

Heneiddio'n Dda
yng Nghymru

Ageing Well
in Wales

Rhaglen bartneriaeth ar gyfer gweithredu ar y cyd
ar draws Cymru ac yn Ewrop

A partnership programme for collaborative action
across Wales and in Europe



Ageing Well in Wales

2014-19

Ensuring Wales is a good place
to grow older for everyone

Ageing Well in Wales

Cambrian Buildings // Mount Stuart Square // Cardiff // CF10 5FL

08442 640 670

www.ageingwellinwales.com

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Foreword

Rt. Hon Carwyn Jones AM, First Minister of Wales



The first Strategy for Older People in Wales was launched in 2003. The Strategy is grounded in ageing as a positive concept and was developed to address the issues and aspirations of people aged 50 and over living in Wales.

In Wales, we value the contribution that older people make and we are committed to making Wales a great place to grow old. Significant work has been undertaken since the launch of the initial Strategy to improve the lives of older people.

We have been working to achieve an innovative and positive response to support our ageing population. In May this year, our landmark Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act received Royal Assent. This Act will pave the way for our ambitious agenda to transform social services in Wales.

We have engaged widely with older people across Wales. We have put in place strong structures at both national and local level, to ensure that the voices of all older people are heard. But it is about more than just hearing the voices, we have taken action on what older people have told us is important to them.

Our Older People's Strategy has now entered its third phase and sets out our ambition to make Wales a great place to grow old. The Strategy is recognised internationally as coherent and sustainable, not least because it is based on what older people themselves have told us are the key issues for them.

I am proud that Wales had been awarded 3 Star Reference Site Status by the European Innovation Partnership for Active and Healthy Ageing for the work that we have undertaken in implementing our Strategy for Older People. The opportunity to found collaborative working relationships with our European neighbours on the world wide agenda is something that I welcome; it is good to see Wales having a presence, quite deservedly, on the European stage.

Wales was the first country in the world to establish a Commissioner for Older People. I have been pleased by the initiative and commitment that the Commissioner has shown in establishing and taking forward a range of work, including the Ageing Well in Wales Programme. The Ageing Well in Wales Programme is a partnership approach across local and national government, the NHS, the third sector and importantly older people themselves.

I would like to thank the Commissioner for her work in leading the Ageing Well in Wales Programme. This will, I am sure, have a real impact on the every day lives of older people in Wales.

Sarah Rochira, Older People's Commissioner for Wales

Wales is a nation of older people. Growing older is something we all aspire to and one million of us in Wales will soon be older people.

But it's not just about being older or simply living for longer. The older people I meet and speak with across Wales have been very clear: it's about ensuring that when we are older we have lives that have value, meaning and purpose, lives through which we can continue to contribute to our families, our communities and the wider economy. It's about ageing well, being able to continue to do the things that matter to us.



Of course, age can bring its challenges, but frailty and dependence need not and should not be seen as an inevitable part of ageing.

There is much that individuals can do to maintain their own health and overall wellbeing, but much more is required if we want Wales to be a good place to grow older. Public services, the third sector, the commercial sector, national and local government and many others must work together, for example, to create age-friendly environments, opportunities for learning and employment and ensure that practical support is available to prevent loneliness and isolation. A joined-up approach is required that focuses on very clear outcomes, outcomes that reflect the biggest challenges faced by people to age well.

The first of its kind in the UK, this Programme is a collaborative partnership, built upon over a decade's commitment in Wales to recognise the need of older people and, more than that, to ensure that they are seen as a valuable asset.

The overall aim of the Ageing Well in Wales Programme is simple: to ensure that there is an improvement in the wellbeing of people aged 50+ in Wales. This action plan outlines key aims and outcomes that will be supported by a detailed implementation plan, outlining how all of the partners to the Programme will be contributing to one overarching objective – to ensure that Wales is a good place to grow older for everyone.

I am proud, as the Older People's Commissioner for Wales, to Chair the Ageing Well in Wales Programme and I would like to thank the members of the Expert Advisory Groups and the Strategic Action Group for their hard work and support. This Programme represents a genuine commitment from many organisations to make a real difference to the lives of people in Wales as they grow older, a genuine commitment to ensure that we can all age well.

Maria Iglesia-Gomez, Head of Unit Innovation for Health and Consumers, European Commission



The European Union welcomes the launch of the Ageing Well in Wales Programme. The areas highlighted in your Action Plan for shaping solutions to address ageing are contributing to the goals we are pursuing in the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP-AHA). The European Commission launched in 2011, six priority areas of action covering prevention and early diagnosis, care and cure and active ageing and independent living, with the goal of increasing by two years the average healthy life years of EU citizens by 2020. The EIP-AHA is now in its implementation stage with more than 3000 partners involved from all EU Member States and the Ageing Well in Wales Programme represents a step forward.

We look forward to working together to achieve our common objectives of improving the quality of life of older people. Age-Friendly Communities and Dementia Supportive Communities is aligned within our work on 'Innovation for age-friendly, buildings, cities and environments' and on falls prevention within 'Personalised health management and falls prevention' in the EIP-AHA. I am sure the outcomes of this action plan as it progresses will add to the discussions in the EIP-AHA and across Europe. This local knowledge and the experiences of the thematic networks in the Ageing Well in Wales Programme will help all interested parties in their efforts to implement similar programmes in Europe.

Across the EU there is a wealth of knowledge that can be shared to foster scaling up across regions in the EU and our partners want guidance on how to develop programmes as in Wales. The best practice examples you have put forward in the context of the Reference Sites framework of the EIP-AHA are indeed a source of inspiration for other regions across the EU. Regions are at the forefront of implementing innovative solutions for active and healthy ageing. We are moving towards large-scale implementation of the most successful practices, and will continue to support the expansion of existing initiatives contributing to increase the quality of life of our older citizens.

