

The Dublin City Age Friendly Programme 2014 – 2019:

Aiming to make Dublin city a great place in which to grow old

The story so far

June, 2019

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Foreword

A joint message from Maurice O’Connell, independent Chair of the Dublin City Age Friendly Alliance and Brendan Kenny, Deputy Chief Executive, Dublin City Council

The ageing of our population will represent one of the most significant demographic and societal developments that our capital city, Dublin, has ever faced.

We want people living across our city to live full and meaningful lives on their own terms.

We know that an extensive range of factors have a bearing on the quality of life that we experience. Many, if not most, originate at local level, where we live. That is why in 2014, a multi-agency Age Friendly Alliance was first established to bring together a range of diverse organisations to streamline their work more actively with the expressed interests and needs of older people at their core.

The city’s Age Friendly Strategy set out a range of age friendly actions across a number of domain areas. In implementing the Age Friendly Strategy the emphasis has been on making practical changes to enhance the lived experience of older people across the city.

We have recently completed a review of progress achieved by the City’s Age Friendly Programme. Some considerable progress has been made through the introduction of an extensive range of quality of life related initiatives - many of which can now be scaled up across the city relatively easily. Indeed, flagship age friendly initiatives such as the City Council led, multi agency ‘Housing with Support’ demonstrator project have shown how well thought out, collaborative approaches can lead to real and meaningful change.

We recognise, however, that we have still a long way to go to delivering a truly age friendly city. Indeed, the review identified a number of areas that have yet to be responded to in an effective way. As a multi-agency programme we have therefore agreed, with the approval of the City’s Older People’s Councils, to attach specific focus to three priority city wide action areas;

1. **Transport and the built environment** with the goal of enhancing ease of access and movement for older people across Dublin City.
2. **Housing + home** with the goal of supporting older people across the city to age comfortably in the communities they belong to.
3. **Communications** with goals to (a) raise awareness of the Dublin Age Friendly Programme and (b) ensure that older people across the City can access more timely and practical information about what is happening in their communities.

We know that we are just at the start of our age friendly journey. The City Council is committed to achieving a successful outcome for the Dublin City Age Friendly initiative. For the city to become truly age friendly all sectors of society – the City Council, our health services, police, transport providers, businesses and the general public – must be involved. We all have our part to play.

Our joint vision, our ambition is to make Dublin a great city in which to grow older. The bar has been set high but the gains for us all as we age will be worth the effort. The member agencies of the Age Friendly Alliance are looking forward to working together to make it happen.

Maurice O’Connell
Independent Chair
Dublin City Age Friendly Alliance

Brendan Kenny
Deputy Chief Executive
Dublin City Council

1 Introduction

Ireland's population is living longer than ever before, and our older adult population is consistently growing in size. The number of people over the age of 65 in Ireland is expected to reach 1.4 million by 2040, or about 23% of the total population.

Just like other areas in Ireland, Dublin City is experiencing ageing in its population structure which will have effects in the very near future. A population with up to 1 in 4 people over the age of 65 years will have significant social and economic implications at an individual, family and societal level. The implications for public policy areas as diverse as housing, health, urban planning, transport, policing and the business environment are, of course, considerable.

The Dublin City Age Friendly Strategy was launched in September 2014. Informed by the 'voice' of the older person across the city and within the framework of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Age Friendly Cities and Communities model Dublin City Council together with an Alliance of agencies committed to 43 city-wide actions across nine domain areas spanning issues such as housing, our health services, the built environment, transport and participation.

Previous to the launch of the Dublin City Age Friendly Strategy no local forums existed for senior-level executives to plan collaboratively in order to respond to the challenges and promises of an expanding older adult population.

Much of the progress achieved to date has involved the implementation of real change in a range of imaginative and cost-effective ways - older adult exercise programmes, village and town improvement schemes, men's sheds, information programmes, intergenerational and social events – can be included in a long list of age friendly initiatives introduced across the city in recent years.

Other, more resource intensive programmes include the City Council led, multi agency 'Housing with Support' demonstrator project which will bring 52 age friendly homes to St Michael's Estate, Inchicore. Expected to be completed across 2021 the aim of this project is to develop a new model of housing for older people where the key components; physical environment and care supports are provided onsite, integrated into the community and are designed with older people at the centre.

Multi-agency working is of course challenging. As the political, cultural and economic capital of Ireland, and with a population of 553,165 (Census 2016) that challenge is heightened further again. A review of the working structures and approach underpinning the Dublin Age Friendly Programme was undertaken across the last 12 months. This resulted in agreement for the Dublin Age Friendly City Programme to prioritise 3 action areas – transport and the built environment; housing and home; and age friendly communications - for coordinated city-wide focus. A new city wide, multi-agency Age Friendly Alliance - involving senior representatives from across the key agencies - has been put in place to oversee progress across the three agreed priority areas. Two regional Alliances - one operating on the north and a second on the south side of the city, both under the leadership of Dublin City Council Senior Managers - will guide implementation of the prioritised actions.

