

# MEATH

## Age Friendly Strategy 2023–2028



# Contents

Foreword	2
Welcome Message	4
Introduction	5
Setting the Context	7
What the Older Person told us	17
Summary Profile of County Meath	26
Key Highlights of Achievements Meath Age Friendly Strategy 2017–2022	27
Public Sector Duty	30
Implementation, Monitoring and Review	34
<b>Theme 1</b>	Outdoor Spaces and Buildings 36
<b>Theme 2</b>	Transportation 38
<b>Theme 3</b>	Housing 40
<b>Theme 4</b>	Respect and Social Inclusion 42
<b>Theme 5</b>	Social Participation 44
<b>Theme 6</b>	Communication and Information 46
<b>Theme 7</b>	Civic Participation and Employment 48
<b>Theme 8</b>	Community Support and Health Services 51



# Foreword



As Chief Executive of Meath County Council and member of the Meath Age Friendly alliance it gives me great pleasure to present the 3rd Meath Age Friendly Strategy. This strategy reflects the progress made to date and what our Older Persons said, in making Meath an Age Friendly County. All this evidence has been collated and developed collaboratively with our alliance partners in identifying how we intend to achieve the actions we have committed to, in the strategy.

As life expectancy increases, the need to ensure that our county becomes a great place in which to grow old in is increasing too. Therefore, we must be ready to face the challenges that this will bring to society. We will continue to adapt and respond to the changing needs and endeavour to provide supports where needed.

It is recognised that where we live, the physical, social and cultural environment impacts hugely on how we live. An Age Friendly county is a place where more older persons can stay living in their own homes and communities, lead healthy and active lives, go where they want to and be valued contributors to their communities.

Meath County Council together with its partners on the Age Friendly alliance is committed to empowering and participating in the continued development of their communities both rural and urban. Often it is the very simple things that will improve the quality of life for everyone, be it a secure neighbourhood or accessible streets and buildings. These simple things benefit a whole community both young and old.

This strategy is the culmination of a detailed consultation process that brought older people in Meath and the key service providers to identify how we can continue to make

Meath a great place to live, work, enjoy life and grow older. With this vision and ambition we can all work together across our towns, villages and neighbourhoods.

I want to thank the chair of the Age Friendly alliance, Michael Finnegan, members of the alliance and the Age Friendly Programme Manager Ms Áine Bird for their continued support and assistance in bringing together this 3rd strategy for Meath.

Finally, I want to pay tribute to Dr Pat Bogue, Broadmore Research & Consulting who passed away suddenly during the preparation of this strategy and sadly did not get to finish the plan.

*Jackie Maguire, Chief Executive, Meath County Council*

# Welcome Message

from the Older Persons Council



As Chairperson of Meath Older Persons Council, I am delighted to be involved with this 3rd Strategy.

As the Age Friendly programme is a National Programme and supported by Government departments, Older People's Councils are a core part of the implementation infrastructure of the Age Friendly programme. They are one of the reasons why the programme has been so successful across the country.

It is necessary to listen to the citizens, as we are an important mechanism to bring the voice of the older citizen to the decision-making table of the Meath Age Friendly alliance, where older people's representatives sit as equal partners with other agencies. The Age Friendly Programme emphasises the value of our older community, and the contribution older people make to wider society, through our knowledge, life experience, volunteering and participation.

As Chairperson, I would like to thank everyone for your tireless work supporting the older population. Age Friendly means age friendly across the life-course, and the work you are doing through your local groups benefits everyone in the community from young to old.

As people are living longer and healthier lives, we need to ensure our county is a great place to grow old in too. It is important that we continue to support the Age Friendly Programme by participating in your Older Persons Council (OPC) and have your voice heard.

I would like to thank my fellow members of the Meath Age Friendly Alliance and the Older Persons across the County for their contribution to this strategy and to Áine Bird, Meath Age Friendly Programme manager in the preparation of this plan.

*Ita Healy, Chairperson, Meath Older Persons Council*

# Introduction



This is the 3rd Age Friendly strategy for Meath and builds on the previous strategies. The Age Friendly county programme was launched in 2011 and operated under two strategies which began in 2012. The programme is hosted under the leadership of Meath County Council Chief Executive Jackie Maguire, is supported by Age Friendly Ireland and is aligned to the eight domains of the World Health Organisation's Age Friendly Cities and Communities Framework.

The Age Friendly cities and counties programme is now active in all 31 local authorities in Ireland, with Ireland becoming the first country in the world achieving and being affiliated to the World Health Organisation Global Age Friendly Network making our country a truly great place to grow old in.

The programme continues to ensure that older people play a valuable role in shaping their communities by giving them a voice to participate in the decision-making process and being responsive to their suggestions.

This strategy continues to give solution focused commitments to deliver and improve key areas of infrastructure, transportation, services, information and a range of ambitious initiatives in response to older people's issues that will greatly enhance their lives over the coming years.

The strategy has been informed by the collective response of Meath Age Friendly alliance in consultation with older people and stakeholders in Meath.

Each Age Friendly alliance partner has given commitments to work together and improve the quality of life of the current population of older people in Meath and create a safe and healthy environment to live in.

An Age Friendly county is a county that recognises the great diversity among older people and promotes their inclusion in all areas of community life. It is a county that respects their decisions and lifestyle choices and anticipates and responds to related needs and preferences.

It recognises that if you design with an older person in mind you will universally support people of all ages and build a sustainable county for all.

*“Design for the young and you exclude the old, design for the old and you include everybody”*



OPC Event, Ardboyne Hotel. L to R: Áine Bird, Age Friendly Meath Programme Manager, Cathaoirleach Meath County Council, Councillor Nick Killian, Chairperson Older Persons Council, Ita Healy.

# Setting the Context



## International

Population ageing is evident in global population statistics which show a demographic trend that signifies an increasing proportion of older people in the population in almost every country of the world.

## World Health Organisation's Global Age Friendly Programme

In response to population ageing at a global level the World Health Organization's (WHO) global Age Friendly programme was established in 2007. The aim on this programme is to encourage countries all over the world to become age friendly - to become places which encourage active ageing by optimising opportunities for people to live healthily, to feel secure and to have their participation in society enabled, overall enhancing quality of life as people age.

The WHO recognises that active ageing is dependent on "a variety of influences or determinants that surround individuals, families and nations. They include material conditions as well as social factors that affect individual types of behaviour and feelings. All of these factors, and the interaction between them, play an important role in affecting how well individuals age".

Reflecting on each of the determinants of active ageing, the World Health Organisation developed a framework of eight themes which encompass the elements within a city/county's structures, environment, services and policies which determine how age-friendly a place is. The themes are outlined in the diagram overleaf.





