



Pen-y-Bont ar Ogwr
Oed-Gyfeillgar
Age-Friendly Bridgend



Age Friendly Bridgend Baseline Assessment

This document is designed to capture and present an overview of Bridgend County Borough at the inception of the Age Friendly Communities project so that we can map our journey and progress in becoming age friendly.

Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol



Baseline Assessment

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2026

1. Introduction

This document presents the comprehensive baseline assessment for Age-Friendly Communities Bridgend, a pivotal step toward achieving membership in the World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities. The core purpose of this assessment is to capture a precise snapshot of the County Borough at the inception of this project, enabling us to effectively map our progress and journey in becoming an environment where all residents can live longer, healthier, and more fulfilling lives.



The WHO Framework and Our Approach

The World Health Organisation established the Global Network in 2010 with the shared vision of connecting communities worldwide in a common mission: to make every locality a great place to grow older. By aspiring to membership, Bridgend commits to being inspired by, and inspiring, others in implementing evidence-based solutions that foster fairer and more sustainable societies. The network facilitates the vital exchange of information, knowledge, and unique lived experiences from across the globe.

This assessment utilises the established and internationally recognised WHO eight-domain structure as its guiding framework. These domains cover all aspects of community life that impact the health and quality of life of older residents:



The document provides an overview of the age-friendly communities concept, its aims, and objectives, while also illustrating the extensive existing engagement processes, services, activities, and best practices already in place within the county borough.



A Foundation of Partnership and Regional Collaboration

Bridgend sits within the Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board footprint. Our approach is fundamentally rooted in strong, cross-sector working, particularly with the third sector. We work in close partnership with public, third sector, and community organisations to deliver integrated services that consistently improve wellbeing across the entire life-course.

Bridgend's local wellbeing assessment has been conducted on a regional basis, recognising the long-standing tradition of collaboration in planning to improve population wellbeing within the newly formed Cwm Taf Morgannwg area. This regional approach now fully includes Bridgend, ensuring a cohesive strategy across the health board footprint. The assessment provides a comprehensive analysis of the social, economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing within Bridgend County Borough, identifying both key challenges and inherent strengths as the community evolves.

An Asset-Based Approach to Community Development

A defining feature of our strategy is the strong ethos of developing community ownership approaches to support meaningful and sustainable development. A "golden thread" in our approach is the use of Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) methodologies. This philosophy focuses on identifying and building upon the inherent strengths, skills, and assets that already exist within our people and communities, rather than focusing solely on deficits.

Regarding the development of Age Friendly Communities, Bridgend recognises its crucial leadership role. This leadership involves connecting deeply with our local populations and communities, as well as fostering broader partnerships including the Public Service Board.



Our Aspiration for Membership

This document serves as the foundational baseline measurement for the development of age-friendly communities in Bridgend. It is designed to capture and present an overview of where we stand today so that we can effectively map our journey and progress in the future.

Bridgend County Borough Council, our communities, and our partners aspire to full membership of the WHO network for specific, impactful reasons:

- **Empowerment and Inspiration:** We aim to inspire and be inspired by the global network, enabling meaningful changes in the lives of our residents and empowering individuals to take agency over their own health and wellbeing.
- **Evidence-Based Solutions:** We seek to create and access evidence-based solutions, leveraging the unique strengths present within our own community to implement real, lasting change.
- **Global Contribution:** We commit to contributing to the global community by facilitating the exchange of information, knowledge, and the unique lived experiences of people within Bridgend County Borough.

By establishing this baseline and leveraging the principles outlined in the WHO domains, Bridgend is committed to building a county borough that is inclusive, supportive, and a truly great place to grow older for all its residents.



1.1 Older People's Involvement in Bridgend

Bridgend's Age Friendly strategy for integrating the voices and needs of its older population into community planning is a genuinely collaborative, long-standing effort rooted in principles of co-production and citizen-driven change. The community and its partners have fostered a bottom-up philosophy, which aims to ensure sustainable change through shared ownership, moving away from a top-down framework.

Engagement and Voice

To gather a broad range of perspectives, partners, facilitated by the Prevention and Wellbeing team, have conducted community consultations in 2024, reaching over 200 residents aged 50 and over. These consultations have provided valuable insights into key areas such as transport, personal safety, outdoor spaces, and access to services, forming the foundation for the community and its partners to co-produce solutions to identified issues. The voice of the older adult community has also been gathered during partnership working sessions and through established forums.

The extensive engagement undertaken has been instrumental in shaping this baseline assessment. The feedback, concerns, and aspirations expressed by older residents inform each of the eight WHO domains presented in this document, ensuring that our age-friendly approach is genuinely grounded in lived experience.

Partnership Working

Partnership working is a crucial component of this shared strategy. A wide array of public services and third-sector organisations collaborate closely to support an Age-friendly Bridgend, including but not limited to BAVO, Awen Cultural Trust, Halo Leisure, Tu Vida, Cwmpas, Age Cymru, South Wales Police, Transport for Wales, Hafod, Valleys 2 Coast, and Cwm Taf Morgannwg Health Board. This integrated approach, also facilitated through the Public Service Boards, ensures a unified vision across the County Borough, with effective signposting and early detection practitioners working across frontline services.

The entire initiative is guided by a shared aspiration to become a more Age Friendly Community. The goal of this extensive engagement and partnership working is to empower local residents, deepen community relations, and ensure Bridgend is a great place to grow older together.



Inclusion

A core tenet of our vision has been the inclusion of often overlooked groups and reflecting the diversity of our older population in our fora. There are a range of community organisations that specifically support the needs and lives of older adults whilst there are many other opportunities where older adults fully engage in community life on an inter-generational and more socially integrated basis.

Our work with SHOUT, our older persons forum, provides a solid foundation and a model that can help us to connect with larger and more diverse numbers of older adults across our County Borough. More recent work and engagement has identified the diversity amongst older adults and highlighted the importance of both bespoke and integrated opportunities and services. One example would be the formation of subgroups including the LGBTQ+ group who help ensure that no voice from our community will be ignored or missed. Reflecting the diversity of our community is also an essential asset, enabling us to share a broad range of views, lived experience and expertise on a variety of subjects.

Citizen-Driven Change

In Bridgend, we are striving to ensure that citizen-driven change is at the core of everything we do in relation to Age Friendly Communities. We recognise that the local authority exists to empower its local residents to have more agency over their own lives, and to form a bedrock from which communities can build a future that they envision.

The Council, within its 2023 - 2028 corporate plan "Delivering Together" has identified seven wellbeing objectives that can connect into our Age Friendly Communities planning and include supporting our more vulnerable, ensuring people have a voice and are listened to and are healthy and happy. There is a specific focus in the Corporate Plan on our aspiration to become a more Age Friendly Community. We will do this externally with our communities and partners but also internally as part of a "One Council" approach to connecting the domains for maximum impact.

For many of our older adults we have recorded that the pandemic has been a particularly challenging time and Age Friendly Communities are more important than ever. Our philosophy of having a bottom-up approach, rather than a prescribed top-down framework, has created a "buy in" effect from the local community who have tangible ownership across the project. As well as creating a sense of community, inclusion and buy in, this de-centralised approach also allows for sustainable change and the constant evolution of approach, adapting and re-orienting to meet the latest challenges that arise.



Co-Production in Practice

The Age-friendly Bridgend initiative is driven by the shared vision of all stakeholders, facilitated by the Prevention and Wellbeing Service team within the Council's Social Services and Wellbeing directorate. From the outset, the focus has been on cultivating strong, co-productive relationships across the community, ensuring this remains a community-centred, rather than council-focused, programme. Initial engagement efforts have provided both a generic overview of Bridgend as an Age-Friendly Community and specific insights into existing services and opportunities.

