Participation Matters: Older People and Community-Based Engagement

Discussion Group Responses

2025

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Executive Summary

This report brings together the views of 158 older people across 20 Welsh local authorities on their experiences of community-based activities supported by the Age-friendly Communities Officers/Coordinators that Welsh Government funds in each local authority. Six key themes emerged:

- **Access to Activities:** Older people enjoy a wide range of social, creative, and physical activities, but transport and information gaps limit participation.
- **Choice and Accessibility:** While variety exists, rural areas face significant challenges. Transport, cost, and physical barriers restrict access, and digital reliance excludes many.
- **Impact and Enjoyment:** Activities are described as lifelines, improving mental and physical health, reducing isolation, and providing purpose and routine.
- **Volunteering:** Volunteering offers social benefits and community pride but is declining due to age, health, and transport limitations. Awareness of opportunities is inconsistent.
- **Voice and Influence:** Engagement with local authorities varies. Forums work well in some areas, but many older people feel consultations are tokenistic and want more direct communication.
- **Access to Information:** Word of mouth and libraries remain trusted sources, but digital exclusion is widespread. Respondents call for printed newsletters, noticeboards, and proactive outreach.

Overall, the picture across Wales is one of commitment and creativity, but also persistent structural challenges. Addressing transport gaps, improving communication, supporting volunteers, and ensuring inclusive engagement will be key to sustaining age-friendly communities where older people can thrive.

It should be noted that as Welsh Government provides £50,000 per annum to each local authority, many structural challenges cannot be addressed via this grant alone.

Introduction

This report draws together feedback received from groups of older people across 20 of the 22 local authorities in Wales. It is structured around six key themes, representing the topic areas covered during our discussions.

We spoke to older people across Wales who are beneficiaries of activities generated by the Age-Friendly Communities Grant, gathering their views on the impact of the programme.

Twenty sessions were completed in total, with just Wrexham and Denbighshire remaining. We sought opportunities in each of those two counties, but unfortunately it was not possible to engage with older people within the available timescales. Nevertheless, we spoke with a total of 158 older people across the 20 counties.

Semi-structured conversations were held with each group, allowing us to collate a great deal of information. We have split the areas discussed into 6 themes:

1. Access to Activities
2. Choice and Accessibility
3. Impact and Enjoyment
4. Volunteering
5. Voice and Influence
6. Access to Information

We would emphasise that the content of this report is based upon the perceptions of those we encountered on the day we met. It is possible that others in the same area may hold differing opinions. It should also be noted that the individuals we met were those who are already, to at least some extent, already engaging with their communities. There may be many others who are not.

Access to Activities

We asked respondents about the activities they chose to engage with, and whether they had noticed an increase in opportunities to access such activities over the past year or two.

The Picture Across Wales

Across Wales, older people are engaging in a rich variety of community-based activities that promote social connection, wellbeing, and active lifestyles. Popular choices include social gatherings such as coffee mornings, lunch clubs, and friendship groups, alongside creative pursuits like craft sessions, art classes, and music groups. Physical activities, ranging from walking groups, tai chi, and aquafit to chair-based exercises, are widely valued for maintaining fitness and independence. Volunteering also plays a significant role, with many older adults contributing their time and skills to local charities, community centres, and events.

Despite this diversity, participation is shaped by several barriers. Transport remains the most persistent challenge, particularly in rural areas where public services are limited and costs are high. Digital exclusion is another obstacle, as many activities are advertised online, leaving those without internet access reliant on word of mouth or printed notices. Accessibility issues, such as venues without lifts or suitable facilities, further restrict involvement, while financial pressures and the closure of some services since the pandemic have reduced opportunities in certain counties.

Conversely, there are clear enablers that help older people stay connected. Community hubs, libraries, and welfare halls act as vital focal points, offering regular sessions and information. Social prescribers and proactive Age Friendly Officers have strengthened links between health services and community activities, while grassroots efforts, such as volunteer-led groups and informal transport arrangements, demonstrate resilience and adaptability. Printed newsletters, WhatsApp groups, and local notice boards also play an important role in bridging communication gaps.

