



People In The Lead

A report on conversations
about later life
around Rotherham Borough

by Iain Cloke
April 2019



Conversations about later life around Rotherham

Age UK Rotherham is an independent local charity, established to support older people in Rotherham. We are a trusted and well established, independent local organisation, who are specialists in providing activities and support alongside older people.

Our EngAge Rotherham project grew from listening and responding to older voices and we are committed to supporting older people to take a leading role in developing our work. Developing in response to the challenges and opportunities of an ageing population as defined by older people themselves, we aim to engage with older people, enable them to be more active, better connected, to improve wellbeing, feel more valued, and counteract the impacts of loneliness & isolation and help Rotherham become more age friendly. We are particularly interested to explore with them root causes and finding solutions to these issues shaped around the needs in each area.

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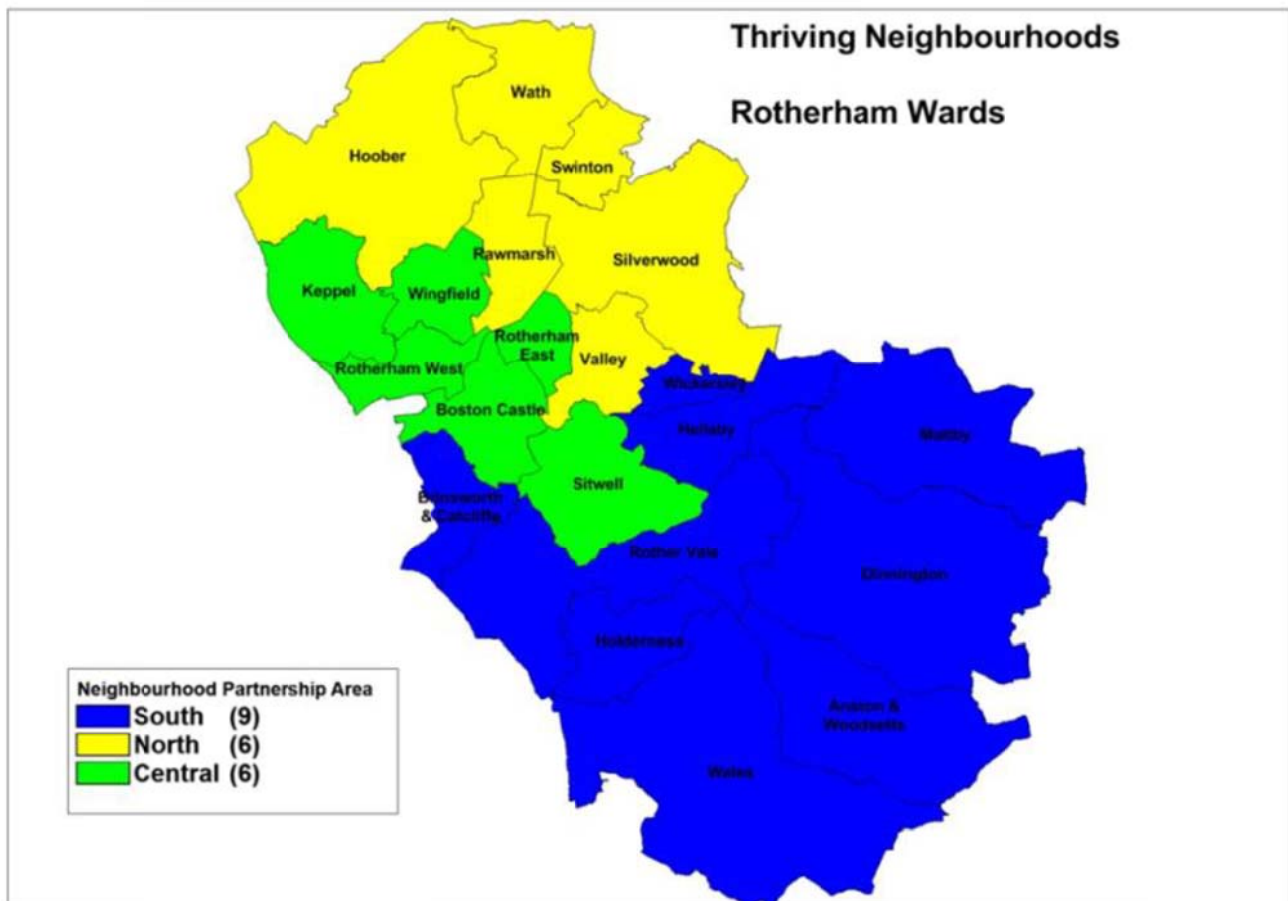
Conversations about our needs in later life

During 2018 and early 2019 we went out to speak with people about experiences of later life where they live.

We made **1,755** contacts with older people; **50** Questionnaires; **12** Workshops

The aim of this was to connect with more people in new locations where older people are more isolated in outlying areas beyond central Rotherham. Our Development Officer worked from local community hubs to engage older people living in areas with high % older people, to target areas most affected by loneliness and isolation. We recognised that those that we are able to reach in this way are not necessarily those most isolated and at risk of being lonely, however they will be able to share insights about what later life is like in their experience and help to identify both challenges and opportunities.

We engaged people as individuals and in small gatherings in community settings for conversations about later life; to think about the issues they face in their lives and what we can do to address these at the earliest opportunity. So these conversations would encourage older people to focus and take action about the things that matter most to them in meeting the challenges of later life. In order to reach people away from central Rotherham we targeted areas in outlying parts of the borough.

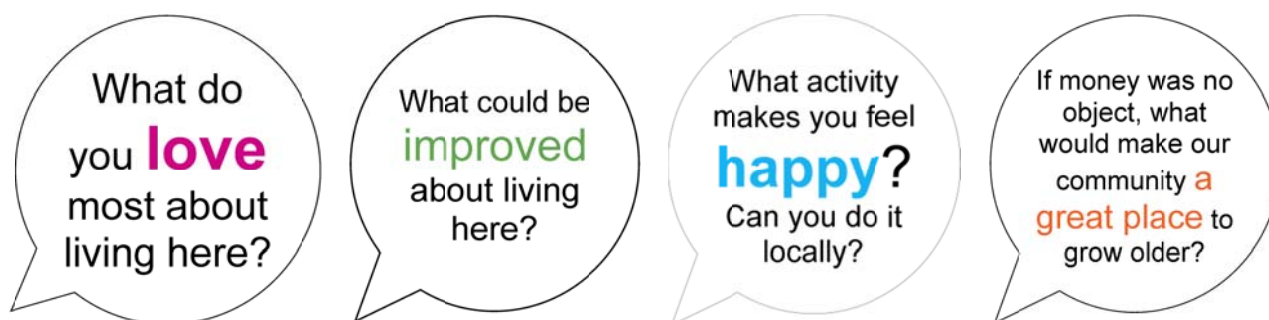


1. Over 11000 people over 65 live in North Rotherham. Wards in rural areas such as Hooper have high % older residents eg Hooper (over 28%). Our own research showed that 91% are affected by loneliness, 48% being lonely most of the time. 48% stated that there are insufficient social activities available. Many face high or very high risk of loneliness (Age UK Risk of Loneliness Data enables us to identify the neighbourhoods most likely to be affected). We worked from community hubs and libraries in Swinton and Wath to reach out to involve residents across North Rotherham targeting people most affected by loneliness and isolation. We had conversations with people who live in Wentworth & Harley, Rawmarsh, Ravenfield, Swinton and Wath. We also met people who use these hubs but live in other parts of the Dearne Valley such as Mexborough and Goldthorpe.
2. Over 27,000 people over 65 live in South Rotherham. We worked through hubs in Dinnington, Swallownest, Kiveton Park, Harthill, Todwick gathering data through structured conversations and utilising our Community Connector in this area. There are notably high percentages of older people including parts of Anston & Woodsetts, Wales, Holderness, Sitwell and Hellaby where over 28% of the population are over 65. An earlier piece of work around Loneliness identified that 82% of older people in this part of the borough said they were affected by loneliness 'most of the time' or 'sometimes'. Only 23% felt there are sufficient social activities available for lonely or isolated older people.

