Age Friendly Strategy
County Wexford Age Friendly Alliance

2022-2026

Curracloe
Image Credit: Stephen Conway

Age Friendly Programme Manager

Wexford County Council

Carricklawn

Wexford

Email: annmarie.laffan@wexfordcoco.ie

Web: www.wexfordcoco.ie

Contents

Welcome Note

As life expectancy increases, the need to ensure that Wexford becomes a great county in which to grow old is increasing too.

Having older people empowered to participate in the development of their communities, both rural and urban, benefits all ages. If you design for the young, you exclude the old but if you design for the old you include everyone.

The voice of older people and their concerns and issues are captured in this our second Age Friendly Strategy. The work of Wexford's Older People's Council with Wexford County Council and the Age Friendly Alliance is for the good of everybody regardless of age.

Very often simple things will improve everyone's quality of life. Secure neighbourhoods are safe for children, youths and older people. Barrier free buildings and streets enhances the mobility and independence of both younger and older people with disabilities. The whole community benefits from the participation of older people in volunteer work and civic activities.

Young or old we all want the same things: to be listened to and taken seriously, to be able to work or volunteer, enjoy a good social life and have access to good information and healthcare. Neighbourliness, a sense of belonging, feeling safe and feeling valued are all important. An Age Friendly Wexford will make this possible for everyone to achieve that kind of life.

Yes, it will take some effort. Some steps are simple, some more ambitious. Not all steps will suite everybody. Together we can make our county a true 'Model County'.

May I thank my fellow council members and all the older people across the county for their contribution to the development of this strategy. Special mention to Ann Marie Laffan, Wexford Age Friendly Programme Manager and Dr. Yvonne Byrne, Rural Development Consultant.

Thank you all.

Kevin Molloy
Chair Wexford Older People's Council

Foreword

As Chief Executive of Wexford County Council and Chairperson of the Wexford Age Friendly Alliance and Cathaoirleach of Wexford County Council it gives us great pleasure to present the 2nd Wexford Age Friendly Strategy which builds on the success of our first strategy. In 2017, Wexford Age Friendly Alliance published their first Age Friendly Strategy for the county.

That document set out a range of ambitious recommendations and actions which when delivered would help to improve the quality of life of older people in the county.

Following on from this a range of exciting and important new initiatives were delivered in the county including the expansion of the Meals on Wheels Service countywide, establishment of the Ferns Befriending Service, community supports during the pandemic, expansion of rural transport services from TFI Local Link Wexford, IT and technology projects including the Telehealth pilot project and the rolling out of Age Friendly Libraries, the Age Friendly Business Recognition Programme, Accessibility initiatives, Sports Active Wexford programmes and a walkability audit of Enniscorthy to name but a few.

Working on this strategy has given us an opportunity to listen to older people and find out what it's like to be an older person living in County Wexford, the good things as well as the challenges and issues.

This strategy is the culmination of an extensive consultation process that brought together the older residents of Wexford and the key service providers from the statutory, voluntary, community and private sectors to identify how we can make Wexford a better place in which to live, work, enjoy life and grow older.

Figures from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) show that in 2016 almost 15% of the population of Wexford was over the age of 65 with a projection that this will grow to 22% in the South East by 2031. We must be ready to face the challenges that such an eventuality will bring to society and the services required to support this ageing population.

We want to commend all members of the Age Friendly Alliance and the Older People's Council who are our partners in the Wexford Age Friendly Programme, for embracing the collaborative approach to establishing this strategy and their commitment to ensuring that no section of the local community is left behind when it comes to the delivery of services.

We ask everyone to play their part in helping us to bring the vision and goals of the strategy to life and continue to make Wexford a great county in which to grow old.

Tom Enright,
Wexford County Council CEO &
Chair of Alliance

Barbara-Anne Murphy
Cathaoirleach
Wexford County Council

Section 1

Introduction

Happy to Chat benches – Gorey Town Park

1.1 Context

Figure 1. Co. Wexford

Each local Age Friendly Programme operates with the same structure which relies on an active Older People's Council, Age Friendly Alliance, Age Friendly Programme Manager and Age Friendly Housing Technical Advisor and Interdepartmental Team within the Local Authority.

The local Age Friendly Alliance is a high-level cross-sector group, chaired by the Chief Executive of the local authority (or an independent chair).

The member agencies of the local Age Friendly Alliance form a strategic partnership to develop and oversee the Age Friendly

Strategy. Members include the Local Authority, the Health Service Executive (HSE), the Education and Training Board, An Garda Siochana, the Chamber of Commerce, the Third Level education sector, other relevant stakeholders including, in some cases, the participation of an elected member representing a Strategic Policy Committee.

The Older People's Council is a representative group of older people, established by the Local Authority as part of the local Age Friendly Programme.

The Older People's Council is a two-tier structure with an elected Executive Committee and a wide membership base. Older People's Councils identify priorities areas of need, raise issues of importance and influence the decision-making process of the local Age Friendly Programme, and also participate in national level structures.

The key purpose of the Older People's Council is to provide the authentic voice of older people representing the diversity that exists among our ageing population. Older People's Council representatives are key collaborators and stakeholders who co-design the actions and objectives of the Age Friendly Strategy.

1.2 International Framework

Local Age Friendly Strategies are aligned to the eight domains of the World Health Organisation's Age Friendly Cities and Communities Framework. However, the Alliance in County Wexford include an extra domain focusing on safety and security. The nine domains are illustrated below.

Figure 2. Age Friendly Cities and Communities Framework

This Strategy 2022-2026 follows on from the first Age Friendly Strategy in County Wexford 2017-2021 and incorporates national and international best practice and research findings. It aims to deliver a range of ambitious new initiatives that will greatly enhance the lives of people in Wexford as they grow old over the next five years.

1.3 Age Friendly Ireland

National Shared Service

Age Friendly Ireland is a shared service of local government hosted by Meath County Council. The shared services manage the national Age Friendly Programme, affiliated to the World Health Organisation's Age Friendly Cities and Communities Network. The national programme is operated through a team-based framework of 31 local Age Friendly Programmes hosted in local government.

"The national Age Friendly Ireland Programme supports cities, counties and towns across Ireland to prepare for the rapid ageing of our population by paying increased attention to the environmental, economic and social factors that influence the health and well-being of older adults.

Age-friendly programmes work to provide walkable streets, housing and transportation options, access to key services and opportunities for older people to participate in community activities. By doing so, these communities are better equipped to become great places, and where appropriate lifelong homes, for people of all ages."

Age Friendly Ireland, 2021

Local Age Friendly Programmes are informed by a positive ageing perspective and seeks to enhance and improve the lives of older people across the country by giving them a voice in the decision-making processes that affect their ability to live full and active lives. Initiatives focus on areas such as housing, transport, caregiving, community engagement, volunteering, social inclusion and combating isolation among older citizens.

Figure 3. Covid Concert outside a Nursing Home: 2021

Figure 4. National Shared Service Framework: Age Friendly Ireland
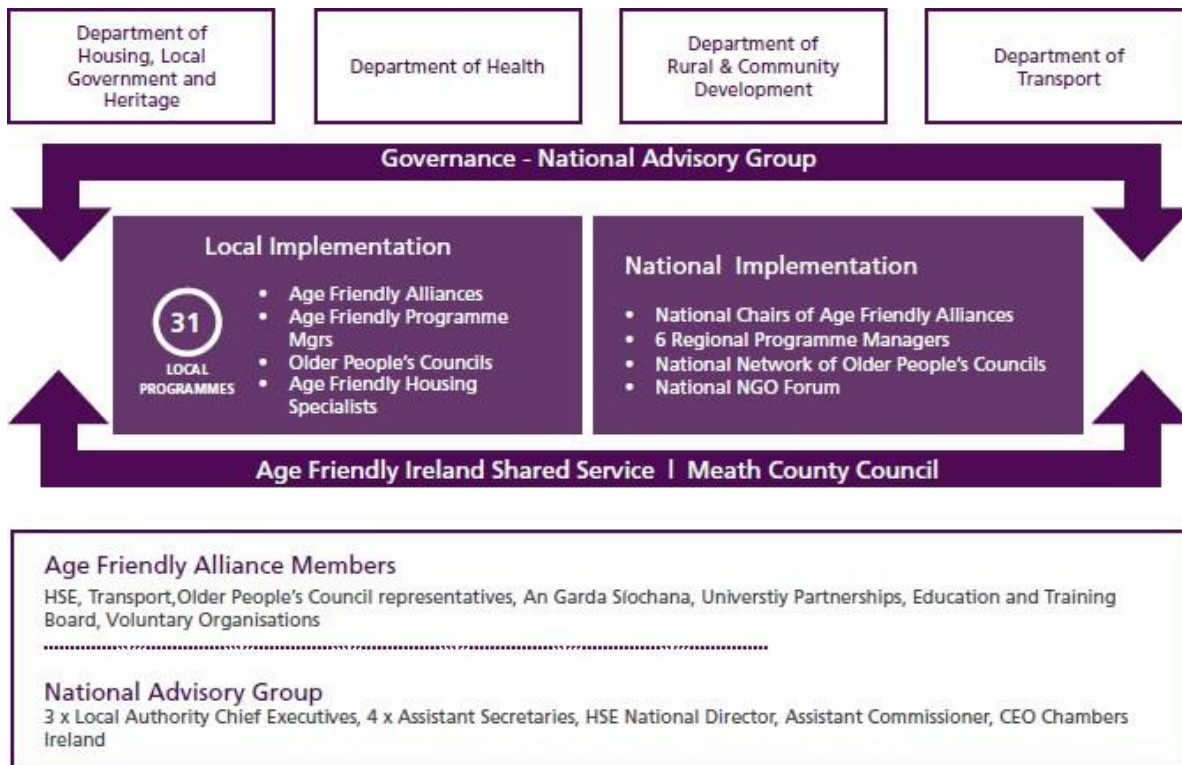
1.4 Older People's Council

Arising from the Age Friendly Strategy 2017-2021 an Older People's Council was formed in 2017. The Older People's Council is a representative group of older people, established by the local authority as part of the local Age Friendly Programme. The Older People's Council is a two-tier structure with an elected Executive Committee and a wide membership base. Older People's Council identify priorities areas of need, raise issues of importance and influence the decision-making process of the local Age Friendly Programme, and also participate in national level structures.

The key purpose of the Older People's Council is to provide the authentic voice of older people representing the diversity that exists among our ageing population. Older People's Council representatives are key collaborators and stakeholders who co-design the actions and objectives of the Age Friendly Strategy.

This Council was instrumental in overseeing the implementation of the first Age Friendly Strategy and also guiding the research and recommendations which are detailed in this Strategy.

Members of the Older People's Council are drawn from a cross-section of interests and geographical areas within the county as illustrated below.

Figure 5. Members of the Older People's Council: 2021

Gorey/Kilmuckridge District	Enniscorthy District
Kevin Molloy	John Carr
Mary Kenny	John Roche
Ann Slator	Marie Redmond
Vacant	Michael Shiggins

Special Area of Interest
Alzheimer Society of Ireland - Aoife Byrne
Wexford Family Carers Assoc - Jason Carroll

Wexford/Rosslare District	New Ross District
Madeline Quirke	Jack Stacey
Sean Kinsella	Laura Rowe
Mary Doyle	James Sinnott
Betty Breen	Vacant

Figure 6. 2019 AGM: Some OPC Members

1.5 Wexford Age Friendly Alliance

The Wexford Age Friendly Alliance was formed in June 2015 and it is a high-level cross-sector group, chaired by the Chief Executive of WCC. The member agencies of the Age Friendly Alliance form a strategic partnership to develop and oversee the Age Friendly Strategy.

The Alliance brings together the statutory, private, voluntary and community sectors to deliver services effectively and efficiently, so that Wexford can be a great place for all citizens to grow old.

Members include the Local Authority, Local Link Wexford, the Health Service Executive, the Education and Training Board, An Garda Siochana, the Chamber of Commerce, the third level education sector, other relevant stakeholders and Wexford County Council elected members.

The members of the Wexford Alliance are committed to providing the resources and supports to ensure this Strategy is delivered over the next five years.

Figure 7. Wexford Age Friendly Alliance Stakeholders

Wexford County Council   Wexford Local Link   Older People's Council

Waterford & Wexford Education Training Board

Health Services Executive   Waterford IT   An Garda Siochána

Church of Ireland   Diocese of Ferns   Chamber of Commerce

Sports Active Wexford

Strategic Partnerships
Wexford Age Friendly Alliance is a strategic partnership for the county to create new initiatives and services as well as enhance existing services for older people in the county. The key of the Alliance is the cross-sector co-operation that finds ways to improve the lives of older people in terms of their health, housing, built environment, social and personal wellbeing. WCC is the lead agency for the Alliance.

Interdepartmental Team
There is currently no Interdepartmental Team within WCC but this is something that will be addressed in the Action Plan of this Strategy.

Objectives of the Wexford Age Friendly Alliance

- Make Wexford a great county in which to grow old.
- Make Wexford a place in which older people have a say in how their county develops.
- Increase the participation of older people in the social, economic and cultural life of the county.
- Look at how Alliance partner organisations and communities can work better together to create a more age friendly environment.
- Seek solutions to concerns/issues raised by older people.
- Embed age friendly messages and practices into all partners structures and operations.
- Build general support and pride among the people of Wexford to be an age friendly place to live, through the successes and high profile nature of the project.
- Lead the way in demonstrating the processes that are required, the benefits to be gained and lessons to be learned from implementing an age friendly county initiative by sharing and disseminating information as the project develops.

Figure 8. 2019 AGM: Telehealth Initiative – Alliance Collaboration

Partners: WCC, HSE, WIT, Age Friendly Ireland and Tunstall Emergency Response

Figure 9. Pool hoist in The Apex, New Ross: Alliance Collaboration

Partners: WCC, Sports Active Wexford

Figure 10. TFI Local Link Wexford Serving Rural Communities

Image credit: TFI Local Link Wexford

1.6 Age Friendly Strategy Review: 2017-'21

In 2017, the County Wexford Age Friendly Alliance published their first Age Friendly Strategy for the county. This set out a range of ambitious recommendations to enhance the quality of life for people as they grow old in Wexford (aged 55+ years). This resulted in the delivery of a range of exciting and important new initiatives in the county which are outlined in appendix 4 and illustrated below.

Figure 11. Bus Shelter: Min Ryan Park

Figure 12. Changing Places / toilets at Min Ryan Park

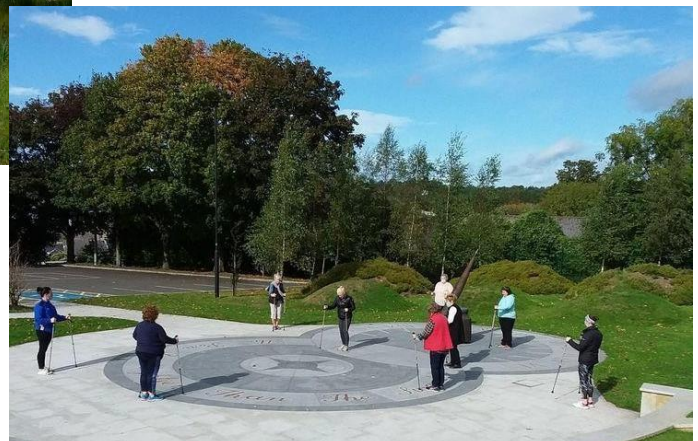**Figure 13.   Walkability Audit Enniscorthy: October 2021**

Figure 14.   Age Friendly Business Training with Enniscorthy Chamber of Commerce

Figure 15. Wexford Festival Opera Pop-Up Concerts in Nursing Homes and Day Care Centres

Figure 16. Positive Ageing Week: Walks with Sports Active Wexford in Gorey Town Park and the New Ross Library Park

1.7 CSO Data Nationally

In Ireland, it is projected that people aged over 65 will increase significantly from the 2016 level of 629,800 persons in the state to between 1.5 million and 1.6 million by 2051 depending on different growth scenarios. This is over double the current number of people aged over 65 based on the Central Statistics Office (CSO) 2016 data.

The older population, aged 80 years of age and over, is also set to rise dramatically by 2051, increasing from 147,800 in 2016 to over 500,000. (CSO, 2021) This represents a 3-fold increase which will have a significant impact on resource allocation as these people will need greater levels of support as they grow old.

Figure 17. Population Projections – People Aged 65+
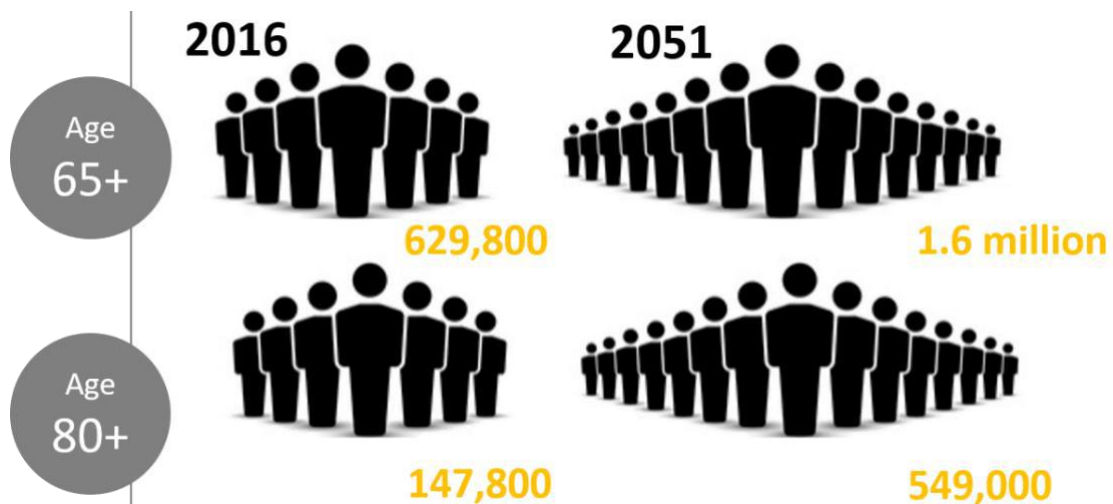
Source: CSO Population and Labour Force Projections 2017-2051

1.8 Socio-Economic Data: County Wexford

In 2016, there were 21,985 people (14.7%) aged 65+ living in the county based on CSO data, representing 14.7% of the population.

This compares to 18,367 people in 2011 or 11.6% of the total population. The map overleaf illustrates the geographical areas with the highest proportion of over 65s in 2016. The highest rates of older people live in the peripheral areas of the county or in the urban cores of the towns.

Figure 18. Population Aged 65 and Over – Co. Wexford, 2016
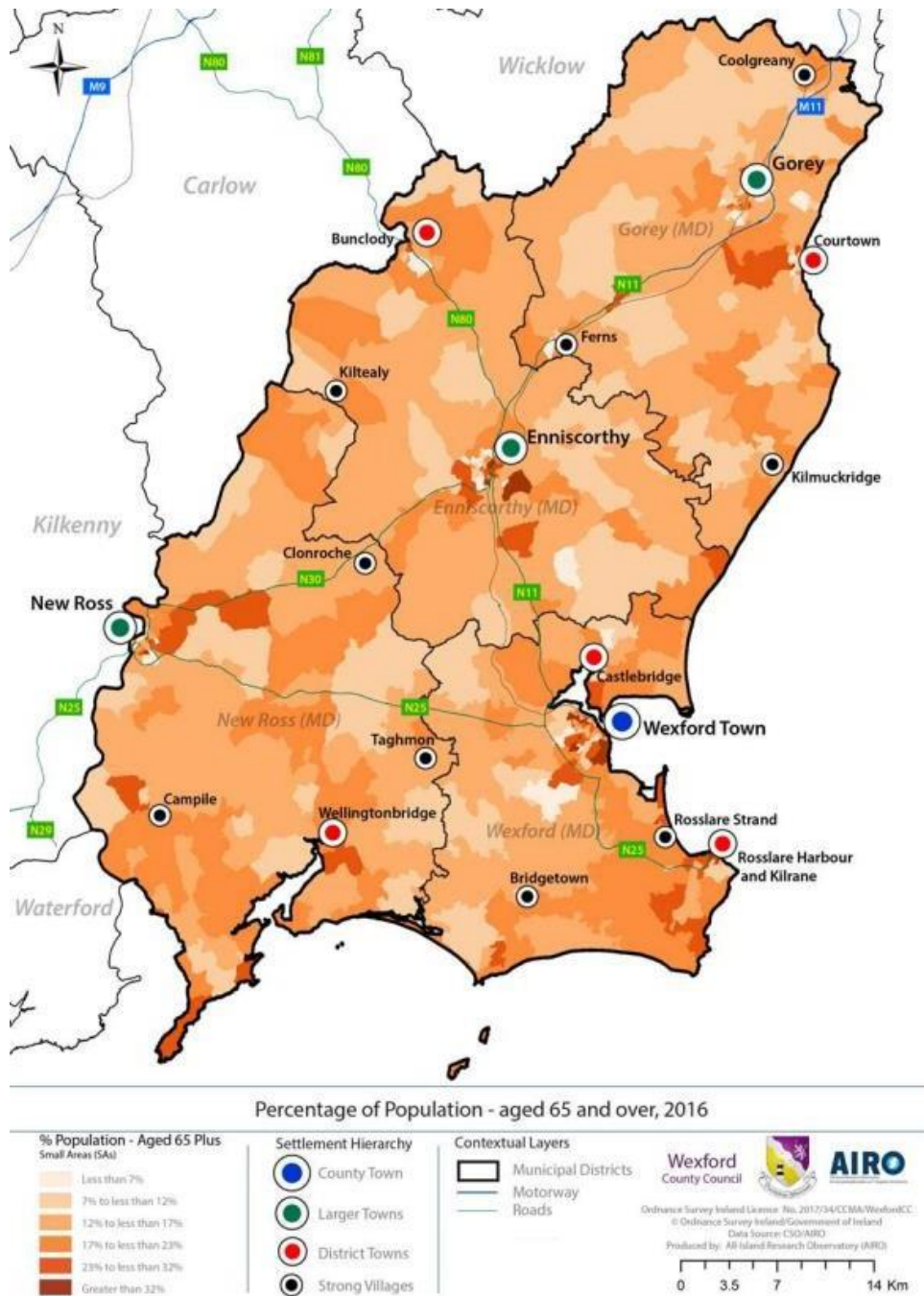
Source: WCC & AIRO, 2018

The Wexford and New Ross Municipal Districts have the highest rates of older people (this geographical area is also likely to include the Rosslare Municipal District but data for this was not available in 2016). Settlements of particular note include Wellingtonbridge, villages on the Hook Peninsula, Rosslare Harbour and Kilrane, Rosslare Strand, Campile, Courtown and Coolgreany.

County Wexford has a higher proportion of older people at 14.7%,
compared to the State average of 13.4%.
(CSO,2016)

These statistics assist the Alliance members in planning for this population growth and informs policy makers on the geographical locations with the highest demand for service provision.

It can be concluded from these projections, that there will be a significant increase in demand for services for older people and so there is a real need to plan for this now. In addition, in future analysis of CSO data it is recommended that mapping of people aged 80+ is completed as this population cohort are likely to have the greatest needs.

The graphs below and overleaf illustrate how the number of people living in County Wexford, aged over 65, has increased over the last ten years.

**Figure 19. County Wexford Population Trend: People aged 65+**
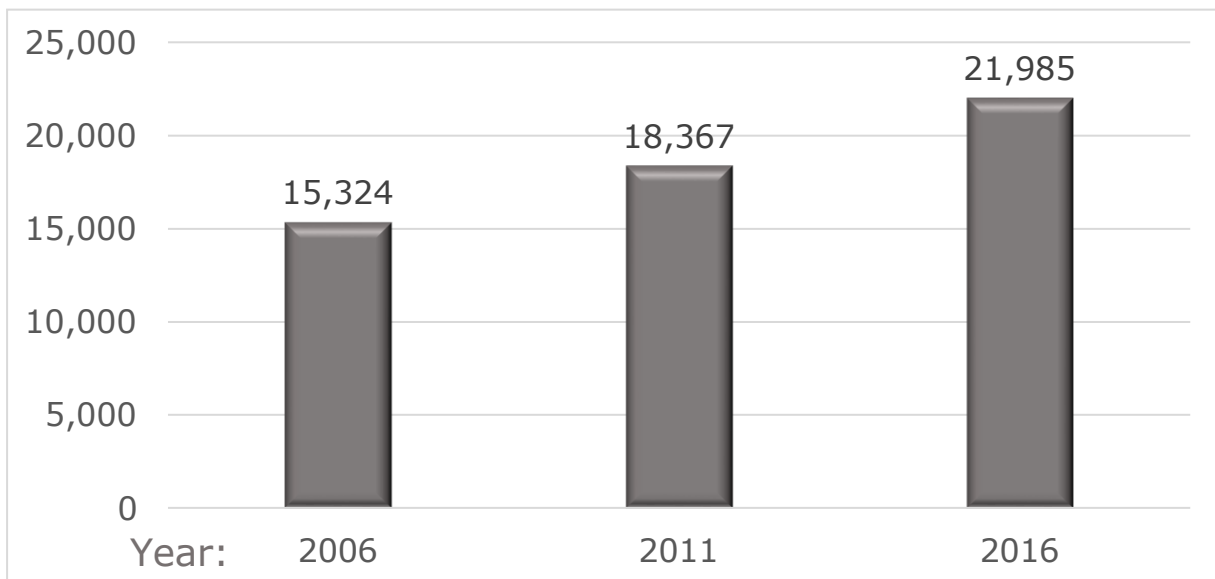
Source: CSO Data

This graph demonstrates that over ten years the number of people aged over 65 has increased from 15,324 in 2006 to 21,985 in 2016.

The graph below illustrates how the number of older people has increased in every age cohort over 65 years of age over the period 2011 and 2016.