Your continued effort and commitment in the European Innovation Partnership on Active & Healthy Ageing is very much valued.

Wales: a Nation of Older People

There are over 800,000 people in Wales aged 50+, over a quarter of our population. This will rise to over one million people in the next twenty years. We are proud in Wales to be a nation of older people. Older people, however, are undervalued and society must fundamentally change the way it thinks about older people and ageing. Ageing Well in Wales will work to unlock the wealth of knowledge and potential of this valuable group of people.

The concept of wellbeing is not yet sufficiently understood and reflected in the planning, development and everyday delivery of public services. There is too often a misconception that the only issues that matter to older people are confined to health and social care. Whilst these are important, services such as education, leisure, housing, transport, community facilities and support to remain in employment all play an essential part in the wellbeing of older people.

However, wellbeing is increasingly being recognised in key Welsh Government legislation as a fundamental aspect of people's lives, such as in the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act¹ and the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Bill².

There are a number of wellbeing or quality of life models being used in relation to the wellbeing of older people, several of which will guide the work of Ageing Well in Wales. One such model is the Older People's Commissioner for Wales' Quality of Life model, which was defined by older people themselves. This model looks at what older people have said they need to stay safe, as healthy and independent as possible and to lead lives that have value, meaning and purpose. They say this is true when they:

- Feel safe and are listened to, valued and respected,
- Are able to get the help they need, when they need it, in the way that they want it,
- Live in a place that suits them and their lives, and
- Are able to do the things that matter to them³.

Older people are huge economic assets: after accounting for costs relating to pensions, welfare and health, older people make a net contribution worth over £1billion a year to the Welsh economy, almost £3million a day. A 2011 study suggests that by 2030 older people will benefit the UK economy by around £291.1billion, compared to projected welfare costs of £216.2billion⁴. Ageing Well in Wales will help to maximise the contribution of older people to their communities and wider economy even further.

1 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2014/4/pdfs/anaw_20140004_en.pdf

2 <http://www.senedd.assemblywales.org/mgIssueHistoryHome.aspx?IId=10103>

3 http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/en/news/news/13-05-23/Framework_for_Action.aspx

4 http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/en/news/news/14-02-25/The_Importance_and_Impact_of_Community_Services_within_Wales.aspx

The work of Ageing Well in Wales will also help older people to retain their independence and health for as long as possible. In order to allow older people to continue to be economically and socially active, the Programme will focus on preventative actions and interventions. Preventing frailty and preparing older people to sustain their independence will, in turn, support them to take ownership of their health and wellbeing.

Ageing Well in Wales, and its preventative approach to supporting older people to retain their independence and health, will also act as a cost containment programme for costs sustained by the NHS and other public and third sector service providers. People who fall will increase visits to their GPs and other health providers, depending on their friends and family for transport and support, thereby resulting in greater amounts of public spending. It is estimated that cutting the number of older people admitted to hospital could save the UK health service £2bn a year⁵.

Ageing Well in Wales recognises that older people are not one homogenous group. Depending on the places where they live, older people in Wales have a wide and diverse range of needs, concerns and priorities. The Implementation Plan, which will follow this document and outline Ageing Well in Wales' activities over the coming years, will recognise these differences, as well as those characterised by the Equality Act (2010)⁶.

Running through the programme are a number of cross-cutting themes, as identified by the Expert Advisory Groups (EAGs), which will inform the work of each network. These are:

- Age discrimination and reducing the stigma attached to ageing
- Engaging with older people and other generations, and
- Empowering older people.

5 <http://www.communitycare.co.uk/2011/11/03/service-cuts-increase-isolation-among-elderly-finds-survey/>

6 <https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance>

Ageing Well in Wales in Europe

Across the European Union, Member States have recognised the need for focused work on ageing and the need to ensure people are able to age well. By 2060, it is expected that 30% of people in Europe will be aged 65 and over⁷. This focus on positive ageing has been formalised through the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP-AHA), of which Ageing Well in Wales became a partner in 2012. The EIP-AHA is a partnership of regions and Member States from across the European Union working to increase the average healthy lifespan of EU citizens by two years by 2020.

Wales' track record of innovative achievements in advancing the rights of older people has been recognised by the EIP-AHA as exemplary. Wales' achievements in this area include:

- Strategy for Older People (a three phase strategy 2003-2023)
- Statutory Older People's Commissioner (a world first)
- Declaration of Rights for Older People
- National Partnership Forum of Older People
- Older People's Strategy Coordinators in Welsh Local Government
- Older People's Champions and 50+ Forums in all 22 Local Authorities

This unique approach and the commitment to ensuring older people's issues have a high profile and are recognised across a broad range of policy areas at local and national level, saw Wales awarded the highest 3* Reference Site status by the European Commission in 2013⁸. The Programme therefore became part of the Reference Sites Collaborative Network⁹, a network of over twenty regions and Member States across the EU to collaborate and exchange best practice examples and innovation in the field of active and healthy ageing.

The EIP-AHA is built of a number of Action Areas, two of which align with Ageing Well in Wales themes. These are Action Area A2: Personalised health management, starting with a Falls Prevention Initiative, and Action Area D4: Age-Friendly Cities, Buildings and Environments.

Through the EIP-AHA, Ageing Well in Wales works with European partners to exchange best practice examples, knowledge and innovative ideas. The EIP-AHA encourages collaboration and facilitates members to attract EU funding for partnership projects in the field of active and healthy ageing.