What we did

It was important to have a range of ways of listening to people talk about later life. To this end we created tools that enabled a variety of approaches:

- (A) One to one and group conversations based on 4 key questions



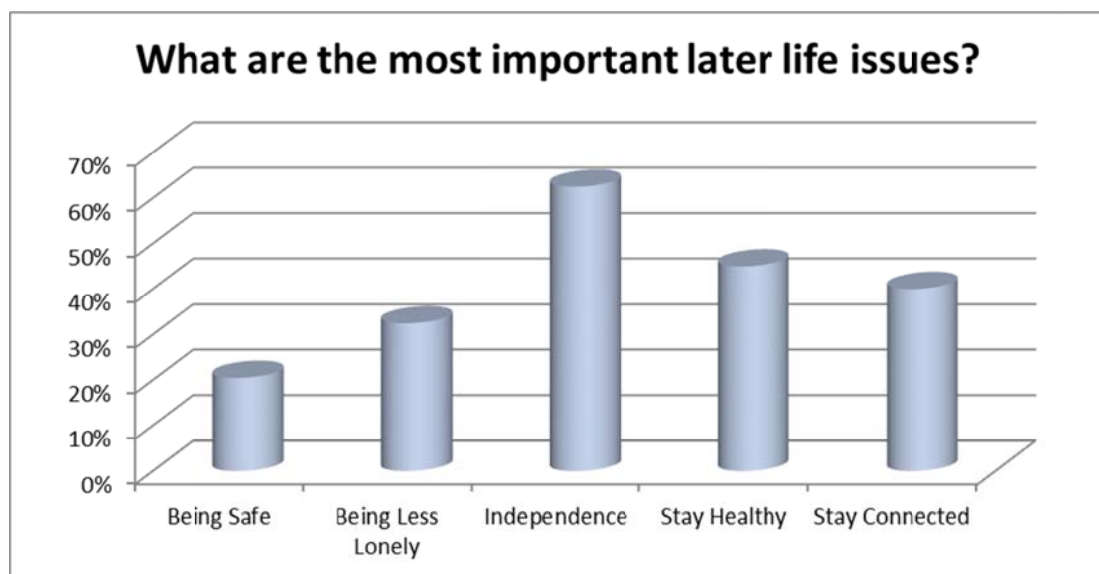
- (B) Detailed individual questionnaires also asking more detailed questions about experiences of later life and issues affecting people in our ageing society. We hope to understand what we can/can't access in our community to live a good life.
- (C) A simple question to determine the relative importance to older people of the 5 later life priorities reported by Rotherham Older People's Forum as the areas of most importance to older people.

(D) Specialist later life workshops around solutions to specific emerging issues or needs of specific demographic groups. These include workshops and meetings around particular themes and with particular groups

- People with dementia and their carers (with the Alzheimer’s Society) See
- Transport Focus (with Rotherham Older People’s Forum - ROPF)
- Various older people’s activity groups (Brinsworth, Swinton, Maltby, Kiveton Park, Todwick, Harthill, Thorpe Hesley)
- Yemeni and Kashmir Elders (with REMA)
- Rotherham Older People’s Forum (ROPF) members
- RMBC Community Reference Group
- Inspiring The Next Generation Toolkit (with Stronger Together Partnership and ROPF) See Appendix 5
- Age UK Rotherham Volunteers,
- Various venues: Silverwood Miners’ Welfare, Crafty Café at St John’s Methodist Church, Swinton, Montgomery Hall Wath, Dinnington Resource Centre, St Leonard’s Dinnington, Libraries in Swinton, Dinnington and Wath ... and others

What are older people saying matters most to them?

Rotherham Older People’s Forum has reported over many years the 5 key priorities for older people in Rotherham. During our People in the Lead conversations we asked people to think about the relative importance to them of these 5 areas. The clear view was that wellbeing in later life is underpinned by people’s ability to be independent: to maintain their right and capacity to make their own decisions and determine what is right for them, to have choice and control over their own lives and to say what matters most to them.



Our Needs in Later Life

Conversations with older people by EngAge Rotherham during 2018 have gathered lots of data about what people are saying about later lives in Rotherham. We have particularly sought out a range of views in different parts of the borough including from people in the more isolated and rural areas in the south and the Dearne in the north. I have summarised the emerging issues in a series of documents focusing on particular areas and communities of interest.

Our thinking is based on Abraham Maslow's well known theory about a human 'Hierarchy of Needs' gives us a way of understanding the motivations of people in later life and many of the things older people have been saying to us can be understood in this way. If our most basic needs are not met, we are motivated to fill those needs and focus on the unmet needs before we move to the next set of needs.



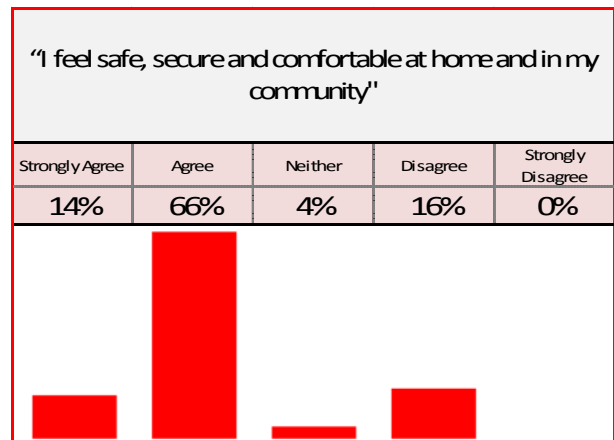
During our conversations we also looked at what each of these areas might mean in the lives of the people we spoke with.

