

# Age Friendly Leeds Strategy 2025 - 2030



# Age Friendly Leeds: Strategy & Action Plan 2025-2030

*Age Friendly Leeds aims to be the 'Best City to Grow Old In', where people aged 50+ lead healthy, connected, fulfilling and independent lives whilst feeling valued and respected.*

*The Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan brings together key services with a focus on prevention to increase the number of years people spend in good health. By doing so, it seeks to reduce or delay the need for reactive services.*

## Public and Civic Spaces

Support people in later life to access and enjoy outdoor spaces in Leeds by:

- Ensuring parks and green spaces are accessible for everyone who wants to use them.
- Providing and promoting a wide range of opportunities for people to get the health benefits of spending time in green spaces.
- Working with communities and having a positive, open and collaborative approach in delivering the Parks and Countryside service.
- Creating high quality and well-connected places that are age inclusive and promote physical, mental and social wellbeing in later life.

## Healthy and Independent Ageing

Supporting people in later life to live healthy and independent lives in the community by:

- Further developing ways for people in later life to keep active and stay healthy, with a focus on supporting people to age well in more deprived areas and ethnically diverse communities.
- Developing Leeds as a Mentally Healthy City for people in later life.
- Promoting financial inclusion to support financial health and wellbeing.
- Sustaining community-based approaches that empower people in later life to live independently, to thrive and age well whilst engaging in their neighbourhoods.

### Working in Partnership with:

- Best City Ambitions and Team Leeds Approach
- The 'Marmot City – Fairer Heathier Leeds' programme
- Child Friendly Leeds, creating a city that is welcoming and inclusive for all ages
- Healthy Leeds Plan

### Cross Cutting Themes:

- Team Leeds Approach
- Inequalities, Equity & Financial Inclusion
- Effective Communication & Digital Inclusion
- Social & Intergenerational Connections

## Active, Included and Respected

Encompassing several areas to promote inclusion and participation in public and community life by:

- Raising the profile of Age Friendly Leeds to promote a positive attitude towards ageing and incorporating intergenerational work.
- Enabling older people in Leeds to have the opportunities, freedom, and support to live the life of their choice.
- Working with people in later life across the city to capture a diverse range of voices, with a view to shaping policy and action.
- Supporting people in later life to engage with a diverse citywide cultural offer as participants, audience and creative practitioners.
- Providing opportunities and resources for social and intergenerational connection within welcoming community hubs and library spaces in the heart of communities.
- Providing volunteering opportunities in the city that are inclusive and equitable for people in later life.
- Ensuring older People in Leeds have equal opportunity to use digital tools, technology, and services in the right way for them.
- Ensuring older people in Leeds are safe and feel safe in their homes, in the streets, and the places they go.

## Employment and Learning

Supporting people in later life in the workplace, improving access to the workplace and to stay in work by:

- Supporting people aged 50+ back into the workplace, to stay in work and explore career change and upskilling.
- Supporting people aged 50+ to have access to education and learning opportunities.
- Hiring and developing the 50+ workforce within Leeds City Council.
- Supporting the health, wellbeing and benefits of the 50+ workforce within Leeds City Council.
- Promoting an age positive culture and flexible working within Leeds City Council and wider.

## Travel and Road Safety

Providing accessible travel options to enable people in later life to get out and about by:

- Ensuring people in later life have a choice of transport options and can choose a mode that is most appropriate for each journey.
- Ensuring transport is affordable and accessible to everyone.
- Eliminating road deaths and serious injuries by adopting a Vision Zero approach.
- Supporting and motivating people in later life to make healthy travel choices.

## Housing

Ensuring housing supports people to stay living independently, comfortably and safely in later life:

- Increasing public and agency awareness of information and advice on housing options with preventative focus.
- Improving housing quality and access to adaptations to support independence.
- Increasing provision of age friendly housing options including accessible new housing and specialist housing with support.

