Age Friendly Strategy

**COUNTY WEXFORD
AGE FRIENDLY ALLIANCE**

WEXFORD
Age Friendly County

2017 - 2021

Wexford

Gorey

New Ross

Enniscorthy

Contents

Welcome Note

We are extremely proud to publish this Age Friendly Strategy, which has been derived from extensive consultation with the older people of County Wexford, over the last year.

This is the first time where we have sought, so comprehensively, to listen and collate people's views on ageing. This has resulted in a greater level of understanding of older people's experiences across a wide spectrum of everyday life activities, which ranges from older people's ability to access health services, travel to meet friends, go to the shops, or their attitudes towards living in their community and how safe they feel.

This fuller understanding and appreciation of what it feels like to grow old in County Wexford gives the members of Wexford Age Friendly Alliance a unique opportunity to develop creative, effective solutions to ensure we strive towards meeting the needs of older people. We believe that this can be best achieved by a close partnership between the Alliance members and the communities on the ground, each playing their part to make a difference to people's quality of life.

At a time when the number of older people living in our county is rising this initiative is of utmost importance to Wexford County Council and all of the other statutory agencies, non-Government organisations and voluntary organisations that have a role in providing services and supports to people aged over 55 years. The research has revealed that older people are typically very proud of their communities and want to remain in their locality, close to neighbours, friends and families. However, the findings also illustrate very clearly how older people would like aspects of their lives improved and identifies a wide array of practical solutions that would contribute to enhancing older people's well-being.

We would like to thank all those involved in the development of this Strategy and we look forward to collaborating with all of the stakeholders over the next five years to ensure that the Strategy is implemented so that our county truly is *"A great place in which to grow old."*

Mr. Tom Enright
Chief Executive,
Wexford County Council

Cllr. Paddy Kavanagh,
Cathaoirleach,
Wexford County Council

Foreword

The implementation of this Strategy and the development of an Action Plan are the next steps in this Age Friendly process. The Action Plan will be prepared and will set clear, attainable and measurable goals that will determine resources and service provision for older people in County Wexford.

In addition, an Older People's Council will be formed in 2017 to represent the views of people aged over 55, from all geographical locations and representative of the diverse communities that reside in County Wexford.

The Older People's Council will play an invaluable role in overseeing the implementation of this Strategy. It will give feedback to communities on the ground, regarding the work that is being undertaken and provide regular support and guidance to members of the Alliance regarding the effectiveness of initiatives that are being implemented.

I am very encouraged by the positive experiences that older people have in their own communities. In the survey carried out by the HSE and Age Friendly Ireland in 2015, supported by Wexford County Council, 94% of people stated that they like their neighbourhood a lot in County Wexford. This compares very favourably with the national average of 89% and illustrates that older people value their locality.

The research commissioned for this Age Friendly Alliance Strategy also highlights some of the services that have impacted very positively on the lives of older people. Examples include the professionally run daycare centres, the wide range of social groups that exist within some communities, the quality of care delivered by health professionals in Wexford Hospital, the array of services offered by Wexford Library and the Citizens Advice Bureau and the comfortable, modern and well-equipped community halls to name but a few.

The challenge and opportunity is to replicate these models of best practice across County Wexford, so that all older people can access and benefit from the wide range of supports and services that are necessary to ensure people over 55 experience a high quality of life.

Mr. John Carley
Director of Services
Housing, Community, Libraries, Arts, Emergency Services and Environment
Chairman of Wexford Age Friendly Alliance

Alliance Members

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Wexford County Council

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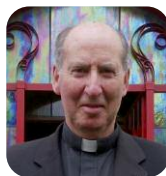
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Church of Ireland

Acknowledgements

Wexford Age Friendly Alliance would like to thank all of the older people who attended the consultation events and so enthusiastically shared their views and insights into how we could make County Wexford a better place in which to grow old. Without this participation, the research and resulting Strategy would not have been possible. We were heartened by the level of interest in this work and we very much hope this Strategy accurately reflects the diverse array of ideas and suggestions that were generated across the 27 consultation events. We would like to thank the participating communities of: Clonroche, Grantstown Daycare Centre (Wellingtonbridge), New Ross, Raheen, Ramsgrange, St Louis Daycare Centre (Ramsgrange), Taghmon, Castlebridge, Kilmore, Our Lady's Island, Piercestown, Rosslare Harbour, Rosslare Strand, St Mary's Daycare Centre (Tagoat), Wexford (The Faythe and Clonard), Oylegate, Bunclody, Enniscorthy, Oulart, Ferns, Gorey, Askamore, Kilanerin, Kilmuckridge, Courtown and the Traveller Community.

We would also like to acknowledge the contribution of many individuals who kindly assisted with setting up the local venues, publicity and refreshments to ensure each consultation event was a success. Furthermore, our sincere appreciation is extended to the Age Equality Network who so kindly attended many of the events around County Wexford. Their knowledge of the older people's community network was instrumental in ensuring we targeted and identified groups across the county.

In addition, we would like to acknowledge the ongoing support of all of the Alliance Members who have greatly assisted in shaping and directing the research and emerging Age Friendly Strategy for County Wexford. A particular mention must be given to the invaluable support of Carlow Institute of Technology (Wexford Campus), Wexford Local Link and Wexford Local Development. Staff and students from Carlow Institute of Technology (Wexford Campus), kindly gave of their time to facilitate and take notes at all of the consultation events. Their input was instrumental to ensuring we captured the voice of the older person. Furthermore, we would like to show our appreciation to Wexford Local Link who kindly attended so many of the consultation events and who used this feedback to shape their transport provision across the county for the benefit of older people. Wexford Local Development also generously supported the Traveller community event and ensured that we heard their views and needs.

We would like to express our gratitude to the staff members of the Community Development Department within Wexford County Council who have worked tirelessly over the last twelve months to support the work of the Age Friendly Alliance. Without their dedication and commitment, it would not have been possible to undertake such a comprehensive consultation exercise. We would also like to recognise the support of our Rural Development Consultant who assisted the Community Development team and who collated this Strategy based on the consultation findings.

Finally, we would like to thank Age Friendly Ireland for continuously guiding and supporting us through this process. This has helped to ensure we have developed a Strategy that best meets the needs of older people in County Wexford, based on best practice nationally and internationally.

The collaborative process, which has resulted in this first Age Friendly Strategy for County Wexford, illustrates what can be achieved when agencies interact with older people in the community. We look forward to working together to make a positive difference for older people in this county.

Tagoat Consultation Event

Executive Summary

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

In County Wexford, a multi-agency, Age Friendly Alliance was formed in 2015 which guided the research, consultation and formulation of this five-year Strategy. In addition, other research findings have been utilised to inform these recommendations.

The Alliance are committed to ensuring that this county is a great place in which to grow old. This endorses the Government's vision, and that of Age Friendly Ireland (AFI), which is to make Ireland *'the best country in which to grow old'*.

The AFI Programme is part of a World Health Organisation (WHO) initiative which aims to make sure that as we age, we can all:

- **"Have a real say in what happens in our own lives and what happens in the areas in which we live;**

- **Enjoy good health, good services, and live in a safe environment;**

- **Participate fully in everything that is going on in our communities, cities and counties."**

(Ireland's National Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme)

This Strategy articulates the views of over 650 people aged over 55 in County Wexford and the priorities identified are based on their needs. These views represent people across a wide age range and with an extensive spectrum of abilities. In addition, it is recognised that the needs of Travellers, Roma, Polish and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex (LGBTI) may differ. Consultation was undertaken with the Traveller community and it is proposed that further consultation and engagement with other groups will be undertaken going forward. In the main, priorities expressed by the Traveller community corresponded with feedback from older people across the county. Although differing views were expressed under theme 5 and these have been highlighted in this Strategy.

The implementation of this Strategy will be driven by the Age Friendly Alliance. Through effective collaboration, the goal is to make a difference together, for the older people living in the villages and towns across the county.

This is particularly important as the number of older people is expected to rise significantly over the coming decades. In the 2011 census there was 33,569 people in the '55 plus' cohort in County Wexford, which represented 23.1% of the total population. This compares to the average for the state of 21.8% in the '55 plus' cohort. The Central Statistics Office (CSO) predict that the '65 plus' age cohort for the South East will increase from 12.5% of the population in 2011 to 22% in 2031 indicating the urgent need to plan for this population growth and the needs of older people. Figure 1 illustrates the increase in people aged 65 and over in County Wexford between 2006 and 2011.

Figure 1. Older People Trend - County Wexford: people 65 and over
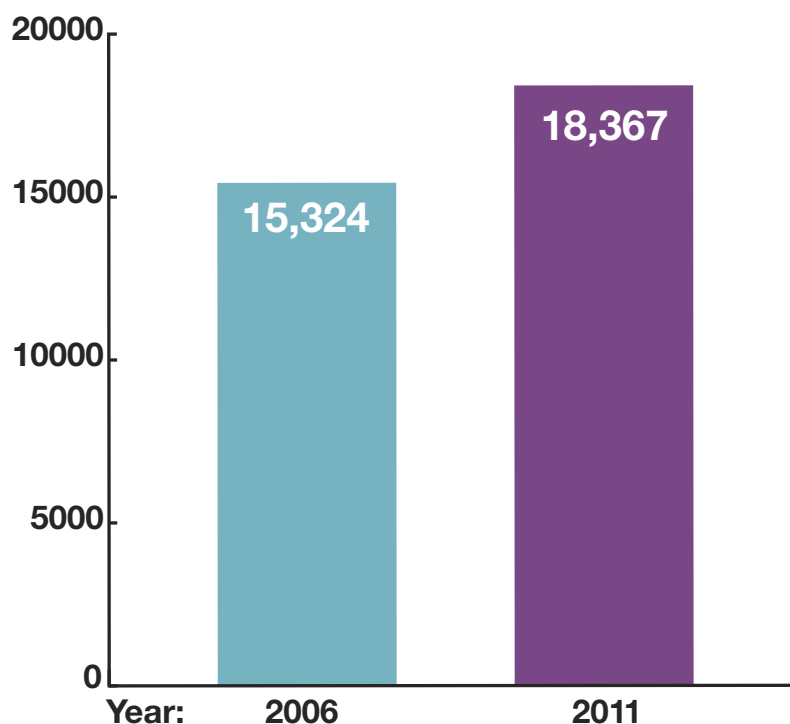
Priorities for County Wexford

The key priorities identified in this Strategy are based on the nine themes identified in the Age Friendly Ireland (AFI) Programme which strives to improve the quality of everyday life for older people. These recommendations are also being linked into the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) to promote the well-being and quality of life for citizens and communities in the county.

Theme 1:
Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

GOAL: "To make outdoor spaces and buildings pleasant, clean, accessible and safe for older people, creating walkable communities and age-friendly spaces." (AFI, 2015)

Comfortable community buildings, footpaths, walking tracks, parks, designated parking, lighting, cut hedgerows, pedestrian crossings and speed ramps are so appreciated where they are available. Good progress has been made in these areas over the last decade with the creation of new parks, up-graded community halls, enhanced footpaths, lighting and pedestrian crossings. Although there is considerable scope to continue these improvements in many communities around the county.

KEY PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Village/Town Infrastructure

Develop the physical layout of villages and towns, in conjunction with local people, to identify requirements for footpaths, ramps, pedestrian crossings, seating, lighting, public toilets, bus shelters, convenient older people's parking spaces, cutting back hedges etc. Undertake capital improvement works based on these reviews to ensure people feel safe when out and about. This should be undertaken in line with AFI and the National Disability Authority's (NDA) recommendations for walkability audits. Ongoing communication to be undertaken with the communities involved.

Priority 2. Shops and Services

Promote the need for improved accessibility in shops, restaurants and services. In addition, encourage age friendly supports such as seating and hand rails.

Priority 3. Recreational Facilities

Review the provision of parks, public gardens, walking tracks and recreational areas in the county to ensure they are available and accessible for older people. Prioritise the development of new recreational facilities in areas where these are not adequately provided for. In addition, support the further enhancement of existing recreational facilities to ensure they are age friendly.

Theme 2:
Transportation

GOAL: "To promote safe, accessible, reliable and comfortable transport services for older people."
(AFI, 2015)

At the consultation events the majority of people had access to a car but it was widely recognised that accessibility to facilities and services is difficult if you cannot drive. It would be advantageous if all of the major transport providers met to consider the recommendations in this Age Friendly Strategy in order to develop their unified and collaborative approach to these issues.

KEY PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Public Transport Connectivity

Improve public transport in rural areas which connects to the public transport network in the main villages and towns in the county, along with associated infrastructure such as bus shelters with seating designated for older people.

Priority 2. Community Transport Provision

Develop a range of local, county and national transport options to facilitate people getting to:
- Medical Appointments
- Shops and Services
- Social Activities

Good community models frequently cited include volunteer car schemes, Cancer Care Ireland, carsharing, car buddy project and Wexford Local Link.

Priority 3. Promotion, Marketing and Clear Communication

Better promotion of public transport through clearer timetables and increased publicity.

Theme 3:
Housing

GOAL: "To provide a more seamless and appropriate continuum of housing choices and options for older people." (AFI, 2015)

There was an overwhelming desire by older people to remain in their own home as long as possible. Older people stated that if they had to move out of their home, they would like to remain within their community in sheltered accommodation, if it was possible.

The following priorities were identified as important to ensure this goal is achieved.

KEY PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Improved Access to Home Modification Grants

Assistance to access home modification grants. Promote a fast track system, for the house modification grants, to facilitate emergency cases. Provide a support service to assist people with the completion of these forms and to advise on appropriate house modifications.