Figure 20. County Wexford Population Analysis:

People aged 65 to 85+
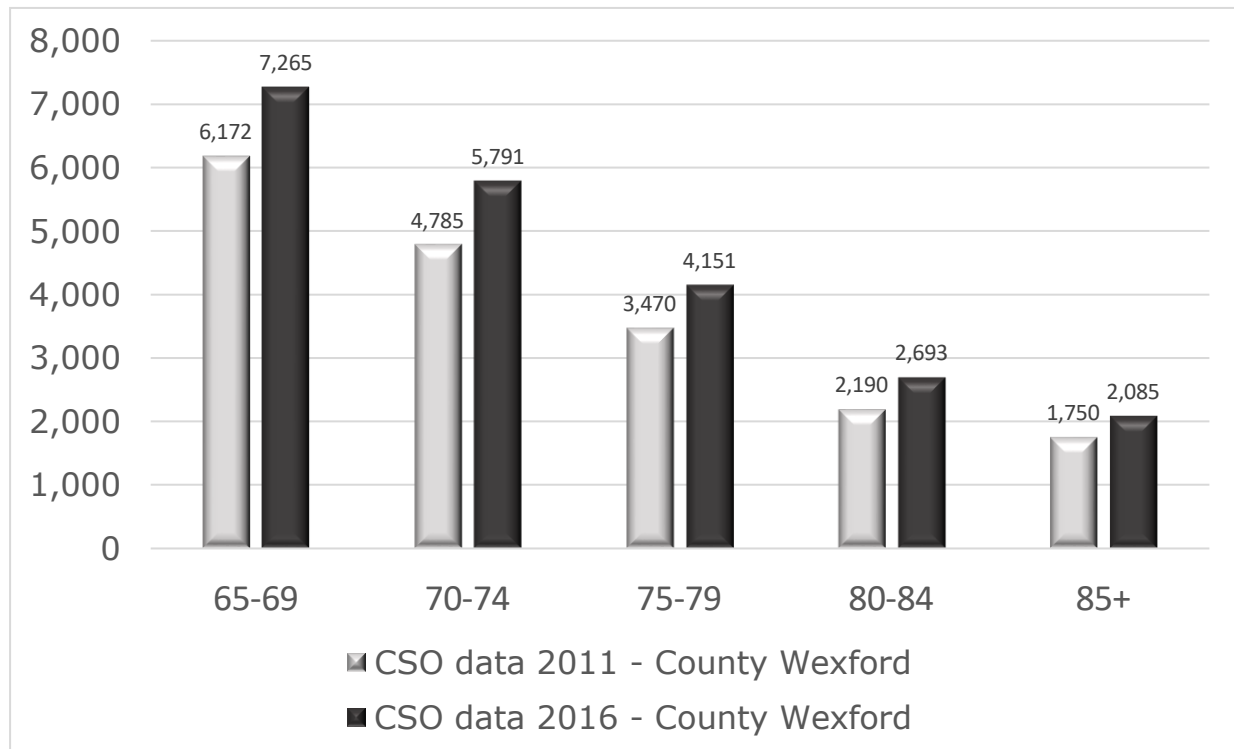
Evaluating the data more closely, it reveals that the percentage of people aged 80+ has increased from 2.7% of County Wexford's population in 2011 to 3.2% in 2016.

Deprivation
According to the All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO) report 2018, Wexford is the 4th most disadvantaged county in Ireland, an improvement of one position (3rd most disadvantaged) in 2011. The majority of Wexford's population live in areas classed as '*Marginally Below Average'* (56% or 84,039 people).

HaPAI Survey
In 2015, over 500 older people in County Wexford participated in a Healthy and Positive Ageing survey. The survey findings are detailed comprehensively in the first Age Friendly Strategy for County Wexford and in summary this research found that 94% of people liked living in their neighbourhood.

Ethnicity / Cultural Background

In the 2016 Census there were 13,244 people identified as non-Irish nationals which represents 8.9% of the population. This compares to the state average of 11.4%. The largest non-Irish national groups in Wexford are UK (3%) and Polish (2.7%).

Wexford had 1,508 Travellers in 2016, representing 1% of the total population, and this compares to a State average of 0.7%. Within the county some geographical areas have much higher rates of Travellers and these include settlements such as Clonroche (20.5%), Taghmon (14.1%), Bunclody (11.1%), New Ross (3.5%) and Enniscorthy (2.5%).

Health and Disability

In 2016, there were 22,650 people who stated they had a disability in County Wexford representing 15.1% of the population. This is the second highest rate in the State.

In terms of general health, the AIRO report noted that 8.7 out of every 10 respondents in County Wexford stated that their general health was either 'Good' or 'Very Good'. This rate is the 14th highest in the State. The AIRO research also noted the correlation between failing age and health.

An important point to note here is the projected increase in elderly population (65 plus) in Wexford and the State between now and 2031. With numbers expected to increase in the region of 56% (South East, CSO Regional Population Projections 2016-2031) there will be an increase in numbers with 'Bad' and 'Very Bad' which will result in significant pressure on health services."
(AIRO, 2018)

Housing

In 2022, WCC Housing Department analysed their housing stock profile for older people and this is summarised below.

Living on Own & Over 65	
No. of Beds	**No. of Tenancies**
1 bed	118
2 bed	181
3 bed	126
4 bed	2
Total	**427**

1.9 Summary

This section has illustrated the national framework and local support structures which collaborate to implement the Age Friendly programme in County Wexford. It also demonstrates the range of new initiatives that resulted from the first Age Friendly Strategy and this learning will be utilised to inform the strategy recommendations in this report.

Finally, the analysis of the CSO data shows that both the number and percentage of people aged over 65 in County Wexford has increased over the last ten years. This has resource implications and demonstrates the real need to further enhance facilities and services for people as they grow old.

Figure 21. Walk and Tone in Min Ryan Park, Wexford

Figure 22. Changing Places – Heritage Park

Section 2

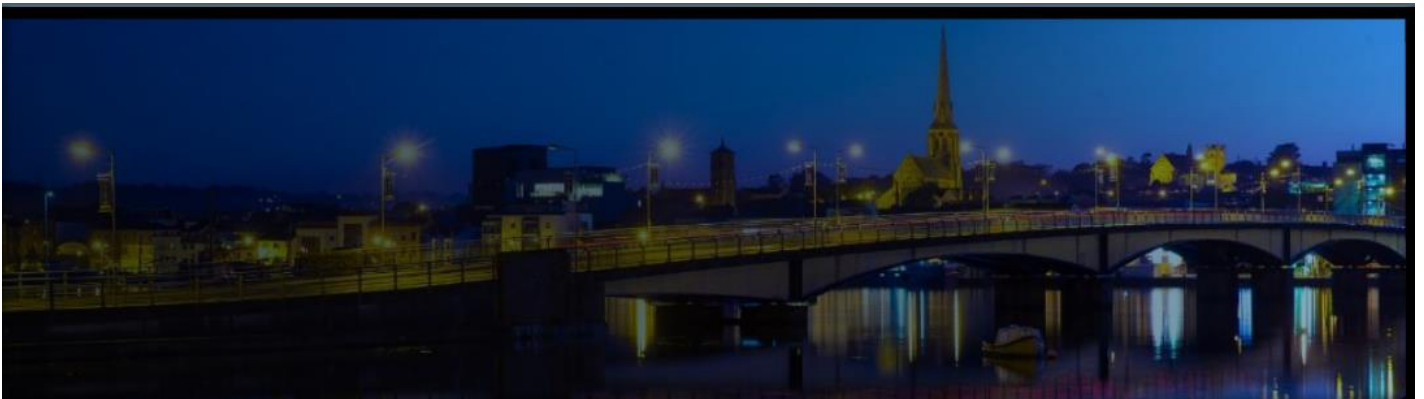# National / Local Plans

Wexford Town

Image Credit: Patrick Browne

2.1 Compatibility with National / Local Plans

This section will present a brief overview of relevant national and local plans to ensure the compatibility of this Age Friendly Strategy to other policy frameworks.

2.2 International / National Policies / Plans

United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals
This plan outlines 17 Sustainable Development Goals that integrate economic, social and environmental themes as illustrated below.

Figure 23. United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The implementation of many of these goals are supported through the execution of actions outlined in this Age Friendly Strategy. Goals of particular relevance include:

- Good Health and Well Being;

- Reduced Inequalities; and

- Sustainable Cities and Communities.

European Green Deal

This strategy seeks to transform the European Union into a fair and prosperous society where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050. It aims to improve the well-being of people and protect the natural environment, which is good for people, the planet and the economy. This Age Friendly Strategy seeks to support these aims through ensuring no person and no place is left behind. It also aims to support the reduction greenhouse gases through improved housing measures and sustainable transport initiatives.

Climate Action Plan 2021

This strategy sets out Ireland's ambition to achieve a 51% reduction in emissions by 2030 and to net-zero by 2050. This will be achieved through major investments in home energy retrofits and also active travel initiatives. These recommendations are endorsed in this Age Friendly Strategy.

Programme for Government 2020: Our Shared Future

The Wexford Age Friendly Programme will support older people to live in their own home with dignity and independence, for as long as possible as outlined in the Programme for Government 2020.

TILDA

The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA) is a large-scale, nationally representative, longitudinal study on ageing in Ireland, the overarching aim of which is to make Ireland the best place in the world to grow old. The results of their work will be studied and used as part of the work of the Wexford Age Friendly Programme.

Healthy Ireland (HI) Strategic Action Plan: 2021-2025

The Healthy Ireland Plan provides a roadmap to support good health, access to services, healthy environments, and the promotion of resilience. This helps to ensure that everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing, to their full potential. The HI Plan identifies a need for a *whole of Government'* and *'whole of society'* approach to support health and well-being.

This philosophy has been recognised in this Age Friendly Strategy which acknowledges the importance of partnership and collaboration to ensure the efficient and effective delivery of facilities and services to older people.

The HI Plan has prioritised these areas which directly complement the actions identified in this Age Friendly Strategy.

- Keeping Active
- Staying Connected
- Being Creative
- Eating Well

- Minding Your Mood
- Healthy Homes
- Healthy Communities
- Healthy Cities and Counties

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) Southern Region
The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy "*Seeks to unlock the latent potential of less developed areas while increasing the competitiveness of the more developed areas. Quality of life for all and safeguarding our environment for future generations is at the heart of its ambition*." This philosophy is embraced in this Age Friendly Strategy which seeks to enhance the quality of life for people as they grow old.

Housing for All: A New Housing Plan for Ireland
This strategy aims to address Ireland's many issues in the housing system. In particular, it aims to assist older people and people with a disability through increasing funding for Housing Adaptation Grants. This objective will be actively embraced in this Age Friendly Strategy which seeks to support people living in their own homes for as long as possible.

Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025
This strategy recognises that Ireland has an ageing population and that a larger proportion of older people live in rural areas in comparison to urban conurbations and that this trend is growing. "*Continuing demographic trends, with remote rural areas in particular experiencing ageing populations and high dependency ratios; this will have implications for the provision of local services for older people and succession issues for farm families*." (Our Rural Future, 2020)

Some initiatives that support this Age Friendly Strategy include:
- Engagement of Approved Housing Bodies with responsibility for older people to develop accommodation in town centres more suited for those with reduced mobility.

- Support the development of Smart Towns and Villages which use innovative solutions to explore how local services, such as health, education, social services, renewable energy, transport and retail, can be enhanced and sustainable through community-led actions and projects.

➕ Improvement and further integration of rural public transport services to enable people to continue to live in rural areas and to access work, education and social activities.

National Volunteering Strategy 2021-2025
The purpose of the Volunteering Strategy is to recognise, support and promote the unique value and contribution of volunteers to Irish society. It sets out five objectives and of particular relevance to this Age Friendly Strategy is its objective to "*Facilitate, develop and support the Volunteering Environment so that it contributes to vibrant and sustainable communities.*"

This Age Friendly Strategy recognises the huge, positive contribution volunteers can make to society. As a result, a range of exciting new initiatives have been identified in the Action Plan in this Strategy based around volunteering.

Project Ireland 2040 Southern Region
This is the Government's overarching policy initiative to make Ireland a better country for all and to build a more resilient and sustainable future. The Project Ireland Strategic Goal to *"strengthen rural economics and communities"* is supported by the actions identified in this Age Friendly Action Plan.

2.3 Local Policies / Plans

Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) 2016-2022
There are six high level goals (HLG) and this report complements the HLG2. "*Support and promote the development of socially inclusive, sustainable communities in County Wexford and ensure that all citizens enjoy optimal health and well-being.*" Under this LECP goal there is a priority to support the implementation of the Wexford Age Friendly Strategy.

County Development Plan (CDP) 2021-2027 (Draft)
There are 15 chapters in the CDP and the '*Sustainable Communities and Social Infrastructure Strategy*' sets out the goal and strategic aims to enhance the quality of life of all residents in the county. "*It is the goal of the Council to ensure that County Wexford has a strong network of socially inclusive sustainable communities, where all residents and visitors enjoy equal opportunities to participate fully in the economic, social and cultural life of the county.*" This Age Friendly Strategy seeks to specially address the needs of older people to ensure they can meet this goal in the CDP.

Let's Talk about Disability in County Wexford (PPN)
County Wexford has over 15% of the population (22,650 people: CSO, 2016) with a disability which is one of the highest percentages in Ireland. The Disability Report recommends seven actions and the findings in this Age Friendly Strategy supports the implementation of these actions, in particular Action 4: "*Incorporate accessibility in the key areas of environment, housing, transport, independent living and employment.*"

2.3 Age Friendly Publications

A comprehensive suite of publications are available on the Age Friendly website (https://agefriendlyireland.ie/). Some examples include: Age Friendly Towns Toolkit; Public Realm Guidelines; Rightsizing Guide; Age Friendly Planning Guidelines; Age Friendly Seating Template; Age Friendly Home Rating Tool; Universal Design Features; Towards an Age Friendly Hospital; and Older People Council's Guide.

2.4 Summary

These international, national and local strategic plans provide a broad policy framework for this Age Friendly Strategy. The goals highlighted in these plans, in conjunction with the consultation process, determine the actions identified in this Age Friendly Strategy.

Section 3

Vision

OPC AGM 2018

3.1 Vision

To make County Wexford a great place in which to grow old.

3.2 Core Values

The values underpinning the work of the Age Friendly Programme in County Wexford are guided by the national programme values outlined below.

*"**Commitment to Action** Active, engaged, practical, pragmatic implementation of local Age Friendly Ireland Strategies which are firmly based on the expressed views and priorities of older people and which enhance their quality of life and participation in Irish life.*

***Future Proofing our Infrastructure and Key Services** Age Friendly Ireland programmes make economic as well as social sense and foster the creation of more liveable, sustainable, resource effective and enabling environments. By future-proofing our county, towns and villages we will help to ensure that our policies, strategies, infrastructure and key services do not become outdated or outmoded in the near future and that they are friendly and accessible on many different levels, to all ages and groups, whether in an urban or rural setting.*

***Collaboration** Fulfilment of the Age Friendly vision through combining a bottom-up participatory approach at local and community level with top-down political and agency-led commitment and resources.*

***Inclusion** Informed by the views and opinions of the diversity of older people and enabling the direct and active involvement of older people in local-level decision-making in a solution focussed way thus ensuring that the complex challenges older people face as they age, at varying degrees of ability, is reflected in what we prioritise and deliver on.*

***Innovation** Commitment to employing new thinking, methods and approaches in response to the challenges and opportunities identified by older people."*

Source: Age Friendly Ireland, 2021

3.3 Age Friendly Themes

The Age Friendly Ireland programme is part of a World Health Organisation (WHO) initiative. The key priorities identified in this strategy are based on the nine themes identified in the Age Friendly Ireland programmes.

Figure 24. Age Friendly Themes

Section 4

Older People's Views

Kilmore Quay

Image Credit: Malcolm Tolen

4.1 Public Consultation Process

An in-depth and comprehensive public consultation process was undertaken between May and October 2021. This was to ensure that older people had a real say in what happens to their lives and what happens in the areas in which they live. This consultation process was undertaken during the Covid-19 pandemic and varying restrictions were in place over this six-month period, which determined how we could engage with older people.

This section will summarise the key findings that were shared by older people and which form the basis for our recommendations in this strategy.

Figure 25. Summary of Public Consultation Process

28 Workshops	190 Participants
Surveys:	582 Completed
Focus Groups:	20 Target Groups/ Agencies

4.2 Workshops

Figure 26. On-line Public Consultation

WCC collaborated with the Older People's Council, TFI Local Link Wexford and the Rural Development Consultant to organise 28 online workshops during May 2021. This involved participants from a cross-section of villages and towns in the county and the full schedule is listed in appendix 1. The summary of the key findings are presented overleaf.

What's Good?

- Fantastic community spirit and friendly people
- Slower pace of life than living in the city
- Weather – Sunny South East
- Nice parks, walking trails and tracks, beaches
- Well serviced towns and some villages
- Transport accessibility to major cities good – excellent road network
- Major routes well serviced by public transport
- Variety of sporting, cultural and heritage events
- Valued supports from agencies / community during Covid pandemic (GAA, Macra na feirme, WCC, Gardaí, Neighbours, Community – befriending/ meals on wheels)

What's Challenging?

- How to reach the people in need?
- Isolation and loneliness
- How to support people after Covid-19 and how to get communities to socialise post-pandemic?
- Poor broadband in certain areas (geographical variations)
- Difficulty in getting to hospital appointments in Dublin / Waterford
- Access to GP services can be limited due to a lack of rural GPs
- Difficulty accessing services online for some people e.g. banking
- All services delivered more and more by machines – there is a real need for personnel interaction
- People not aware of services and how do you publicise them effectively?
- Lack of public toilets
- Dog fouling on footpaths in the towns
- Pedestrian / cycling on roads can be dangerous
- Parking in rural coastal villages during summer too busy
- Parking in towns can be difficult
- New Ross and Enniscorthy Town can be challenging with steep hills
- Closure of shops, post office and banks in some villages a real challenge – loss of community interaction

County Wexford: Two Halves?

Positive Experience	Negative Experience
Strong family unit	Living alone
Good Broadband	Poor Broadband
Own car	No car and not connected to major transport routes
Member of social clubs / sporting activities etc.	Not actively involved with social groups / activities
Confident with technology	Limited use / confidence of phone, tablet or pc
Living in town or village with shops and services	Living in rural area or village with no shop or services
Private health care and good access to GP	Difficulty accessing GP and health services (two tier system)
Good physical health with no accessibility issues	Reduced mobility with limited access to facilities / services

Outdoor Spaces

Key features valued by older people
- Bus shelters
- More frequent bus stops
- Public toilets
- Smooth and well-maintained footpaths
- Wide footpaths – not cars parked on them
- Appropriate time for pedestrians at traffic light crossing
- CCTV – in towns
- Public seating
- Car parking close to town centre
- Slipways at beaches too steep and slippery – need railings
- Outdoor recreation, parks, beaches, forests, walking trails, beach boardwalk for wheelchair users
- Parks with covered areas (band stands / canopies) and agility equipment
- Heart of the village: Shop, Post Office, Pub, Bank – fear of them being closed in recent years

Potential Solutions:
- Walkability audits with Age Friendly Programme Manager, Accessibility Officer and local people. (Towns and Wexford General Hospital)
- Additional infrastructure noted above to be installed where possible
- Better promotion of facilities: e.g: Beach wheelchair, CCTV, walking tracks & trails, public toilets etc.

Transport

Key difference in experience between those who do and don't drive.

There are large geographical variations in service provision. However, there is a great appreciation of the TFI Local Link Wexford Service and the frequent Bus Services on major routes. Older people highlighted the comfort of travelling by train with access to toilet facilities which is very welcomed, although they would like more services.

Potential Solutions:

Public Transport
- Better rail services / up-grade physical appearance of some stations / open old stations (e.g. Ferns, Camolin)
- More bus shelters & stops where they are needed. Need the right times
- Local community to promote public transport and demonstrate need

Road Infrastructure
- Dangerous roads for pedestrians / cyclists – particularly difficult in Rosslare Harbour village
- Need for pedestrian crossings and ramps to slow the traffic
- Need for more footpaths and cycleways
- Concerns over the new motorway routes in communities potentially affected
- Insufficient parking for older people with accessibility issues in towns, beaches or at hospital

Figure 27. Modified wheelchair to provide accessibility to beaches

Housing

Most respondents comfortable in their own homes but they were aware of some older people needing additional supports.

Potential Solutions:

- Interest in sheltered housing – Community / Volunteer led – right location is key e.g. Rathangan or Kilanerin

- Down-sizing relevant – many older people in homes which are too large for them

- Need to secure planning permission for younger people so they can live near to older people – keep rural villages alive and create /   maintain extended family structures

- Cash flow issues with claiming housing adaptation grants – make the grant process easy, faster, better and approachable. Can credit unions be part of the solution? More help and publicity required for the grants – too daunting

- Advertise housing supports through facilities such as meals on wheels, GPs, daycare centres etc.

- Climate change and energy efficiency will become increasingly important – many living in older properties and have difficulty heating their homes

- Leniency for septic tank issues

- Need more publicity and information on security alarms

- Home / garden maintenance can be an issue

Figure 28. Rathangan Senior Citizens Housing Association

Image Credit: Schokopic Photography

Social Participation

The range of social activities varies widely between different villages and towns.

Potential Solutions:
- Mapping of communities – funding / facilities / services
- Training up local Leaders in areas where social activities are missing

Drop-in Cafe

Befriending

Building Trust

Meals on Wheels

Agency Supports

Partners:
WCC, HSE, Gardaí, WWETB, WLD, Alone, OPC, Local Link, Irish Rural Link, Volunteers
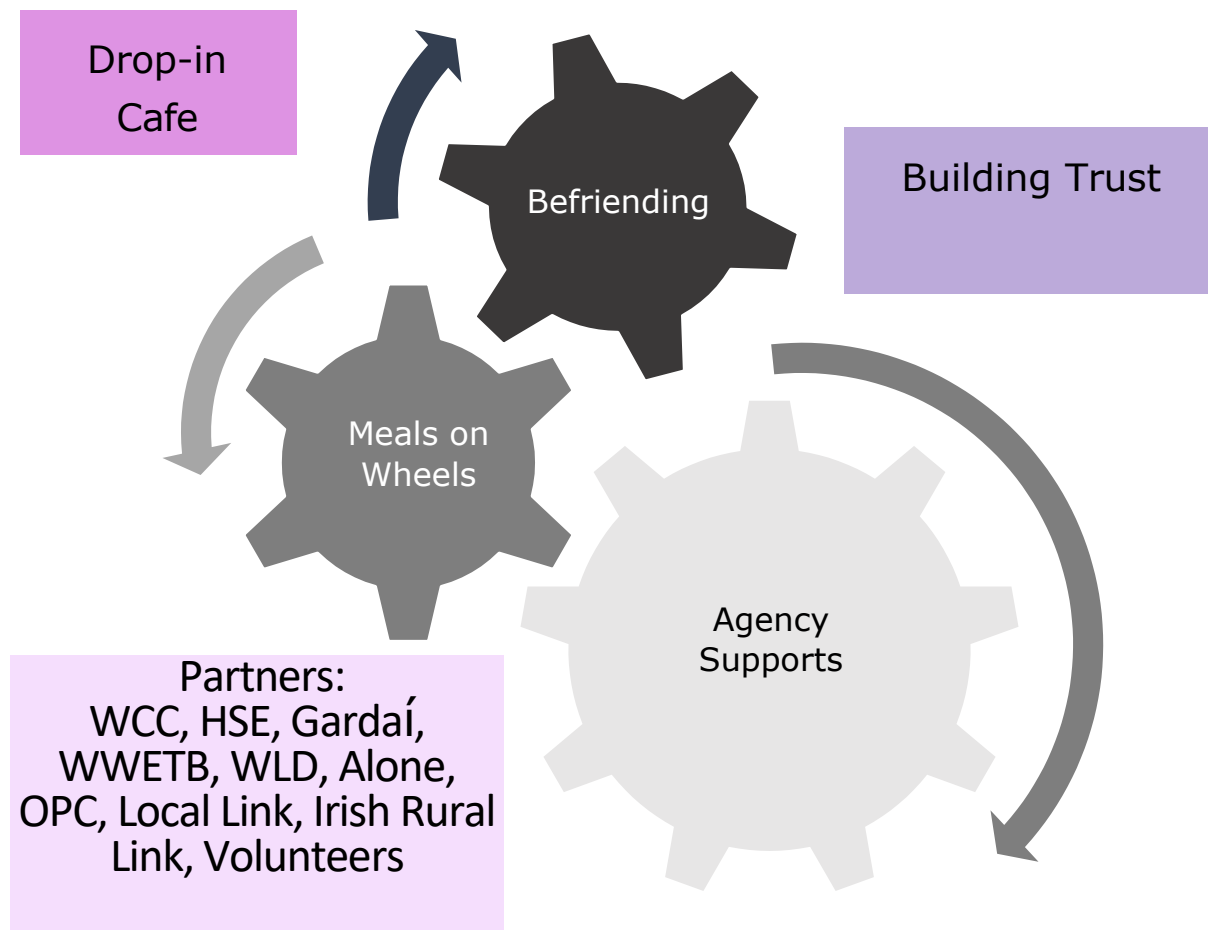
Figure 29. Launch of Ferns Befriending Service 9th July 2019

Social Participation (continued....)