Trends across counties reveal both commonalities and contrasts. Urban areas like Cardiff and Swansea benefit from well-coordinated hubs and a wide choice of activities, while rural counties such as Powys and Ceredigion rely heavily on self-organised groups and volunteer support. Some regions, including Flintshire and Monmouthshire, show strong engagement through U3A and luncheon clubs, whereas others, like Merthyr Tydfil and Pembrokeshire, highlight the impact of funding cuts and transport limitations. Across all areas, the desire for better information sharing, improved transport and inclusive communication is consistent.

Overall, the picture across Wales is one of commitment and creativity, with older people eager to participate and contribute despite structural challenges. Sustaining and expanding these opportunities, through collaborative partnerships, targeted

transport solutions, and accessible information, will be key to ensuring that older adults remain active, connected, and supported in their communities.

Choice and Accessibility

We asked participants whether they have a choice of activities in which to take part and about ease of participation.

Across Wales, older people's ability to participate in community activities is shaped by a complex interplay of transport, accessibility, cost, and communication. While many areas offer a reasonable choice of activities, from exercise classes and arts sessions to informal social groups, the reality of accessing these opportunities often depends on geography, mobility, and available support.

Transport remains the most significant barrier, particularly in rural counties where public services are limited and unreliable. Reduced bus timetables, long travel times, and high taxi costs leave many older people dependent on lifts from family or volunteer schemes. Community transport initiatives exist but face persistent challenges: shortages of volunteer drivers, restrictive booking systems, and limited coverage. For those without private vehicles, these gaps can mean complete exclusion from social life.

Physical accessibility compounds these difficulties. Poor pavement conditions, misaligned dropped curbs, and inadequate public toilets undermine confidence and independence, especially for those using mobility aids. Even where venues are accessible, the journey to reach them often is not.

Cost and financial pressures also influence participation. While many local sessions are free or low-cost, trips and specialist activities can be prohibitively expensive, particularly where grant funding is absent and costs fall on participants. This creates inequity between those who can afford to travel or pay for classes and those on fixed incomes.

Digital exclusion and communication gaps remain critical issues. Increasing reliance on online platforms for advertising activities and transport information leaves non-digital users at a disadvantage. Offline communication, through leaflets, posters, and noticeboards, is inconsistent, and word of mouth, while helpful, cannot reach isolated individuals. Calls for better outreach and visible information in community spaces were common across counties.

Volunteer sustainability emerged as another concern. Many activities and transport schemes depend on unpaid support, yet recruitment and succession planning sometimes appears to be weak. Without structured investment, these grassroots efforts risk collapse, threatening the continuity of valued services.

Despite these barriers, older people expressed a strong desire for greater choice and inclusivity. While urban areas often provide diverse opportunities, rural communities rely heavily on self-organised groups and informal networks. Popular

activities such as Zumba Gold, walking groups, and social trips have disappeared in some areas, leaving unmet demand. Community hubs were praised for reducing loneliness and building confidence, but their future depends on sustained funding and local commitment.

Finally, geographic inequalities were evident. Participants perceived investment as favouring urban and southern regions, while rural and northern areas struggle with transport, digital access, and venue sustainability. Concerns were raised that large-scale facilities often receive priority over smaller local spaces, risking further isolation for those in remote communities.

In summary, the picture across Wales is one of resilience and resourcefulness, but also of persistent structural challenges. Addressing transport gaps, improving physical and digital accessibility, supporting volunteers, and ensuring affordable, varied activities are essential steps toward creating inclusive, age-friendly communities where older people can remain active, connected, and valued.

Impact, Benefits and Enjoyment

We asked respondents to explain what they like about their activities and what difference have they made to them.

Across all areas, participants consistently described these activities as lifelines that provide social connection, purpose, and improved wellbeing. Many said that without these opportunities, they would be "watching TV," "sitting at home doing nothing," or feeling "lost." Instead, these groups offer a sense of belonging and friendship, with people often meeting outside organised sessions and supporting one another in practical ways, such as helping with banking or checking in on those who seem unwell.

Social interaction emerged as the most valued benefit. People spoke about the joy of "having a chat," "meeting people from all walks of life," and "laughing together." For those living alone or caring for a partner with dementia, these sessions break the cycle of isolation and provide emotional support from others who understand their experiences. Several participants described the groups as "family," saying they now have friendships they never expected to form.

Mental health improvements were a recurring theme. Individuals reported feeling happier, less anxious, and more motivated. One person said, "I'm usually miserable and crying, but when I come here, I've got a big smile on my face." Others highlighted how activities "take our minds off our problems," including financial worries, and help maintain cognitive health: "It keeps your brain active" and "helps your memory."