The purpose of this document is to provide a high level, summary overview of the key progress secured by the City's Age Friendly programme to date together with an outline of plans for age friendly working to be led out across the city over the next number of years.

2 Background to the Age Friendly Programme

The Department of Health's National Positive Ageing Strategy (2013) sets out a vision for an age friendly society. It recognises that all sectors of society – government, business, voluntary groups, service providers and the general public - have a role to play in creating such an age-friendly society. In particular, the strategy set out the need for effective local joint working structures, since so many of the factors that contribute to a good quality of life for older people are community based.

A key purpose of local government is to promote the wellbeing and quality of life of its citizens and communities. The first local authority led Age Friendly County programme was established in Louth in 2009. This World Health Organization (WHO) informed programme involves a multi-agency, multi-sectoral approach to age-related planning and service provision. Since 2009, an Age Friendly Programme has been developed in each of the 31 local authority areas following application of a consistent methodology and governance structure which supports cities and counties to be more inclusive of older people by addressing their expressed concerns and interests under the eight defined WHO programme headings;

1. Outdoor spaces and buildings
2. Housing
3. Social participation
4. Transportation
5. Respect and social inclusion
6. Civic participation and employment
7. Communication and information
8. Community support and health services

The Dublin City Programmes first Age Friendly Strategy was launched in September 2014. Following a thorough city wide consultation – involving a combination of survey questionnaires, on street and round table conversations with older people together with consultation with an extensive set of service providers – the strategy was formulated to develop the city as an environment which will better support its older community members to lead healthy, active and engaged lives.

Under the leadership of the City Council governance was anchored in a multi-agency city wide Age-Friendly Alliance, supported by five cross-sectoral administrative area-based Age-Friendly Alliances. Older People's Councils were also established across each of the five administrative areas of the city to both inform and support the work of the area-based age friendly programmes.

At administrative area multi-agency Alliances and local Older People's Councils have worked together to introduce age friendly initiatives in a bid to support older people across the city to live more autonomous, independent and valued lives.

Dublin's age friendly leadership at national and international level

- ***Dublin Declaration on Age Friendly Cities & Communities***

Dublin City is host of the International Dublin Declaration on Age Friendly Cities & Communities. Modelled on the Barcelona Declaration, and developed on a collaborative basis by the World Health Organizations (WHO) Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and the International Federation on Ageing, the Dublin Declaration expresses the clear and strong commitment of political leaders to champion actions which improve the lives of older people.

In 2011, an historic International Declaration Signing was hosted by Dublin City Council with over 40 Mayors from across the world. Subsequent signings were hosted by the City Council in both 2013 and 2014.

The 2014 civic ceremony held in Dublin's City Hall marked the full engagement of all 31 local authorities across Ireland to take actions to improve the quality of life of older people in our cities and counties. To date the Dublin Declaration has been signed by a host of international cities including New York, Mexico, Manchester, Edinburgh and Seoul.

- ***Hosting the national office – Age Friendly Ireland – and supporting a country wide extension of the Age Friendly Programme***

Established in January 2014 as an intermediary organisation Age Friendly Ireland was tasked with coordinating the Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme. Across 2014 to 2016 this key national office was hosted by Dublin City Council on behalf of the local government sector and was responsible for bringing together, supporting and providing technical guidance to the growing number of local authority led age friendly programmes.

During this three-year term Age Friendly Ireland was governed by a Board and advised by a national oversight group chaired by Dublin City Councils Deputy Chief Executive, Brendan Kenny. With the support of the City Council the Age Friendly programme was successfully extended to all 31 local authority areas in Ireland.

Collectively, the national Age Friendly City and County Programme provides a now national infrastructure to bring key actors - City and County Councils, An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive, NGO's, business and third level sector representatives - together at local authority level to plan collaboratively, to share resources and to streamline their work, with the interests and needs of older people and an ageing population at their core.

Health and wellbeing is fundamental to the age friendly vision. A great deal of the programme focuses on practical actions and developments in other areas; In creating walkable, attractive and accessible communities and age-friendly spaces, and by introducing actions to address participation and inequality people of all ages will be supported to enjoy healthier, more active and connected lives.

- ***Hosting of the National Age Friendly Recognition and Achievements Awards***

Dublin City Council will, in November 2019 host the National Age Friendly Recognition and Achievement Awards in Croke Park. The primary aim of these awards is to recognise and reward 'age friendly' innovation and achievement.