Figure 30. Model illustrating a Vibrant Community
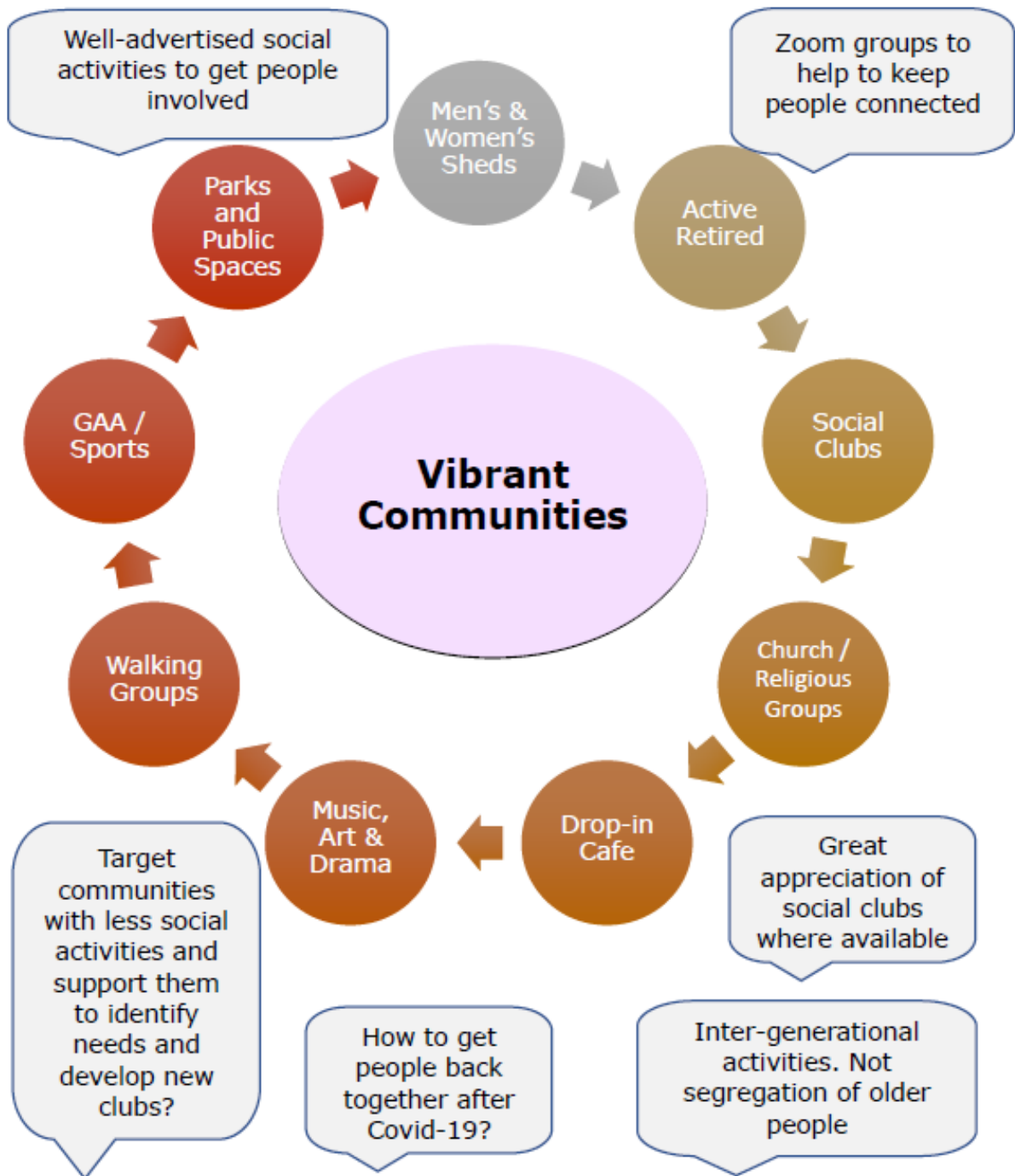
Respect and Social Inclusion

Older people really value integrating with all age-groups within their community.

Issues
- Concern that many older people are feeling isolated and lonely which has been exasperated by the Covid-19 pandemic. (Observation: Not likely to have reached that target group through the workshops so specific focus groups were arranged to capture the views of vulnerable older people).
- People missing visitors calling to their homes.
- Older people's isolation amplified by more services moving on-line and the closure of shops / post offices within their village.
- Levels of isolation vary according to people's home situation (living alone or with partner).
- Communities have very different levels of social activities and local services.

Potential Solutions:
- Great interest in inter-generational activities – linked to National and Secondary schools / youth clubs etc. Exchange of skills – IT / crafts / folklore / music.
- Dynamic community networks greatly help people to feel included in society and also supports the informal sharing of information and advice. Need for drop-in social club / café located within the community.
- Under-utilisation of community buildings and this presents an opportunity for older people to use this facility – particularly during the day-time.
- Importance of providing comfortable and attractive outdoor spaces where people can socialise.
- Expand key services to reduce isolation: Be-friending, Meals on Wheels, Daycare Centres, TFI Local Link Wexford, increasing accessibility to the Gardaí.

Figure 31. Cultural Companions 1st Anniversary Celebration

Civic Participation & Employment

Many older people are highly skilled and interested in sharing their knowledge with the wider community.

- Significant interest in participating in training courses, particularly IT.
- Valued this consultation process and keen to be continued.

Figure 32. Model for older people's active civic participation in society

Vibrant Communities

Working

Volunteering

Acquiring new Skills

Successful communities have local leaders!

Communication & Information

Ensuring everyone is informed about the wide range of services in the county is essential.

Older people greatly value local shops, post office, bank, community centre, GP Surgery.

When they are lost it creates a breakdown in communication and the informal sharing of information.

Potential Solutions:

- IT training – smart phones, ipads, tablets, Personal Computers – linked to schools (Transition Year), GAA or peer to peer learning in person / 1 to 1 with trainer at Day Care Centre (go to where the older people are rather than making them travel)

- WCC – Age Friendly Website Page; Older Person's Directory; Newsletters – Volunteer led

- Irish Rural Link training courses in community facilities

- Inter-generational activities linked to National Schools – sharing of skills

- Get GP surgeries / pharmacies / daycare centres to promote other services e.g. meals on wheels, TFI Local Link Wexford etc.

- Engage at a national level to address difficulties in accessing banking facilities, broadband, telephone services, GPs

- Older people value their Post Offices and there is a real need to keep them open in rural areas – explore opportunities for them to provide a greater range of services

- Publicise the digital ambassadors scheme in the libraries to assist older people access services

- Community / Church notice board, local leaflets to publicise community facilities

Community Champions

Community Support & Health Services

Access to health care can be an issue for older people.

Issues

- Some doctors not taking on new patients

- Difficulty getting appointments with the GP

- Closure of rural GPs and then have to travel further to access a doctor

- Difficulty of accessing medical appointments in Dublin or Waterford Hospitals if you don't have access to a car

- Two tier medical system with public patients experiencing long waiting lists

- Variability in health service provision and limited integration between different services

- Little interest in telecare or on-line medical appointments

- Older people nervous to socialise even after they have been fully vaccinated

Potential Solutions:

- Operate outreach health facilities to rural areas e.g. physiotherapy, chiropody etc.

- A change of names on prescriptions can be confusing for older people, may use a generic name instead of a brand name that people are use too – ideally include both drug names

- Greater access to the public health nurse or operate community based health centres

- Public awareness campaign related to the vaccines and Covid-19 to reassure people

- Improve parking at hospitals to facilitate people with accessibility issues

Safety & Security

Most people felt safe in their homes and in the community and older people really value the Gardaí services.

The model illustrated below indicates potential solutions to safety in the community and within the home.

Figure 33. Initiatives to enhance safety in the home and community

Greater Gardaí presence in community

Improve footpaths so they are safe for people with reduced accessibility

Improve road safety for pedestrians and cyclists – reduce speed limits and install signage

Safe Communities

Vulnerable to cyber security attacks – greater training and awareness

Publicise the CCTV facilities in the towns so people feel safer

Address youth boredom to stop young people hanging around on the streets

Publicise home security / panic alarm services

4.3 Surveys

A survey with 24 questions covering the nine Age Friendly themes was circulated to older people in County Wexford between June and September 2021. A copy of the survey is in Appendix 5 and the corresponding results are shown in Appendix 6. 582 surveys were completed and the results will form the basis for our recommendations in this strategy and the corresponding action plan for 2022 to 2026.

Figure 34. Public consultation with farming community at IFA event

4.4 Focus Groups

A series of focus groups were held in the Riverside Park Hotel over 2 days in September 2021. This involved participants and organisations who work with vulnerable adults because these voices were unlikely to have been heard through the workshops and surveys.

Figure 35. Vulnerable Older Adults Consulted in this Strategy
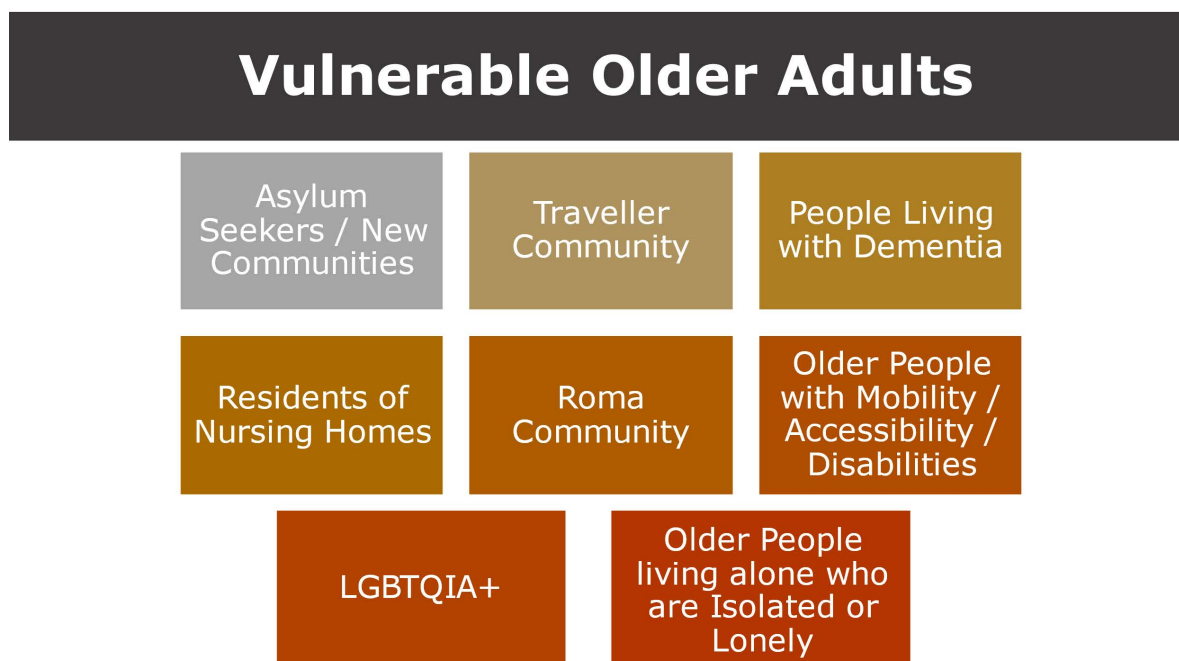
A summary of the findings from vulnerable older adults are presented below.

What's Good?	
Proximity of the extended family	Good neighbours
Good quality of life in Co. Wexford	Sunny South East. Lovely beaches, river walks, attractive towns
Daycare centres	Meals on Wheels
TFI Local Link Wexford	Religious Services
Men's / Women's Sheds	Community Centre Activities e.g. bingo, bridge, social outings
Volunteer Centre	Alone and Befriending Initiatives
WCC Community Helpline	Gardaí Supports
Public Health Nurses	Mobile Library
Muintir na Tire (community alert)	Local shops
Walking Tracks at GAA pitches	Discounted tickets - older persons

What's Challenging?

Loss of connection and chance for older people to interact	Closure of Post Offices & Garda Stations
Getting transport to events, shops, chemist, doctors, hospitals	Automated banking and difficulty with speaking directly to a human
Many Government Departments now automated	Loneliness and isolation – lack of face-to-face meetings
Bereavement support / losing family and friends	Garda Vetting – one person has to be vetted by many organisations and that clogs up the system
Support to allow older people to remain in their own homes	Access to information is often difficult and older people can find it difficult to use technology
Lack of integration of services	Grants – applying for them and knowing what is available
Too restrictive grants for personal alarms	Shortage of volunteers but chance to link with the Volunteer Centre
Waiting list for those needing help	Lack of parking for older people in towns
Civil defence unable to continue their volunteer transport service to assist with medical appointments	

What Opportunities?

The Call Centre operated by WCC during Covid worked well and if that could continue it would be very helpful. Alternatively, use another organisation to operate a one stop shop where people can be referred or signposted to what or who they need.
Establish a network of Local Leaders & Champions.
Support the transition towards integrated care packages.
Expand collaborative links between voluntary organisations and state agencies to get information and supports out to older people. Collate a directory of services (not just age-related).
Use the media to promote positive attitudes towards ageing and encourage older people to get out of the house (post Covid pandemic).
Establish community cafés where people can meet and chat, many older people don't want to do courses, go to pubs, join groups they just want to hang out.
Establish Age Friendly Parking spaces in towns or establish one free parking day a week.
Older people would like an expansion of the TFI Local Link Wexford budget for route expansion.
Support for elderly in banking – make banking easier for older people e.g. in person supports one day a week.
Support the social prescriptions initiative to combat mental health issues and isolation / loneliness.
Deliver more mobile services e.g. post office or other services to rural areas.

Focus group sessions were held with individual vulnerable target groups to identify their specific needs and these are detailed below.

Asylum Seekers / New Communities

Context:
There is one Direct Provision Centre in County Wexford with 114 residents currently from 29 nationalities. 87% have good spoken English and literacy classes are on-going. Asylum Seekers have a weekly allowance of €38.80. There are clusters of asylum seekers living in Rosslare Harbour; Bridgetown; New Ross and Gorey. The opportunity to restore Yola Farm in Tagoat as an initiative involving people from the Direct Provision Centre is currently being explored.

Challenges:
- Access to GPs and dentists difficult
- Transport is costly
- Access to clothing / footwear difficult
- Language barriers and different cultural backgrounds make integration difficult
- Older people can be left behind
- Length of time to get a work permit too long
- Difficulty of securing accommodation and assimilating into the local community once asylum seekers leave the Direct Provision Centre
- People living in the Direct Provision Centre are often suffering from trauma and can have mental health difficulties

Opportunities:
- Forge links with the Volunteer Centre and local groups, Active Retired, Men's Shed, Befriending, Sporting Organisations, Schools etc. to assist with integration into the community. Create a volunteer buddy system and family pen-pals.
- Foster collaboration with TFI Local Link Wexford to assist with transport issues.
- Identify volunteers with language skills. Explore the scope to have hospital liaison interpreters (e.g. Urdu).
- Organise interactive events and activities with asylum seekers and local residents e.g. cooking, crafts, sewing, woodwork etc.
- Create links with the Arts Department and Sports Active Wexford to develop projects.
- Amend the WCC Housing Form to include Direct Provision.

Dementia Working Group: Health Provision

Context:

A dementia group has been established in County Wexford to co-ordinate and integrate care supports for people with dementia. The ARC Team undertake a full assessment of older people to prevent unnecessary hospitalisations / residential care. Dementia can affect all age groups but if you are under 65 there is no support within the HSE.

Challenges:
- Address the fear and stigma of a dementia diagnosis
- There is insufficient information about dementia and promoting brain health amongst the public
- Career fatigue and career burden is a big issue
- People with dementia can have transport difficulties getting to appointments
- Access to facilities can be limited
- Funding for all
- Inter-departmental communication needs to be improved as staff are not aware of available services and duplication can occur
- A lack of referrals to the Memory Technological Unit in County Wexford due to insufficient awareness of the initiative
- There is technology that can assist people with dementia but it can be expensive to purchase and a hire service is logistically difficult
- There are trained people in dementia care but there is no database. There is also no record for tracking the number of people with dementia
- More signpost information for Gardaí who get call outs to people with dementia
- County Wexford has a disproportionately high number of people moving into the county to retire who don't have family members near by
- People with dementia are at risk of financial fraud

Opportunities:
- Information sharing on dementia and brain health in 'Town Hall' events, libraries or community centres to promote positive ageing.
- Share information on dementia and brain health through church newsletters, radio, local newspapers etc.
- Ensure there is an integrated care pathway and information sharing amongst care providers and statutory agencies.

- Expand funding and staffing supports for dementia patients.
- Expand the Community Call / WCC Helpline as it is very useful for frontline services and vulnerable people.
- Link the Memory Technological Unit (MTU) with the Volunteer Centre to assist patients accessing this service.
- Offer MTU clinics at outreach centres in the county.
- Explore links with the library to identify if equipment / technology hire can be facilitated through the library service.
- Map service provision and identify what is available.
- Establish a database of trained dementia champions.
- Train Befriending volunteers in dementia supports.
- Investigate if collaboration with Higher Education Institutions can be forged to better understand dementia.
- Establish and encourage GPs to recommend social prescriptions.
- Develop more day services and health clubs.
- Support adaptive housing and assisted living initiatives.
- Put in place a process for HSE and/or WCC for dealing with dementia related or neglect concerns raised by Gardaí or others in the community.

Traveller Community

Context:

Older Travellers have very strong extended family ties, good neighbours and are well respected. They like shopping locally, value the friendly community and enjoy visiting holy wells, graveyards, beaches, playgrounds and parks. Opportunities for younger family members are not good, particularly in relation to accessing employment and the transition from Primary School to Secondary School which can present challenges. However, younger people often live close to their extended family so they can greatly assist the older generation. There is a strong reliance on younger family members who assist with online services or the completion of forms etc. The Traveller Health Workers are very helpful for the Traveller community. Older Travellers prefer face to face or telephone communication. The life expectancy of Travellers is considerably lower than the average in Ireland.

Challenges:

- Literacy issues
- Typically don't use online facilities and services
- Difficulty with banking and many older people don't have a bank card or account

- The rapid transition to online services during the Covid-19 pandemic created considerable difficulties for older Travellers
- Poor quality housing and grounds on halting sites
- Housing maintenance can be delayed and there is a greater requirement to complete more works yourself. The WCC housing booklet cannot be read by some older Travellers
- Rubbish issues
- A lack of respect from some tradesmen
- Cars speeding
- Accessibility issues in the town for older people
- Isolation and loneliness, particularly during the pandemic
- Difficulty to find employment if identified as a Traveller

Opportunities:
- Offer literacy courses for older adults.
- Provide supports to the Traveller community to assist with form filling and online services.
- Information events to discuss the housing maintenance booklet and how to liaise with WCC on housing repairs. Ideally appoint a WCC Traveller Housing Liaison Officer.
- Assessment of halting sites and establish resident's associations to co-ordinate improvements.
- Explore opportunities to assist with housing repairs through schemes such as the 'Little Jobs' initiative.
- Bring a Traveller group on the WCC walkability audits.
- Foster closer links between the Traveller community and TFI Local Link Wexford; Men's Shed; Sports Active Wexford etc.
- Establish arts, physical activity and cultural initiatives with the Traveller community in areas such as story-telling, sewing, flower arranging, sports / games, bingo, allotments etc.
- Explore initiatives to record the Traveller language so it's not lost, for example Gammon or Cant.

Mobility / Accessibility

Context:

There are three types of disability: congenital; acquired; and infirm associated with ageing. Older people can have a combination of these types of disabilities.

There was 22,650 people with a disability in County Wexford in 2016

(15.1%) of the total population – the second highest in the state and much higher than the national average of 13.5%.

Challenges:
- How to ensure that those with disabilities are given the opportunity to Participate, Engage and get Involved in decision-making processes?
- How to ensure that those with a disability are not adversely disadvantaged in society?

Opportunities:
- Explore the opportunity to nominate a person with a disability onto the Older People's Council.
- Promote best practice case studies or exemplar's on accessibility.
- Compile a leaflet on accessible walking trails with tarmac in the county that includes accessible parking, toilets and refreshments.

LGBTQIA+

Context:
Throughout the pandemic older people faced many difficulties, whether shielding at home or unable to see family while in care homes. Such a sense of isolation and loneliness has been exacerbated for all those in the LGBTQIA++ community and even more so for the older members of this community.

There are also different dynamics and experiences at play within the LGBTQIA++ community based on age and grouping. For example, lesbian women are often not as isolated. The language and terminology can be difficult and it is important to get it right.

Challenges:
- The LGBTQIA+ community are more likely to experience mental health difficulties.
- The LGBTQIA+ community can feel uncomfortable in some situations for example team sports, community groups etc.
- Often less support from family and friends.
- Older members of the LGBTQIA+ community feel there is a lack of trust and understanding?

Opportunities:

- Explore the opportunity to nominate a 'Diversity Position' on the Older People's Council
- Annual awareness training to give people a better understanding of this community and their needs. This could be linked to Pride
- Host a LGBTQIA++ community exhibition as part of a positive ageing event. This could then be rotated around the libraries and other public events. It could also be filmed as a webinar.
- Form a new walking / hiking club for all ages of this community. Launch this at an event with high profile sports people.

Older People in Nursing Homes

Context:

In County Wexford there is good capacity in nursing homes and there is a mix of public and private nursing homes. Approximately 5% of older people need a nursing home. The Covid-19 pandemic had a major impact on residents of nursing homes as the links to the wider community were largely severed. However, new supports were created with the library and South East Radio (free bingo cards) that were very welcomed.

Challenges:

- Ensure planning for new nursing homes are in areas of real need and there is a connectivity with the local community. The location of a nursing home is very important. Ensuring compliance with building regulations can result in delays and additional expense.
- During the Covid-19 pandemic the challenge has been how to stay part of the community
- When day trips are allowed there is a need to have parking close to amenities and public toilets which are wheelchair accessible. Footpaths also need to be tarmacked
- Some regular visitors to nursing homes cannot drive so connectivity to public transport links is essential
- Some residents could have avoided needing nursing home care if they had received better supports when they had lived in their own home
- Shortage of accessible taxis in County Wexford
- There are a good range of tablets and technology to support zoom calls to family / friends which works very well but broadband can be an issue

Opportunities:

- Ensure there is accessible parking in towns, with public toilets and good quality footpaths and benches
- Support initiatives that foster links between the nursing homes and their community e.g. arts, religious services, music, etc
- Forge links with the Volunteer Centre so that volunteers can come into the nursing homes to chat to residents on a one-to-one basis. Activities include painting nails, reading the newspaper, playing music, singing, feeding the birds, setting up zoom calls etc
- Support initiatives with secondary school transition years
- Continue the library book service for residents which was established during the Covid-19 pandemic which worked really well
- Explore if a parking disc for the nursing homes could be given to facilitate parking for medical appointments
- Forge closer collaboration with TFI Local Link Wexford to support visitors using public transport to see residents in nursing homes – more information on timetables etc.
- Explore opportunities to develop daycare and sheltered housing on nursing home sites.
- Investigate the possibility of those residents able to attend daycare centres doing so, allowing them to see their friends.

Figure 36. Covid Concerts at Nursing Homes during Covid-19

A wide range of support structures are in place to assist these vulnerable groups and opportunities for partnership and collaboration will be considered in the recommendations section of this report. Examples of the key agencies that have a role in the implementation of this Age Friendly Strategy are illustrated overleaf.

Figure 37. Agencies / Groups interacting with Older People

Examples of Support Structures

Men's Shed	GAA	Alone	Befriending	Community Development Groups
Wexford Local Link	Wexford Sports Active	Volunteer Centre	Dementia Working Group	
Wexford Local Development	Gardaí	Wexford County Council	Health Service Executive	
Libraries	Older People's Council	Age Friendly Ireland	Public Participation Network	

Figure 38. Consultations with targeted focus groups (Sept. 2021)

4.5 Summary

The findings from this extensive public consultation process have been instrumental in informing the recommendations developed in this Age Friendly Strategy. The research reveals that for many older people, growing old in County Wexford can be a very positive experience.

However, the findings also illustrate that for some older people the experience can be much more challenging and isolating. This is particularly true for some of the more vulnerable groups such as the Traveller community; refugees; asylum seekers; people living alone; the LGBTQIA+ community; and those with disabilities or who have long-term illnesses. Figure 39 below summarises some of the key positive and negative experiences for people as they grow old in Wexford.

Figure 39. Older People's Experience of Living in County Wexford

Positive Experience	Negative Experience
Strong family unit	Living alone or no close family
Good Broadband	Poor Broadband
Own car	No car and not connected to major transport routes
Member of social clubs / sporting activities etc.	Not actively involved with social groups / activities
Confident with technology	Limited use of phone, tablet or pc
Living in town or village with shops and services	Living in rural area or village with no shop or services
Private health care and good access to GP	Difficulty accessing GP and health services (two tier system)
Good physical and mental health with no accessibility issues	Reduced mobility and / or poor health and difficulty in accessing facilities / services

Section 5

Recommendations

Enniscorthy Town

Image Credit: Jennifer Coady

5.1 Overview

The recommendations outlined in this section of the strategy will directly address the needs of older people in Wexford across all of the themes identified by the World Health Organisation as part of its Age Friendly Cities and Communities programme.

Figure 40. World Health Organisation: Age Friendly Themes

1. **Outdoor Spaces & Buildings**

2. **Transportation**

3. **Housing**

4. **Social Participation**

5. **Respect & Social Inclusion**

6. **Civic Participation & Employment**

7. **Communication & Information**

8. **Community Support & Health Services**

9. **Safety & Security**

Theme 1:

Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

Goal:
To make outdoor spaces accessible and safe for older people, thereby creating walkable communities and age friendly spaces. This enables people to stay active and to participate fully in their wider community.

The survey findings gave a clear indication of the outdoor facilities needing improvement, with public toilets, bus shelters, seating and walking on public roads being the most important.