⁷ <http://afeinnovnet.eu/sites/default/files/leaflet.pdf>

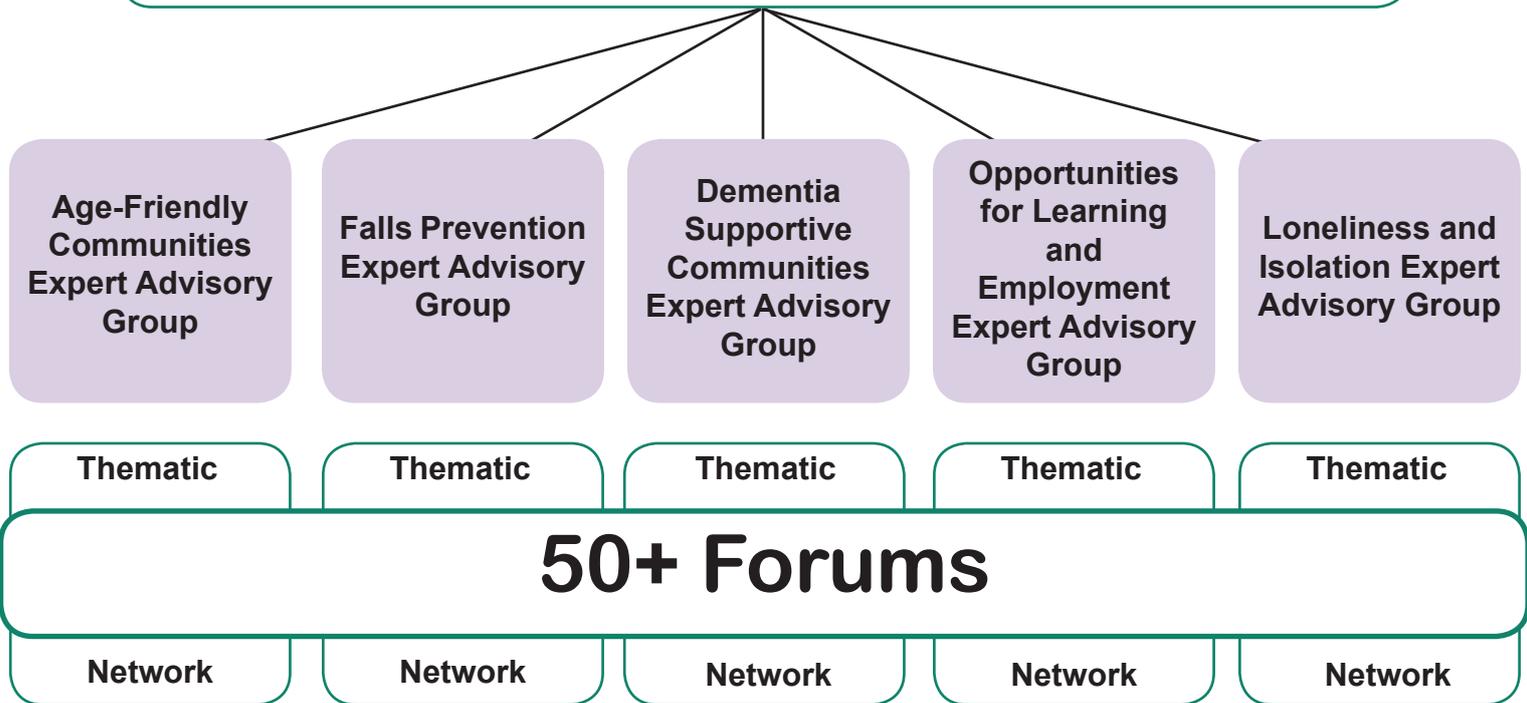
⁸ <http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/excellent-innovation-ageing-european-guide-reference-sites-european-innovation-partnership>

⁹ <http://www.northernireland.gov.uk/index/media-centre/news-departments/news-dhssps/news-dhssps-november-2013/news-dhssps-251113-northern-ireland-leading.htm>

Programme Structure

Ageing Well in Wales has been purposefully structured to provide a consistent pan-Wales approach from national organisations and public bodies, whilst also engaging with and supporting activity at regional and local levels through its networks.

STRATEGIC ACTION GROUP



The **Strategic Action Group (SAG)**, chaired by the Older People’s Commissioner, provides high-level strategic direction to the Programme. Comprised of a broad range of national bodies, the Group meets on a quarterly basis to steer the work of the Programme through advice and guidance, by scrutinising progress and contributing resources where applicable.

The **Expert Advisory Groups (EAG)**, led by Chairs who have a broad range of experience and knowledge of issues that older people face, advise members of the SAG on good practice for adoption throughout the networks to support them in increasing the impact and the further development of their own work. The Groups also develop and agree planned activities and contribute to or identify any collaborative opportunities. Each group includes representatives from the Department for Health and Social Services and members of the National Partnership Forum for Older People (NPF), directly representing older people.

The **Thematic Networks** are key to the success of the Programme. They will raise awareness of the activities of Ageing Well in Wales at a local level across the public and private sectors, harnessing and supporting action, within communities, villages, towns, cities and other places where older people live their lives and go about their business. They will use this local experience, knowledge and impact to drive the development of better and more impactful national programmes.

Local Government is represented within Ageing Well in Wales at every level. The Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) is a founding partner of the Programme and sits on the SAG. Older People's Strategy Coordinators from every Local Authority are part of the Programme and are represented on the EAGs. The Coordinators also provide a direct link to all 22 of the local 50+ Forums of older people.