Physical health benefits were also noted. Activities such as Tai Chi and gentle exercise classes improve balance, coordination, and mobility, reducing pain and

increasing confidence. Participants linked these benefits to preventative health outcomes, emphasising that staying active and social reduces the risk of decline and costly health interventions.

Purpose and structure matter. Many said these sessions give them "something to look forward to" and "a reason to get up," creating routine and meaning in their week. For some, volunteering adds an extra layer of fulfilment, combining social engagement with helping others.

Inclusivity and accessibility were highlighted as essential. People valued welcoming environments where age and ability do not matter, and where carers can continue attending even after their caring role ends. However, concerns remain about cost, transport, and digital barriers, which can limit access for some.

In short, these activities are far more than leisure: they are critical to wellbeing, independence, and community cohesion. They combat loneliness, support mental and physical health, and foster resilience among older people. As one participant summed up:

"This is my life now. If I won the lottery, I'd donate millions because I don't want this to close, ever."

Conclusion: Impact, Benefits and Enjoyment

Across Wales, older people describe these activities as lifelines that transform daily life. They provide companionship, reduce isolation, and create friendships that often extend beyond the sessions. The mental health benefits are clear: people feel happier, more motivated, and less anxious, with activities offering purpose and routine. Physical wellbeing also improves through gentle exercise and movement, helping maintain confidence and independence. Above all, these groups give older people something to look forward to and a sense of belonging, reinforcing that community engagement is essential for resilience and quality of life.

Volunteering

We simply asked respondents questions such as "Are you doing any volunteering?" or "What type of volunteering do you do and what benefits does volunteering give to you?"

Feedback from participants across Welsh local authorities highlighted the complex landscape of volunteering for older people, including motivations, barriers, and opportunities.

Awareness of Volunteering Opportunities

Awareness of volunteering opportunities varies significantly across different areas. In one community, a participant noted: "The local volunteer centre is good to find out about volunteering." In another area, efforts to promote volunteering were

acknowledged, though not always visible: "They're quite good at advertising volunteering opportunities. But then, you have to go and look for it. It's not in your face."

Conversely, in some places, participants expressed uncertainty and physical limitations. Several individuals were unaware of how to find out about volunteering opportunities, often because they no longer felt physically able to participate: "No, that's for younger people really."

Others echoed this lack of awareness: "I wouldn't know where to go to find out." Word-of-mouth remains a common way to discover roles, as one participant shared: "I found out about Players because I was out and I saw the posters… It was word of mouth, not online or in the paper."

Motivations and Benefits of Volunteering

Volunteering was frequently described as rewarding and socially beneficial. One participant shared: "I want people to come together… I find it very rewarding. I think everyone should do it."

For some, volunteering helped ease feelings of loneliness after retirement: "I worked in a school for 28 years, and when I retired it was just me and my husband at home, and he isn't a great talker. So, I started volunteering three days a week."

Others spoke of a deep emotional connection to their volunteering roles: "If I won the lottery, millions, I would be donating money myself, because I don't want this to close, ever, because this now is my life."

The value of contributing within one's own community was also highlighted: "People say 'oh, we don't have the volunteers.' Well, sometimes it's good for the people who use the place to become volunteers, and they enjoy it as well."

In some areas, volunteering was linked to community improvement: "We're trying to create a community garden on… an old industrial place. We're slowly clearing the rubble and starting to grow vegetables. The idea is to provide free meals for people when they need it."

Barriers and Changing Circumstances

Physical limitations and age-related changes were common barriers: "I used to volunteer with the RNLI in the shop, but standing up for long periods got too much." "Well, I think you have to be healthy to volunteer and I'm not healthy." Others expressed difficulty committing to regular hours: "I'd like to do some sort of volunteering where if I didn't feel like it, I wouldn't be letting anyone down." Funding cuts were also cited. A participant in Merthyr Tydfil said: "I used to volunteer. I was a volunteer for 26 years, but I'm too old to do it now, but they lost their grants. All the grants have disappeared."

Types of Volunteering

Examples of volunteering activities ranged from charity shop work and food banks to gardening projects, befriending schemes, and cultural activities. One participant described: "I'm a trustee at a local centre and I also do volunteer gardening… We're slowly clearing the rubble and starting to grow vegetables."