To embed this co-production permanently, a dedicated Age-Friendly Working Group is being established. This group will serve as the core mechanism for ongoing dialogue and collective action, providing all key stakeholders with an equal share in decision-making and implementation.

The "SHOUT" Older Persons Forum in Bridgend has been a vital part of the initial engagement. Going forward, existing networks such as U3A Bridgend and Porthcawl, alongside smaller older adult community groups, including Elderly Residents Associations and social groups, will be invited to nominate representatives to join the Working Group. This structure empowers older adults to move beyond consultation and actively contribute to the Age Friendly planning and implementation process.

Throughout all documentation, 'we' refers to all participating stakeholders: older adults, local government, and public, private, and voluntary organisations. The Age-Friendly lead's primary role is to coordinate this diverse group, ensuring every voice holds equal weight and that older adults remain at the centre of planning, design, development, and delivery of services.

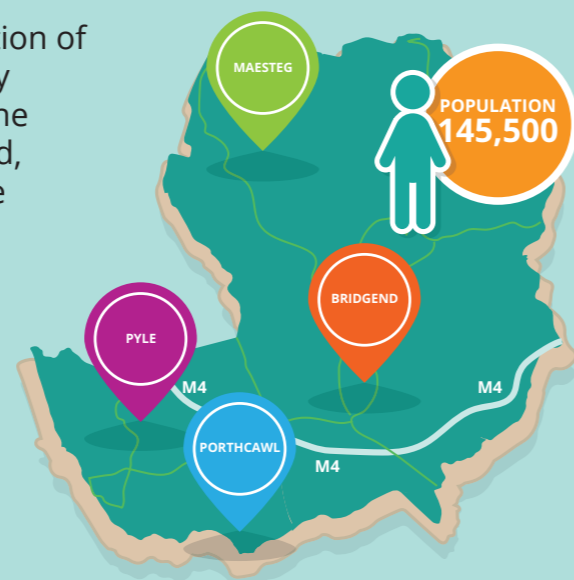
This Age-Friendly Bridgend baseline assessment outlines progress made, and details future work based on shared priorities identified through this collaborative engagement process. The initiative is designed to maximize opportunities for true co-production, ensuring older adults are partners in the planning, design, delivery, and review of all services and opportunities, while also improving access to information about activities and events that enhance wellbeing and independence.

The established network of older people's groups now functions as the foundational membership for the Working Group. This mechanism allows for direct participation, moving beyond traditional surveys and consultations to include active representation on local policy and planning groups, and the immediate escalation and resolution of common issues identified at a local level. A priority moving forward will be to update and improve the web and social media-based information available for Age Friendly Bridgend and the older persons forum to support the Working Group's communication needs.



1.2 Population and Demographics

According to the 2021 Census Bridgend had a population of 145,500, making it the 8th largest of Wales's 22 unitary authorities (UA) and home to approximately 4.7% of the Welsh total. The area includes urban centres (Bridgend, Porthcawl, Pyle, Maesteg) and rural valleys which pose access challenges.



Bridgend borders Neath Port Talbot to the North-West, Rhondda Cynon Taff to the North-East and Vale of Glamorgan to the South-East. The M4 runs through Bridgend, connecting the UA to Cardiff and Newport to the east and Swansea to the west. The Bridgend UA has four large settlements (Bridgend, Porthcawl, Pyle and Maesteg) with the central and north-eastern areas having relatively low population density, in comparison.

Population Growth and Age Distribution

Between 2011 and 2021 Bridgend's population grew by 4.5% (139,000 – 145,500). This is above the national population increase of 1.4% over the same time period. Whilst Bridgend's population is experiencing a shift towards an older demographic, Bridgend has a lower percentage of its population over 65 (20.7%) when compared to Wales as a whole (21.3%).

However, Bridgend experienced a 15% increase in the representation of over 65s as a percentage of the population from 2011 to 2021, in-line with a national increase of 15.8%. This has resulted in the median age of Bridgend increasing to 43, higher than the national average (42). This is due, in part, to an increase in the 50-64 age group of 13%, whilst the 35-49 age group population fell by 11.6%.

The reduction in the 35-49 age group is of primary concern, as it is this age group which produces the greatest economic output in the population as well as performing the majority of essential roles such as emergency service roles. The service industry also relies heavily on people in this age bracket.

Between 2011 and 2021 Bridgend's population grew by **4.5%** (139,000 – 145,500).



Bridgend experienced a **15%** increase in the representation of **over 65s** as a percentage of the population



Census data from 2021 shows that **20.7%** of in Bridgend are **65+**



Implications for Service Planning

This uneven distribution of population growth could present numerous multi-faceted challenges to the health service in Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board (CTMUHB). It is known that older generations are at greater risk of experiencing adverse health and thus requiring, when taken as a population group, greater health and social care interventions capacity on the part of the National Health Service (NHS), local authorities and 3rd sector organisations, to help them maintain good wellbeing and to retain independent lives.

The lower percentage of the population being of working age also means a relative decrease in taxation-based revenue and this could lead to reductions in public spending in real terms. However, older adults can contribute to local economies in a broad range of ways and add value to community life also beyond their working lives and their opportunities to engage in active citizenship should be supported. This may help to reduce overall impact of reductions in economic growth and help to see older adults viewed as a valuable community resource.

In a local context, some areas of Bridgend County Borough are experiencing more rapid increases in aging than others. Bridgend West cluster contains Rest Bay Ward which has 56% of its population over the age of 55. This highlights the additional challenge of uneven pressures on public services in different areas although examples of healthy and active ageing populations should not be viewed as a problem but rather a success story.

The population of Bridgend has been growing at a rate of 8,588 people per decade. The 75+ age group now forms 9.5% of the population. This age group is the most likely to experience negative health events, and thus, require the disproportionate allocation of resources. The increasing number of people in this age group coupled with a relative reduction in working age individuals is sure to have a significant impact on frontline services.

Because of the acceleration of medical innovation and ever improving public health systems, life expectancy is at its highest in history and supporting older adults to have a good quality of life is important within our Age Friendly Communities.



1.3 Social Deprivation and Determinants of Health

Deprivation is unevenly distributed across Bridgend, with higher concentrations in northern and valley areas. These areas face transport and accessibility barriers, lower economic opportunity and higher health needs. Bridgend's approach focuses on health equity, community co-ordination, and resourceful and resilient communities to mitigate these determinants.

Understanding Local Deprivation

Here in Bridgend, we recognise the impact that social deprivation and the determinants of health can have on the health and wellbeing of our communities. Many sections of our communities do experience social deprivation and therefore, experience additional barriers to accessing services and opportunities and this can lead to poorer health outcomes. We are committed to ensuring health equity in our communities; therefore, we are working with our communities to hear their lived experience and to co-produce strategies to help address the main barriers present.

As displayed in deprivation mapping, the highest concentration of deprivation is in the north of the county. These areas are mountainous in nature and have additional challenges relating to transport and accessing services. These areas are predominantly occupied by small communities built in a linear fashion along valley floors. This makes them difficult to access for businesses, resulting in lack of economic opportunity for residents. The steep hillsides also pose additional challenges for older populations, as many of the streets are uneven and on slopes which can become challenging

Strategic Response

Our age-friendly approach recognises that addressing health inequalities requires targeted interventions that acknowledge the specific challenges faced by different communities within Bridgend. The eight WHO domains provide a framework for addressing these determinants holistically, ensuring that improvements in transport, housing, outdoor spaces, and other areas work together to reduce health inequalities and improve quality of life for all older residents, particularly those in more deprived areas.

2. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Bridgend County Borough offers a diverse mix of green and blue spaces that align strongly with the Age-Friendly Communities vision of creating accessible, safe, and inclusive environments for people of all ages. Natural assets such as the Merthyr Mawr Warren National Nature Reserve-with Europe's second-highest sand dune-and the Kenfig National Nature Reserve provide opportunities for physical activity, social connection, and wellbeing. Managed parklands like Bryngarw Country Park support the Outdoor Spaces and Buildings domain through well-maintained walking routes, woodland areas, and recreation spaces that encourage active lifestyles.