This year, eight categories of awards, aligning to the WHO themes, have been chosen as they have a meaningful impact on the lives of older people in Ireland.

1. Age Friendly Transport Award: This category recognises the vital difference that access to good quality and reliable transport options can make to an older person.

2. Age Friendly Active and Healthy Ageing Award: We are living for longer, but remaining healthy and active in later years can be a challenge. This award recognises those initiatives that optimise opportunities for good health in later years, so that older people can continue to play an active role in community life.

3. Age Friendly Business Innovation Award: Creating an enjoyable and accessible environment for older consumers pays dividends for businesses and the wider community. This category acknowledges age aware businesses who recognise that older people as both producers and consumers bring a wealth of experience and value to our society.

4. Age Friendly Safety and Security Award: Feeling safe and secure at home and when out and about plays an important role in supporting older people to feel more confident in staying active and engaged in the wider community. This category acknowledges the impact of community-based responses which enable older people to feel secure in their homes and in the wider community.

5. Age Friendly Communication Award: The ability to access clear and concise information can impact on a range of aspects of an older person's life, from health and wellbeing to social connectedness to financial security. This award recognises efforts being made around the country to bridge the information gap.

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6. Age Friendly Environment Award: The built environment can have a significant impact on the lives of all older people. Simple things like adequate public seating, level footpaths and appropriate crossing times at pedestrian crossings all impact on the ability of older people to be active in their towns and villages. This category recognises projects that bring about change in the built environment which supports older people to enjoy more active and connected lives.

7. Age Friendly Community Innovation Award: The voice of the older person is at the heart of the Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme. This award recognises those innovative projects that are driven 'by older people for older people' in the local community. These projects not only enhance the lives of older people, but benefit people of all ages across the community at large.

8. Age Friendly Housing Award: As people age, they tend to spend more time in their own homes. This means that older people's quality of life, and thus their health, can depend on the appropriateness of their home environment and the conditions in which they live. This award recognises innovative housing initiatives that enable older people to remain independent at home for as long as possible.

An open call has been issued to all local authorities seeking innovative projects that have real impact and the potential to be replicated.

A judging panel, made up of a team of age friendly practitioners including older people, has been established to evaluate all submissions. Shortlisted projects will be visited by the judges across June 2019. Each award category is to be sponsored by a relevant Department or State Agency.

3 Dublin City Age Friendly - A snapshot of age friendly initiatives introduced across the city

A wide range of age friendly initiatives have been progressed across the term of this inaugural Dublin City Age Friendly Strategy. Just some of the highlights across the various age friendly domain areas include:

Outdoor spaces and buildings: Making outdoor spaces accessible and safe for older people, creating walkable communities and age-friendly spaces.

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- **Walkable communities and age-friendly spaces - Age Friendly Towns Programmes: Crumlin, East Wall and Raheny**

Village and town improvement programmes, informed by older person led walkability exercises, have been facilitated to make city outdoor spaces more accessible and safe for older people. As front runner age friendly villages, Crumlin, East Wall and Raheny have led out on the delivery of focused programmes of work which have resulted in better signage, seating, parking, improved access to medical centres and other aspects of age friendliness. These village based programmes have also supported the development of a community garden and a dementia friendly café – initiatives which the age friendly programme would now like to see scaled up across Dublin City.

Building on the age friendly work led out across these three villages, walkability audits have been conducted more recently in Ranelagh village. The various audits have assessed the quality and continuity of pavements, the number, safety and timing of pedestrian crossings and any barriers to mobility in the street. Traffic management issues have also been identified while the need for age friendly parking has also been recommended by older participants.

- **Being Age Friendly in the Public Realm: Resource document for planners and engineers**

The design and maintenance of a community's built environment can make the difference between a healthy and active lifestyle, or one characterised by limited mobility and high levels of social isolation.

Dublin City Council, in partnership with Age Friendly Ireland, developed a guidance document, 'Being Age Friendly in the Public Realm', to demonstrate how an extensive range of practical, low cost and at times 'no cost' interventions, in the area of the public realm, can make a big difference to the lives of older people. The resource document features tips and advice on age friendly design across a range of relevant age friendly areas – public seating, toilets, parking, pedestrian crossings, bus stops, parks and green areas, wayfinding and signage.

It is anticipated that this guide will provide a further means to prompt 'age friendly thinking' on the part of key city-based professionals - architects, designers, engineers and planners – who may be involved in the design and maintenance of our public realm.

Housing: Supporting older people in Dublin City to age comfortably in the community they belong to and to participate in decision-making about their housing environment.

- **Development of the Dublin City Housing with Support Programme:** Under the auspices of the age friendly housing with support programme agreement was reached to provide €15 million funding for a 'Housing with Support' Scheme for older people in Inchicore. As proposed by the Dublin City Age Friendly Housing Working Group, the St. Michael's Estate site, Inchicore will now deliver 52 age friendly homes, due for completion in 2020.

