

Local, caring, responsive

Our strategic direction 2017 - 2020



Toni Goodley, 79 years old, taking part in a tandem skydive from over 12,000ft to raise funds for the Good Neighbour Scheme.

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Introduction



Sheila Evans,
Chairman of Trustees



Jo Dare
Chief Executive Officer

We have come so far over the last 10 years but this is not a time for complacency.

The UK has changed in that time. An increasingly ageing population and austerity continues to challenge people and communities. The Health and Social Care 'system' is under immense pressure.

Whilst Charities cannot solve all of our problems, the contribution Age UK Isle of Wight (Age UKIW) can make alongside our Public Sector colleagues is large.

We want to be leaders and innovators, adapting to offer high quality services, and working alongside colleagues from other organisations to deliver the best outcomes for local older people. We will always aspire to achieve our vision, remember our purpose and stay true to our beliefs.

Leading

Age UKIW is ambitious. We want to play a part in creating a truly age friendly Island, so our communities become a better place for all people to grow older, now and in the future.

Everything we do works towards that goal, whether it's influencing and campaigning,

delivering and adapting our services, or generating income to carry on and expand our work.

However, we realise that we cannot do everything. That's why we have spoken to local residents, listened to their priorities and set 3 strategic themes to focus on. This approach allows us to learn from over 30 years' experience, plays to our strengths and makes the biggest positive impact for local older people.

Innovating

We have built a reputation for innovation and trying new ways to do things better. For example the Good Neighbour Scheme offers a new model of volunteering. Recognising the breadth of support needed by isolated older islanders, it responds by encouraging a large number of people, including young volunteers, those still in work and retirees, to give 'time not a task' to help a local older person to live well in their own home.

We want, and need, to be even more still to respond to increasing, and complex, requests for help. This includes working together in better ways, collaborating with other organisations and striving towards ever greater integration of services.

Changing

What a 'good life' looks like to people aged 50+, 65+ and 75+ is likely to be very different, just as the needs and aspirations of each successive generation will differ greatly from the one before. Nowhere is this more apparent than in our understanding of new technology, how we want to spend our leisure time and our attitude towards care.

We need to ensure that we recognise and respond to the needs of today, as well as preparing for the future. This may include developing new activities, refining our existing services or stopping how we do certain things. Whichever direction events take we will work with, and be guided by, local older people to find the right solutions for them, as well as for us.

Performing

We will develop and support outstanding staff to offer quality services that provide value for money, maximising every pound we are given by funders, donors and customers.

In summary, our strategy is about who we are, where we want to be and what we will contribute towards the achievement of an Age Friendly Island.

Our Vision, Purpose and Beliefs



Vision:

An Island community where older people are respected, valued, included and able to live the life they choose.

Purpose:

Working with, and for, older people; driving change so they can live well whatever their circumstances.

Beliefs:

In all that we do, we will be:

- Local, caring and responsive
- Led by older people, working with them and not just for them
- Champions of independence, inclusion and equality
- Respectful of each person and their freedom to choose
- Thoughtful, open and honest
- Positive and proactive

Local older people



Over 66,000 local people
are over the age of 50 and are eligible
for our services.

Over 3,000 older people
on the Isle of Wight are
chronically lonely.

*"I am very lonely, have no family here
and I find it difficult to make friends
which I need to make life more bearable"*

The Isle of Wight has twice
the average national rate of dementia
*"My mother is 96 and has Alzheimer's.
She, and we, need good quality respite
services, activities and support to access
the right information to help us"*

1 in 6 local people
aged over 65 live alone.
*"I am physically and mentally well at the
moment but I do worry about my future
as I live on my own"*

More than 50% of Islander's
over 65 are living with at least one
long term health condition.

*"My condition has lead to isolation. I can
no longer do much around the house, or
get out and about and enjoy hobbies"*

Approach

Age UK Isle of Wight exists to work with, and for, local older people, helping them to live well whatever their circumstances.

We will achieve this by delivering outstanding services, driving change and focusing on three strategic themes; **Being happy, Being healthy & cared for**, and **Being connected**.

We will, with support and good will:

Involve

We will be inclusive, open and honest. We will work with older people to design, refine and monitor our Charity and our services. We will shape our services around people and their communities.

We will listen to, involve and acknowledge individuals at every stage of service delivery, ensuring each contact is holistic, respectful and responsive to their choices.

Collaborate

We will build on our existing partnerships, deepening and strengthening them as we work towards ever greater integration of services. We will seek new collaborations to ensure the best use of resources.

Innovate

We will trial new ways of working to tackle local and national challenges, sharing best practice and what we learn and with others

Influence

We will be leaders. We will persevere to change attitudes and policies locally so that older people have their voices heard at every level.

Challenge

We will challenge ourselves, and others, to make sure we are achieving the Ageing Better goal to be Age Friendly.

Work towards sustainability

We will reduce risk and build sustainability for the future by developing a range of income streams, and by delivering high quality services that offer real value for money.

Value our Staff and Volunteers

Our charity is built on the experience, enthusiasm and kind heartedness of our staff and volunteers.

We will value them and offer support so they can do their jobs well. We will seek regular input from all of our staff and volunteers, and be proactive in addressing and acting on their concerns.



Strategic theme one:

Being happy

We recognise that 'Being Happy' means different things to different people. To guide our strategy we listened to local people to find out what happiness means to them.

Some people we spoke to wanted help with practical tasks, such as someone to help with food shopping. Others highlighted the need for social activities or hobby opportunities. People also spoke of the importance of good information and advice to help them plan for their later years.



