

Age Friendly Wales: Our Strategy for an Ageing Society

People in Wales are living longer – in 20 years, 1 in 4 of us may be over 65. This is a good thing – it has been estimated that in 2018, older people contributed £2.19 billion to the Welsh economy.

However, an ageing population does bring new challenges for Welsh Government, local authorities and local health boards, charities, businesses, communities and all of us as individuals.

Age Friendly Wales: Our Strategy for an Ageing Society, sets out the action we will take to prepare for the future. It considers the many things that influence how we grow older, like health and social care, transport and even the way we socialise, work and care for others.

The strategy aims to change the way we think about ageing. By acknowledging and valuing the contributions of **all** older people in Wales, we can work across generations to create an age friendly Wales.

Vision

- ***Our Vision is an age friendly Wales that supports people of all ages to live and age well.***
- ***We want to create a Wales where everyone looks forward to growing older.***
- ***A Wales where individuals can take responsibility for their own health and well-being whilst feeling confident that support will be available and easily accessible if needed.***
- ***A Wales where ageism does not limit potential or affect the quality of services older people receive.***

- ***Ultimately, we want to be a nation that celebrates age and, in line with the UN Principles for Older Persons, a nation that upholds the independence, participation, care, self-fulfilment and dignity of older people at all times.***

Four aims

The Strategy has four aims:

Aim 1: Enhancing well-being

We want to help people live healthier and happier lives for longer. We will achieve this by:

- Supporting unpaid carers
- Improving access to health and care services
- Improving access to mental health services

Aim 2: Improving local services and environments

We want to improve the places where people live and work. We will do this by:

- Building and adapting homes that suit people as they get older.
- Creating a joined up transport system.
- Creating urban and green spaces that are safe and easy to get to.

Aim 3: Building and retaining people's own capability

We want to help people to be active in their local communities for as long as possible. We will do this by:

- Supporting people to be active by volunteering or having their voice heard in local groups and forums
- Ending abuse of older people

- Encouraging people to plan for their futures
- Supporting older workers and people who are caring for someone as well working
- Delivering a right to lifelong learning

Aim 4: Tackling age-related poverty

We want to help older people who are struggling to make ends meet. We will do this by:

- Commencing the socio economic duty which means to consider the needs of those who are socially or economically disadvantaged in every decision we make
- Increasing take up of pension credit and other related benefits
- Investing in Wales' foundational economy which is all the basic services that people rely such as health and social care, housing, construction, food and tourism. Estimates suggest four in ten jobs and £1 in every three that we spend in Wales are part of the foundational economy.

Three cross-cutting themes which run throughout the strategy

1. Creating an age friendly Wales

The global response to the world's ageing population has been a move towards age friendly communities and cities. The World Health Organisation (WHO) states that:

By making cities and communities age-friendly, we ensure that cities and communities are inclusive and equitable places that leave no one behind – especially the most vulnerable older people. Equitable societies, in turn, have benefits for everyone.

We want Wales to part of this global movement towards age friendly communities.

2. Prioritising prevention

By building communities, homes, transport systems and outdoor spaces that enable people to age well, we aim to support people in Wales to live healthy and fulfilled lives for as long as possible. We want to help people by providing them with the knowledge and skills to plan ahead and to take responsibility for their own health and well-being.

3. A rights based approach which rejects ageism and age discrimination

We want to help older people understand their rights. Raising awareness of rights can also empower older people to take control and recognise and challenge bad treatment. It is also important that professionals understand these rights and do not treat people unfairly because of their age.

We have established a **Ministerial Advisory Forum on Ageing**. This group consists of older people and their representatives from across Wales. They will oversee the implementation of this strategy to make sure it has a positive impact on older people.