

# AGE-FRIENDLY BRISTOL ACTION PLAN

—  
2022



**BRISTOL**  
**ONE CITY**





# WHAT AND WHO IS THIS PLAN FOR?

---

Age-Friendly Bristol identifies ways to make Bristol a more liveable and enjoyable place for people to grow older, ensuring age is not a barrier to staying independent and active in city life. We work with older people and partners across the public, private, and voluntary and community sectors to do this.

This plan sets out the steps that council departments and local organisations will be taking over the next few years.

# CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EMPLOYMENT



## Background

An age-friendly city provides opportunities for older people to contribute to their communities through different channels including informal and formal volunteering and paid employment.

Some older people work and volunteer because they enjoy it; however, others need to carry on working as a financial necessity. For the 78% of areas of Bristol where healthy life expectancy is below retirement age, it is important to bear in mind that even a stable job, which an older person wishes to continue with, may become challenging to continue with until they are eligible for their pension.

Local democratic processes should be designed to ensure that older people are meaningfully included at the earliest possible stage of decision- and policy-making.

## Key priorities

Improving the diversity of older people involved in local decision-making

Decreasing barriers to volunteering and community contributions

Providing tailored support to older jobseekers to help them find suitable, secure employment for as long as they choose

Protecting older people's health and wellbeing at work



# CIVIC PARTICIPATION & EMPLOYMENT

## Agreed Actions

**1** Promote volunteering opportunities, particularly those suitable for Disabled people and people with long-term health conditions, to older people through the Can-Do Bristol volunteering platform

Lead: Bristol City Council Community Resources Team

**2** Promote co-delivery of community projects through community development work so that older people continue to be active members of their communities

Lead: Bristol City Council Neighbourhoods & Communities Team

Sub-partners: Southmead Development Trust, Wellspring Settlement, BS3 Community, Knowle West Health Park

**3** Establish the BOPF Advisory Group within the City Office. This group will comprise people representative of the city's older population, allowing meaningful input to the One City Plan and high-level planning decisions made by cabinet members of particular importance to older people

Lead: City Office working with Bristol Older People's Forum

Sub-partner: Age UK Bristol

**4** Offer targeted employment support for older jobseekers, building on the learning from the Centre for Ageing Better's report *Back on Track* which included interviews with Bristol businesses and support programmes

Lead: West of England Combined Authority Business Growth Programme and Adult Education

**5** Offer guidance to employers to improve their retention and support for older workers

Lead: West of England Combined Authority Business Growth Programme

# COMMUNICATION & INFORMATION



## Background

Staying connected to events and people and having access to timely, practical information to manage life and meet personal needs is vital for active ageing.

Digital exclusion is still a significant factor in older people lacking information on what's going on in the city, as well as navigating public services and utilising local businesses. One-to-one support to get online is vital, but it is also important to recognise that a significant number of older people are not currently interested in using the internet or increasing their digital skills. Other barriers to getting online include fears around privacy as well as broadband affordability.

Printed information available in public places and delivered newsletters, as well as local radio content, reach older people who otherwise might not be aware of social activities, local council information and campaigns such as scams awareness.

## Key priorities

Supporting older people to increase their digital skills and confidence so they can do what they need and want to online

Improving the accessibility of broadband, particularly for social housing residents

Joining up groups, organisations and services available to older people so that information can be found in one place

Improving the representation of older people in and by the media

Continuing to ensure free newsletters and helplines are available to all older people who benefit from them



## Agreed Actions

**1** Promote Bristol Ageing Better's age-friendly business and neighbourhood toolkits to help businesses and local organisations to improve their services and publicity to reach older people

Lead: Age UK Bristol

**2** Set up an Age-Friendly Communication & Information Action Group to provide and implement recommendations to improve communication from statutory services, VCSE organisations, and local media, led by older volunteers

Lead: Age UK Bristol

**3** Social housing broadband pilot to identify the best way to improve the accessibility of broadband for social housing residents and older people on low incomes

Lead: Bristol City Council Management of Place

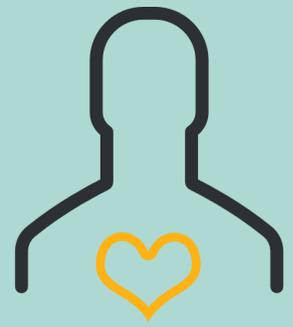
**4** Ensure sustainability of helplines for older people seeking information, advice or support

