



**Age Friendly York**

**West Office, Station Rise, York, YO1 6GA**

**Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025**

**10.00-11.30 am**

1. Introductions and welcome
  - a. Guest – Age Friendly York Service Update (Chris Farrell)
  - b. Guest – U3A Initiative (Beryll Oppenheim)
  - c. Guest – Let Liz Home Organiser
2. Minutes
3. Take a Seat – feedback on new name
4. Age Friendly York Impact Report
5. Age Friendly York Handbook – Your Home
6. Progress on a page – Getting Out and About
7. Quick updates:
  - a. Home assessment tool
  - b. Happy to Chat Bench
8. Any Other Business



Age Friendly York

## Age Friendly York Meeting Notes – February 2025

### Presentations

We had two guest speakers at the meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> February, so there was lots of information to absorb and discuss:

- Mike Richardson presented the consultation on the Adult Social Care strategy: [Have your say in current consultations – City of York Council](#). If you want to comment but don't want to complete a survey then please send comments to [AgeFriendlyYork@york.gov.uk](mailto:AgeFriendlyYork@york.gov.uk) One of the members has already completed it and it took her 45minutes including providing comments. Some of the comments raised included:
  - Age Friendly York has gathered comments from residents throughout the year and the things that are most important to them are: quality of pavements; toilets; good public transport; benches etc. Although these issues are not directly to do with an ASC strategy they have an indirect impact for example reducing the risk of a fall due to a raised paving slab reduces hospital admissions and potentially on going care. Not feeling confident in going out increases sedentary behaviour and social isolation which impacts on wellbeing and independence.
  - Talking Points provided access to a social worker in the community prior to things becoming a crisis. Would be good to see the preventative agenda captured in the strategy.
  - Would be good to see the approach aligned with the neighbourhood model that is being developed
  - The [Easy Read](#) version helps to provide a summary of the strategy in Plain English.
- Chris Farrell presented an update of the progress with Age UK York:
  - They will look to come back in April with further updates
  - There was discussion around the words used within the mission and vision statement. Chris explained this was a co-designed piece of work done alongside 50 older people.

- Chris explained about the impact and review of the day services with the loss in council funding. Age UK York have managed to continue a reduced offer but are still engaging 80 older residents.
- There was a discussion around the transport to day clubs which is essential and supported by the Age UK York driver as well as York Wheels
- Chris talked about positive imagery of older people with their new postcards taking this approach

Please contact [AgeFriendlyYork@york.gov.uk](mailto:AgeFriendlyYork@york.gov.uk) if you require a copy of the presentation slides.

## Getting Out and About

- There were some comments in Your Views about A boards causing obstruction. York Older People Assembly had instigated a [policy](#) that the Council have adopted and is still in place. It was felt that there was an increase in obstacles during the pandemic so we will need to keep an eye on things to make sure the policy is adhered to. There was a discussion about pavement cafes and having a clearance between the pavement and the road. There are [policies](#) in place regarding pavement cafes.
- There was the suggestion that delivery of goods to busy city centre streets should have a restriction on the size of the lorries to reduce disruption.
- There was a discussion about people who use a wheelchair booking a taxi. This was a topic that was mentioned by both residents and groups as an issue. Age Friendly York called a couple of community transport meetings. The main issues identified was 1. Booking a taxi in advance if you are a person who uses a wheelchair 2. Concessionary bus pass users not going back to public transport. There was a deliberate approach to ensure new licences that are issued are suitable for people who use a wheelchair. It was hoped that this would resolve the problem in respect to being able to book a suitable taxi in advance. However indications from York Wheels and Age UK York were that this problem still exists. **Action:** to pick up outside of the meeting.
- The transport team are picking up on the issue of reduced public transport use by concessionary bus pass holders. This will be looked at wider to raise the profile of barriers that can exist in using public transport. The comments raised through Your Views and other means have been collated by RS and passed onto the transport team alongside the feedback from the transport survey.
- York Wheels have been asked to park in the loading bay when collecting someone who has just had an eye operation. They have warned that they will get a parking ticket if they park outside. **Action:** Carl will talk to a property colleague
- Take a Seat – [Rotary York Ainsty](#) have very kindly agreed to purchase two Happy To Chat Bench signs. We will be putting one at one of the new benches at North Street Gardens. Any suggestions for the second one? We are also putting two on Acomb Front Street benches. The list of Happy to Chat Benches can be found on the [Live Well York webpage Places to Sit](#).

## Your Service

- We agreed to invite Susan Wood to the next meeting to talk about the targeted approach they have been using to maximise residents income, particularly Pension Credit.
- Tom Warren-Dolman from the Integrated Care Board provided an update of the self-monitoring devices to check high blood pressure. This has been running for a year now at 3 different locations in York (Energise, Morrisons and Tang Hall Community Centre) with the devices used 552 times. This has identified 8% of people using the device as having Hypertension and therefore able to assess support to reduce their high blood pressure. It was recognised that not everyone would feel comfortable using the device in a public space and this should be seen as one of a number of approaches to identify residents with high blood pressure. Once the data is analysed we will know if there is a case for continued funding of this initiative.

## Your Home

- The Your Home workshop identified that many people do not think of housing options when preparing for older age. It is usually triggered by a crisis. We visited a retirement scheme in Osbaldwick and joined their coffee morning to see if residents would be interested in a pier-based solution. It became apparent that an informal approach would work best, encouraging people to visit the scheme through providing activities in their community centre. I approached [U3A](#) and are currently exploring them bringing the activities to the retirement schemes. We are looking to test this concept in Campbell Court and Majorie Waite Court. A second meeting has been arranged in February to explore the idea further. This will be followed by a questionnaire to look at what activities residents are interested in.