# Age Friendly Leeds - The story so far...



Age Friendly Leeds has a longstanding ambition to be the Best City to Grow Old In: a place where people in later life (age 50+) age well, lead healthy, connected, fulfilling, independent lives and are valued, feel respected and are recognised as assets.

Age Friendly Leeds plays a preventative role to increase the proportion of our lives that we spend in good health in later life. Age Friendly places, communities, and services support everyone, including those with health challenges, to lead

vibrant, connected, fulfilling, and independent lives. As a result, this helps to prevent, reduce, and delay the need for reactive services.

Our first Age Friendly Strategy was developed in 2015 which placed people in later life at the heart of our strategies, ensuring their diverse voices shape Leeds initiatives. This builds on previous work and a long history of engagement dating back to 1994.

# Working across our citywide ambitions



## Best City Ambition

'Age Friendly Leeds' plays a key role in contributing to delivering the Best City Ambition. For partners and services, supporting the delivery of the Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plan should be entirely complementary and consistent with supporting the Best City Ambition and the 'Team Leeds' approach.

Delivering across all four ambitions in the Best City Ambition:

- Health & Wellbeing and the vision to be a healthy and caring city for all ages, where people who are the poorest improve their health fastest. Age Friendly has remained a priority in the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2023 to 2030. This strategy also includes several priorities that are linked to supporting people to age well, such as fostering 'strong, engaged and well-connected communities'; 'improving housing for better health'; creating 'a strong economy with good local jobs for all' and 'a city where everybody can be more active more often'.

- Inclusive Growth and the vision to create growth in our economy that works for everyone, where people and businesses can thrive, and we work together to tackle poverty and inequality, ensuring people of all ages and backgrounds can enjoy access to education and skills development. The Inclusive Growth Strategy recognises the challenges that older workers experience in relation to employment, as well as the need to make sure that people in later life are valued in work or as volunteers and carers. Inclusive recruitment, better jobs and healthy workplaces help to support people to age well in work.
- Zero Carbon and the plan to tackle climate change, with Leeds aiming to become the first net zero city in the UK. This will be delivered by creating a more walkable city; promoting a resilient food economy; making the homes we live in healthier, more environmentally friendly and cheaper to run; protecting and investing in our public spaces and infrastructure to prepare Leeds for future climate impacts. Considering the impact of these areas on people in later life is directly linked to the Age Friendly Leeds Strategy as older people are among those groups most at risk from the effects of climate change.
- Strong Communities are at the heart of a city where people feel safe, welcomed, and empowered to shape the decisions that impact their lives. Together, we are creating clean, connected neighbourhoods that enable people to live healthier lives and enjoy the diverse social, cultural and sporting offer of our vibrant city. The Age Friendly Strategy supports this by enabling people in later life to be active, included and respected.





## Supporting the 'Team Leeds' approach:

The delivery of the Age Friendly Leeds strategy aligns to the ways of working within the Best City Ambition 'Team Leeds' approach by championing community power and putting people in later life at the heart of our strategy, focussing on prevention and strength-based approaches, and building a healthier society where we pursue equity for people as they age to tackle poverty and inequalities. Reviews of the Best City Ambition will continue to dovetail into the delivery of the Age Friendly Strategy and Plan.

## Fairer, Healthier Leeds: A Marmot Approach

Age Friendly Leeds and the commitment to Leeds being a Marmot City (i.e. Fairer, Healthier Leeds) both require the collaboration of strategic partners to address the social determinants of health, emphasising the shared goal of improving health outcomes and reducing inequalities within Leeds. There is a joint aim to create a more equitable society for all.

Age Friendly recognises the impact that social determinants have on ageing well and applies an approach that:

- Systematically puts fairness and health at the centre of our decision making.
- Ensures services and resources are prioritised in a way that is proportionate to people's needs.
- Ensures individuals' voices are effectively heard and considered through consultation, data, evidence, and insight.