The 'Housing with Support' model is intended to set a new standard for the future of housing provision for older people and to act as an exemplar for Dublin City and others to follow. Funding has been approved under the Department of Housing's Capital Assistance Scheme with a contribution of €450,000 from the HSE/Department of Health towards additional communal facilities for the older residents. These homes will provide extra space in all of the homes to allow for care staff and/or family to stay over whichever is the more appropriate as time goes by.

The model is structured around three pillars:

- The creation of a 'village' feel and sense of place through the provision of communal facilities that promote and encourage social interaction and engagement;
- The availability of a range of services, supports and amenities, designed to facilitate independence and autonomy;
- An integrated approach to building mixed tenure and vibrant, mixed communities.

Most importantly it is intended that this project will act as a model that housing providers across Dublin City can learn from and ultimately replicate. A reference group of older people from Dublin City continues to advise on the design and development of this exciting age friendly housing initiative.

- **Supporting older people in Dublin City to stay fit, active and independent for longer:**

The 'Move More Stay Active' weekly physical activity programme for older people ran across twelve weeks at the Mansion House, Dublin. A group of older people from across the City took part in this fun and safe exercise programme which involved pre and post programme testing for strength, balance and agility. Reggie, one of the participants, improved his overall fitness by 210% in 12 weeks!

The Dublin City Age Friendly Programme is very keen to build on this positive experience and, from next year, will be looking to support the scale up of this kind of initiative so that more older people across the City are supported to stay fit, active and independent for longer.

"The challenge remains to create socially engaged communities by designing a place where home is about the needs of the older person and this project will set the standard for housing for older people in Ireland."

Lord Mayor of Dublin, Mícheál MacDonncha

Those participating clearly enjoyed it. They had the following to say...

"A great social benefit, meeting people, getting you out and about. It's fantastic! It gives you more energy and you are more flexible. You can go up and down the stairs no problem. You get so much more energy and feel much more positive about yourself." **Marie Grennell (84)**

"It has so many positives and you can see how everyone is benefitting from the exercise...So it's good for the city and (all of us) taking part." **Lord Mayor Nial Ring**

You forget your aches and pains when you come here. (Just) get out of the house and forget your age! **Dympna Clarke (91)**

A range of community walking, aqua aerobics and swimming programmes were also introduced through the Age Friendly programme to better enable older people across the city to stay healthy, independent and where possible living in their own homes and communities.

The City Councils Parks Department has installed a number of outdoor gyms across recent years including those at Albert College Park, Bunting Park and Lansdowne Valley Park. The City Council together with DCU introduced an older person focused 'healthy living' project which supported older people to make more regular and effective use of the outdoor gym equipment installed at Albert College Park, Ballymun.

- **DCC and ALONE's Cold Weather Initiative: Encouraging the public to check in on older people during cold weather**

Dublin City Council's Community Development Section, in association with ALONE, the Gardaí and the Dublin Fire Brigade, has, across recent years issued an annual appeal to urge members of the public to check in on older people in their community during periods of cold weather and to ensure that they have sufficient fuel, food, water and are in good communication with family friends and neighbours.

- **Development and facilitation of training for City Council architects, planners and engineers** on age friendly housing design in order to support older people across the city to live in their own homes and communities for longer.

Exploratory meetings have also been held with the City Councils planners and urban renewal teams to promote the use of lifetime adaptable and age friendly housing design and provide advice on 'smart house' technologies which can help older people to live independently for longer.

Further work is underway to better ensure that planning guidelines incorporate universal design principles and age friendly design.

- **Introduction of Trusted Tradesmen Schemes** to support older people in more confidently and cost effectively maintaining their own homes and independent living.

- **OPRAH (Older People Remaining at Home) – Action research study supporting older people to remain at home:** OPRAH or 'Older People Remaining at Home' was an action research community based initiative designed to help older people to stay living in their homes for longer, avoid unnecessary hospitalisations and admissions to nursing homes.

The Dublin City OPRAH support co-ordinator worked with a cohort of older people to ensure that, upon discharge from hospital or when actively considering a move to long stay care, such older people could receive a wider range of personalised health and social supports necessary for them to continue living in at home.

The action research project successfully illuminated a number of systemic barriers to change and the considerable barriers often experienced by older people in identifying, accessing and managing the complex range of services needed to support successful independent living.

"The winter months can be a difficult time for many people who are vulnerable, alone and isolated. It can be a very frightening experience to be without shelter, warmth, food or essential items such as medication. We are appealing to all Dubliners to look out for the older people in the community who may live alone, have no family or may be at risk of suffering from fuel poverty, illness or loneliness. This campaign represents the community and the whole city working together."

