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**Introduction**

People in Ireland are living longer and healthier lives, thanks primarily to improvements in healthcare and lifestyles. The 2016 census indicates that the population of Ireland has increased by 169,724 people to 4,755,976 (*Central Statics Offices.)*

South Dublin County Council first Age Friendly Strategy was launched in 2012. Since then, the population of the County has grown by an additional 13,544 with the population increasing from 265,205 in 2011 to 278,749 in 2016. This Growth in population reflects a 5.1% increase, the 8th highest increase in the local authority areas in the country. According to the Census reports, 11% of South Dublin County’s residents are 65 years old or older.

Following the Publication of the results from the Census 2016, the estimated population growth between 2016 and 2019 was 3.8% and the numbers and proportion of the population in the older age groups continues to grow – the number of people over the age of 65 is increasing by 20,000 a year. Over the next 20 years, the number of people aged 85 and over is projected to increase by average of 6000 each year.

Notwithstanding further increases in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy in the coming decades, it has been proposed that the expected increase in the number of people over the age of 65 years will lead to increased demands on our health and welfare services in particular.

This will present a number of challenges for South Dublin County Council and all public service providers in County.

This revised and updated Age Friendly Strategy will build the successes of the First Age Friendly and seek to:

* Improve the health and well-being of older people in the County
* Increase participation in the social, economic and cultural life of the community
* Encourage effective partnerships between local statutory, private and voluntary organisations

**What we achieved**

Since the first Age Friendly Strategy was launched in 2012, a number of initiatives have been progressed. Examples include:

* Home Security Lock Scheme
* Carbon Monoxide Scheme
* South Dublin Transport Study 2016
* Pilot ExWell Programme
* Tallaght Integrated Care for Older Person’s Team commenced in January 2017
* Dedicated events for Older Persons during Annual Health and Wellbeing Week and Annual Programme for Bealtaine.
* An Garda Síochána continue to support many Neighbourhood Watch Committees in the County improving safety and security for older persons
* An audit of community buildings, play spaces and pitches has been carried out by South Dublin County Council
* Mens sheds/social clubs have been developed across the county
* The very successful 55+ Daily Planner is updated and published annually
* The County’s Older Persons Council, Tus Nua meet once a month to discuss issues affecting older people
* The County Library in Tallaght is an accredited Age Friendly Library. This was recognised by the presentation of an Age Friendly Library Achievement Award by Age Friendly Ireland in October 2019.
* The Age Friendly Programme Co-ordinator consulted older patrons, using a short questionnaire, to get feedback on our services and how we could improve them. Members of Tús Nua, the Older People’s Council, conducted a walkability study of the library.
* Kiltipper Park was upgraded in 2019/2020 with new walking and cycling routes, entrance ways and car parking. All access points were designed to be universally accessible, and the design of the footpaths was completed following consultation with local wheelchair users and service providers.

**Our Vision**

To make South County Dublin a place where older people are treated with dignity and respect; and their contribution to the social, economic and cultural fabric of the County is valued.

**Mission**

South County Dublin Age Friendly Alliance is committed to enhancing the quality of life of older people in South Dublin through a coordinated and strategic approach to age friendly initiatives.

**Values**

1. To encourage the **participation** of older adults in all the all social, economic and cultural activities
2. To promote **intergenerational learning** to facilitate the reciprocal sharing of expertise between generations.
3. To ensure that the Age Friendly Alliance Members **research** agenda is informed by the needs of an ageing society.
4. To enhance access for older adults to **health and wellness** opportunities in the County
5. Age Friendly Alliance Members will actively engage with their own **retired communities**
6. To ensure regular **consultation** with organizations representing the interests of the ageing population.

**Age Friendly County Themes**

The Age Friendly County Themes, as developed by the World Health Organisation (WHO), are considered to be the factors most affecting the quality of life of older people. These nine WHO themes are also linked to both the National Positive Ageing Strategy (NPAS). And they include.