Ageing Well in Wales combines top-down and bottom-up approaches, with the SAG guiding the direction of the Programme with input from the EAGs, who are in turn fed by the experiences and knowledge of the network members.

Research, Innovation and Creativity

Running through the Programme is a strong focus on research, innovation and creativity to ensure the capturing and sharing of evidence based approaches and best practice examples from across Wales and beyond to support impactful and empowering change at a local level.

The initial priority for Ageing Well in Wales will be to develop an understanding of current provision and baseline statistics within the five themes of the Programme. The Programme will revisit these baselines at years three and five to confirm Ageing Well in Wales is delivering on its outcomes (see page 11 for these outcomes 'At a Glance')

Ageing Well in Wales will focus on turning research into practice, ensuring actions taken over the next five years to achieve these outcomes are evidence based and have been proven to positively impact on the lives of older people in Wales.

Ageing Well in Wales is fortunate to have strong links to the EIP-AHA, which will facilitate sharing and learning with colleagues in the European Union, who are involved in their own ongoing and innovative research into healthy ageing. The Older People and Ageing Research and Development Network (OPAN Cymru¹⁰) will lead on the development of the first integrated research strategy for Ageing Well in Wales, which will underpin the five themes of the Programme. OPAN researchers sit on each of the five EAGs, and a number of researchers have already joined the thematic networks. Relationships are also being made with existing and emerging research projects in other parts of the UK to build dialogue and share new knowledge around ways of working and delivering improved service under the five themes of the Programme.

At a time when national government, Local Authorities and the third sector are increasingly being asked to 'do more with less', researching and promoting innovation and existing good practice will enable Ageing Well in Wales to reduce reinvention and the costs and time involved in changing service delivery. Having an informed picture of current provision and demonstrating what research and direct engagement with older people works most effectively to support older people to age well, will better enable service providers, community groups and Local Authorities to respond to these needs swiftly and effectively.

¹⁰ <http://www.opanwales.org.uk/en/index.htm>

Ageing Well in Wales – Aims and Outcomes at a Glance

| | Aim | Outcome One | Outcome Two | Outcome Three |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| Age-Friendly Communities | To make Wales a Nation of Age-Friendly Communities | The importance of Age-Friendly Communities is recognised at all levels throughout Wales. | The voices of all generations are heard and actively included in the creation and ongoing development of their own Age-Friendly Communities. | Local and national government support the development of Age-Friendly communities and intergenerational practice. |
| Falls Prevention | To support older people to reduce their risk of falling, reducing the number of falls amongst older people in Wales. | Older people and their carers are aware of the preventable causes of falling and know how to reduce their risk. | Current levels of early identification and preventive interventions are mapped and assessed to inform future development. | Falls prevention is integrated into other older people's health and social care programmes as part of a wider 'ageing well' approach. |
| Dementia Supportive Communities | To make Wales a dementia supportive nation by building and promoting dementia supportive communities. | Wales is an environment where people affected by dementia feel confident, valued and understood. | People affected by dementia in Wales note an improvement in the timely identification of dementia and support provided before, during and after identification. | Enhanced and extended education, training, information and advice around dementia is established. |

| | Aim | Outcome One | Outcome Two | Outcome Three |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| Opportunities for Learning & Employment | To ensure the experience of older people in Wales is optimised through continued learning and employment. | Older people in Wales benefit from maximised opportunities for participation. | Older people in Wales benefit from maximised opportunities to increase their income. | Older people in Wales feel empowered to effectively plan for their future. |
| Loneliness & Isolation | To reduce levels of Loneliness and Isolation and their negative impact on health and wellbeing as experienced by older people in Wales. | Loneliness and Isolation are recognised as public health and safety issues in Wales. | The main causes and factors of Loneliness and Isolation amongst older people living in Wales are identified and understood. | The provision of innovative and accessible support is developed, addressing the impact of changes to life circumstances older people face. |

Age-Friendly Communities

Wales is a nation of communities, varying in size, nature and geography. Age-Friendly Communities will meet the needs of older people, and people of all ages, in each individual community by responding directly to their needs. Such communities will encourage and enable older people to engage with their surroundings and continue to engage socially within those communities, thereby maintaining their health, independence and wellbeing.

The concept of Age-Friendly Cities was launched in 2007 with the publication of the Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide by the World Health Organisation (WHO)¹¹. The Guide identified eight domains of city life that might influence the health and wellbeing of older people: outdoor spaces and buildings; transportation; housing; social participation; respect and social inclusion; civic participation and employment; communication and information; and community support and health services.

In practice, an Age-Friendly community is one where local people have decided their priorities to better support people as they age. This can include physical design, promoting better access and mobility, promoting people's social engagement and developing support and relationships between the generations. The most important aspect is that it is an integrated approach to thinking about the places where people live and how best to promote older people's wellbeing and engagement with their physical and social environments.

The Age-Friendly cities concept was refreshed in 2013, under the Irish Presidency of the European Union, when the Dublin Declaration on Age-Friendly Cities and Communities was launched¹². The Dublin Declaration shows a city or community's pledge to become 'Age-Friendly' using the eight WHO domains as a framework for development. Each city or community will have to demonstrate a process of consultation with older people (and other age groups), planning, implementation and evaluation to become part of the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.

As part of the process for Wales to be recognised as an Age-Friendly Nation, all 22 of Wales' Local Authorities have signed up to the Dublin Declaration; a true achievement for Wales, showing real commitment at local levels to creating communities that are inclusive and supportive for all, regardless of their age.