Lord Mayor of Dublin, Mícheál MacDonncha

OPRAH'S recommendations for how to realise its vision for the future of community-based supports for older people. stem from the project's;

"...demonstration of a way of providing support services which can be adapted to suit people's individual needs as they grow older thereby maximising their independence and health outcomes."

Sean Moynihan, Chief Executive, ALONE

- **Supporting older people to feel safe when out and about and at home, and so feel more confident to stay active and participate in the wider community**

A garda Age Friendly representative was appointed across a number of key Dublin city Garda stations in order to promote further awareness of older persons concerns within An Garda Síochána and to liaise with older people in the community regarding such concerns raised.

Social participation: Providing opportunities for older people to stay socially connected and to play an active part in social networks.

- **Development of community cafés** and Men's Sheds, a dementia choir, the facilitation of an extensive series of intergenerational and social events were introduced to support older people across the city to remain active and stay socially connected.

Dublin City Council has developed a series of physical, social, cultural and artistic activities for older people across the city's five administrative areas with these including: outdoor exercise programmes, the 'Let's Walk and Talk' programme, tea dances, petanque, bowling, aqua aerobics, swimming and art exhibitions among others.

Transportation: Promoting safe, accessible, reliable and comfortable transport services for older people.

- **Vantastic – Health Route for North East Inner City and East Wall area**

This partnership pilot project, proposed by Vantastic together with the Dublin City Age Friendly Initiative, provides a fully accessible door-to-door minibus service to elderly and mobility impaired (over 65's) residents to attend appointments at the Mater and Beaumont Hospitals. The pilot Health Route operated Monday to Friday, 8:30 am – 11:00 am and 13:00 – 16:00 at a nominal charge to the individual user. Service users were required to register with Vantastic; <https://vantastic.ie/health-route/> and then contact the customer support free phone number 1800 242 703 in advance to book a journey. The fee for each journey is invoiced to clients on a monthly basis. The service commenced in mid-2018 and was to be piloted through until the end of the year.

There is now an ambition to develop a number of similar innovative schemes across the city to address key connectivity related issues.

Respect and inclusion: Combatting stereotypes and negative views on ageing and preventing discrimination against older people.

- **Age Friendly Business.**

With close to 1 million people (aged 65+) now living in Ireland we know that this is a growing market segment and accounts for over 50% of consumer spending. The Age Friendly Business Programme provides a valuable means for businesses to further attune their approach to this valuable and growing market.

The City's Age Friendly Programme, in partnership with the Local Enterprise Office (LEO), has continued to facilitate workshops for interested businesses - supporting them to identify practical ways to make their businesses more attractive to the older adult market and better positioned to serve this growing segment.

Raheny, now designated as an age friendly town, has seen many of its resident business engaging with the Age Friendly Programme across recent years. – business coming on board

There is further opportunity for the city's age friendly programme to partner with Dublin Chamber and to more formally integrate with the Chamber's well positioned Diversity and Inclusion Award which enjoys high levels of awareness amongst Dublin's business community.

Civic participation: Providing volunteering and lifelong learning opportunities for older people across the city.

- **DCU – An Age Friendly University:** To support the DCU Age Friendly University programme currently underway an experienced planner led a series of walkability exercises with members of the Dublin City Older People's Council. Such exercises have informed plans for better signage, seating, parking, access routes and other aspects of age friendliness across the university. The recommendations and agreed actions are now being implemented.

The world's first international age friendly universities conference was hosted by DCU in Autumn 2015 with the Dublin City Age Friendly Programmes submitting a report on progress for presentation to the international audience.

- **Age Friendly Trinity:** A working group entitled "Age-Friendly Trinity" was founded to promote age-friendly policy and practice throughout the university. The working group brought together ageing and age-equality experts from across the university in an action-focussed group with the goal of making Trinity an ever-more age-friendly university. Through the work of the Age-Friendly Trinity movement, Trinity has endorsed the Ten Principles of an Age-Friendly University and joined the Age-Friendly Universities Network; this was celebrated at a public launch event in the Trinity Long Room Hub in September 2017.
- **TCD led, Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) – Strategies for successful ageing;** Older People's Council representatives from across Dublin participated in the design phase to inform the development of the TCD led MOOC. The programme addressed many of the challenges to an age-friendly society across a free five-week 'massive online open course', delivered by trinity engAge, and involved the presentation of world-leading research in ageing and offered strategies to support health and well-being as we get older. Academics from seven trinity schools collaborated with Age friendly organisations to present information about mental health, physical wellbeing, perceptions of ageing, creativity, and social interaction. With over 150,000 comments posted on the course, 'Strategies for Successful Ageing' is not only a way for people to learn how to age successfully, but also for meeting others from around the world, and taking part in a lively and active online community. Since 2016, the programme has been run three times, with more than 30,000 learners registering for the course.