Priority 2. House Repairs and Trustworthy Trade Service

Older people frequently stated they need assistance with cutting grass, changing light bulbs, cleaning gutters and minor house repairs. Establish a comprehensive, affordable, trustworthy, home repair, odd job and maintenance team which has been Garda vetted, thereby stimulating local employment opportunities in the trade sector.

An extension of the 'Little Jobs' initiative would be welcomed in conjunction with greater publicity of this initiative and the WARM Programme.

Priority 3. Supported Housing Options (Modified Homes, Sheltered Housing etc.)

In most parts of County Wexford there is a lack of options for older people, other than their own home or a nursing home. Older people feel there is a need to provide more housing options with additional supports, in their own community such as sheltered housing.

Theme 4:
Social Participation

GOAL: "To provide opportunities for older people to stay socially connected and to play an active part in social networks." (AFI, 2015)

There are significantly different levels of social interaction between communities in County Wexford. Some areas have a wide range of thriving older people's groups and a diverse mix of activities and events. In contrast, in other areas there could be very few community groups and a low level of social interaction amongst older people.

KEY PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Community Resources

Establish a database of community facilities and assess how suitable they are for older people. Arising from this assessment, support and encourage new or enhanced community hall facilities.

Priority 2. Activities and Events

Establish a database of groups for older people in the county to identify gaps and support registration with the Public Participation Network (PPN). Carry out a programme to establish new groups and an additional range of diverse activities in communities with existing social events. To ensure these are a success they would need to be well publicised in parish newsletters, the local newspaper, radio, PPN network and most importantly through word of mouth. Carsharing should be promoted to ensure those without transport can attend.

In addition, there is a need to support sectors of society that typically are less likely to engage in social activities. This includes men and diverse groups such as Travellers, Roma, Polish and the LGBTI community. Activities that are targeted at these groups and tailored to suit their interests is important.

Priority 3. Network of Community Cafés

Create a network of community cafés across the county in existing community facilities such as parish centres or community halls. These facilities would provide a social outlet for older people and could incorporate guest speakers, covering a range of topics such as safety, grants, entitlements, health, WCC/WLD services etc.

Theme 5:
Respect and Social Inclusion

GOAL: "To combat stereotypes, myths and negative views on ageing and prevent prejudice and discrimination against older people." (AFI, 2015)

In general, older people feel they are treated with respect by public and private organisations. They are also generally very happy living within their local area and very much value close knit communities. However, there is a strong desire to foster a greater level of understanding between the young and old; better integration of new comers; and more proactive initiatives to reach out to those who are isolated and vulnerable.

The Traveller community stated that the level of respect between them and the settled community has improved although they feel there is still a way to go. Initiatives to build mutual respect between all members of society need to be implemented.

KEY PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Integration

Develop a range of initiatives that support community integration. This is particularly important in communities which have expanded rapidly in recent years, areas where there are holiday homes, or areas which lack community facilities or groups for older people.

Older people would like initiatives that foster integration between the old and the young. Examples include oral history, music, the young teaching IT skills to the older community and in return older people teaching crafts and different skills to young people. Opportunities to link with national and secondary (transition year) students to be explored. This initiative would be undertaken in collaboration with Comhairle na nÓg.

Priority 2. Social Inclusion

Promote the establishment of befriending visits to isolated, frail and vulnerable older people. Consider supporting the formation of groups specifically tasked with assisting those who are vulnerable and isolated. The aim would be to encourage people to participate in local activities and events and to ensure people are fully informed about what is going on and what services are available within their community.

Priority 3. Diverse Communities

Combat stereotyping and discrimination. There is a need to continually engage with all diverse groups to ensure their voice is heard and their needs are addressed.

Theme 6:
Civic Participation and Employment

GOAL: "To increase employment, volunteering and civic participation among older people." (AFI, 2015)

Older people like to volunteer and participate within their local community. Communities with a large number of groups for older people, creates well connected neighbourhoods, and supports the informal sharing of information amongst everyone living in the area.

The PPN supports communities across County Wexford through offering training courses, advice and networking opportunities.

KEY PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Volunteering

Encourage volunteering opportunities for all age groups within each community, and encourage people to become involved.

Priority 2. Employment

Older people would like the flexibility to remain on in employment as they get older, possibly with reduced hours. This will be promoted through business networks and government agencies.

Priority 3. Older People's Council - Hearing the Older Persons' Voice

Formation of the Older People's Council, that is truly representative of the geography of County Wexford and all of its diverse groups. This model will aim to facilitate two-way communication between the Alliance and older people in the community.

Theme 7: Communication and Information

GOAL: "To ensure that older people can access timely, practical information about what is happening in their communities." (AFI, 2015)

Communicating information through the local newspaper, radio, texts and the parish newsletter is typically how many older people acquire knowledge about what is happening in their community. The informal sharing of information through older people's groups and word of mouth is very effective. The role of the library and the Citizens Advice Bureau is invaluable. Publications like the Irish Pensioners Handbook is very helpful. There is a low usage of the internet and broadband coverage is patchy in some rural areas.

KEY PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Older People's Entitlements

Provide more printed information on the entitlements for older people as they are often unsure of what is available to them. Solutions include presentations at older people's events, mobile or new Citizens Advice Bureau, local drop in centres, written communication etc. Clear printed information is essential as internet usage is low.

Priority 2. Training in New Technologies on a One to One Basis

Organise transition year programme to deliver one to one training in mobile phones, internet, emails, skype, computers and tablets. This could be developed in collaboration with Comhairle na nÓg, youth organisations and training providers.

Priority 3. Local 'Drop in Services' through Community/Family Resource Centres

Provide support for completing medical forms, grant applications and other documents as required. This could be through the network of community/family resource centres located in the county that could provide 'drop in services'. This is a priority for geographical locations with diverse communities.

Priority 4. Banking/Credit Union Services

Older people prefer simpler banking and dealing directly with staff members. Older people who use telephone banking have had a good experience with this. Discuss these findings with the financial services' sector and address these concerns.

Theme 8:
Community Support and Health Services

GOAL: "To provide older people with easily accessible health and community services and help with access to everyday activities and high quality home care and residential facilities." (AFI, 2015)

Older people desire to stay in their own home and within their local community as they get older. To facilitate this vision, it is essential that a wide range of supports are available to enable people as they become frailer, to live safely in their home. The participants' experience of the health service was generally very positive but in some cases there was difficulty accessing medical care and there were examples of long waiting lists.

KEY PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Supports to Facilitate Living in your Own Home

Older people had concerns about home help service provision. They identified the need to expand the range of services that are available to them including: Home care (washing, dressing, meals etc.); and Health (e.g. discharge support from hospital, dressing wounds etc.). Ensure there is clear information on what is available and who is eligible.

Priority 2. Expand the Number of Daycare Facilities and Sheltered Housing Schemes

Daycare services are excellent and older people identified the need to expand the number of daycare centres in the county and deliver health care supports through these facilities. There is also considerable interest in developing sheltered housing within the community but people are unaware of how to set these up. The Grantstown model is an excellent example.

Priority 3. Accessibility to Attend Medical Appointments

Older people frequently cited concerns around accessing medical appointments. Some solutions include: A submission to the Department of Health to request an expansion of the range of services delivered by Wexford Hospital; and Setting up or expanding existing community transport schemes as outlined in theme 2.

Theme 9:
Safety and Security

GOAL: "To ensure older people feel safe and secure in their homes and community." (AFI, 2015)

Older people really value community schemes to reduce crime such as Neighbourhood Watch and Community Alert. In addition, home security systems and personal alarms make people feel safer in their home. Close knit communities, good neighbours, footpaths, lighting, cut hedgerow, speed ramps and pedestrian crossings help people to feel safer in their community. However, many communities reported a decrease in Gardaí within their community in recent years and a heightened sense of fear, which is an issue of concern for older people.

KEY PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Increase Gardaí Presence in the Community

A higher profile for the Gardaí in the community, with a good local knowledge of the area, is of considerable importance to older people. Inviting the Gardaí to local events to discuss safety in the home and community would also be useful to older people.

Priority 2. Safety Initiatives

Promotion and advice on personal safety and home safety devices with group discounts. Encourage the establishment of Community Alert schemes in locations where it is not currently established.

Priority 3. Close Knit Communities

Initiatives to encourage people to know their neighbours greatly enhances people's feeling of safety in their community. Befriending schemes, Meals on Wheels, daycare centres and active social groups all assist in creating close knit communities.

This Strategy outlines our collective response to the changing demographic situation and reflects our ongoing commitment to the vision of being a great place to grow up and grow old in. It provides the foundations for a place where everybody as they age are supported, connected and valued for their contribution to community and family life. We hope that this Strategy shows the achievements that can be made through effective partnership, creative thinking and a dedication to making our shared vision for the future a reality.

Section 1

Introduction

1.1 National Policy Context on Ageing

The National Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme (AFCCP) is part of a worldwide, World Health Organisation (WHO) inspired movement which aims to improve the quality of life for all people as they age. As part of this movement, the WHO has developed a set of guidelines for towns and cities interested in planning to become more age friendly, which have been utilised to guide this Strategy formulation.

The key guiding principles are outlined below:

- **"Older people exercise autonomy in relation to the systems, services and decisions which affect them;**
- **There is real respect for older people, and their contribution to Ireland, and to the communities in which they live, is fully valued;**
- **Older people feel positive, and in control of their own lives;**
- **Older people participate fully in community life, and social isolation is rare;**
- **Prejudice and discrimination against older people do not exist;**
- **Older people are supported to live independently for as long as they wish to;**
- **Older people experience excellent quality of life;**
- **Better integration of services reduces dependency and avoidable duplication and costs;**
- **People of all ages feel part of an inclusive, equitable society."**

Source: AFCCP, 2015

The AFCCP approach is about engaging with organisations currently working with the community, to explore how they can better use current resources to respond to the real issues for older people. It is also about ensuring that older people are central to devising the recommended actions.

The implementation of the AFCCP is being facilitated nationally by Age Friendly Ireland (AFI) whose vision is that: ***"Every county in Ireland will be a great place in which to grow old"***.

In Wexford it was agreed to set up a County Alliance that would agree a Strategy based on the aims of the AFCCP detailed above. This process has been actively supported by AFI, who has offered invaluable guidance throughout the consultation process and compilation of this Strategy.

1.2 Age Friendly Alliance

The Wexford Age Friendly County Alliance was formed in June 2015 and this is the first time that such a wide range of partners have worked together for the benefit of older adults in County Wexford. Our hope is that the wealth of experience around the table will bring a fresh approach to delivering on the commitments laid out in this Strategy and will ensure the sustainability of the programme into the future. It is also hoped that this Alliance offers the opportunity for agencies to collaborate together on the delivery of services so that they are more effective and efficient at meeting the needs and aspirations of older people in the county.

The Wexford Alliance brings together the statutory, private, voluntary and community sectors. Our members include the heads of all key groups and organisations who share a common commitment to make Wexford a great place for all its citizens to grow up and grow old in. Members have been selected on the basis of having the influence and resources to be able to develop and deliver this Strategy.

The Alliance members include representatives from the organisations illustrated below.

Organisations Represented on the Wexford Age Friendly County Alliance

- **Wexford County Council**
- **An Garda Siochána** • **Health Service Executive**
- **Age Equality Network** • **Age Friendly Ireland**
- **Wexford Local Development**
- **Church of Ireland** • **Diocese of Ferns** • **Wexford Local Link**
- **Carlow Institute of Technology (Wexford Campus)**
- **Waterford and Wexford Education Training Board**
- **Chamber of Commerce**

The Objectives of the Alliance are to:

- Make County Wexford the best possible place in which to grow old. It will be a desirable location, enjoyed and appreciated by older people and their families for its great quality of life;

- Increase the participation of older people in the social, volunteering, economic and cultural life of the community, for everyone's benefit;

- Build general support and pride among the people of Wexford for being 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.

In order to achieve these objectives, the Alliance will work in a collaborative way to co-ordinate and simplify existing partnerships, strategies and practices where necessary, and enable fresh opportunities in the planning and delivery of services for older people to be identified and exploited.

1.3 County Wexford Age Equality Network

The County Wexford Age Equality Network is an independent network of individuals and older people's groups concerned with ageing. It was founded in 2008 and came together to help to make the county a better, and more positive, place to grow older in. Members of the Age Equality Network have been instrumental in identifying the consultation events for this Strategy and their input and guidance has been invaluable.

1.4 Older People's Council

As part of this AFI, there is a recommendation to form an Older People's Council. This is seen as essential to ensure that organisations respond to the real concerns and issues of older people. During the consultation process, at each event people were asked if they would like to put their name forward for the Older People's Council. The inaugural meeting will be held in 2017. One of the key roles of the Older People's Council will be to ensure that this Strategy and subsequent Action Plan are successfully implemented in County Wexford.

1.5 Public Consultation Process

The Wexford Age Friendly Alliance agreed that this Strategy should be directly based on the needs articulated by older people in County Wexford. As a result, an extensive public consultation process, was undertaken between late 2015 and early 2016. The aim of this consultation process was to garner the views and needs of the older people in our community.

All priorities detailed within this Strategy were developed in direct response to the feedback gained through the age friendly consultation process which involved 663 older adults. Appendix 1 details the consultation schedule that took place over an eight-month period. There was also a separate Travellers consultation session held in Taghmon in June 2016 so that their views could be heard and captured.

These events were widely publicised in the local newspapers, parish newsletters, posters, flyers and on the local radio station and everyone was afforded the opportunity to participate in these consultation events.

However, it should be noted that these public consultation events are not necessarily representative of all views held by older people in the county. We are conscious that these events took place in communities where there are established community group networks with a certain level of voluntary support, services and facilities available.

We recognise that there are more isolated rural areas where there is less structured, voluntary support, for older people. The views of older people living in these locations are possibly not well represented in this Strategy. One of the challenges and opportunities for this Strategy, is to ensure that there are more voluntary/community supports, in areas where this is currently lacking. Figure 2 depicts the geographic locations selected for the consultation process.