* Transportation
* Housing
* Social Participation
* Respect & Inclusion
* Civic participation & Employment
* Communication & Information
* Community Support & Health Services
* Outdoor Spaces & Public Buildings
* Security and Safety

**HaPAI Research**

A survey was carried out by the Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme and the Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative in 2016. This report is the outcome of a collaboration between the South Dublin Age Friendly County programme and the Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative (HaPAI). It provides evidence about the determinants of health, wellbeing and quality of life for older people. The information in this report will support the development of a revised Age Friendly Strategy and monitoring of the Age Friendly County Programme and will inform planning for an ageing population in South Dublin County.

**Thematic Actions for Age Friendly County Strategy 2020 – 2025**

1. **Transport**

South Dublin Recognise the importance of mobility for Older Persons within our county or who are travelling from outside. South Dublin County Council are committed to managing and maintaining our current road network to ensure that all Road users have a safe and ease of access journey. It is vitality important that we continue to invest in and maintain our current road Infrastructure including footpaths, Cycle paths, and traffic calming measures in order to address the needs of all road users including Older Person.

**Background Data / Challenges - HAPaI initial Findings**

* All respondents to the HaPAI study reported that public transport was available within a 15 minute walk of their house and 6.9% reported it was difficult to access.
* 11% of 70+ used public bus compared to 13% of 55+
* 5.7% of 55+ - reported that a lack of transport in South Dublin causes difficulty for socialising or completing essential tasks
* 19% of 70+ don’t drive
* 17% of 70+ reported walking difficulties.
* 60% of people in the local authority area rated public transport as good or excellent, compared with 50% nationally.

**Actions**

* Consultation on with Older Persons on future public transport initiatives Via our Alliance and Older Persons Council
* To investigate the provision of Age Friendly Parking spaces at County Buildings/other public buildings and locations around the County.
* NTA is mapping all bus routes and bus stops to look at a gap analysis. This project is called ‘Connected Ireland’ and is an audit of all services.
* To support the work of public transport providers such [Transdev](https://www.google.ie/search?q=Transdev&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAOPgE-LUz9U3MDa2KMhW4gIx07PjTXMstEwyyq30k_NzclKTSzLz8_RzE4uL40uKEvOKC_KLShJBYvHFlcUlqbnFVvkFqUWJJflFxYtYOUJASlJSy3awMgIA-61Fl10AAAA&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjSjIKYtJDpAhVCrHEKHZqwD9kQmxMoATAoegQICxAD) who run the Luas and Dublin Bus on their on their Safety and Security on Public transport
* Through working with the National Transport Authority (NTA), South Dublin aim to deliver on cycle and walkway schemes throughout the County
* South Dublin County Council delivers important initiatives, such as the Annual Roads Maintenance and the Social Housing Estate Renewal Programme.

1. **Housing**

Housing is one of the most pressing issues that Ireland is facing today and will continue to do so over the lifetime of this strategy and beyond. The State will continue to look to provide adequate and affordable housing for all. The Provision of Housing that meets the needs of an aging population is something that South Dublin County Council is committed to addressing. It is important that we are aware of the needs of Older Persons when it comes to Housing in terms of Design, Upkeep and access to services.

**Background Data / Challenges - HAPaI initial Findings**

* Only 7% of People aged 55+ reported problems with the condition of their home;
* 13% of people aged 55+ have problems with the upkeep of their homes.
* 11% of people over the age of 55 had issues with facilities - such as lack of shortage space, home to big for current need, lack of downstairs toilet.
* 15% of people aged 55+ were unable to keep their houses adequately warm in the last 12 months.
* 82% are Positive about Adapting current House to their needs
* 39% would consider moving to an adapted type Housing

**Actions**

* Conduct “right-sizing” research study with Age Friendly Ireland.
* Devise Tallaght Wellness Village Concept as a model for older persons supported accommodation
* Mapping and analysis of under-occupied housing stock
* Develop policy for allocation of older persons’ accommodation supporting needs of older citizens / tenants including options for rightsizing of existing Council tenants’ accommodation
* Deliver housing for older persons at optimal locations to support the specific needs of older citizens, including housing grants.
* An analysis of the county to identify Clusters - where elderly currently reside.
* South Dublin County Council Have an Age Friendly Technical Specialist under the housing options for Our Ageing Population Policy.
* It is proposed that liaison /community officers be trained in using home energy saving kits so that they could assist the elderly in making improvements within their homes, and by making the kits accessible for online home delivery.
* Housing aid for Older People Scheme - The scheme is available to assist older people (over 66 years of age) living in poor housing conditions to have essential repairs or improvements carried out such as re-wiring, re-roofing and the provision of central heating (where none exists).  The availability of the grant is means tested and the level of grant is determined on the basis of gross income of each member of the household over 18 years of age (over 23 if full time student) for the previous tax year. The maximum grant available is €8,000 of the approved cost of proposed works.