Lead: Bristol City Council and Support Hub for Older People

**5** Produce 'What's On' guides promoting social activities aimed at older people in north, south, and central & east Bristol respectively

Lead: LinkAge and Friends Ageing Better at Age UK Bristol

# COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES



## Background

Health and support services tailored to older people's needs are vital to maintaining wellbeing and independence. People's medical and social needs are not independent of each other, and it is important that services and referral pathways are joined up both to ensure success of early intervention and preventative services, and also to avoid people being overlooked for treatment.

Adult social care is under a great deal of pressure, which in turn puts a strain on carers and leaves older people without family to provide unpaid care at risk. Supporting older people to access direct payments has the potential to empower people to use social care eligibility for preventative self-care and to make their budgets go further.

The pandemic has impacted older people's health in multiple ways, including physical deconditioning, food insecurity, late-stage diagnoses and social isolation. Recognising the nuanced causes of these issues is vital to ensuring older people are not left out of programmes aimed at rebuilding physical and mental health.

## Key priorities

Developing a strengths-based approach to supporting people, starting from what people are themselves interested in, their own skills and contributions

Improving the availability and effectiveness of social prescribing

Removing barriers to older people accessing appropriate mental health treatment

Increasing the accessibility of health-promoting activities such as exercise and eating well

Avoiding incidents of older people missing out on the support they need and are entitled to - such as social care, home from hospital help, and community support



# COMMUNITY SUPPORT & HEALTH SERVICES

## Agreed Actions

**1** Develop a strengths-based approach to supporting people, ensuring personalised, preventative care to maintain independence

Co-leads: Age UK Bristol and Adult Social Care

**2** Ensure all older people in Bristol have access to a social prescribing style service, with referral pathways from community services as well as GP link workers

Lead: TBC

**3** Develop work that supports older people leaving hospital to regain their independence. Learning from this pilot project will inform future commissioning to ensure older patients are given the housing and care support they need and enable smoother discharge from hospital.

Lead: TBC

Sub-partners: We Care Home Improvement, British Red Cross, Age UK Bristol

**4** Apply learning from Bristol Ageing Better wellbeing and talking therapies projects to increase the number of older people accessing the mental health support they need

Co-leads: Connecting Communities at Age UK Bristol and Vita Minds at Vita Health

**5** Ensure Bristol's One City Food Equality Strategy is embedded across organisations supporting older people

Lead: Feeding Bristol

**6** Ensure Bristol's One City Food Equality Action Plan tackles the causes of food inequality among older people

Lead: Feeding Bristol

**7** Update Active Ageing's Healthy Ageing Directory annually and provide copies to social prescribing services

Lead: Active Ageing

# HOUSING



## Background

Good quality, appropriate housing is an essential component of health, independence, safety and social wellbeing. Despite being the age group most likely to own their own home, there are many factors that prevent older people from being able to stay in their own home as long as they choose to, or feeling safe and connected to their community.

The vast majority of older people live in mainstream housing, and our current housing stock will still house most Bristol residents in 50 years' time. There's therefore an urgent need to future-proof existing housing as well as ensuring new developments are truly age-friendly. Accessibility is fundamental - ambitious retrofitting and adaptation programmes that take into account the financial and psychological barriers older people face will make a significant difference to the number of people living in hazardous homes. It is also important to look at how people can be more involved in decision-making, especially social and sheltered housing residents. For those who need to move, holistic support to make informed decisions should be provided.

## Key priorities

Supporting older people to think about their housing options at an earlier stage of their lives, being cognisant of the barriers that prevent people from addressing this

Developing materials covering home adaptations and hiring tradespeople

Involving residents of all kinds in decision-making that affects their homes

Reviewing Extra Care Housing, including intergenerational approaches

New developments and adaptations to existing stock to aim for suitability for all ages, taking into account physical accessibility as well as social needs



## Agreed Actions

- 1** Ensure all older people can access support and information to make an informed choice about moving home and/or making adaptations to their home

Co-leads: WE Care Home Improvements and Bristol Housing Festival

- 2** Develop and disseminate materials around the types of home adaptations that can be made, as well as a list of trusted and affordable tradespeople