Figure 2. Public Consultation Events in County Wexford
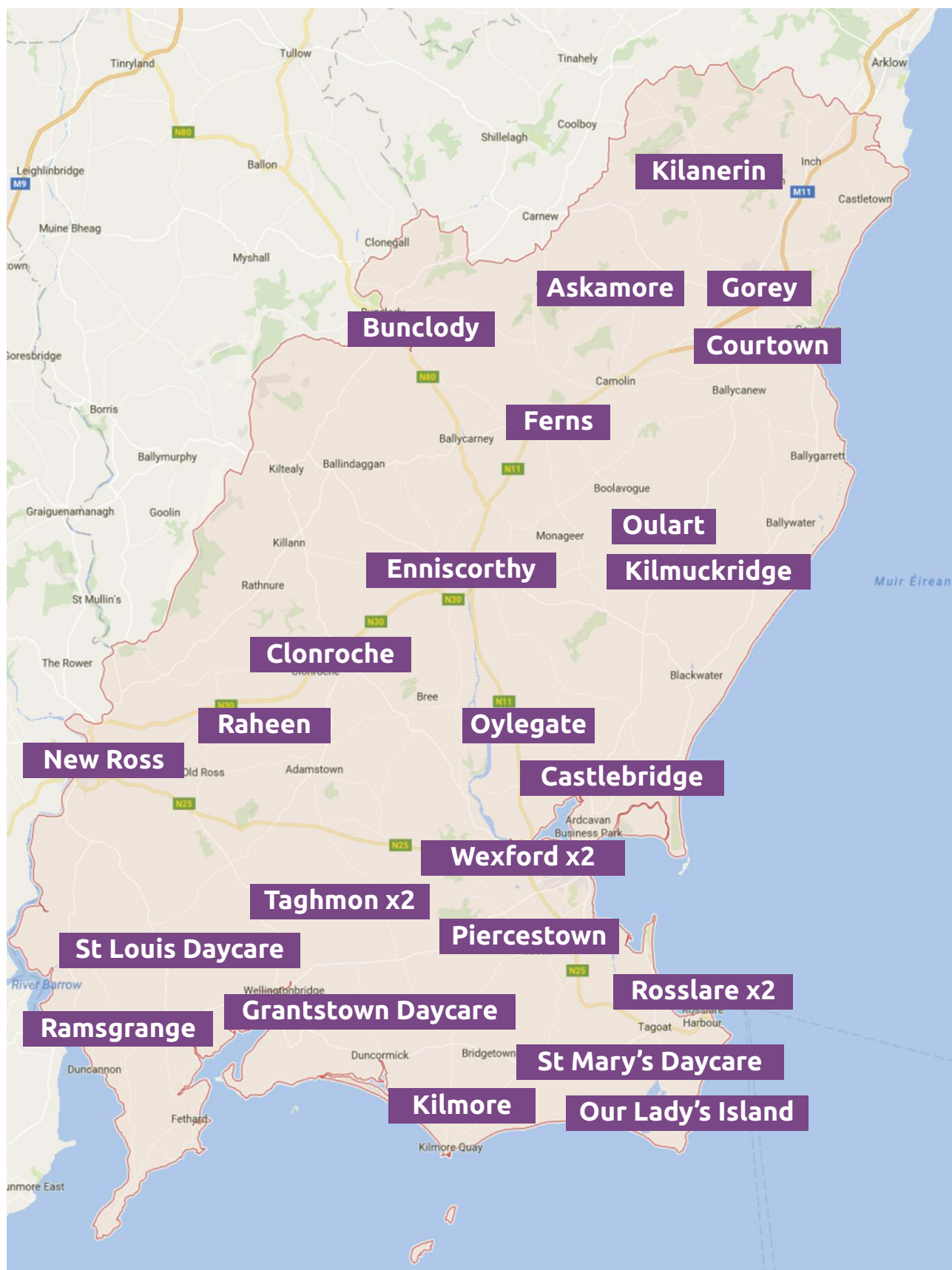
1.6 HaPAI Survey

Wexford County Council (WCC) supported a comprehensive survey undertaken by the Department of Health in conjunction with AFI and the Health Service Executive (HSE) to understand the current attitudes towards facilities and services in the county. This is part of a national research programme supported by Atlantic Philanthropies, and uses a standardised questionnaire to allow comparisons with national benchmarks such as the Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing (TILDA) or the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS).

In Wexford, 500 people aged 55 and older were interviewed for the 'Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative' (HaPAI) survey between July and November 2015. The HaPAI survey has included questions from each of the areas in the AFCCP and these statistics have been used to inform the priorities in this Strategy. The HaPAI results will also allow us to measure the impact of our actions on older people over time.

The same survey has been carried out in many local authority areas around the country and data collection is ongoing. The results provided for Wexford have been checked and weighted. In this Strategy, the HaPAI results are compared with the interim findings from the 10 local authority areas that have been analysed to date. These include; Dun Laoghaire Rathdown, Cavan, Mayo, Kildare, Galway County, Limerick City and County, Cork City and County and Wexford. The findings from the full dataset may change as additional counties are surveyed and analysed.

The HaPAI statistics are illustrated in section 3 of this Strategy, alongside the findings from the Wexford Age Friendly Alliance consultation process. Results have shown that, in general, the majority of those aged over 55 living in the county are happy with the local environment. For example, 94% of people like living in their neighbourhood 'a lot', and 78% are happy with the general appearance and upkeep. However, the survey also found some differences between satisfaction levels of the 'younger old' (55 - 69 years) and those aged over 70. The findings of the survey suggest that there are some issues that the AFCCP could address in order to ensure that County Wexford can become an even better place in which to grow old.

1.7 Wexford Socio-Economic Baseline Report

In 2015, WCC published an overview of the socio-economic characteristics of the county, compiled by the All Island Research Observatory (AIRO). This research greatly informs this Strategy as it details the demographic profile of the county and illustrates the spatial profile of the older population, thereby informing decisions around the effective distribution of resources.

1.8 County Wexford Local Economic and Community Plan

The first Wexford Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) is being prepared which sets out the high level goals, objectives and actions needed to promote and support economic and community development over the next six years. A significant number of agencies, individuals, businesses and community groups have inputted into this LECP and synergies between this and the Age Friendly Strategy will be identified.
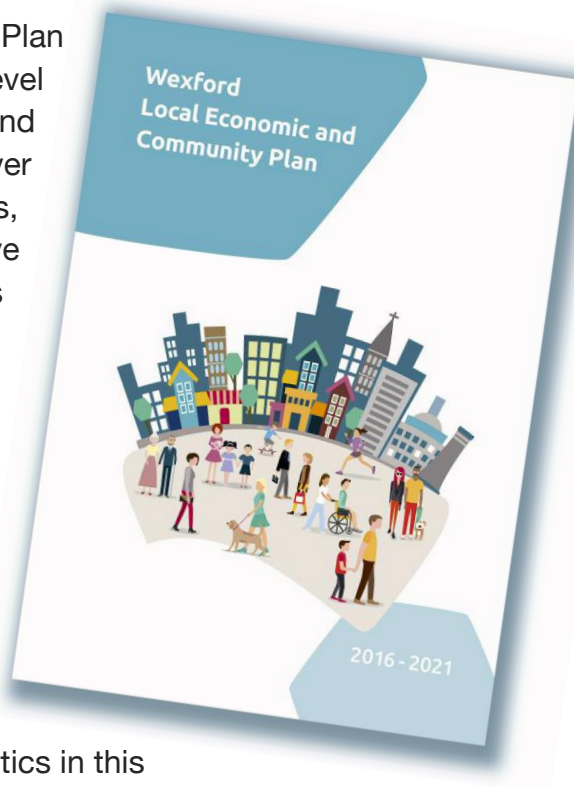
1.9 Census

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) undertakes a census every five years to give a comprehensive picture of the social and living conditions in Ireland at a point in time. The census data and the results are essential tools for effective policy, planning and decision making purposes. The statistics in this Strategy are based on the 2011 census, however, when the information is available from the 2016 census it will be used to further inform the implementation of this Strategy.

1.10 Strategic Plans of the Alliance Members

To deliver an effective Age Friendly Strategy it is essential for all public services, affecting older people, including health, policing, local government, transportation and social welfare, to work together with relevant Non-Government Organisations (NGO's). This provides a real opportunity to transform communities to make them as age friendly as possible. Furthermore, the findings from this research will be used to inform future public service strategies. The priorities identified in this Strategy have also been informed by Alliance members' own strategic plans and their available resources.

1.11 Age Friendly Ireland

The AFI programme has proved very successful both nationally and locally. AFI has also published a wide range of reports to support the implementation of the AFCCP across Ireland. These are referenced in appendix 2 and have been used to inform the priorities identified in this Strategy.

1.12 Structure of the Age Friendly Strategy

This Strategy is structured as follows:

Section 1 introduction to the Age Friendly Strategy.

Section 2 presents the demographic trends for ageing internationally and within Ireland.

Section 3 outlines the consultation feedback and key priorities for the county over the next five years.

Section 4 details the implementation, monitoring and evaluation process that will be used to oversee the implementation of this Strategy and subsequent Action Plan.

Section 2

Demographic Profile

2.1 What Do We Mean When We Say Ageing?

Ageing begins from the moment of conception. Ageing is often seen in broad phases such as entering old age, an active later life, and the onset of dependency and frailty. These phases are not age specific and there is an acknowledgment that ageing is an individual experience that differs greatly in terms of people's living needs, interests, circumstances, choices and cultural influences. This is one of the reasons why throughout this Strategy we refer to 'older' rather than 'old' people. For the purpose of this Strategy, older people are generally defined as being people aged 55+.

2.2 International Policy on Ageing

The world's population is getting older, with many of us living longer and healthier lives, thereby experiencing older age very differently from our grandparents' generation. Globally, average life expectancy at birth in 1955 was just 48 years; in 1995 it was 65 years; and in 2025 it will reach 73 years.

By 2060, one in three Europeans is expected to be over 65. Although the change is happening later in Ireland than in other European countries, the number of people in Ireland over 65 is rising. In 2011, 12% of the national population were over 65 or 550,590 people; by 2036 the CSO estimates 20% of the population will be over 65 or 1.1 million people. Consequently, the number of people over 65 will double in 25 years. In the developed world, the very old (age 80+) are the fastest growing population group.

2.3 Irish Context

In Ireland, the trend towards an ageing population is happening later than in many other European countries. However, despite this slower rate of growth, change is happening. The CSO predict that there will be approximately 1.4 million people aged 65 years and over living in Ireland by 2041, three times more than the older population in 2011 which was 535,393 people. The greatest increase is anticipated in the over 80 age group where numbers are expected to quadruple from 110,000 in 2006 to 440,000 in 2041.

Life expectancy is predicted to rise from 76.7 years in males to 86.5 by 2041, while women's life expectancy will increase from 81.5 to 88.2 in the same period. This represents real service provision challenges, to ensure older people have a high quality of life and there are adequate resources to meet this growing demand.

**By 2036
the over 65s
will increase
by 250%**

**By 2041
the over 80s
will increase
by 400%**
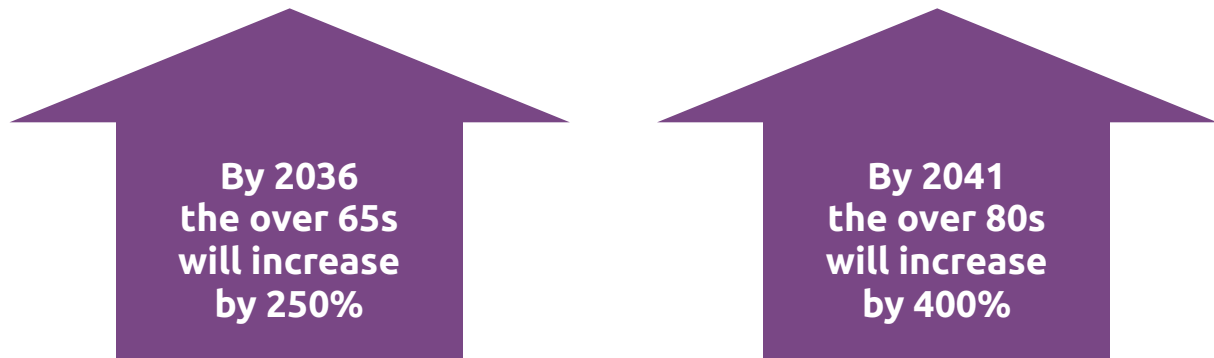
Source: Age Friendly Ireland, 2015

2.4 County Wexford Profile

The 2011, CSO census revealed that the '55 plus' cohort represented 23.1% of the total population living in County Wexford representing 33,569 people. This compares to the average for the state of 21.8% in the '55 plus' cohort. This illustrates to both stakeholders and citizens the need to plan for ageing, through providing adequate service provision for older people in County Wexford, which has a higher percentage than the national average.

The 2011, CSO census also shows the '65 plus' cohort, which represents 12.6% of the total population living in County Wexford, representing 18,367 people. Since 2006, the '65 plus' cohort increased by 3,043 people representing a 20% increase which was the 5th highest increase nationally. The CSO also predict that the '65 plus' age cohort for the South East will increase from 12.5% of the population in 2011 to 22% in 2031. The AIRO report analysed the spatial distribution of older people in the county and it illustrates the highest rates along the south coast and within the urban core of the main towns (figure 4).

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 population projections, that there will be a significant increase in demands for elderly services. This will result in a need to develop new services, to support this ageing population.