¹¹ http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global_age_friendly_cities_Guide_English.pdf

¹² [http://minutes.belfastcity.gov.uk/\(S\(j4evevik51sogrisjnuol345\)\)/documents/s70324/Appendix%201%20-%20Dublin%20Declaration%202013.pdf](http://minutes.belfastcity.gov.uk/(S(j4evevik51sogrisjnuol345))/documents/s70324/Appendix%201%20-%20Dublin%20Declaration%202013.pdf)

Age-Friendly Communities: Aim and Outcomes

Overarching aim: To make Wales a Nation of Age-Friendly Communities

Outcomes

1. The importance of Age-Friendly Communities is recognised at all levels throughout Wales.

- 1.1. Support the creation of Age-Friendly Communities across Wales.
- 1.2. Define what is meant by an Age-Friendly Community in the Welsh context and to formalise the recognition process communities, cities and counties/county boroughs need to follow in order to be officially recognised as being Age-Friendly.
- 1.3. Establish Age-Friendly Champions in local communities.

2. The voices of all generations are heard and actively included in the creation and ongoing development of their Age-Friendly Communities.

- 2.1. Actively promote the inclusion of all generations in discussions about their community, with particular reference to groups sharing protected characteristics.
- 2.2. Facilitate the development of shared public spaces (both physical and social) as an integral element of an Age-Friendly Community.
- 2.3. Support and encourage communities to identify and realise the assets (actual and potential) that contribute towards an Age-Friendly Community.

3. Local and national government support the development of Age-Friendly Communities and inter-generational practice.

- 3.1. For Age-Friendly Communities to feature in key strategic planning documents in all Local Service Boards.
- 3.2. Develop information packs, training and development resources and learning networks for professionals, to embed the understanding and practice of Age-Friendly approaches in strategic planning and implementation.
- 3.3. Establish Age-Friendly Advocates within Local Authority planning, housing, transport and education departments.

Falls Prevention

Falls prevention is a key issue in the improvement of health and wellbeing amongst older people. Falls are a major cause of disability and death in older people in Wales, and result in significant human costs in terms of pain, loss of confidence and independence. It is estimated that between 230,000 and 460,000 people over the age of 60 fall in Wales each year. Between 11,500 and 45,900 of these suffer serious injury: fracture, head injury, or serious laceration¹³. The work of the Falls Prevention network will help older people to maintain their health and wellbeing, live longer in their own homes and remain active in their communities.

There is also significant financial cost to health and social care services associated with dealing with the results of falls. Falls are estimated to cost the NHS in the UK more than £2.3billion per year¹⁴. Evidence suggests that falls prevention can reduce the number of falls by between 15% and 30%¹⁵, and that well organised services, based on national standards and evidence-based guidelines, can prevent falls and reduce death and disability from fractures.

A number of substantial national and local initiatives are underway in Wales to address the issue of falls, ranging from prevention through to treatment. Whilst the 1000 Lives Multiagency Falls Collaborative for Wales focuses on those who have already fallen, the falls prevention network of Ageing Well in Wales will address early intervention for those older people at risk of falling for the first time. The network and any development and delivery of falls prevention services that result from the Programme will support an older person's wellbeing as well as addressing specific identified risk factors for falls. This work will link with Public Health Wales' Transforming Health Improvement Programme¹⁶, which is looking at evidence-based interventions on key topic areas across the lifecourse.

13 [http://www2.nphs.wales.nhs.uk:8080/HealthImpDomStratManGrpDocs.nsf/815f97434d281f8b80257508003d3986/38950ca8dd1f3456802578fd004b67c6/\\$FILE/Injury%20Prevention%20Guidance%201%20-%20Falls%20v4.docx](http://www2.nphs.wales.nhs.uk:8080/HealthImpDomStratManGrpDocs.nsf/815f97434d281f8b80257508003d3986/38950ca8dd1f3456802578fd004b67c6/$FILE/Injury%20Prevention%20Guidance%201%20-%20Falls%20v4.docx)

14 <http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/CG161>

15 <http://www.1000livesplus.wales.nhs.uk/falls>

16 <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/986/PHW%20Health%20Improvement%20Review%20Final%20Report%20-%2020260913.pdf>

Falls Prevention: Aim and Outcomes

Overarching aim: To support older people to reduce their risk of falling, reducing the number of falls amongst older people in Wales.

Outcomes

1. Older people and their carers are aware of the preventable causes of falling and know how to reduce their risk.

- 1.1. Work with older people and their carers to develop a comprehensive national online information resource to raise awareness of falls, and promote the value of early intervention and prevention to reduce the risk of falling.
- 1.2. Work with health and social care professionals, third sector partners, carers and others to develop a brief intervention that can be delivered by professionals and volunteers to raise awareness of falls risk and preventive measures with individual older people and their carers.
- 1.3. Pilot and evaluate the interventions from 1.1 and 1.2 to inform future work in this area.

2. Current levels of early identification and preventive interventions are mapped and assessed to inform future development.

- 2.1. Develop an agreed understanding of the core operational components of the National Institute for Health and Social Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines¹⁷ in relation to a.) early identification of risk, b.) multi-factorial risk assessment, and c.) multi-factorial preventive interventions in all settings. Preventive interventions include: evidence-based falls prevention exercise classes, home safety checks, installations and modifications, medication reviews, low vision assessments and sight tests, and footcare.
- 2.2. Support local audit/mapping of local services against these three areas, using a standardised format.
- 2.3. Identify barriers to the availability of interventions outlined in 2.1 and work with partners to seek solutions and increase provision, ensuring that interventions are evidence based and evaluated.

¹⁷ <http://www.nice.org.uk/Guidance/cg161>

3. Falls prevention is integrated into other older people's health and social care programmes as part of a wider 'ageing well' approach.