Figure 41. Older peoples' views on outdoor facilities (survey results)

Legend:
- Good (yellow)
- Poor (red)
- Don't Use (orange)
- No Response (dark red)

Facility	Good	Poor	Don't Use	No Response
Pedestrian Crossings	64%	15%	17%	4%
Walking in your nearest town	58%	17%	18%	7%
Footpaths	57%	7%	30%	6%
Parking	44%	20%	30%	6%
Public Transport	38%	35%	21%	6%
Train Stations	37%	43%	13%	7%
Public Seating	33%	25%	36%	6%
Bus Stop/Shelters	23%	39%	33%	5%
Public Toilets	11%	37%	47%	5%
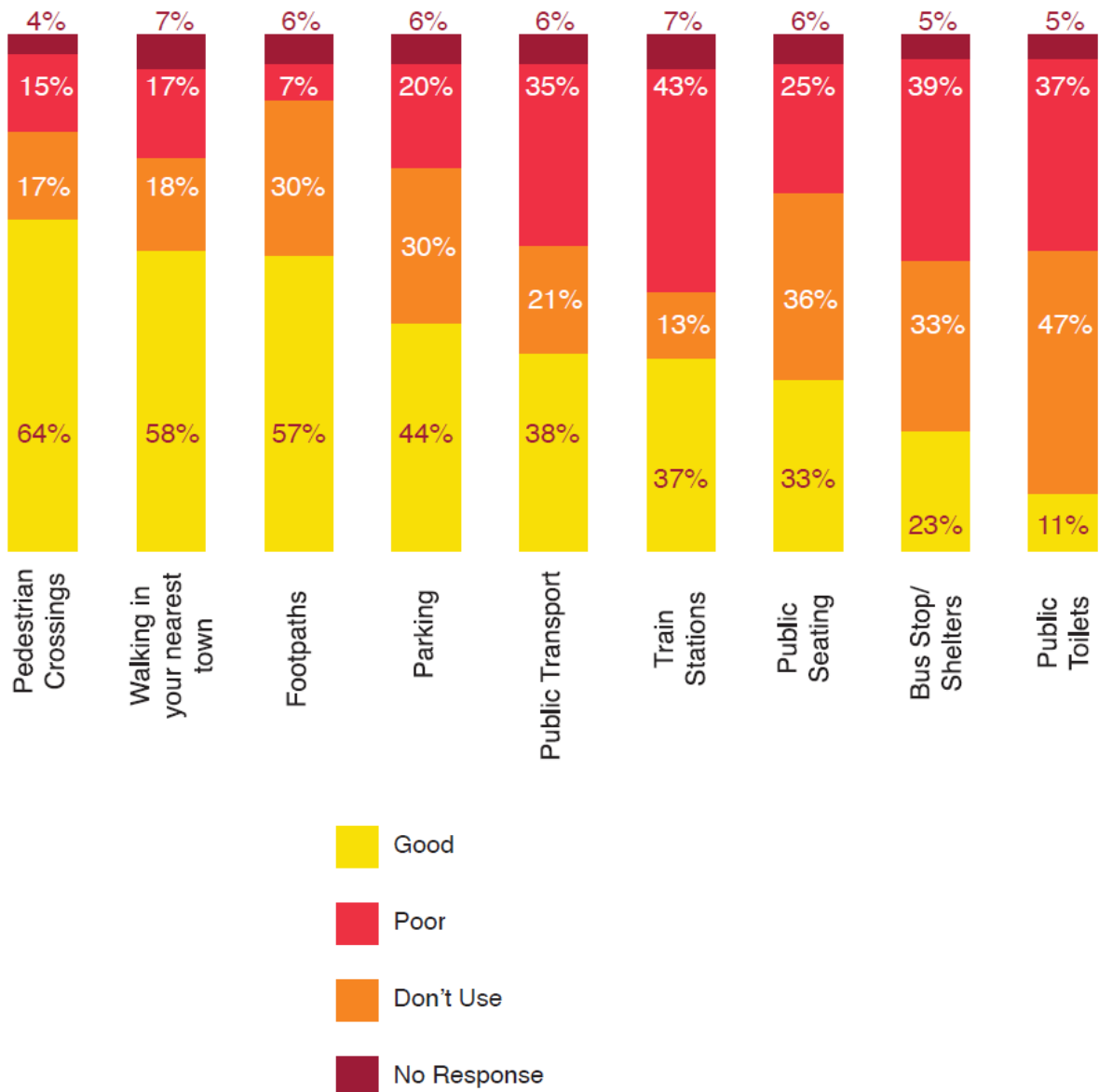
Recommendations

**Objective: Improve the accessibility of our Towns
(Wexford, Enniscorthy, Gorey, New Ross, Bunclody, Rosslare Harbour, Courtown)**

- Complete walkability audits in towns and Wexford Hospital (1 per year).
- Designate 1 day per week in each town as Age Friendly. Provide toilets, parking, shopping discounts, public transport, library and banking support.
- Provide and promote public toilet facilities in each town linked to existing facilities where possible.
- Create Age Friendly parking spaces in each town close to the main services and also at Wexford hospital, beaches and parks.
- Provide more Age Friendly public seating and bus stop shelters.
- Create more local parks and off-road walking tracks / cycle paths.

**Objective: Improve the accessibility of our Villages
(Rural Communities)**

The shop, post office, pub, bank, church, community centre and national school are often at the '*Heart of the rural community*' – there is a fear around losing these facilities.

- Develop outdoor gardens / parks / walking tracks and walking trails for older people to socialise (ideally with a sheltered covered area). Prioritise communities where there are currently no outdoor amenities available.
- Provide more public seating.
- Explore opportunities to diversity the range of facilities / services offered by local shops / post office / community centres.
- Publicise the availability of public toilets in rural communities linked to existing facilities.
- Promote disabled wheelchair facilities where available.
- Create dedicated and segregated cycling / pedestrian infrastructure to connect rural communities to the towns and other villages.
- Develop initiatives to create footfall in the rural communities, thereby sustaining local facilities and services.

Proposed Partners

WCC, Chamber of Commerce, Tidy Towns, Community Development Groups, Men's Shed, Wexford Walking Trails, WexBUG

Theme 2:

Transportation

Goal:
Provide safe, accessible and reliable public transport

Develop active travel for older people.

Ensure people are informed about available transport options.

The public consultation process gave a clear indication of the transport needs of older people and what would be most beneficial to them.

Arising from the considerable number of older people that can't use a car, this demonstrates the need to ensure that people can access services and facilities through using public transport or other types of transport initiatives.

Figure 42. Survey Extract: Do you drive and have access to a car?

70%
Yes

29%
No

1%
No response
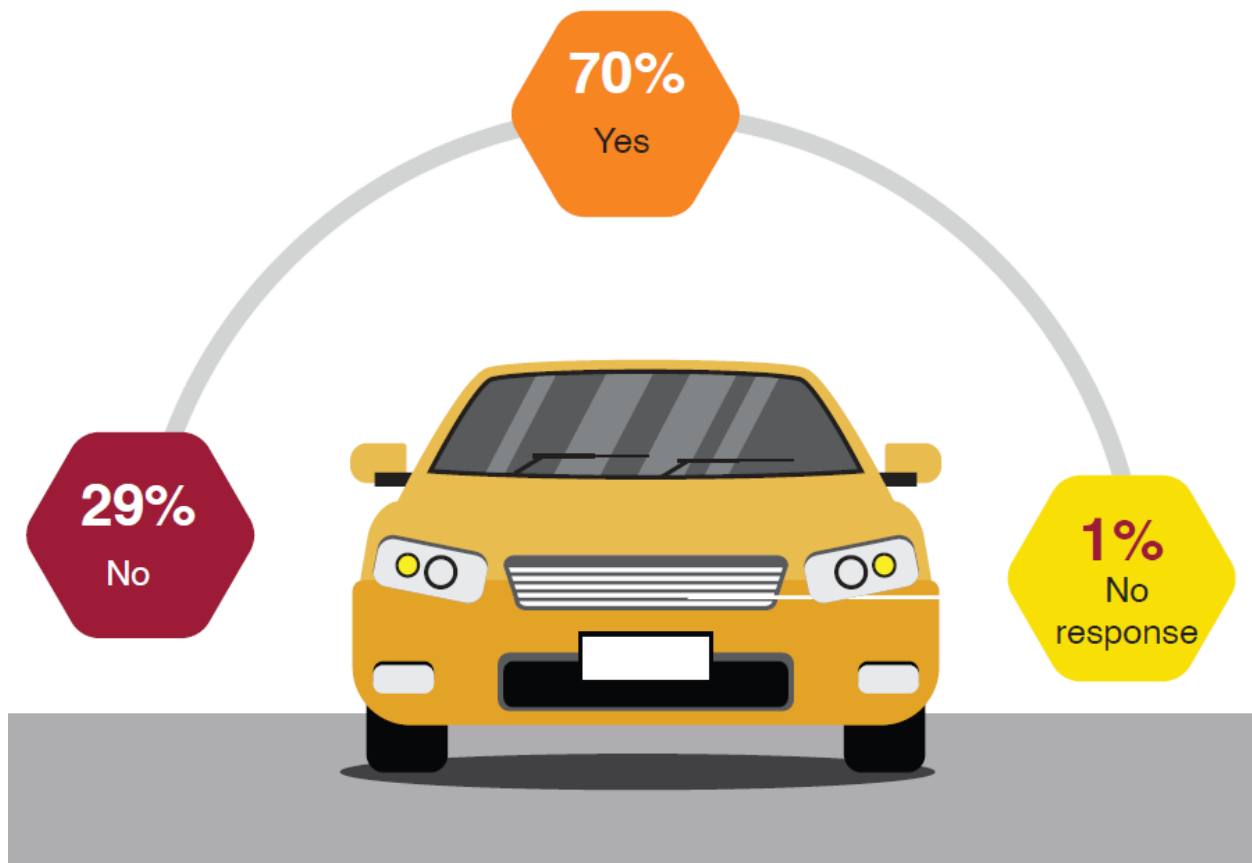
Recommendations

Objective: Improve people's access to medical appointments

- Establish a county wide car volunteer scheme (prioritising people attending medical appointments.)

Objective: Further expand the public transport network

- Continue to expand the TFI Local Link Wexford service and the public transport infrastructure to best meet the needs of older people in the county. This is to be undertaken in collaboration with local communities who are best placed to identify local needs.

Objective: Invest in safe walking and cycling infrastructure

- Ambitiously develop segregated cycling infrastructure in the county so that it can be seen as a safe and valid transport choice for older people wanting to engage in activities / services outside their home.

Figure 43. Greenway from the Cork suburbs to the city centre

Objective: Establish a network of Community Champions to promote public transport and active travel options within their locality

- Explore opportunities to create a network of Community Champions throughout the county who can offer local and one to one advice on public transport and their timetables. These Champions could also assist in promoting public transport options in newsletters, notice boards and on social media. This could possibly be supported by social employment schemes.

Proposed Partners

WCC, Wexford Local Link, Sports Active Wexford, Volunteer Centre, Community Development Groups, WexBUG

Theme 3:

Housing

Goal:
Facilitate older people to live in their own homes for as long as possible through providing supports.

Provide a range of housing options to suit different needs.

Support family members being able to live nearby.

The public consultation process gave a clear indication of the housing needs of older people and what would be most beneficial to them. In particular, there was a strong message that older people want to live in their own homes for as long as possible.

Figure 44. Survey Extract: Are you happy with the home you are in?

89%	7%	4%
Yes	No	No Response
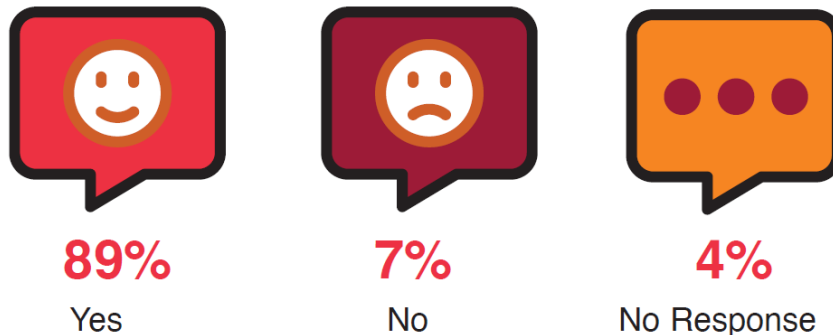
Age Friendly Ireland have developed a model illustrating the housing needs of older people as their needs change. This ranges from independent living through to a nursing home.

Figure 45. Housing with care continuum (adapted from the Age Friendly model)

No specific inputs needed	Home care services	Supportive Housing (low support)	Supportive Housing (high support)

Living in mainstream housing in the community → Supportive housing → Nursing home or other forms of long-term care

Repairs / adaptions / technology	Home care & repairs / adaptions / technology	More suitable home (Mainstream)	Nursing home or other forms of long-term care

Source: www.agefriendly.homes.ie

Recommendations

Objective: Provide supports to enable people to live in their own homes where possible

- Improve the range of agency supports available to people living in their own homes. This includes:
  - WCC to provide one to one support to assist older people apply for home adaption or mobility aid grants.
  - Skill up Community Champions to advise on home adaption grants, personal alarms, meals on wheels, daycare centres and adaptative technologies.
  - Expand the Wexford Local Development - Little Jobs Service.
  - Explore SMART Communities and innovative home care solutions.
  - Forge partnerships to promote adaptive technologies.
  - Promote and support older people to undertake home energy audits and energy retrofit works.
  - Planning polices to support extended family networks living in close proximity to each other.

Objective: Provide a range of supportive housing options

- Identify locations which are suited for new sheltered housing developments for older people.

Figure 46. Grantstown Sheltered Housing

Objective: Support links between nursing homes and their community

- Ensure planning for new nursing homes are in areas of real need and that there is a connectivity with the local community. The location of a nursing home is very important as some visitors can't drive so public transport links are essential.
- Support and encourage partnerships with the Church, secondary schools, musicians, artists, South East Radio and members of the community to maintain links between the nursing home residents and their local area.

Proposed Partners
WCC, Wexford Local Development,
Community Development Groups, Church,
HSE, Department of Social Protection,
Nursing Homes, TFI Local Link Wexford

Theme 4:
Social Participation

Goal:
Support the development of social activities in communities where facilities are under-utilised or they aren't available.

Expand key services to reduce isolation and support vulnerable individuals.

Many older people are actively involved in a wide range of social activities as illustrated in the survey findings below.

Figure 47. Peoples' involvement in the following activities.

38% Church/Religious Groups

29% Social Clubs

25% Sports (Playing/Spectator)
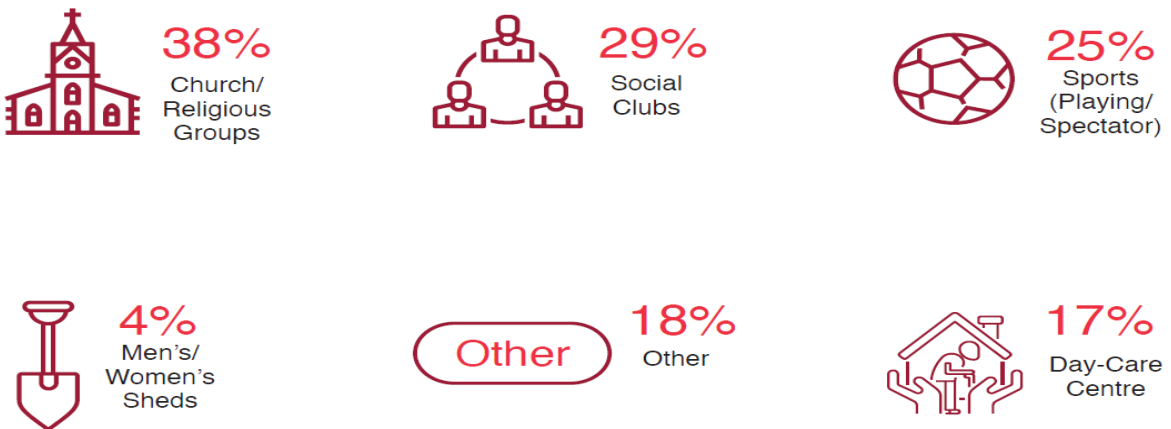
4% Men's/Women's Sheds

18% Other

17% Day-Care Centre

Figure 48. Are you interested in activities with young people?

Music/Dancing /Art **37%**

IT Training **27%**

Woodword **14%**

Gardening **44%**

Crafts **34%**

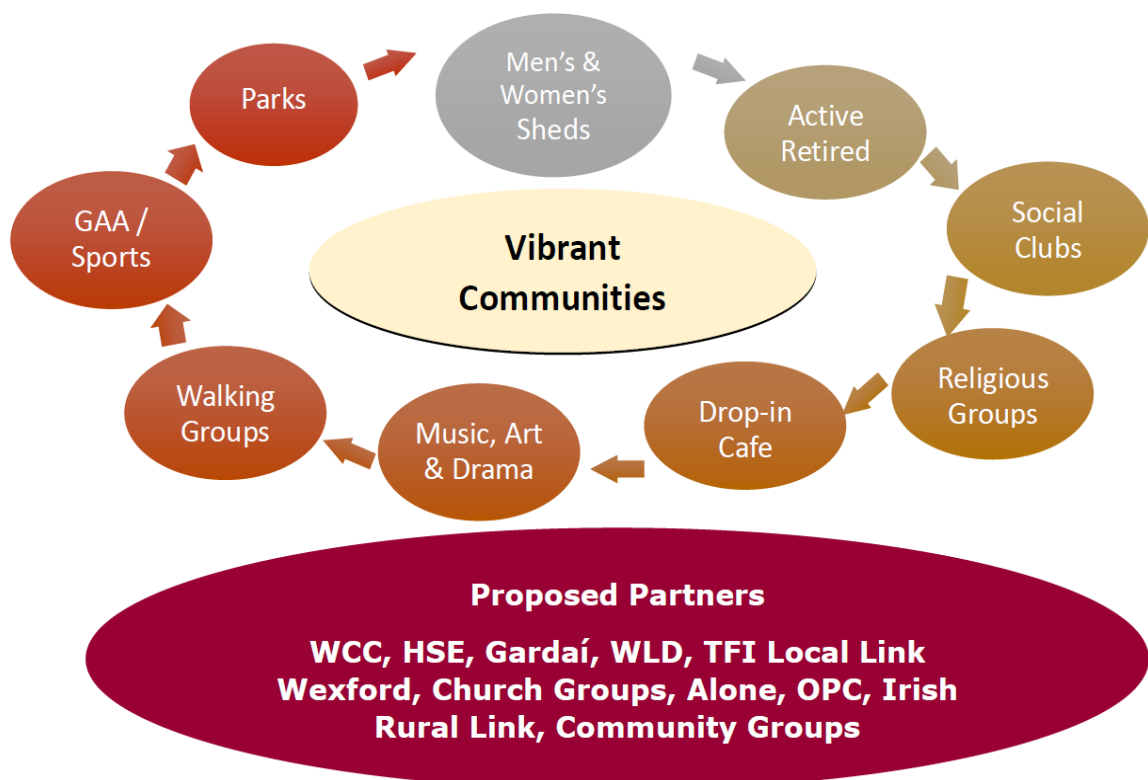Sport **21%**
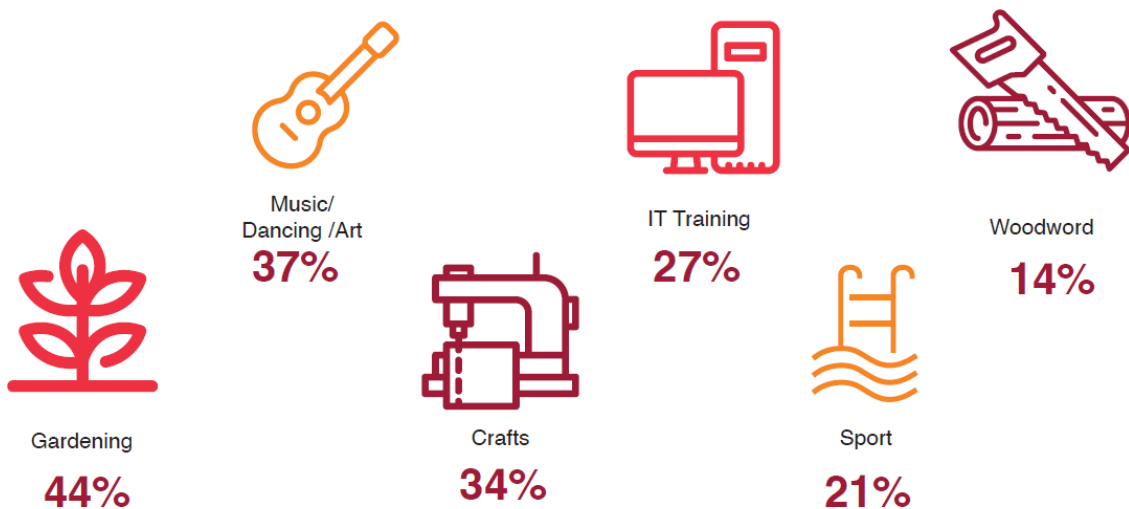
Recommendations

Objective: Actively support vulnerable

- ♦ **older people** Map and collate a database of facilities and clubs and identify areas where there is a deficit.
- ♦ Provide county wide coverage: daycare centres, meals on wheels, community café's and befriending services. Collaborate with relevant agencies.
- ♦ Build the capacity of community leaders in geographical areas which have limited social activities.

Befriending

Building Trust

Meals on Wheels

Agency Supports / Services

Drop-in Cafe
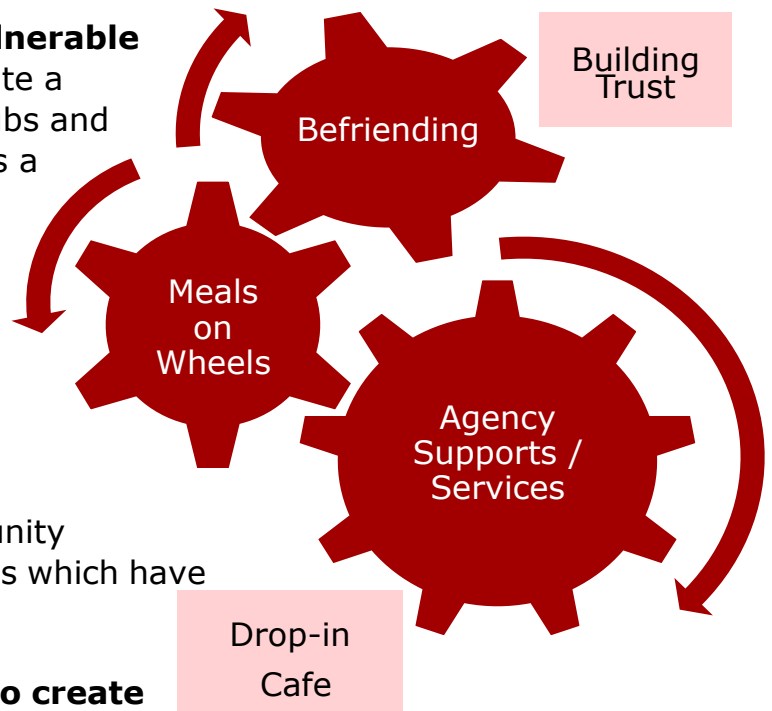
Objective: Support initiatives to create vibrant communities

- ♦ Create a network of Community Champions that support older people.
- ♦ Support the development and continuation of a wide range of activities including community café's which are promoted by newsletters, notice boards and online.
- ♦ Foster the establishment of intergenerational activities.

Parks | Men's & Women's Sheds | Active Retired | Social Clubs | Religious Groups | Drop-in Cafe | Music, Art & Drama | Walking Groups | GAA / Sports

Vibrant Communities

Proposed Partners

WCC, HSE, Gardaí, WLD, TFI Local Link Wexford, Church Groups, Alone, OPC, Irish Rural Link, Community Groups

Theme 5:

Respect and Social Inclusion

Goal:

Ensure older people feel valued and can be actively involved in their community.

Allow the voice of older people to be heard in all policies affecting them, particularly those most vulnerable.

Promote positive ageing across all sectors of society.

The consultation process identified that many older people have very positive experiences of growing old in Wexford. However, not all people are so fortunate as illustrated in the table below under '*Negative Experience*'.

Positive Experience	**Negative Experience**
Strong family unit	Living alone
Good broadband	Poor broadband
Own car	No car and not connected to Major Transport Routes
Member of social club / sports	Not actively involved with social groups
Confident with technology	Limited use: Phone, Tablet, Computer
Living in town or village with shops and services	Living in rural areas with no shop or services
Priavte healthcare and good access to GP	Difficulty accessing GP and health services
Good physical health with no accessibility issues	Reduced Mobility with Limited Access to Facilities / Services
	Marginalised Communities

Recommendations

Objective: Develop initiatives to ensure the voice of older people are heard

- Establish a strategic Interdepartmental Team within WCC to embed the principles of age friendly and to link to the Age Friendly Alliance.
- Extend the pilot 'Age Friendly Business Programme' to all towns.
- Establish a network of Age Friendly Community Champions that can hear the voices of older people and share this with the Age Friendly Programme Manager.
- Nominate people representing vulnerable groups onto the Older People's Council.
- Design specific Age Friendly support programmes for vulnerable target groups as outlined below:

Objective: Actively support Asylum Seekers / New Communities

- Forge links with the Volunteer Centre and local groups, Active Retired, Men's Shed, Befriending, Sporting Organisations, Schools etc to assist with integration into the community. Create a volunteer buddy system and family pen-pals.
- Foster collaboration with TFI Local Link Wexford to assist with transport.
- Identify volunteers with language skills. Explore the scope to have hospital liaison interpreters (e.g. Urdu).
- Organise interactive events and activities with asylum seekers and local residents e.g. cooking, crafts, sewing, woodwork etc.
- Develop projects with the Arts Department and Sports Active Wexford.
- Amend the WCC Housing Form to include Direct Provision.

Objective: Actively support the Traveller Community

- Extend the range of literacy courses for older adults in collaboration with FDYS, WLD and WWETB.
- Provide additional supports to the Traveller community to assist with form filling and online services.
- Information events to discuss the housing maintenance booklet and how to liaise with WCC on housing repairs. Publicise the appointment of the WCC Traveller Housing Liaison Officer.
- Assessment of halting sites and establish resident's associations to co-ordinate improvements.
- Explore opportunities to assist with housing repairs through schemes such as the 'Little Jobs' initiative.
- Bring a Traveller group on the WCC walkability audits.
- Foster closer links between the Traveller community and TFI Local Link Wexford; Men's Shed; Sports Active Wexford etc.

o Establish arts, leisure activities and cultural initiatives with the Traveller community in areas such as story-telling, sewing, flower arranging, sports / games, bingo, allotments etc.
o Explore initiatives to record the Traveller language so it's not lost, for example Gammon or Cant.