Co-leads: WE Care Home Improvements and Bristol Housing Festival

- 3** Develop & implement Housing Policy Statement and Housing Action Plan

Co-leads: BOPF Housing Action Group, City Office and Bristol City Council

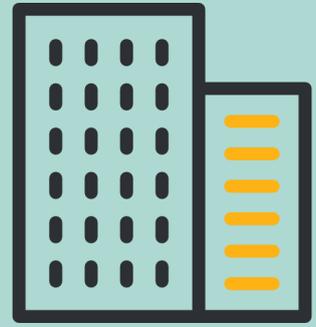
- 4** Form a Task and Finish group to work on options for an improved warden service, filling the gap in day-to-day contact and support in extra care and independent living as identified by BOPF's Housing Survey Report.

Lead: BOPF Housing Action Group, City Office and Bristol City Council

- 5** Develop Age-Friendly Standard for Housing, learning from local providers including Sovereign Housing Association

Lead: Bristol City Council

# OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS



## Background

We want a city where older people are able to age in place, where they can remain mobile and have easy access to services. This includes having barrier-free public spaces and buildings which are useable and accessible for disabled people and those with mobility difficulties, and designing urban environments that foster a sense of belonging and connectedness.

Fundamentally this means removing obstacles that prevent people from using and enjoying spaces in the city. The presence of pavement clutter as well as the lack of adequate seating and toilet facilities and accessible paths in green spaces are regularly cited as problems that can become increasingly perilous as people get older. A more even and varied spread of local amenities would also increase age-friendliness; with permanent shifts in the amount of time people of all ages spend in their local area making the concept of the fifteen-minute neighbourhood economically viable as well as socially beneficial.

## Key priorities

Increasing access to public seating and toilets

Ensuring older people are offered the opportunity to contribute to public space planning

Removing barriers to older people enjoying local parks and green spaces

Tackling pavement obstacles in residential areas



# OUTDOOR SPACES & BUILDINGS

## Agreed Actions

**1** **Improve the community toilet scheme**, getting at least 80 organisations to ensure signage is visible and staff at all venues are aware that people can use the facilities for free and recruiting more businesses to the scheme in underrepresented wards

**Lead:** Bristol City Council Management of Place Service

**Sub-partner:** Age UK Bristol

**2** **Engagement with the BOPF Advisory Group to capture the views of older people on use of public outdoor spaces and buildings**

**Lead:** City Office working with Bristol Older People's Forum

**3** **Identify and tackle physical and cultural barriers to older people enjoying their local park**

**Lead:** Your Park

**4** **Support residents' groups to raise awareness of pavement obstacles**

**Lead:** Bristol City Council Regulatory Services and Enforcement

# RESPECT & SOCIAL INCLUSION



## Background

In a culture that reveres youth and largely views ageing as a process to be feared or avoided, older people can feel both stigmatised and ignored. The narrative of demographic ageing as a burden on society and contrived conflict between generations can prevent older and younger people from enjoying positive social interactions and exacerbate age discrimination and loneliness for both groups.

Many older people would like more choice around how to spend their leisure time, but those on low incomes or living in areas with less social capital can find it challenging to find inclusive opportunities.

## Key priorities

Improving the physical and social inclusivity of cultural spaces and events

Using asset-based models to improve older people's awareness of opportunities to be more involved in all aspects of civic life

Ensuring all older people are given access to neighbourhood support and empowered to connect with others in their area

Reducing the use of ageist language and stereotyping in local media

Increasing older people's levels of cultural engagement, particularly those from minority groups



## Agreed Actions

- 1 Promote asset-based models to improve older people's awareness of opportunities to be more involved in all aspects of civic life**

**Co-leads:** Bristol City Council Neighbourhoods & Communities Team, Support Hub for Older People and Make it Local

- 2 Develop long-term plans for Community Hubs and specialist organisations on the Support Hub for Older People to provide older people with access to the support and connection they need**

**Co-leads:** Bristol City Council Neighbourhoods & Communities Team, Older People's Support Hub and Make it Local

- 3 Communication & Information Action Group to make recommendations to local media outlets - including press, radio, and TV – to reduce the use of ageist language and stereotyping**