1. **Social Participation**

South Dublin County Council recognise the positive effects and benefits that participation in community events and social interaction has on Older Persons. This allows Older Persons to maintain and establish new relationships with people their own age. South Dublin has a wide range of amenities and a calendar of annual events that older Persons activity participate in. The Bealtaine Festival, and supports from our Library and Community Development section, ensures that Older persons and Older persons Groups have a range of annual activities to participate in.

**Background Data / Challenges - HAPaI initial Findings**

* 20% of people aged 55-69 which is 1 in 5 participate in a community group at least weekly compared to 1 in 3 or 31% of people aged 70+.
* 21% of 70+ reported the social activities available don’t interest them
* 1 in 2 of 55+ meet socially with relatives, friends and colleagues at least once per week

**Actions**

* Promote the use of cultural and natural amenities in SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL (Parks, Community Centres, Theatre,)
* Facilitate an expanded range of social and cultural events for older people through the Arts Office and Libraries. South Dublin Libraries’ programme of classes and workshops provides a rich calendar of events for older people throughout the year, and especially during Bealtaine, Health and Wellbeing Week, Social Inclusion Week and through our annual History and Heritage events programming in August and September.
* Support Older Persons Groups and activities through the Community Grants Scheme.
* South Dublin County council will continue to co-ordinate in the Annual Bealtaine Festival held in May which encourages, inspires creativity amongst older people and showcases their creativity and talents.
* Social Inclusion agenda to include activities / interventions identified by older people
* Continued support of Men’s Sheds Initiative throughout the county

1. **Respect and Inclusion**

South Dublin County Council recognise the importance of a respect and the development of an inclusive society within south Dublin. It is vital through the various networks and structures that Older persons needs are represented and listened to, particularly in relation to the development of Policy, Plans and Strategies. We want to continue to develop a county that promotes age awareness, a society where the young and old can mix and learn from another.

**Background Data / Challenges - HAPaI initial Findings**

* 5% of those aged 55-69 and 14% of those aged 70+ said that they experienced negative attitudes or behaviour towards them as an older person.
* The top two sources of negative attitudes and behaviours experienced by people aged 55+
  + 6.1% was from younger people
  + 1.5% from those providing services in the financial sector.

**Actions**

* Age Friendly principles will be considered in developing the new Local Economic and Community Plan
* Alliance Members plans/policies will be proofed for age friendly support
* Tus Nua will work with the Public Participation Network and nomination process and local structures to ensure that the voice of older people is represented on as many community groups as possible
* A proposed Intergenerational project at the community open space in Glenasmole is planned as part of a Public Participatory Budget Project,
* To create a Greater awareness by Departments when they are formulating plans actions to ensure that Age Friendly Principles are adopted. An example of this is provided by our Library service who offer a Housebound service which is delivered in all areas of the county. Our Mobile Libraries bring Library services into the community and facilitates book drops to nursing homes and day care centres.
* SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL under a Service Level Agreement with Irish Water provide water services to all citizens of the county. Particularly water-dependent customers, which may include people within older age groups, are advised they may register as priority customers with Irish Water. This allows the service providers to plan works and provide services especially in times of water supply issues.
* Our Library service offer a programme of intergenerational storytelling workshops with local schools.

1. **Civic Participation and Employment**

As an Older person living within South Dublin, we want to ensure that there are opportunities for Older persons to be actively involved in their community in either a voluntary capacity, or to contribute to the economic benefit of our county. The benefits of employment, being a Volunteer or having access to further education for an older person’s health and wellbeing is important and rewarding.