<i>A society in which everyone loves later life in Rotherham</i>				
BE SAFER	BE LESS LONELY	BE INDEPENDENT	BE HEALTHY	STAY CONNECTED
<p>Feeling safe and secure in my home</p> <p>Feeling safe at night</p> <p>Living in a community that is perceived as safe</p> <p>Being able to keep myself safe at home and when I'm out and about</p> <p>Knowing where to get help if I feel unsafe</p> <p>Neighbours looking out for each other</p> <p>Housing that is appropriate in later life</p>	<p>Opportunities and support to acknowledge when I am lonely and help to address this</p> <p>Loneliness is invisible and carries a stigma for many</p> <p>A shared sense of pride at being part of a community/ place even though things change around us.</p> <p>Neighbours looking out for each other</p> <p>The importance of family relationships, dispersed families and living alone for the first time in later life</p> <p>Positive relationships between older people and younger people</p>	<p>To be able to do things for myself and make my own decisions</p> <p>To have a sense of purpose in life, a reason for living</p> <p>To be able to plan and control my life with access to information, advice and advocacy that I may need</p> <p>To be able to live in my home for as long as I choose</p> <p>Transport links, roads, pavements</p> <p>Help with transitions and end of life planning</p> <p>To be able to have fun throughout my life</p>	<p>To have enough appropriate food to eat and stay healthy</p> <p>Access to high quality health services and support where I live</p> <p>Physical, mental, emotional and social wellbeing are important</p> <p>The physical environment affects personal health too</p> <p>Being able to keep myself healthy with support when I need it</p> <p>Responding to physical and mental challenges such as falls in later life</p> <p>Having an active brain</p>	<p>Have a range of relationships I call my own with family, friends and neighbours</p> <p>To maintain existing connections or make new ones when things change</p> <p>Use appropriate technology to help stay in touch</p> <p>Having physically age friendly spaces in my community</p> <p>Access to community/retail and cultural spaces – and seats to sit on when I get there</p> <p>People want their community to have a heart – amenities, shops, facilities within easy reach</p>

FEELING SAFE

80% of people I spoke with said “I feel safe, secure and comfortable at home and in my community” but a significant minority reported feeling unsafe too.

- Dementia Trailblazers reported feeling less safe and said it would be nice to see more PCSO’s and Police Officers out and about in the community.
- “I worry that criminals will get to know where I live and target me at home - my family worry about this too.”
- “Where I live used to be a lovely place I think it has a bad name now.”
- “Trust is required when you are dealing with financial matters and feeling respected. I am forced to rely on my daughter to deal with things for me – I can’t be independent.”
- “But I won’t go out at night”
- “Reluctant to go out alone, particularly at night. Feel anxious in some areas. I worry about young people and drugs”

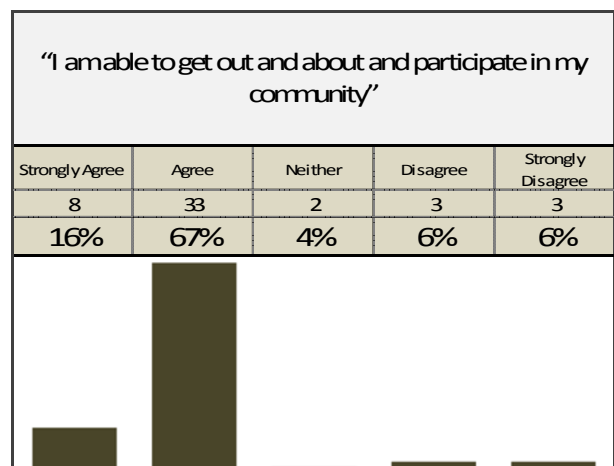


The last three Rotherham polling surveys asked two questions about feelings of personal safety, which also feature in the LGA’s (Local Government Association) national polling survey. Eighty three per cent of respondents in Rotherham said they felt ‘very safe’ or ‘fairly safe’ during the day when outside in their local area, and 61 per cent reported the same feelings of safety after dark. Both results are much lower than the proportions observed nationally.

GETTING ABOUT

People living around Rotherham feel that it is well located in proximity to services and transport link as long as they are able to drive.

- “Transport is a problem if you haven’t got a car – even short journeys because I need to avoid walking up hills and crossing busy roads.”
- “People express concerns about public transport in particular with routine journeys becoming difficult with a lack of services in rural areas.”
- “The loss of a hearing clinic in Harthill led to significant difficulties for older people who needed to use the bus service.”



- “The state of our roads needs a lot of work making them more safe especially pot holes.”
- “I get out most days but not everyone in the village can”
- “I am mobile and drive. This is not true for everyone.”

Conversations at Rotherham Older People’s Forum about this focused on:

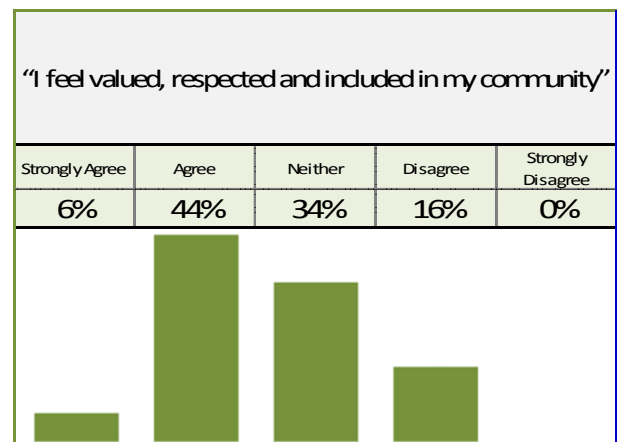
- (A) The availability of priority seating for older people on the buses. There were a range of experiences shared about good and bad examples of this and comments about how bus drivers respond when issues arise. Some people recognised that they are in a difficult situation but are usually doing their best. Although many have also had experiences of drivers stopping too far from the kerb, not lowering the step, moving off before they are seated.
- (B) Appropriate shelter and seating at more bus stops;
- (C) Better communications about changes in routes and times.
- (D) The lack of services in some areas, particularly routes linking with key health services around the borough.

AN AGE FRIENDLY BOROUGH

Conversations highlighted some ways in which Rotherham could be more age friendly.

Please support our ‘Standing Up For Sitting Down’ Campaign – targeting specific retail areas and raising awareness of the barriers and loneliness created by a lack of suitable seating.

- Only 50% say “I feel valued, respected and included in my community”
- 29% say its is difficult to find opportunities for creative & cultural activities such as cinema, theatre, art, dancing, singing etc
- Free Parking in the Town Centre
- Incentives for local shops in Town Centre and in neighbourhood shopping centres
- Self defence classes for older people, women and other vulnerable people
- More visible policing
- Bus routes where pensioners actually live, planned so we need a walk up hill.
- Get communities working together better. Use community centres, libraries to bring people together – all generations
- Can we make the markets in town safer for older people – for all people – stop people riding bikes/scooters through pedestrian areas.

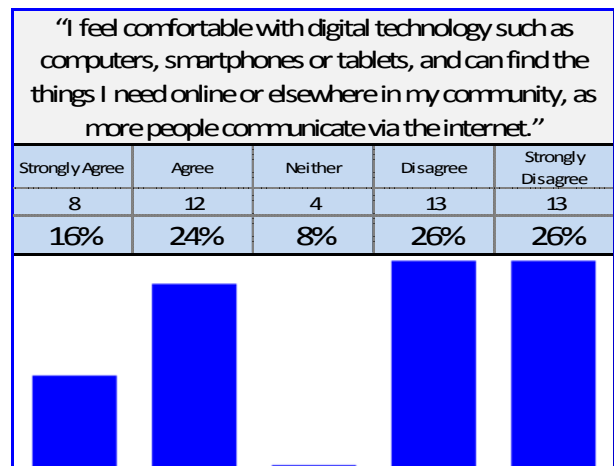


INFORMATION & DIGITAL INCLUSION

Many older people feel angry when they feel forced online – some can't, some won't – this means they sometimes miss the best deals.