- 3.1. Collaborate with other national and local programmes such as those on frailty, dementia, concussion and chronic conditions, to develop complementary/integrated approaches and protocols in relation to risk assessments and interventions.
- 3.2. Promote access to and strengthening of community based opportunities, such as Ageing Well clubs, to support healthy ageing and as key exit routes for maintaining and improving health and strength after discharge from formal falls services.
- 3.3. Work with the providers of community healthy ageing clubs, classes and events to support the development of evidence based activities.

Dementia Supportive Communities

In 2013 there was an estimated 45,529 people living with dementia in Wales, of those people, only 17,661 had received a formal diagnosis. By 2021 it is estimated that over 55,000 people in Wales will have dementia¹⁸. Developing dementia supportive communities is crucial to the wellbeing of older people, especially the thousands of people living with dementia, regardless of official diagnosis, and the people around them that are also affected.

People affected by dementia talk about the everyday challenges they face in living well with dementia. This can include difficulty using technology, getting appropriate service in shops, banks and post offices, using transport, going on holiday and maintaining social contact and hobbies. Although help from health and care services is vitally important, making it possible for people affected by dementia to live well will require help from people and organisations across society¹⁹.

A dementia supportive community is any community that shows a high level of public awareness and understanding of dementia (for example, a local or national organisation such as a shop, bank or corporation, or a village, town or city). Such communities are more inclusive of people with dementia, and improve their ability to remain independent and have voice, choice and control over their lives. Creating dementia supportive communities requires a social movement: one that mobilises all sections of society to act, respond and give their time, inspired by the ambition to make their community more dementia friendly²⁰.

As emphasised by the Welsh Government's National Dementia Vision for Wales²¹, people who receive an early diagnosis of dementia and are given access to appropriate information, support and care, are able to live well with dementia. The Dementia Supportive Communities network will work to facilitate this and encourage the development of communities and have the capacity to support people affected by dementia so they can enjoy the best possible quality of life.

The network recognises that it is not only the individual who is affected by dementia, it also impacts on their family, friends, colleagues and carers. Ageing Well in Wales therefore uses the term 'people affected by dementia' to recognise the wider effects of dementia beyond the individual.

18 http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/site/scripts/download_info.php?fileID=1666

19 Alzheimer's Society (2013) Dementia Supportive Communities: Briefing Paper

20 Alzheimer's Society (2013) Dementia Supportive Communities: Briefing Paper

21 <http://wales.gov.uk/docs/dhss/publications/110302dementiaen.pdf>

Dementia Supportive Communities: Aim and Outcomes

Overarching aim: To make Wales a dementia supportive nation by building and promoting dementia supportive communities.

Outcomes

1. Wales is an environment where people affected by dementia feel confident, valued and understood.

- 1.1. Engage with people affected by dementia to identify what constitutes a “dementia supportive community” and disseminate best practice examples.
- 1.2. Work with partners to further develop and adopt a national recognition process for ‘Dementia Friendly’ community and commercial businesses and organisations.
- 1.3. Establish a compendium of organisations, dementia action alliances and communities in Wales that are working towards being recognised as dementia supportive/friendly.

2. People affected by dementia in Wales note an improvement in the timely identification of dementia and support provided before, during and after identification.

- 2.1. Work with professional bodies, organisations and community groups to improve assessment, diagnosis and care.
- 2.2. Identify current support available to people affected by dementia, as well as gaps in provision.
- 2.3. Identify and promote current and future opportunities for prevention.

3. Enhanced and extended education, training, information and advice around dementia is established.

- 3.1. Promote positive images of people affected by dementia to drive attitudinal change.
- 3.2. Ensure engagement of public services, for example, housing and transport, with the dementia agenda.
- 3.3. Promote awareness and understanding of dementia and the issues people affected by dementia face in their daily lives.

Opportunities for Learning and Employment

Older people have a wealth of knowledge and experience which is currently underappreciated and undervalued in the workplace. Tackling age discrimination and recognising the value and worth of older people in Wales will be a key feature in the work of this network; older people are currently worth over £1 billion to the Welsh economy every year²². The network will aim to increase the recognised value of older people through further learning, employment and volunteering opportunities.

It is good for the individual, the community and the economy for older people to be engaged in some form of employment, education or training. Learning for older people has a range of benefits, such as:

- Promoting full economic and societal participation
- Contributing towards personal wellbeing and fulfilment
- Supporting creativity and innovation, and
- Increasing efficiency as workers or volunteers²³.

The need to prioritise opportunities for employment and new skills for older people has been added to the Ageing Well in Wales Programme in recognition of its prevalence as an issue for older people in Wales. The Strategy for Older People (Phase 3) 2013-23 states that older people who are unemployed are more likely to be long-term unemployed; around 45% of unemployed people aged 50-64 have been unemployed for a year or more compared to 30% of 18-24 year olds and 38% for 25-49 year olds.

With the economic downturn affecting the traditional models of retirement, older people must be able new learning and employment opportunities to remain in or re-enter the labour market. Older people require access to learning for a number of reasons. For example, with an increasing number of older people unable to afford retirement at State Pension age, the provision of learning and skill development opportunities to improve their employment prospects becomes ever more important. For other older people who are able to retire when they choose, access to learning is a key factor in maintaining their wellbeing. Learning and skills development in this context includes financial and digital inclusion, helping older people to become more resilient in later life.

By improving the employment prospects of older people and empowering them to remain engaged longer with society, Opportunities for Learning and Employment will also complement the work of the Loneliness and Isolation network.