Coastal access points, including Porthcawl Promenade and surrounding beaches, offer additional routes for walking, socialising, and enjoying nature-key contributors to mental and physical wellbeing for older adults. The county also benefits from a rich heritage environment, including medieval sites such as Newcastle Castle and Coity Castle, which enhance place identity and community pride.

Community Infrastructure

Community infrastructure-such as Awen Community Libraries, Halo Life Centres, and cultural venues including the Grand Pavilion in Porthcawl and the recently redeveloped Maesteg Town Hall-play an important role in supporting wider age-friendly domains. These facilities foster social participation, lifelong learning, arts and culture engagement, and intergenerational community activity. Awen Cultural Trust's mission to enhance wellbeing through arts, cultural and heritage venues align closely with age-friendly recommended approaches for strengthening community connection and accessibility.



Access and Experience of Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

The Ageing Well in Bridgend consultation responses indicate that a large majority-82% (182 respondents)-agree or strongly agree that they have good access to nearby parks, libraries, community centres, and buildings. However, 18% (40 respondents) disagree, highlighting persistent inequalities in access that need to be addressed through targeted age-friendly planning.

Themes from engagement include:

- **Lack of public toilets, which limits the ability of older people to spend longer periods outside and can discourage participation in community activities.**
- **Uneven pavements and poorly maintained footpaths, posing safety risks and inhibiting mobility-especially for those using mobility aids or living with long-term conditions.**
- **Limited seating and rest points, which reduce walkability and access to green spaces for older adults.**
- **Poor lighting, impacting perceptions of safety and preventing people from using outdoor areas at certain times.**
- **Concerns about derelict premises in Bridgend town centre, which affect safety, attractiveness, and civic pride-factors central to age-friendly urban design.**
- **Issues related to pedestrianisation, where changes to road layouts or access routes can unintentionally disadvantage some older people if not supported by clear signage, transport integration, and accessible crossing points.**

Age-Friendly Recommendations

In line with age-friendly best practice across the domains, the following improvements were identified:

- **Targeted investment in accessible seating and rest areas, ensuring benches are frequent, comfortable, well-positioned, and include armrests-supporting mobility and confidence outdoors.**
- **Clear, consistent signage to public facilities, including toilets, accessible entrances, and transport links, supporting both the Outdoor Spaces and Buildings and Communication & Information domains.**
- **Maintenance and resurfacing of pavements and footpaths, reducing trip hazards and ensuring age-friendly walkability.**
- **Improved lighting, increasing feelings of safety and enabling residents to use outdoor spaces more flexibly.**
- **Town centre regeneration, addressing derelict buildings to create a more welcoming, safer, and vibrant environment that supports civic participation and social engagement.**
- **Integration with the Transport domain-ensuring that any pedestrianisation or redesign is supported by accessible bus stops, drop-off points, and seating to maintain independence and ease of movement.**
- **Consultation with older people in design processes, ensuring that outdoor spaces genuinely meet their needs and preferences.**

3. Transport and Mobility

Transport is a core enabler of independence and social participation within an Age-Friendly Community. In Bridgend County Borough, transport provision includes mainstream public transport, concessionary travel schemes, community transport services, and informal volunteer-led options. Together, these form an essential network that supports mobility, access to services, and quality of life-particularly for older people and those with mobility impairments.

Current Transport Provision

Bridgend Community Transport plays a critical role within this system. Operating fourteen accessible vehicles, services such as the Town Rider and Community Car Scheme provide flexible, door-to-door transport for older adults and residents with reduced mobility. These services complement statutory transport provision and offer an essential alternative for residents who are unable to drive or access conventional bus routes, supporting the Transport and Community Support and Health Services domains.

Concessionary travel for people aged 60+ and eligible disabled residents is delivered through the national scheme administered by Transport for Wales. Applications are supported locally through Bridgend County Borough Council, with community staff-including staff within Awen Libraries-assisting residents to navigate the digital and administrative process. This reflects the importance of the Communication & Information domain, ensuring people can understand and access transport entitlements.



Access and Experience of Local Transport

The Ageing Well in Bridgend consultation responses suggests that a majority of respondents can reach the places they need to go:



However, a significant minority-20% (44 respondents) disagree and 5% (12 respondents) strongly disagree-report unmet mobility needs. This highlights the importance of addressing persistent barriers within transport planning.

Car access remains a key factor shaping mobility:



Yet 8% (18 respondents) strongly disagree and 3% (7 respondents) disagree. These findings underline the importance of developing age-friendly transport systems that do not rely solely on private car use, particularly for older adults who may reduce their driving as they age.

Themes from engagement include:

- Irregular or insufficient bus routes in rural areas, particularly affecting valleys communities, reducing access to shops, services, social activities, and health appointments.
- Reduced availability of community transport during school drop-off and pick-up times, limiting options during peak periods.
- Lower transport coverage in more remote areas, contributing to inequalities in mobility and social participation.
- Difficulty booking transport services, particularly for those without internet access or digital confidence.
- Lack of clear information about available transport options, timetables, and eligibility criteria.
- Affordability concerns for some residents who rely on taxis or community transport for essential journeys.

Age-Friendly Recommendations

- Supporting and expanding volunteer driver schemes, reducing reliance on private cars and offering flexible, people-centred transport-particularly effective for health appointments, shopping trips, and social visits.
- Weighting transport funding to better support rural and valleys communities, recognising the higher need and lower provision in these areas.
- Improving coordination between school transport and wider community transport services, avoiding conflicts that limit availability at peak times.
- Enhancing communication and information, including clearer timetables, accessible formats, better promotion of concessionary schemes, and support for digital applications-aligning with the Communication & Information domain.
- Strengthening integration with other age-friendly domains, such as ensuring transport connects effectively to community centres, outdoor spaces, cultural venues, and health facilities.
- Training for transport staff to ensure they are sympathetic to and understanding of the needs of older passengers.
- Improved waiting facilities including sheltered seating at bus stops, particularly in areas with high numbers of older residents.
- Accessible booking systems that don't rely solely on online platforms and include telephone options with real people available to assist.

4. Housing

Housing is a fundamental component of an Age-Friendly Community, enabling people to live safely, comfortably, and independently as they age. Bridgend County Borough offers a wide range of housing options, from mainstream owner-occupied homes to supported and specialist accommodation. Across the borough, there are approximately 849 care home places, including sheltered housing, extra-care apartments, and residential and nursing care homes. Local housing associations such as Hafod, Valleys to Coast (V2C), and Linc Cymru play an important role in providing and managing accessible and specialist accommodation that aligns with the needs of older residents.

Supporting Independent Living

In line with the Age-Friendly Housing domain, the county also offers services that support older residents to remain living independently at home for as long as possible. Bridgelink Telecare delivers 24/7 monitored telecare, personal alarms and a mobile response team-enabling residents to feel safe, confident, and connected. As an early adopter of the digital telecare switchover, Bridgend has taken proactive steps to ensure that technology-enabled care continues to support greater independence, reduce unnecessary hospital admissions, and increase wellbeing.

Bridgend County Care & Repair provides another essential layer of support. Their services help older people maintain safe, warm, and accessible homes, offering minor and major adaptations such as grab rails, ramps, stairlifts, level-access showers, and other home improvements. They also provide free home assessments, advice on grants and funding, and technical support to manage building work. This aligns strongly with the Age-Friendly principles of adaptability, accessibility, and ageing in place.