**Background Data / Challenges - HAPaI initial Findings**

* 1 in 4 people aged 55-69 and almost 1 in 5 people aged 70+ Volunteer at least once a month. 9% of over 55’s Volunteer at least weekly;
* 70% are satisfied with the amount of time they spend volunteering
* 19% would like to increase the amount of time they spend Volunteering
* 56% are satisfied with the range of volunteering options on offer.
* 13% Volunteer with Community and Social Service Organisations
* 9% Volunteer with Educational, Cultural, Sports or Professional Associations and 7.4% Volunteer with Social Movements (e.g. Environmental or human rights)

**Actions**

* Secure a commitment from all Alliance members to meet with the Tus Nua at least once a year.
* South Dublin works in partnership with the south Dublin Volunteer centre and will continue to support this partnership and encourage members of the community to get in touch and create awareness of its services.
* Provide and promote opportunities for older people to participate in their communities through, for example Community Centres, Volunteer Centre
* Ensure that South Dublin County Council’s LEO office commitment to Providing start your own business courses, mentoring and additional Services is also available to older people with business ideas”
* Life Long Learning – Providing access to information and opportunities for personal progress to engage in a lifetime of learning and reading is a fundamental strength of our Library service. Our library service facilitates an number of classes such as Language Classes, Creative writing classes, Photography workshops and Genealogy courses.

1. **Communication and Information**

How we convey information to our Older Persons and through what channels is something that has changed greatly over the last decade. It is vitally important that our Older persons can access reliable information about Community News, activities and events. As more services, supports and information move online, it is vital that out older persons stay connected.

**Background Data / Challenges - HAPaI initial Findings**

* The top 4 sources of information for over 55’s in south Dublin is
  + National Radio - 77% Television - 66% and Newspapers with 72%. Internet – 54%
* 61% of Residents aged 70+ use the internet on a regular basis.
* 85% of person aged 55-69 use the internet on a regular basis.
* Only 2.6% of people aged 55+ have difficulty accessing information about Health or Social Care compared to 5.3% for people aged 70+ and 1.7% aged 55-69.
* In relation to gaining access to information about Health or Social care 1.3% of people aged 55-69 felt that they have difficultly compared to 7.3% of people aged 70+.

**Actions**

* The Community Development Team an Publish annual Active 55+ Planner, to help older people find information on what’s going on every day in their Local Area. This is supported by the South Dublin age Friendly Alliance.
* Supporting Tus Nua in disseminating information to member groups.
* Facilitate 2/4 meetings annually between SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL/Gardai and Tus Nua
* Support Friendly Alliance to Meet every quarter and review Strategy Implementation
* South Dublin County Council will provide Age Friendly news and updates via our social media planforms – Twitter, Facebook & Instagram.
* Our libraries provide one-to-one computer/tablet/smartphone classes for older people, in association with Age Action.
* Library staff facilitate regular online resource clinics to assist older people in setting up ebooks, online magazines . on their devices.

We provide Computers, printing and photocopying facilities, with staff available to assist.

* GIS Mapping of older persons services within the South Dublin Area. This mapping is being developed and will be available on the Age Friendly Ireland Shared Service Website, were South Dublin County Council will have a dedicated page with Links to our strategy. This site will provide information on the Age Friendly programme within South Dublin

1. **Community Support and Health Services**

South Dublin County Council has built up strong links with the HSE, and various other stakeholders and partners who provide health services to older persons. We will continue to fund, promote and develop these links in a partnership approach to ensure that that the health and wellbeing of order persons is catered for

**Background Data / Challenges - HAPaI initial Findings**

* 65% of People aged 55-69 and 57% of People aged 70+ say that their health is good or Very Good.
* 11% of People aged 70+ say that Health is bad or very bad.
* 24% of People aged 55+ currently smoke. This is higher than the national average of 14%.
* The most common health conditions experienced by adults age 55+ in south Dublin and nationally is Arthritis, High Blood Pressure or Hypertension, High Cholesterol and Diabetes.