2.4.1 New Ross District

In the New Ross District there was 4,247 in the '65 plus' cohort in 2011 representing 13.2% of the total population in this District. The highest rates of elderly population aged 65 plus reside around Wellingtonbridge, the Hook Peninsula and along the south west coast.

2.4.2 Wexford District

In the Wexford District there was 6,012 in the '65 plus' cohort in 2011 representing 13.5% of the total population in this District. The highest rates of elderly population aged 65 plus reside around the south coast and in Castlebridge.

2.4.3 Enniscorthy District

In the Enniscorthy District there was 4,261 in the '65 plus' cohort in 2011 representing 12.4% of the total population in this District.

2.4.4 Gorey District

In the Gorey District there was 3,847 in the '65 plus' cohort in 2011 representing 12.6% of the total population in this District.

Figure 3. The Number of People Aged 65 Plus (2011 census) in Each District
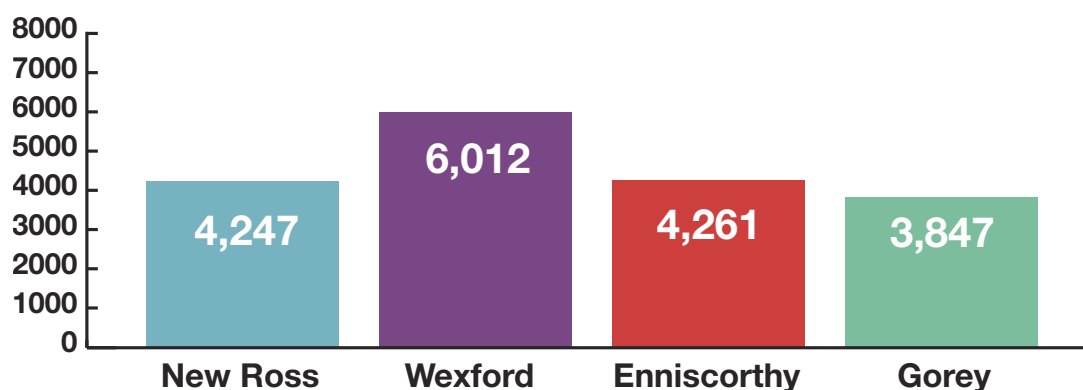
Figure 4. Spatial Distribution of the Aged 65 Plus Population in County Wexford, 2011
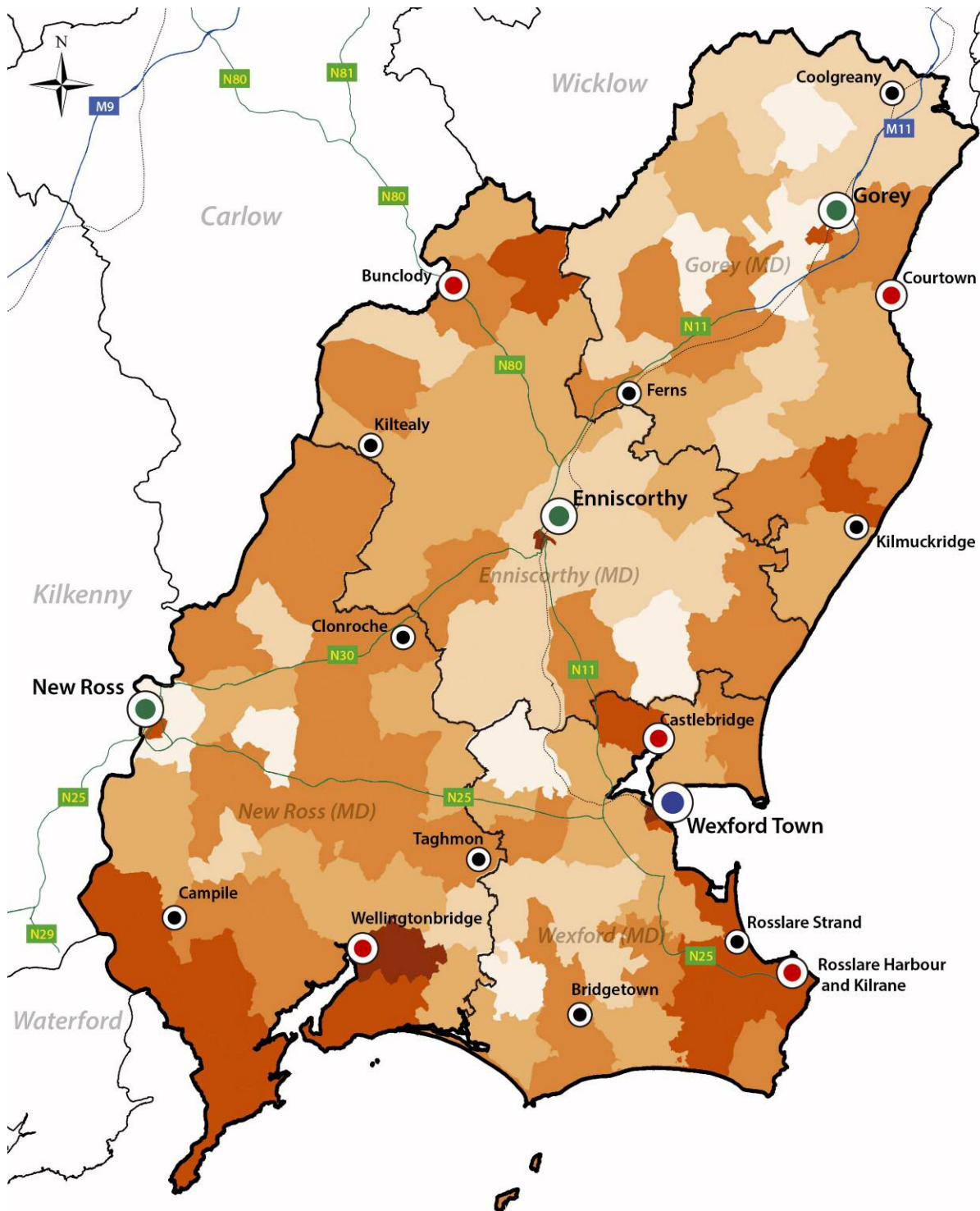
Percentage of Population - aged 65 and over, 2011

% Population - Aged 65 Plus
Electoral Divisions (EDs)
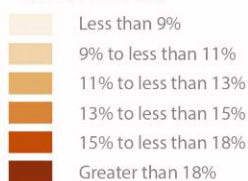
- Less than 9%
- 9% to less than 11%
- 11% to less than 13%
- 13% to less than 15%
- 15% to less than 18%
- Greater than 18%

Settlement Hierarchy

- Hub
- Larger Towns
- District Towns
- Strong Villages

Contextual Layers

- Municipal Districts
- Motorway
- Roads
- Railway

Wexford County Council

AIRO

Ordnance Survey Ireland Licence No. 2014/34/CCMA/WexfordCC
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Data Source: CSO/AIRO
Produced by: All-Island Research Observatory (AIRO)

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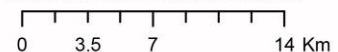
Source All-Island Research Observatory((AIRO) 2015

Section 3

Consultation Findings and HaPAI Survey Results

3.1 Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme

This section of the Strategy will consider the views of the older people who participated in the 27 consultation events that were held around the county in 2015 and 2016. Notes were recorded at each event and this Strategy details the summary of these discussions. A copy of the notes for each community is available and will be important to assist in the implementation of actions to make the villages and towns around County Wexford more age friendly. A separate consultation event was held for the Traveller community.

The HaPAI findings are also detailed in this section of the Strategy, with the key findings summarised for each theme. These statistics give a useful perspective on age friendly issues and how County Wexford compares to other areas nationally. This data will also be invaluable for monitoring results as it provides baseline data which can then be repeated in a number of years' time to evaluate what impact this Strategy has had on the quality of life for older people in County Wexford.

Arising from these consultation events, priority issues have been identified, that are of utmost importance to older people. The priorities discussed by the Traveller community are highlighted separately, if they have specific needs which are different to those already identified.

3.2 Consultation Findings

The nine WHO themes which affect the quality of life for older people are considered next.

Askamore Consultation Event

Theme 1:
Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

The aim is to promote a built and social environment which will be accessible for older people to enjoy. County Wexford has four main towns and a network of smaller towns, villages and rural settlements which support the county's rural population. A model to strive towards is attractive, close knit communities with accessible services and good infrastructure such as footpaths, lighting, pedestrian crossings, convenient parking, seating, parks, walking tracks and public toilets.

Tintern Abbey

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

Older people are generally very positive about their community. Comfortable community buildings, footpaths, walking tracks, parks, designated parking, lighting, cut hedgerows, pedestrian crossings and speed ramps are so appreciated where they are available. Good progress has been made in these areas over the last decade with the creation of new parks, up-graded community halls and enhanced footpaths, lighting and pedestrian crossings, although there is considerable scope to continue these improvements in many communities around the county. Older people think this could be achieved if there is greater collaboration and on-going communication between local communities and government representatives/political representatives.

Footpaths

Older people value well maintained, wide footpaths, pedestrian crossings and cycle lanes where they are available. They would appreciate more safe walkways, extension of the footpath network and creation of more cycle lanes so that they can safely access facilities. In some areas there are broken, obstructed and uneven footpaths which need to be fixed. There is also a need for footpaths to be salted in the winter.

Many older people in rural areas stated that there was a need for more footpaths and lighting in their locality as they are afraid to walk on the roads.

Roads, Street Lighting and Parking

Villages and towns with congested or fast traffic is a problem for older people as it makes them feel unsafe. Measures to slow traffic down in villages/town centres to create a safer environment is important. These include pedestrian crossings, speeds ramps and reduced speed zones. Increasing the length of time for the 'Green Man' at traffic lights is important so that older people have more time to cross the road safely.

Rural roads feel unsafe if there is speeding traffic, potholes, bends, poor drainage or the hedges have not been trimmed. There is a need to ensure that landowners cut back ditches so that walking and driving is safe and potholes are filled quickly so it doesn't cause damage to cars.

Many communities have street lighting but older people feel there is a need for more.

More designated parking spaces for older people required close to the shops.

Benches and Seating

Gorey is age friendly as it is a relatively flat town and easy to get around. Enniscorthy, Wexford and New Ross are hilly and need more seating because of the topography.

Many of the older people interviewed said they would like more benches in the towns and villages. There was a suggestion these could be made by the Men's Shed Groups.
There was a frequent request to have bus shelters with seating at bus stops and also in shops / services where you are likely to encounter long queues.

Public Toilets

The majority of older people stated they would like more public toilets in the villages and towns. There are public toilets in most churchyards which is helpful.

Attractive Towns and Villages

Well maintained, attractive communities with flowers and trees are very much valued. Tidy Town Committees harness volunteer goodwill very effectively and there is a need to set up more citizens groups and give training in how to run them effectively. The Community Employment Scheme (CES), Rural Social Scheme (RSS) and TÚS schemes are very effective and older people suggested a new landscaping initiative such as Wexford in Bloom.

Shops and Services

If there are a range of shops and other services such as a post office, church, mini market, chemist, restaurant, pub, hairdresser, health centre, community hall, car park with wheelchair spaces etc. in the community, this is highly valued.

In rural areas which have lost their local shop, Garda station or post office this has a big negative impact on the community. Some communities reported a need for more GPs and pharmacies.

The Traveller community reported some difficulty in being served in hotels, restaurants and pubs which creates a feeling of embarrassment or shame because of not feeling welcome.

Install more handrails and seating in public places such as shops, churches, post offices etc.

Older people highlighted that it can be difficult for those living outside a village or town to access basic services and facilities.

There is a need to ensure good access to services for those with disabilities as older people reported that some shops, restaurants and public services have steps which are not accessible for those in a wheelchair as disability ramps are needed.

Community Facilities

Comfortable, accessible community facilities with lots of activities taking place is highly valued by older people where these are available. Many communities are well resourced with thriving local groups and modern community halls. However, this is not the case for all areas and in communities where these facilities are lacking there is an urgent need to develop them.

Establish voluntary groups for older people in communities where they do not exist. It can be hard to see neighbours or get to know new ones if there are not social interaction points in the community.

Older people value close communities, relatives nearby and neighbours looking after each other.

There is a problem with dumping and if there was one household charge for water and refuse this would help reduce illegal dumping. Areas which suffer from illegal dumping need to be sorted out. There is also a need for well-designed recycling areas which can be kept clean. If people don't drive it can be difficult to access the Council Recycling Centre.

John F. Kennedy Memorial Park and Arboretum

Parks and Recreation

In communities which have a park, GAA pitches, outdoor gym or walking track this is highly valued. Walking in remote areas e.g. Camolin Woods can make some older people feel unsafe and they prefer more built up areas such as the park in New Ross or Courtown Woods. Older people would like more walking tracks, playgrounds and parks, in communities where they are not currently available, to encourage active living and social interaction. Older people value taking their grandchildren to the park, if it is available.

The development of more community, sporting and leisure activities which are age friendly and fully accessible would be welcomed. If there are gravel surfaces these are not suitable for wheelchair users or walking aids.

In coastal communities, safe walking access to the beaches needs to be developed because at the moment it is often along narrow roads which are unsafe.

Litter, Dog Fowling and Anti-Social Behaviour

Maintaining and creating an attractive, clean environment is important. There is a need to address dumping, potholes in the roads, derelict buildings, dog fowling and anti-social behaviour. WCC to raise awareness of dog fouling and litter issues. Introduce a community litter scheme, install more bins, improve recycling areas, and increase convictions to act as a deterrent.

Older people are often fearful at going outside at night times due to the risk of crime. It was suggested that more lighting and installing CCTV could be helpful.

Stray pets and poor animal welfare is an issue for a few communities.

Vacant Buildings

If there are unoccupied houses or buildings in the community this needs to be addressed because they make the area look rundown and attract unwelcomed attention. Activities for young people could be developed in some of these disused buildings to reduce loitering and vandalism.