## Child Friendly

The ambitions of Child Friendly and Age Friendly Leeds complement one another, to be the best city for children and young people to grow up and the best city to grow old in. This is about creating a city that is welcoming and inclusive for and values people of all ages, ensuring their diverse voices shape all Leeds initiatives. The wishes of children and young people and the expectations of people in later life are aligned – with shared issues that both groups want to improve. Child Friendly Leeds and Age Friendly Leeds will work together with partners on these issues.

## Healthy Leeds Plan

This work also contributes to the following outcomes in the Healthy Leeds Plan:

- **Healthy Adults** - People in Leeds are physically and mentally healthier for longer; people in Leeds are supported to live well and have a standard of living which supports their health and wellbeing.
- **Long Term Conditions** - People with a LTC return to and maintain their normal activities and lifestyle in ways that matter to them.
- **Frailty** - Living and ageing well defined by 'what matters to me' (e.g. being independent, active etc).

# Why is Age Friendly Leeds important?

Our data shows there is much more we can do to reduce the time people spend in poorer health in later life.

The Joint Strategic Assessment 2024 looks at the current and future health, social care needs of people living in Leeds. Its purpose is to inform and guide priorities and the planning and commissioning of health, wellbeing and social care services. The 'Ageing Well – Age Friendly Leeds' section reflects key findings and recommendations identified in the Director of Public Health Annual Report 2023 – Ageing Well: Our Lives in Leeds. This provides a range of information and insights, exploring how healthy people, places, and communities all contribute to ageing well in Leeds, which have informed the Age Friendly Leeds Strategy review for 2025-2030.

Some of the findings in the report show that:





Most people in later life are not lonely (64.8% hardly ever or never lonely). Over **1 in 2 people mentioned that strong, positive community and social connections enabled them to age well** (e.g. activities, groups and the local community).

Older people in Leeds saw **later life as an opportunity to be more active and stay healthy.**



**2 in 3 people aged 50-64 are in employment**, with **40,000 people aged 50-64 years being economically inactive** due to caring responsibilities, health conditions, retirement or because there is a perception that suitable work is not available for them.



There are an estimated **51,000 homes in Leeds with health hazards**. Half of these homes will be occupied by someone aged 60+.

Nearly **2 in 3 people aged 65+** would like to stay in their own home, with support when needed and **only 3% (aged 65+) are living in a nursing or care home.**



Over **1 in 2 people** talked about access to green spaces, theatres and libraries as **positive features of Leeds that enabled them to age well.**



People **aged 65+** are **12x more likely to be non-digital users.**



**Driving, walking and travelling by bus are popular amongst people in later life.** However **accessible and appealing roads and pathways would better enable active travel and uptake of bus passes in some of the most deprived areas** of the city is low (60% compared to 80% citywide).



People in later life experience **negative stereotypes, ageism and discrimination**. Experiences of people in later life, their health and wellbeing outcomes and access to services or support are impacted by stereotypes, ageism and discrimination.



## Ensuring Leeds is an Age Friendly city has been identified as a priority area by people in later life themselves.

Since 2015, engagements and consultations in Leeds have ensured we put people in later life at the heart of our strategy, helping to develop, inform and enhance Age Friendly Leeds.

Recent activities include:

- December 2021**  
 The State of Aging in Leeds: What life is like for people aged 50 and over in Leeds sets out data and stories about what it's like to grow older in Leeds. This included consultation with 44 residents aged between 50 and 102. The report supported individuals and organisations to consider priorities to make Leeds Best City to grow old in and also informed the development of the Age Friendly action plan.
- July 2023**  
 The Leeds Older People's Hub managed by Leeds Older People's Forum provides a space and support to ensure that older people's voices are heard and helps officers from across #TeamLeeds to meet with people in later life and discuss any consultations, proposed changes to services and supports the co-production of new initiatives.
- December 2023**  
 Publication of the Director of Public Health Annual Report 2023 – Ageing Well: Our Lives in Leeds. The report heard from 945 residents aged 50+ and 53 professionals working with people age 50+ around what impacts their ability to age well, both positive and negative.