Staying safe online is a big concern and most older people are unhappy or unwilling to shop or bank online

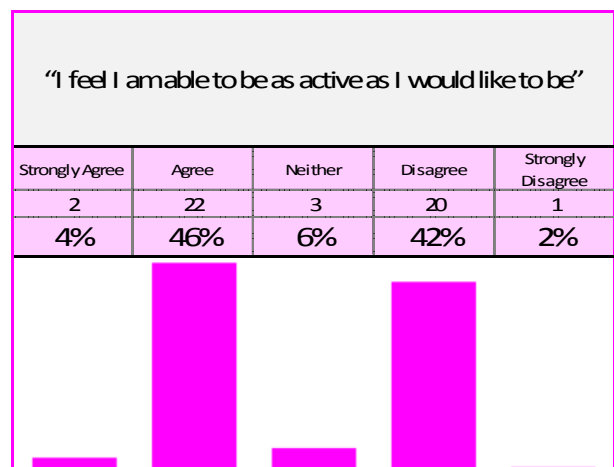
- Only 41% of older people we spoke with agree or strongly agree that “I feel comfortable with digital technology such as computers, smartphones or tablets, and can find the things I need online or elsewhere in my community, as more people communicate via the internet.”
- We need 1-1 contact; preferably face to face but if it's on the phone it should be from someone with the appropriate knowledge, skills and empathy to connect with older people.
- The telephone can be difficult for older people too. In fact I feel like I have lost my confidence in dealing with things.
- Post offices and banks are closing and this is forcing us either to queue and get poor service or go online – which I don't want to do even though I can do some basic things online like emails and Facebook.

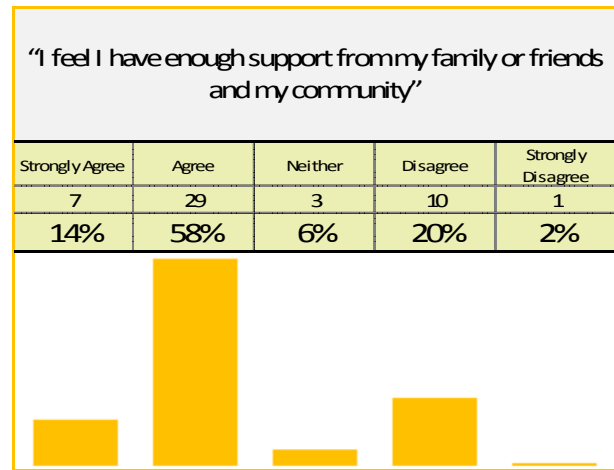
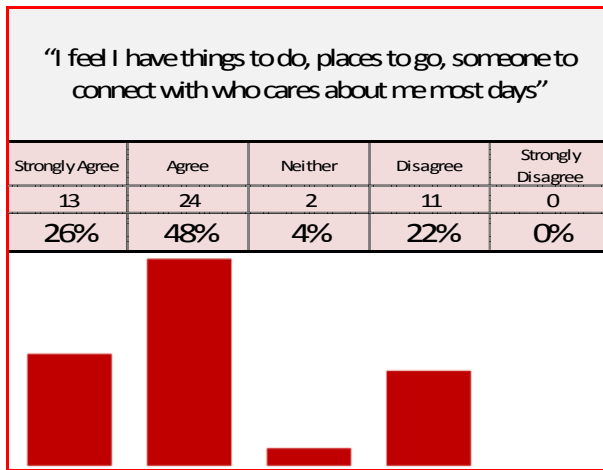


SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Most of the people we spoke with are those who have maintained some social connections but many fear losing their connections with infirmity or difficulties getting out.

- Older people are keen to stay socially active as possible for as long as possible with many citing their local community hub or activity group as a key lifeline.
- 0% of people worried that they do not have sufficient support from family, friends and community.
- 40% are not able to be as active as they would like to be





Whilst a high proportion of older people say they feel well connected there are a significant minority who feel less secure

- Barriers were identified that leave people feeling isolated including, loss of health, poor transport links, a lack of support to travel, loss of confidence following ill health or a fall.
- Caring for my husband makes being involved more difficult as we no longer have transport
- I have very few people to ask for help. They are mostly disabled like me.

INFORMATION

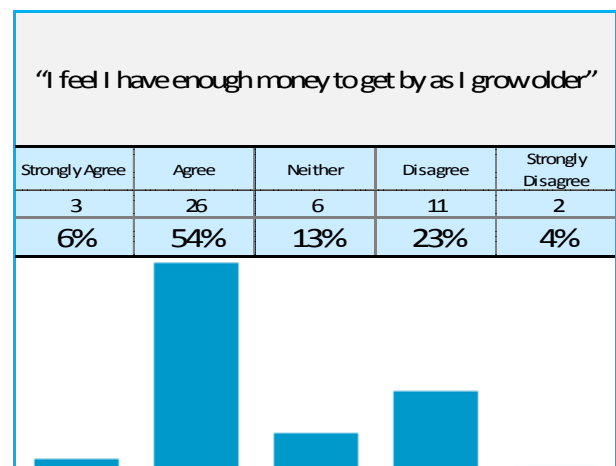
People often talked about the difficulties of knowing what’s going on

- People highlighted the importance of informal social networks and the local voluntary & community sector and churches
- It is often difficult to know what is going on
- Networks and word of mouth are the best way to find out what’s going on
- Reaching people who are not on the radar is a priority for many agencies concerned about welfare and wellbeing of residents.
- Approaches such as the Great Door Knock can help people to have information and the opportunity to connect.

THE ECONOMY

Over 50s in Rotherham are more likely to be economically inactive, with potential impacts on pensioner poverty in years to come

- 30% of older people are concerned that they won't have enough money to get by in later life

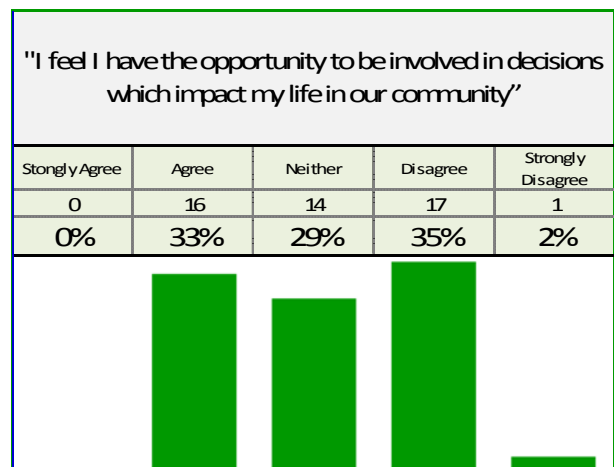


- Everything is moving to Parkgate and this is quite accessible but I liked going to the Town Centre where I felt proud of Rotherham and there were lots of choices for browsing.
- The banks are really difficult to get to they keep closing. I guess it's a sign of the times but services like this are becoming more remote from older people
- In the past I got a job and worked at Queen's Foundry, the Fire Brigade and the Army. I loved it all, it made a difference and my social life came along with it – friends, football teams, outings. Its good to remember these times.
- I came here because of the pit and it has been a great place to be ever since. A nice area with friendly people – we used to have shops and banks too!
- The local shops are closing because younger people shop differently than us.
- A vegetable shop please – its no joke trying to get back up the hill from the Coop with a bag of shopping and my walker.
- Many people talked about their volunteer roles or how they benefit from the volunteering of other older people
- There's not enough appropriate housing for older people