Regenerating town centres and preserving old buildings to make them more attractive and to retain the heritage of the county is important to older people.

HaPAI Initial Findings - Access to Services

- As Wexford is a mostly rural area, (56% live in open countryside) many people reported that essential and social/recreational services were not available within a 15 minute walk from their home.

- 22% of all people age 55+ reported great difficulty accessing essential services and this figure was higher for those aged over 70 (25%). This is similar to the average from other counties (21%) in accessing essential services such as postal services, banking, public transport, supermarkets or other shops, local health services and the Gardaí.

- Banking services were reported as not available to 40% of Wexford people and of those who say the services are available 34% had a difficulty accessing them (great or some difficulty). By comparison, the EQLS asked this question in 2012 and only 14% reported a difficulty accessing banking services.

- Including those who say services are not available to them, 16% of Wexford people (55+) had great difficulty accessing social services and this was higher for older people, 24% of people aged over 70. Wexford's percentage is a little higher when compared to the average in other counties (12%). Social services include cinema, theatre or other entertainment; recreational, park or green area; community centre or other venue where you can meet friends; cafés and restaurants; library.

- 36% of people in Wexford say that the Gardaí/Garda station are not available to them. This is higher than the average in other counties, 16% said that the Gardaí or a Garda Station was not available to them. Excluded people who said that the services were not available to them, 20% said that they had great difficulty accessing the Gardaí (similar for both age groups).

- 15% had great difficulty accessing public transport and a further 14% had some difficulty. 14% had great difficulty accessing a park or recreational area and this was higher for those aged over 70 (20%).

- The services that were least likely to be available were cinema or other entertainment (not available for 41%) full banking services (40%) and the public library (38%). A high proportion also say that a recreational park or green area is not available to them (35%).

- Supermarkets and shops are the services most available to Wexford people, 17% say that they were not available (compared to 5% in other counties) while a further 17% had difficulty or great difficulty accessing them (also 17% in other counties).

- Wexford's rural nature may account for some of the difference in availability of services between it and the other counties surveyed. Many participants in other areas say that 'Cinema and other entertainment' 'public libraries' and 'public transport' were not available but at lower percentages (Cinema 26%; Library 19% and transport 17%).

HaPAI Initial Findings - Satisfaction with Aspects of the Built Environment

- In general people in Wexford tend to be more satisfied with the built environment than people in other areas. However, there are still significant numbers of people expressing dissatisfaction.

- The good news is that 94% of people in Wexford (compared to 89% of people in other areas) like living in their neighbourhood a lot.

- 78% are satisfied with the general upkeep and appearance of the area. This is a little lower than in other counties where 84% are satisfied with the upkeep and appearance.

- 80% of people are dissatisfied with the availability of accessible toilets (compared to 64% of people in other areas) and only 12% of people in Wexford are satisfied (23% in other areas).

- 54% of people in Wexford are dissatisfied with the availability of seats or resting places (compared to 40% of people in other counties) and only one third (33%) are satisfied.

- Half (50%) of people in Wexford (compared to 40% of people in other areas) are dissatisfied with the availability or effectiveness of traffic calming measures and only 39% are satisfied (compared to 45% of people in other areas).

- A higher number of people in Wexford are dissatisfied with the number of pedestrian crossings, 42% (compared to 26% in other areas). However the majority are satisfied with the timing of crossings (60% satisfied and 30% dissatisfied).

- Just over half (57%) of Wexford people are satisfied with the quality and continuity of pavements (compared to 60% in other areas).

Wexford Main Street

Theme 1:
Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

GOAL: "To make outdoor spaces and buildings pleasant, clean, accessible and safe for older people, creating walkable communities and age-friendly spaces." (AFI, 2015)

Comfortable community buildings, footpaths, walking tracks, parks, designated parking, lighting, cut hedgerows, pedestrian crossings and speed ramps are so appreciated where they are available. Good progress has been made in these areas over the last decade with the creation of new parks, up-graded community halls, enhanced footpaths, lighting and pedestrian crossings. Although there is considerable scope to continue these improvements in many communities around the county.

KEY PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Village/Town Infrastructure

Develop the physical layout of villages and towns, in conjunction with local people, to identify requirements for footpaths, ramps, pedestrian crossings, seating, lighting, public toilets, bus shelters, convenient older people's parking spaces, cutting back hedges etc. Undertake capital improvement works based on these reviews to ensure people feel safe when out and about. This should be undertaken in line with AFI and the National Disability Authority's (NDA) recommendations for walkability audits. Ongoing communication to be undertaken with the communities involved.

Priority 2. Shops and Services

Promote the need for improved accessibility in shops, restaurants and services. In addition, encourage age friendly supports such as seating and hand rails.

Priority 3. Recreational Facilities

Review the provision of parks, public gardens, walking tracks and recreational areas in the county to ensure they are available and accessible for older people. Prioritise the development of new recreational facilities in areas where these are not adequately provided for. In addition, support the further enhancement of existing recreational facilities to ensure they are age friendly.

Theme 2:
Transportation

The County Development Plan 2013 - 2019 strives to integrate land use and transport to reduce the reliance on car-based travel and this objective is age friendly.

Wexford Local Link

Improvements in the road infrastructure has meant that Dublin is much more accessible now and it is well served by buses from the main towns or villages along the N11 to Dublin. There is a rural bus service provided by Wexford Local Link and there is also a regular train service from Rosslare Harbour to Dublin. However, the closure of the Rosslare to Waterford train line was missed by older people living in the south of the county.

The consultation process identified that transport is a big issue for many older people, particularly if they don't drive. The research identified a need for a more comprehensive public transport service in the county, but there is no one solution as the issues are complex and varied.

W H A T P E O P L E S A I D

At the consultation events the majority of people drove but it was widely recognised that accessibility to facilities and services could be difficult for some people. It was highlighted that isolation can occur due to a lack of transport provision. Older people who can't drive often rely on family and friends for lifts, but this may not be an option for all people, if they are new to an area or don't have a close network of people near to them.

Older people very much value the free travel pass, the Wexford Local Link service and also the frequent bus and train services from Rosslare Harbour to Dublin which are reliable, frequent and accessible. However, it was recognised that in some rural areas there is very limited public transport provision. Older people generally do not like to use public transport in the evenings.

Public Bus Transport

A lack of transport, or not being aware of the public transport options that are available is a huge problem for many older people. There is an urgent need to provide more public transport in rural areas for those who don't drive. High usage needs to be encouraged to ensure routes are viable. Establishment of shuttle buses that connect communities to essential services such as shops, GPs, hospitals, parks, nursing homes, shopping centres or other public transport routes is needed. Part of the solution could be to extend the Wexford Local Link service to support more communities.

In some locations there is good public transport and in other areas there is limited service provision. The communities on the main Wexford - Enniscorthy - Gorey (N11) are well served by Wexford Bus, Bus Éireann and the Ardcavan Bus and people in the rural communities can access these services along the N11 if they drive. However, you can be stuck if you don't live in those areas and don't have access to a car. There is a need for rural public transport services to connect up with the direct public bus services along the N11 to Waterford and Dublin.

There is an interest in a new direct bus service from Rosslare to Dublin via the R741 to support the villages along the coast. Ideally this would run three times a day.

Where there are daily public transport services this is very much appreciated. A Sunday service would also be appreciated.

There are limited bus services to either Carlow or Kilkenny.

It can often be easier to travel to the towns but there is no service provision to the local shops.

Within New Ross there is a need to provide a shuttle bus to assist the older people get from the Quay back up to the top of the town because the roads are so steep. In Wexford town the shuttle bus is good and accepts bus passes. However, it no longer goes into the hospital car park but stops opposite it. A re-evaluation of the changes to the shuttle bus routes and timetable would be important. There are certain parts of Wexford town that the shuttle bus does not cover and people would like to see an increase in the number of bus stops and have them more clearly marked.

Public Train Service

Scope for re-opening the train stations in Camolin and Ferns should be explored. There is also a need for more frequent trains and more suitable times, although there is a perception that services have improved in recent years.

The train service is good, comfortable and convenient but you have to drive to access it if you don't live in the towns. Parking at Ennsicorthy railway station can often be full but Gorey railway parking is better. If there was a bus linking to the railway stations this would be useful.

Access to Medical Appointments

Public transport should connect with hospitals in Dublin and Waterford and the older people value the bus service from Wexford town to Waterford hospital. There is concern about missing the last bus if hospital appointments over-run. In Dublin there are not always connecting buses to the hospitals or they are hard to get. In general public buses do not often serve hospital appointment times and this should be addressed. There is uncertainty regarding bus times to the Dublin hospitals.

There is a need for a volunteer car driving scheme to support those who can't access GPs, hospitals, other services and facilities as this issue is of great concern. This could be an expansion of the volunteer car scheme that is currently available to cancer patients. This could include a central contact person who would have a list of volunteer drivers. Alternatively, a mini bus for the sick, elderly and disabled to help them get to the hospital, doctors and chemist could be provided.

If the HSE could provide more information regarding bus routes to the hospitals this would be useful.

There needs to be joined up thinking between public transport providers and the HSE so that public transport provision meets the needs of older people and older people can attend GPs and hospital appointments.

Social Events and Activities

Older people would like transport arrangements organised to assist with going to local events and participating in groups for older people. Some older people expressed a need for rural bus services to extend into the evening so people can access entertainment in the evenings in the towns. However, many older people stated they are reluctant to use public transport in the evenings and would prefer community car services or carsharing. Currently members of local groups tend to offer lifts to those who can't drive. However, if you are new to an area and don't have a wide social network this could be a problem. A good example is the Irish Countrywomen's Association (ICA) national insurance scheme.

Evening transport arrangements are very much valued.

A community car service would be very advantageous. Setting up a buddy car system could be good so older people don't always have to drive themselves which would also cut down on costs.

Local groups sometimes like to hire minibuses for events but these are often not available locally. If there was subsidised minibuses for events this would encourage people to participate in activities.

Taxi Services

Some communities have local taxi services and others don't. Taxi services are useful but older people can find them expensive and if there was reduced rates for older people this would be appreciated. Alternatively, consideration could be given to a taxi type service, linked to the free travel pass for older people.

Consultation

Some communities have experienced much better public transport services in recent months, due to local consultation which is very much appreciated.

In some communities they have lost their Bus Éireann service which makes it harder for older people and family members to travel.

There needs to be a mechanism for consulting with older people on their transport needs.

Ensure public transport provision is not reduced in communities which will be effected by the new Gorey to Enniscorthy and New Ross bypasses. In communities which will be affected by the bypasses they welcome the possibility of less traffic.

Older people very much value the free travel pass but shuttle buses from villages to towns can be expensive if you don't have the travel pass. In addition, if you are disabled but too young for the travel pass then you are not eligible. It was thought that free travel passes should be available for the disabled members of the community.

There are frequent concerns that public transport services will be reduced or cut completely and older people would like TDs to protect their services.

Bus Stops, Shelters and Seats

There is a lack of bus stops and bus shelters with seating and this needs to be addressed. Where bus stops are centrally located, near the shops, it is appreciated.

Walking distances to bus stops can be an issue for those with poor mobility.

The bus stops outside Wexford Hospital which is very useful but it needs a bus shelter with seats. The bus stop in Enniscorthy needs to be closer to the shops as the town has steep hills. There is also a need for a bus stop opposite the hospital for return visits as the pickup is at the Maldron Hotel which is too far away.

Public Transport Facilities

There is a need for priority seating on public transport. Steps onto the bus shouldn't be too high and should have disability access.

There is a need to provide toilets on some buses travelling longer distances e.g. Dublin and indicate this on the timetable.

Awareness of the Needs of Older People

Sometimes young people don't let older people sit down on the bus and children need to be taught how to respect the elderly at home and in schools.

Ensuring there is passenger assistance on public transport is important, and it was widely acknowledged that bus drivers are very friendly and helpful. Easy access getting on and off buses is required for older people and giving them more time to disembark is necessary. Priority seating on buses would be valued.

Physical and financial accessibility are two barriers preventing older people from accessing transport systems. Not all bus services have either wheelchair access or a 'lowered' step facility.

Some bus drivers use their discretion regarding dropping people off not at official stops which is appreciated.

Having a facility to book a seat on the train is helpful and older people value the priority seating.

Encourage respectful driving and further develop the pilot text service to encourage people to report those parking in illegal wheelchair spaces.

There is a need for speed ramps, more footpaths, pedestrian crossings and good street lighting at junctions to make walking safer for older people.

There are issues around road infrastructure such as potholes, dangerous junctions, inadequate lighting on estates, poor footpaths, litter and dog fowling. Footpaths are often not suitable for wheelchair users (see theme 1).

Traffic management in areas near schools can be a problem.

Older people find booking public transport online difficult e.g. airport car parks. If payments could be made through services such as the post office this would be advantageous.

Wexford Railway Station

Timetables and Publicity

Clear timetable information, better publicity and signage is essential so that more people use these services. Displaying public transport information in post offices and local shops is effective. Some people feel that bus timetables are confusing and they should be clearer and specific to their area so that they are easier to read. These timetables should also show how they link with other transport providers such as the train services and buses from Wexford town to Dublin and Waterford. In addition, there is a need for bus timetables to be displayed at bus stops. If service providers could collaborate to address these issues it would be appreciated.

There is a need to ensure community groups share information about public transport options in their locality to encourage people living in rural areas to use public transport.

Talk to people who are not using public transport and get an understanding of what is restricting their usage.

The phone line to access timetable information is good and timetables are easily accessible from the internet.

Cost and Difficulty of Parking

Parking needs to be accessible and affordable and some older people stated that they find it expensive to run a car and pay for parking. If there were rural bus services this would help. Parking in the villages is not generally a problem.