**Actions**

* Promotion of existing sporting and physical exercise opportunities and programmes run/funded by SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL Sports and recreations and sports Partnership Sections
* Three Key Components of Functional Fitness for Older people are – Aerobic Fitness (of the Heart and Lungs) Strength (Of the Muscles) and Mobility (of the joints). South Dublin County Sports Partnership have FitWalk Circuits in over 10 Parks throughout the county which uses a suite of outdoor exercise equipment and walking paths which will improve all three components of Functional Fitness.
* Investigate the development of a programme on nutrition for older people.
* Promote and support events for older persons through our Community Centre Network and through our Tallaght and Clondalkin Leisure Centres.
* South Dublin County Council are part of Healthy Ireland Network. One objective of the Healthy South Dublin Strategy is to develop new approaches to reduce smoking amongst vulnerable groups in south Dublin. This is achieved through expanding and adapting the ‘We Can Quit Programme’ in collaboration with the Irish Cancer Society
* Continued Support of the Ex Well Programme. The Programme offers community-based supervised exercise classes, and home programmes to people with many different long term illnesses. The Programme offers Participants the opportunity to become fit and active in a friendly, safe and enjoyable environment.
* South Dublin County Council run an annual Health and wellbeing festival, which promotes the Health and Wellbeing activities that are available throughout our county. The festival arranges events and workshops in which our Older Persons can actively take part in.
* As part of the Healthy Ireland at Your Library Initiative, our libraries facilitate talks and workshops aimed at older people. Previous examples of this were talks on Brain Health. Our Healthy Ireland at Your Library book collection promotes healthy aging.
* Our Libraries have developed partnerships with local HSE Health Centres, the Irish Heart Foundation, the Alzheimer Society of Ireland, Tallaght Hospital, and the HSE’s Dementia: Understand Together initiative, in the roll out of programmes in our libraries, these programmes include:
  + - Free blood pressure checks
    - Visits by the Alzheimer Society Mobile Information Centre
    - Healthy eating courses
    - Fall prevention clinics
    - Dementia awareness training for staff
    - Talks and workshops
* South Dublin Headquarters/County Hall is located in Tallaght. Conveniently located beside the Integrated Primary Health Care Centre in the Russell building. This area is supported by extensive Public Transport networks served by Luas and CIE.

1. **Outdoor Spaces and Public Buildings**

It is important that Older Persons live in a community in which they can be mobile and have ease of access to vital services. Our Outside spaces and Public Buildings play an important role in assisting in the mobility and the quality of life of our older persons. The way in which we design and maintain our outdoor spaces and Public Buildings will ultimately contribute to the ability of Older Persons to participate in their Community

**Background Data / Challenges - HAPaI initial Findings**

* 6.6% of people ages 55-69 felt that they had great difficulty accessing essential services (Public Services, Banking ) compared to 7.6% of people aged 70+.
* 76% of 55-69 and 64% of 70+ stated that they had no difficulty.
* 7.2% of people aged 55-69 and 9.5% of people aged 70+ stated that they had great difficulty accessing social recreational services.
* 75% of 55-69 and 72% of 70+ had no difficulty

**Actions**

* The provision and maintenance of parks and open spaces close to residential areas allows people to stay mobile and active. Access to the outdoors and access to nature has been proven to be beneficial for both physical and mental well-being as well as allowing for day-to-day social contact. The Council is a signatory of the Barcelona Declaration which commits the council to universal access to public open space.
* Our parks and open spaces are well served by a variety of hard surfaced footpaths and access routes with many options available to enable people to gain active and passive recreation and facilitate access by people with mobility issues .
* Promote the use of parks and outdoor gym equipment. The provision of outdoor gym equipment at 14 separate park locations across the county has been well received and are of great value, particularly to older age groups.
* South Dublin County Council will endeavour to respond to the impacts and challenges of climate change, both current and future. Our work includes educating citizens of all ages. There is significant interest amongst the older members in society on environmental concerns. Research has shown that this age group may be disproportionately affected by climate change effects. Community workshops were held and well attend by this age group. South Dublin County Council to examine the feasibility of tailoring SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL Climate Action, Biodiversity/Gardening workshops for older members of the community.
* South Dublin County Council works in partnership with neighbourhood improvement groups like tidy towns. South Dublin Support Numerous Tidy Town Groups throughout the county.
* Our Libraries offer a wide range of age friendly stock, including audio books and large print books. We also have a Hearing Loop installed in all libraries. Our Libraries provide seating, including armchairs and computer chairs, at a suitable height and with sufficient support appropriate for older people. Our Libraries also provide reading glasses in a range of magnification strengths for older patrons who had forgotten to bring their reading glasses.
* Community Space - An important aspect of library services to older people is the provision of space which allows older people to meet and socialise in a community setting. Our libraries make space available free of charge for many local groups such as Tus Nua our Older Persons Council, Men’s Shed Groups, Historical Societies, and active retirement associations.
* South Dublin County Council will ensure that Age and Dementia Friendly design and planning principals are embedded in all local authority planning and development.
* Easy access to Public buildings, ensure that public counters have a seating area, and access to public buildings via automatic doors
* To identify Urban Areas in south Dublin with a view to ensuring that they are Age Friendly and to follow the themes of an age friendly Village or Town to ensure adequate footpaths, improved accessibility for older persons and age friendly universal design.