## National Context

The National Positive Ageing Strategy 2013 formally recognises, at a national level, the need for all sectors of society to plan properly for individual and population ageing in Ireland. The visions of the National Positive Ageing Strategy are as follows:

“Ireland will be a society for all ages that celebrates and prepares properly for individual and population ageing. It will enable and support all ages and older people to enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential. It will promote and respect older people’s engagement in economic, social, cultural, community and

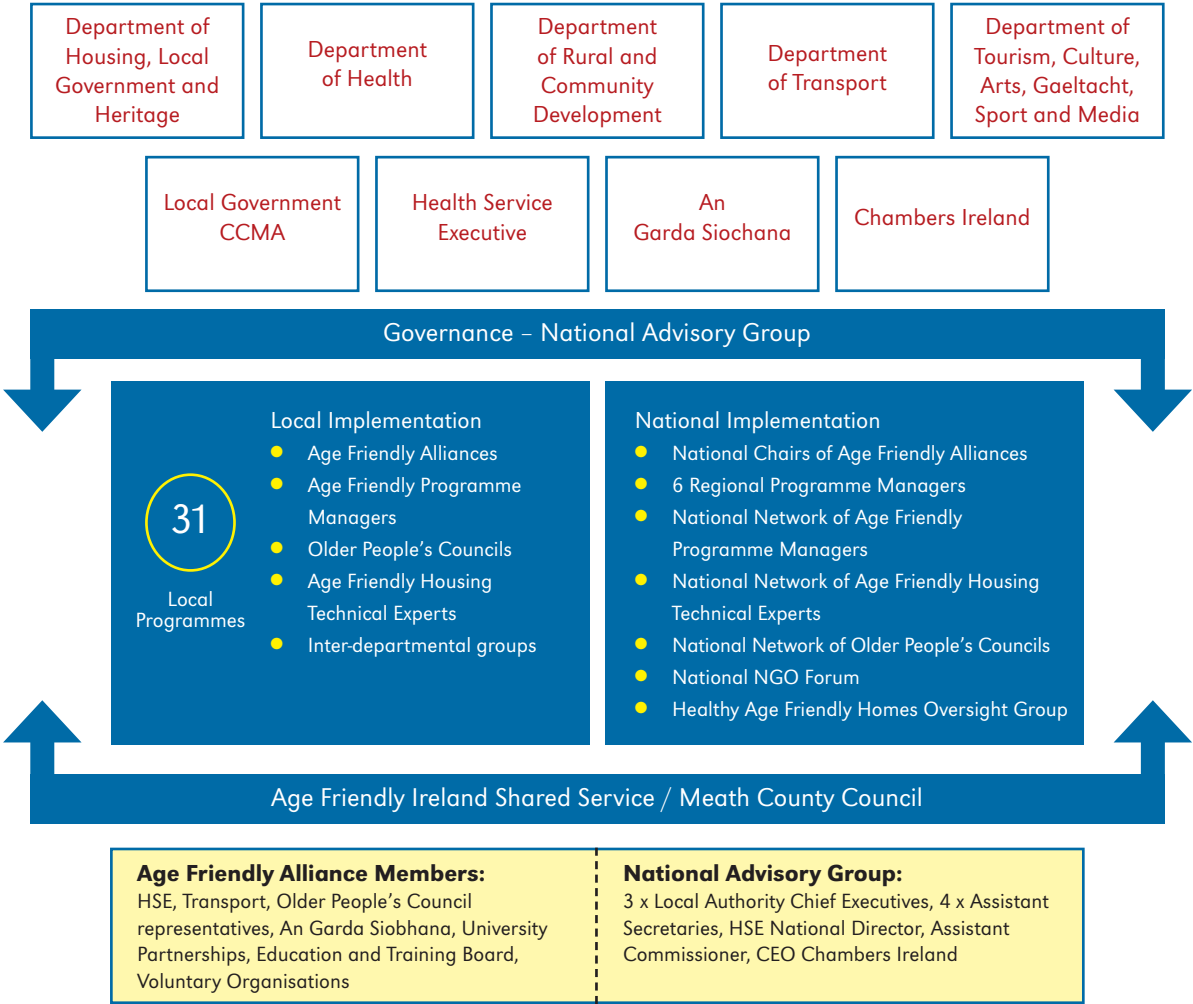
family life, and foster better solidarity between generations. It will be a society in which the equality, independence, participation, care, self-fulfilment and dignity of older people are pursued at all times.”

Ireland’s population has been getting steadily older since the 1980s. The average life expectancy for men in Ireland (2016 census) is 79.3 years and for women is 83.3 years, and life expectancy at the age of 65 is rising faster here than anywhere else in the EU. By 2051 the average life expectancy for males is 85.6 years with females averaged at 88.3 years. While this is a huge triumph of medicine, the challenge for society is to ensure that this is not just expansion of life years, but expansion of quality life years.

This trend is set to continue, so it is crucial now to plan and prepare for the needs of greater numbers of older people in our communities. The national Age Friendly Programme in Ireland is set in the context of the World Health Organisation’s global Age Friendly movement. Ireland’s Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme has been leading internationally in rolling out the programme. In April 2019, Ireland became the first country in the world to have full membership with all 31 Local Authorities participating in rolling out the Age Friendly Programme. This was formally recognised in December 2019 with all 31 Local Authorities being presented with charters by the WHO and An Taoiseach in recognition of Ireland’s work in delivering on the aims and ambitions of the WHO Global Network of Age Friendly Cities and Communities, and to formally acknowledge the membership of each local authority led Age Friendly Programme in Ireland to this network.

## **Age Friendly Ireland**

The national Age Friendly Programme is operated by Age Friendly Ireland which is a shared service of local government hosted by Meath County Council. The shared



service manages the National Age Friendly Programme, affiliated to the World Health Organization's Age Friendly Cities and Communities Network. The national programme is operated through a team-based framework of 31 local Age Friendly Programmes hosted in local government.

The National Age Friendly Shared Service supports cities, counties, towns, villages and rural communities across Ireland to prepare for the rapid ageing of our population by paying increased attention to the environmental, economic and social factors that influence the health and well-being of older adults.

Age Friendly Programmes work to provide walkable streets, housing and transportation options, access to key services and opportunities for older people to participate in community activities. By doing so, these communities are better equipped to become great places, and even lifelong homes, for people of all ages.

Local Age Friendly Programmes are informed by a positive ageing perspective and seek to enhance and improve the lives of older people across the country by giving them a voice in the decision-making processes that could affect their ability to live full and active lives. Initiatives focus on areas such as housing, transport, caregiving, community engagement, volunteering, social inclusion and combating isolation among older citizens.