BEING HEARD

Only one third of older people feel they “have the opportunity to be involved in decisions which impact my life in our community”

- “Getting our voices heard” identified by ROPF members meeting as a key frustration
- Those we met often felt unheard but that they were aware of how to contact their Councillors or MP's
- A few people signed up to become part of Rotherham Older People's Forum



The things that I value in a great community:

- Great neighbours, facilities for children, outdoor recreation areas, pubs, schools, a swimming pool. Feeling blessed by life and relationships. Good neighbours and friends are essential
- I've lived here for 58 years and its not perfect but it is home and I love it. The friendliness, love and care that people show each other when they have opportunity.
- More housing suitable for older generation – 2 bedroom bungalows with parking space, storage for scooters, wet room

IN NORTH ROTHERHAM

The people I have grown up with and all my family are local.

I've lived here for 58 years and its not perfect but it is home and I love it.

The friendliness, love and care that people show each other when they have the opportunity.

The library – the staff are lovely and helpful.

St Margaret's Church – I enjoy hearing about its history here, exploring the Church Yard and the caring community of people.

Most things, having been brought up here all my life.

Being near to public transport and shops.

Volunteering at Swinton Lock Activity Centre

It's a quiet area without a lot of crime

It's a friendly village. I've recently retired and I'm just working out what to do with my life now.

Its central to the local towns (Rotherham, Barnsley, Doncaster and Sheffield) with good transport links

The Methodist Church 'family' that I am part of.

It is a very friendly village, I love chatting with people as I walk around.

It's a quiet area. I have good neighbours

Its very handy for other towns and the shops and facilities are good.

There used to be lots good in Swinton but there's nothing good now

There's a good butcher

It's a friendly place. We 4 are known as the *Piccadilly Angels*, from years ago when we used to knock about together and go on trips and that – we even kept minutes!

What do you **love** most about living here?

It is well located.

Kilnhurst is a really pleasant area close to the country and near the towns.

People are friendly. It's been a good place to live.

Familiarity. I have always lived here. It's something you can't describe. It's just what I know.

Brilliant neighbours.

Montgomery Hall is great – I volunteer here.

Family are nearby and within reach. The friendliness of the people

Lots of things to do socially and good amenities across a wider area.

I love the RSPB Wetlands

People in the Lead 2019

Montgomery Hall and Wath Market Day

The community – I used to help run Montgomery Hall, helped to save it and sustain it for this community.

When I retired I wanted to put something back and got involved volunteering.

Since my husband died I joined in with things locally at the chapel pensioners' lunch club as a volunteer.

Cortonwood Comeback is a great community hub which brings people together with lots of volunteering activities and trips out.

I came here because of the pit and it has been a great place to be ever since. A nice area with friendly people – we used to have shops and banks too!

Great neighbours help me to feel safe

It's a good size. I don't feel too "hemmed in". The town has a village feel, not too big and well located for shops and facilities and friendly people.

There is plenty of green space around and we are very close to open country too.

I live in Rawmarsh on a lovely little estate with good access to buses

IN SOUTH ROTHERHAM

I've lived here most of my life and found it a lovely place to live and bring up my family. Then my husband got Dementia about 8 years ago and I feel very isolated now. I do see people but he won't accept/allow helpers at the house – even family.

I never thought of living anywhere else. It has a nice community feel in Dinnington.

I moved here from Sheffield when my wife died and I needed a smaller house. It is nice and quiet here.

I don't want to move from here. My family are nearby and I have great neighbours.

I love going to Chatterbox on Tuesdays

I am near my family and have friends in the area.

It is a nice area to live. Beautiful and clean.

Attending Church (wonderful to have a their support when my husband died)

The Community Groups in Kiveton and Todwick

Everyone is friendly where I live. I get on with people and there is lots for people my age to do

It is quiet but as a village lots of people are friendly and talk to each other

It is peaceful, safe and accessible to the motorway

People are very friendly. I go to a lot of community groups and church, they are a big part of my life

It's quiet

My garden and friends

Quiet and friendly people

A lovely quiet village with good neighbours

Village Life



What do
you **love**
most about
living here?

Todwick is very friendly. The friendliest place I've ever lived

The best thing is the people.

There's good access to doctors and hospital

Good access to the motorway

This is a brilliant village to live in, with a strong sense of community.

Everyone turned out to my husband's funeral – that meant a lot.

There's always something going on.

I was born here in Kiveton

It's a village and the countryside around here lifts my spirits

Everybody speaks to you

People in the Lead 2019

People in the shops in Harthill greet me by name

The train service is good (Kiveton Park). Buses less so

I moved here when I was 19. Now if I go down the street there's always someone who knows me.

Harthill is a friendly place but less so these

days because new people are moving in.

Local shops in the Harthill village

I have always lived in Harthill and everyone is friendly

I was born here and know lots of people

Harthill Tea Club

Nice walks around the Ponds

People speak to you and are very friendly

It is clean and comfortable

It is good socially

I remember it from my youth. My Dad was born here

IN NORTH ROTHERHAM

GETTING ABOUT

The state of our roads needs a lot of work making them more safe especially pot holes.

A walkway over the road or double yellow lines outside the shops as it is dangerous to cross when cars are parked as you are nearly halfway across before you can see any oncoming traffic.

The buses –don't turn up and are always late

It would be good to have a volunteer driver scheme to help us get out when buses/trains and taxis don't work or aren't affordable.

A vegetable shop please – its no joke trying to get back up the hill from the Coop with a bag of shopping and my walker.

Road safety in Kilnhurst, there are some dangerous corners near the river.

Better bus services – especially on a Sunday when it stops at 6pm.

Also more buses to Mexborough.

Bus routes where pensioners actually live and planned so it doesn't need a walk up hill.

I need a bus from Ravenfield to Wickersley

Transport is a problem if you haven't got a car – even short journeys because I need to avoid walking up hills and crossing busy roads.

Buses that go where I want them to go and more frequently.

We need more buses and some thinking out better routes that go where we need them, particularly those who are less mobile and find it hard to walk far to catch a bus.

Where can I get hold of mobility scooters to borrow and learn to drive safely. I'm generally coping but I won't go on a trip to the seaside unless I know there is one available to take.

The bus company is changing buses that I



What could be
improved
about living
here?

use regularly to go to line dancing and Bingo in Kilnhurst.

AGE FRIENDLY PLACE

Public toilets as there are virtually none apart from the library and the pubs

More seating near the shopping areas.