Themes from engagement include:

- **Timely and affordable home adaptations, including grab rails, bathroom modifications, stairlifts, and ramps.**
- **Accessible housing options located near family, amenities, and key services, reducing reliance on transport and enabling community connection.**
- **Energy-efficient, warm homes, which support health and reduce the financial burden of heating.**
- **Clear information and advice about available support, grants, and housing pathways-connecting to the Communication & Information domain.**
- **Support with property maintenance, particularly for owner-occupiers who may struggle to identify trustworthy tradespeople or manage building work.**
- **Housing adaptability, ensuring that properties can be modified as residents' needs change over time.**

Age-Friendly Recommendations

- **Enabling older people to live independently in their own homes wherever safe and possible.**
- **Developing additional accessible and specialist housing in partnership with Hafod, V2C, and other partners.**
- **Strengthening support services such as Care & Repair, telecare, and preventative home adaptations.**
- **Ensuring housing is closely connected with other Age-Friendly domains such as Transport, Health Services, and Social Participation.**
- **Better planning for future housing needs, considering factors such as local infrastructure, parking, and pressure on services.**
- **Improving access to advice and advocacy for older tenants and homeowners facing housing challenges.**



5. Social Participation

Social participation is central to an Age-Friendly Community, supporting wellbeing, reducing isolation, and enabling people to remain active and connected as they age. Bridgend County Borough has a wide and growing range of programmes, community groups and third-sector initiatives that encourage older adults to participate in social, cultural, and physical activities.

Local Programmes and Initiatives

Local initiatives such as Super Agers, 60+ Active Leisure, Free Swimming, and Feel Good for Life contribute directly to active ageing by offering group activities, social events, and online sessions that promote both physical movement and social interaction. These programmes help build confidence, sustain friendships, and create new opportunities for participation-key features of the Age-Friendly Social Participation domain.

Bridgend also benefits from a rich local cultural and creative sector. Third-sector organisations such as Breathing Space, run by Tanio arts charity, offer creative workshops in welcoming spaces where people can meet, chat, enjoy warm drinks, and try new art activities. Awen Libraries play an important role, providing accessible social spaces and regular activities including craft groups, "knit and natter," Welsh lessons, and other community events. Some libraries also host dementia hubs delivered by Mental Health Matters (MHM), helping create dementia-inclusive environments that align with Age-Friendly principles of accessibility and belonging.

In addition, Mental Health Matters run regular wellbeing and dementia hubs across the borough, offering emotional support, peer activity, and connection to wider community resources.

Community Navigation and Local Coordination

Supporting participation also requires good information, signposting, and personal support. BAVO's Community Navigators and Bridgend Council Local Community Coordinators play a vital role in connecting older residents to activities, social groups, volunteering opportunities, and wellbeing services. These roles-aligned with the Communication & Information and Community Support & Health Services domains-ensure that people can find the right support at the right time and overcome barriers such as lack of confidence, transport, or awareness of local opportunities.

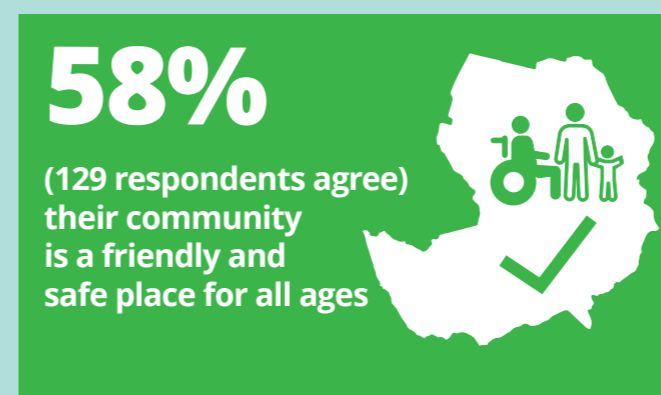


Befriending, Outreach and Inclusive Activities

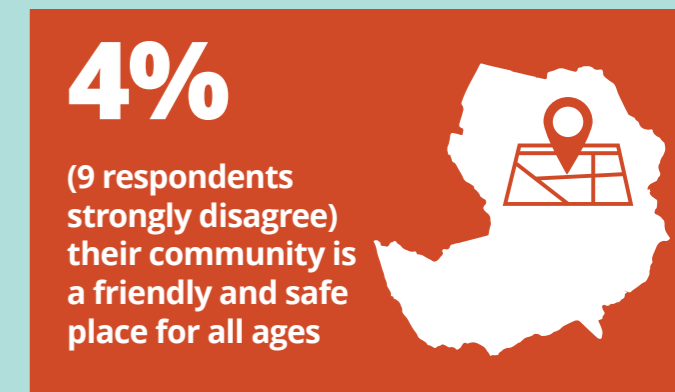
A strong network of third-sector partners offers befriending and outreach services to reduce loneliness and ensure residents feel part of their community. Organisations including Age Connects Cymru, BAVO, and the Samaritans provide telephone befriending and welfare check-ins, while leisure providers and community hubs run dementia-friendly activities and other inclusive programmes. These services ensure that people who may be less able to attend group sessions still have opportunities for social contact and support. Together, these initiatives reflect Age-Friendly priorities around inclusion, accessibility, and meaningful participation in community life.

Community Friendliness and Safety

The Ageing Well in Bridgend consultation responses provide insight into residents' perceptions of their local communities:



that their community is a friendly, safe place for people of all ages. However:



indicating that some residents still feel disconnected or do not perceive their community as welcoming. These findings highlight the continued need for age-friendly initiatives that strengthen community cohesion, intergenerational interaction, and neighbourhood safety.

Themes from engagement include:

- **Transport limitations preventing access to social activities, particularly in rural and valleys areas.**
- **Lack of awareness about available activities and opportunities for social participation.**
- **Timing of activities that may not suit older people's preferences or transport availability.**
- **Cost of participation for some activities, creating barriers for those on limited incomes.**
- **Limited intergenerational activities to connect different age groups within communities.**
- **Concerns about safety or accessibility of venues, particularly in the evening or winter months.**
- **Digital exclusion limiting awareness of and access to online social opportunities.**

Age-Friendly Recommendations

- **Expand community-based activities across all areas of the borough, with particular focus on underserved communities.**
- **Improve publicity and information about social opportunities through diverse channels, ensuring older people are reached effectively.**
- **Develop more intergenerational programmes that bring together people of different ages for mutual benefit.**
- **Address cost barriers through subsidised or free activities where possible.**
- **Coordinate transport to enable access to social activities, particularly for those in rural areas or with mobility limitations.**
- **Create local community hubs that serve as accessible meeting points with regular activities and information services.**
- **Support volunteer networks that enable neighbourly connections and informal social support.**
- **Ensure activities are scheduled at appropriate times, considering daylight hours and transport availability.**



6. Social Inclusion and Non-Discrimination

Bridgend County Borough Council, together with its third-sector partners, is deeply committed to building a community in which every person—regardless of age, ability, background, or identity—is respected, welcomed and supported to fully participate. At the heart of this commitment is the principle that older adults should not merely be passive recipients of services, but active, valued participants in creating a fair and inclusive society.

Promoting Inclusion Through Partnership

One of the key mechanisms for promoting this inclusive agenda is the Bridgend Inclusive Network Group (BING), which brings together a range of organisations and stakeholders to share best practice, deliver training, and create opportunities for inclusive social engagement. Through BING, people with different abilities and their families connect with local groups, take part in activity days, and receive support to build community capacity. This reflects the Age-Friendly aim of enabling social inclusion, removing barriers, and creating shared spaces for diverse participants.

Bridgend also encourages civic engagement through the SHOUT forum, which includes sub-networks such as LGBTQ+ groups. These structures ensure that planning and policymaking reflect the needs and voices of different community segments, strengthening trust, representation and belonging in local decision-making. This engagement aligns directly with the Civic Participation & Employment domain.

Community Navigation and Support

A network of Community Navigators and Local Community Coordinators (LCCs) plays a vital role in bridging gaps between services and people. These workers help older adults—especially those with complex needs—to navigate community resources, understand their rights, access support, and feel included in civic life. In doing so, they support not only Community Support & Health Services, but also Communication & Information, by acting as human signposts, interpreters, and advocates.