## **Age Friendly Meath Programme**

Each local Age Friendly Programme operates with the same structure which relies on an active Older People's Council, an Age Friendly Alliance, an Age Friendly Programme Manager, an Age Friendly Housing Technical Advisor, an interdepartmental group within the local authority and an Age Friendly Ambassador to promote the programme.

The local Age Friendly alliance is a high-level cross-sectoral group and is chaired independently. The member agencies of the alliance form a strategic partnership to develop and oversee the Age Friendly strategy.

**Alliance members representing the following agencies:**

Chairperson	Meath County Council
Chief Executive	Meath County Council
Director of Service	Meath County Council
Senior Executive Officer	Meath County Council
Councillor	Meath County Council
Manager Older Persons	Health Service Executive
Adult Education Officer	Louth Meath Education Board
Chief Executive Officer	Meath Partnership
Older Persons Council	Chairperson
An Garda Síochána	Superintendent
An Garda Síochána	Crime Prevention Officer
Chief Executive Officer	3rd Age Foundation
Chief Executive Officer	Flexibus, Rural Link

The Alliance has made significant progress in improving key areas of infrastructure, services, and communication for older people in Meath. Consultation with older people in development of age friendly strategies ensure that actions undertaken are aimed at

addressing issues affecting older people. Since 2012, the Meath Age Friendly Alliance has implemented two Age Friendly strategies.

**The Older People's Council** is a representative group of older people, established by a Local authority as part of the local age friendly programme. The Older People's Council is a two-tier structure with an elected executive committee and wide membership base. Older People's Councils identify priority areas of need, raise issues of importance, influence the



OPC Event, Ardboyne Hotel.

decision-making process of the local Age Friendly Programme, and participate in national level structures. The key purpose of the Older Peoples' Council is to provide the authentic voice of older people representing the diversity that exists among our ageing population. Older People's Council representatives are key collaborators and stakeholders who co-design the actions and objectives of the Age Friendly Strategy. In Meath a new older person's council is being set up through the Age Friendly programme as previously the Alliance collaborated with an independent older person's committee.

OPC Event, Ardboyne Hotel.



## Outcomes-based planning

The Age Friendly alliance will seek to ensure that this strategy achieves measurable outcomes for older people that demonstrate improvements in their quality of life. To guide us, we will use an outcomes-based planning approach based on the framework developed by Age Friendly Ireland.

This approach begins with the end in mind and then determines the actions and activities, which will best achieve to that end. By beginning with broad outcomes, it is clear that no one agency can improve these outcomes, that progress requires various agencies to continue to work collaboratively to improve the lives of older people.

This approach brings the needs of older adult's right to the core of the process and ensures their views, opinions and experiences are given serious consideration in the planning process used by the alliance.

Outcomes for older persons in this context will mean that older persons:

- Are valued and have opportunities to enhance the communities they live in.
- Have opportunities for civic, social and economic participation.
- Are supported to stay living in their own homes and connected to their communities.
- Can lead healthier, longer and active lives.
- Live in places where the social and physical environments are safe when out.
- Can get to where they want to go, when they want to.
- Feel and are safe in their own homes and their communities.
- Have the required information and communications to support them.



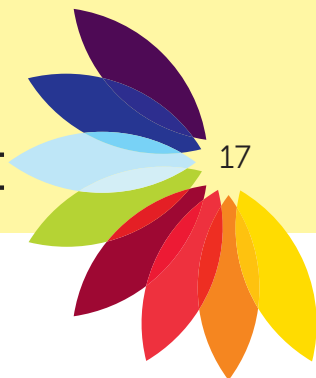
Interagency work is important where policies, strategies and services are based on outcomes which are informed by the needs of older adults and from evidence-based research. Each action will contribute to the achievement of one or more of the above-named outcomes.



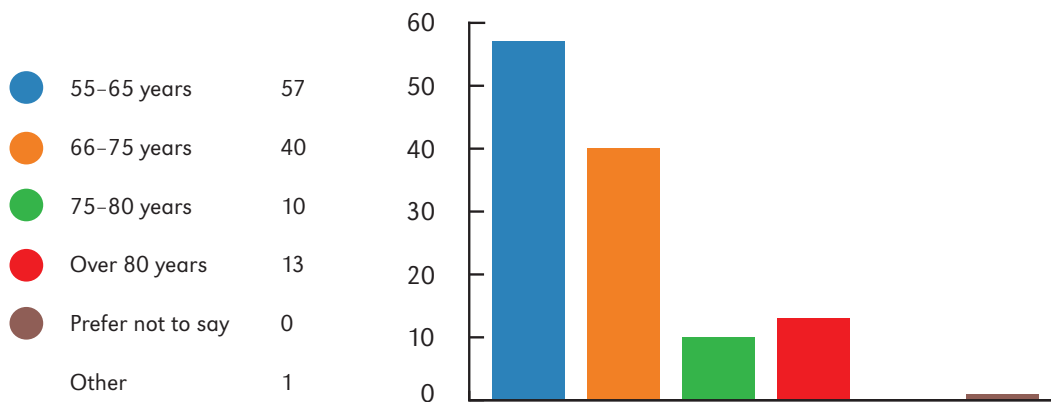
OPC Event, Ardboyne Hotel.

# What the Older Person told us:

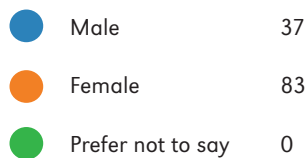
17



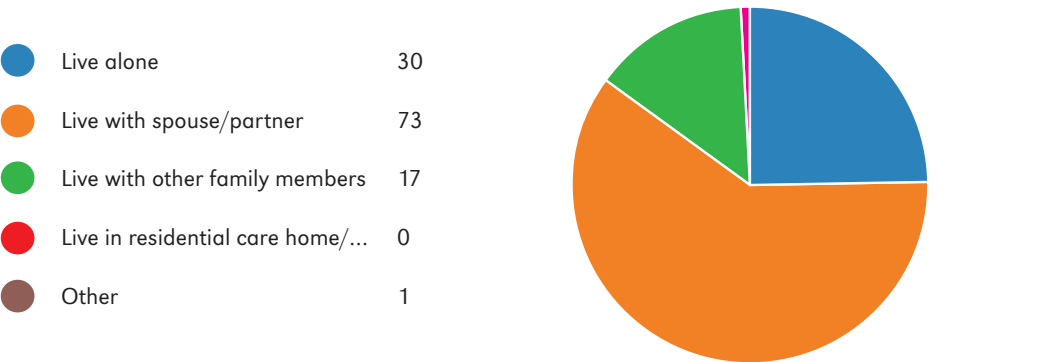
## 1. What age group are you?



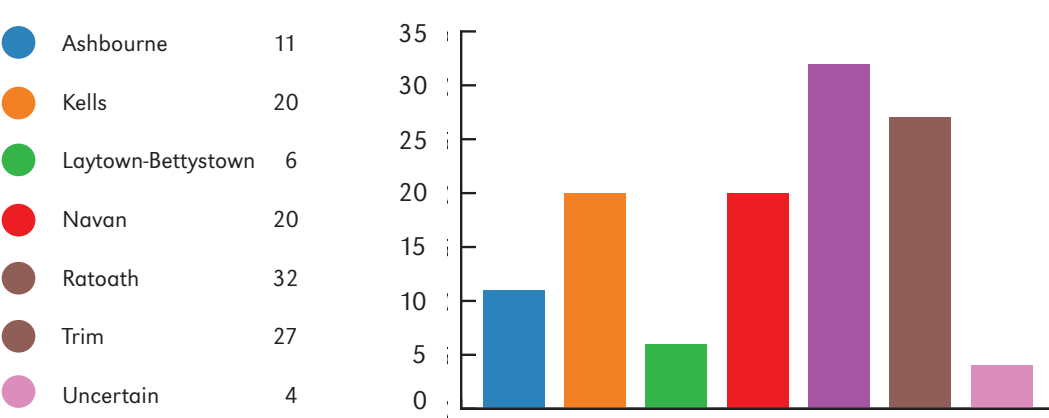
## 2. What gender are you?







3. Which of the following best describes how you live?

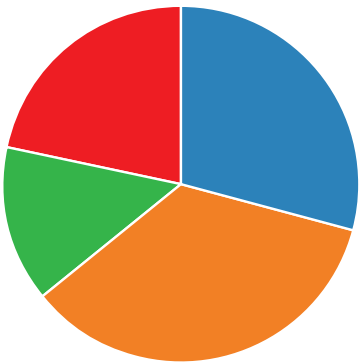


4. In which Municipal District/Electoral Area do you live?

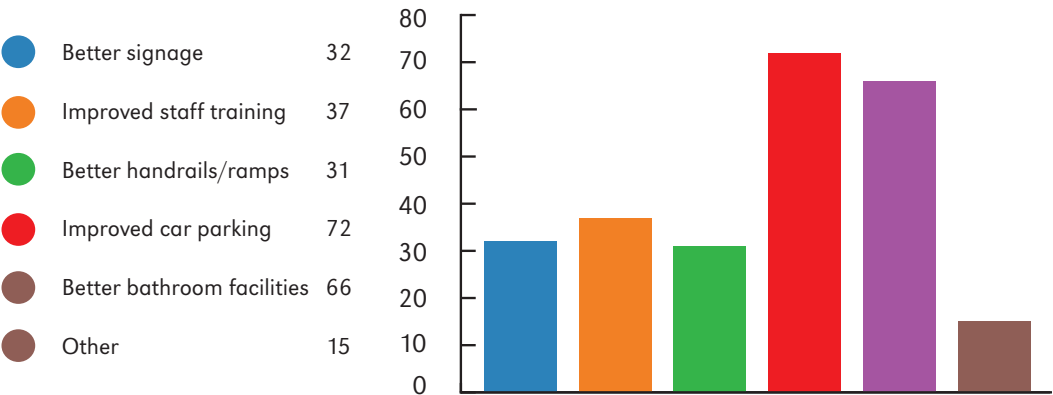


5. In which of the following do you live?

	In a town	35
	In a village	42
	In rural area – relatively built up	17
	In rural area – less built up	26



6. In what ways could local shops and private/public service providers better assist older persons in accessing their services?



7. How could general access to local shops and private/public service providers be improved for older persons in Meath?

90  
Responses

Latest Responses  
*“more ramps and handrails more organised transport”*  
*“better handrails especially for steps”*

8. How could general outdoor facilities/public areas be improved to better meet the needs of older persons?

91  
Responses

Latest Responses  
*“better signage”*  
*“more seating and car parking”*

9. Thinking about your own situation or that of your spouse/partner, what home supports/ assistance do you consider need to be improved?

82  
Responses

Latest Responses  
*“None”*  
*“home care assistants and help as required”*

10. Have you any suggestions for how housing for older persons could be improved? (think about new housing, upgrading of older homes, right sizing etc)

92  
Responses

Latest Responses  
*“better insulation wheelchair accessible doors non-slip flooring handr...”*  
*“single storey houses designated for older persons”*

11. How could public transport be improved for older persons living in Meath?

91  
Responses

Latest Responses  
*"lower step onto public transport more bus stops in rural areas"*  
*"more frequent buses"*

12. How could car parking be improved for older persons living in Meath?

99  
Responses

Latest Responses  
*"more disabled parkings spaces"*  
*"special areas designated for older drivers"*

13. How could olders persons in Meath be encouraged to have more engagement/ involvement in social activities and their local community?

94  
Responses

Latest Responses  
*"Advertising of events and activities. Provide transport to local commu..."*  
*"it would be good to encourage older people to join clubs and keepof..."*

14. Older persons engage in a side range of voluntary activities in Meath, do you have any suggestions for how volunteering among other persons could be further encouraged?

76  
Responses

Latest Responses  
*"Advertising voluntary activities in Supermarkets, local shops and Loc..."*  
*"good idea provided older persons are insured when visiting others"*

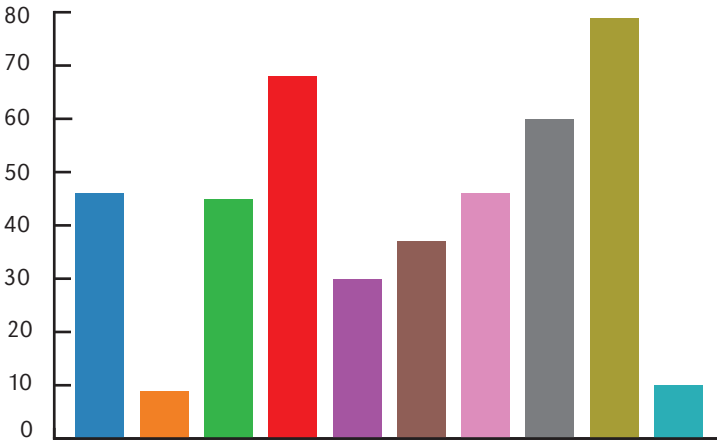
15. Have you any suggestions for how the respect for older persons in Co. Meath could be enhanced?

74  
Responses

Latest Responses  
“Talks in schools (as some younger children are not respectful to elderl...”  
“need respect from others”

16. Which of the following do you use to hear about what’s happening in your area?  
Please select all that are relevant to you

- LM FM 46
- Other Local Radio Stations 9
- Meath Chronicle 45
- Local Parish/ Church Newsletters 68
- Local Notice Boards e.g. Doct... 30
- Email 37
- Text message/WhatsApp 46
- Social Media – Facebook/Insta... 60
- Family/Friends/Neighbours 79
- Other 10

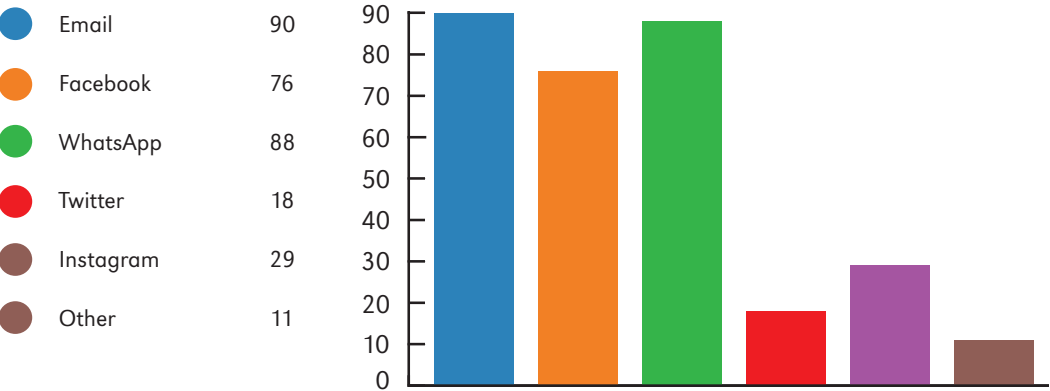


17. How often do you use the internet (on your phone, laptop, computer etc)? (email, talking to family/friends online, zoom calls, looking up information, booking activities etc)

■ Daily
 ■ A few times per week
 ■ Weekly
 ■ Monthly
 ■ Rarely
 ■ Never



18. Which of the following Social Media do you use (at least occassionally)?





19. How could communication and provision of information to older persons in Meath be improved?

79  
Responses

Latest Responses

*"leaflets to hand out to older persons when calling to them in rural or..."*  
*"leaflet drop into houses with information on local events"*

20. Have you any suggestions for how health services (hospitals, doctors, public health nurses, out-patients) could be improved to better meet the needs of older persons?

82  
Responses

Latest Responses

*"A Doctor service in Enfield"*  
*"waiting time in A & E is too long for older persons bus stops at medic..."*  
*"maintain access to ICU and emergency services in local hospitals"*

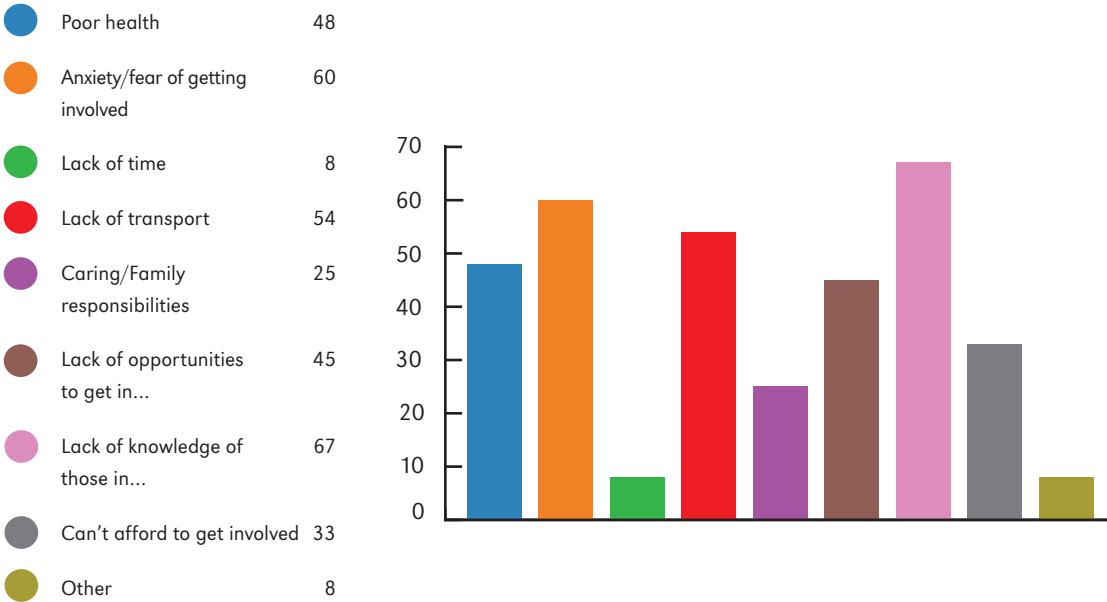
21. Are there other aspects of community supports which could be improved to enhance the lives of older persons in Meath?

60  
Responses

Latest Responses

*"More free transport for older people in rural areas. List of older peop..."*  
*"help older persons with their shopping"*

22. What are the main barriers to the more active involvement of older persons in your idea?



23. Have you any further suggestions or comments on services/supports/issues which should be considered in the development of the Meath Age Friendly Strategy?

51  
Responses

Latest Responses

*"There is a major difficulty with banking facilities and on line is not us..."*  
*"more home visits when required more carers/nurses/helpers"*

# Summary

## Profile of County Meath

The census is normally held every five years however it was postponed in 2021, due to the Covid pandemic. The Central Statistics Office (CSO) has released preliminary figures and recorded the population in the state as being 5,123,536 which is an increase of 361,671 people or 8% on the 2016 population of 4,761,865.

The overall population increase is made up of two components – (a) natural increase which is the difference between total births and deaths (b) net migration, the difference between number of people immigrating and emigrating.

There was a natural increase in the state population of 171,338 as births exceeded deaths over the six years since the last census in 2016 which accounts for 47%. An estimated net migration figure of 190,333 was recorded which accounts for 53% of the population increase.

Meath recorded a population of 220,296 which is a significant increase of 13% or 25,252 people which is above the national average of 8%. Meath reported a high birth to deaths ratio of 2.77 which tends to indicate a younger age profile. The net migration for Meath was 14,921 people which is 59% of the population which is in excess of the national average of 53%.

# Key Highlights of Achievements



## Meath Age Friendly Strategy 2017–2022

- Sean Boylan appointed as the Age Friendly Ambassador
- Hosted the National Older Persons convention in Trim in May 2022
- Commenced the establishment of an Older Persons Council
- Co-ordinated and hosted an Age Friendly awareness event for Older Persons in November 2022
- Walkability audits completed in several towns including Trim, Kells, Enfield & Summerhill
- Walkability audit of Athboy completed with a focus on people with cognitive impairment and dementia in collaboration Dementia Understand Together national office.
- Age Friendly Business training rolled out to businesses throughout the county
- An increase in bus stops, seating, shelters, and bus information at bus stops
- Age Friendly parking spaces installed at relevant locations such as banks, Post Offices
- Installation of seating and public lighting along walking routes
- Increase of cycle routes and the provision of cycle stands.
- Installation of outdoor gym equipment in parks and along walking routes
- Availability of Community sensory gardens with picnic areas
- Buildings and spaces becoming more accessible with ramps and hand rails
- Public Realm training rolled out to staff to include planners, clerk of works, engineers
- New plans including County Development Plan, Public Realm plans, Local Economic Community Plan (LECP) has Age Friendly components included.

- Older persons were consulted locally in the preparation of the County Development Plan, LECP, Public Realm Plans, Healthy Ireland strategy, Age Friendly initiatives along with national plans.
- Age Friendly is included as a category in the Pride of Place competition and grant schemes.
- The completion of intergenerational programmes including students at Eureka school teaching older persons to use smart phones. Purls of Wisdom knitting project using the colours of the changing climate to knit blankets.
- The ACORN tablet designed and tested by older persons.
- ACORN tablets distributed to several Nursing Homes in the County.
- All newly refurbished libraries are Age Friendly
- The Age Friendly Library Ambassador nominated is Ita Healy OPC chairperson
- Building and promotion of Age Friendly homes to include downsizing.
- JAM Card (Just A Minute) training completed by frontline staff to build awareness and address barriers for people with learning difficulties and communication barriers
- Rural Local Link continue to review services and identify gaps for new routes.
- Gardaí continued to engage with Older Persons groups providing information on crime prevention and security
- Community Guards visited isolated, vulnerable older persons throughout the county
- Meath Sports Partnership include specific activities for older persons such as chair yoga, mature movers

- The Arts Department hosted Teas, Chats and Tunes in Nursing homes across the county.
- Age Friendly collaborated with agencies as part of the community response during the pandemic.



L to R: Mags, Bridie and Ita with Michael Ring TD – discussing the new ACORN tablet launched for Older Persons.

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Acts require public bodies to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, promote equality and protect human rights of service users, staff, and policy beneficiaries across the implementation of all their functions.

In implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty, this Strategy has been developed within, and checked against, the parameters of the Meath County Council Equality and Human Rights Values Statement and the Assessment of Equality and Human Rights Issues as relevant to the functions addressed by the Strategy.

The identified equality and human rights issues pertinent to this Strategy, drawn from the Assessment of Equality and Human Rights Issues, are set out and categorised under the equality and human rights values of Dignity, Inclusion, Social Justice, Democracy and Autonomy as set out and defined in the Values Statement.

**Dignity** is about the human worth and integrity of all individuals, respect and equal treatment for all regardless of difference, and being person centred.

**Statement of Priority:** Meath County Council works to be a champion and exemplar for, and set a standard in, creating an environment of quality relationships based on human worth and individual integrity, both at community level and in its workplace.

## Relevant Equality & Human Rights Issues:

- Stereotypes, stigma, hate speech, and hate crime across the identified groups.
- Discrimination in service provision across the identified groups.
- Violence and intimidation, including gender-based violence, abuse of older people and fears and experiences of violence in public spaces and in particular for LGBTI+ older people.

**Inclusion** is about integration and recognition of difference. It concerns community, social cohesion, flexibility in adapting to the diversity of needs, and securing a focus on the most excluded.

**Statement of Priority:** Meath County Council works to advance more inclusive communities and workplace, encouraging and enabling the participation of groups experiencing inequality.

**Relevant Equality & Human Rights Issues:**

- Isolation, vulnerability, loneliness, and fear of crime.
- Lack of universal design for buildings and public spaces and IT infrastructure.
- Lack of attention to the specific needs of people in the identified groups.

**Social Justice** is about the elimination of poverty and the equal distribution of resources, such as employment and public goods and services. It concerns quality of life, wellbeing, and opportunities to participate fully in society.

**Statement of Priority:** Meath County Council strives to provide opportunities and achieve outcomes for a diversity of groups in its employment and from its service provision, and to advance fair and just relations in the wider society.

**Relevant Equality & Human Rights Issues:**

- Housing insecurity, poor quality housing conditions, access barriers due to housing design or lack of adaptation, and lack of appropriate accommodation, including



lack of culturally appropriate accommodation, and barriers to transition from and out of direct provision into independent living.

- Poverty and high risk of poverty, across the identified groups and in identified areas of deprivation including fuel poverty.
- Participation barriers due to digital literacy issues, digital access issues across the identified groups.

**Democracy** is about voice, having a say, being heard, and contributing to decision-making. It concerns transparency, accountability, and empowerment. It includes the choice to speak up or not to do so.

**Statement of Priority:** Meath County Council works to promote and encourage strong community leadership and organisation, and to empower the individual and collective voice for a diversity of groups.

#### **Relevant Equality & Human Rights Issues:**

- Lack of opportunities to voice perspectives and lack of influence on decision-making across the identified groups.
- Absence of the voice of organisations of people from within the identified groups in consultation and decision-making fora.

**Autonomy** is about self-determination and having and making choices. It includes the right to act in one's own interests, free from coercion, having regard to the rights of others.

**Statement of Priority:** Meath County Council works to ensure groups experiencing inequality have meaningful choices based on real options, in service provision and employment, within the bounds of available resources.

### Relevant Equality & Human Rights Issues:

- Absence of or limited options made available in services.
- Congregated settings, direct provision, and forms of institutional care that limit choices and independence
- The above has been used to include actions that address these issues to implement the duty.



Philip Hogan CEO Clifffrun Media donating an ACORN Tablet to Lucy Grillet, Proprietor of St Elizabeths Nursing Home, Athboy during Covid.

# Implementation,

## Monitoring and Review

This Strategy sets out the continued development of Meath as an Age Friendly County where the inclusion and diversity of older people is promoted, valued and actively encouraged. For the strategy to be successful, it should be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure progress and actions are being achieved.

Lead agencies have committed to implementing the actions in this strategy and will work in collaboration to ensure their delivery. An annual implementation plan will be prepared at the start of each year which will identify agencies, outputs and timeframes for achievement of actions.

Implementation will be monitored by way of updates by lead agencies at quarterly meetings of the Meath Age Friendly Alliance. The Alliance will engage with the Older Persons and listen to their ideas and concerns and utilise this information in the development and evaluation of services to ensure that the needs of the Older Persons are being met.

An annual progress report will be compiled outlining progress made each year of the strategy.



# Theme 1

## Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	2023	2024–2028
1.	Continue walkability audits in towns and public buildings and consider any accessibility issues in line with universal design guidelines.	MCC Community	OPC/Alliance /Dementia service	Minimum One walkability audit of a town	Minimum of one audit per year.
2.	Ensure public parks are provided with accessible paths and seating at regular intervals in areas with heavy footfall in line with Universal Design Guidelines.	Transportation/ MD's	OPC/ Community	annually	annually
3.	Upgrade Public lighting in public spaces where necessary so that older persons can feel safer when out to elevate fear of violence, intimidation & abuse of older persons.	MCC Public Lighting	MD's	annually	annually

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partner Agency</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024–2028</b>
4.	All future public realm plans will include universal design guidelines and provide Older Persons the opportunity to input into these.	MCC Planning/ Transportation	OPC/HSE/ AGS/Alliance	Identify plans for input	Identify plans
5.	Support ongoing training for staff involved in designing and implementing public realm projects.	Age Friendly Ireland	Community / HR	One training session	Annual training session.
6.	To encourage more businesses to sign up to the Age Friendly Business recognition scheme where they will receive training in becoming an age aware business to reduce discrimination & harassment.	Age Friendly Ireland/ Community	OPC/ LEO/ Chambers	Minimum One town to receive training and roll out scheme.	Minimum of one town per year.

# Theme 2

Transportation					
	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	2023	2024–2028
1.	To increase and upgrade bus stops and bus shelters with seating in suitable locations to provide for safer and more secure waiting environment to alleviate fear of violence, intimidation, and stereotyping	MCC Transportation	Flexibus/NTA/OPC	annually	Identify locations for upgrades
2.	To promote active and sustainable travel by ensuring there is accessible walking routes, cycle lanes and cycle stands in safe and convenient locations.	MCC Sustainable Travel	MCC Transportation/NTA	annually	Identify locations to promote

	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	2023	2024–2028
3.	Increase the number of Age Friendly Parking spaces close to essential services such as Post Office, Pharmacy and promote awareness of these. Encourage supermarkets and shopping centers to install in their car parks.	MCC Community	MCC MD's & transportation/ Businesses/ OPC	Two AF spaces in each Municipal District.	Identify locations to install parking spaces in each MD
4.	Support public transport providers to improve links between the Local link Service and Public Transport and continue to highlight the central role that transport plays in the connectivity of older persons.	Flexibus	NTA/Alliance/ OPC/HSE	Identify a route to support	Identify routes annually to support and promote.



# Theme 3

## Housing

	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	2023	2024–2028
1.	Agencies need to develop a shared focus and collaborate to take steps to make the provision of supports which aim to ‘keep people of all abilities and backgrounds living in their own homes for as long as possible’ to provide options to downsize and retrofit houses.	MCC Housing/ AF technical adviser	AF Alliance	Identify an area to develop and promote with other agencies.	Identify supports with agencies to develop and promote.
2.	Explore and encourage private developers to prioritise the inclusion of Age Friendly housing and single storey units in their developments.	MCC planning / AF technical adviser	MCC housing	To encourage developers to include Age Friendly housing in plans.	Promotion of Age Friendly houses annually.

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partner Agency</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024–2028</b>
3.	Local authority and agencies to work to increase the provision of age friendly housing in the county. Solutions need to be found for both local authority tenants and private homeowners.	MCC housing/ planning	Voluntary Housing Agencies	Increase provision of age friendly houses.	Continue to provide Age Friendly housing annually
4.	To liaise with the Healthy Homes Co-ordinator to support and assist older persons in accessing services so that they can remain living at home.	AFI, AF alliance	HSE, MCC housing, MCC community	To promote the Healthy Homes Co-ordinator role	Continue to promote the Healthy Homes co-ordinator
5.	Collaboration to ensure older persons homes benefit from energy retrofits, modifications, and use of technology.	AF alliance	OPC/SEAI/ MCC climate action section	To identify and promote ways with the agencies how older persons can benefit.	Promotion annually

# Theme 4

## Social Participation

	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	2023	2024–2028
1.	Support Befriending to encourage and support older people to engage in more activities with a focus on including the most vulnerable and isolated.	3rd Age / Meath Partnership	Alliance / OPC	Identify older persons to support and engage with.	Engagement and support of older persons annually.
2.	Increase links with active retirement groups and care homes to disseminate information and work with the Public Participation Network to ensure the voice of the older persons is represented on specific groups.	MCC community	PPN/OPC/ Alliance	Identify groups to engage and disseminate information with.	Continue to identify new/ existing groups to engage with annually.
3.	Promote initiatives in active living and healthy lifestyles in local community hubs in collaboration with the Healthy Meath coordinator and Local Sports Partnership.	HSE	Healthy Meath coordinator/ Local Sports partnership/ OPC	Roll out 2 initiatives in hubs	Roll out annual initiatives in hub

	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	2023	2024–2028
4.	Identify opportunities to develop Intergenerational initiatives between older and younger, to include traveller, LGBTI, disabled and ethnic minority groups to reduce isolation, sharing of skills, learning and to expand the range of options and make available to older persons.	Alliance	OPC/PPN/ Schools/MCC community/ HSE Social Inclusion officer	1 interg- enerational initiative	Annual initiatives
5.	The library service provides a wide range of supports, services for older persons. To encourage organisations to support older persons in accessing and utilising the library resources.	Alliance	OPC/Library	Promotion of Library services	Annual promotion of services

# Theme 5

## Respect and Social Inclusion

	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	2023	2024–2028
1.	Support to engage and encourage the involvement of older people from the ethnic minority, LGBTI+, persons with disabilities & carers, travellers to participate in representative structures and their community.	PPN / Meath Partnership/ 3rd Age	Alliance/ Flexibus/ HSE Social Inclusion officer/OPC	Encourage and support more older persons from diverse back-grounds	Continue annually to support more older persons from diverse backgrounds.
2.	Need to build the awareness of the function of the Older Persons Council and to proactively engage with organisations and care homes to promote the OPC and encourage membership.	MCC community/ OPC	Alliance	Identify groups to engage with to build awareness of the OPC and its function.	Continue annually to engage with groups and build awareness of OPC.
3.	Work with Meath Dementia Adviser in becoming more dementia friendly. HSE to host local events for general information and updating on key developments for older persons.	HSE	Dementia Unit/Alliance/ OPC	One event	Host an event annually.

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partner Agency</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024–2028</b>
4.	To undertake an assessment of the factors which contribute to isolation including poverty, health, mobility, financial, transport, confidence, geographic and consider how to address the findings.	Alliance	HSE/Flexibus/ AGS/3rd Age/ Meath Partnership	Assessment carried out.	Support the findings of the assessment and consider how to address these.
5.	To ensure that Nursing Homes and residential care residents are targeted for involvement in decision making and provided with appropriate opportunities for engaging with them even in a virtual/ online format. Given the possible limited resource, there may a potential role for volunteers or other organisations to support engagement.	HSE	Alliance/ Private Nursing Homes/ Volunteer Centre	Host an event to engage with Nursing homes both public and private.	Annual engagement with Nursing homes.

# Theme 6

## Civic Participation and Employment

	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	2023	2024–2028
1.	A challenge for older persons is carrying out routine tasks around the household/garden. Seek volunteers or a community worker scheme that can support older persons with the maintenance of basic tasks.	Meath Partnership	Alliance	Scheme in place	Continue with the scheme annually.
2.	Ensure representative structures engage travellers, LGBTI+, persons with disabilities & carers, ethnic minority, persons in care homes, to support, encourage and facilitate their participation and to represent the views of older people through all available forums.	Alliance/ OPC	Community/ PPN	Older persons supported to participate and engage in representative structures.	Continue annually to encourage older persons to engage in representative structures.

	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	2023	2024–2028
3.	An annual series of Crime Prevention events to take place by An Garda Síochána to inform older persons on staying safe in their homes & communities, addressing fear of violence & intimidation & abuse of older persons.	An Garda Síochána	Alliance/OPC	One event	Annual crime prevention events.
4.	To recognise the contribution of older persons to society by highlighting and showcasing their achievements such as seeking change on how banks operate/setting up helpline dedicated to older persons. This may encourage other older people to become more involved in their communities or engage with the services.	OPC/ Community	Alliance	Showcase event	Annual show case event of achievements by OPC.



## Communication and Information

	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	2023	2024–2028
1.	Reinvigorate the age friendly message to ensure all service providers including local authority, community and voluntary groups and businesses are implementing age friendly policies to address discrimination & stereotyping.	MCC community	Alliance/ OPC/PPN/ businesses	To communicate information on Age Friendly.	Continue to communicate information on Age Friendly annually.
2.	Develop and implement a proactive communication programme for keeping older persons informed on services and supports available to them. To consider targeting family members or sharing information through schools.	Alliance	PPN/HSE ICPOP/ Schools	To develop a communication programme.	Communicate annually on services and supports available to older persons.

	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	2023	2024–2028
3.	Promote information on safety and security whilst using digital platforms. Review the approach of communicating with older persons in terms of the source of information it's delivery and effectiveness on addressing discrimination and elder abuse.	MCC Broadband/ IT/ Community	Alliance/ OPC/PPN	Promotion of safety information using digital methods and its effectiveness.	Annual promotion of use of digital methods
4.	To utilise Digital hubs which are being developed across the county for the engagement of older people with ICT but also a range of related activities such as training and social activities.	Alliance	Healthy Meath / LMETB/ Local sports partnership/ Meath Partnership/ PPN/OPC	Support usage of digital hubs for activities to engage older persons.	Continue using digital hubs for engagement with older persons.

	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	2023	2024–2028
5.	Look at utilizing local radio/media for communicating Age Friendly updates by the Older Persons Committee.	OPC/ Community	Alliance	OPC to link in with an LMFM show	Support OPC in utilising local media in communicating awareness of Age Friendly.



Members of Meath Age Friendly Alliance.

# Theme 8

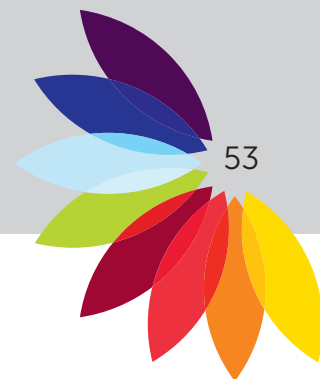
51



Community Support and Health Services					
	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	2023	2024–2028
1.	Support and work with the HSE Integrated Care Programme for Older Persons (ICPOP) by the promotion of information and communication on health and wellbeing supports and resources available to travellers, LGBTI+, Disabled persons & carers, ethnic minorities.	HSE	MCC community	Promote and communicate supports and resources available older persons.	Continue to communicate supports available annually.
2.	Collaborate with other organisations in areas such as the funding for supports such as lights/alarms which will allow for wider circulation to older persons.	Alliance	Government Depts/ community	Engage with agencies to seek funding where required for supports.	Continue to seek funding through agencies for necessary supports

	Action	Lead Agency	Partner Agency	2023	2024–2028
3.	Organisations/ agencies need further collaboration to create awareness of each other's services/ supports and changes in these.	Alliance	OPC/PPN/ community	Engage with organisations to create awareness of services/ supports	Annual engagement and awareness of each other's services
4.	Many schemes involve a complex application process. Older persons need support through this process whereby they get guidance if necessary. Organisations/ agencies should provide the supports around the process.	Alliance	OPC	Assist and support older persons with an application process.	Continue to support older persons with complex processes.
5.	Develop the 'tea, chats, and tunes' initiative to provide for engagement between residential care residents and their families and friends.	MCC Arts Office	HSE/Nursing Homes/MCC community. Music & Health Ireland	Develop and roll out the initiative in care homes.	Annual initiative in care homes

# Abbreviations



53

AF	Age Friendly
AFI	Age Friendly Ireland
AGS	An Garda Síochána
HR	Human Resources
HSE	Health Service Executive
ICPOP	Integrated Care Programme for Older Persons
IT	Information Technology
JAM	Just a Minute
LECP	Local Economic and Community Plan
LEO	Local Enterprise Office
LGBTI	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and Intersex
LMETB	Louth Meath Education Training Board
MCC	Meath County Council
MD's	Municipal Districts
NTA	National Transport Authority
OPC	Older Persons Council
PPN	Public Participation Network
SEAI	Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland
WHO	World Health Organisation



Coordinated and Supported by  
Meath County Council



comhairle chontae na mí  
meath county council



Age Friendly Meath Programme  
T: 046 9097400  
E: [customerservice@meathcoco.ie](mailto:customerservice@meathcoco.ie)  
W: [www.meathcoco.ie](http://www.meathcoco.ie)