Hospital parking is expensive and older people are more likely to require these facilities on a regular basis. Older people would like cheaper hospital parking and allocated spaces near the hospital entrance.

People would like more age friendly parking at GPs, shops, services and in town.

Rural Transport

HaPAI Initial Findings - Transportation

- The majority (78%) of the under 70s are current drivers (who drove themselves in the past week), however this is lower for those aged 70+ (67%). This is similar to other counties (79% and 59%).

- For those who have not driven in the past week 33% say that they have problems with transport 'most or all of the time' (32% in other areas). For the full sample (most of whom are drivers), smaller numbers say that lack of transport causes difficulties most or all of the time (20%).

- 62% rated public transport in their locality as poor or very poor (compared to 42% in other survey areas). When we looked at people who had used public transport in the previous week only 26% rated it poor or very poor. Nationally when TILDA asked this question in 2011, 35% of people rated transport in their area as poor or very poor.

- 79% of people aged 55+ in Wexford (compared to 81% in other areas) report that a lack of transport rarely or never prevents them from doing essential tasks. However, this is lower for those aged 70+ (73%). However, 10% of people had difficulty doing essential tasks because of transport most or all of the time and 14% of people over 70 had such problems.

- These figures are similar for attendance at health and social care appointments. 15% of over 70s have difficulty caused by transport (compared to 11% in other areas) most or all of the time.

New Ross Consultation Event

Theme 2:
Transportation

GOAL: "To promote safe, accessible, reliable and comfortable transport services for older people." (AFI, 2015)

At the consultation events the majority of people had access to a car but it was widely recognised that accessibility to facilities and services is difficult if you cannot drive. It would be advantageous if all of the major transport providers met to consider the recommendations in this Age Friendly Strategy in order to develop their unified and collaborative approach to these issues.

KEY PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Public Transport Connectivity

Improve public transport in rural areas which connects to the public transport network in the main villages and towns in the county, along with associated infrastructure such as bus shelters with seating designated for older people.

Priority 2. Community Transport Provision

Develop a range of local, county and national transport options to facilitate people getting to:
- Medical Appointments
- Shops and Services
- Social Activities

Good community models frequently cited include volunteer car schemes, Cancer Care Ireland, carsharing, car buddy project and Wexford Local Link.

Priority 3. Promotion, Marketing and Clear Communication

Better promotion of public transport through clearer timetables and increased publicity.

Theme 3:
Housing

The County Development Plan 2013 - 2019 states that the availability of quality, safe, affordable and well located housing, which is suited to the needs of the user, is fundamental to the quality of life of individuals and this is a core objective of WCC.

This theme will consider older people's views on their housing conditions as well as community supports that may assist a person to remain living in their own home for as long as possible.

W H A T   P E O P L E   S A I D

Older people identified that they have three tiers of need. Initially, there is the independent phase, followed by basic care and if required, leading to full time care. Older people would like to be given the choice to either move to a nursing home or stay in their own home with supports, where possible.

The overwhelming majority of people stated they would like to stay in their own homes if possible, but recognised that circumstances can change. This is because they have strong emotional ties to their locality and are reluctant to move away.

Older people stated that if they had to move out of their home, they would like to remain located within their community in sheltered accommodation, if it was possible. Older people value close neighbours, good community spirit and lots of local groups and activities. The following priorities were identified as important to ensure people can remain in their homes as long as possible.

Grantstown Daycare Centre

Grants for Home Adaptations

In some communities it was felt that there is a good supply of well-built houses suitable for older people. However, as people become frailer, assistance is needed so that people can adapt their home to suit their needs. Examples include safety hand-rails, door chains, stair lifts, ramps, outside lights, downstairs bathrooms and walk in showers.

Increased access to grants to modernise homes is required to ensure the home is suitable for the needs of the older person. Older people would like assistance with completing these application forms and they identify the need for an emergency programme so that the work can be undertaken immediately if required.

Older people would like leaflets and advice on recommended modifications to the home. There is also a need to publicise the grants and supports that are available for home improvements. These could be promoted at community events. The Traveller community have a heightened need for more advice and support to assist with home improvement works.

Home Maintenance and Repairs

People take pride in their homes and are generally good at maintaining and painting them. However, there is a recognition that as you age you need greater help with maintaining the house and garden.

Well-built modern housing, which is energy efficient, and age friendly is appreciated. However, many people live in older houses which are in need of energy efficiency measures but some people were unaware of the WARM project and feel it could be more widely promoted.

Older people value the 'Little Jobs' programme delivered by WLD and think this should be more widely publicised and agree that it represents value for money. There was uncertainty around the range of jobs that can be undertaken and eligibility. Older people would like this service expanded, as long as it does not undermine the trades sector.

Many older people stated that there was a real need for home repair / maintenance services to assist with cleaning, heavy lifting, garden tasks, changing light bulbs etc. In some instances neighbours help out as home maintenance and repairs can be very expensive. A trusted tradesman scheme would be very much welcomed based on a database of tradesmen that are trusted and good value. This could stimulate employment in the trades sector. Other ideas included using the Community Employment Scheme or a volunteer 'home maintenance' initiative.

Health Care Supports

Healthcare support in the home is very limited. If there is no GP or access to a district nurse in the community this can represent a problem for older people. This concern is accentuated for people living in remote rural areas who fear about the inaccessibility of health services. To address this concern, older people feel there is a need to have greater access to the public health nurse and health care centres in their area.

Home help is invaluable and some older people commented that the home help scheme is underfunded and more hours for carers to support older people living in their own homes is needed. In addition there needs to be a home respite initiative for people who are unfit to be on their own straight after hospital as some people reported that older people have to go into a nursing home because there is inadequate support at home, whilst they recover.

There is a need for more affordable nursing homes in Wexford.

Daycare Centres

Older people value the range of services delivered by daycare centres including meals, hygiene, laundry, hairdressing, physiotherapist and chiropody etc. Older people would like daycare centres in their community and identified a need for more of these in the county.

Sheltered Housing

Older people would consider living in affordable, attractive, sheltered housing if it is located in their area. If it has access to a community care nurse and group alarm scheme this is very beneficial. They would like to see this further developed so that they wouldn't have to move out of the area away from their family and friends. It was suggested that surveys could be used to assess need and Councillors could play a role in helping the community develop appropriate housing needs for their locality.

Examples of best practice were highlighted including the sheltered housing in Kilanerin; the Grantstown voluntary housing scheme and daycare centre; community centre and housing initiative in Carnew; and the McMurrough Court social housing scheme in New Ross. There was also interest in retirement villages which are centrally located in a town.

It is widely acknowledged that there is a need for more sheltered housing for older people and that the waiting list is too long for accessing sheltered accommodation, bungalows and wheelchair friendly houses. These houses need to be energy efficient. The Traveller community would like sheltered housing specific to their needs.

Community Services

Older people value being able to meet neighbours within their own community and really appreciate neighbours and relatives calling into them in the home. Initiatives to assist with getting to know your neighbour would be great such as a home friendly (befriending service) for lonely, older people and Meals on Wheels. Some older people also commented on a divide between those who have always lived in the area in contrast to those who have moved into the area.

Older people value GPs, clinics, pharmacies, hair dressers and chiropodists in rural areas. There is a need to establish more medical centres and or clinics in rural areas or provide transport supports to nearby facilities. If there was a good neighbourhood scheme to assist with transport this would be useful, especially in areas where there are no local shops or limited public transport.

Older people appreciate activities in local community centres but it can be difficult to find an accessible venue as they can be booked up with other events. Lifts need to be installed in community centres with upstairs facilities. In communities without a community centre, this should be a priority, as it would benefit all sectors of society.

There needs to be better communication on services, Community Alert Scheme, transport and public health facilities. In a few communities there are family resource centres which assists in completing forms, providing Meals on Wheels etc. and these are invaluable. If the Citizens Advice Bureau could offer a mobile service this would be useful. Hold information sessions for residents to identify the issues that are affecting them and how these can be dealt with.

There is a need for better public transport so older people can access the services they need.

Social Housing

The role of WCC in providing social housing was discussed by many older people. There was positive feedback in terms of adapting the home to meet the needs of the elderly although it was felt that additional initiatives could be beneficial such as providing well designed and landscaped housing estates; more rapid response to implementing housing adaptations; developing more social housing, particularly in communities which are well served by public transport and other services; increase communication between WCC and their tenants to see if home improvements are required; and purchasing vacant houses and using it for social housing.

Many older Travellers live in Local Authority houses. There is a need to make sure they live in age appropriate housing specific to their needs.

In some communities there is a good supply of housing that is within walking distance of the village. Empty houses and ghost estates are an eyesore within some villages.

Housing Costs

Rent and house prices are increasingly making it more difficult to buy and the rent supplement is not sufficient for current rental prices. There is a shortage of affordable homes to rent on a long term basis and there is a need for affordable housing schemes.

There is a need for additional housing for people of all ages. Older people are seeing that their grown up children are experiencing difficulties finding affordable houses to rent or buy in their local community and are being forced to live away from them or are having to live back with their parents. Planning permission needs to be made easier for extending or adapting houses if there are changes to mobility, or if additional family members move in.

Older people can find it increasingly difficult to financially upkeep their homes with all of the new charges being introduced such as the household charge, water charges and the possible elimination of the free TV licence for older people. Older people are having increasing concerns over the rising costs of running a house and car.

Safety in the Home

Anti-social behaviour is creeping into rural areas with some people having little regard for the community or environment and an increased Gardaí presence would make older people feel safer in their homes.

There is a concern that you don't know your own neighbour and this is particularly true in communities where there are a lot of holiday homes. Consider introducing a phone 'Buddy System' so no-one feels isolated. In smaller, less transient communities older people tend to know their neighbours.

The houses in rural areas are typically quite isolated which makes people more vulnerable if they have a fall or if there is a crime incident. Older people can also feel vulnerable and isolated living on housing estates without adequate street lighting.

Promote actions to make sure people feel safe in their home including information and support for installing home/personal alarms, external lights and the Community Alert or Neighbourhood Watch scheme. However, there are concerns that the personal alarms don't work if there is no land line and some participants only have a mobile service in their home. The broadband service and mobile phone coverage can also be quite patchy in some locations.

HaPAI Initial Findings - Housing

- More than one fifth (22%) of people in Wexford have some difficulty with facilities in their homes - this is defined as shortage of space, home too big, indoor flushing toilet, bath/shower, downstairs toilet, outside space.

- 12% of people in Wexford aged 55+ had difficulty keeping their house adequately warm in the last 12 months (the same as other counties surveyed but significantly higher than the EQLS (2012) average of 5%).

- The cost of upkeep was a problem for 35% of Wexford people (compared to 25% of the other areas who answered yes or to some extent).

- Among the over 55s very small numbers (3%) reported that their home does not have a downstairs toilet or bathroom facilities.

- Just over one in 10 of the over 55s (13%) have problems with housing conditions. The most frequently reported problem is damp or leaks in walls or roof.

- More than a quarter of those aged 70+ (40%) answered 'yes' or 'to some extent' to the question about having difficulty carrying out maintenance or upkeep. This is higher than other areas where 34% have some difficulty with carrying out maintenance/upkeep themselves.

- When asked about their willingness to move home if they were no longer able to remain in their homes, a majority were negative about the various options that involved moving from their home.

- Participants were most positive about adapting their current home to their needs (71% of the over 55s in Wexford compared to 77% in other areas) but 22% were negative about this option.

The level of positivity toward other housing options was lower;

- Only 23% of the 55 - 69 age group and 20% of the over 70s were positive about moving to an adapted type of housing; (compared to 35% of 55 - 69s and 26% of over 70's in other areas).

- People in Wexford were also very negative about the other options; 65% were negative about living with other older people (compared to 62% elsewhere).

- 85% were negative and 8% positive about moving in with a relative (compared to 81% negative and 9% positive in other areas).

- 81% were negative and only 10% were positive about moving to a nursing home (compared to 79% negative and 10% positive in other areas).

St Louis Daycare Centre

Theme 3:
Housing

GOAL: "To provide a more seamless and appropriate continuum of housing choices and options for older people." (AFI, 2015)

There was an overwhelming desire by older people to remain in their own home as long as possible. Older people stated that if they had to move out of their home, they would like to remain within their community in sheltered accommodation, if it was possible.

The following priorities were identified as important to ensure this goal is achieved.

KEY PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Improved Access to Home Modification Grants

Assistance to access home modification grants. Promote a fast track system, for the house modification grants, to facilitate emergency cases. Provide a support service to assist people with the completion of these forms and to advise on appropriate house modifications.

Priority 2. House Repairs and Trustworthy Trade Service

Older people frequently stated they need assistance with cutting grass, changing light bulbs, cleaning gutters and minor house repairs. Establish a comprehensive, affordable, trustworthy, home repair, odd job and maintenance team which has been Garda vetted, thereby stimulating local employment opportunities in the trade sector.

An extension of the 'Little Jobs' initiative would be welcomed in conjunction with greater publicity of this initiative and the WARM Programme.

Priority 3. Supported Housing Options (Modified Homes, Sheltered Housing etc.)

In most parts of County Wexford there is a lack of options for older people, other than their own home or a nursing home. Older people feel there is a need to provide more housing options with additional supports, in their own community such as sheltered housing.