## The opportunities and challenges presented by an ageing population are well rehearsed.

People in later life contribute in countless ways to Leeds' rich and vibrant communities – through the skills and knowledge that they bring to their local communities, high levels of volunteering, acting formally and informally as community connectors, intergenerational interactions, unpaid caring roles, and through the skills and experience they bring to their workplaces.

However, inequalities exist in later life and there are opportunities to increase the time spent in good health in later to enable people to live healthy, fulfilling and independent lives. This provides the focus for our Age Friendly Leeds Strategy and Action Plan.



# Our Approach

This strategy encompasses key topics (domain) areas and cross-cutting themes that underpin our approach.

## Our Topic (Domain) Areas

These six topic (domain) areas have been adapted for Leeds from the Age Friendly City domains developed by the World Health Organisation:



## Our Cross-cutting Themes

The following cross-cutting themes underpin our approach to delivering the Age Friendly Leeds Strategy and are aligned to the Best City Ambition Team Leeds approach:

- **Team Leeds Approach:**  
Age Friendly is everyone’s business, so this involves collective action around embedding the consideration of Age Friendly into all of our policies and services, and challenging negative stereotypes relating to ageing. We place people in later life at the heart of our strategy and ensure their diverse voices shape all Leeds initiatives, while providing timely feedback, ensuring contributions are not only valued but also lead to meaningful impact. We also use data, evidence and research to focus on what matters to people in later life, collaborating with academic partners to enhance age-friendly initiatives.
- **Inequalities, Equity & Financial Inclusion:**  
Focusing on the most deprived areas, addressing barriers faced by people in later life and acknowledging age as a protected characteristic intersecting with other factors like ethnicity and gender. This includes aligning our work towards being a Fairer, Healthier Leeds/Marmot City to address the social determinants of health, embedding equity, fairness and age-friendly considerations into all policies and services, ensuring services and resources are prioritised in a way that is proportionate to people’s needs.
- **Effective Communication & Digital Inclusion:** Providing age-friendly information that is clear, easily accessible, and available in various formats, while supporting the use of digital formats.

- **Social & Intergenerational Connections:**  
Ensuring there is a strong focus on being socially connected and connected across generations. This involves embedding opportunities to increase social connections and reduce social isolation in later life into all of our policies and services.

# Our Plan

For each topic (domain) area we have an action plan with:

## Outcomes

What we want our end result to be.

## Objectives

What we are focusing on to achieve our outcomes.

## Actions

What actions we will take to deliver on our Age Friendly ambition, outcomes, objectives and crosscutting themes.

## Older People’s Expectations

What people in later life have told us they expect from Age Friendly Leeds.

## Topic (Domain) Lead(s)

People that lead on objectives and actions under each topic.



# Governance: The Age Friendly Leeds Board (AFLB)

The board is chaired by the Council's elected Older People's Equality Champion.