Communication and information: Supporting older people to access timely, practical information about what is happening in their communities.

- **Household based survey; 500 people aged 55+ participating from across the city**

Policy makers need evidence to make projections of future need across all policy areas. The majority of the available national data sources do not, however, provide any information on the lives of older people on a local authority basis. To address this gap, the Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative (HaPAI), together with the Dublin Age Friendly City Programme, carried out local research using a single random sample survey which involved over five hundred people aged 55 and over from across the city.

An extensive range of findings relevant to Dublin City's older adult population is now available in respect of public spaces and buildings, transport, housing, safety and security, healthy ageing, social participation, lifelong learning, respect and social inclusion, civic participation, information access and caregiving.

These survey findings continue to be used to inform policy development and service provision as the city progresses its age friendly plans. Other activities in this area included:

- Installation of age friendly information stands across all five administrative area offices.
- Circulation of 10,000 age friendly calendars to older residents across the city
- Ongoing roll out of the Dublin city age friendly library strategy.
- Hosting of an age friendly information fair in the ILAC library.

Community support and health services: Bringing about better integration of services and addressing gaps in service provision.

- **Networking event for all city-based agencies to promote better integration of services and reduce avoidable duplication and costs**

Through consultation older people have told us that the services "aren't sufficiently joined up". To address this the HSE Integrated Care Programme for Older People (ICP OP) together with DCC's Age Friendly Programme Coordinators organised a speed networking event in September, 2018.

Over 120 agencies and groups participated in the event aimed at building stronger connections across those Dublin City agencies who are working either directly or indirectly with older people. The event was organised so that each participant met with at least three other agency representatives – sharing information on their services and the older people that they support. Similar networking events are planned for next year.

- **Consultation between the HSE and the city's Older People Councils as part of a series of facilitated listening meetings**

The Age Friendly Programme together with the HSE's Quality & Patient Safety Division facilitated a number of 'listening meetings' which provided a valuable opportunity for the HSE to meet directly with older people and to hear of their experiences with the health care services.

The listening meetings resulted in the identification of a number of relevant action improvement areas in respect of in-patient and out-patient hospital and community-based health services. The HSE has met with senior managers across a number of the city's hospitals to provide an overview of findings. Specific training with contact staff has been designed to respond to the findings provided.

4 Making age friendly 'real' at the local level: A snapshot of age friendly initiatives supported across the city

South East Area – Coordinating a range of age friendly activities including:

- **Conduct of a series of walkability studies** across spring, 2018. These were carried out to identify hazards and accessibility related issues in the area. The South East Area Older Person's Council have also focused on events within the area to combat littering, dog fouling, and general waste management problems.
- **An Older Person and Social Inclusion Art Exhibition** facilitated as part of Dublin City Council's Social Inclusion Week.
- **A special Older Person's Council meeting with local councillors.** This allowed for an active discussion where OPC members could raise and share their concerns with their local representatives.
- **Older People's Council engagement with transport partners** in the area focused on enabling an interagency approach to transport provision. The Older Peoples Council aim to engage more with transport information, official city transport, community-based transport, and hold further consultations with bus and Luas drivers in 2019.
- **Ballroom of Romance** at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI).
- **Beech Hill Knitting Group.**
- **Beech Hill Weekly Afternoon Tea.**
- **Carmelite Over 55's fair.**
- **Golden oldies sing along.**
- **Neighbours day** at St. Patricks' CYMS.
- **Distribution of the 'Message in a Bottle'** – supporting older people living independently at home to keep their basic personal and medical details in a common place, where, in cases of emergency, the Emergency teams can easily access them.
- **Terenure Tea Dance.**
- **Dance for Life contemporary Dance Programme.**
- **Let's Walk and Talk** – a programme of over 300 walks focussed on supporting older people to keep fit, meet people and learn more about our city.
- **Seasonal arts and cultural events** (Easter, Summer, Halloween and Christmas) organised in all older person complexes.
- **World café consultation event** to inform the development of Dublin City's Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) from the perspective of older people living in the area.

South Central Area

- The South-Central Area Age Friendly Unit was very productive during 2018 with Community and Area staff working on various projects and events. This included senior citizen events; environmental projects, summer and autumn outings; Age Friendly community choirs; and environmental enhancements.
- **Taster sessions in meditation**, head and shoulder massage, hand massage to promote wellbeing in Father Kitt Court.
- St. Catherine's church was host to Dublin's Theatre Royale Remembered and Thanksgiving Day event.