## Your Time

- DW mentioned that the 50+ Festival and International Day of Older People events for 2025 are starting to be planned. The day of the IDOP celebration is Saturday 27th September.
- In addition to the U3A initiative mentioned in Your Home we are exploring bringing physical activities to sheltered housing schemes through York St John University. The staff are trained in physical assessment and are currently training in exercises for people with joint replacements. The Health Trainers are also saying that a lot of their referrals are people that are struggling with pain management so exercise programmes may be a possibility.

## Your Information

- The results of the Your Information survey were provided to the meeting. It was noted that work was being done to ensure that digital was not the only offer and that these different solutions were used to provide information to residents. These include:
  - Ward based newsletters
  - York Talking Newspaper
  - Community group newspapers like: YOPA; York Carers Centre; Healthwatch York etc
  - Continued use of flyers
  - Word of mouth
  - Community workers eg Local Area Coordinators
  - Volunteers eg/ Health Champions
  - Live Well York personal printable booklet

We know that 30% of people over 65 do not use the internet.

- In addition [Live Well York](#) is utilised as a partnership website to hold community based information and services in one place

## General

- The Terms of Reference were approved
- The Age Friendly York achievements for 2024 were summarised

## Additional suggestions

- Provide time after the meeting for people to chat
- Provide a comfort break
- Suggest guest to cover environmental considerations (perhaps in August prior to environmental week)
- We are aware a lot of older volunteers did not go back to volunteering after the pandemic. To contact York CVS to see if there could be a targeted approach for volunteers that are retired.
- See if it is possible to request for one room to permanently be set up with captions for those who are hard of hearing. This would significantly reduce the time for setting up and clearing away and makes for a smoother transition between room bookings.

## Take a Seat Review

The access team have been working in partnership with Age Friendly York and have visited and reviewed the existing venues that are on the scheme. A detailed email was provided showing the increased information which will be available for all participating venues. This includes: level access; offer of a seat; whether the seat has arms; offer of use of their toilet; whether it is a accessible toilet and whether there is babby changing facilities. So this initiative is wider and all age and needed to change the name of the scheme to reflect this.

Some initial proposals were provided with a request to indicate preference and the reason why. The initial votes through Age Friendly York members were as follows:

Happy to Help.	3
At or For your convenience	3
Here for You	3
Take a seat	1

However a number of members provided alternative scheme names:

- Have a break
- Have a quick break
- Here to help
- Place to rest
- place to pee
- Take a break
- toilet stop
- Take a pew
- Use our loo
- For York convenience
- A place to go
- A throne in the throng
- Come in for a comfort break
- Room to rest
- Convenience for you
- Feel Free
- Comfort shop
- Easy shop
- Relax and shop

- Shop with support
- York support
- York comfort
- Easy York
- Flexi shop

We are going to try to narrow down this list at the Age Friendly meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> April. We will then suggest between one and three scheme names and the reason/s why to the Access Team for consideration.

Here is the feedback provided by members of Age Friendly York:

- The word **convenience** is synonymous with toilets.
- The pictograms clearly indicate the type of help available. I also think the words "**happy to help**" are important as the business is volunteering this and that says a lot about them
- "**Here for You**" because it lists exactly what is on offer inside the store. The labels speak for themselves but I can understand that they may be difficult to decipher for some people. Unless you're familiar with the content, the play on words with "At your convenience" may not be understood. And while you could argue that it's not "specific" I think "**Happy to help**" invites more enquiry as well as being more "general" in application. The same could apply to "Here for you" but I think people might be more diffident about asking what it meant or covered.....
- I like **Here for You** as the title for the new take a seat initiative. Well done
- I have yet to tackle the details of the current consultation but my immediate thought is that a priority should be that participants should receive some obvious acknowledgment of their involvement in some way .. Secondly that the offering ie toilet facilities should if possible be reflected sensitively in the title of the scheme. Several of the suggested titles don't reflect this. I do appreciate that a lot of energy and commitment has already been devoted to this revamp.....and I can envisage your eyes rolling in irritation at my suggestions !!!!  
Finally....('my constant leit motiv ...'more eye rolling from your end!!) this marketing of the scheme ie the stickers is far too complicated and wordy...one simply cannot reflect every type of potential user.....and will confuse those considering the facilities
- **Have a break** or. **Have a short break**
- Thanks for work on this. '**Here to help**' sounds simple enough alongside the facilities guide. 'convenience' is a bit old fashioned (and long!)  
'No step free access' could be ambiguous for neuro divergent. Step access with handrail (or no handrail!) could be more useful to know.
- These seem to me too generic: Happy to help; Here for you

- Ref the wording, I think the image of steps could be confusing. Could you make the word "No" next to the graphic, capitals, ie "NO step-free access. Or better still, say what there is: "Warning: steps".
- What about '**Feel Free**' followed by 'to use our seats/toilet/baby changing etc.' I think this is perhaps more empowering for those using the services. I think conveniences is a term out of use for younger people, happy to help and here for you are about the person needing help rather than being offered a choice.
- Please don't use the term "at your convenience" - many people over 50 immediately think of "Carry on at your convenience" - if you don't remember it then Google it. Personally I'm not keen on the word "accessible" as meaning disabled facilities - nobody, whether disable or not wants an inaccessible toilet!





## Moving Towards an Age Friendly York

### Impact Report March 2025

The UK Network of Age-friendly Communities, overseen by the Centre for Ageing Better, inspires, connects and supports 91 Age-friendly Communities around the UK to improve the lives of older people. Over 50% of members of the UK Network of Age-friendly Communities were engaged to understand the benefits of the Age-friendly Communities approach, the role of the UK Network in realising these benefits, and the mechanisms that support change.

In Age-friendly Communities, a variety of organisations work together with older people to follow the World Health Organisation's (WHO's) Age-friendly Communities framework, taking steps to ensure that everyone can age well.

The Centre for Ageing Better have produced a [national impact report](#). This briefing provides an overview of York's impact using the same headings to the national report. These are the headline impacts identified in the national report with local examples of how we have worked to make an impact:

#### Expanding older people's access to and use of local spaces

##### Making local spaces more accessible and improving independence through access to transport, outdoor spaces and buildings.

- We have championed the importance of benches to enable people to access local spaces by working with Goodgym York to run all the streets of York and map them, indicating which ones are age friendly. This helps to evidence where there are gaps and new benches are required. Having regular benches enables people to break up their journey to rest their legs and reach the local spaces they would have otherwise not managed to get to.
- The council has commissioned Access Able to provide good quality information about public venues so that anyone with accessibility challenges can access local spaces with confidence.
- We work in partnership with the York Bus Forum to ensure older people's voices are heard in relation to public transport
- We set up community transport task and finish groups to identify and problem solve key challenges with representation from the executive Councillor for transport, the transport team, community groups, community transport groups and residents
- We are looking at creating a local version of a housing check list for developers that will then inform the Local Plan in ensuring properties are suitable for the life course. This check list includes access to amenities in the community.

#### Expanding older people's access to support and services

##### Helping improve design of, and communication around, local services to improve accessibility and better meet older people's needs.

- We have entered over 600 services on Live Well York so that people know what is available. We have created the opportunity to add any of these services into a printable personal booklet for people who do not use IT.
- We have created the opportunity for Age Friendly Ambassadors so that there is a named older citizen that can be invited to relevant meetings to inform decision making.
- We facilitated a sensory impairment meeting, giving the opportunities for people with lived experience and commissioners to discuss the important aspects of service delivery in advance of a commissioning process.

## Increasing older people's connections to and inclusion in society

### Encouraging activities that improve social participation and inclusion, increasing intergenerational and cross-cultural connections.

- We recognise the importance of connections in society and the risk of losing connections as people get older. We have partnered with U3A to pilot the concept of bringing their social activities to the retirement schemes to remove transport barriers and create stronger connections in the community by welcoming other people in.
- We have set up a Homeshare York initiative to match an older person who has a spare room and needs some support with a younger person who needs affordable accommodation.
- We have worked very closely with the Access Officer to ensure ageing-related issues are considered alongside other accessible considerations.
- We worked in partnership with York Cares to facilitate the introduction of intergenerational activities

## Enhancing older people's voice, representation and inclusion in decision-making

### Creating mechanisms to enhance representation and inclusion of older people in decision-making to shape public life.

- We have established an Age Friendly York co-production group since 2019 to provide a platform to discuss and problem solve issues that impact older people.
- We have supported the design of consultations that impact on older people and provided feedback to the consultations to ensure there is a strong older person's voice.
- Local older people who are part of Age Friendly York have sat on interview panels for senior members of staff as well as tender panels for older people services.

## Improving older people's health and wellbeing

### Developing opportunities and activities that support the health and wellbeing of older people.

- We are working with York CVS and Age UK York to increase the awareness of volunteering to older people. We recognise that this does not only support their local communities but also enhances the wellbeing of the volunteer.
- We have raised the profile of older people stating that they would be happy to use self-monitoring devices. We have specifically created an Age Friendly York Health Ambassador as we recognise the importance of influence health decisions.
- We support the International Day of Older People and the 50+ Festival in recognition of its positive approach and impact on health and wellbeing.



Age Friendly York

## Age Friendly York Handbook

Evolving handbook – last updated 24<sup>th</sup> March 2025

This handbook has been designed for people and organisations involved with or wanting to identify ways to make York a better place to age. This is an adapted version of the [National Age Friendly Communities Handbook \(February 2025\)](#).

The handbook is based on the World Health Organisation's Eight Domains of Age-friendly Communities. These domains are part of a framework first published in 2007, which cover the key components that impact on how well people age. We have adapted these domains to align with York's strategic approach.

For each York based domain, we have provided a summary of its influence on people's lives; an explanation of the need for it to be addressed; and some key stats to illustrate the challenges and opportunities within the domain. This is followed by the core principles that we advise considering in any policy. To illustrate what kinds of actions can be taken, we have included examples of practices that are already making a difference across a range of types of communities and where we are making progress in York, have provided local age friendly examples.

We recognise, that there will always be challenges and barriers to overcome but believe, by working together, we can influence change and make progress in "[working towards an age friendly city](#)".

### Why be age-friendly?

The UK population is ageing.

- In the last 40 years, the number of people aged 50 and over has increased by 47% and nearly one in five of us are now aged 65 or over.<sup>1</sup>
- Over the next 20 years that will become one in four.
- Meanwhile, the number of people aged 80 and over – the fastest growing segment of the population – is set to more than double to over 6 million.<sup>2</sup>
- By 2043, 34% of York's population will be aged 65+.<sup>3</sup> This is a 55% increase on current levels.

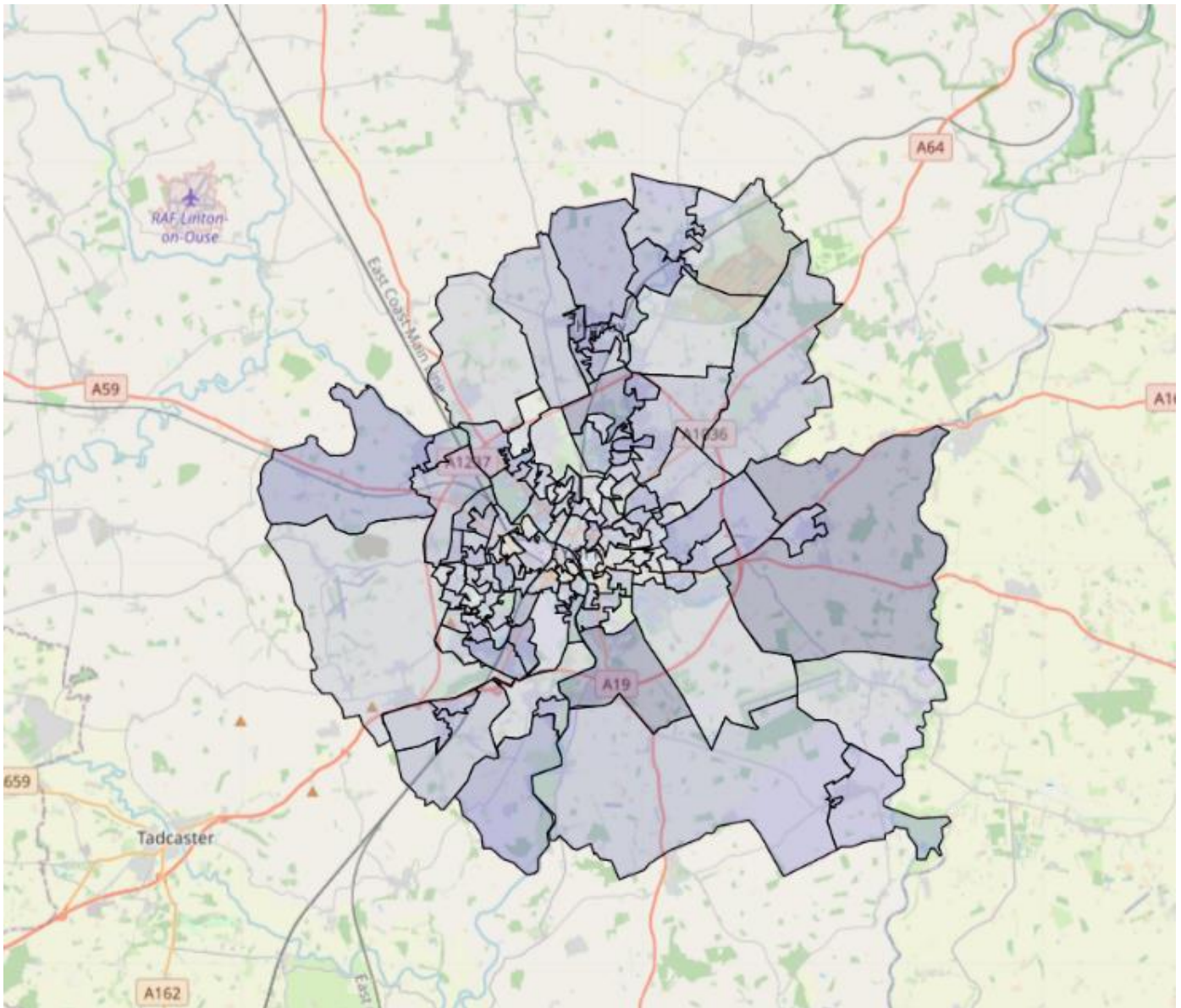
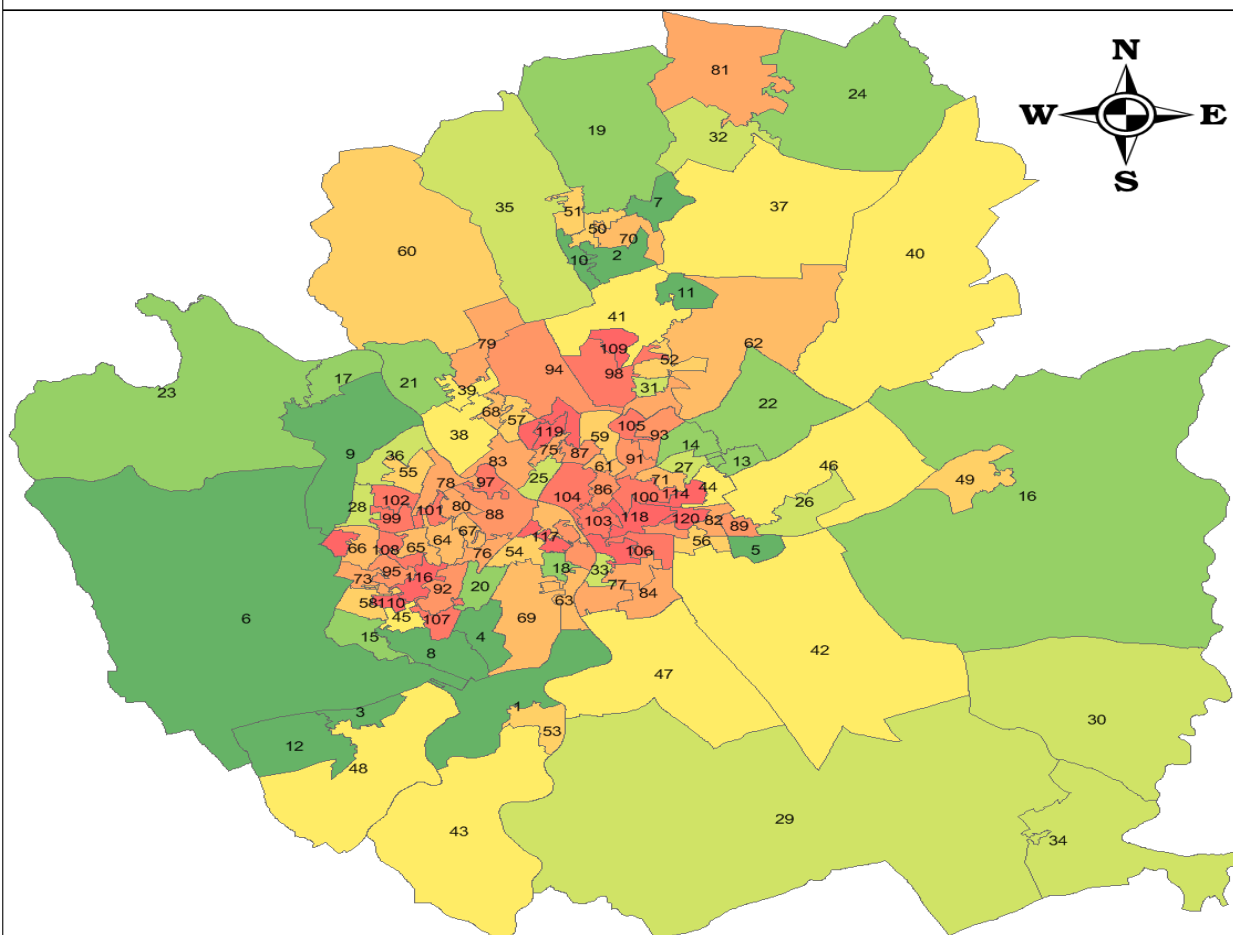


Fig 1. 65+ population in York. The darker shading shows a higher density of older people.

- In York 9.4% of the 60+ population are classified as income deprived in comparison to 13.6% national average.
- When compared with York's statistical neighbours (16 "similar" local authorities) York is ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> lowest.
- This paints a good picture for York, however there is disparity in the city with pockets of deprivation.
- 2 income deprived areas within the bottom 10% of all areas of England (within Clifton and Hull Road wards)
- With a further 3 within the bottom 20% (within Micklegate, Westfield and Guildhall).<sup>4</sup>

## Income Deprivation Affecting Older People 2019 Rank for each LSOA within York



Key to Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index	
1 is least deprived; 120 is most deprived	
<span style="color: red;">■</span> Decile 10 Most Deprived	<span style="color: orange;">■</span> Decile 5
<span style="color: red;">■</span> Decile 9	<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> Decile 4
<span style="color: orange;">■</span> Decile 8	<span style="color: lightgreen;">■</span> Decile 3
<span style="color: orange;">■</span> Decile 7	<span style="color: green;">■</span> Decile 2
<span style="color: orange;">■</span> Decile 6	<span style="color: green;">■</span> Decile 1 Least Deprived

0 2.54  
kilometres  
Scale: 1:106,500

Produced by

Business Intelligence Hub

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“The fact that many of us are living longer is to be celebrated, but this huge shift requires system-wide and nationwide action, affecting infrastructure, economies, and services. Local authorities have a key role to play. Local government’s role as place makers and conveners, as well as service providers make them well placed to act far beyond social care and for the long-term benefit of the people who live in their local authority area and future generations.

We recognise that all use of capacity and budgets involves tough choices, and that no locality will be able to implement all the recommendations presented. However, where improvements can be made, this handbook can help to ensure they make a real difference to the age-friendliness of your community.

When inequalities in how people age are addressed, all of society benefits. Many of the changes that can make a difference to people’s independence, inclusion and wellbeing in later life benefit other groups. This includes children and young people, parents, disabled people, and people of all ages experiencing structural and place-based inequalities.

Many older people face barriers in accessing community spaces, employment and volunteering opportunities, and local business. But when these restrictions are removed, it benefits the economy. Likewise, the same benefits are seen when older people can access support to improve their health and financial security.”

[The Centre for Ageing Better- Handbook Feb 2025](#)

## Where is York now on this age friendly Journey?

On [13<sup>th</sup> March 2019 a proposal was approved through the Health & Wellbeing Board](#) to use the Age Friendly Communities toolkit as a framework to deliver against the Ageing Well arm of the Health & Wellbeing strategy.

The Age Friendly Partnership provided the reporting method to ensure the initiative progressed and was scrutinised through an Age Friendly York group that consisted of York older people and organisations who had a direct interest.