Welsh Language and Cultural Inclusion

Language inclusion is a further priority. Bridgend strongly supports the Welsh language through its Active Offer policy in social services and bilingual provision across public-facing materials. This ensures that Welsh-speaking older residents, as well as those who wish to use or learn the language, feel culturally respected and included. The Council ensures its core documents, community programmes, and engagement materials are bilingual, and continually seeks feedback from Welsh speakers to refine its strategy. As well as inclusion, the promotion of the Welsh language is supported by Menter Bro Owgr, who run regular Welsh language coffee mornings across the borough. As well as by Awen cultural trust, who facilitate a number of Welsh lessons and conversational groups within local libraries.

Themes from engagement include:

- **Limited awareness among some older residents of BING, SHOUT or navigator services, limiting their participation in inclusion initiatives.**
- **Physical or logistical barriers that may restrict access to inclusive community events and training (e.g., venue inaccessibility, limited transport, insufficient volunteer capacity).**
- **Digital exclusion reducing reach of inclusion-oriented information for those without internet access.**
- **Recognising diversity within the older population, including people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ individuals, ethnic minorities, and Welsh speakers.**
- **Using inclusive language and imagery in communications and public materials.**
- **Lack of confidence among some Welsh speakers in requesting or using Welsh-medium services.**
- **Persistent stereotypes about older people being vulnerable or unable to contribute, rather than being valued for their experience and skills.**

Age-Friendly Recommendations

- **Strengthen outreach by working with community hubs, libraries, and navigators to raise awareness of BING, SHOUT, and coordination services among older residents.**
- **Expand and make more accessible venues for inclusive events, ensuring they are physically accessible, well-signposted, and distributed across the borough.**
- **Provide multiple channels for information (print, telephone, in-person, digital) so that messaging about inclusion, rights, and opportunities reaches digitally excluded populations.**
- **Promote and support age- and identity-friendly civic forums and consultation processes, ensuring under-represented groups have a voice in decision-making.**
- **Increase capacity for Community Navigators and LCCs so they can sustain engagement with complex cases, providing consistent support for inclusion and connection.**
- **Continue to strengthen the Welsh-language offer by making it visible, accessible, and easy to request, ensuring older Welsh speakers feel confident and supported in using services in their preferred language.**
- **Implement training programmes for service providers and businesses to increase awareness of older people's diverse needs and promote age-friendly practices.**
- **Develop an Older People's Champion programme or accreditation scheme to recognise and encourage inclusive practices across organisations.**
- **Ensure true accessibility by verifying that facilities claiming to be accessible genuinely meet the needs of wheelchair users and people with sensory impairments.**

7. Civic Engagement and Employment

Older people in Bridgend make a significant contribution to their communities through volunteering, mentoring, civic involvement and part-time employment. Local organisations such as BAVO, Baobab Food Pantries and a wide range of community groups benefit from the skills, time and experience of older volunteers, with BAVO's Volunteer Centre providing guidance, matching services and structured opportunities-including befriending, community development roles and social support visits. For many, volunteering offers a meaningful way to stay connected, maintain purpose and build confidence.

Supporting Civic Participation

Civic participation is also strengthened through the Council's Delivering Together corporate plan, which emphasises wellbeing, co-production and age-friendly principles. Older adults regularly contribute to consultation activity, community forums and partnership groups, ensuring their voices shape local policy and service design.

The SHOUT Older Persons Forum provides a crucial platform for older residents to engage with decision-makers, share their perspectives, and influence service development. The forum has been established for several years and provides leadership in representing the voice of older people across the county, working in partnership with the Council, health board, and other public service providers.

Employment and Skills Development

Employment support is a key part of Bridgend's age-friendly approach. Employability Bridgend provides tailored mentoring, skills development, job-search support, and access to training for residents aged 16+, including those aged 50+ seeking to return to work or change careers. These services address barriers ranging from socioeconomic factors to health and wellbeing conditions such as disabilities, mental or physical health conditions, or low confidence. For individuals aged 50+, specific offerings include a dedicated 50+ Job Club with four sessions that promote shared learning and include employer attendance for interview preparation, as well as a dedicated 50+ Health Journey work preparation programme, a four-session programme designed to build confidence for health customers around volunteering and work. The local sessions are being delivered in partnership with JCP and LCC colleagues.

The B.E.S.T. (Bridgend Employment Support Training) programme offers work trials, in-work mentoring, and pathways into roles suited to individual needs, including phased return options. National support through the DWP 50+ offer provides additional help for mid-life jobseekers, including tailored coaching from Work Coaches, access to specialist programmes, and financial guidance. This complements local provision by ensuring older adults have consistent support whether engaging through Employability Bridgend, Jobcentre Plus or community partners.

Volunteering as a Pathway

Volunteering continues to provide accessible pathways into purposeful activity for those not seeking formal employment. AWEN, HALO and BAVO hosts a broad range of regular opportunities suitable for older adults, from public-facing roles to behind-the-scenes community support. For some individuals, volunteering also serves as a stepping stone into paid employment, helping people rebuild confidence and develop skills in a safe and supported environment.

Themes from engagement include:

- **Limited awareness among older adults of available employability and volunteering opportunities.**
- **Confidence barriers, especially for those who have been out of the workforce for long periods or who worry about age discrimination.**
- **Digital exclusion, making job-search, online training and virtual recruitment processes difficult for some older residents.**
- **Transport challenges, particularly for rural and valleys communities, restricting access to employment, volunteering placements and training opportunities.**
- **Lack of flexible or age-friendly job roles, including phased hours, shorter shifts, or light-duty options.**
- **Transition gaps for older volunteers who wish to move into paid work but face limited structured pathways or accredited training routes.**
- **Timing of volunteer opportunities and civic events that may not align with transport availability or personal preferences.**
- **Insufficient recognition of the value and contributions older people make through civic engagement and volunteering.**

Age-Friendly Recommendations

- **Enhanced communication and outreach to ensure older adults are fully aware of Employability Bridgend, DWP 50+ support, volunteering pathways and community-based learning.**
- **Strengthened confidence-building and wellbeing programmes tailored to the needs of people aged 50+, expanding on the successes of the 50+ Health Journey model.**
- **Increased digital inclusion support, including drop-in digital help sessions, practical training and access to devices.**
- **Improved transport links and travel support so that employment and volunteering opportunities are accessible to rural and valleys communities.**
- **Partnership work with local employers to promote age-friendly employment practices, flexible roles and recognition of the strengths of older workers.**
- **Clearer pathways from volunteering into employment, including accredited training, mentoring and supported placements for older adults seeking to progress.**
- **Better coordination of civic forum timing and locations to maximise participation from older residents.**
- **Development of mentoring programmes that enable older people to share their expertise with younger community members and new employees.**
- **Information about pensions and working to help older people understand how part-time or full-time work affects their income and benefits.**

8. Communication and Information

Clear, accessible and timely communication is essential to an age-friendly community. For many older people in Bridgend, printed materials, telephone contact and face-to-face conversations remain vital alongside digital channels. The Council and local partners continue to strengthen communication through multiple formats, including improvements to online information, such as the Ageing Well in Bridgend website, enhanced social media content and updated service webpages. Alongside this, traditional communication remains a priority. Printed bulletins, leaflets, letters, posters and community noticeboards help ensure information reaches residents who prefer or rely on non-digital communication, including people who are digitally excluded or have limited internet access.