More places to sit down – we should get together and support Standing Up For Sitting Down campaign

More housing suitable for older generation – 2 bedroom bungalows with parking space, storage for scooters, wet room.

It is difficult following a bereavement to find people who can help. It would have been helpful to know about a group

and where to get advice around these kinds of events.

Help around transitions like retiring or losing your husband and planning ahead.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

We need more “community”

A more responsive and listening council

More activity groups for older people in Swinton

A place (a centre) where older people can get more involved and find help.

Walking groups and More cultural activities, concerts etc in Wath.

The hardest part is being alone in the late afternoons

ENVIRONMENT

Environmental work that could be done by the community to get people caring about the area more – Kilnhurst area particularly

Litter clearing and the environment – it feels like it is being left to residents.

Cleaner public areas such as on public rights of way that nobody seems to look after any more.

Less vandalism, Less litter and mess on the streets. Clearing up the litter.

A lot of young people don't care for us they just drop cans and rubbish.

ECONOMY

Having no bank here means having to travel to Mexborough. I'm not interested in online banking – I don't trust it.

More job opportunities for older people

Wath used to be a thriving place, now the economy needs support and for people to realise that this is important.

The withdrawal of banks and shops is penalising older people who find it harder to travel.

The banks are really difficult to get to they keep closing. I guess it's a sign of the times but services like this are becoming more remote from older people.

The nearest bank is now in Mexborough so everybody goes there and then there is a long queue to see someone.

Business rates are too high in the centre so traders are leaving.

More local shops in the town centre (Wath). Existing traders struggling due to increasing dominance of supermarkets and now the banks are withdrawing too.

FEELING SAFE

More police visibly on patrol particularly in the evening. There is too much youth nuisance and drunkenness in the Town (Wath)

.Can we make the markets in town safer for older people – for all people – stop people riding bikes/scooters through pedestrian areas.

We are on the outskirts of Rotherham and it feels like we are not a priority.

We need to encourage better sustainable lifestyles. A less throwaway society.

IN SOUTH ROTHERHAM

GETTING ABOUT

Having transport is crucial but the buses are unreliable particularly those going to Crystal Peaks from Swallownest.

The village is very spread out (Kiveton Park) so it can be difficult to get about.

The bus service to Meadowhall keeps getting cut and its particularly hard to get around by bus on a Sunday.

I struggle with hills now and get help sometimes from my son, so transport could be better.

While I am still able to drive my car, things should be okay but it is hard to get to everywhere you need on public transport so I am worried about that.

Buses direct to Sheffield, Rotherham and Dinnington (from Todwick)

Transport – Door 2 Door could be better

The bus services for Todwick need to be improved

There aren't all that many shops so we need good transport to get what we need.

Bus Services. Buses are too big for our village and infrequent. I have problems with walking and with breathing

Need more frequent buses in Dinnington

The bus times are inflexible and don't work well for doing shopping

Transport options could be better – there are very few buses

State of the roads – pot holes

COMMUNITY BUILDING

When I came out of the army in 1954 there was nothing here so I set up Judo and Karate clubs for adults but these are gone now.

I worry about the people we don't know – the ones who are already isolated and lonely. How can we reach them?



What could be
improved
about living
here?

It is easy to feel isolated in a place like Swallownest.

I know there is support around. I have had support from Crossroads and visited 2 or 3 Dementia Cafes but he won't come and doesn't want anyone in the house

Getting our regular Hearing Aid Clinic back

They are closing services at Bassetlaw Hospital

More police presence for reassurance

Local policemen walking the beat

ECONOMY

Its not as good as it used to be, we had shops and buses and better roads in the past.

People in the Lead 2019

A better shopping centre in Dinnington, with proper shops. We need better clothes shops and a shoe shop. Charity shops are okay and I do use them for some things – they help me get by – but I also need to buy good quality new clothes.

There are too many charity shops and they often make the place look untidy with things out on pavements.

Decent shops and a post office

Shops – mainly a post office

Extra shops and public transport

Shops: a post office, grocers, doctor chemist; Transport

We want our Post Office back!

We need more local shops – a bakery would be nice

More cash machines

We want our bank back! (Closed Nov 17)

An old fashioned pub with a snug and a wood burner

A local post office and a cash machine

If we could get a local fish & chip shop back. We used to have 3 in the village

We need more shops in Harthill

DIGITAL

I would prefer to manage my prescriptions on the telephone not online.

We need to learn about using tablets for things like shopping and social.

IN NORTH ROTHERHAM

Gardening and playing with my grand children.

Spending time with my grand children.

Local history and heritage – yes there is a Local History group where I live.

Going to the cinema – there is a ‘Cosy Cinema’ in Mexborough.

Attending Mexborough Baptist Church Lunch Club (Avalunch).

A chance to meet lovely younger people – I do this at St Margaret’s Church.

Getting out around the community and seeing people. I love coming to the library where they are so lovely and welcoming.

I love it when I get visits from younger folk, at the

moment somebody comes from Red Cross but that is just for a few weeks.

I love having chats and when people take an interest in what I have to say.

Playing pool – yes

Going on computers when I feel stressed – Yes

Volunteering at Swinton Lock Activity Centre is a great way to contribute to the community and it makes me feel good. Every day is different, there is nice scenery and wildlife.

I enjoy helping my neighbours who have health problems – Yes

Helping my neighbour who had a stroke.

Taking exercise – Yes

Taking my daughter to the park

Gardening – I have 2 gardens and love growing flowers

What activity makes you feel **happy?**
Can you do it locally?

Theatre is my thing and I go to Sheffield or Doncaster

I love cricket and go to watch my grandson

The library and the Civic Hall are great places to come to

Friendship and a good laugh with my friends

Remembering and reminiscence

Keep the library and the civic centre

A bank for Swinton

More and better things for young people to do to keep them out of trouble

More community police

People in the Lead 2019

Crafts of all sorts – painting, knitting, cross stitch,. I attend a craft group in Brampton. I would go locally if there was something on.

Listening to music, especially country music concerts – Yes

Mixing with my friends and going away with friends – Yes

Volunteering at the early onset Dementia group (at Kimberworth)

Seeing my family.

Riding my bike – getting out into the country

Being with family – we go off in my daughters caravan

Gardening –Yes

Helping others through my volunteering.

Baking cakes.

Knitting and crafts.

Coming to Montgomery Hall and St James' Friendship Group.

Getting out and seeing people.

Learning music

Learning classical guitar.

Modern sequence dancing (x6)

Line dancing (Montgomery Hall + West Melton)

Gardening

Reading

Playing on my tablet

Walking in the country (x2)

Knitting for charity (St John's Methodist)

Helping others through the church and volunteering

Walking in Rosehill Park

Line Dancing at Kilnhurst

IN SOUTH ROTHERHAM

We need to find funding to run more trips out during the year.

I like crochet and knitting and it is great to share skills with others.

Walking short distances

Attending church, being a Church Warden and helping other people.

Attending Craft Group

Rotherham Carers Forum

Bowling – there are clubs locally but I can't bend down now

Bowling – yes

Doing crafts - Going to Church

Local community events and socialising with friends and my family

Being with people. My pastoral visiting, especially the elderly.