Theme 4:
Social Participation

The County Development Plan 2013 - 2019 recognises that the provision and access to a range of services and facilities can affect the quality of life in an area. It also fosters a sense of place and belonging and creates opportunities for interaction between new and existing members of the community. Overwhelmingly, the older people that participated in this consultation exercise expressed a strong bond with their community. However, this research did illustrate significantly different levels of social interaction between communities in County Wexford. Some areas have a wide range of thriving older people's groups and a diverse mix of activities and events. In contrast, in other areas there could be very few community groups and a low level of social interaction amongst older people. This theme will consider older people's views on social interaction and their suggestions for how this could be improved.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

Older people value close knit villages and towns with modern, well-equipped community centres, a good sense of community, interaction between the young and the old, co-operation between different community groups and a wide range of local groups and activities. However, there was a general perception that good neighbourliness has decreased as people don't have enough time to get to know their neighbours. Older people identified the need to set up more events to encourage more people to participate and to reinvigorate the community spirit. There is also a need to encourage new people to get involved so that they become integrated in the community.

It was widely agreed that it is very important to stay an active member of the community as this supports personal well-being, the informal sharing of information and community integration.

Oulart Active Retired

Social Events

The types of groups that are frequently found in communities include active retirement groups, bowling, ICA, Men's Sheds, drama, crafts, sewing, gardening, set dancing, book clubs, art, card evenings, historic society, tea dances etc. However, in some communities there is a need for more activities such as breakfast or lunch clubs, arts/crafts, and more physical activities that are cognisant of their ability. It is advantageous to hold a range of events and activities to cater for all interest types.

The consultation events did reveal that this is not the case for all communities as some have few regular activities for older people. In these locations, older people would like more social groups and outings to increase interaction amongst all sectors of society and thereby reducing the risk of isolation. Local events are a lifeline for older people.

The Traveller community do not typically engage in organised older people's groups. This maybe because they feel they might not be welcome or it is not accessible to them. They also commented on a lack of information and a lack of confidence. The older Traveller community would like something developed for them to do in their locality.

Isolation can also be an issue for those who live outside the villages unless they have family or friends to transport them. Carsharing should be encouraged where possible. Encourage venues to organise complementary buses so that people can access events. Preferred times for activities in the winter months are during the day. (See theme 2).

Older people stated that in some instances it can be difficult to get people to come to activities that are arranged. This can be because they are held in the evenings, when some older people don't like to leave their home; if they are new people who have moved into the area; insufficient publicity and awareness; or people's lives have become too busy. It is important to provide social events in each locality because older people find accessing events in other locations more difficult due to cost and accessibility.

The WCC amenity grant is very important to stimulate new activities and events in the community and there is a need to increase this further. A goal for life is a good programme and supports a wide range of activities that groups would like to organise. Communities would like more funding to support a greater range of activities and events within their locality.

Mass is an important social occasion for some older people and serving tea/coffee after Mass could help to make it more of a social event for everyone.

Concerns over men's participation led to a call for organisations and community groups to develop more projects which encourage men to be more active in the community.

Ensure all communities of size, have an accessible community centre, where activities can be held. In locations where there is no community centre, older people would like discussions, to assess where and how a community centre could be developed.

Community Capacity

Encourage collaboration between all community groups within a village/ town as this can work very effectively. Encourage the younger people and more men to become involved.

Organise shared activities for a number of neighbouring communities to increase networking.

It would be helpful to deliver training programmes to build capacity in how to set up community activities and events. There is interest in being involved but guidance and support is required. This training could also cover the recruitment of volunteers and local leadership skills.

Accessibility

Some community halls have age friendly issues, such as upstairs rooms which can only be accessed via stairs, poor heating, or they are too small for purpose. Community halls can also be fully booked during the day thus reducing the potential for use by older people. Investment in some community halls is required to ensure they are age friendly.

In the towns it was widely acknowledged that there was a good range of accessible venues, events and activities for older people and this was very much appreciated.

Older people recognised that if you did not drive social activities are much harder to access. Although in some areas there are transport options for older people which supports them being able to attend social activities and events. Family members who live locally can also help greatly. It was suggested that volunteer car schemes, carsharing or a car buddy project would help people access events.

In villages where there are pot holes and insufficient drainage, this makes it difficult for older people to get around with crutches, sticks and wheelchairs.

Ensure those who live outside the villages and towns are able to access events and facilities. In many communities people offer carsharing to facilitate those who don't drive.

Ensure there are local transport arrangements so people can actively participate in activities, visit parks or other facilities.

Services

The towns have a wide range of accessible services and people enjoy the cinema, theatre, swimming pool, library, working in charity shops, church activities etc. However, there is some concern over a lack of wheelchair access into some shops and restaurants and the steep hills can be difficult for some people.

In some villages there are a good range of activities and local shops although additional services would be welcome such as a small library, butchers, etc. However, in contrast some communities have lost the local shop and post office and there are no local services. This is a big cause for concern for those who don't drive. If a solution could be found to address this issue it would be very much welcomed. Mobile or community shops could be invaluable in areas where there is no local shop.

Recreation and Fitness

Local parks and walking tracks are appreciated by older people, where they are available. In communities which don't have recreational areas there is an urgent need to address this issue through the development of walking tracks, parks and playgrounds. Forest walks can make older people fearful if they are on their own and the formation of local walking groups can address this issue. (See theme 1).

Encourage active participation in Tidy Towns Groups to foster a sense of local pride. Older people value parks and recreational places to relax and socialise.

Ensure there are exercise and fitness programmes available although some older people stated that they are not so keen on activities that involve physical activity. Sporting organisations such as the GAA could introduce activities that would involve the older person.

Older people would appreciate reduced rates in hotels for gym facilities.

New Ross Town Park Gym Equipment

Daycare Centres

The daycare centres play an invaluable role in providing social activities and they are serviced by buses to support people who are unable to drive. There is an interest in the development of daycare centres in communities where they do not exist.

Inter-generational Activities

Older people expressed an interest in inter-generational projects between the youth and themselves and some people suggested linking with primary schools. This is successfully taking place in a few areas as older people are invited into the primary school for computer classes or reading with children and this works well.

Distribute a survey to find out what the young and old would like to do in their community.

Communication

Social events and activities need to be well publicised to ensure everyone is aware of these events. Often it is the same people continually getting involved and older people feel responsible for speaking to people and welcoming and encouraging others to join in local activities. Adult children could be engaged to encourage their parents to be active in the community.

Poor dissemination of information is seen as a barrier restricting participation and the better publicity of social events is needed. Using the local newspaper, notice boards, group texts, posters, parish newsletters, the internet and South East Radio is seen as very important. Although it was widely acknowledged that word of mouth or calling into people is the most effective way of keeping people informed about what is going on in their community. There needs to be a better mechanism for sharing information - what facilities are available and what's on in the area.

If Government Agencies could assist with awareness programmes and disseminating information on events that would be advantageous.

The mobile library service is excellent and allows older people to interact with the librarian and others.

Education and Training

The opportunity for lifelong learning is very important to participants, especially around technology which is essential to keep people fully engaged in our rapidly evolving society. Many older people commented on the libraries and the full range of activities that they offer including computer classes.

Community groups like to organise local training classes and if there was a database of tutors who deliver activities in the county this could be very useful.

Isolation

In some communities there is a general perception that older people are not generally isolated or lonely in their area. However, this contrasts to smaller, more remote rural villages which have lost their shop and have no pub or post office and feel that the heart has been removed from their area. Isolation and loneliness is also an issue in the urban areas.

There is a need for funding and new initiatives which would identify these individuals and encourage them to become involved in social activities or provide them with supports to reduce their loneliness. Outreach services were recommended as a possible solution as was 'meet your neighbour' events. Older people think it is really important to encourage people to get out and socially integrate.

In areas where there are a large number of holiday homes, develop activities to encourage these people to get involved with the local community.

Ramsgrange Consultation Event

HaPAI Initial findings - Social Participation

- Social participation in Wexford is slightly lower than the national average - 28% participate in a community group on a weekly basis and 12% of people participate at least once a month but not weekly. In other counties in this survey 33% participate weekly and 16% participate at least once a month.

- 72% people aged over 55 meet socially with friends, relatives or colleagues at least once a week and 19% meet socially more than once a month. This is similar to other areas, 67% at least weekly and 24% at least monthly.

- Although only 5% of people in Wexford (same as in other areas) report feeling lonely 'most of the time', this was higher among people aged 70+ at 9% (8% elsewhere).

- A further 21% of people report feeling lonely 'some of the time' and again this was higher for people aged over 70 (24% in Wexford and 26% in other areas).

- The most frequently reported reason for not taking part in social activities was that the social activities available do not interest them. This was reported by more than one third of the over 55s (34%) and 9% said they couldn't get to the venues where social activities were taking place.

Pipe Band

Theme 4: Social Participation

GOAL: "To provide opportunities for older people to stay socially connected and to play an active part in social networks." (AFI, 2015)

There are significantly different levels of social interaction between communities in County Wexford. Some areas have a wide range of thriving older people's groups and a diverse mix of activities and events. In contrast, in other areas there could be very few community groups and a low level of social interaction amongst older people.

KEY PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Community Resources

Establish a database of community facilities and assess how suitable they are for older people. Arising from this assessment, support and encourage new or enhanced community hall facilities.

Priority 2. Activities and Events

Establish a database of groups for older people in the county to identify gaps and support registration with the Public Participation Network (PPN). Carry out a programme to establish new groups and an additional range of diverse activities in communities with existing social events. To ensure these are a success they would need to be well publicised in parish newsletters, the local newspaper, radio, PPN network and most importantly through word of mouth. Carsharing should be promoted to ensure those without transport can attend.

In addition, there is a need to support sectors of society that typically are less likely to engage in social activities. This includes men and diverse groups such as Travellers, Roma, Polish and the LGBTI community. Activities that are targeted at these groups and tailored to suit their interests is important.

Priority 3. Network of Community Cafés

Create a network of community cafés across the county in existing community facilities such as parish centres or community halls. These facilities would provide a social outlet for older people and could incorporate guest speakers, covering a range of topics such as safety, grants, entitlements, health, WCC/WLD services etc.

Theme 5:
Respect and Social Inclusion

This theme considers how valued, active and engaged people feel in their community. The County Development Plan 2013 - 2019 supports social inclusion and seeks to ensure the fair and equitable access to infrastructure services for all members of the community. In general, older people are very happy living within their local community and very much value good neighbours and a wide range of local groups and activities that they can get involved with.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

The majority of older people feel respected and treated with dignity by all generations. They also have a positive experience with the health professionals; people working in Government Agencies; and local businesses. Many older people expressed a desire to mix more with all members of their community, particularly the young through the development of more inter-generational activities.

There are concerns that some people experience isolation and loneliness and it was recognised that active community networks help to ensure older people feel included in society. In some areas there are lots of activities and in other locations there are very few and this is an issue to address. It is important to have local transport options so that people are able to participate in events and activities.

Traveller Community Consultation Event

Community Spirit

Older people are generally very content in their community and value good neighbours who call into them or bring them to the hospital or doctors when required.

It is recognised that everyone has a responsibility to call on neighbours. Older people would like to see initiatives that develop closer links with their neighbours - possibly a visiting committee.

In some communities there are a wide range of activities and social events, which is very much valued by older people as regular events and day trips, help people to get involved within their local area. The challenge is to replicate this for all communities. The need for more volunteers was recognised and more training or advice here is required.

Older people value local community groups which allows them to make decisions and act as advisors within their area e.g. ICA or Tidy Towns. It also serves as a means for older people to be visible in the community.

It was acknowledged that more is needed to be done to get to know new people who have moved into the area. This could be achieved through organising meet and greet events for new members of the community or encouraging new members to join local groups. There is an opportunity for the Church to support new families.

There is a need for social housing so that older people can remain within their community.

Ensure community facilities are accessible for all users and encourage a wide range of events and services. Conduct surveys to see what people are interested in and to understand why people don't engage with activities.

Older people would like access to more amenities such as daycare centres, drop-in centres, Meals on Wheels, coffee mornings, card drives, counselling services, and social outings to combat loneliness. There is also a need for a good bus services and accessible doctor/health services.

Kilmore Consultation Event

Inter-generational Involvement

Older people generally feel there is a positive relationship with younger people but in some areas older people feel disconnected from the youth in the community. If there was shared activities with school children this would be beneficial as they would have a reason to mix. The young could teach IT skills to the older generation and in return the older members of the community could teach crafts and other skills to young people. This would ensure that older people become valued contributors to passing on skills, especially trades which are being lost. Older people thought they would enjoy these volunteering opportunities and would find it rewarding.

There is a need to improve young people's attitudes towards older people through educational and attitudinal awareness initiatives in the schools. They like the Grandparents Day in the National School.

Older people would like training in computer skills. This could be undertaken by transition year students in the locality. A daycare centre had transition year students volunteering with them and this worked well and the young people were friendly and showed respect for the elderly.

Communication

Older people feel they often didn't know their rights and they would like information events to gain a fuller understanding of their entitlements. Older people feel they should be encouraged to voice their concerns and be open about issues that affect them through regular consultation events.

There is a need for better communication within communities through notice boards, newsletters etc. so everyone is kept informed.

There is a need for improved broadband services and IT/mobile phone training so that older people can keep themselves informed and connect with other people using email or skype.

Older people can find electronic banking and mobile phones daunting and would value more personal support in these areas.

Older people feel that automated telephone services needs improving and form filling is difficult.

Respect

Older people feel their views are valued. In most instances, older people think that they are respected by all members of the community, however there were a few examples where they were dealt with disrespectfully but they noticed this applied to all age groups and not just themselves. Teaching respect and social inclusion in the schools would be valued.

The Traveller community often feel a lack of respect when they try to access facilities such as hotels, restaurants, shops and supermarkets. This lack of respect is heightened at important family events such as funerals and weddings. To combat this issue, the Traveller community would like more support from local resource workers.

Some older people remarked that they are not always respected on the road and motorists can be driving too fast. Speeding also makes older people fearful of going out for walks. There should be a public education campaign to profile older people's difficulty with mobility, hearing, eye sight, disabilities etc.
Older people feel there can be a stigma attached to attending daycare centres.

