make things better

❖ Implementation of local and regional transport strategies, and active travel initiatives will ensure that the needs of older people and those with restricted mobility are met.

❖ Continued work with Welsh Government to ensure transport needs of all Flintshire residents are highlighted and considered as part of the National Transport Delivery Plan.

❖ Increased awareness of the different community transport options to enable people to stay connected and access local services.

❖ Ensure access for people with different needs is considered in the development of active travel (walking, cycling) routes.

Housing

Support people to make decisions about where they live, enabling people to stay in their own homes as they get older, or to find accommodation suitable to their needs near to the people and places that are important to them.

What is happening now

✔ Housing providers and third sector organisations provide a range of housing options and services that promote independence and wellbeing and enable people to make informed decisions about where they live as they age.

✔ Development of activities and initiatives to increase the use of community facilities within sheltered housing schemes for residents and the wider community.

✔ Providing opportunities to increase digital skills and access the internet amongst residents in sheltered housing.

What will make things better

❖ Working collaboratively to influence the development of housing strategies and housing provision to promote independence and to support the needs of older people in Flintshire, including those requiring additional health care support.

❖ Continue to develop housing provision and services that meet the needs of older people/people with complex needs, enabling them to remain in their own home if they choose to or move to more suitable accommodation.

Social participation

Enable people to stay connected with friends and family in age-friendly communities that improve and maintain positive mental health and wellbeing.

What is happening now

✔ Improving information about existing groups and activities and supporting the development of new activities in communities with few social groups/opportunities.

✔ Raising awareness of community transport services that enable access to social activities.

What will make things better

❖ Support for people to actively participate in existing and new groups, clubs, and activities across all communities, including support for groups to have sustainable membership and administration.

❖ Promote existing groups and activities.

❖ Promote new opportunities for social participation

Respect and social inclusion

Build age-friendly communities that foster positive images of ageing and challenge ageism by bringing together people of different ages.

What is happening now

✔ Intergenerational activities and events promote a positive attitude towards ageing and provide opportunities for older people to play an active role in communities.

✔ Community groups, organisations and businesses are increasing understanding and support for people with dementia and raising awareness around community safety including the role we can all play in supporting the most vulnerable.

What will make things better

❖ Promote the equality and contribution of older people in the community, providing opportunities for inclusion through activities, campaigns, and intergenerational community projects.

❖ Continue to provide opportunities for older people to contribute to the development of age-friendly communities.

❖ Implement Flintshire's Dementia Strategy to ensure people with dementia and their carers are able to live well.

Civic participation and employment

Support older people to maintain economic security, independence, and skills to continue to be involved in all aspects of community life, including working, volunteering, politically and social activity.

What is happening now

✔ Existing networks and groups (e.g. older people's network, carers network, 50+ Action Group) are providing opportunities for older people to have a voice and shape projects and services.

✔ Opportunities for older people to volunteer, access training and develop new skills (e.g. digital skills, volunteer training, confidence building, Welsh language, crafts).

✔ Providing support to older people's groups to increase sustainability.

What will make things better

❖ Challenge the representation and portrayal of older people through positive language and imagery and help provide opportunities for people to be active community participants at any age.

❖ Continue to identify opportunities for older people to have a voice in the design/development of policies and services that affect them.

❖ Continue to work in partnership to maximise opportunities for learning within the community to increase wellbeing and improve skills.

Communication and information

Provide continuous, clear, and accessible information about community events, services, and facilities to all residents of Flintshire.

What is happening now

✔ Improving access to information about local groups, activities, and services through different formats (paper, on-line, face-to-face, English / Welsh).

✔ Providing opportunities for people to learn how to get online or improve their digital skills including access to free equipment loans.

What will make things better

❖ Increase access and availability of information that will encourage and support people to age well, including support for people who are digitally excluded.

❖ Continue to grow the older people's network and work with communities to improve access to information, assisting people to access online services and get online (if they choose to).

❖ Support Ambition North Wales partnership project to bring consistent broadband connectivity to rural communities and business.

Community support and health services

Provide responsive and accessible local health and care services that support people to stay healthy and independent as they grow older.

What is happening now

✔ Developing personalised and integrated community, health and social care services enabling individuals to remain independent for as long as possible.

✔ Increasing partnership working across the public sector and third sector to bring wellbeing information, advice, and services to local communities.

What will make things better

❖ Support the commitments in the Council Plan to enable people to access key community and health support services across Flintshire.

❖ Continue to develop age and dementia friendly services and amenities.

Useful links and further reading

- World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Network for Age-friendly cities and communities

  https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/who-network/

- Older People's Commissioner for Wales: Priorities "Enabling everyone to age well"

  https://olderpeople.wales/commissioners-priorities/enabling-everyone-to-age-well/

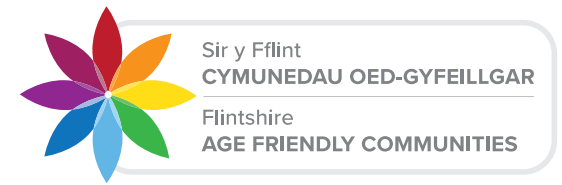- Age friendly Wales: our strategy for an ageing society, Welsh Government

  https://www.gov.wales/age-friendly-wales-our-strategy-ageing-society

- National programmes for age-friendly cities and communities: a guide (English only), WHO

  https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/

- UK network of age-friendly communities

  https://ageing-better.org.uk/uk-network-age-friendly-communities

If you would like more information, or want to be involved in helping to make your community age-friendly, please email:
OPEngagement@flintshire.gov.uk
ymgysylltiadPH@siryfflint.gov.uk (Cymraeg)