Being with family - yes

Entertaining my family and friends

Church and local activities

Social Life – clubs

Craft over 60's -
Grey Matters -
Computer Club –
WI

Walking – yes

Swimming – this is a drive to Staveley Leisure Centre (a 10 mile journey)

Community Clubs – yes

Gardening

Spending time with my family

Crafts – yes

Knit & Natter

Community Clubs in the village – the scarecrow competition

I like being able to get out and seeing people. I can still drive which helps to be able to get to things – I don't know what I would do without it.

Getting out and about on my scooter.

I read a lot.

What activity makes you feel
happy?
Can you do it locally?

Coming out to the Dinnington lunch club.

Seeing my grandchildren

Watching old films.

Mixing socially

Dancing (yes it is available)

Folk dancing (but I go to Mexborough for this)

I go to University of the Third Age (U3A) groups on reading and gardening. These are great but it would be good to have some running in Dinnington area.

Volunteering in my community. I help run events at Dinnington Resource Centre.

I love attending social groups rather than ones with craft activities. Chatterbox is excellent.

People in the Lead 2019

What we need is a bit of development work and help setting up more of these groups for older people.

Gardening – yes

Meeting people (at Village Hall)

Walking (by the canal)

Volunteering (Village Hall and local groups)

Crafts (Community Centre)

Reading (At home but the library is struggling)

Finding a bargain (There is no value

supermarket or charity shops or car boot sales)

Art – there's nothing in Harthill

Keep fit – not in Harthill

Gardening – at home

Exercise – I go to the Drs Surgery in Kiveton

Whist drives – nothing in Harthill

Dancing – not very easily

Amateur dramatics – yes in Harthill

WI meetings – yes in Harthill

Lunch clubs – yes at the Peregrine Centre

Coming to Tea Day in Harthill

Coffee morning – at the Methodist Church – but we need more people

Trips out – yes with various clubs in Harthill

Going to football – but I can't get there now

Going on holidays and day trips.

A good social life with music – Yes but only limited now. Local pub only has music once a week now

IN NORTH ROTHERHAM

More housing for our younger generation

A holistic approach to reducing social isolation through community development

Transport systems that make it possible for people to get to where they need to be, when they need to be there

Training for service providers to “befriend” service users and incentives for business to sign up

A blue plaque trail celebrating local people and historical events in the area

Better information systems and support for older people to be involved in everything going on in the area

Intergenerational work like the TV programme with children going in to care home

Believing in local older people and supporting them to make the most of life. Community can come together and make a difference

More opportunities and encouragement to be good neighbours and show that we care about each other and this place

More places to go when its cold and damp

It would be great to have a marina at Swinton Lock, a bit like the canal basin in Sheffield – with shops and activities for the whole community

Redesign our streets and traffic system – currently not fit for purpose or good for people. It needs to be safer. Ban cars and get Supertram out to Swinton.

Build a new swimming pool or leisure centre.

I would invest in Montague Hospital

A swimming pool closer than Rotherham or Wath

More for everybody – all ages – more facilities, more money

Free computer courses



If money was no object, what would make our community a great place to grow older?

Better policing and street cleaning

More public toilets

Better seating around the shopping areas should be looked at.

Better funding for voluntary groups and support for community hubs like Cortonwood Comeback and Montgomery Hall.

A much better shopping centre.

Don't close the social care day centres. More support for vulnerable people.

More community projects for children in the park

Local swimming baths with a pop in café to meet local like minded people

IN SOUTH ROTHERHAM

I really don't know! I do have money now but I can't really use it to help myself due to my husband's Dementia. I was invited on a family holiday abroad and world like to go but I can't really leave him.

A community cinema with a minibus to pick people up and take them home.

We need better roads!

I feel strongly that we shouldn't be building on our green spaces. We need new housing and businesses but there are plenty of brown field sites. Trouble is they are often contaminated and need to be cleaned up first.

More day trips

A swimming pool – I have to travel to Maltby at the moment.

Large Community Centre with lots of activities offered

More activities for people with Learning Disabilities

A local swimming pool to help me keep active

A centre to accommodate everyone

Exercise classes

Make activities more locally accessible. I would like to be more active than I am currently able

Better transport. More local sheltered accommodation.

More local shops

A care home in the village

Sheltered accommodation

Doctors, shops and a post office

Promote greater community integration across all age groups. This would engender a caring culture across generations.

Something that money can't buy – a community that respects everyone's views.

In money terms – better healthcare for the disabled and disadvantaged

If money was no object, what would make our community a great place to grow older?

A local pub with cheap/free beer for the elderly

Transport

Local shops

Shops: a post office, grocers, doctor chemist; Transport

I can't ask for much more than I have. Wouldn't mind a better transport system. Taxis are very expensive for OAPs with no car.

Transport / Transport / Transport for people with no cars and no family.

I would like a local police station with patrols in every village
More liaison with elderly groups

Improved transport and Community Transport

People in the Lead 2019

Invest in the library to make it secure for the future

A theatre!

More public toilets (nice ones)

Open more independent shops and a value supermarket

More for teenagers to do in the village – improves life for us all

Sports Centre and bowls

Banks and Post Office in local villages

More frequent buses

More pride, keeping the streets free of litter

More frequent buses

More funding and support for local community groups and societies

More accessible shops

Trailblazers: Focus on Dementia 2018

The Alzheimer's Society in South Yorkshire provide support for a group of people coping with dementia as 'experts by experience'.

I attended 2 meetings in July and in August to hear their ideas and thoughts about later life and what they need in communities. On the second occasion I participated in a parallel discussion with their carers.

I asked 4 questions and recorded the responses and conversations that took place. The responses are anonymised for my report. In making notes I have sought to record what was said and in editing for clarity attempted to stay faithful to the meaning expressed

What do you **love** most about living here?

TRAILBLAZERS

- I have lived in several places in Rotherham including Maltby and Brinsworth and I like them all.
- I like having a bungalow.
- I remember having a great time going to the cinema
- Seeing my family and friends.
- The countryside is lovely
- There are good groups but I think funding is a worry

DEMENTIA CARERS GROUP

- This used to be a great place to live

What activity makes you feel **happy**? Can you do it locally?

TRAILBLAZERS

- Dog walking
- Fishing – but I need someone to help me now
- Snooker – I go to Castouts (?) at Brecks
- Going out to the cafés
- Men In Sheds (Kimberworth)
- Hobbies – it would be good to have support to continue with them too

What could be **improved**?