22 http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/en/news/news/14-02-25/The_Importance_and_Impact_of_Community_Services_within_Wales.aspx

23 http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/en/news/news/14-02-25/The_Importance_and_Impact_of_Community_Services_within_Wales.aspx

Opportunities for Learning and Employment:

Aim and Outcomes

Overarching aim: To ensure the experience of older people in Wales is optimised through continued learning and employment.

1. Older people in Wales benefit from maximised opportunities for participation.

- 1.1. Increase the number of older people who volunteer.
- 1.2. Increase the number of older people continuing their learning and skill development before and after retirement.
- 1.3. Identify and share successful community models for older people's participation.

2. Older people in Wales benefit from maximised opportunities to increase their income.

- 2.1. Increase the numbers of people aged 50+ in Wales who are economically active.
- 2.2. Develop and improve older people's financial inclusion schemes.
- 2.3. Increase the number of people aged 50+ who are accessing education and training.

3. Older people in Wales feel empowered to plan effectively for their future.

- 3.1. Raise awareness amongst older people of current governmental and other advice and information schemes to assist in building their financial resilience.
- 3.2. Develop a live compendium of current provision.
- 3.3. Work with partners to run a pilot programme to support older people through economic transitions.

Loneliness and Isolation

Loneliness and isolation are cross-cutting issues that seriously impact on the health and wellbeing of older people in Wales. Achievements made by each of the Ageing Well in Wales networks will have a positive impact on the loneliness and isolation felt by older people living in Wales. Given the changes to the public services landscape in Wales and the need to see loneliness and isolation recognised as public health issues, Ageing Well in Wales will be dedicating a network to this increasingly important theme.

Loneliness and isolation are not fringe issues; they have been shown to damage health, are the basis for social exclusion and are a significant and pressing problem in Wales that cross all boundaries of social class, race, gender identification, sexual orientation, financial status and geography. Eradicating loneliness and isolation may be unrealistic, but working at all levels, individual, organisational and strategic, identifying and tackling the root causes is not.

Research demonstrates that loneliness has an effect on mortality that is similar in size to smoking 15 cigarettes a day²⁴. It is associated with poor mental health and conditions such as cardiovascular disease, hypertension and dementia. Loneliness also has a much wider public health impact too, as it is associated with a number of negative health outcomes including mortality, morbidity, depression and suicide as well as health service use²⁵.

Given the budgetary reductions to community and public services, often seen as “lifelines”, older people are at an increased risk of loneliness and isolation, sometimes referred to as “silent killers”. More than 75% of women and a third of men over the age of 65 live alone. Without the means to leave their homes, or with fewer visits from community workers and service providers, an increasing number of older people will feel lonely and isolated resulting in damaging effects to their mental health²⁶.

24 <http://www.campaigntoendloneliness.org/threat-to-health/>

25 http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/en/news/news/14-02-25/The_Importance_and_Impact_of_Community_Services_within_Wales.aspx

26 http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/en/news/news/14-02-25/The_Importance_and_Impact_of_Community_Services_within_Wales.aspx

Loneliness and Isolation: Aim and Outcomes

Overarching aim: To reduce levels of loneliness and isolation and their negative impact on health and wellbeing as experienced by older people in Wales.

Outcomes

1. Loneliness and isolation are recognised as public health and safety issues in Wales.

- 1.1. Raise the profiles of loneliness and isolation as public health issues.
- 1.2. To ensure that health and social care information and advice services address the impact of loneliness and isolation on older people's wellbeing.
- 1.3. Empower older people to be aware of the risks of loneliness and isolation to their wellbeing.

2. The main causes and factors of loneliness and isolation amongst older people living in Wales are identified and understood.

- 2.1. Identify the key causes of loneliness and isolation amongst older people.
- 2.2. Identify the impact loneliness and isolation have on the individual, the community and the economy.
- 2.3. Identify and develop current and potential interventions that could successfully reduce loneliness and isolation amongst the emerging older generation.

3. The provision of innovative and accessible support is developed, addressing the impact of changes to life circumstances that older people face.

- 3.1. Ensure older people are properly and meaningfully consulted regarding public transport provision.
- 3.2. Ensure older people have the financial means to participate in social activities.
- 3.3. Older people are aware of and have access to housing schemes that promote social interaction and inclusion.

Conclusion

There are already many excellent schemes and initiatives taking place across Wales that address the five themes of Ageing Well in Wales. This Action Plan and the current and future work of the Programme, its networks and their members will add value to and further develop these schemes and initiatives. Through close collaboration and an integrated approach, the Ageing Well in Wales Programme will identify innovative best practice examples and seek to duplicate this across Wales for the benefit of older people.

Ageing Well in Wales will use a variety of methods to determine if older people's wellbeing improves over the next five years. These will include:

- On-going engagement with older people and those who care for and support them.
- Establishing an evidence base for each of the five networks, to be compared to refreshed figures in years three and five.
- Completing a year three review of the Programme, its activities and its achievements.

Older people currently make a contribution of over £1 billion a year in Wales. The five Ageing Well in Wales networks - Age-Friendly Communities, Falls Prevention, Dementia Supportive Communities, Opportunities for Learning and Employment, and Loneliness and Isolation - will provide further support to older people to maintain their wellbeing and remain socially and economically active. By maximising older people's potential, this £1 billion figure will only increase in the coming years. Older people in Wales should be recognised as and invested in like the truly valuable asset they are.

The combined depth and breadth in experience, knowledge and reach of the Ageing Well in Wales partner bodies, organisations and networks gives Wales a real and unique opportunity to make lasting improvements to the wellbeing of its older people, now and for generations to come.