The York based domains were agreed and align with local strategic considerations:

- Getting Out and About (Your Journey and Your destination)
- Your Information
- Your Time
- Your Home
- Your Service

From 2019 to 2022 we consulted with older people living in York alongside groups and organisations that had a direct interest in the needs of older people. From there we created reports about each of these domains which included what the key challenges were and what support and resources were available in the city. These reports are called “baseline assessments” and can be found on the [Age Friendly York documents section](#).

The state of play within each of the domains has led to an action plan being produced. The [Age Friendly York evolving action plan](#) identifies key pieces of work that are required to improve the quality of life for older people. It is called “evolving” as we recognised that we needed to provide an approach that enable a voice to be raised and listened to when it is relevant to the older person. These comments go to the Age Friendly York meeting and can result in a proposed change to the action plan. [Your Voice, Your Experience can be found in the consultation section of the City of York Council website](#).

When the action points were progressed, we submitted them to the Age Friendly York Meeting followed by the Ageing Well Partnership for sign off. This was an update on a page using a “you said-we did” approach.

In Autumn 2024 we started reviewing the action points in each domain and refreshing them based on contributions from older people living in York, organisation, groups, councillors and businesses.

Alongside the baseline assessments created in 2021-2022 we created a State of Aging report for York in 2023 to run alongside the [national State of Aging report 2022-23](#) through the Centre for Ageing Better. A refresh of this report should be available in spring 2025.

**This, second cycle, will not have a new stand-alone baseline assessment. Instead, alongside refreshing the action plan we will develop this evolving handbook to provide a transparent and accountable approach to Age Friendly York. This will include findings from the State of Aging report.**

## Domain: Your Home

### Summary

The opportunity to live in a decent home is currently a challenge for people of all ages. The right housing enables us to stay living comfortably and safely in our communities as we age. Housing in an age-friendly community can help to maintain or even improve physical and mental health and wellbeing, as well as support independence well into later life.

“In planning and designing the city and new housing this focuses on no cars and playing fields, sports. There is little or no consideration to build or design age friendly. We don't play rugby or football but 106 focuses on this, what about walking spaces, social spaces, things appreciate for older people's healthy lifestyles. At a point in life a car or good public transport becomes essential you are designing us out yet we are the ones able to buy”

○ *Female 55-65 YO10*

“[We need] grants available for home owners who want to update their homes when on a pension.”

○ *Female 66-75 YO26*

“Need to talk about low-cost housing. Less student accommodation in the city. Plenty of room up on the campus.”

### Need

Nationally there are nearly 2.5 million older people living in a home that do not meet government minimum standards for decency. These are homes with hazards or that can't be heated to a comfortable temperature resulting in a risk to people's health, wellbeing, financial security and, in some cases, death. Enabling more older people to live in suitable housing would also save the NHS and social care up to £1.5 billion per year.<sup>5</sup>

There were an estimated 23,200 excess winter deaths which occurred in England and Wales in the 2018 to 2019 winter. There is currently no post-COVID data available to understand the impact of increased fuel prices and loss of winter fuel benefits.

Older people who are disabled, from a minority ethnic group, or on low income, are more likely to be living in homes that harm their quality of life and increase risk of injury.

There are an estimated 1.8 million people with accessibility needs that are living in unsuitable homes. When it comes to new build housing, local housing plans can also sometimes reflect the one-size-fits-all stereotypes of older people that fails to meet the range of local housing needs and budgets older people have.

Without a sufficient and suitable range of local housing, support and information to access repairs or adaptations, or to understand their options, older people may end up leaving their existing communities and support networks to find somewhere suitable to live.

### Key stats

#### Nationally -

- 49% of the homes that don't meet the government criteria for decency are headed by someone 55 and older (2.6 million people)<sup>6</sup>
- 60% of homes defined as excessively cold are currently occupied by at least one person over the age of 55<sup>7</sup>
- £595 million per year is spent by the NHS to treat ailments caused by poor-quality housing for those 55 and over<sup>8</sup>

- Only 9% of homes have all four accessibility features (a WC at entrance level; flush threshold; sufficiently wide doorways and circulation space; and level access to the main entrance) that make a home visitable<sup>9</sup>
- 52% of older people live alone. Wellbeing is higher among those who live with others<sup>10</sup>
- The number of people aged 50 and over living in privately rented homes doubled between 2001 and 2021. More than one in three (37%) people of pension age in the private rented sector are living in relative poverty<sup>11</sup>
- Across England, the mean weekly mortgage payment for someone aged 65+ (who was still paying a mortgage), was £129. The majority (44%) within this age group were paying less than £60 per week, however 17.2% were paying £180 or more per week.<sup>12</sup>

### Locally (York) -

- Across all ages 66.1% of tenures were owner occupier, with 13.9% socially rented and 18% privately rented.
- 12.9% of all households were comprised of one person aged 65+, and a further 8.8% were families with all occupants aged 65+.
- Across all ages, 14.7% of households are classified as fuel poor<sup>13</sup> York is above the England rate of 13.2% but below the Yorkshire and Humber regional average of 17.5%.

### Principles

Age awareness in policies and investments can improve the number of new and existing homes which are accessible and safe for older people and allow people to age in their own homes and communities for as long as they want and are able to.

Part of this is about ensuring that support and information is available for people to stay in their homes or identify and find new housing options, including for people on low and changing incomes, and the growing numbers of older people in private rented accommodation.

Wherever possible, new housing should be designed to a 'lifetime' standard, and new models of housing trialled with the input of older adults and communities to meet the needs of local ageing populations.

1. Housing is safe, accessible, and affordable. This is achieved when:
  - a. Affordable housing options or financial support for those on low income is available.
  - b. Accessibility adaptations are readily available.
  - c. All new homes are built to be accessible and adaptable.
  - d. Information, advice and support is available for people of all tenures and incomes to maintain, repair or adapt their home.
  - e. Residential building entrances and hallways and the immediate area are secure and accessible
2. Housing choices reflect the diversity of needs and desires of older people. This is achieved when:
  - a. People have access to a range of housing sizes and types in their community that support changing needs at different life stages.
  - b. Local housing strategies promote innovation to meet the varied needs of older people, including through alternative housing models (cohousing, intergenerational housing, and so on).
  - c. Information and advice on local housing options is available and easily accessible, maximising personal choice.
  - d. Older people are involved in housing planning co-design and consultation.



## Practical examples

### Creating age-friendly developments –

The cross-sectoral Greater Manchester Housing Planning and Ageing Group has produced a guide for developers, planners, policymakers and architects. It sets out factors to consider when planning, designing and developing homes and neighbourhoods to make them age-friendly, such as how and why to engage with older people, and how to incorporate design features in communal and private living spaces that support independent and fulfilling lives. The guide is successfully being used for a new 250-apartment age-inclusive development in Stockport.

Age Friendly York looked at this initiative alongside the [Age Friendly Ireland Rating Homes Checklist](#). We explored these options in a Your Home workshop in September 2024. We concluded that the option that is more likely to create system change in York would be to influence the Local Plan (see action point 3).

Staying Put Agency – Middlesbrough Unitary Major change The Staying Put Agency, part of Middlesbrough Independent Living Services (MILS), supports age-friendly practices by providing essential home adaptations and minor repairs to help older adults live safely and independently. Services include installing grab rails, ramps, and personal alarms, as well as offering winter warmth support. These efforts enhance accessibility, safety, and comfort in the home, promoting the wellbeing and independence of older residents. The agency's private works offer supports individuals by liaising with builders, involving family members in decisions if desired, and ensuring high-quality work. They also collaborate with Cleveland Police and Trading Standards to stop rogue traders.

Housing Options for Older People – Care and Repair Newcastle, has partnered with the Elderly Accommodation Council (EAC) to help older people and their families make informed choices about housing and care. EAC has developed the online tool Housing Options for Older People (HOOP), which assesses whether a person's current housing provision remains fit for purpose, with questions about size, condition, location, costs and so on. It identifies needs and provides information about possible solutions or alternatives. By linking with Care and Repair, HOOP connects residents to the services and accommodation local to them. This supports independent and safer living.

Age Friendly York invited a PHD student in York to offer a discussion group in the Your Home workshop around housing options and a peer support approach. Her studies have identified that many older people are not planning for the future in respect to housing options. Decisions therefore often take place as the result of a crisis for example a serious fall. We followed up the workshop with a visit to a retirement scheme to talk to residents at their coffee morning.

It was agreed that the best approach to enable older local people to consider their options was informally by inviting them to a social activity. We therefore invited U3A to join the initiative to offer a social activity within a retirement scheme community room. This was seen to be mutually beneficial as it will also enable retirement scheme residents to feel more connected to their community. The proposal was approved by U3A in March 2025 providing the opportunity to pilot this initiative in Majorie Waite Court.

## Revised action points

1. Encourage people to share their experience of using telecare to increase confidence for those that have not used it.
2. Advocate intergenerational options being considered within developments and initiatives across York.
3. Influence any review of the Local Plan to include minimum level of accessible homes in all future developments as well as energy efficient.
4. Explore the potential to have Age Friendly Housing Ambassadors to encourage conversations in the community about:
  - o remaining independent at home and alternative housing.

- telecare
- falls prevention
- handyperson schemes
- making your home more energy efficient
- introduction to people with lived experience (for example, someone already living in sheltered housing or independent living schemes)
- having the conversation early

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## Progress on a Page

Find methods to reduce trips and falls in the exterior environment due to quality of pavements

(Action point 2: Getting Out & About)

### You said:

“Pavement surfaces are very uneven, or on a camber, making it difficult for me to get around the city centre easily. I often have to walk on the road.”

66-75 year old female (February 2025)

“Better level pavements please. Longer crossing times at lights. Obstacles e.g bins, packaging etc not allowed to impede less mobile people.”

76-85 year old Female (February 2025)

### We did:

- We engaged with the team that are responsible for looking after the public pavements. They informed us that there is a scheduled inspection of pavements and there is a works programme for non essential repairs. Essential repairs have a specific short timescale for completion.
- The team improved the reporting process which also provides the opportunity, through logging in, to receive a progress update
- Age Friendly York members then reported faulty paving and received a positive experience
- We approached the NHS to see if there was the possibility to record where someone has had a fall outside so we can create a direct link to the impact of poor paving and prevent falls happening at the same place. Unfortunately that was not possible.

### What happens next:

- The next step, now that we are confident in the reporting process, is to raise the awareness of [how to report fault paving](#). This could be in the form of a “Did You Know” campaign.

### Recommendation:

- That update the action point to: Increase the awareness of how to report faulty paving.

# Find methods to increase options for people to get to community activities and other locations where public transport does not suffice

(Action point 3: Getting Out & About)

## You said:

"I am dependent on public transport and very much regret the decision to stop the Dial and Ride bus service. This was a vital service and very much missed. Is there any hope that this service will be restarted?"

*Female 86+ YO41*

"Provide or support a service to replace Dial A Ride. increase the availability of wheelchair taxi/private hire vehicles especially at school run times. make sure that there is always an alternative to "online" contact/services for council services & champion this with other organisations."

*Female 55-65 YO31*

## We did:

- We set up two community transport meetings to look at whether any co-produced solutions could be found. It was identified at the time (this was prior to losing Dial a Ride) that the key challenges were:
  - access to booking a taxi in advance for people using a wheelchair
  - concessionary bus pass holders not going back to public transport post COVID.
- We invited a taxi driver to one of the meetings to try to understand the issues from their point of view. It became apparent that due to the small quantity of taxi drivers there was "dead miles" having to travel across the city to pick up the customer. Also when picking up and dropping off there was additional time required and it is illegal to charge while stationary. We looked at the potential for a compensation scheme but the travel budget we identified was cut in the budget savings.
- Licences were restricted so that they were only issued for drivers that has a suitable vehicle for people who use a wheelchair. This has taken a while to have traction but there now appears to be very positive progress. The stats for one taxi company are:
  - January 2025 - 162 advanced bookings
  - February 2025 - 146 advanced bookings
- Two organisations in a recent Age Friendly York meeting indicated that this was still a significant problem which is contradictory to the information above.
- YOPA carried out a small survey to try to better understand why people with concessionary bus passes were not going back on buses (65% in comparison to pre COVID, non-concessionary 95%). There was not a sufficient response to provide a clear picture but some feedback included: passengers no longer

happy for the windows to be left open; change in lifestyle choosing to stay local rather than go into town and general fear of infection.

- Age UK York have set up a Getting Out and About Service that can offer going back on the bus with someone for them to then be confident in using the bus again.

**What happens next:**

- The transport team will be gathering the data for the other taxi companies
- We will request an update on concessionary bus pass holders
- We have requested more detailed information from the providers to understand the cases the providers are aware of.

**Recommendation:**

- To maintain this as an action point as work in progress.

# Additional media to improve people's confidence and experience of getting out and about

(Action point 5: Getting Out & About)

## You said:



Age Friendly York member contacted highway regulations regarding these A boards causing an obstruction on what can be a busy street. (March 2025) 1

“I hate the 'bobbles' that are near the kerbside, they're very dangerous to walk on.”<sup>2</sup>

“Not allocated enough time for pedestrians to cross” x53

“No audio on bus routes” x9 (these comments are prior to the First Bus provision of audio visual on all their buses. However, we know 35% of concessionary bus pas holders did not return to buses post COVID. So we need to ensure people are aware of the improvements)<sup>4</sup>

## We did:

- We are aware that there are older people that do not get to hear about improvements or solutions to challenges of getting out and about. Quite often people rely on post (32% Age Friendly York survey 2024) or word of mouth (12%). We also recognise that post is costly and people do not always read mail that is not addressed to them. However, an exception appears to be local newsletters (27%) for their community.

## What happens next:

- Increase messaging through local newsletters
- Launch an Age Friendly York “Did you know” initiative. This could be through: local newsletters; Live Well York Latest News; and work of mouth through – Age Friendly York members; health champions and Local Area Coordinators. These can be key public health messages as well as a direct response to people's views fed back to Age Friendly York.
- Set up a comms meeting to explore additional options to widen messages to older people
- Contact leads to see what key messages they want local older people to know.

## Did You know examples:

1. The Council has an A Board policy. If you spot an obstruction you can report this to [highway.regulation@york.gov.uk](mailto:highway.regulation@york.gov.uk)
2. We are trialling an alternative surface to the bobbles at crossing points. Do try it out and provide your feedback to [cycaccessteam@york.gov.uk](mailto:cycaccessteam@york.gov.uk)

3. That the crossings in York are Puffin Crossings which means there is a camera that detects if someone is still crossing the road and holds the traffic lights on red.
4. That all York First buses now have next stop audio visual announcements with an induction hearing loop at every wheelchair space and priority seat.

**Recommendation:**

- To maintain this as an action point as work in progress.

## **Respond to feedback on electronic timetables at bus stops**

(Action point 6: Getting Out & About)

**You said:**

“Where there are electronic timetables they don't seem to have a good reliability record in terms of the sign working.”

“All bus stops should have electronic boards showing the time of the next bus.”

“Lots of electronic info displays in central York do not work”

There were 73 comments regarding bus information in the 2022 Age Friendly York survey. There have been improvements made since. It is also worth noting that we have received no comments in recent years about paper timetables a bus stops being out of date.

**We did:**

- This action point has not been picked up yet

**What happens next:**

- To contact the transport team to get an understanding of the approaches being taken to improve bus information.

**Recommendation:**

- To maintain this as an action point as this action has until now been on hold.

## Reports to follow

- Create an Age Friendly approach for provision of benches
- Shared spaces and being considerate of different needs
- Bus stop improvements
- Support improved reliability of buses through reduction of general traffic into the city centre
- Support reduced congestion and pollution through reduction of general traffic into the city centre, including supporting increased awareness of alternative environmental transport like e-bicycles
- Explore where proposed improved bus routes can be supported
- Increase awareness of functionality of puffin crossings
- Ensure that there is a citizen voice to improvement in access to green spaces
- For Age Friendly Citizen Group to continue to contribute to improving city centre foot street area ensuring there is an Age Friendly voice
- To align awareness opportunities of how to report faulty paving with how to report street light repairs