Others mentioned teaching wellbeing classes: "I teach Tai Chi to the over 75s, free sessions."

Another volunteer shared: "I run three different age and dementia groups… I do a newsletter on behalf of the group, Codgers' Quarterly."

Informal volunteering within community groups was also highlighted: "They enjoy helping in the kitchens… Another man does a walking group."

Participants shared varied experiences: "I started out helping at the library… Then I heard that there was a group on a Tuesday here. So, I go to one place on Mondays and another on Tuesdays." And: "I was a volunteer for a few years. That was great. They did fantastic work. It's a shame the funding stopped."

Communication and Awareness

Participants suggested improvements in communication around volunteering options, such as newsletters: *"Maybe something like a monthly newsletter to tell us what's going on. And volunteering things."*

Social media was noted as useful, though not universal: *"Opportunities are advertised on Facebook by some organisations and the council".*

Conclusion: Volunteering

Volunteering plays a vital role in the lives of many older people across Wales, offering not only practical support to communities but also significant personal benefits. Participants described volunteering as deeply rewarding, providing purpose, social connection, and a sense of pride. For some, it eased the transition into retirement or helped combat loneliness, while others valued the opportunity to "give something back" through roles such as charity shop work, gardening projects, befriending, and cultural activities.

However, volunteering is not without challenges. Awareness of opportunities is inconsistent, and many older people feel roles are geared toward younger volunteers. Physical limitations, health concerns, and transport difficulties often restrict involvement, leading some to step back after years of service. Others expressed a preference for flexible, informal volunteering, such as helping within their own groups or neighbourhoods, rather than committing to structured roles.

Where volunteering thrives, it is closely tied to strong local networks and visible support which highlight the importance of proactive communication, accessible information, and sustainable funding. Yet concerns remain about volunteer

recruitment and succession planning, with many groups dependent on a small number of dedicated individuals.

Overall, volunteering is highly valued but faces pressures that risk its long-term sustainability. Addressing barriers through better promotion, flexible opportunities, and investment in community-led initiatives will be essential to ensure older people can continue contributing meaningfully and benefiting from the sense of purpose and connection that volunteering brings.

<u>Voice and Influence</u>

We asked participants whether they feel they are listened to by their local authority.

Experiences vary widely across Wales. In some areas, older people feel their voices are heard and acted upon, while in others, there is a strong perception of neglect or tokenistic engagement.

Positive experiences were shared in some areas, where older people reported that practical issues—such as a request for a dropped kerb—were resolved promptly after being raised. One woman using a mobility scooter was pleased that the issue was fixed within three weeks, benefiting not only her but also those with pushchairs. There was also confidence that concerns raised by phone were addressed effectively, with one man describing his experience as having "couldn't be better" after contacting a local representative.

In contrast, others expressed frustration and a sense of being unheard: "We don't feel they listen to us." Some described local services as "invisible" and shared examples of lobbying for changes, such as speed limit reductions, that had not led to any action. Others felt that concerns were routinely dismissed: "They listen and then they ignore us" and "It happens when it suits their agenda."

A lack of proactive communication was also noted, with participants reporting that they only discovered available care services years after receiving a diagnosis. Transport was highlighted as a major issue, with older people describing difficulties in accessing hospitals without relying on expensive taxis.

How are they being consulted?

Consultation methods differ significantly. Some councils, like Anglesey, use a mix of paper and online surveys, supported by older people's coordinators who help spread the word. They also hold local forums and larger island-wide meetings twice a year, bringing together community representatives and council officers for face-to-face discussions.

In RCT and the Vale of Glamorgan we were told 50+ Forums play a central role. These forums organise surveys, questionnaires, and information days, and in the

Vale, strong administrative support ensures regular bulletins reach around 300 people. Forum members feel listened to: "They know that if they don't listen to us, we won't shut up!", but acknowledge that those outside the forum, especially offline, may not hear about consultations.

Elsewhere, consultation feels minimal or tokenistic. In one area, forum members help with questionnaires but believe policies are already decided: "The questions are so angled, so you feel obliged to answer a certain way." Outside the forum structure, awareness of engagement opportunities is low.

Do older people find it easy to be involved in decision making or finding information?