But the overall theme that people came back to was one of inclusiveness; that they wanted to be involved and connected to boost their happiness.

Local people told us that they want to be able to build, or maintain, bonds with family, friends and like-minded people. They aspire to be included in their community and lead an active, full and shared life. It is also essential that they feel valued, useful and respected in order to be happy.

Being Happy matters. Happiness helps people to live better, healthier and more positive lives. It helps create communities that are productive, inclusive and resilient.

We will work to support local older people, and their communities, to achieve and maintain happiness.

To achieve our first strategic theme we will:

- Listen to local older people, acknowledge their views, respect their input and act in their interest.
- Build opportunities for older people to stay connected, both with individuals and their community.
- Boost wellbeing by enabling access to social, befriending, learning and hobby opportunities.
- Build opportunities for people to feel valued, through sharing their time, ideas and energy.
- Provide access to impartial information and advice, helping people to make informed choices.
- Promote planning for later life.
- Ensure people are supported to access all of the benefits to which they are entitled.
- Offer practical support to help people feel safe and maintain independence.
- Support our staff and volunteers to become, or keep being, happy. Building within Age UKIW a culture of productivity, engagement and loyalty.

Strategic theme two:

Being healthy & cared for

Listening to local older people they told us that they recognise the importance of being healthy. To be healthy they told us they need easy access to health information and activities to help them manage, and improve, their health.

They also wanted to know that there would be someone there for them during the tough times. To know that if their health falters there would be someone to support them to live the best life they can.



We know from over 40 years experience of working with older people that being healthy is a vital cornerstone of overall wellbeing. We know just how devastating an effect an adverse change in health, or a sudden health crisis, can have on a person. We also understand the impact it has on the people around them.

That's why we're dedicated to promoting positive ageing, self-management and early intervention.

However, we recognise that there are some very serious challenges facing us and others. Locally, nationally, and across sectors, organisations are under immense pressure.

We are all responding to ever increasing need and complex cases with less funding. This has left the Health and Social Care system increasingly stretched and struggling to meet the needs of older people.

As a result we are seeing an increasing number of older people coming to us with a multitude of health and social care problems, or who are in/on the verge of crisis.

This is a very real concern and a challenge to achieving our vision.

To achieve our second strategic theme we will:

- Enable easy access to information about local health services and available support to stay healthy.
- Support healthy ageing to help prevent or delay the need for more complex Health or Social Care interventions.
- Be there during life transition points and during the tough times, including helping older people regain a sense of purpose.
- Build positive emotional wellbeing, including health coaching and peer mentoring.
- Be there during the last years of life.
- Provide information, aids and adaptations to help people maintain independence at home, including raising awareness of how to prevent falls and helping people keep warm and well in winter.
- Challenge health inequalities.
- Support our staff and volunteers to age healthily, and recognise their caring responsibilities as they juggle home and work life.

Strategic theme three:

Being connected

It is a sad fact that a significant number of local older people will suffer from feelings of loneliness or isolation at some point.

It is heartbreaking that a number of these people will become chronically lonely and often not come onto the radar of local services until they slip into crisis.

We will do as much as we can to tackle this problem, and support people into a connected life on an Age Friendly Island.



Local older people told us they want to feel connected. They want to connect with like-minded people, be connected to their community and to feel connected through the use of technology and the internet.

They also told us of some of the barriers they faced.

These included mobility or transport issues, rurality and lack of confidence. There was frustrations voiced with accessing community facilities, and the perception that there wasn't anything going on locally that they could become involved in.

We know we can't fix everything, but we can help.

We will help to connect people to all of the great organisations, support and social opportunities on the Island.

We will support them to become digitally included, offering an extra way to stay in touch with family and friends further afield.

We will work to build confidence in themselves and throughout their community.

To achieve our third strategic theme we will:

- Support, through the Ageing Better Programme, the creation of a truly inclusive Age Friendly Island
- Work with individuals and organisations to develop activities and initiatives wanted by, and run by, their community. Help to build resilient communities.
- Connect organisations from all sectors to share information, working towards older people only 'telling their story' once when accessing services
- Build opportunities to connect people, both in person and through the use of technology
- Empower older people to become digitally included
- Raise awareness of the need for user-friendly technology and design, and the importance of providing alternative access for people who are not online
- Connect more with local people, raising awareness of our services.
- Support our staff and volunteers to use new technology to work more effectively

Finally

We are proud of, and value, our history as a local, independent charity. We have been listening to, working with, and working for older people on the Isle of Wight since 1973.

To develop this strategy we started as we have always done, by listening, then acting. We consulted with as many people as possible, including our service users, volunteers, Trustees, staff and stakeholders.

Our strategic direction has been shaped by their voices and what they believe our priorities should be over the next three years.

The three strategic themes will provide focus as to how we develop our plans for the coming years. Each theme is also deeply relevant to our staff and volunteers.

Without happy, healthy and connected staff and volunteers we will not be able to achieve our vision. We will always support

them to do their best work.

We will challenge ourselves to live and work by our beliefs. These beliefs, woven throughout this document, show everyone how we intend to operate.

They will help us to drive progress, guide a way forward and reach conclusions even when faced with difficult decisions.

We do face challenges, and have highlighted a number throughout this strategy. The biggest problems we face in achieving our vision are, as always, capacity, time and money.

If you believe in our vision – whether you're a potential volunteer, donor or funder – we ask you to become a part of our story and help us achieve our goals.

By working together we can ensure that older people, now and in the future, are able to live well on an Age Friendly Island.



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