Appendix One: Strategic Advisory Group

Sarah Rochira (Chair), Older People's Commissioner for Wales

Helen Birtwhistle, Director, Welsh NHS Confederation

Nick Capaldi, Chief Executive, Arts Council for Wales

Dr Tracey Cooper, Chief Executive, Public Health Wales

Linda Davies, Principal Health Promotion Specialist, Public Health Wales

Lisa Dunsford, Deputy Director for Integration Policy Delivery, Welsh Government

Dr Bernadette Fuge, Chair, Age Cymru

Dr Alan Hatton-Yeo MBE, Generations Together Cymru

Dr Ruth Hussey OBE, Chief Medical Officer, Welsh Government

Ian Johnston QPM, Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner

Rt Hon. Alun Michael, South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner

Terry Mills, Acting Chair, National Partnership Forum for Older People

Professor Judith Phillips OBE, Director, Older People and Ageing Research and Development Network (OPAN Cymru)

Sarah Powell, Chief Executive, Sport Wales

Sally Rivers, Head of Operations, Wales, Royal Voluntary Service

Winston Roddick CB QC, North Wales Police and Crime Commissioner

Christopher Salmon, Dyfed Powys Police and Crime Commissioner

Steve Thomas CBE, Chief Executive, Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA)

Allison Williams, Chief Executive, Cwm Taf University Health Board

Richard Williams, Chair, Age Alliance Wales

Appendix Two: Expert Advisory Groups

Age-Friendly Communities

Dr Alan Hatton-Yeo MBE (Chair), Generations Together Cymru
Natalie Avery, Department for Health and Social Services, Welsh Government
Lucie Connors, Cardiff Story
Louise David, Vibe Creative
Shaun Evans Pask, Cardiff City Council
Chris Jones, Care and Repair Cymru
Sandra Jones, Denbighshire County Council
Martin King-Sheard, Play Wales
Mike Lewis, Hawliau
Sian Lewis, Conwy County Borough Council
Charles Musselwhite, OPAN Cymru
Andrea Nicholas-Jones, Welsh Government
Gweneira Raw-Rees, Ceredigion County Council
Ian Thomas, Age Cymru
Lee Parry Williams, Public Health Wales

Falls Prevention

Linda Davies (Co-Chair), Public Health Wales
Sarah Jones (Co-Chair), Public Health Wales
Dr Marko Arkesteijn, Aberystwyth University
Rachel Beckett, Cardiff & Vale University Health Board
Claire Bottomley, Age Cymru
Professor Chris Bridle, Aberystwyth University
Dr Karl Davies, Cardiff & Vale University Health Board
Rhian Dawson, Integrated Health and Social Care Manager, Hywel Dda University Health Board and Carmarthenshire County Council
Phillipa Ford, Chartered Society of Physiotherapists
Dafydd Gwynne, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board Local Public Health Team
Rebecca John, School of Optometry and Vision Sciences, Cardiff University
Jane Neathey, Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board
Andrea Nicholas-Jones, Welsh Government
Dr Heather Payne, Department for Health and Social Services, Welsh Government
Iain Roberts, Public Health Wales
Bex Townley, Hywel Dda University Health Board
Sandra Trimarco, Newport City Council
Neil Williams, Care and Repair Cymru
Jeannie Wyatt-Williams, National Exercise Referral Scheme

Dementia Supportive Communities

Dr. Bernadette Fuge (Chair), Age Cymru
Nick Andrews, All Wales Academic Social Care Research Collaboration, Swansea University
Stuart Blythe, Welsh Local Government Association
Pat Charles, National Partnership Forum
Hannah Davies, Swansea Dementia Friendly City
Rhiannon Davies, Brecon & Hay Dementia Friendly Communities
Philly Hare, Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Andrea Nicholas-Jones, Welsh Government
Prof. Judith Phillips, Older People and Ageing Research and Development Network (OPAN Cymru)
Sue Phelps, Alzheimer's Society Wales
Gweneira Raw-Rees, Ceredigion County Council
Jon Roche, Department for Health and Social Services, Welsh Government
Dr Les Rudd, Public Health Wales 1000 Lives Improvement Unit
Rhian Webber, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council
Prof. Bob Woods, Bangor University

Opportunities for Learning and Employment

Terry Mills (Chair), National Partnership Forum
Maria Cheshire Allen, OPAN Cymru
Rhian Davies, Disability Wales
Matt Downton, Department for Health and Social Services, Welsh Government
Phil Fiander, Wales Council for Voluntary Action
Cerys Furlong, Niace Dysgu Cymru
Simon Hatch, Carers Trust
Nick Lee, Adult and Continuing Learning, Welsh Government
Andrea Nicholas-Jones, Welsh Government
David Pugh, Prime Cymru
Helen Scaife, Adult and Continuing Learning, Welsh Government
Richard Spear, Careers Wales
Mandy Sprague, Caerphilly County Borough Council
Huw Thomas, Department for Work and Pensions

Loneliness and Isolation

Sally Rivers (Chair), Royal Voluntary Service

Natalie Avery, Department for Health and Social Services, Welsh Government

Vanessa Burholt, Older People and Ageing Research and Development Network (OPAN Cymru)

Laura Ferguson, Campaign to End Loneliness

Jeff Hawkins, Age Connects Cardiff and Vale

Sandra Jones, Denbighshire County Council

Lisa Kenny, British Red Cross

Andrea Nicholas-Jones, Welsh Government

Rhian Webber, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council

Heneiddio'n Dda yng Nghymru

Ageing Well in Wales

Rhaglen bartneriaeth ar gyfer gweithredu ar y cyd ar draws Cymru ac yn Ewrop

A partnership programme for collaborative action across Wales and in Europe