Digital exclusion is a recurring barrier. Some older people admitted they cannot keep up with younger people online, making engagement harder. In one area, most participants were not online and struggled to access information. One said, "They've put everything on their website now. If you call them, it tells you to go to the website." This left them feeling forgotten.

Participants suggested practical solutions: door-to-door updates, newsletters, and notice boards. They also highlighted the need for private spaces in council hubs, which currently lack confidentiality.

Do they feel their voice is being heard or ignored?

Many respondents believe their input has little impact. In two areas, consultation is seen as a box-ticking exercise, decisions are made without them and forums exist mainly to satisfy agendas. Comments like "We're not consulted. We're not involved. They come to us and tell us what's been decided" underline this frustration.

However, there are pockets of trust. In Anglesey, older people expressed confidence that issues raised are considered properly, and in the Vale of Glamorgan, forum members feel empowered and supported by dedicated officers.

Examples of good practice:

- **Anglesey:** Prompt action on accessibility issues; regular local and island-wide forums; mixed consultation methods (paper and online).

- **Vale of Glamorgan:** Strongly supported 50+ Forum with administrative help, bulletins, and stakeholder engagement.

- **RCT:** Active Over 50 Forum providing surveys and opportunities for input.

Other Insights:

- **Digital exclusion** is a major barrier across multiple areas, leaving many older people unable to access information or participate in consultations.

- **Isolation in rural areas** amplifies the need for direct communication, as highlighted in Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire.

- **Perceived priorities:** Several respondents believe councils focus more on younger people and families, sidelining older people's needs

Conclusion: Voice and Influence

Older people's experiences of voice and influence in Wales are mixed. While some benefit from structured forums, such as the 50+ Forum in Rhondda Cynon Taf and the Vale of Glamorgan, which provide opportunities to share views and shape local priorities, others feel engagement is tokenistic or inaccessible. Consultations that rely heavily on online platforms exclude those without digital skills or internet access, creating barriers for many older residents.

A recurring theme was the lack of awareness about local representation. Many participants admitted they do not know who their councillors are or how to contact them, reinforcing a sense of distance from decision-making. This disconnect is particularly pronounced in rural areas, where isolation and limited communication channels make engagement even harder.

There is a clear appetite for more direct, meaningful communication and representation. Participants called for inclusive consultation methods, visible councillor presence in communities, and proactive outreach, through newsletters, local meetings, and offline channels, to ensure older people's voices are heard. Strengthening these connections is essential not only for improving trust and transparency but also for ensuring that policies and services reflect the needs and priorities of older residents across Wales.

Access to Information

We asked participants how easy it is to access information about local services and their rights.

Older people across Wales reported mixed experiences when trying to access information about local services and their rights. While some areas demonstrate strong community links and proactive communication, others reveal significant barriers, particularly for those who are not online.

Overall Themes:

- **Digital exclusion** is the most consistent barrier. Many respondents are not online or lack confidence in using digital tools, leaving them dependent on word of mouth, libraries, or printed materials.

- **Libraries and community hubs** often act as lifelines for information, but their accessibility and sustainability vary.
- **Reliance on Facebook** and other online platforms frustrates those who are digitally excluded.

- **Awareness of rights and elected representatives** is patchy, with many unsure where to turn for help.
- **Respondent-led calls for change** include: more printed newsletters, noticeboards, door-to-door updates, and less reliance on online-only communication.

Do older people know where to find information on their rights?

Awareness of rights is generally low and inconsistent. Most respondents said they rely on word of mouth, libraries, or community hubs rather than formal council channels.

Do older people know who their elected representatives are?

Knowledge of elected representatives varies widely:

- Some participants reported strong awareness and trust in their local representatives, praising individuals such as Age Friendly Champions and councillors: "There's trust between them, and confidentiality."
- Others described their councillors as approachable and helpful: "They help if you ring them up, and we wouldn't have any qualms about contacting them."
- In some areas, uncertainty was more common: "We were a bit unsure about who our local councillors are."
- A few respondents admitted they didn't know who their councillors were or how to find out: "We didn't know who our councillors are… if I wanted to find out, I'd ask at the library."

This lack of awareness often leaves people unsure where to turn for help, reinforcing reliance on informal networks.