**Lead:** Age UK Bristol

- 4 Research project *Connecting through Culture as we Age: Digital Innovation for Healthy Ageing* to identify ways in which digital technology can be used to diversify arts audiences and reduce social isolation, and share these models with cultural institutions.**

**Lead:** University of Bristol

- 5 Support cultural events and institutions in Bristol to adopt Family Arts Campaign's Age-Friendly Standard**

**Lead:** Bristol City Council Arts Development Team

- 6 Deliver monthly Challenging Ageism Workshops to people working with older people and in sectors including health, care, housing, and recruitment, as well as bespoke workshops for individual organisations**

**Lead:** Bristol Older People's Forum

# SOCIAL PARTICIPATION



## Background

Participating in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities in the community, as well as with family, promotes independence and helps establish and maintain supportive and caring relationships.

Significant life events can create a disparity between the amount and type of social contact people have and what they would like. Retirement, becoming a carer, having less disposable income and experiencing ill health can cause people to lose social connections. Public and VCSE organisations can create infrastructure that helps overcome these challenges, however its inclusivity and sustainability relies on it being designed by - or at least in partnership with - the people it seeks to benefit. People's social lives should not become more narrow as they get older; they should be able to participate in events and activities at different times of day with people of all ages, and find meaningful ways to spend their time which open the door to mutually trusting and supportive relationships.

## Key priorities

Increase visibility of small local opportunities, including those led and coproduced with older people

Support people of all ages to increase intergenerational participation in their neighbourhoods

Make it easier and more enjoyable for older people to keep physically active

Provide transparent and accessible ways for community groups to access microfunding streams



## Agreed Actions

**1** Increase visibility of small local opportunities, including those led and coproduced with older people

Co-leads: Support Hub for Older People and Make it Local

**2** Age-friendly neighbourhoods project to **support people of all ages to increase intergenerational participation** and use the guidance and age-friendly checklist in the *Make Your Neighbourhood Age-Friendly* toolkit

Co-leads: Playful Bristol and Age UK Bristol

**3** **Develop an Active Ageing Well strategy**, working with key stakeholders and providers across BNSSG to offer accessible and varied opportunities and using public health messaging to empower older people to discover sustainable ways to stay active

Lead: Bristol Health Partners Active Lives Health Integration Team (HIT)

**4** Use the evaluation from Bristol Ageing Better's Community Kick-Start Fund to **provide transparent and accessible ways for community groups to access microfunding**

Lead: Connecting Communities at Age UK Bristol

**5** **Set up self-sustaining peer support projects to help older people to build up their confidence and re-engage with local social opportunities**

Co-leads: Age UK Bristol, Redcatch Community Garden and STAR Bereavement

**6** **Continue to offer virtual and telephone-based social activities for older people once coronavirus restrictions end**

Lead: LinkAge and Friends Ageing Better at Age UK Bristol

# TRANSPORT



## Background

Transport is a crucial component of age-friendly environments – and it's not just about who gets priority on the roads.

Taking the bus involves walking or using a wheelchair to get to the bus stop while negotiating cars and cyclists. Going for a walk may involve getting the bus or driving to get there. It is important to remember that when talking about one form of transport, other types of travel and transport are often involved too.

Older people are keen cyclists, drivers, walking group leaders, and transport workers, and are contributors to – not just users of – our transport system. Age-friendly transport means giving people choice in the transport they use and accommodating for new circumstances people may find themselves in when they age: disability, disease and bereavement can make active travel or access to public transport challenging, and can stop people being able to get about by car.

## Key priorities

Ensure transport workers are trained to anticipate and meet older people's needs

Make it simple for older people to book reliable and affordable taxi services

Reduce traffic in residential areas, enabling them to become safer and more sociable

Increase availability of information about bus routes, community transport providers, and 'extra help to travel' cards



## Agreed Actions

- 1** **Introduce Liveable Neighbourhoods**, with efforts to speak to all residents on affected streets to ensure they increase safety, accessibility and sociability for all

**Lead:** Bristol City Council Transport and Policy Team

- 2** **Identify and implement ways to make active travel more accessible and attractive to older people**

**Co-leads:** Age UK Bristol and Bristol Older People's Forum

- 3** **Introduce trial mobility hubs across the West of England Combined Authority** to make it easier for older people to use public transport and switch between different kinds of transport

**Lead:** West of England Combined Authority