Objective: Actively support people living with dementia
o Information sharing on dementia and brain health in 'Town Hall' events, libraries or community centres to promote positive ageing.
o Share information on dementia and brain health through church newsletters, radio, local newspapers etc.
o Ensure there is an integrated care pathway and information sharing amongst care providers and statutory agencies.
o Expand funding and staffing supports for dementia patients.
o Expand the Community Call / WCC Helpline as it is very useful for frontline services and vulnerable people.
o Link the Memory Technological Unit (MTU) with the Volunteer Centre to assist patients accessing this service.
o Offer MTU clinics at outreach centres in the county.
o Explore links with the library to identify if equipment / technology hire can be facilitated through the library service.
o Map service provision and identify what is available.
o Establish a database of trained dementia champions.
o Develop a system of supports between the HSE/WCC/Gardaí.
o Train Befriending volunteers in dementia supports.
o Investigate if collaboration with Higher Education Institutions can be forged to better understand dementia.
o Establish and encourage GPs to recommend social prescriptions.
o Develop more day services and health clubs. This could be undertaken in collaboration with daycare centres who could deliver specific activities and offer support, advice and sign posting to carers / families of those living with dementia.
o Support adaptive housing and assisted living initiatives.

Objective: Actively support residents of Nursing Homes
o Ensure there is accessible parking in towns, with public toilets and good quality footpaths and benches.
o Support initiatives that foster links between the nursing homes and their community e.g. arts, religious services, music, etc.
o Forge links with the Volunteer Centre so that volunteers can come into the nursing homes to chat to residents on a one-to-one basis. Activities include painting nails, reading the newspaper, playing music, singing, feeding the birds, setting up zoom calls etc.

o Support initiatives with the secondary school transition year.
o Continue the library book service for residents which was established during the Covid-19 pandemic and worked very well.
o Explore if a parking disc for the nursing homes could be given to facilitate parking for medical appointments.
o Forge closer collaboration with TFI Local Link Wexford to support visitors using public transport to see residents in nursing homes – more information on timetables etc.
o Explore opportunities to develop daycare and sheltered housing on nursing home sites.

Objective: Actively support people with accessibility / disabilities
o Promote best practice case studies or exemplar's on accessibility.
o Compile a leaflet on accessible walking trails (tarmac surface) in the county which includes accessible parking, toilets and refreshments.

Objective: Actively support people in the LGBTQIA++ community
o Arrange annual awareness training so that people / organisations have a better understanding of the LGBTQIA++ community and their needs. This could be linked to Pride in June each year.
o Host a LGBTQIA++ community exhibition as part of a positive ageing event. This could then be rotated around the libraries and other public events. It could also be filmed as a webinar.
o Form a new walking / hiking club for all ages of this community. Launch this at an event with high profile sports people.

Objective: Actively support people living alone or who are isolated
o Promote and expand the befriending initiative to all communities in Wexford.
o Utilise the Community Champions network to reach vulnerable individuals.
o Strengthen collaboration between agencies who interact with vulnerable people to ensure older people receive the supports they require.
o Support the ambition to have a Men's Shed in every village / town.
o Revitalise the GAA Social Committee and continue the GAA supports to vulnerable people, that was so effective during Covid-19.

Proposed Partners

WCC, HSE, Gardaí, WLD, Local Link, Church Groups, Alone, Older People's Council, Irish Rural Link, Community Groups, Volunteer Centre

![Age Friendly Wexford logo]

Theme 6:

Civic Participation and Employment

Goal:
Increase employment opportunities for older people.

Encourage positive volunteering experiences.

Continue to hear the voice of older people and ensure they can participate fully in their community.

Wexford's first Age Friendly Strategy was published in 2017 and this recommended that an Older People's Council was formed. As a result, 18 members are now actively representing older people across the county and they have been instrumental in guiding this research and the formulation of this strategic plan: 2022-2026. In addition, the Wexford Volunteer Centre was launched in May 2021 and this is an invaluable new service that aims to enhance the quality of volunteering in the county.

> *"Essentially, it's about matching volunteers with organisations and providing support for all parties going forward. We'd aim to work with everyone from Tidy Towns committees to the local Women's Refuge and even those staging festivals etc across the county in a bid to help them to find suitable and willing volunteers. A lot of the time people don't even realise that their organisation can avail of such supports."*
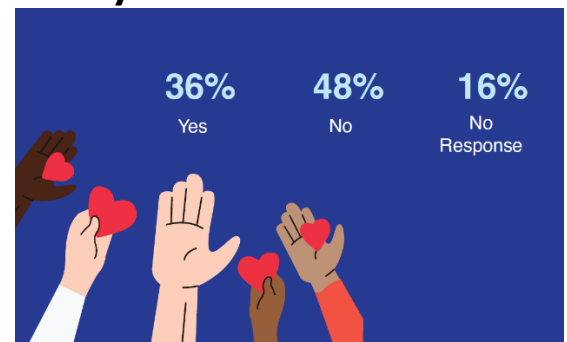> (Jane Byrne, Manager of Wexford Volunteer Centre, 2021)

The consultation process illustrated current levels of volunteering and also demonstrated that this could be further developed.

Figure 49. Survey Extracts:

Do you currently volunteer?

32% Yes   63% No   5% No Response

Would you like to in the future?

36% Yes   48% No   16% No Response
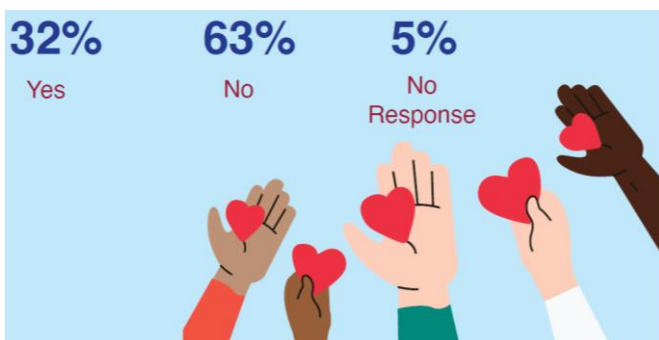
Recommendations

Objective: Increase employment opportunities for older people
- Utilise the Age Friendly Business Programme to support positive ageing in the workforce.
- Support vulnerable groups and their access to the workplace.

Objective: Encourage positive volunteering experiences
- Explore opportunities to utilise the 1,000+ database of volunteers to assist with Age-Friendly initiatives identified in the strategy.

- Examine the viability of developing a volunteer car scheme for medical appointments based on the existing cancer / HSE initiative. Access to medical appointments is a huge issue for older people and there is no dedicated service in place to address this.

- Investigate the potential for linking volunteers with vulnerable older people such as those living in the Direct Provision Centre, people living alone, or residents in Nursing Homes etc. This could be undertaken in collaboration with Alone who could provide volunteer training.

- Examine the scope to create a volunteer 'Community Champion' initiative as outlined in earlier recommendations.

- Explore the interest in working with volunteers to assist with literacy and digital supports for older people.

- Identify volunteers who have specific skills such as IT, music, art, gardening, other languages etc.

Objective: Expand the Older People's Council
- Expand the membership of the Older People's Council to include representatives from vulnerable and marginalised groups as outlined in earlier recommendations.

Objective: Promote positive ageing across all sectors of society
- Appoint Age Friendly Ambassadors to positively and proactively promote the lives of older people.
- Develop a range of inter-generational activities so that young and old people can learn from each other.

Proposed Partners

WCC, Volunteer Centre, Older People's Council, Library Service

Theme 7:

### Communication and Information

Goal:

Ensure everyone is informed of services and facilities available locally and nationally.

Support older people to access services, goods and information digitally.

Assist vulnerable groups engage with all sectors of society as required.

The survey findings clearly illustrate where older people get information from with friends / family, radio and the local newspaper being the most important sources. The findings also revealed that approximately two thirds of older people use a smart phone or other technology such as iPads and tablets. Over 40% use social media and zoom / facetime to communicate with others.

Figure 50. Survey Extracts: Do you use the following?

64% Smart Phone

56% iPad / Tablet / Computer

42% Social Media

40% Zoom / Facetime
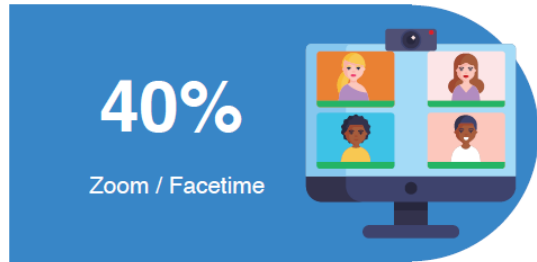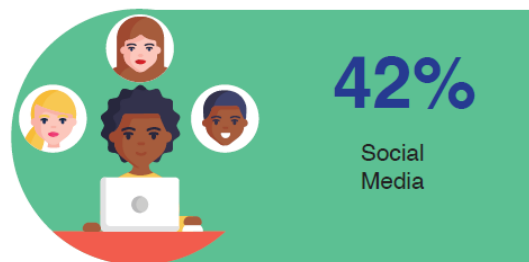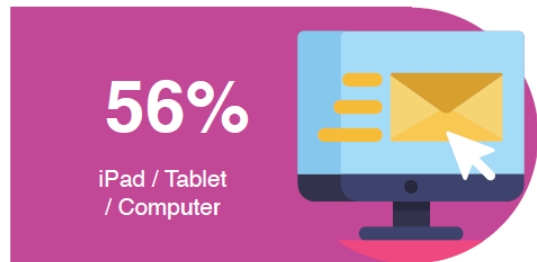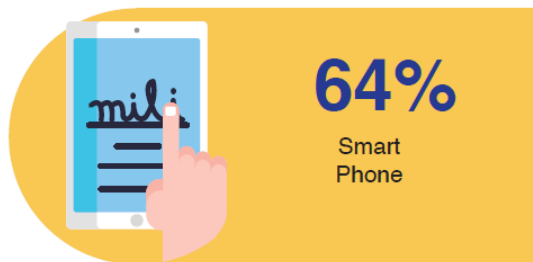
However, the results also illustrated that 32% would like IT training and our consultation findings showed that this should ideally be undertaken on a one-to-one basis in the community.

In addition, the focus group sessions revealed that vulnerable groups need particular assistance with accessing services as many have difficulty accessing them online. Supports are required in literacy, language skills, financial procedures and digital literacy.

Recommendations

Objective: Ensure everyone is informed of available services and facilities

- ✦ Establish a Community Champion network to disseminate information at a local level through newsletters, community / Church notice board, social media or by word of mouth.
- ✦ Support the implementation of the Befriending Service countywide.
- ✦ Utilise existing services such as the meals on wheels, daycare centres, libraries and mobile libraries, TFI Local Link Wexford and church groups to regularly distribute information.
- ✦ Host monthly radio interviews publicising services for older people.
- ✦ Explore the potential to create a weekly newspaper column featuring older people's needs.
- ✦ Support the development of community cafes and informal social clubs so older people can regularly share information.

Objective: Support the digital access of services, goods and information

- ✦ Provide bespoke IT training for older people in collaboration with the library and WWETB.
- ✦ Expand the transition year initiative with students and older people to deliver IT training on a one-to-one basis.

Objective: Assist vulnerable groups engage with all sectors of society

- ✦ Explore upskilling volunteers to assist with literacy and digital supports for older people.
- ✦ Identify volunteers who have other languages that can assist with translation services for refugees / new communities where English is not their first language.
- ✦ Provide a dedicated Age Friendly 'Customer Care' staff member in WCC to assist with enquiries and embed this across all WCC Sections.
- ✦ Deliver a digital ambassador scheme through the library service.

Proposed Partners

WCC, Volunteer Centre, WWETB, local media channels, Library, Schools, Church Groups

Theme 8:

Community Support and Health Services

Goal:
Ensure older people can access and afford the health care services required.

Utilise new assistive technologies and telehealth initiatives.

Promote healthy and active lifestyles to improve the health status of older people.

Accessing health care was identified as an issue during the consultation process. This included transport issues to attend hospital appointments, particularly if they were out of county; parking difficulties at hospitals if the patient has limited mobility; obtaining doctor's appointments in a timely manner; and accessing health care through the public system.

These issues are accentuated for vulnerable groups that possibly don't have access to a car, have limited mobility, have no private health insurance, live alone, have no family members nearby, are a non-Irish national or are from a minority ethnic group. The survey findings illustrated that 17% of older people need mobility aids to get around.

Figure 51. Survey Extracts: How active would you say you are?

The survey results also explored people's experience of accessing health services and the results are illustrated below.
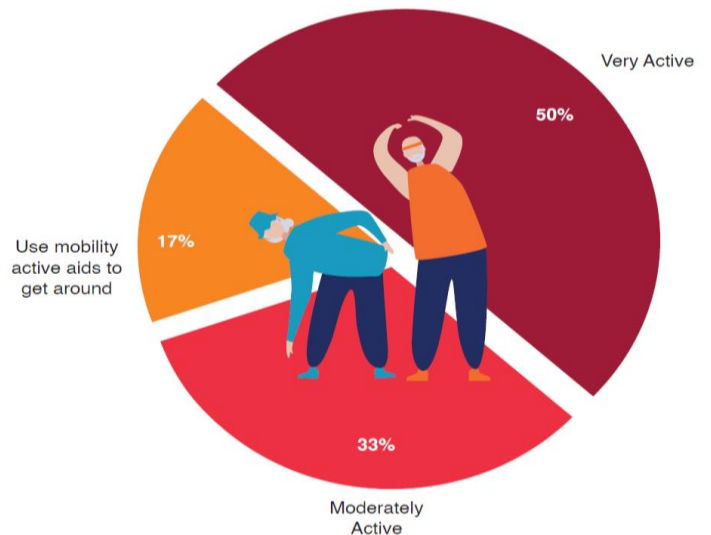

Very Active 50%

Use mobility active aids to get around 17%

Moderately Active 33%

Figure 52. Experience of accessing the following?

Pharmacy	Doctor Appointment	Hospital Appointment
92% Good	76% Good	62% Good

__Recommendations__

Objective: Enhance access to health care services

- Examine the viability of developing a volunteer car scheme for medical appointments based on the existing cancer / HSE initiative in collaboration with the Volunteer Centre as outlined in an earlier recommendation.
- Improve parking at hospitals to facilitate people with accessibility issues – undertake walkability audits.
- Support the social prescriptions initiative to combat mental health issues and isolation / loneliness.
- Operate outreach health facilities in rural areas e.g. physiotherapy, chiropody etc.
- Greater access to the public health nurse or operate community-based health centres.
- A change of names on prescriptions can be confusing for older people, may use a generic name instead of a brand name that people are familiar with so ideally include both drug names and ensure the instructions are in a large font size.

Objective: Promote assistive technologies and telehealth

- Promote assistive technologies to health professions and the public.
- Promote the national 'Age Friendly Homes' website profiling assistive technology.
- Forge partnerships and collaboration with carers and other health professionals to support older people in their use of assistive technology. This includes training and on-going support.
- Record a webinar series on the technologies and widely circulate.
- Deliver the telehealth initiative based on findings from Phase 1.

Objective: Promote active living and healthy lifestyles

- Extend links between vulnerable groups and Sports Active Wexford to promote active living and social interaction.
- Explore the potential to develop walking trail groups linked to the Wexford Walking Trail (WWT) network.
- Include Age Friendly recreation initiatives in funding proposals.

Proposed Partners

WCC, Volunteer Centre, HSE, Waterford Institute of Technology, Sports Active Wexford, WWT

Theme 9:

Safety and Security

Goal:
Ensure older people feel safe and secure in their homes and community.

Many people living in County Wexford thought they have a high quality of life and feel safe in their homes and within their wider community.

However, older people do feel unsafe when they are walking or cycling on the public roads where there are no footpaths, which is quite common in rural areas.

Figure 53. Survey Extracts: How do you find the following?

Legend:
- Good
- Poor
- Don't Use
- No Response

	Beaches	Parks	Walking Trails in Forests	Walking Tracks (GAA)	Walking on Public Roads
No Response	5%	6%	7%	8%	4%
Poor	30%	31%	37%	51%	30%
Don't Use	8%	8%	7%	6%	42%
Good	57%	55%	49%	35%	24%
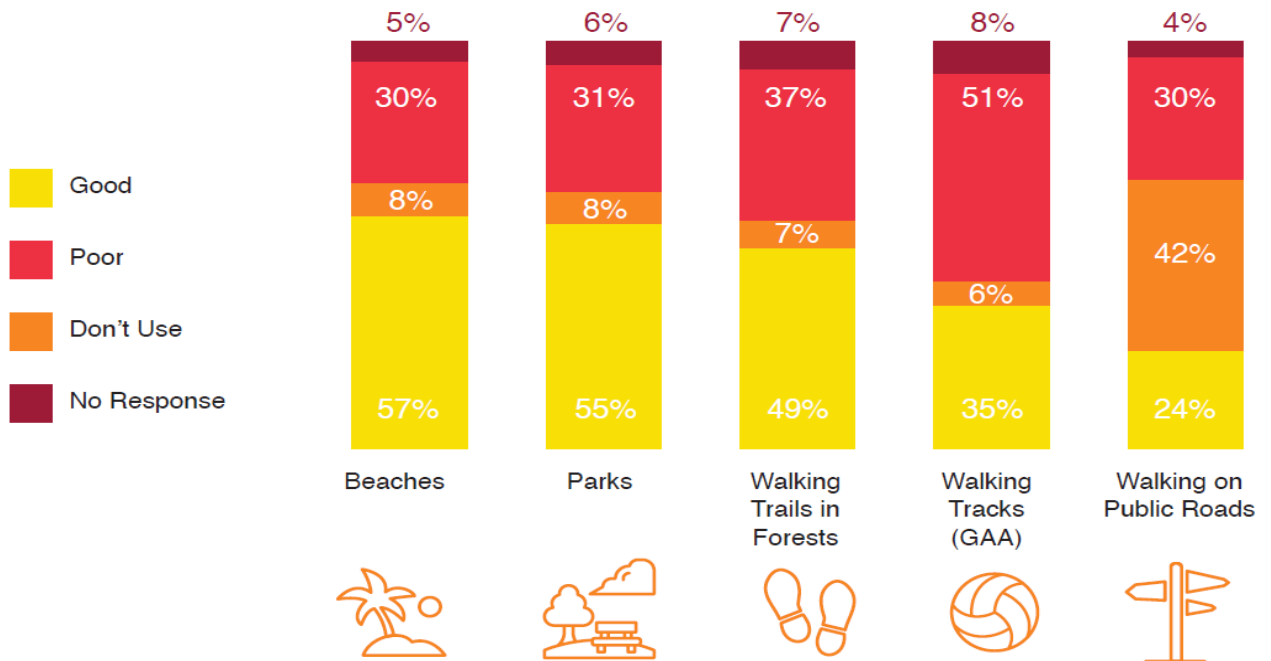
Figure 54. Survey Extracts: Do you feel safe in the following?

Own Home	Community	Walking / Cycling on Public Roads
93% Safe	77% Safe	30% Safe
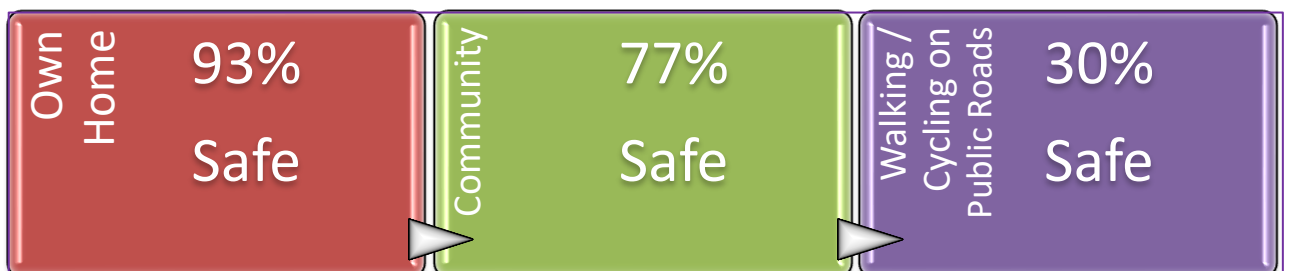
Recommendations

Objective: Ensure older people feel safe and secure in their homes

- Publicise home security / panic alarm services.
- Older people are vulnerable to cyber security attacks so provide training and awareness on digital technologies.

Objective: Ensure older people feel safe and secure in their community

- Improve footpaths so they are safer for people with reduced accessibility.
- Improve road safety for pedestrians and cyclists. Create designated cycleways, reduce speed limits and install signage.
- Provide greater Gardai presence in the community where possible.
- Publicise the CCTV facilities in the towns so people feel safer.
- Address youth boredom to stop people hanging around on the streets.
- Reduce the fear of crime and crimes against older people. (e.g. Awareness and crime prevention of Elder Abuse, use of Bogus caller cards, home security etc.)
- Increase Garda engagement and accessibility with older people (e.g. Garda Clinics, Neighbourhood Watch, Community Alert Schemes, meetings with older person groups etc.
- Support community safety initiatives that assist older people (e.g. implement the older person's register, senior alert alarms from Pobal, incorporate initiatives learned from the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Utilise community partnerships to respond to the ongoing needs and expectations of older people.

Figure 55. Key components of a safe community

5.2 Summary

This section has identified a wide range of recommendations and objectives that should be implemented across the nine age friendly themes, subject to available funding and resources.

It is envisaged that these initiatives will become embedded into the work programmes of a wide range of government agencies and voluntary groups who can then actively collaborate to ensure the optimum outcome for older people.

It is also likely that over the course of the five-year period these recommendations will need to be reviewed and potentially revised based on evolving situations in society.

Section 6 will now outline a detailed Action Plan for the Age Friendly Strategy which has been prepared in consultation with the Alliance partners.

Figure 56. Age Friendly Parking Pilot Launch Enniscorthy Town

Figure 57. Gardai engagement with older people

Image Credit: Mary Browne

Section 6

Action Plan

2019 AGM

6.1 Action Plan

To deliver on the strategic recommendations outlined in section 5, it is essential to have a clear and concise 5-year action plan. This is a living strategy and will be continuously revised based on emerging needs and issues. In addition, it will be consistent with the existing and proposed LECP.

All partners within the Age Friendly Alliance have been consulted on this Strategic Plan and have directly inputted into the formulation of this Action Plan as outlined below. This work will be overseen by the OPC to ensure that the lives of older people in the county are continually enhanced.

Figure 58. Age Friendly Action Plan 2022-2026

High Level Theme 1: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings						
Priority No.	**Action**	**Lead Partner**	**Support Partners**	**Timeline**	**Measurable**	**Funding Opportunities / Staff Resources**
1.1	Age Friendly Manager host meetings with District Engineers & District Managers Establish a strategic Interdepartmental Team within WCC	WCC	N/A	2022 - 2026	2 per year 2 per year	Existing council staff
1.2	Identify buildings that can provide age friendly toilets Publicity and signage (strategy) of existing toilet facilities Compile a map of public toilets in the county and widely promote	WCC	Businesses, Tourism Operators, Libraries, Public Buildings, Chamber of Commerce	2022 - 2026	Number of toilets advertised in public buildings / businesses – targeted at older people Identify toilet facilities and prepare a map of these facilities	Existing council staff

1.3	Develop / improve garden / park / walking track (1 per district)	WCC	DRCD, WLD, LCDC	2022 - 2026	Number of gardens, parks, trails developed / improved	TVR LEADER ORIS
1.4	Developing social activities around the green spaces	WCC	WWT, HI, WWETB, Men's Shed	2022 - 2026	Number of social activities organised	TVR WCC grants
1.5	Promote the formation of informal walking groups Provide 'Walking Leader Training' for local walking groups	Sports Active Wexford	WWT, WCC Walk/Cycle Officer	2022 - 2026	Number of local walking groups established Number of walking leaders trained	Existing council staff Sports Active Wexford staff
1.6	Provide Age Friendly seating in appropriate places	WCC	OPC, DRCD	2022 - 2026	Number of seats and resting bars installed	TVR WCC grants
1.7	Increase access to the beaches for those with a disability	WCC	LCDC, PPN, DRCD	2022-2026	Number of board walks, adapted wheelchairs and beach mats installed	TVR FLAG WCC grants LEADER
1.8	Conduct walkability audits on towns and install infrastructure and age friendly parking	WCC	OPC	2022-2026	1 audit per year Number of infrastructure installed	Existing council staff Various funding sources
1.9	Design and install age friendly initiatives in infrastructure, public realm, active travel and greenway projects	WCC	Community Dev. Groups, DRCD	2022-2026	Age friendly infrastructure installed Active travel installed Greenways installed	Department of Transport TVR LEADER
1.10	Connecting villages to towns with segregated travel corridors or through promoting TFI Local Link Wexford / public transport	WCC	TFI Local Link Wexford	2022-2026	Number of services within villages / towns safely connected (increased permeability) Number of villages safely connected to towns (walking / cycling or public transport)	Active Travel Climate Adaptation Grant Dept. of Transport Discretionary Grants

| 1.11 | Introduce age friendly as cross cutting themes in grant applications | WCC | DRCD, WLD, LCDC | 2022 - 2026 | Number of grants to include age friendly activities as a measure | Existing council staff |

High Level Theme 2: Transportation

Priority No.	Action	Lead Partner	Support Partners	Timeline	Measurable	Funding Opportunities / Staff Resources
2.1	Continue to expand the public transport services Additional transport supports for the direct provision centre or other vulnerable groups	TFI Local Link Wexford	CIE, Wexford Bus, Bus Eireann, NTA: Connecting Ireland, Direct Provision Centre	2022-2026	Number of new transport services Number of passengers Number of passengers recorded through special passes	Connecting Ireland: NTA TFI Local Link Wexford
2.2	Embed age friendly within transport services including the installation of new bus stops / bus shelters	WCC	TFI Local Link Wexford, CIE, Wexford Bus, Bus Eireann	2022 - 2026	Number of bus stops / bus shelters Number of new age friendly transport initiatives	Connecting Ireland: NTA TFI Local Link Wexford Wexford County Council
2.3	Promote TFI Local Link Wexford service as a provider of transport information	TFI Local Link Wexford	WCC, Libraries, HSE	2022 - 2026	Number of transport enquiries Number of passengers on the door-to-door service	Existing TFI Local Link Wexford staff
2.4	Form transport / access Health Working Group Conduct an assessment of need	WCC	TFI Local Link Wexford, HSE, Volunteer	2022-2023	A Working Group formed to establish a model of best practice Needs Assessment Research	Existing council staff Existing TFI Local Link Wexford staff

			Centre, Red Cross, Civil Defence, Order of Malta			
2.5	Implement transport initiatives to support people attending medical appointments	WCC	TFI Local Link Wexford, HSE, Volunteer Centre, Red Cross, Civil Defence, Order of Malta	2023 - 2026	Number of new transport services	Connecting Ireland: NTA HSE TFI Local Link Wexford
2.6	Raise awareness in HSE of transport provision and constraints	HSE	WCC, TFI Local Link Wexford	2022-2026	Increase in people being able to attend medical appointments by public transport	Existing HSE staff
2.7	Enhancing access to recreation / heritage / outdoor facilities	TFI Local Link Wexford	WCC, Tourism Operators, Failte Ireland	2022-2026	Number of new transport services Number of passengers accessing facilities by public transport	Connecting Ireland: NTA Failte Ireland TFI Local Link Wexford
2.8	Enhancing access to beaches to reduce congestion	TFI Local Link Wexford	WCC	2022-2026	Number of new shuttle services Number of passengers	TFI Local Link Wexford

High Level Theme 3: Housing

Priority No.	Action	Lead Partner	Support Partners	Timeline	Measurable	Funding Opportunities / Staff Resources
3.1	Promote housing grants for older people Research home adaptations to allow access to outdoor space / gardens Promote and support grants to make homes more energy efficiency thereby reducing fuel bills	WCC	OPC, Libraries	2022-2026	Number of grants awarded Number of grants to improve access to outdoor spaces/gardens Number of homes upgraded with energy efficiency works	Existing council staff Disability Ireland
3.2	Create more housing options for older people and desirably implement universal design / adaptability	WCC	Approved Housing Bodies	2022-2026	Number of smaller and low maintenance homes built	Approved Housing Bodies Dept. of Housing
3.3	Exploring opportunities for providing houses for older people in urban areas including the renovation of vacant / derelict properties	WCC	Approved Housing Bodies, Local Communities	2022-2026	Number of houses built in urban areas Number of houses renovated in urban areas	Approved Housing Bodies. Dept. of Housing Capital Programme
3.4	Explore opportunities for smart technology in social housing schemes	WCC	Age Friendly Ireland	2022-2026	Number of smart technologies installed	Dept. of Health & Housing
3.5	Explore the potential to expand the 'Little Jobs Scheme' or a new scheme	WCC	Volunteer Centre, WLD	2022-2026	Number of people using the 'Little Jobs Scheme'	To be identified
3.6	Map sheltered housing provision	WCC	Private sector, Housing Agencies	2023	Map of county services	Existing council staff

| 3.7 | Encourage new sheltered housing units linked to nursing homes, daycare centres or community facilities | Nursing Homes | WCC, Daycare Centres, Community Groups | 2023-2026 | Number of new sheltered housing units built | Private sector Various funding sources |
| 3.8 | Support Traveller, Roma, Asylum Seekers, New Communities with housing needs | WCC | WLD | 2022-2026 | Number of people assisted with WCC forms and housing issues

Number of people provided with appropriate accommodation | Existing council staff Govt. Depts. |

High Level Theme 4: Social Participation						
Priority No.	**Action**	**Lead Partner**	**Support Partners**	**Timeline**	**Measurable**	**Funding Opportunities / Staff Resources**
4.1	Create a database of older people's groups in the county in collaboration with the PPN Investigate data protection issues to support the sharing of details on older people's groups	WCC	WLD, PPN, Active Retired Groups	2023	Database complete	Existing council staff
4.2	Expand links with the Active Retired Groups and all older age groups to disseminate information	WCC	Active Retired Groups	2022-2026	Number of clubs actively engaged with the age friendly programme	Existing council staff
4.3	Deliver community activities for older people Organise collaborative gatherings linked to social dancing or sporting events	WCC	WLD, PPN, Libraries, Sports Active Wexford, HI, WWETB Gardai, GAA, TFI Local	2022-2026	Number of activities held in the library Number of activities in community facilities or outdoors Number of events per year	WCC Grants LEADER TVR Creative Ireland

Priority No.	Action	Lead Partner	Support Partners	Timeline	Measurable	Funding Opportunities / Staff Resources
	Pilot a social inclusion initiative in the New Ross District (urban and rural)		Link Wexford, business, Libraries		Number of older people supported	
4.4	Deliver community education and literacy for older people	WWETB	WLD, PPN, HI Libraries, Sports Active Wexford,	2022-2026	Number of people completing courses	WWETB
4.5	Organise community cafes linked to the church or local community groups as a pilot initiative Explore the shared use of toilet facilities	Church / Community Groups / Parish Councils	WCC Social Employment Schemes	2022-2026	Number of community cafes established with support from community champions (1 per District as a pilot) Number of toilets signposted as open to the public	Church resources WCC Grants

High Level Theme 5: Respect and Social Inclusion

Priority No.	Action	Lead Partner	Support Partners	Timeline	Measurable	Funding Opportunities / Staff Resources
5.1	Host OPC meetings at District level	WCC	OPC	2023-2026	Number of District Meetings	Existing council staff
5.2	Design and deliver a wide range of creative and cultural activities Develop projects with Asylum Seekers, Travellers and New Communities	WCC Cultural Team	Sports Active Wexford, WWETB, HSE, FDYS, WLD, Healthy County	2023-2026	Number of events held Number of older people supported	Creative Ireland Programme Healthy Ireland HSE Existing staff resources

5.3	Promote physical activity for older people and deliver a range of activities for physical and mental health (e.g. Healthy Woodlands)	Sports Active Wexford	Leinster Rugby, FAI, Football for All, GAA, Park Runs, Swim Ireland, Healthy County, Coillte, WWT, Sports Clubs	2022-2026	Number of events held Number of older people attending	Sports Active Wexford, Age & Opportunity, HSE, Sport Ireland Dormant Accounts, Get Ireland Walking, Slaintecare Healthy Ireland, TFI Local Link Wexford
5.4	Expand the sensory collection and independence assistance aids for older people	Libraries	HSE, WCC, Wexford Dementia Alliance	2023-2026	Number of assistance aids loaned to older people	HSE
5.5	Expand the Secondary School / Church programme (Pope John Paul II award)	Church	Secondary Schools	2023-2026	Number of schools / students participating Number of older people involved	Existing staff resources
5.6	Implement a Healthy Communities initiative in socially deprived areas	HSE	WCC	2022-2026	Needs analysis Number of communities supported	HSE
5.7	Continue to support the Wexford Dementia Alliance and the implementation of recommendations in this Strategy	HSE	WCC, Gardai	2022-2026	Number of initiatives implemented	Various funding sources

High Level Theme 6: Civic Participation & Employment

Priority No.	Action	Lead Partner	Support Partners	Timeline	Measurable	Funding Opportunities
6.1	Explore volunteering opportunities for older people	Volunteer Centre	WCC, PPN	2023-2026	Number of volunteers	Existing staff resources
6.2	Explore opportunities to support vulnerable older people access the workforce or volunteering	WWETB	Volunteer Centre	2023	Number of people attending courses	WWETB
6.3	Deliver Age Friendly training programme to businesses and provide mentoring supports	LEO	WCC, OPC, Chamber of Commerce,	2023-2026	Number of businesses trained 1 town per year	Existing staff resources
6.4	Dementia training for businesses	WCC	Chamber of Commerce	2022-2026	Number of training courses implemented	HSE Understand Together
6.5	Investigate the viability of implementing grants for shop modifications	WCC	Chamber of Commerce	2023	Research completed	To be identified

High Level Theme 7: Communication & Information

Priority No.	Action	Lead Partner	Support Partners	Timeline	Measurable	Funding Opportunities / Staff Resources
7.1	Establish a concise communication strategy Set up regular slots with local media on themes e.g. road safety, cyber safety, security in the home, home modifications, public transport etc	WCC	South East Radio, Newspapers Gardai, HSE, Libraries, Citizens Information Centres, TFI Local Link Wexford,	2023-2026	Strategy completed Number of radio interviews Number of press articles Number of agencies sharing information to older people Number of older people clinics in the libraries	Existing staff resources

			Active Retirement Groups			
7.2	Disseminate age friendly initiatives in church newsletters / social media	Church	WCC	2022-2026	Number of age friendly bulletins in church newsletters	Existing resources
7.3	Establish a team of community champions in the county to build capacity and to disseminate information / advice locally	WCC	LCDC, WLD, PPN, Volunteer Centre, Libraries / Mobile Libraries, Tourist Offices, CE, Family Resource Centres	2022 – 2026 Pilot initiative:	Number of trained community champions

Number of events hosted by the library to support community champions | Existing council staff |
| 7.4 | Host specialist information clinics for older people | Libraries | HSE, Daycare Centres, WCC, TFI Local Link Wexford | 2023-2026 | Number of clinics held

Number of older people assisted | Existing staff resources |
| 7.5 | Deliver bespoke IT training for older people

Explore opportunities for large scale training of older people in IT. e.g. digital clubs | Libraries | WCC, Daycare Centres, WWETB, TFI Local Link Wexford, Secondary Schools | 2022-2026 | Number of older people trained in IT. | Existing staff resources |

Priority No.	Action	Lead Partner	Support Partners	Timeline	Measurable	Funding Opportunities / Staff Resources
7.6	Expand the digital ambassador initiative (peer to peer) learning	Libraries	OPC	2022-2026	Number of older people who become ambassadors Number of older people assisted	Existing staff resources
7.7	Enhance the Customer Service Unit within WCC to ensure it is age friendly and that it is well publicised Conduct a service / building evaluation of libraries by older people	WCC	OPC, Libraries	2022	Number of older people assisted Number of audits undertaken of public buildings	Existing council staff
7.8	Commission research on age friendly initiatives	WIT	WCC	2022-2026	Research completed	Existing staff resources
7.9	Continue to produce mapping resources for key demographics in County Wexford	WCC	Third Level Institute	2022-2026	Number of mapping reports produced	Existing council staff

High Level Theme 8: Community Support & Health Services						
Priority No.	Action	Lead Partner	Support Partners	Timeline	Measurable	Funding Opportunities / Staff Resources
8.1	Promote the Fair Deal Scheme	HSE	OPC	2023	Number of events promoting the Fair Deal Scheme	Existing staff resources
8.2	Explore opportunities to deliver and enhance care in the local community	HSE	N/A	2022-2026	Number of care services delivered in the community	HSE
8.3	Implement phase 2 of the Telehealth initiative	HSE	Wexford Telehealth Stakeholder Group	2022-2026	Delivery of phase 2 Telehealth initiative Number of patients	Various sources

8.4	Explore opportunity for collaboration between the church and the Wexford Dementia Alliance	Wexford Dementia Alliance	Church	2023	Information exchanged Number of referrals	Existing staff resources
8.5	Raise awareness in pharmacies of clarity over drug names	HSE	N/A	2022-2026	Use of dual drug names on prescriptions	Existing staff resources
8.6	Conduct a walkability audit on Wexford General Hospital	OPC	HSE, WCC	2023	Walkability audit completed	Existing staff resources

High Level Theme 9: Safety & Security

Priority No.	Action	Lead Partner	Support Partners	Timeline	Measurable	Funding Opportunities / Staff Resources
9.1	Initiatives to promote safe use of the roads by pedestrians / cyclists	WCC	Gardai	2023-2026	Number of safety promotional campaigns	Various funding sources
9.2	Explore collaboration between TFI Local Link Wexford, public transport providers and Gardai / HSE	WCC	TFI Local Link Wexford, public transport providers, Gardai, HSE	2022	Establish a protocol for addressing social issues on public transport	Existing staff resources
9.3	Support people living with dementia through participation in the Wexford Dementia Alliance	Wexford Dementia Alliance	N/A	2022 onwards	Number of meetings held Number of new initiatives implemented	Existing staff resources
9.4	Commitment to develop pathways for transfer of vulnerable older people to other agencies	WCC	Gardaí, HSE, Alone, Befriending, Meals on Wheels,	2022-2026	Number of referrals	Existing staff resources

			Daycare Centres			
9.5	Deliver presentations in the community on safety in the home / cybersecurity / community safety. Explore initiatives to ensure older people are safe in their home.	Gardaí	Community Groups	2023	Number of events held	Existing Gardai staff
9.6	Collaborate with the IT training initiatives and include cybersecurity and other safety issues	WCC	Gardaí, Day Care Centres, WWETB, Libraries,	2022-2026	Number of events held	Existing staff resources

Age Friendly
WEXFORD

Section 7

Monitoring

Older People's Council meeting

7.1 Overview

This Age Friendly Strategy has been prepared during the Covid-19 pandemic. This experience has directly shaped many of the views shared by older people, which in turn has significantly influenced the recommendations and action plan outlined in this strategy.

This strategic plan will continue to be monitored and adjusted, based on the emerging public health situation and the consequences of this on the lives of older people.

In addition, new technologies are currently evolving so rapidly, with the potential to have transformative impacts on the lives of older people. It is therefore essential that this is continuously reviewed and new opportunities are identified and advanced.

Figure 59. Storytelling for older people 'Tale a Phone Exchange'

Figure 60. Beach Wheelchair

Figure 61. Chatting Bench
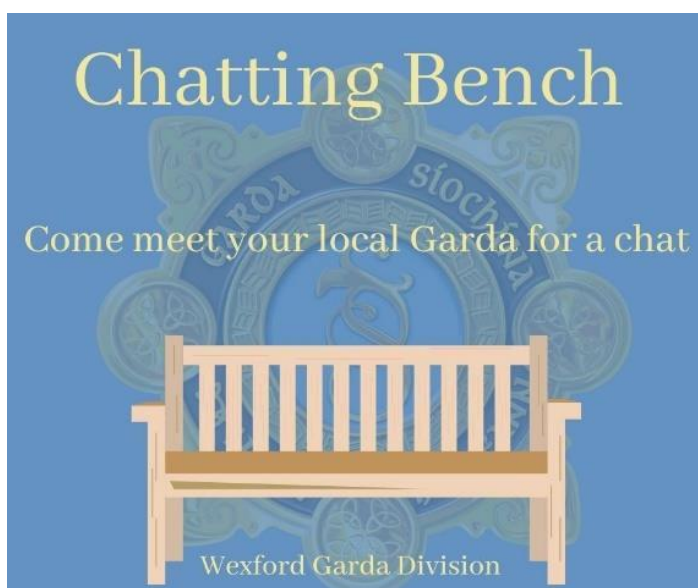
7.2 Roles and Responsibilities: Action Plan

The age friendly programme operates within a national framework as outlined in the diagram below.

Figure 62. Age Friendly Structure

National Level	County Level	Local Level
Age Friendly Ireland	Wexford Age Friendly Alliance	Alliance Partners
Regional Programme Manager	Older People's Council	Older People's Council Members
	Age Friendly Programme Manager	
	WCC Strategic Inter-Department Team	
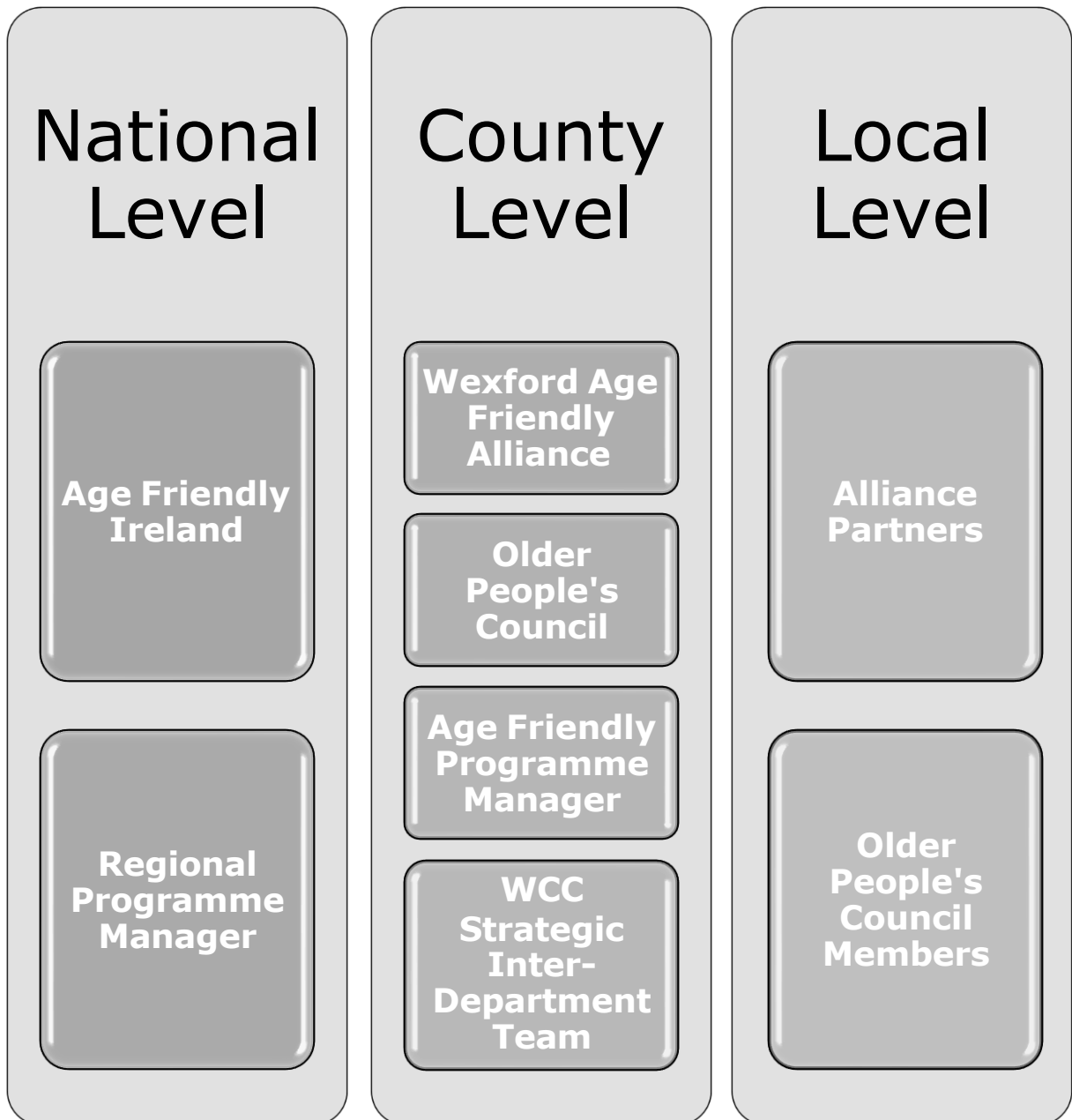
7.3 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Alliance members will oversee the implementation of the Strategy Plan: 2022-2026.

- An annual action plan will be developed and monitored at the quarterly Alliance meetings.
- Progress reports will be produced by each lead partner for Alliance meetings.
- The Older People's Council will annually review the Action Plan and evaluate its delivery. The results will be widely publicised to ensure older people are aware of new initiatives and supports.
- The WCC Strategic Interdepartment Team will be formed to implement key projects based on emerging funding opportunities.
- An annual review will be undertaken with Community Champions to evaluate the effectiveness of actions delivered on the ground.
- Wexford will link with the Regional and National Age Friendly office to implement key strategic projects according to National policy and best practice.
- The Age Friendly Programme Manager will attend National & Regional network meetings and attend relevant training as required.

7.4 Funding and Resources

National and local funding resources will be sought where appropriate to implement the actions identified in this Strategy.

WCC also has a dedicated Age Friendly Programme Manager to support the delivery of initiatives to improve the quality of life for older people. This is undertaken in collaboration with the Older People's Council and the Age Friendly Alliance Members.

In addition, the Wexford Age Friendly Programme Manager is supported by the Regional Programme Manager and the National Age Friendly Shared Service Team which is affiliated to the World Health Organisation's Age Friendly Cities and Communities Network.

Useful websites include:

- www.agefriendlyireland.ie

- www.agefriendlyhomes.ie

- https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/age-friendly-cities-framework/

Appendices

Appendix 1   Consultation Schedule

Date	Consultation
	On-line Workshops
May 2021	**Gorey / Kilmuckridge District:** (38 Participants) Gorey Town, Tara Hill, Courtown, Riverchpael, Kilmuckridge, Askamore, Kilanerin, Oilgate, Camolin.
	Enniscorthy District: (49 Participants) Enniscorthy Town, Bunclody, Clohamon, Bree, Ballyhogue, Galbally, Ferns, Marshalstown, Caim, Kiltealy, Ballindaggin.
	Wexford District: (34 Participants) Wexford Town x2, Crossabeg, Ballymurn, Barntown, Glynn, Castlebridge.
	Rosslare District: (34 Participants) Rosslare Harbour, Rosslare Strand, Our Lady's Island, Kilmore Quay, Bridgetown, Murrintown, Piercestown, Wellingtonbridge, Carrick on Bannow, Taghmon.
	New Ross District: (35 Participants) New Ross Town, Courtnacuddy, Clonroche, Rathnure, Fethard on Sea, Ramsgrange, Rathgarogue, Adamstown, Raheen.
	Focus Groups
September 2021	Asylum Seekers, Traveller Community, Dementia Working Group, Nursing Homes, Roma Community, Older People with Disabilities, LGBTQIA++, Older People living alone who are isolated, Volunteer Bureau, GAA, Men's Shed, HSE, Alone, Befriending, TFI Local Link Wexford, PPN, Wexford Local Development, Age Friendly Ireland, WCC, Gardaí

Surveys	
June – October 2021	Survey (582 respondents) • Surveys completed electronically via the WCC website (210 surveys) • Paper copies received (372 surveys) • Paper copies distributed through the local newspaper, daycare centres, meals on wheels, Gardai, TFI Local Link Wexford, libraries etc
Interviews with Alliance Members	
January 2022	One to One Interviews with Alliance Members to prepare the Action Plan
Consultation on Draft Plan	
February 2022	Age Friendly Alliance Members
	Older People's Council
	National / Regional Age Friendly Programme
Final Plan	
May 2022	Adoption of Final Plan by Age Friendly Alliance
	Endorsement through Local Authority structures
	Adoption of Final Plan at WCC Council Meeting
	Launch of Age Friendly Strategy

Appendix 2   References

Age Friendly Ireland (2021) https://agefriendlyireland.ie/

Age Friendly Ireland (2021) Older People's Council Guide.

Age Friendly Ireland (2015) Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme Handbook.

Age Friendly Ireland (2021) The National Positive Ageing Strategy

Age Friendly Ireland (2021) Housing Options for our Ageing Population

Central Statistics Office (2021) https://www.cso.ie/en/populationandlabourforceprojections2017-2051/populationprojectionsresults/

Central statistics Office (2011 & 2016) Census data

Department of Health (2015) Healthy & Positive Ageing Initiative

European Union (2019) European Green Deal

Government of Ireland (2021) Housing for All – a New Housing Plan for Ireland

Government of Ireland (2020) Project Ireland 2040 Southern Region

Government of Ireland (2020) Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025

Healthy Ireland (2021) Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021-2025

Government of Ireland (2020) National Volunteering Strategy 2021-2025

Southern Regional Assembly (2020) Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy for the Southern Region

United Nations (2015) Sustainable Development Goals: 2030

Wexford County Council (2020) Wexford County Development Plan 2021-2027 (DRAFT).

Wexford County Council (2016) Local Economic & Community Plan 2016-2022.

Wexford County Council & All-Island Research Observatory (2018) Socio-Economic Profile 3: Demographics – Population, Nationality and Pobal HP Deprivation Index.

Appendix 3   Abbreviations

AFI: Age Friendly Ireland

AFCCP: Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme

AIRO: All-Island Research Observatory

CSO: Central Statistics Office

CE: Community Employment Programme

CDP: County Development Plan

GAA: Gaelic Athletic Association

GP: General Practitioner

GIS: Geographical Information System

HaPAI: Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative

HSE: Health Service Executive

HLG: High Level Goal

IT: Information Technology

ICA: Irish Countrywomen's Association

IFA: Irish Farmers Association

LGBTIQ+:   Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, Other

LECP: Local Economic and Community Plan

MTU: Memory Technological Unit

NDA: National Disability Authority

NGO: Non-Government Organisation

PPN: Public Participation Network

OPC: Older Person's Council

TILDA: The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing

TFI: Transport for Ireland

WCC: Wexford County Council

WLD: Wexford Local Development

WWT: Wexford Walking Trail

WHO: World Health Organisation

WWETB: Waterford Wexford Education Training Board

WIT: Waterford Institute of Technology or South East Technological University (SETU)

Appendix 4   Review of Age Friendly Strategy

Theme 1: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Implementation of Age-Friendly walkability audits in Enniscorthy Town.
- Age Friendly Town designated in Enniscorthy.
- Age Friendly Parking pilot in Enniscorthy and County Hall.
- Age Friendly Business Training with Enniscorthy Chamber of Commerce.
- Adaption to some of the Wexford Walking Trails in the county so that they are universally accessible. These are now linked to the Wexford County Council (WCC) website and actively promoted in conjunction with Destination Parks.
- New access initiatives including the provision of beach wheelchairs, pool-pods and changing places.
- Geographical Information System (GIS) of public toilets created and updated for the county.
- The proposed Development Plans were disability proofed to ensure ease of access for all.
- Physical infrastructure improvements undertaken in villages and towns across the county. This has been achieved through the Town and Village Renewal Programme and a range of other grants.
- Issued '*Access for all Guidance Booklet'* for retailers developed by Access Section and made available at Chamber events.
- Access for all gardens and parks competition held.
- Toilets and Changing Places installed in popular locations such as the Irish National Heritage Park and Min Ryan Park.
- Upgrade of public toilets including accessibility toilets for Duncannon beach.

Theme 2: Transportation
- Significant expansion of rural transport services from TFI Local Link Wexford including evening / night-time services.
- All TFI Local Link Wexford services are now fully accessible.
- All timetables are available on the website, facebook and over the telephone.
- Installation of bus shelters in villages and towns throughout the county.

Theme 3: Housing
- New sheltered housing units completed.
- Age Friendly Housing and Public Realm training for WCC technical staff in Housing and Planning and District Engineers.
- WCC has designed and funded fully accessible social housing.

- Organised training for community and Older People's Council in the Fair Deal Scheme.

Theme 4: Social Participation

- A range of activities and sports for older people organised by Sports Active Wexford.
- Implementation of Community Leadership training programmes and courses for older people in Information Technology (IT) and crafts by the Waterford and Wexford Education and Training Board (WWETB).

Theme 5: Respect and Social Inclusion

- Sporting events organised with the Direct Provision Centre in Rosslare Harbour.
- Inter-generational projects organised in IT with transition year students and older people. In addition, a Postcard Pen-pal project was organised.
- Establishment of befriending support service on a pilot basis
- Establishment of 'Cultural Companions' for people on their own who wish to attend art and cultural events as a group.
- Many art and cultural projects and initiatives held, including storytelling, music for people living with dementia, etc.

Theme 6: Civic Participation and Employment

- Establishment of the Older People's Council so that the voice of older people could be heard and they are directly involved in the decision-making process.
- Held Older People Council meetings at a District level.
- Establishment of a Volunteer Centre for the county.
- Completed training in Age Friendly Business Training including the employment of older people.

Theme 7: Communication and Information

- Up-grade of the WCC website to make it more accessible and user-friendly through the implementation of new assistive technology called '*Recite Me'*.
- Publicity of older people's services over the last five years through radio and newspaper articles. They have also been publicised via the Public Participation Network (PPN) and local newsletters.
- Age Friendly Libraries and Digital Ambassadors in all libraries. This includes the installation of Tovertafel (*Magic Tables)* and ongoing investment in new technology that supports older people.
- New '*Home Book Delivery'* service implemented by the libraries for older people in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Theme 8: Community Support and Health Services

- Completion of a needs analysis of the Meals on Wheels Service and mapping of service provision.
- Implementation of county wide coverage of the Meals on Wheels Service.
- Completion of mapping of daycare centre provision in the county.
- HSE Understand Together & National Dementia Office Inclusive Design training for WCC technical staff.
- Working as part of the Wexford Dementia Working Group to produce an information leaflet which signposts the services and supports that are available in the county.
- Delivery of a range of support services for older people during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Telehealth pilot project with partners including the HSE, Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) and Tunstall Emergency Response.
- Provision of tablets for nursing home residents.
- Bringing music to nursing homes with the Covid Care concerts.

Theme 9: Safety and Security

- Increased Gardaí presence in the community, particularly during the covid pandemic.
- The Gardaí have completed a register of older people for the purpose of increased Garda engagement and accessibility with older people.
- The Gardaí making themselves available to talk to older people on the '*Chatting Benches'* around the county.
- The Gardai held events in the community on safety and security.
- Gardai are focusing on dementia and aiming to raise awareness and understanding about this issue and have joined the Dementia Alliance.

Actions to take forward into the Age Friendly Strategy 2022-2026
The Action Plan in the Age Friendly Strategy 2017-2021 was reviewed. It was agreed that the following actions have not been fully completed but are still relevant and so need to be brought forward into this Strategic Plan.

Theme 1: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Age Friendly Programme Manager to hold regular meetings with Municipal District Engineers to raise their awareness of the Age Friendly Programme and to ensure works comply with Age Friendly standards.
- Significant investment has been given to outdoor infrastructure but the provision of toilets needs to be considered further in the new programme.
- Vacant / derelict buildings to be continually addressed in the new programme.

Theme 2: Transportation
- Transport access to medical appointments within the county and nationally needs to be addressed further in the new Strategy. Complete research to undertake if models of best practice exist which can be adopted within County Wexford. Liaise with Waterford Hospital and Dublin Hospitals and the transport providers to identify solutions.
- Form a working group at local and/or national level to work on this issue with partners to include Age Friendly Ireland (AFI), WCC, HSE, TFI Local Link Wexford/Bus Eireann and Volunteer Centres.

Theme 3: Housing
- Further promotion of the housing modification grant required and implement actions not completed in the last Age Friendly strategy.
- Establish a Customer Service Unit within WCC that will provide a dedicated support to assist older people with queries and complete grant forms such as the housing modification grant.
- Explore opportunities to expand the '*Little Jobs Scheme'* and promote it further. Pilot a new scheme potentially linked to the Volunteer Centre.
- Explore opportunities for Wexford to be a national pilot for installing innovative new housing technology in social housing schemes.
- Explore opportunities for new sheltered housing units linked to nursing home sites or a stand-alone initiative.
- Explore opportunities to create more housing options for older people.

Theme 4: Social Participation
- Create a database of older people's groups in the county and identify gaps and opportunities for partnership and collaboration.

- Invest in activities in community facilities to improve access to resources and services.

Theme 5: Respect and Social Inclusion
- Organise gatherings linked to social dancing and include information and advice at these events.
- Host Older People Council meetings at a District level linked to advice and training in collaboration with Alliance members.

Theme 6: Civic Participation
- Partner with the Local Enterprise Office (LEO) and the Chamber of Commerce to explore opportunities for employing older people.

Theme 7: Communication and Information
- Formalise the arrangement of having regular older people communication slots on the radio and in the local newspaper.
- Work with the Citizens Information Centres and the local newspaper to improve communication on services / facilities for older people.
- Extend the local dop in service to Community / Family Resource Centres and other community facilities.
- Create a dedicated WCC telephone line for older people to assist them to access council services.

Theme 8: Community Support and Health Services
- Mapping of sheltered housing provision in the county.
- Promote the Fair Deal Scheme as it has new guidelines.
- Establish a Thematic Group to review current support providers for attending medical appointments.

Theme 9: Safety and Security
- Continue to collaborate with the Gardaí to support people living with dementia or who are deemed vulnerable older people.

Appendix 5   Survey

Age Friendly Survey: June / July 2021

Wexford County Council is carrying out a survey to hear the views of older people living in County Wexford. The information you give will help to identify what age friendly activities are developed to improve the quality of life for people as we all grow old.

We very much appreciate you taking a few minutes to complete this survey. Your ideas will be used to shape Wexford County Council's Age Friendly Strategy 2022-2026 and your insights and contribution will be invaluable.

Ann Marie Laffan
Age Friendly Programme Manager

Please complete and return to: Ann Marie Laffan, Age Friendly Programme Manager, Wexford County Council, Carricklawn, Wexford.
E: **annmarie.laffan@wexfordcoco.ie**

Name of your village/town: _____

How active would you say you are? (please tick the relevant box)
Very Active ☐

Moderately Active ☐

Use Mobility Active aids to get around ☐

What age category are you in?
55 years to 74 years ☐   75+ years ☐

Do you rely on family / friends to access services / facilities?

Often ☐   Sometimes ☐   Occasionally ☐

Do you drive and have access to a car? ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Do you have family members within 30km (20 miles)?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

Transport: Are you aware of bus / train services in your area?
☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Not sure

WEXFORD
AGE FRIENDLY
COUNTY PROGRAMME

Comhairle Contae Loch Garman
Wexford County Council

How do you find using the following?

	Good	Poor	Don't Use
Pedestrian crossings			
Footpaths			
Walking in your nearest town			
Public Toilets			
Parking			
Public Seating			
Public transport			
Bus Stops / Shelters			
Train Stations			

How do you find using the following?

	Good	Poor	Don't Use
Beaches			
Parks			
Walking Trails in Forests			
Walking Tracks (GAA)			
Walking on Public Road			

Housing: Are you aware there are grants from Wexford County Council for home modifications for older people or those with disabilities?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Not Sure ☐

Have you applied for a housing adaption or a mobility aid housing grant?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Not Sure ☐

How would you rate your experience? _____

Are you happy with the home you are currently in?

Yes ☐   No ☐

Would you be interested in the following?

	Yes	No	Not Relevant
Sheltered housing			
Move to smaller home			
Move closer to shops			
Move closer to family			
Move in with family			

Are you involved in any of the following?

	Yes	No
Church / Religious Groups		
Social Clubs		
Men's / Women's Shed		
Sports (playing / spectator)		
Day-Care Centre		
Other?		

Would you like more activities in the area?

Yes ☐   No ☐   If Yes: Please state? _____

Is there anything stopping you from getting involved? _____

Are you interested in the following activities with younger people?

	Yes	No
Woodwork		
Gardening		
Music / Dancing / Art		
IT Training		
Crafts		
Sport		

Do you currently volunteer?   Would you like to in the future?
Yes ☐   No ☐   Yes ☐   No ☐

Where do you get information and advice?

	Often	Occasionally	Never
Radio			
Local Newspaper			
Church Newsletter			
Community Notice Board			
Social Media (Facebook, WhatsApp)			
Websites			
Libraries			
Family / Friends			

What is your experience of accessing the following services?

	Good	Poor	Not Sure
Doctor Appointments			
Hospital Appointments			
Pharmacy			

Safety: Do you feel safe in the following?

	Safe	Not Safe	Not Sure
Own House			
Community			
Walking / Cycling on Public Roads			

Services: Are you aware of the following supports?

	Yes	No
Meals on Wheels		
Day-Care Centre		
Little Jobs Scheme		
Personal Alarms		
Wexford Local Link		
Library / Mobile Service		

Do you use any of the following?

Smart phone ☐

iPad / Tablet / Computer ☐

Social Media ☐

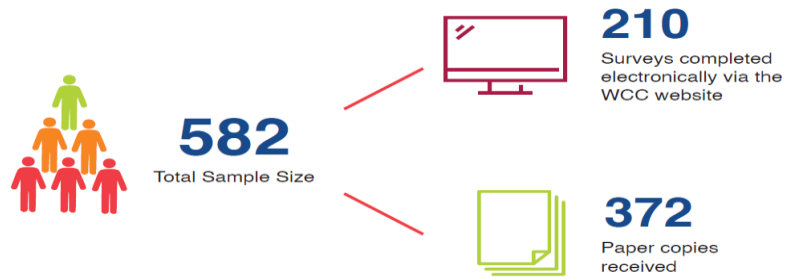Zoom / FaceTime ☐

Would you like to take part in IT training?

Yes ☐   No ☐

How have you managed through Covid?

_____

How do you feel about socialising once you are fully vaccinated?

_____

What additional supports would help you? _____

_____

Appendix 6   Age Friendly Survey Results

Summary

582
Total Sample Size

210
Surveys completed electronically via the WCC website
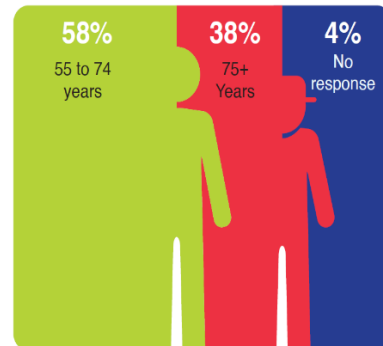
372
Paper copies received

Paper copies distributed through the local newspaper, daycare centres, meals on wheels, Gardai, Local Link, libraries etc

Question 1:
Social Participation
How active would you say you are?

Very Active 50%

Use mobility active aids to get around 17%

Moderately Active 33%
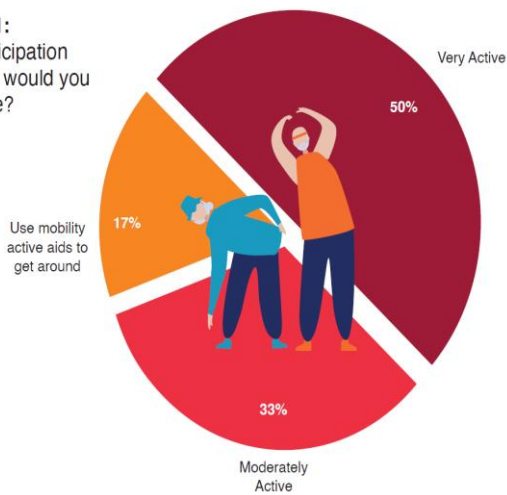
Question 2:
Baseline Data
What age category are you in?

58% 55 to 74 years

38% 75+ Years

4% No response

Question 3: Transportation
Do you rely on family / friends to access services / facilities?

23%
Often

21%
Sometimes

47%
Occassional/
Never

9%
No response
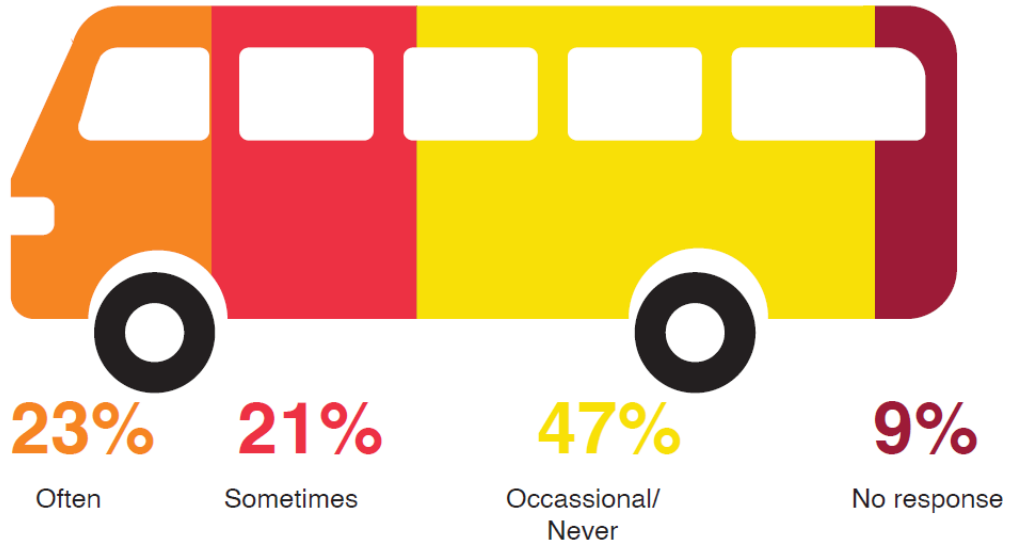
Question 4: Transportation
Do you drive and have access to a car?

70%
Yes

29%
No

1%
No response

![Age Friendly Wexford logo]
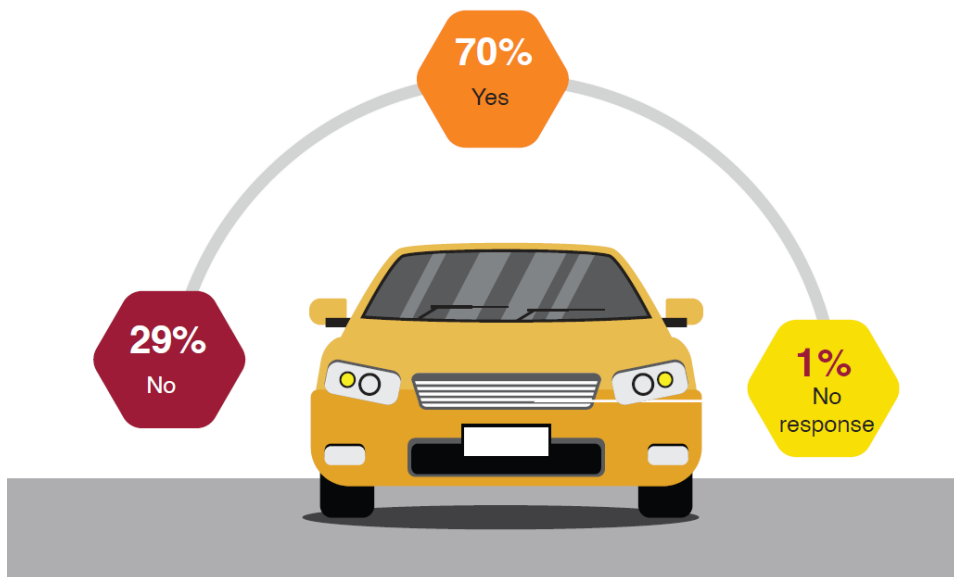
Question 5: Community Support & Health Services
Do you have family members within 30km (20 miles)?

1% No response

22% No

77% Yes
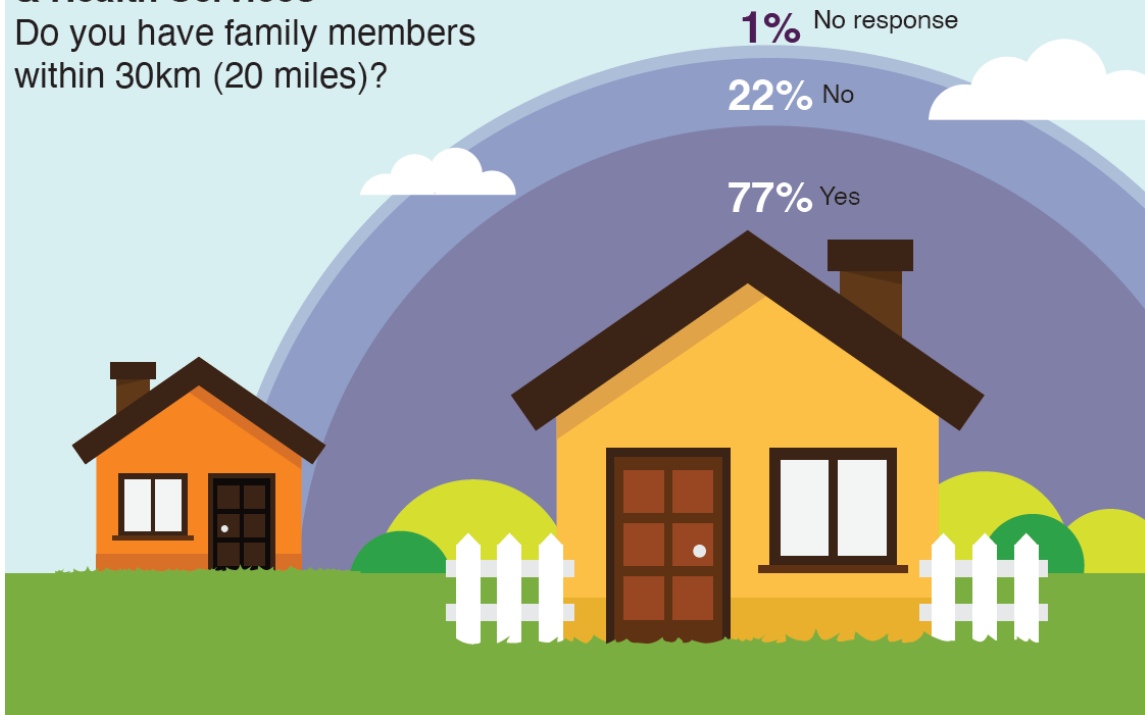
Question 6: Transportation
Are you aware of bus / train services in your area?

67%
Yes

15%
No

16%
Not Sure

2%
No response
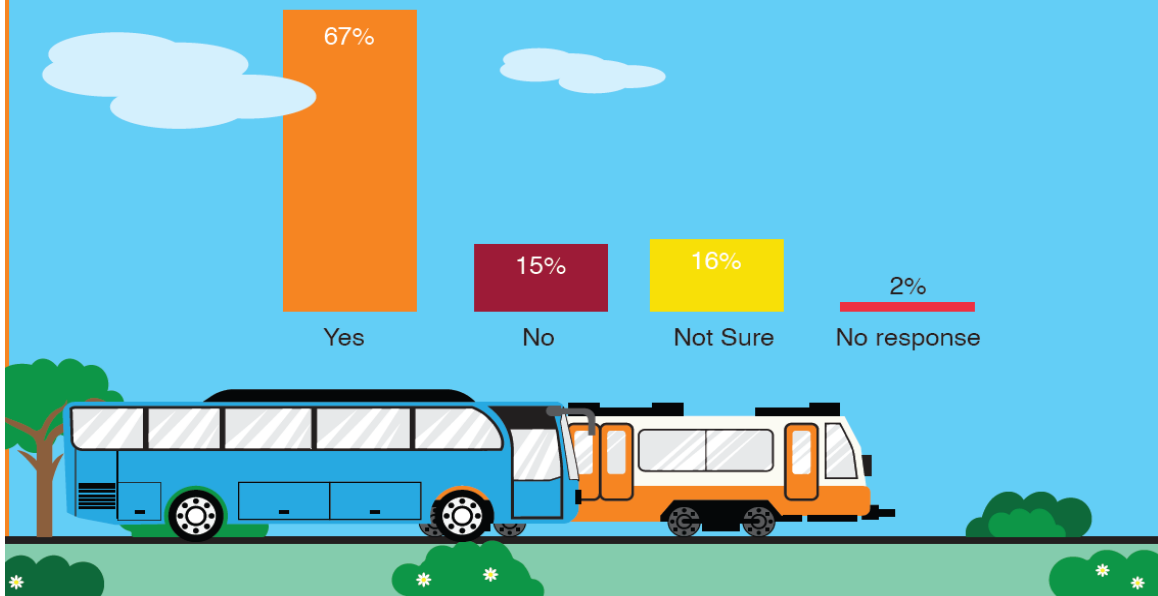
Question 7: Outdoor Spaces & Buildings
How do you find using the following?

	Pedestrian Crossings	Walking in your nearest town	Footpaths	Parking	Public Transport	Train Stations	Public Seating	Bus Stop/ Shelters	Public Toilets
No Response	4%	7%	6%	6%	6%	7%	6%	5%	5%
Poor	15%	17%	7%	20%	35%	43%	25%	39%	37%
Don't Use	17%	18%	30%	30%	21%	13%	36%	33%	47%
Good	64%	58%	57%	44%	38%	37%	33%	23%	11%

Legend: Good, Poor, Don't Use, No Response
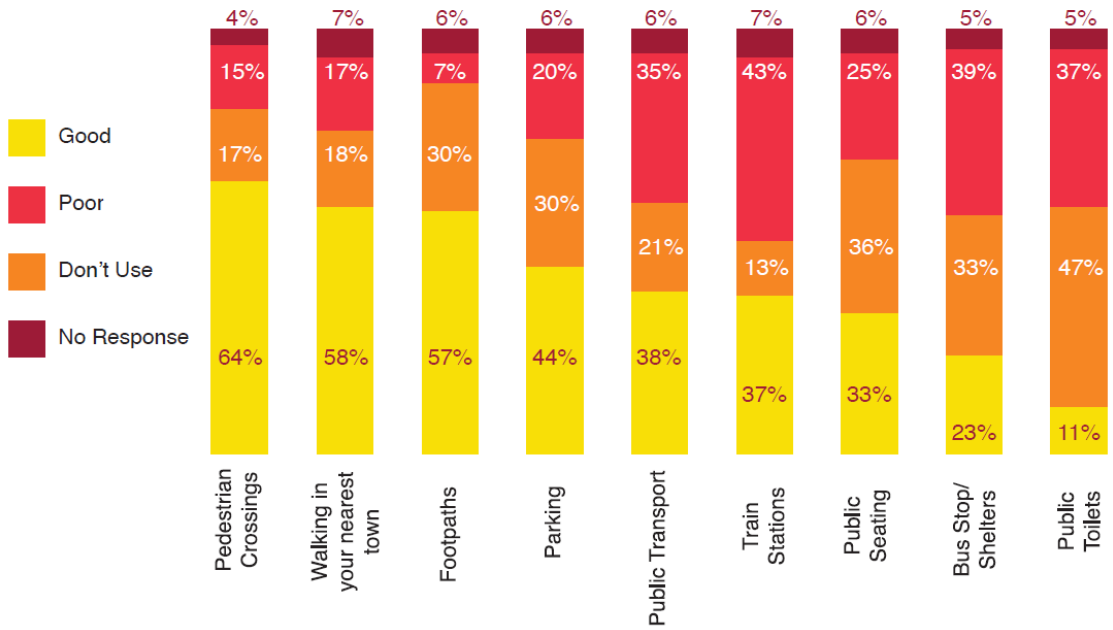
Question 8: Outdoor Spaces & Buildings
How do you find using the following?

	Beaches	Parks	Walking Trails in Forests	Walking Tracks (GAA)	Walking on Public Roads
No Response	5%	6%	7%	8%	4%
Poor	30%	31%	37%	51%	30%
Don't Use	8%	8%	7%	6%	42%
Good	57%	55%	49%	35%	24%

Legend: Good, Poor, Don't Use, No Response
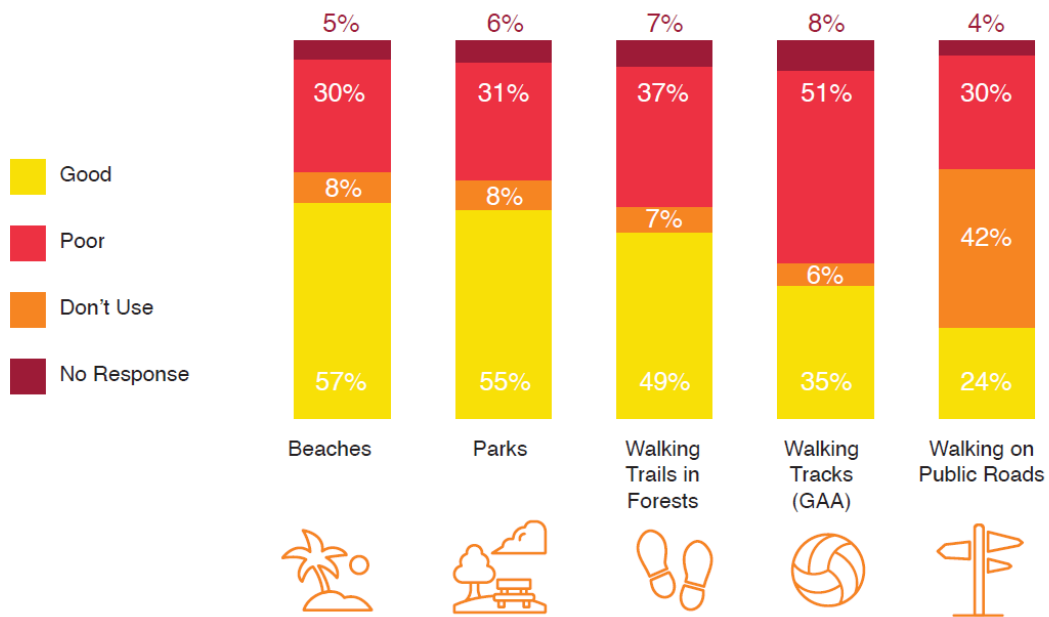
Question 9: Housing

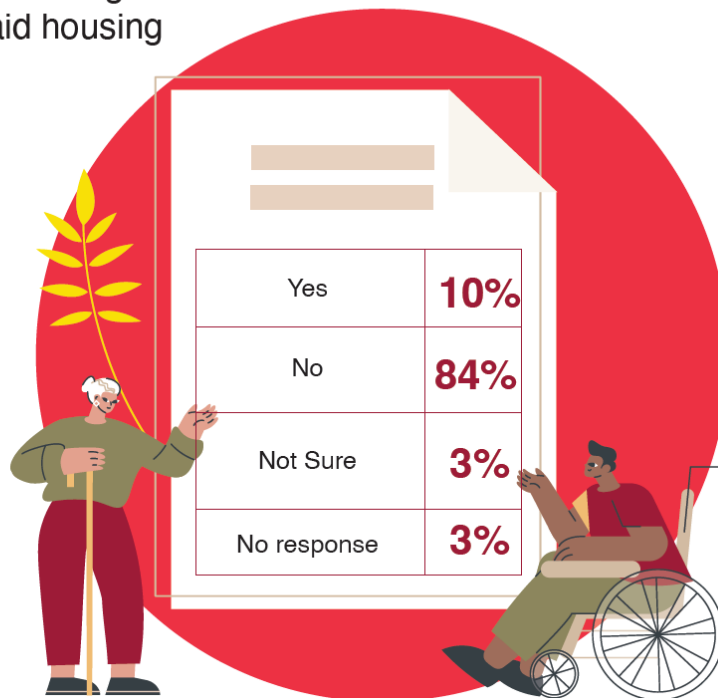Are you aware there are grants from Wexford County Council for home modifications for older people or those with disabilities?

51% Yes	**27%** No
19% Not Sure	**3%** No response
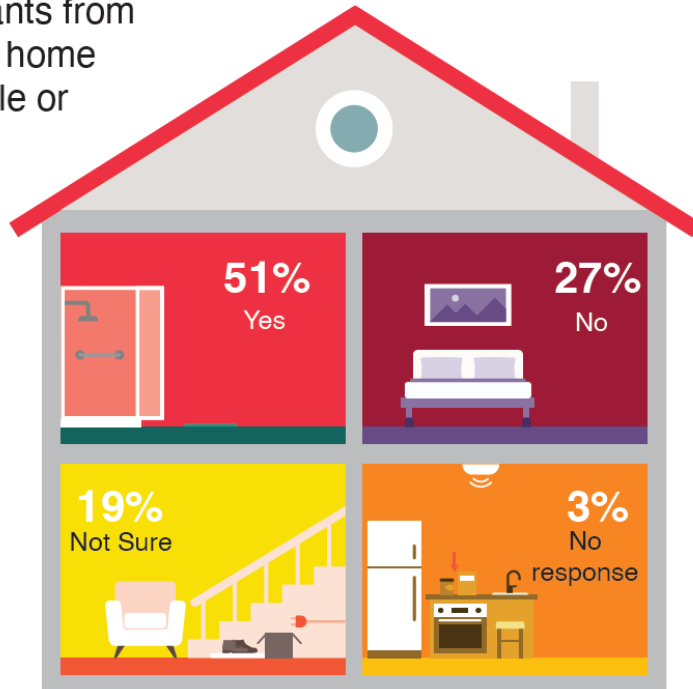
Question 10a: Housing

Have you applied for a housing adaption or a mobility aid housing grant?

Yes	**10%**
No	**84%**
Not Sure	**3%**
No response	**3%**

Question 10b: Housing
How would you rate your experience?

No. of respondents

Rating	No. of respondents
Very Good/Excellent	16
Good	19
Average	4
Poor	8
Very Poor	6

Question 11: Housing
Are you happy with the home you are currently in?

89%	**7%**	**4%**
Yes	No	No Response

Question 12: Social Participation
Would you be interested in
the following?

	Move closer to shops	Move to smaller home	Move closer to family	Sheltered Housing	Move in with Family
No Response	8%	8%	10%	7%	13%
Not Relevant	26%	22%	30%	30%	24%
No	54%	59%	52%	55%	61%
Yes	12%	11%	8%	8%	2%

Legend: ■ Yes ■ No ■ Not Relevant ■ No Response
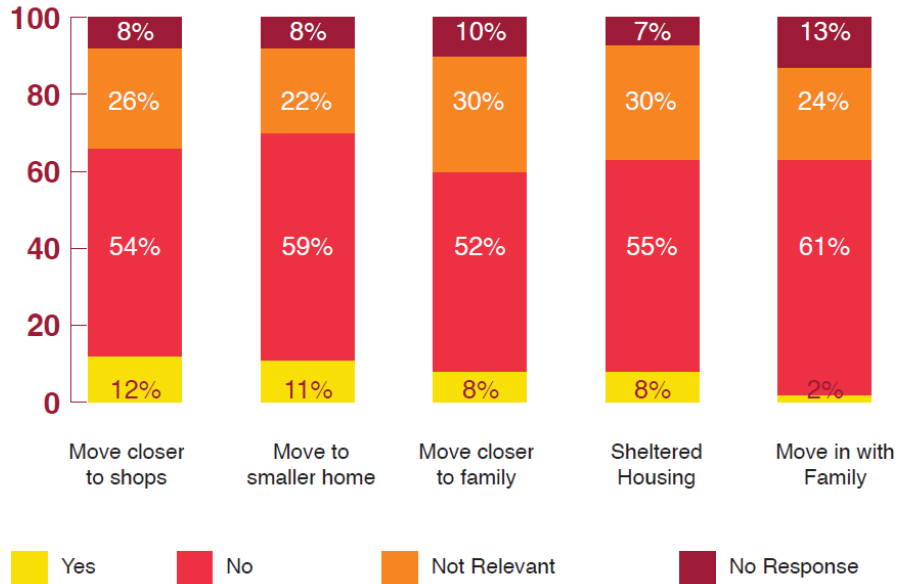
Question 13: Social Participation
Are you involved in any
of the following?

38% Church/ Religious Groups

29% Social Clubs

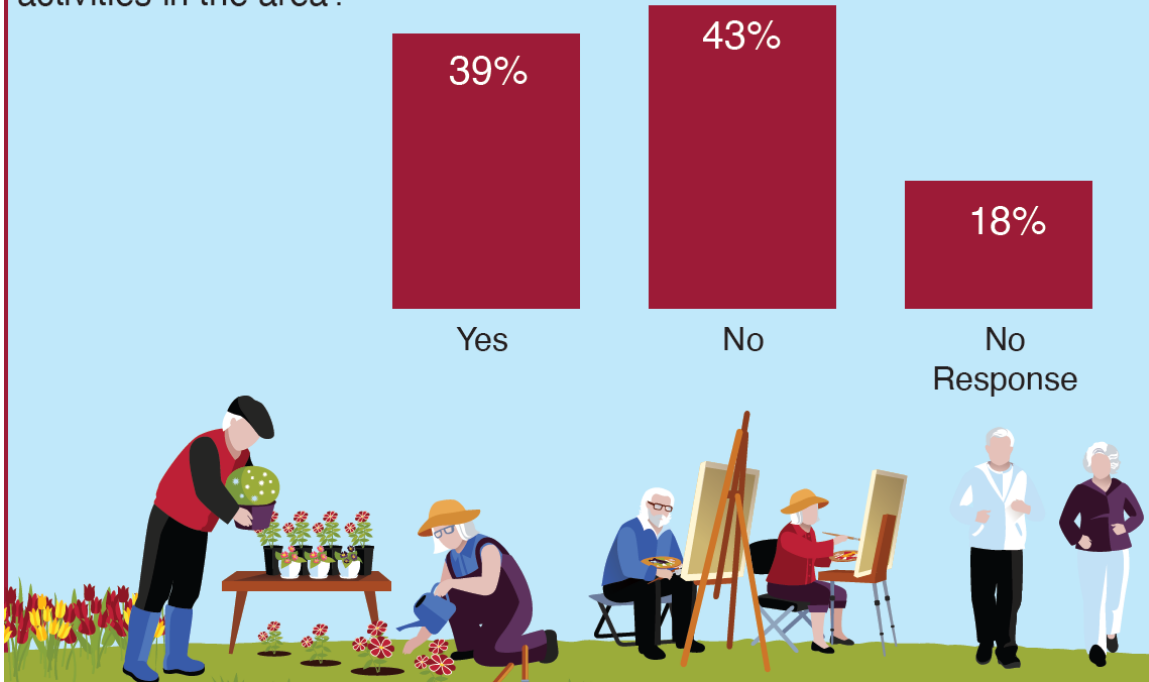**25%** Sports (Playing/ Spectator)

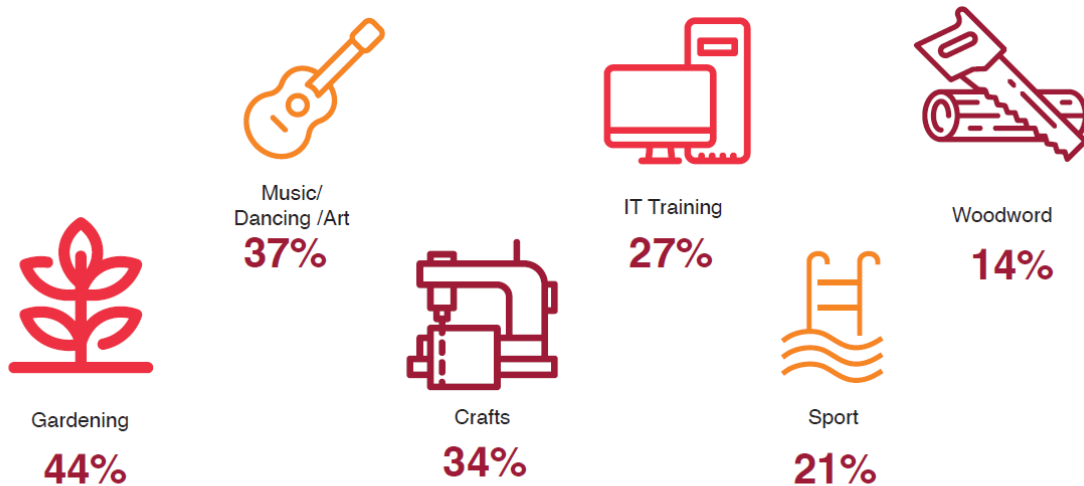**4%** Men's/ Women's Sheds

18% Other

17% Day-Care Centre

Question 14: Social Participation
Would you like more
activities in the area?

39%	43%	18%
Yes	No	No Response

Question 15: Social Participation
Are you interested in the following
activities with younger people?

Music/
Dancing /Art
37%

IT Training
27%

Woodword
14%

Gardening
44%

Crafts
34%

Sport
21%

Question 16a: Civic Participation & Employment
Do you currently volunteer?

32%
Yes

63%
No

5%
No Response

Question 16b: Civic Participation & Employment
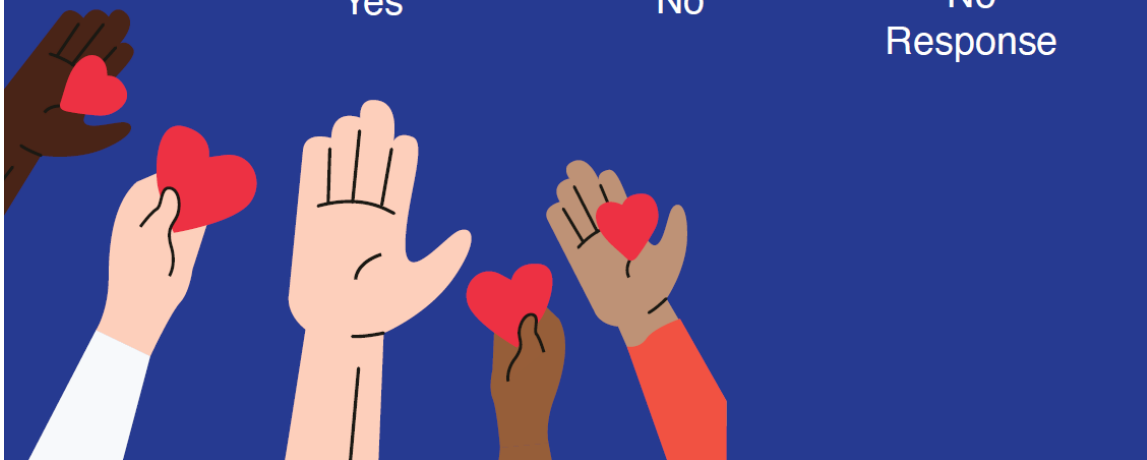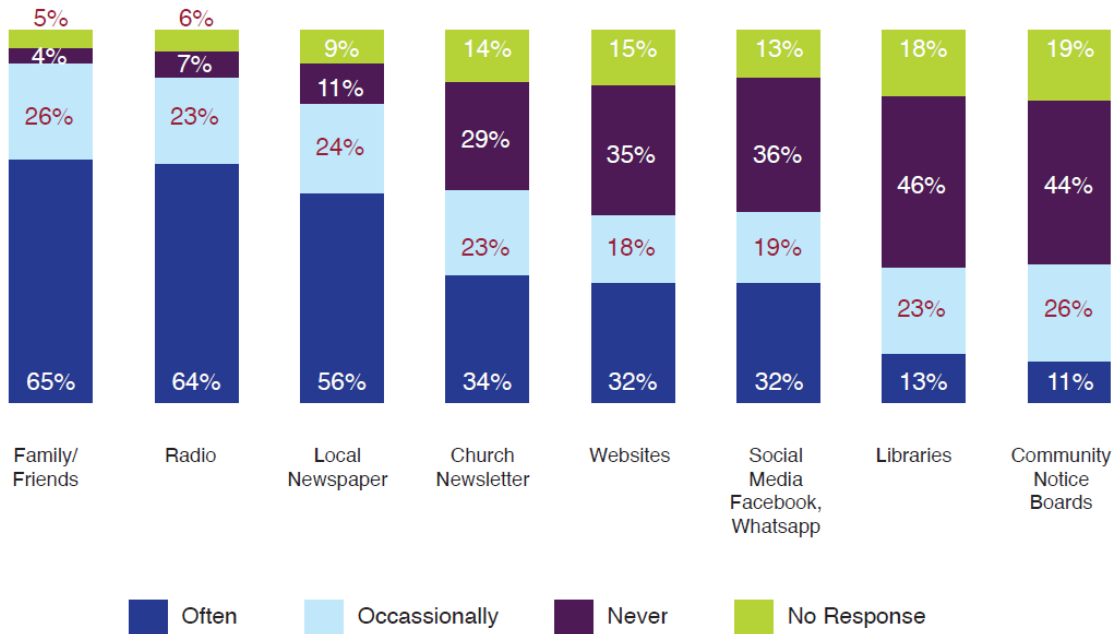Would you like to volunteer in the future?
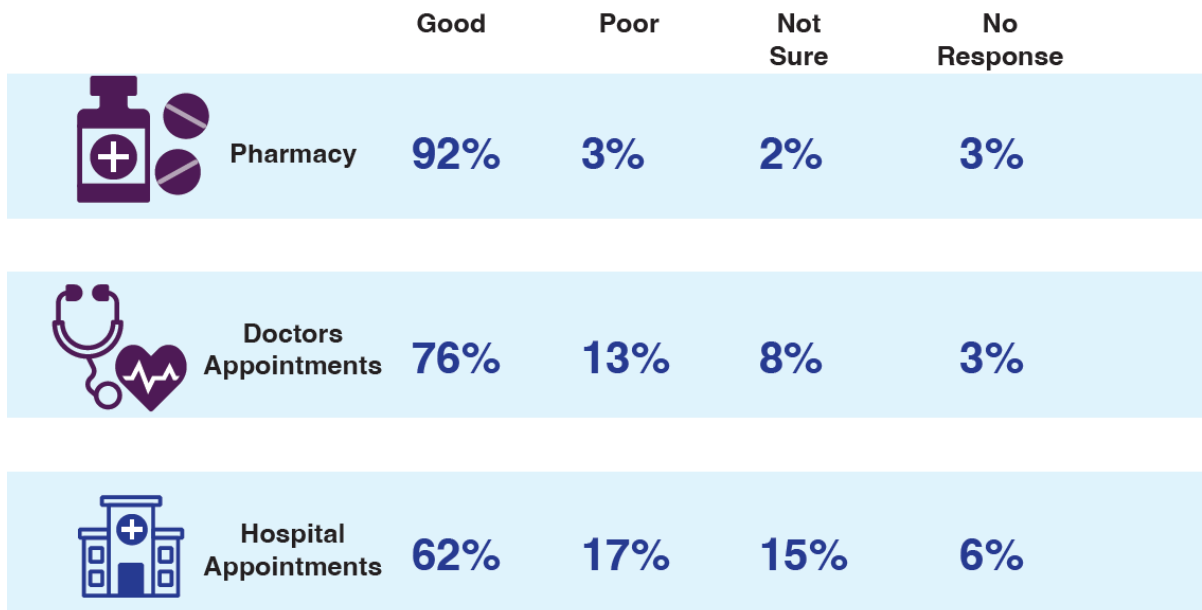
36%
Yes

48%
No

16%
No Response

Question 17: Communication & Information
Where do you get information and advice?

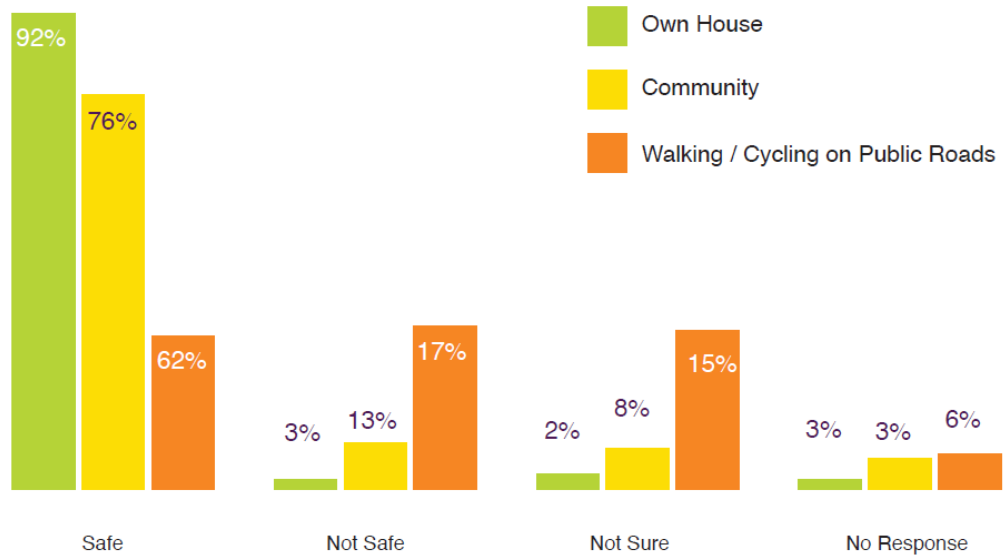|	Family/Friends	Radio	Local Newspaper	Church Newsletter	Websites	Social Media Facebook, Whatsapp	Libraries	Community Notice Boards
No Response	5%	6%	9%	14%	15%	13%	18%	19%
Never	4%	7%	11%	29%	35%	36%	46%	44%
Occasionally	26%	23%	24%	23%	18%	19%	23%	26%
Often	65%	64%	56%	34%	32%	32%	13%	11%

Legend: Often | Occasionally | Never | No Response

Question 18: Community Support & Health Services
What is your experience of accessing the following services?

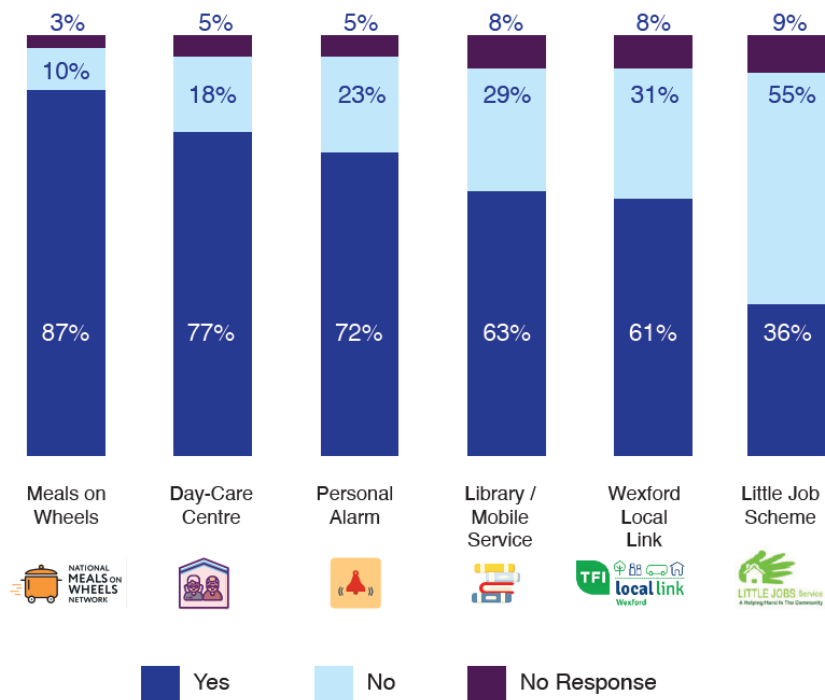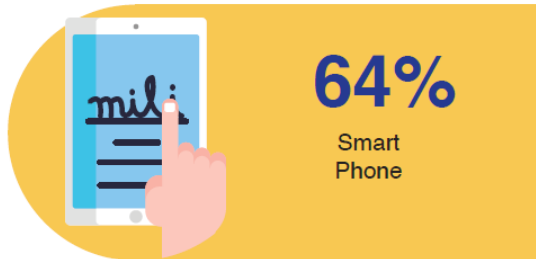|	Good	Poor	Not Sure	No Response
Pharmacy	92%	3%	2%	3%
Doctors Appointments	76%	13%	8%	3%
Hospital Appointments	62%	17%	15%	6%

Question 19: Safety
Do you feel safe in the following?

Legend:
- Own House (green)
- Community (yellow)
- Walking / Cycling on Public Roads (orange)

	Safe	Not Safe	Not Sure	No Response
Own House	92%	3%	2%	3%
Community	76%	13%	8%	3%
Walking / Cycling on Public Roads	62%	17%	15%	6%

Question 20: Communication & Information
Are you aware of the following supports?

	Meals on Wheels	Day-Care Centre	Personal Alarm	Library / Mobile Service	Wexford Local Link	Little Job Scheme
No Response	3%	5%	5%	8%	8%	9%
No	10%	18%	23%	29%	31%	55%
Yes	87%	77%	72%	63%	61%	36%

Legend: Yes, No, No Response

Question 21: Communication & Information
Do you use the following?

64%
Smart Phone

56%
iPad / Tablet / Computer

42%
Social Media

40%
Zoom / Facetime
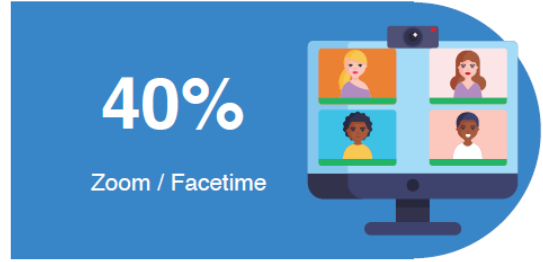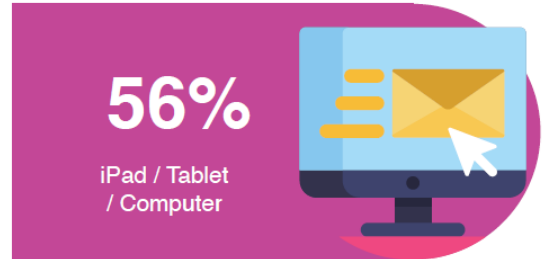
Question 22: Communication & Information
Would you like to take part in I.T. Training?

64%

Yes

Question 23: Community Support & Health Services
How have you managed through Covid?

16%
Lonely / Isolated / Bored

24%
Good / Very Well

49%
OK / Fine

11%
No Response

Lonely / Isolated / Bored: Anxiety, missing activities, friends, family, lonely, tough, terrible, struggling, afraid, alone, saw nobody, missing socialising

OK / Fine: Being sensible, careful, OK but restrictive, quite well, satisfactory, stay at home, in my garden, good neighbours, stayed healthy, kept busy with chores, alright

Good / Very Well: Good support from family, friends, neighbours, garden, walking, hobbies, very well, great, kept positive

Question 24: Community Support & Health Services
How do you feel about socialising once you are fully vaccinated?

54%
OK / Good

14%
No Response

32%
Unsafe / Nervous / Not Comfortable / Will be Careful