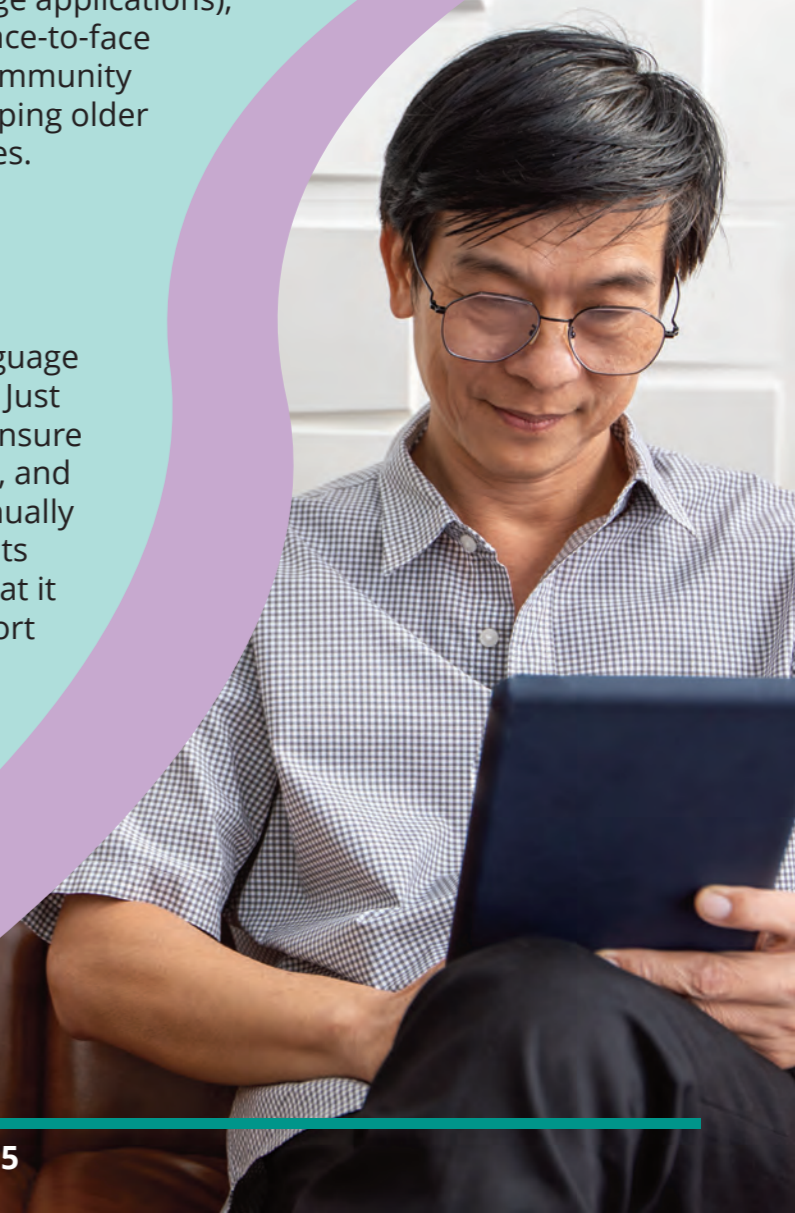
Digital and Non-Digital Channels

Bridgend recognises that while digital technology offers many benefits, it also creates barriers for some older residents. The Council is committed to ensuring that essential information and services remain accessible through multiple channels, respecting the diverse communication preferences and capabilities within the older population.

Community venues such as Awen Libraries, Halo Life Centres, and community centres play an important role in supporting both digital and non-digital communication. Library staff assist residents with online applications (such as bus passes and Blue Badge applications), while also providing printed information and face-to-face guidance. Community Navigators and Local Community Coordinators act as trusted intermediaries, helping older people access information and navigate services.

Welsh Language Provision

All services in Bridgend comply with Welsh language legislation and the Mwy na Geiriau (More Than Just Words) framework. The Council and partners ensure that core documents, community programmes, and engagement materials are bilingual, and continually seeks feedback from Welsh speakers to refine its approach. Older residents have emphasised that it is particularly important they can receive support in their mother tongue, and therefore service providers ensure bilingual provision is available and accessible.



Barriers Identified Through Engagement

Engagement findings highlight that many older adults feel overwhelmed by the increasing shift towards online-only communication, service access and consultation processes. Some residents reported that major developments-such as the new bus station and regeneration proposals in Porthcawl-did not feel accessible to older people due to consultations being predominantly hosted online. This created a perception that older residents were less informed or less able to participate in decisions affecting their communities.

Themes from engagement include:

- **Over-reliance on online information and consultation, making it difficult for digitally excluded residents to participate.**
- **Inconsistent awareness of where to access up-to-date information on services, developments or local events.**
- **Digital exclusion, including limited confidence, skills, devices or internet access for some older adults.**
- **Large-scale consultations delivered mainly online, reducing opportunities for older adults to contribute their views in accessible ways.**
- **Complex or unclear information formats, making it harder for some residents to understand service changes or engagement processes.**
- **Phone systems that rely on automated menus or recorded messages rather than connecting callers to real people.**
- **Lack of targeted communication to older people about matters that specifically affect them.**
- **Financial information concerns, including confusing energy bills, reliance on card or direct debit payments, and online-only financial services.**