- **Community and social events** including summer barbeques and Christmas parties held in Older Person Complexes.
- **Showcase of Talents** celebrating the impact of local older people in the arts, music and dance as part of Social Inclusion Week.
- **Establishment of a Dementia Choir** for those living with dementia, their families and carers. Over 45 were meeting weekly in St. Mary's Nursing Home.
- **A bowling blitz** for older people.
- **Establishment of four senior café's** providing a weekly service for older people on given days where they can avail of reduced prices on tea, scones, breakfasts and dinners.
- **Young at Heart Dance** with music from the Garda Band for senior citizens in the South-Central Area attended by over 350 people.
- **Positive Ageing events** held throughout Crumlin, Drimnagh, Ballyfermot, Inchicore and the Liberties in association with SICAP implementers.
- **Walkability studies** in Chapelizod, Bluebell and Inchicore.
- **Fire safety talks** organised at Stannaway Avenue and Father Kitt Court Senior Citizen Complexes in association with the Dublin Fire Brigade.
- **Dance and Exercise classes** held at Ballyfermot Sports Fitness Centre for adults over 55 – includes a cup of tea after each class.

North West Area

- **Establishment of a Men's Shed** in Finglas. Three new Men's Sheds were set up in the North West Area in 2018, bringing to eight the total number set up in the area in the last four years. Each of the three new Men's Sheds are completely different, with one solving the problems of the world over cups of tea, one whose members are referred from St. Michael's House, and a third includes a Monday walk as part of their weekly mental health routine.
- **Enhancement of seating at Collins Avenue** following consultation with the Older Peoples Council.
- **Delivery of two falls prevention courses** and one older persons Positive Mental Health initiative.
- **Opening of three petanque courts.**
- Participation by the Older Peoples Council in the Trinity College **Alzheimer Memory Test Studies.**
- **Tour of the Dublin Tenement Museum** by the Older Peoples Council.
- **Performance of a play, "Midwife of the Nation"**, by Carnation Theatre organised by the Finglas Community and Social Development Section along with the North West Area Older Person's Council in order to mark International Women's Day.
- **Musical tour of Richmond Barracks** entitled "Melodies and Memories Tour" organised with the North West Area Older Person's Council.
- **The annual Finglas Senior Ball**, which took place in Erin's Isle GAA Club.

North Central Area

- Various events took place in the North Central Area throughout 2018, some of these included a performance of 'Beezie' to the Grange Woodbine Seniors Group and the Drumcondra Residents Association, day trips to Richmond Barracks, a Summer Variety Show, a Christmas Tea Dance, and a trip to the Aviva Stadium during Social Inclusion Week.
- **HSE and DCC weekly community walking programme** at Lerne Sports and Social Club.

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- **Memorial Park and Priorswood Park walking groups.**
- **'Men on the Move' 12-week physical activity programme** at Glin Community Centre.
- **Weekly aqua aerobics and swimming programme.**
- **Pilot walking football programme** in Darndale.
- **Historical walk and talk programme** at Drumcondra graveyard.
- **Establishment of Men's Sheds** at Priorswood, Donaghmede, Artane/Coolock.
- **Raheny café / community club** supporting weekly guest speakers for c. 40 to 45 local older residents.
- **Artane / Coolock café** meeting weekly.
- **Built environment improvements** – dishing of footpaths, addressing gradients on safety ramps etc. - as part of older person informed works at Raheny.
- **Installation of a number of age friendly benches** in May Park, Coolock village, and Raheny village.
- **One to one nutrition advice sessions** in partnership with DIT's Department of Nutrition.
- **Information session for older people** on services and entitlements held in partnership with Northside Citizens Information Service.
- **St. Anne's Court Art Exhibition** held in the community room of St. Anne's Court Older Persons Complex.
- **Drop in Dance classes** for people aged 55+ in Grange Woodbine Community Centre.
- **Tea dances held** at Easter, Summer, Halloween and Christmas.

Central Area

- **Training in civic engagement**, in partnership with Age & Opportunity, for nominated members of the Older People's Council.
- **Joint working group established with Croke Park** to support pursuit of Age Friendly Stadium status

5 Outline plans for 2019/2020 and beyond

The Dublin City Age Friendly strategy continues to be implemented on a City Council supported, multi-agency basis across the city. An extensive range of quality of life related age friendly initiatives - many of which could now be scaled up across the City – have been successfully introduced through the programme.

A City Council led review of the programme - which involved extensive consultation and engagement with key programme stakeholders – including both agency-based personnel and Older Peoples Council representatives – identified that there is further scope to exploit the full potential of this key city wide programme.

A new Dublin City Age Friendly Strategy is to be developed for a three to five-year term commencing January, 2020.