**The role of the board is to:**

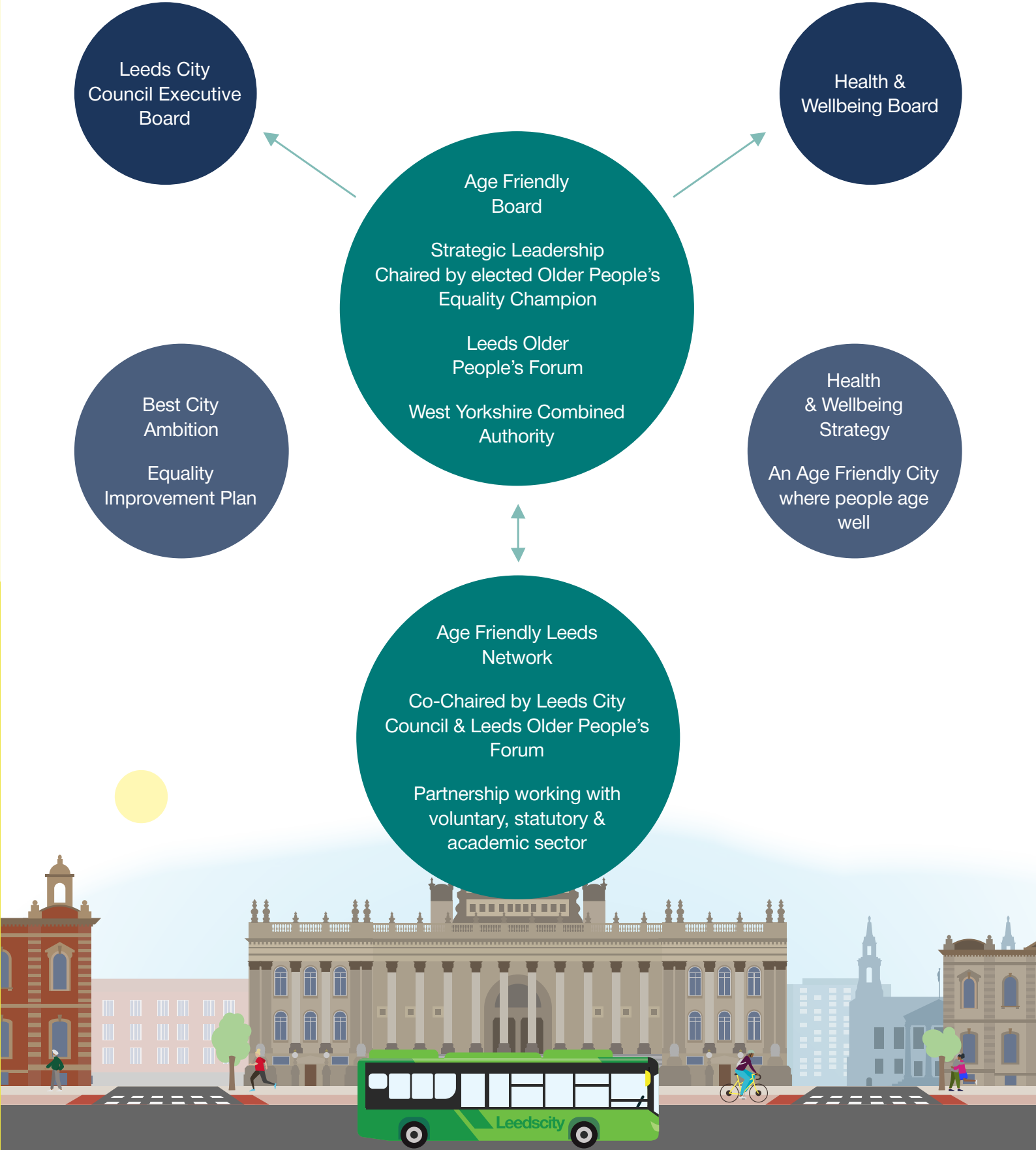
- Provide political leadership and set the strategic direction for the Age Friendly Leeds work programme.
- Ensure the approaches, objectives and actions in the Age Friendly Strategy & Action Plan are being met through oversight of quarterly highlight and flash update progress reports from officers across the council and their partners.
- Provide strategic direction and guidance to topic (domain) leads to ensure the needs of people in later life are being met.
- Hear the voices of people in later life and respond to data, intelligence and research to ensure actions are evidence based.
- Nurture the 'Team Leeds' approach, providing an opportunity for collaboration and collective action.
- Build on existing work around people in later life.
- Share progress updates with the Age Friendly Leeds Partnership.