TRAILBLAZERS

- Transport – there aren't many buses in rural areas.
- More lawnmowers and street cleaners taking care of our community

People in the Lead 2019

- I am feeling less safe now. It would be good to see more police or PCSO's on the beat.
- I worry that criminals will get to know where I live and target me at home – my family worry about this too
- Change is always difficult for me

DEMENTIA CARERS GROUP

- Where I live used to be a lovely place but I think it has a bad name now. The local shops are closing because younger people shop differently than us.
- Kilnhurst Road used to have every shop under the sun but now has hardly anything of interest.
- Post offices and banks are closing and this is forcing us either to queue and get poor service or go online – which I don't want to do even though I can do some basic things online like emails and Facebook.
- Trust is required when you are dealing with financial matters and feeling respected. I am forced to rely on my daughter to deal with things for me – I can't be independent.
- The telephone can be difficult for older people too. In fact I feel like I have lost my confidence in dealing with things.
- We need 1-1 contact, preferably face to face but if its on the phone it should be from someone with the appropriate knowledge, skills and empathy to connect with older people.
- A member of my family has been working in a call centre in his 50's and decided to leave because it felt like kindergarten, people didn't respect callers and were trained to miss-sell products that are not appropriate.
- Everything is moving to Parkgate and this is quite accessible but I liked going to the Town Centre where I felt proud of Rotherham and there were lots of choices for browsing.
- Think about litter – why did this become a problem? I don't drop litter, my children don't do it. Parents don't set standards any more.
- Looking for reasons carers mentioned lots of other possible factors at play in causing current state of society:
 - drug use – put them all in prison;
 - it's the government and the nanny state,
 - teachers can't touch the children, it's the schools.
 - There are no father figures – they have lots of children to different women and don't help bring them up.
 - Youth work is just for the kids who are in trouble with the police or have dropped out.

If money was no object, what would make our community a great place to grow older?

TRAILBLAZERS

- (1) **The things that I value in a great community:** Great neighbours, facilities for children, outdoor recreation areas, pubs, schools, a swimming pool. Feeling blessed by life and relationships. Good neighbours and friends are essential
- (2) **The importance of caring for others:** On a Friday I go to buy milk along the road. I also get something to eat for a blind neighbour. I do this every week.
- (3) **Help for the downs as well as the ups:** Other than that I don't really do anything and I'm beginning to feel life's not worth living any more. I retired 18 years ago at the age of 56 from a good job at the steelworks.
- (4) **Caring about everyone and being generous:** I'd give it to the young people – there's not much for them to do. Invest in sport – buy sports fields. We used to be more proactive and get organised and set up societies and groups to get things done. Everyone needs help – if I care about others maybe they will notice when I need help too.
- (5) **Finding purpose and sharing experiences:** I never really thought about this before. In the past I got a job and worked at Queen's Foundry, the Fire Brigade and the Army. I loved it all, it made a difference and my social life came along with it – friends, football teams, outings. Its good to remember these times.

DEMENTIA CARERS GROUP

- Free Parking in the Town Centre
- Incentives for local shops in Town Centre and in neighbourhood shopping centres
- Self defence classes for older people, women and other vulnerable people
- More visible policing
- Have a dog, be less lonely
- Get communities working together better. Use community centres, libraries to bring people together – all generations
- Raise money together for a good cause
- WE can support our neighbours
- WE can be an example

Thank you to the experts: Derek, Tom, Richard, Eric, Graham and Joan – for sharing your stories and feelings and knowledge. Thank you to those who care and support for them and who helped with these conversations.

We can be part of the solution

During the course of these later life conversations people had lots of suggestions about what we can do together to meet the challenges of an ageing society

- Raise money together for a good cause
- Lots of older people are carers. Lots of community groups are run by older people
- Older workers are often more welcoming and give better customer service in shops
- Caring about everyone and being generous: We used to be more proactive and get organised and set up societies and groups to get things done. Everyone needs help – if I care about others maybe they will notice when I need help too.
- WE can support our neighbours. WE can be an example
- 77% of people felt positive about ageing in their community despite the challenges
- The importance of caring for others: “On a Friday I go to buy milk along the road. I also get something to eat for a blind neighbour. I do this every week” and volunteering.
- Have a dog, ride the bus, join a group – be less lonely.
- Even at 75 I have recently joined a local group walking in Rosehill Park. They run, I walk! Majority are much younger but they are welcoming.

BE SAFE

- More visible signs of security and safety eg visible policing, neighbourhood watch
- Help to recognise and avoid scams

BE LESS LONELY

- Pets are important to people and can help breakdown loneliness and isolation. They talk about how they help them feel less lonely but that they also sometimes need help to look after them when they go into hospital or aren't feeling well. Can we have one of these?
- Help and support to develop new circles of friendship

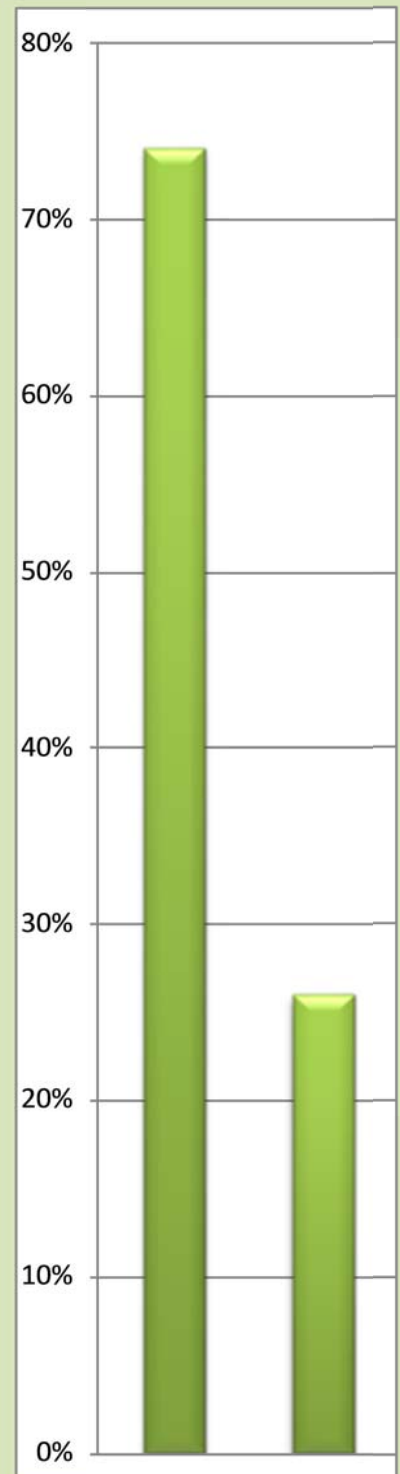
“I feel positive about growing older in my community”

YES

NO

74%

26%



- Help to develop connections based on shared interests
- Access to activities where I meet other people
- More opportunities to connect between generations

BE INDEPENDENT

- Early access to information
- Support at transition points
- Advice and support when I need help
- Advocacy can be critical in supporting choice and independence
- Being able to access the best deals and support available even if I can't or don't want to be online
- To have high quality trusted and flexible support in my home when I need it.
- Access to help to maintain my home and live independently

BE HEALTHY

- Wider bereavement support, including practical help, emotional support, help to build friendships, sharing with peers
- Support to cope with the impact of isolation on health
- Appropriate support for men around transitions and loss
- Indoor and outdoor activities that support healthy lives
- Groups and activities that are accessible for people with dementia

STAY CONNECTED

- Help to navigate what is out there so they know what's going on
- Support Networks
- Improved public and community transport, trusted taxi's
- Engage those responsible for retail and public spaces about the needs of older and disabled people for better seating and design
- Community Hubs (VCS) and other local connecting places

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