With the agreement of key agency and Older People Council representatives a number of key decisions have now been agreed:

- **Formation of a new city-wide Alliance** with membership including senior level representatives from Dublin City Council (Deputy Chief Executive), the HSE (Director and Chief Officer), the National Transport Authority, the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design and Dublin Chamber.

The Alliance is led by independent chair, Maurice O’Connell, while the City Council has appointed Beatrice Casserly as Dublin City Age Friendly Programme Coordinator providing support to the multi-agency approach at city wide level. Working together with the north and south side area Alliance leaders, other relevant senior level stakeholders will be invited to join on a ‘as needs basis.’

- **Programme wide agreement reached for the city-wide Alliance to prioritise and drive 3 action areas** for coordinated city-wide focus;

1. Transport and the built environment with the goal of enhancing ease of access and movement for older people across Dublin City.

Rationale: Good access to transport makes it easier for older people to participate in community life. People who depend on others for help with transport tend to prioritise essential outings, such as grocery shopping and medical appointments, and neglect their social and leisure needs.

The design and maintenance of a community’s built environment can make the difference between a healthy and active lifestyle, or one characterised by limited mobility and high levels of social isolation.

2. Housing + home with the goal of supporting older people across the city to age comfortably in the communities they belong to.

Rationale: People want to stay living in their own homes and communities as they age. As people age, they spend more time in their own homes. This means that older people’s quality of life, and thus their health, can depend on the appropriateness of their home environment and the conditions in which they live. Loneliness and social isolation increase the risk of depression and mental health difficulties, as well as cognitive decline.

3. Communications with goals to (a) raise awareness of the Dublin City Age Friendly Programme and (b) ensure that older people across the City can access more timely and practical information about what is happening in their communities.

Rationale: Lack of awareness of what is on offer, or how to access it, can prevent older people from accessing useful services or resources. A reliable flow of accessible information about activities and opportunities keeps older people active and involved, and is critical for those who have few formal or informal networks to call on.

- **Development of a preliminary baseline data / evidence profile** for the 3 agreed priority action areas to support the Alliance and its partners in making informed decisions and in monitoring progress over time.

This evidence profile draws primarily on the Dublin City Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative study which involved a survey of 500 people aged 55 and over living in Dublin City. Key findings are relevant to Dublin City's older adult population in respect of public spaces and buildings, transport, housing, safety and security, healthy ageing, social participation, lifelong learning, respect and social inclusion, civic participation, information access and caregiving. It is anticipated that this profile will further evolve over time in terms of detail and sophistication.

- **Agreement on a range of initial action areas to stimulate programme development across the three priority areas:**

Priority domain area 1: *Transport and the built environment*: Key issues

- Supporting the scale up of proven initiatives such as the health and shop routes together with successful physical activity and exercise programmes
- Enhancing connectivity and, in particular, supporting people to get from their own homes to key bus stops.
- Need to build greater awareness of needs of older people amongst private bus operators.
- Improvements to the built environment addressing uneven surfaces, dog fouling, access to seating, street lighting and the dishing of foot paths so as to support people of all ages to enjoy more active and connected lives.
- Need for older people to be involved, through the introduction of walkability programmes, in planning the location of age friendly parking, bus stops, shelters and seating.

Walkability was identified as a key methodology for promoting engagement – on the part of both agency representatives and older people. To facilitate comparison a standardised methodology is to be employed for the walkability exercises across the city's administrative areas.

Together, the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD) and the National Transport Authority (NTA) are working currently on a walkability tool kit and approach to facilitate this programme of work. It is anticipated that this will support consistent reporting and an informed allocation of available resources.

Priority domain area 2: *Housing and home*: Key issues

- Promoting and supporting older people to access key community events.
- Enhanced access to home help and home care packages, home adaptation grants and meals on wheels supports.
- Greater awareness of good practice housing options for older people and their available benefits.
- Recognition of the critical role of transport – and investment in same - in combatting isolation.

Priority domain area 3: *Communications and information*: Key issues

- Need for a communications and branding campaign to raise awareness and understanding of the Age Friendly Programme and the role of the Older People's Councils.
- Provision of 'signposts' to key services and information sources relevant to older people; The development of Area based Directories of Key Services may be considered in this context.

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- Greater awareness of the needs of an ageing population amongst service providers and businesses across the City; City wide engagement in the branded 'age friendly business programme' or variation of same will be further promoted.

Key initiatives – short term:

- **30th June – 13th July 2019** – Launch of the Dublin City Age Friendly Communications Programme.
- **2nd July 2019** – Launch of the Dublin City Age Friendly Technical Guide to Communications (City Hall)
- **12th July 2019** – Older Person's Council (OPC) Training (Council Chamber, City Hall)
- **12th July 2019** – Staff Dementia Awareness Training (Wood Quay Venue)