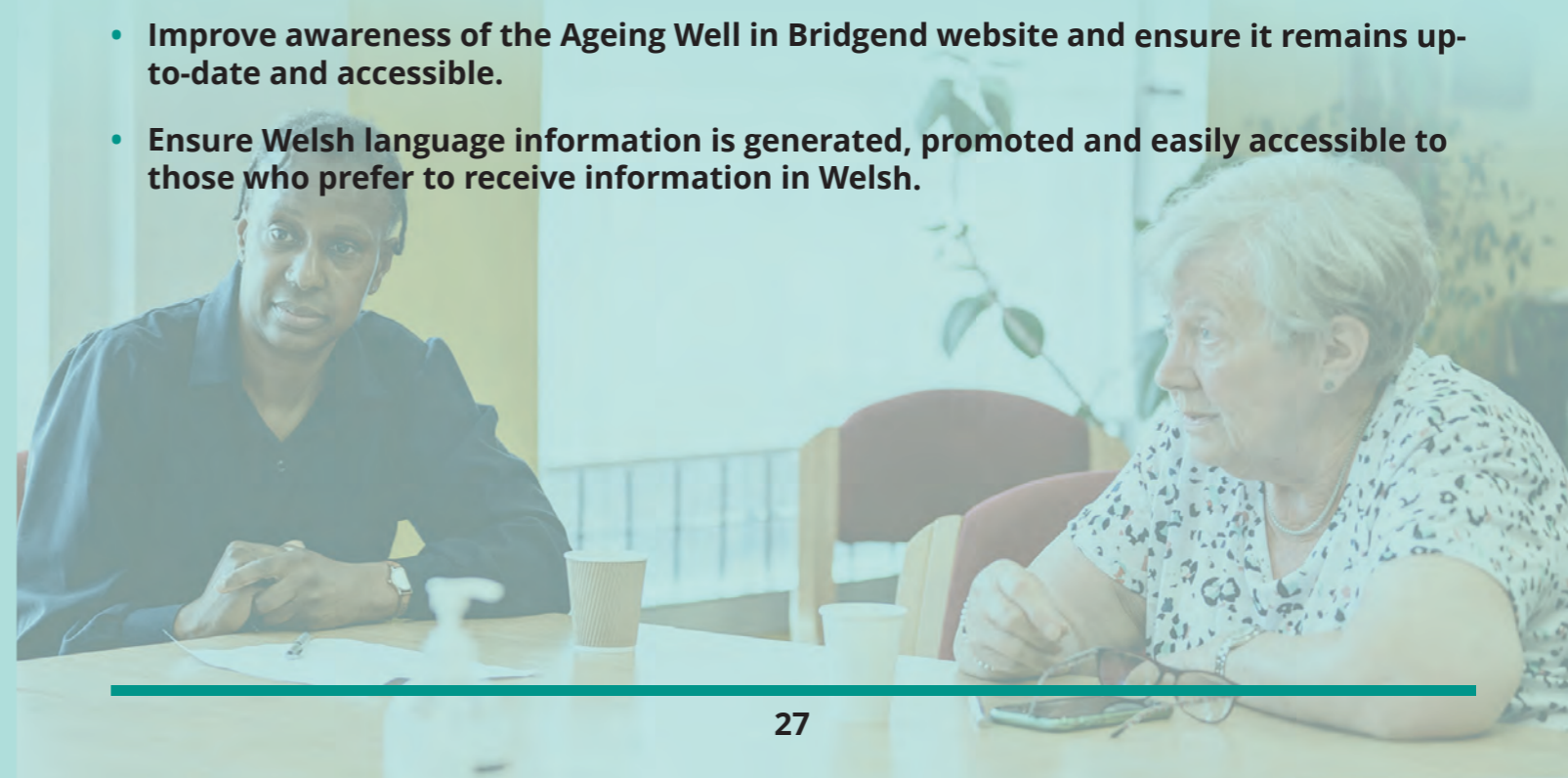


Age-Friendly Recommendations

Older people emphasised the importance of information being available in multiple formats, delivered consistently across digital and non-digital channels, and supported by clear signposting. Word-of-mouth communication, trusted community intermediaries, and local groups also play a crucial role in ensuring that information is understood, shared and acted upon.

Specific improvements recommended include:

- **Provide all key information in multiple formats, including printed materials, telephone options, community noticeboards, radio and in-person briefings.**
- **Increase in-person and paper-based consultation opportunities, ensuring older people can meaningfully contribute to community planning and regeneration projects.**
- **Strengthen digital inclusion programmes, offering practical skills support, device access and confidence-building sessions for older adults.**
- **Improve signposting across community venues, working with libraries, Navigators, LCCs and local groups to disseminate information through trusted networks.**
- **Ensure plain-language communication, with clear explanations of changes, timelines and how residents can get involved.**
- **Expand outreach channels, such as pop-up information stands, local events, or information workshops in community centres and sheltered housing complexes.**
- **Develop targeted newsletters for older residents that can be printed and distributed through community networks.**
- **Provide phone numbers with real people available to answer inquiries, not just automated systems or voicemail.**
- **Promote local communication channels including town council noticeboards (electronic or physical) and local radio for community updates.**
- **Improve awareness of the Ageing Well in Bridgend website and ensure it remains up-to-date and accessible.**
- **Ensure Welsh language information is generated, promoted and easily accessible to those who prefer to receive information in Welsh.**



9. Community Support and Health Services

Bridgend County Borough provides a comprehensive health and community support infrastructure that enables older adults to maintain independence, wellbeing and quality of life. Services include primary care, community nursing, mental health support, social care and a broad network of voluntary sector organisations. These services are delivered in partnership, creating integrated pathways that respond to both routine and complex needs.

Dementia Support

Dementia support forms a central component of Bridgend's age-friendly approach. Statutory and third-sector partners-including Dementia Connect (Alzheimer's Society), Dementia Support Bridgend (BAVO), and local Dementia Hubs run by Mental Health Matters-provide information, practical support and social engagement opportunities for people living with dementia and their carers.

Ty Pen Y Bont is the integrated dementia service in Bridgend, providing specialist day opportunities for people with complex symptoms of dementia. Integrated with health the service is a multidisciplinary hub, including day care, therapy and specialist interventions. With dementia prevalence projected to rise by up to 70% by 2040, these services form a critical part of the borough's proactive planning, supported by community hubs, carer pathways and public awareness programmes.

Mental Health Matters (MHM) host pop up dementia hubs across the borough as well as a permanent hub in the centre of town, providing accessible, welcoming environments for people affected by dementia and their families. These hubs offer activities, information, and peer support in familiar community settings.

Falls Prevention and Frailty Management

Falls prevention and frailty management are also key priorities. Programmes such as NERS (National Exercise Referral Scheme), Bridgestart, and mobile falls-prevention services aim to maintain mobility, reduce the risk of hospitalisation, and support older adults to live safely at home. Information, referral pathways and guidance for falls prevention and rehabilitation are provided via the Ageing Well in Bridgend website and local service networks.

These programmes recognise that maintaining strength, balance, and confidence is essential for independent living and that early intervention can prevent more serious health events.

Telecare and Technology-Enabled Care

Telecare and mobile response services further enhance safety and independence. Bridgelink Telecare delivers personal alarms, sensors, and 24/7 monitoring, supported by mobile response teams that can provide immediate assistance. Bridgend was an early adopter of the digital telecare switchover in Wales, modernising monitoring and improving response times. These services exemplify how technology can support independent living, particularly for those with health vulnerabilities or living alone.

Integrated Health and Social Care

Bridgend's approach to health and social care emphasises integration, with close working between the Council's Social Services and Wellbeing directorate, Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board, and third-sector partners. The Prevention and Wellbeing team plays a coordinating role, connecting people to the right services and supporting them to maintain independence for as long as possible.

Community Navigators and Local Community Coordinators provide crucial support in helping older people navigate health and social care systems, access information, and connect with appropriate services. This personalised approach helps address the complexity that many older people experience when trying to access multiple services.

Themes from engagement include:

- **Awareness and accessibility:** Some older adults are unsure which services are available or how to access them, particularly around dementia support and falls-prevention programmes.
- **Capacity pressures:** Increasing prevalence of dementia and frailty is placing pressure on existing services and voluntary sector support.
- **Digital exclusion:** While telecare and online referral systems are effective for many, residents without digital access or confidence may not fully benefit.
- **Coordination challenges:** Multiple providers and pathways can create complexity, making it difficult for residents to navigate care and support.
- **Transport and mobility constraints:** Attendance at community hubs, day services or exercise programmes may be limited for those with mobility challenges or limited local transport options.
- **GP appointment systems:** Residents report frustration with early-morning phone call systems, difficulty getting timely appointments, and concerns about explaining personal medical conditions to non-clinical staff.
- **Hospital experiences:** Long waits, difficulty hearing names being called, poor parking, and stressful environments create anxiety for older patients.
- **Prescription management:** Multiple medications requiring separate collections and repeat prescription processes create unnecessary complexity.
- **Discharge planning:** Hospital discharge procedures don't always adequately consider patients' home circumstances, support needs, or transport requirements.
- **Primary care access in rural areas:** Some communities face significant travel distances to access GP surgeries, pharmacies, and other primary care services.

Age-Friendly Recommendations

- **Enhanced communication and outreach to ensure older adults and carers are aware of available health and support services, referral pathways, and eligibility criteria.**
- **Strengthen capacity and resourcing for dementia care, falls prevention, and frailty programmes to meet projected demand.**
- **Digital inclusion initiatives alongside telecare services, including training, device access, and support for those who struggle with technology.**
- **Integrated service navigation through Community Navigators, Local Community Coordinators and linked health/social care teams to simplify access and reduce fragmentation.**
- **Flexible and localised service delivery such as mobile clinics, home-based interventions, and community hubs in accessible locations to reduce barriers of transport and mobility.**
- **Support for carers through respite, training, peer networks and information provision to sustain informal care arrangements and wellbeing.**
- **Improve GP appointment systems to reduce stress and ensure accessibility, including options beyond early-morning phone calls and better coordination for those needing multiple appointments.**
- **Development of "super surgeries" or integrated health centres combining multiple services (GP consultations, physiotherapy, blood tests, etc.) in accessible locations.**
- **Better hospital experience including improved communication systems for calling patients, clearer signposting, better parking, and more supportive waiting environments.**
- **Simplified prescription management with better coordination between pharmacies and GP surgeries, alignment of renewal dates, and oversight to prevent medication interactions.**
- **Enhanced discharge planning ensuring patients can return home safely with appropriate support, equipment, and follow-up care arranged.**
- **Preventative health education delivered through accessible channels, helping older people maintain health and understand when to seek support.**
- **Expanded NHS dentistry access to address barriers to maintaining oral and dental health among older people.**

10. Vision and Priorities

10.1 Vision

Bridgend's vision is to be an inclusive, age-friendly borough where older people are valued, connected and supported to live healthy and independent lives. This vision is citizen-driven and rooted in co-production, recognising that older people are not passive recipients of services but active partners in shaping their communities.