## Key Performance Indictors

A framework to measure the impact of the action plan was developed with support from the Centre for Ageing Better. Reporting was previously through the Best City Ambition but due to changes in that, reporting is currently being reviewed. These indicators are:

- Indices of Deprivation Affecting Older People.
- Disability Free Life Expectancy by gender at birth and at 65.
- Healthy Life Expectancy by gender at birth and at 65.
- The number of new build properties built to accessible standards M4 (2) and M4 (3) (reported to the Infrastructure, Investment & Inclusive growth Scrutiny Board twice a year).



# The Age Friendly Leeds Network (AFLN)

The network is co-chaired by the Head of Public Health (Ageing Well), Leeds City Council (LCC) and the Chair of Leeds Older People's Forum.

**The role of the network is to bring together statutory, voluntary and private sectors to:**

- Hear the voices of older people and identify priorities in local data in relation to making Leeds an Age Friendly City.
- Address the identified priorities from older people and local data in order to make Leeds an Age Friendly City.
- Raise the profile of Age Friendly Leeds priorities and actions.
- To support Age Friendly initiatives in our communities and other broader initiatives which help us to work towards Leeds becoming an Age Friendly City.
- Empower partnership members to develop and put Age Friendly actions in place.



Membership is open to any organisation that has an interest in and is committed to making Leeds an Age Friendly City.



The AFLN meets quarterly and reports on successes and challenges to the Age Friendly Leeds Board. Each meeting is themed around a topic or theme from this action plan, prioritised by AFLN members.

# Regional, National and International Partnerships



Leeds is recognised as an example of good practice for our Age Friendly work and is a member of:

- **World Health Organisation (WHO) Age Friendly Cities**  
Established to foster the exchange of experience and mutual learning between cities and communities worldwide.
- **Eurocities**  
Through the Council's membership of the Eurocities network which has a 'Wellbeing & Ageing' group.
- **UK Network of Age Friendly Communities**  
A group of communities from across the UK that are collaborating to bring about change in the way that we respond to population ageing. Managed by the Centre for Ageing Better.
- **Yorkshire & Humber Healthy Ageing Community of Improvement**  
A network of public health leads in the region with a healthy ageing/Age Friendly remit which enables collaboration and sharing of best practice. The Head of Public Health (Ageing Well) in Leeds co-chairs this meeting.
- **Yorkshire & Humber Age Well, Live Well Network**  
Which brings together social care, NHS and public health leads in the region with an ageing well remit to enable collaboration and sharing of best practice.

Leeds was one of three places to have a strategic partnership with the Centre for Ageing Better to further test and apply 'what works' to make Leeds a better place to age. Our formal partnership with the Centre for Ageing Better ran from October 2017- 2022 and since, Leeds continues to maintain strong links with the Centre to:

- Support the adoption (and early adoption) of evidence-based practice.
- Support the understanding of how evidence lands in the context of ageing in place.
- Amplify the voice of people in later life in Leeds through national platforms.
- Raise the profile of Age Friendly Leeds through the UK Age Friendly Cities Network.
- Be a critical friend to each other's work.





# Get involved

Consider what actions you can take as an individual or as a community, at home or at work, or what your organisation can do to make Leeds an Age Friendly city. Age Friendly is everyone's business, we can all benefit and play our part in making Leeds the best city to grow old in.

**Sign up to  
the Friendly  
Communities  
Newsletter:**



**Become an Age Friendly  
Ambassador or Age Friendly  
Organisation:**

Join the Age Friendly Leeds  
Network

## Want to find out more?

### Contact us:

#### Leeds City Council

✉ [agefriendly@leeds.gov.uk](mailto:agefriendly@leeds.gov.uk)

☎ (0113) 3783831

🖱 [www.leeds.gov.uk/age-friendly-leeds](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/age-friendly-leeds)

🐦 @AgeFriendlyLDS

#### Leeds Older Peoples Forum

✉ [Info@opforum.org.uk](mailto:Info@opforum.org.uk)

☎ (0113) 2441697

🖱 [www.opforum.org.uk](http://www.opforum.org.uk)

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Leeds  
**Health and Wellbeing  
Board**