Positive Practices
- **Anglesey**: The Age Friendly Champion and officers, and ageing well open days foster trust and accessibility: "*people have no qualms about contacting them.*"
- **Blaenau Gwent**: Library hubs are highly valued: *"There seems to be more going on in the library hub now, and we use it more often than ever before."*
- **Vale of Glamorgan and RCT**: Strong forum networks share information through bulletins and word of mouth. In some areas, libraries act as hubs, even if they are not designated as such: *"If we come here, we can speak to others for opinions about what to do about a problem."*

Frustrations and barriers
- **Digital exclusion** was the most common frustration: *"I'm not online . I miss a lot not being on Facebook." "I have no interest in [going online]. I feel I'm missing out, but I'm too anxious."*

- **Over-reliance on Facebook**: *"Don't just put things on Facebook."*
- **Poor advertising and "secrecy"**: *"They should make council meetings less secretive."*
- **Difficulty contacting staff**: *"They all had antiquated work mobiles… now they use personal mobiles, so you can't get hold of them."*

Respondent-led calls for change

Older people consistently asked for:

- **Printed newsletters and noticeboards**: *"We'd like a newsletter or noticeboard, but it's not provided."*
- **Door-to-door updates** for those without digital access.
- **Better advertising in physical spaces** like libraries and GP surgeries.
- **Buddy schemes** to share information offline: *"Maybe we need a sort of friend thing, like a buddy scheme."*
- **Transparency in council meetings**: *"They should make council meetings less secretive."*

Conclusion: Access to Information

Across Wales, older people's experiences of accessing information reveal persistent gaps and inequalities. Word of mouth and libraries remain the most trusted sources, offering reassurance and personal contact. While platforms like Facebook and WhatsApp help some stay connected, many older people are not online or lack confidence using digital tools, leaving them excluded when information is primarily shared through these channels.

Participants consistently called for printed newsletters, physical noticeboards, and proactive outreach to ensure inclusivity. They also highlighted the need for clearer signposting. not only to activities but also to services, rights and opportunities, so that older people can navigate what is available without relying on chance encounters or complex online searches.

While some councils demonstrate good practice through forums, hubs, and Age-Friendly champions, many older people feel information is too hidden, too digital, and too dependent on personal networks. Awareness of rights and elected representatives is patchy, and digital exclusion leaves many disconnected from essential services. Improving communication through consistent, accessible, and multi-channel approaches is critical to ensure older people remain informed, engaged, and empowered in their communities.

Concluding Thoughts

Across Wales, older people are eager to participate in community life, valuing activities that provide social connection, purpose, and wellbeing. The Age Friendly Communities Grant has helped create opportunities, but persistent barriers remain.

Transport is the most significant challenge, particularly in rural areas, alongside digital exclusion, inconsistent communication, and limited funding for local venues. Whilst hubs, forums and grassroots initiatives demonstrate resilience and creativity, geographic inequalities and volunteer shortages threaten sustainability. Older people consistently call for better transport solutions, clearer offline communication, and inclusive consultation methods. Strengthening these areas will be essential to ensure older adults remain active, connected, and influential in shaping age-friendly communities.

Appendix – Age Friendly Coordinators

Respondents were not asked directly about Age Friendly Coordinators, but many mentioned them when discussing activities, volunteering, and access to information. Feedback varied widely. In some areas, coordinators were highly valued and described as essential: *"She's the most important person coming here", "Without her we would be lost", "She's worth every penny."* Others praised proactive outreach and support: *"It's absolutely brilliant… getting the older people to come out of their homes, which is good, good for mental health, good for the NHS even."*

However, there was confusion about roles, with some participants unsure who to contact: *"I don't see anything from the council – I hear things from [the coordinator] and we talk about things here. I wouldn't know where else to go to find out anything really."* In some cases, coordinators were seen as separate from the local authority: *"We're not consulted. We're not involved. They come to us and tell us what's been decided."*

Elsewhere, coordinators were barely mentioned, and groups relied on volunteers or their own networks: *"We do have days like today – information days. I don't know how many people know about them: the last one wasn't very well-attended."*

Overall, feedback suggests that while coordinators can make a significant difference when visible and proactive, their role is not consistently understood or recognised. This could be because the coordinators operate in different ways with some focussing influencing local authority or creating networks with a range of partners under a shared goal to create age-friendly communities.

Older people we spoke to called for greater clarity, outreach, and support for volunteer-led groups to be priorities going forward.