Our aspiration is to create a Bridgend where:

- **All older residents can participate fully in community life, regardless of their background, abilities, or circumstances.**
- **Services and environments are designed with older people, drawing on their expertise and lived experience.**
- **Age is celebrated and older people are recognised for the valuable contributions they make to economic, social, and cultural life.**
- **Communities are connected and supportive, with strong intergenerational relationships and reduced social isolation.**
- **Health and wellbeing are prioritised, with accessible services and opportunities for active, healthy aging.**
- **Bridgend is recognised globally as an exemplar age-friendly community within the WHO network, sharing learning and inspiring others.**

10.2 Priorities

Based on the findings of this baseline assessment and extensive community engagement, Bridgend's age-friendly priorities are:

Transport and Mobility

- **Improve transport accessibility, coverage and affordability, particularly for rural and valley communities**
- **Expand community and volunteer transport options**
- **Enhance integration between transport services and key destinations**
- **Ensure transport information is available in accessible formats**

Housing and Living Environments

- Expand housing adaptations and reduce waiting times for assessments and installations
- Increase supply of accessible and specialist housing near amenities and family support
- Strengthen Care & Repair and other support services for independent living
- Improve energy efficiency in homes to support health and reduce fuel poverty

Outdoor Spaces and Built Environment

- Invest in accessible seating, rest areas, and public toilets
- Improve pavement maintenance and lighting for safety and walkability
- Regenerate town centres, addressing derelict buildings and creating welcoming environments
- Ensure pedestrianisation and urban design changes support rather than disadvantage older people

Health and Social Care

- Strengthen dementia and frailty support to meet growing demand
- Improve GP appointment systems and primary care accessibility
- Enhance hospital experiences, discharge planning, and prescription management
- Expand community-based health services closer to where people live
- Support carers through respite, training, and information

Social Participation and Connection

- Reduce loneliness through expanded befriending and social activities
- Develop more intergenerational programmes and opportunities
- Create accessible community hubs across all areas of the borough
- Address transport and cost barriers to participation
- Expand cultural and creative opportunities for older people

Communication and Information

- Ensure all key information is available in multiple formats (digital and non-digital)
- Strengthen digital inclusion support while maintaining non-digital options
- Improve consultation processes to enable meaningful participation by older people
- Enhance signposting and awareness of available services and opportunities
- Maintain strong Welsh language provision

Inclusion and Respect

- Challenge ageist stereotypes and promote recognition of older people's contributions
- Ensure services and spaces are genuinely accessible to people of all abilities
- Strengthen support for diverse groups within the older population
- Expand capacity of Community Navigators and inclusion networks
- Develop age-friendly training and accreditation for organisations

Civic Engagement and Employment

- Expand volunteering opportunities and pathways into employment
- Promote age-friendly employment practices with local employers
- Strengthen 50+ employment support programmes
- Enhance civic forums and ensure older people's voices shape policy
- Recognise and value the expertise older people contribute through civic roles

Implementation Approach

These priorities will be progressed through:

- Partnership working across council services, health, third sector, and community organisations
- Co-production with older people, ensuring they lead and shape developments
- Asset-based community development, building on existing strengths and resources
- Phased implementation, with clear actions, timelines, and accountability
- Regular monitoring and review, tracking progress against this baseline
- Learning and sharing, both locally and through the global WHO network

The detailed Age-Friendly Bridgend Action Plan will set out specific actions, responsibilities, timescales, and measures of success for each priority area.

11. Concluding Remarks

This baseline assessment represents Bridgend County Borough's commitment to becoming a truly age-friendly community and joining the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities. It provides a comprehensive snapshot of where we are now—our strengths, our challenges, and the aspirations of our older residents—establishing a foundation from which we can measure our progress.

The assessment has been developed through extensive engagement with over 200 older residents, drawing on their lived experiences, concerns, and ideas. It reflects genuine co-production, with older people not just consulted but actively involved in shaping our age-friendly vision and priorities.

Bridgend has significant strengths to build upon: strong partnership working across sectors, dedicated community organisations, innovative services like Bridgelink Telecare, rich cultural and natural assets, and most importantly, engaged and active older residents committed to improving their communities. The SHOUT Older Persons Forum, Community Navigators, Local Community Coordinators, and the extensive network of third-sector partners provide solid foundations for our age-friendly journey.

However, the assessment also identifies clear areas for improvement. Transport accessibility in rural and valley areas, GP appointment systems, digital exclusion, housing adaptations, outdoor space maintenance, and information accessibility all require sustained attention and action. The barriers identified by older residents are real and impact their daily lives, independence, and wellbeing.

As our population ages—with projections suggesting nearly one-third of residents will be aged 65+ in coming decades—the importance of this work only increases. But we do not see this demographic shift as simply a challenge to be managed. Rather, it represents an opportunity to build a more inclusive, connected, and resilient community that works for people of all ages.

Our Commitment

Bridgend County Borough Council and its partners commit to:

- **Implementing the Age-Friendly Action Plan with clear accountability and regular progress review**
- **Continuing to engage meaningfully with older residents, ensuring their voices remain central to all developments**
- **Working collaboratively across all sectors to deliver integrated, person-centred approaches**
- **Monitoring and evaluating our progress against this baseline, celebrating successes and addressing gaps**
- **Sharing our learning locally, nationally, and internationally through the WHO network**
- **Maintaining momentum through sustained leadership, adequate resourcing, and genuine prioritisation of age-friendly principles**

Looking Forward

This baseline assessment is not an end point but a beginning. It establishes where we are so we can chart our journey forward. The Age-Friendly Bridgend Action Plan will translate the priorities identified here into concrete actions with timescales, responsibilities, and measures of success.

We recognise that becoming truly age-friendly is an ongoing process, not a destination. As our communities evolve, as new challenges emerge, and as we learn from experience and from others in the global network, our approach will adapt and develop. What will remain constant is our commitment to co-production, to valuing older people, and to ensuring Bridgend is a great place to grow older for all residents.

We thank all the older residents who have contributed their time, experiences, and ideas to this assessment. We thank our partners across the public, third, and community sectors who work tirelessly to support older people. And we thank the WHO Global Network for providing the framework and inspiration for this work.

Bridgend is ready to join the global community of age-friendly cities and communities, to learn from others, and to contribute our own experiences and innovations. Together, we will make Bridgend a place where everyone can age well, remain connected, and continue to contribute to community life.

12. References

Key Local Documents:

- Bridgend County Borough Council, Delivering Together Corporate Plan
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg Well-being Assessment
- Bridgend Local Well-being Assessment
- Bridgend Housing Strategy
- Building Resilient Communities Plan
- Ageing Well in Bridgend Strategic Plans

WHO Framework Documents:

- World Health Organisation (2007). Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide. WHO, Geneva.
- World Health Organisation (2015). World Report on Ageing and Health. WHO, Geneva.
- World Health Organisation. Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities: www.who.int/ageing/age-friendly-world

National Policy Framework:

- Welsh Government. A Strategy for an Ageing Society: Age-friendly Wales
- Welsh Government. Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Welsh Government. Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014
- Welsh Government. More Than Just Words: Welsh Language Strategic Framework for Welsh Language Services in Health, Social Services and Social Care

Population and Demographic Data:

- Office for National Statistics (2021). Census 2021
- Stats Wales (2022). Population Estimates
- Welsh Government (2020). Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation