Wrexham County Borough
Plan for Older People

Ageing Well in Wrexham 2016-2019

... making Wrexham a great place to grow older

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Foreword and Vision

In Wrexham, we firmly believe that Older People are not only users of health and social care services; they are also people who can contribute to society using their skills and experiences.

They have a continuing contribution to make to the communities in which they live. They may join in or help run local clubs, or be involved in voluntary organisations. Many themselves will be carers. Choice, Dignity and Respect are important to Older People, even if their independence decreases, in various aspects of their lives. Social networks play an important role in maintaining health and well-being and can also minimise demand for services.

Wrexham County Borough Council and its partners are committed to ensuring that all Older People in Wrexham are provided with the opportunities to achieve optimal health, independence and well-being. It is our vision to enable all adults to live the lives they want, achieving their potential to live independently.

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) Act and the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Bill.

We need to embed wellbeing at the heart of public services, driving up the quality of health and social care, protecting and improving community services, standing up for older people at risk of harm and tackling prejudice, inequality and discrimination.

This Plan will deliver against the three overarching outcomes within the Strategy for Older People Phase 3, 2013 – 2023 Living Longer, Ageing Well. The Plan sets out to ensure that all older people in Wrexham have the Financial, Environmental and Social Resources to Age Well. These three focus areas tie in with Wrexham Single Integrated Plan priorities:

- A place where people can live independently and are healthy and active
- A place with strong, resilient and responsible economy
- A place that’s safe and where everyone feels included.

The current challenging financial climate may impact on our ability to fully achieve our outcomes, nevertheless, we are committed to working through partnership to maximise the use of available resources to make our Plan succeed.

This Plan has been amended to take account of comments received during the public consultation.
Introduction

The Strategy for Older People in Wales was launched in 2003.

The Plan emphasises ageing as a positive concept and was developed to address the issues and aspirations of People over 50 living in Wales.

The third phase was launched in May 2013 and sets out the ambition of making Wales a ‘great place to grow old’. This has the wellbeing of the individual older person at its heart, and identifies that to achieve wellbeing an individual needs to secure financial, environmental and social resources. This means ensuring that Older People live in homes and communities that meet their needs and wants; have the ability to participate in their community; feel valued and included, whilst ensuring that future generations of older people are well equipped for later life by encouraging recognition of the changes and demands that may be faced and taking action in preparation.

Further to the wide ranging National Older Peoples Strategy will be the development of an all Wales Ageing Well Plan led by Sarah Rochira, the Older People’s Commissioner for Wales. Launched in October 2014, the Ageing Well in Wales Programme requires action from local and nation government, the NHS, the third sector and Older People themselves.

The aim of the programme is to ensure there is an improvement in the wellbeing of People aged 50+ in Wales through the prevention of ill-health, social isolation and improving independent living. Ageing Well in Wales is a unique partnership programme that will harness local innovation across Wales, engaging with communities, agencies and existing schemes. It will turn local priorities and projects into national strategic action that makes a real difference to older people now and for those who are growing older.

The programme has five priority areas:

1. Age-Friendly Communities
   Age-Friendly Communities will meet the needs of older people, and people of all ages, in individual communities by responding directly to their needs. Communities will be encouraged and enable older people to engage with their surroundings and continue to engage socially within their communities, thereby maintaining their health, independence and wellbeing.

2. Falls Prevention
   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.

3. Dementia Supportive Communities
   By 2021 it is estimated that over 55,000 people in Wales will have dementia. 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.
4. **Opportunities for Learning and Employment**

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 volunteers

5. **Loneliness and Isolation**

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.

This Ageing Well in Wrexham Plan has attempted set out five areas of action in support of both the Strategy for Older People (Phase 3) 2013 – 2023 and the Ageing Well in Wales Programme which aims to improve Older People’s wellbeing as they age. As in “Our Wrexham Plan” we want Wrexham to be a great place, a safe place and a place where all older people live independently and are healthy and active. The Plan will set out the long term vision for older people living in Wrexham, and will encompass Wrexham’s Single Integrated Plan, and the Well-being Future Generations Bill as well as the Ageing Well in Wales five priority areas.

**Who are our 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 population of Wrexham County Borough in 2013 was estimated at 137,617 with 24,820 aged over 65 years (18%). By 2030 the population of Wrexham will increase by 19,945 (14%) to 157,562. The number of people aged 65 years and over is expected to rise by 10,138 over the same time period. This means that by 2030 over 22% of the population will be aged over 65 years, as compared to 18% of the population in 2013. The total population of people over 65 with dementia is set to increase by 144 (8.5%) over the next four years and increase to 1,154 (70%) by 2030.

Long term population predictions are an indication of the future trends in population by age and gender over the next 25 years. They are trend based projections, which means assumptions for future levels of births, deaths and migration are based on observed levels mainly over the previous five years. They show what the population will be if recent trends continue.
The increase in need arising from demographic change may fluctuate as a result of differing experiences and people’s expectations. The extent to which the population increase will place demands upon services will depend upon a number of factors, including service provision and especially the expansion of low-level and preventative services delivered by the third sector.

1. Age Friendly Communities

We will work towards Wrexham becoming a place where people are healthy and active, a place that enables people of all ages to actively participate in community activities, a place that treats everyone with respect, regardless of their age. We will work towards an age friendly Wrexham that will help people stay healthy and active even at the oldest ages, and a place that helps those who can no longer look after themselves live with dignity and enjoyment.

Many towns and communities in Wales are already taking active steps towards becoming more age-friendly, however, many barriers persist. Some of these are physical, for example, poorly designed buildings or lack of transportation that prevents older people accessing the places they want to visit. But many barriers result simply from the way we think about ageing and the way we view and treat older people.

Creating barrier-free and affordable housing, accessible public spaces, and transportation enable people to stay independent and participate in community life. An age-friendly environment reduces the risk of falls and prevents the neglect and abuse of vulnerable older people by increasing the safety of natural and built environments and the security and protection of older people in the community.

We need to recognise that independent living is influenced by the spatial environment outside the home, for example by promoting the practice of “age-friendly cities and communities” [World Health Organisation (WHO)] through improved access to transport, mobility in public spaces, and community infrastructures such as availability of public toilets, and safe pavements, etc. We will need to work with our partners to ensure coordination of environmental design with service provisions, and pro-actively engage with older citizens and their carers to act as key informants about the barriers and challenges they face in using public spaces.
Overarching aim: To make Wrexham an Age-Friendly Community by promoting the wellbeing of older people as a whole.
Strategy for Older People in Wales – Overarching Aims

The Strategy for older people in Wales included amongst the outcomes it is seeking “Older people have access to housing and services that supports their needs and promotes independence”

- **Shared Spaces** – older people find public places welcoming, safe and accessible
- **Living in the community** – older people are able to participate and contribute in their communities and access services and amenities
- **Transport** – older people can access affordable and appropriate transport which assists them to play a full part in family, social and community life.
- **Housing** – older people are supported to live in homes and communities that are suitable for their needs.

What older people have told us?

- Feeling respected and feeling that they belong is important.
- Having something to do and feeling needed and productive makes older people feel valued.
- Street furniture, placards and chairs and tables create barriers and makes mobility difficult.
- Rural areas miss out, unable to access services such as GP’s and shops due to transport issues.
- Community events are reducing.
- Shops in rural areas are reducing.
- There is limited housing stock available, there is a need for more appropriate housing, dementia friendly housing, older people friendly, and grandparent friendly.
- Need energy efficient homes.

What we have now:

Through the Local Housing Plan, the Wrexham Plan, the Council Plan, the Unitary Development Plan, and other supporting strategies and with the help of all its partners, Wrexham will work towards making all its communities Age Friendly.

Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC) uses regular surveys to understand local opinion of the County Borough and of council services. WCBC has successfully used the People Voice Panel in the past to find out local residents’ opinions on a range of topics.

Now we want to continue this consultation while taking financial pressures into account. Our new online panel allows this – providing great value for money, as well as limiting the environmental impact of postal surveys. If you join the People’s Voice, you will be invited to complete short online questionnaires two or three times a year and may have a chance to take part in discussion groups.
The Council is committed to involving as many people and groups as possible in developing planning policies. Anyone who has an interest in shaping the future of Wrexham, including older people, can make a contribution in the preparation of the Local Development Plan\footnote{Local Development Plan} and other planning policy documents.

The Wrexham Local Housing Plan 2013–2018\footnote{The New Housing Landscape Wrexham Local Housing Plan 2013–2018} sets out WCBC direction of travel in housing and housing issues over the next five years. The Plan will play a pivotal role in helping to deliver sustainable communities in well-designed neighbourhoods where people can access quality, affordable housing.

The Older Persons Housing Needs and Aspirations Study (2013) is a complementary document to the Local Housing Plan. Current older persons provision includes extra care housing, Sheltered housing, Visiting Warden Service and Telecare.

Extra Care Housing aims to meet the housing care and support needs of older people while helping them to maintain their independence in their own private accommodation. It gives on site flexible care that adapts to resident’ changing needs and promotes their independence.

Sheltered housing schemes differ from residential or nursing homes as each tenant has their own self-contained flat, bedsit or bungalow.

The Visiting Warden Service aims to support people to live independently at home for as long as possible. It adds peace of mind and security in peoples own homes. Wardens are experienced in giving advice and support on the many circumstances and issues faced by older people.

Telecare is a 24 hour service which operates 365 days a year and contributes to aiding hospital discharge, avoiding unscheduled care and supporting people to continue living in the community.

Wrexham Council has always had a strong commitment to community cohesion and equality and human rights. The work undertaken through the Community Cohesion Plan and the Strategic Equity Plan reflects the public requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Supporting the Council to take forward the requirements of the Act is the key objective for the Community Diversity Team.

Age discrimination and ageism seem to be widely tolerated across the world. Part of the Older Peoples Commissioner’s work has been to publish a Declaration of Rights for Older People in Wales\footnote{http://gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/140716olderen.pdf}, to help older people to know what their rights are by clearly setting out their entitlements.

Members of the Local Services Board need to recognise and accept responsibility to respond to language need; strengthen Welsh language services and ensure that they are mainstreamed into all service planning and delivery.
What changes need to be made:

Shared Spaces – Older people need public places to be welcoming safe and accessible. People need to feel safe when accessing shared spaces without disproportionate fear of crime and are able to navigate roads and junctions safely.

Living in the community – Older people are able to participate and contribute in their communities and access services and amenities and can have access to community run facilities shops and services

Transport – Older people have access to safe, cost effective and accessible transport including community transport such as taxi service, shopmobility etc., and have accessible bus stops with adequate information about services to assist older people to play a full part in family, social and community life. Older people also need to have access to concessionary travel and accessible parking and have access to community transport schemes.

Housing – Older people need to be supported to live in homes and communities that are suitable for their needs and housing providers should broaden their focus to encompass inclusive housing design and create housing stock that is future proofed and age integrated as opposed to age segregated.

OUTCOME 1: The importance of Age-Friendly Communities is recognised at all levels throughout Wrexham.

Key Aim 1: Ensure groups representing older people are engaged in planning processes and facilitate greater participation by looking at the suitability of venues and the times when events are held.

Key Aim 2: Work in partnership with Community Councils to establish a Community Agent Network in all local communities across the Borough.

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

Key Aim 3: Actively promote the inclusion of all generations in discussions about their community, with particular reference to groups sharing protected characteristics.

Key Aim 4: Facilitate the development of shared public spaces (both physical and social) as an integral element of an Age-Friendly Community.

Key Aim 5: Support and encourage communities to identify and realise the assets (actual and potential) that contribute towards an Age-Friendly Community.
OUTCOME 3: The Local Authority and their partners support the development of Age-Friendly Communities and inter-generational practice.

Key Aim 6: For Age-Friendly Communities to feature in key strategic planning documents in all Local Service Delivery plans.

Key Aim 7: Develop learning networks for professionals and our partners in the third sector to embed the understanding and practice of Age-Friendly approaches in strategic planning and implementation.

Key Aim 8: Establish Age-Friendly Advocates within Local Authority Council Members, Planning, Housing, Transport and Education Departments.

2. Dementia Supportive Communities

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 society.

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 friendly.

As emphasised by the Welsh Government’s National Dementia Vision for Wales, 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. But it is not only the individual who is affected by dementia, it also impacts on family, friends, colleagues and carers.

Overarching aim: To make Wrexham dementia supportive by building and promoting dementia supportive communities.
Strategy for Older People in Wales – Overarching Aims

A dementia supportive community is one in which people with dementia and their carers are empowered, feel confident and know they can contribute and participate in their communities in a meaningful way.

What older people have told us?

- Need more information for families and carers
- Staff training needed in the retail sector
- Transport to activities is a problem especially those who live in rural areas
- Increased challenge to those individuals with dementia who have dependents, children or elderly parents
- Regular check by GP’s and dementia linked to other illnesses such as increase in falls

What we have now:

The Social Care Workforce Department delivers training and advice to informal carers, and offer one day basic awareness courses to social care staff. Workforce development are undertaking a pilot to deliver a train the trainer approach to senior staff in Care Homes. This pilot if successful will be extended to Domiciliary Care providers. An e learning module will also become available to a wider audience.

Social Care Workforce partnership offers free training to the social care sector including Council Staff, Independent and third sector staff/volunteers and also informal/family carers.

There is a “Carers Collection” of books established in all libraries throughout Wrexham.

Wrexham Adult Social Care are working in partnership with the Alzheimer’s Society to deliver a series of community events to support people to live well in their own homes and communities and to lay the foundations for the Borough of Wrexham to become a dementia supportive community. The events aim to raise awareness of dementia in communities enabling various sectors within the community to have an understanding of how they can support those affected by dementia.

The Alzheimer’s Society Dementia Support Workers provide specialist advice service that meets the very specific needs of people with Dementia, their Carers, family and friends.
What changes need to be made:

Communities working to become dementia friendly should:

- Involve people with dementia and their carers in order to identify their needs
- Increase awareness and understanding of dementia and combat stigma
- Offer activities that are appropriate to the needs of people with dementia and ensure that existing leisure services and entertainment activities are inclusive
- Ensure that people with dementia can make a positive contribution to their communities
- Provide practical and emotional support to ensure people with dementia can engage in community life
- Ensure that transport is consistent, reliable, responsive and respectful to the needs of people with dementia
- Ensure that the physical environment is accessible and easy to navigate for people with dementia
- Promote awareness of dementia in all shops, businesses and services so all staff demonstrate understanding, know how to recognise symptoms and help people with dementia utilise their business
- Support people with dementia in whatever care setting they live
- Ensure access to early diagnosis, integrated care and person centred support in all settings

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

Key Aim 9: To work in partnership with the third sector to engage with people affected by dementia to identify what constitutes a “dementia supportive community” and disseminate best practice examples.

Key Aim 10: Work with partners to further develop and adopt a recognised process for Dementia support within the community and in commercial businesses and organisations.

Key Aim 11: Establish a compendium of organisations, dementia action alliances and communities in Wrexham that are working towards being recognised as dementia supportive/friendly.
OUTCOME 1: Wrexham is an environment where people affected by dementia feel confident, valued and understood.

Key Aim 9: To work in partnership with the third sector to engage with people affected by dementia to identify what constitutes a “dementia supportive community” and disseminate best practice examples.

Key Aim 10: Work with partners to further develop and adopt a recognised process for Dementia support within the community and in commercial businesses and organisations.

Key Aim 11: Establish a compendium of organisations, dementia action alliances and communities in Wrexham that are working towards being recognised as dementia supportive/friendly.

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

Key Aim 12: Work with professional bodies, organisations and community groups to improve assessment, diagnosis and care.

Key Aim 13: Identify current support available to people affected by dementia, as well as gaps in provision.

Key Aim 14: Identify and promote current and future opportunities for prevention.

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

Key Aim 15: Promote positive images of people affected by dementia to drive attitudinal change.

Key Aim 16: Ensure engagement of public and private services, for example, housing and transport, with the dementia agenda.

Key Aim 17: Promote awareness and understanding of dementia and the issues people affected by dementia face in their daily lives.
3. Falls prevention

Falls place a considerable burden upon health and social care agencies in Wales.

Alongside poverty and social isolation (both linked, the fear of falling is reported as a key concern for older people and a major contributory factor to social isolation. Too many people believe that falling is an inevitable consequence of ageing. We need to overcome the inherent myths surrounding falling and to raise the general awareness of the value of maintaining a good diet and remaining active to prevent the likelihood of falling. Risk assessment should become systematic in all parts of Wales and we need to move to a situation where everyone is offered earlier support rather than after the event.

The annual numbers of falls to older people in Wales is estimated between 230,000 and 460,000. Across Wales, between 115,000 and 230,000 fall more than once and 11,500 to 45,900 suffer a fracture, head injury or serious laceration, this equates to between 32 and 126 injury falls per day in Wales. There are around 200 fall related deaths in Wales each year. There are around 21,000 fall related in-patient admissions each year in Wales. Demand on ambulance and hospital resources continues to increase and also on costly inpatient beds many of which are used inappropriately. There is strong synergy between all of these themes in the Ageing Well in Wales programme because people with dementia are ten times more likely to suffer a fall, unsupportive environments contribute to falls and the use of Information Technology to support people with dementia and reduce falls is a recurring theme of shaping the environment. (need Wrexham figures here)

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 year. Evidence suggests that falls prevention can reduce the number of falls by between 15% and 30%, and that well organised services, based on national standards and evidence-based guidelines, can prevent falls and reduce death and disability from fractures.

Over-arching aim: To support older people to reduce their risk of falling, reducing the number of falls amongst older people in Wrexham.
Strategy for Older People in Wales – Overarching Aims

Healthy Ageing – Older people enjoy good physical, mental and emotional health and well-being with the aim of being able to live independently for longer, with a better quality of life and continue to work and participate in their communities.

What older people have told us?

• The focus should be on an integrated service where GP’s, Local Authority leisure services, therapies and the third sector are all working together seamlessly resulting in lower falls incidence.
• That people over 60 all have access to services such as the National Exercise Referral Scheme (NERS) focused on maintaining good core stability, strength and balance.

What we have now:

The falls prevention programme in Wrexham is delivered in collaboration with the Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Partnership and the Wrexham National Exercise Referral Scheme (NERS). The exercise programme is designed to reduce the risk of falls. At the end of the programme people are encouraged to continue to exercise in appropriate mainstream classes available in local leisure centres or attend classes within their own community.

Age Cymru LIFT programmes in partnership with Age Connects NE Wales provide community based classes that include a social aspect.

What changes need to be made:

Being active can play an important part in both positive ageing and reducing frailty, helping to reduce the risk of falls.

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

Key Aim 18: Work with older people and their carers to develop a comprehensive information resource to raise awareness of falls, and promote the value of early intervention and prevention to reduce the risk of falling.

Key Aim 19: 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.

Key Aim 20: Signpost people identified as at risk of falls to appropriate activities for older people for example walking, Nordic walking, bowling, Zumba, Yoga, Pilates, Tai-chi, and other generic exercise sessions for seniors/50+. Pilot and evaluate the interventions from 1.1 and 1.2 to inform future work in this area.
OUTCOME 2: Current levels of early identification and preventive interventions are mapped and assessed to inform future development.

Key Aim 21: Develop an agreed understanding of the core operational components of the National Institute for Health and Social Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines in relation to;
- early identification of risk,
- risk assessments, and preventive interventions. Preventive interventions include: evidence-based falls prevention exercise classes, home safety checks, installations and modifications, medication reviews, low vision assessments and sight tests, and foot care.

Key Aim 22: Support local audit/mapping of local services against these three areas, using a standardised format.

Key Aim 23: 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.

4. Opportunities for employment and new skills

Older people have a wealth of knowledge and experience which is currently underappreciated and undervalued in the workplace.

We need to Value the worth of older people in Wrexham 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 volunteers.
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 to access 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.

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

**Strategy for Older People in Wales – Overarching Aims**

- **Learning and activities** – older people have opportunities to be engaged in lifelong learning and other appropriate social activities.
- **Employment** – older people who want to work are able to do so and can access help with re-skilling and retraining.
- **Pensions and other income** – older people have an adequate standard of income and are receiving all the financial benefits to which they are entitled.
- **Energy efficiency** – older people live in energy efficient homes and can afford to heat their homes to the temperature they required to protect health.
- **Financial Inclusion** – older people can access appropriate financial advice and services and are not over-indebted.

**What older people have told us**

- Older people are not engaged or do not have access to social media
- Digital inclusion is a barrier to learning
- Older people find accessible transport a barrier to engaging in learning and activities
- IT/Digital inclusion Older people have a fear of IT and equipment is not always accessible.
- Support is not well signposted

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8 OP Commissioner – Ageing Well in Wales 2014-2019
9 Ageing Well in Wales
What we have now

Wrexham Council run free IT literacy sessions at Contact Wrexham for people who have limited or no access to computers, tablets or smartphones and to build their confidence and skills with IT Technology.

Coleg Cambria offers a wide range of continuation courses suitable for learners with a little knowledge of Welsh through to almost fluent. They also offer free courses to improve maths English and basic digital skills.

What changes need to be made:

**OUTCOME 1: Older people in Wrexham benefit from maximised opportunities to enter/re-enter or maintain employment or to volunteer or participate within their community**

**Key Aim 24:** Increase the number of opportunities for older people to volunteer.

**Key Aim 25:** Increase the number of older people continuing their learning and skills development before and after retirement.

**Key Aim 26:** Identify and share successful community models for older people’s participation.

**OUTCOME 2: Older people in Wrexham benefit from maximised opportunities to increase their income.**

**Key Aim 27:** Increase the numbers of people aged 50+ in Wales who are economically active.

**Key Aim 28:** Develop and improve older people’s financial inclusion schemes.

**Key Aim 29:** Increase the number of people aged 50+ who are accessing education and training.
OUTCOME 3: Older people in Wrexham feel empowered to plan effectively for their future

Key Aim 30: Raise awareness amongst older people of current governmental and other advice and information schemes to assist in building their financial resilience.

Key Aim 31: Develop a live compendium of current provision.

Key Aim 32: Work with partners to support older people through economic transition.

5. Loneliness and Isolation

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 crosses all boundaries of social class, race, gender identification, sexual orientation, financial status and geography.

Research demonstrates that loneliness has an effect on mortality that is similar in size to smoking 15 cigarettes a day. It is associated with poor mental health and conditions such as cardiovascular disease, hypertension and dementia.

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 health.

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

Strategy for Older People in Wales – Overarching Aims

- **Diversity** – older people are not discriminated against because of their age, and do not experience multiple discrimination on account of gender, ethnicity, disability, religion and belief, or sexual orientation in addition to their age, and are not subject to abuse.

- **Access to information** – older people have access to information and advice about services and opportunities, and are not disadvantaged when accessing them.

- **Social Participation** – older people enjoy a better quality of life, have active social lives (if desired) and loneliness and isolation is minimised.
What we have now

Community Agents work with the over 65’s in Wrexham providing easy access to a wide range of information that will enable them to engage with their local community and reduce social isolation.

Community Inclusion Grants provide projects that stimulate community activity and deliver services such as time-banking, peer mentoring, befriending services and good neighbour initiatives.

Lunch Clubs provide social contact and leisure activities and are a good source of health and well-being information.

The development of a Shared Lives Scheme in Wrexham has enabled older people to live independently within their own communities for longer and reduces social isolation and loneliness thus improving health and wellbeing.

What older people have told us:

- After the loss of a long term partner or family migration older people experience a lack of confidence
- Accessible Information
- Transport, especially at night or at weekends
- Isolation increases in the evenings and at weekends and during holiday periods
- Village Halls and Community Centres were the focal point for community activities
- Lack of age related activities contribute to the lack or loss of friends
- Feeling safe in own community, fear of going out at night
- Demands on mental health services puts a strain on NHS
- Language barriers exaggerates all the above issues

OUTCOME 1: Loneliness and isolation are recognised as public health and safety issues in Wrexham.

Key Aim 33: Raise the profiles of loneliness and isolation as public health issues.

Key Aim 34: Ensure that health and social care information and advice services address the impact of loneliness and isolation on older people’s wellbeing.

Key Aim 35: Empower older people to be aware of the risks of loneliness and isolation to their wellbeing.
OUTCOME 2: The main causes and factors of loneliness and isolation amongst older people living in Wrexham are identified and understood.

Key Aim 36: Identify the key causes of loneliness and isolation amongst older people.

Key Aim 37: Identify the impact loneliness and isolation have on the individual, the community and the economy.

Key Aim 38: Identify and develop current and potential interventions that could successfully reduce loneliness and isolation amongst the emerging older generation.

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

Key Aim 39: Ensure older people are properly and meaningfully consulted regarding public transport provision.

Key Aim 40: Ensure older people have the financial means to participate in social activities.

Key Aim 41: Older people are aware of and have access to housing schemes that promote social interaction and inclusion.
Glossary

World Health Organisation – Age Friendly Cities and Communities

Dublin Declaration on Age Friendly Cities and Communities

Ageing Well in Wales
http://www.ageingwellinwales.com/en/home

Wales’ strategy for older people
http://gov.wales/topics/health/publications/socialcare/strategies/older/?lang=en

Wrexham Single integrated plan
http://www.wrexhamlsb.org/wsp.htm

Wrexham strategic equality plan