1. **Safety and Security.**

Safety and Security in the home is something that south Dublin County council has been at the forefront for some time and we have been awarded for our endeavours. South Dublin County Council aim work with An Garda Siochana and other stakeholders via our PPN’s and Alliance to address concerns that older Persons have in relation to security in their homes and security for the wider Community.

**Background Data / Challenges - HAPaI initial Findings**

* 13% of people aged 55+ reported an experience that has left them concerned about their Personal Safety.
* 57% reported this experience occurring more than once.
* 90% of people feel safe at home during the day. 86% feel safe at home at night
* 70% feels sale out and about during the day and 54% feel safe out and about at night.

**Actions**

* Continued work with An Garda Siochana in relation to their strategy on safety for older persons.
* Support from An Garda Siochana and seek membership on the South Dublin Older Persons Alliance.
* Continuation of the Award-winning Lock Scheme.
* Continuation of the Award-winning South Dublin County Council Carbon Monoxide Scheme
* South Dublin County Council support numerous Residents Associations which co-coordinate the work of local Neighbourhood watch.
* Continued maintenance and provision of a public lighting system which includes the delivery of 2,000 LED upgrades to will ensure that our Communities adequately lit. This will contribute to the safety and security of our communities at night time.

**Age Friendly South Dublin in Context**

The Age Friendly City and Counties programme in Ireland is grounded in the World Health Organisation’s (WHO) Age Friendly initiative (WHO 2005)1. From a national perspective, in recognition of the need to support our aging society, the Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme (AFCCP) was established in 2008 and is being rolled out by Age Friendly Ireland

(AFI). The signing of the Dublin Declaration on Age-Friendly Cities and Communities in 2011 marked a national commitment to age friendly cities across the country. Subsequent Governments have produced a range of policies and guidelines including:

* Programme for Government 2011-2016
* Putting People First 2012
* National Carers Strategy 2012
* National Positive Aging Strategy 2013
* Healthy Ireland 2013-2025
* National Dementia Strategy 2014
* Listening to Older People: Experiences with Health Services 2015
* Towards 2016
* Healthy and Positive Aging Initiative (HaPAI) 2016
* Programme for Government 2016-2020

**Implementation and Monitoring**

Successful implementation of the action within this strategy require the continues building up the Age Friendly Agenda within South Dublin County Council. The Age Friendly Programme Manager has a key role in

* Engaging with senior managers across all departments to ensure all Council plans and policies are age friendly proofed and may request officials to present to Age Friendly Alliance and or Older People’s Council (Tus Nua).
* Keeping County Councillors informed about the Age Friendly programme through the Chief Executive Monthly News Letter and reports to the Social, Community and Equality Strategic Policy Committee
* Engaging with the Older People’s Council(Tus Nua) through an annual programme of scheduled themed events.
* Re-Establishing the Age Friendly County Alliance within 3 month of the Strategy being adopted
* Participation in regional and national Age Friendly fora and updating the annual work programme based on emerging best practice
* Identifying and reporting on implementation metrics annually for age friendly actions
* Organising and Hosting the launch of the Age Friendly Strategy 2020