Older people feel the public image of aging, conveyed through the media, is generally positive and they see themselves as a value to society. Introduce a national media campaign on respect and courtesy towards older people so there is a greater awareness of their needs.

Training people in respect, social inclusion and how to get new things initiated in an area would be appreciated.

Isolation

Explore initiatives that tackle social isolation as there are large numbers of invisible, lonely, isolated older people who do not get out and about.

The family connection is very important to older people and they recognise that isolation can occur if they live some distance away.

If groups for older people stop within the community, then older people lose a valuable source of social interaction.

HaPAI Initial findings - Respect and Social Inclusion

The level of volunteering in Wexford is slightly less than in other areas;

- In Wexford just over one quarter of people aged 55 - 69 (27%) volunteer at least once a month (33% in other counties) and 17% of them volunteer at least once a week (compared to 20% in other areas).

- The figures are higher for those aged 70+ (23% compared to 20% in other areas) of people who volunteer at least once a month and 17% (compared to 12%) who volunteer at least once a week.

- A majority of people are satisfied with the time they spend volunteering (82%) and 71% are satisfied with the range of volunteering opportunities in their area. However, 23% say they don't know if they are satisfied with the range of volunteering opportunities.

- While the majority have never personally experienced negative attitudes or behaviour towards them as an older person, more than one in ten (12%) of people aged 55+ in Wexford have, similar to other areas (13%). Overall, the most common sources of negative attitudes were younger people (4.8%), people in the community (4%), those providing services in the financial sector (4%) and health professionals providing services (4.4%).

- In other areas the percentage experiencing negative treatment from young people was higher (6%).

Cleariestown Community Hall

Theme 5:
Respect and Social Inclusion

GOAL: "To combat stereotypes, myths and negative views on ageing and prevent prejudice and discrimination against older people." (AFI, 2015)

In general, older people feel they are treated with respect by public and private organisations. They are also generally very happy living within their local area and very much value close knit communities. However, there is a strong desire to foster a greater level of understanding between the young and old; better integration of new comers; and more proactive initiatives to reach out to those who are isolated and vulnerable.

The Traveller community stated that the level of respect between them and the settled community has improved although they feel there is still a way to go. Initiatives to build mutual respect between all members of society need to be implemented.

KEY PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Integration

Develop a range of initiatives that support community integration. This is particularly important in communities which have expanded rapidly in recent years, areas where there are holiday homes, or areas which lack community facilities or groups for older people.

Older people would like initiatives that foster integration between the old and the young. Examples include oral history, music, the young teaching IT skills to the older community and in return older people teaching crafts and different skills to young people. Opportunities to link with national and secondary (transition year) students to be explored. This initiative would be undertaken in collaboration with Comhairle na nÓg.

Priority 2. Social Inclusion

Promote the establishment of befriending visits to isolated, frail and vulnerable older people. Consider supporting the formation of groups specifically tasked with assisting those who are vulnerable and isolated. The aim would be to encourage people to participate in local activities and events and to ensure people are fully informed about what is going on and what services are available within their community.

Priority 3. Diverse Communities

Combat stereotyping and discrimination. There is a need to continually engage with all diverse groups to ensure their voice is heard and their needs are addressed.

Theme 6:
Civic Participation and Employment

Economic development is vital to maintaining strong communities and towns within the county. Older people can play a significant role with their skills and wealth of knowledge accumulated over many years in the workplace.

Taghmon Consultation Event

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

Older people like to volunteer and participate within their local community. Communities with a large number of groups for older people, creates well connected neighbourhoods, and supports the informal sharing of information amongst everyone living in the area. Older people recognise they can make a valued contribution to the community and initiatives should be developed to use the skills sets of older people. In many communities, there was recognition that older people are generally well served by society.

Employment

Most older people have retired but it was thought that if older people are employed they offer the benefit of giving the experience of life to their job. Older people like the flexibility to remain on in employment after 65 years of age - possibly with reduced hours. It was felt that retirement age should be a choice for individuals rather than compulsory. Most felt there were no employment opportunities available for them. The Traveller community felt this issue was not of relevance to them due to their limited education and employment history.

Older people commented on the general state of the economy and felt there is a need to increase the opportunities for science, industry and technology in the county. There is also a need to upskill trainees so that they are work ready. Concern was expressed over the high unemployment levels in some areas, particularly among men.

Training

Older people expressed an interest in continuing to develop their skills, particularly in the area of new technologies so that they can stay in touch with the civic/public world. Older people would like one to one training during the day, in their local area. The course must be designed to match the skills level of the participant. IT training is most popular. Older people expressed a preference for training courses targeted at retired people as they could feel apprehensive in a class with younger people.

The opportunity to develop training and the passing of skills between the old and the young would be valued as this would create active links between all cross-sections of the community.

The Community Employment Scheme is available within many communities which is helpful.

Volunteering

Many older people enjoy participating in society in a volunteering capacity and feel that it contributes towards their community. Examples of voluntary organisations include sporting organisations, Men's Sheds, ICA, Church, St. Vincent de Paul, Meals on Wheels, drama, musical society etc. However, there can be a shortage of people willing to volunteer in a community and it is often left to the same people.

Some older people stated that there can be a lack of information on volunteering opportunities in the community and communication can be poor. This restricts the number of people who get involved. The Church newsletter plays a vital role in disseminating information in communities but not everyone goes to Church and so misses out on this newsletter. It was recognised that some people do not know how to get involved and would benefit from voluntary organisations becoming more proactive in recruiting retired people.

The range of volunteering opportunities can be good in some localities but limited in others. Transport availability can restrict people's ability to participate in volunteering. Some people feel they are either too busy or not willing to invest time in volunteering. Older people can feel that posts in voluntary work are taken up by better educated people which makes others feel excluded.

Older people think more should be done to encourage young and middle aged people to give freely of their time so that older people can get to know them and it is seen as a worthwhile activity. Thriving communities require all cohorts of society to be actively involved in their neighbourhood. Initiatives that involve the schools or GAA would be very welcome as a means of getting young people involved with volunteering from an early age.

Civic Participation

Community centres are invaluable for facilitating a wide range of activities and events although it was highlighted that there is a need to ensure all community facilities are comfortable and accessible to all. These facilities are widely used for social evenings, classes and events and older people value activities being held locally as it supports social interaction. However, it was recognised that not all areas have community centres and then accessibility becomes a significant issue. Older people advised that there is a need to ensure there are community groups for older people in every neighborhood.

In addition, it is important to try and get as many people involved as possible and proactively encourage those who are not attached to any group to participate.
This could be achieved through word of mouth, concerts and events. Another mechanism could be through appointing a community contact person who would visit the elderly to keep them informed.

Some villages/towns have very active Community Development Associations which play an invaluable role in organising local events and fostering a sense of local pride. Their work can be further enhanced if they have access to grants.

Older people's groups are very effective networks to circulate information to older people to keep them fully informed of local opportunities and they would welcome more guest speakers on topics of interest.

Networking and shared events between Older People's groups in the county is seen as beneficial.

Community leadership is vitally important and this can be lacking within some communities.

Community Integration

Older people do call into each other so that they do not become isolated and more 'good neighbour' schemes could be developed to support social interaction such as a Meals on Wheels.

In some communities there is a problem of integration between all members of society and this needs to be addressed.

The value of inter-generational events to share skills and experience is seen as important.

It is important to try and get men involved, possibly through initiatives like the Men's Sheds as their level of participation in the community can be low.

**Clonroche
Consultation Event**

Accessibility

Ensure there are good public transport systems so that older people who don't drive can participate in society. Currently some people who don't drive find it difficult to rely on public transport as the times are often inconvenient and unreliable. This is much more of a problem in rural areas than the towns. (See theme 2)

Accessing activities, even if you have your own car can also be difficult, as parking is often too far away and crossing busy roads is dangerous. It would be very beneficial to have parking for the elderly in the same way there is parking for people with a disability.

Age Friendly Strategies and Policies

Ensure strategies meet the needs of older people in a meaningful way and that the contribution of older people is valued. Many older people expressed concerns over the increasing cost of living for older people, whilst the pension has stayed the same, which makes it difficult for older people to be able to go to social activities or cover unplanned events.

Older people would like pensions increased to a livable amount which is index linked. Older people also feel that it is unfair to pay levies on private pensions as they have already paid taxes on their income. Refuse collection payments should be part of the Local Property Tax.

There is a shortage of nursing homes as they are not able to cope with the ageing population. There is confusion around the Fair Deal Scheme and nursing homes and older people feel that it should be simplified.

The housing policy which encourages the down-sizing of the older person's home to give it to a young couple is not fair.

There is a need to develop a Strategy to encourage volunteering for all voluntary groups.

Circulate concerns to the national organisations where relevant, such as the ICA or the Active Retired, so the elderly voice is heard. Older people can be discriminated against by their age when trying to obtain health or driving insurance.

Links with Wexford County Council

Ongoing communication with local Councillors was felt to be very beneficial to ensure local concerns and issues were heard and people appreciate the approachability of local Councillors and that they take an active interest in what is happening in their local communities.

Hold annual meetings with a member of WCC who would explain any plans for the year regarding their area so older people are given the chance to give their opinion on these changes. Alternatively, Councillors could hold public meetings to feedback to their area what is happening at county level or hold more clinics to hear people's opinions on their local area.

HaPAI Initial findings - Civic Participation and Employment

- In Wexford, 26% of those surveyed aged 55 - 64 are retired, nationally this figure is 17% (TILDA 2013).

- In the over 65 age group 75% of people in Wexford are retired while nationally the figure is 70%.

- 34% of people aged 55 - 64 in Wexford are employed/self-employed (the national figure is 49%), and 8% are unemployed. Among those aged 65+ 5% are employed or self-employed while nationally the figure is 9%.

- 34% of women and 1.4% of men age 55+ are looking after home or family.

Raheen Consultation Event

Theme 6:
Civic Participation and Employment

GOAL: "To increase employment, volunteering and civic participation among older people." (AFI, 2015)

Older people like to volunteer and participate within their local community. Communities with a large number of groups for older people, creates well connected neighbourhoods, and supports the informal sharing of information amongst everyone living in the area.

The PPN supports communities across County Wexford through offering training courses, advice and networking opportunities.

KEY PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Volunteering

Encourage volunteering opportunities for all age groups within each community, and encourage people to become involved.

Priority 2. Employment

Older people would like the flexibility to remain on in employment as they get older, possibly with reduced hours. This will be promoted through business networks and government agencies.

Priority 3. Older People's Council - Hearing the Older Persons' Voice

Formation of the Older People's Council, that is truly representative of the geography of County Wexford and all of its diverse groups. This model will aim to facilitate two-way communication between the Alliance and older people in the community.

Theme 7: Communication and Information

Communicating information that is relevant to the needs of older people is vital to their well-being. In recent years a lot of information has moved online and it is more important than ever to make sure that older people stay connected.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

Communicating information through the local newspaper, local radio, texts and the parish newsletter is typically how many older people acquire knowledge about what is happening in their community. The informal sharing of information through older people's groups and word of mouth is very effective.

The role of the library and the Citizens Advice Bureau is invaluable. Publications like the Irish Pensioners Handbook is very helpful. There is a low level of usage of the internet and broadband coverage is patchy in some rural areas. This is a link to the outside world that a lot of older people are missing.

Wexford Mobile Library

Local Information

Older people like the promotion of events and activities through local radio, newspapers, community newsletters, signage, notice boards, internet, facebook, church announcements, posters in local shops, word of mouth, flyers etc. However, some older people suggested that getting information to people needs to improve, especially the publicity of amenities available within the local community. Ideas to improve communication include:

- A local community run coffee shop which could serve as a social outlet and facilitate the informal sharing of information;
- Encourage neighbours to call into older people who do not use media devices and who might not be fully informed about events and activities in their locality;
- Group texts to inform each other of what is going on;
- Special section in the local newspaper which advertises activities for older people;
- Schools provide information sheets for older people in the community;
- Parish councils in each community to actively promote activities to older people.

Local events are a good mechanism for sharing information informally through word of mouth and this direct contact is very effective. Some communities are very well connected and share a lot of information through these informal networks. However, older people are aware that this is not the case in all communities. Older people think that effective communication is of paramount importance to their well-being. Agencies have a responsibility to ensure all information is current and accessible.

Social Networks

Older people are fearful that when they are not able to drive or their visibility deteriorates they will lose their communication channels. This places a huge importance on community groups and social networks for older people, so they do not become isolated. Many older people highlighted the need for more community activities so that social interaction is enhanced. This could include guest speakers (e.g. Gardaí, WCC, WLD) to advise older people. Ensure that all events are continually well publicised, with a name and contact number for more information. Proactively targeting isolated people or those who are new to the area should be a priority.

Word of mouth is vitally important for sharing information. Conveying information informally through local organisations or via phone calls is very effective. Older people recognise the value of personal contact if someone becomes ill or experiences a loss of mobility within their community. Develop a volunteer or 'neighbour' scheme to provide information to older people in the community about their entitlements or local activities. Try to include people who are isolated and consider establishing a community newsletter.

Daycare centres are excellent facilities to support older people, where they are available. Older people would also like more over 55s clubs and would like support to see these established.

Local Services

The informal sharing of information takes place in the local shop, chemist, church and post office and this is very much valued and older people are fearful of losing these services. In areas where the village shop, post office or local priest has gone this has reduced the informal sharing of information.

The post office service is excellent and invaluable to older people as they offer an essential service. There was an interest in expanding the range of services that are offered through post offices including banking services and internet support.

Areas which have vibrant community centres/family resource centres with someone to assist in the circulation of information, entitlements and help with form filling is invaluable. Older people would volunteer to staff local drop in centres, if they were provided with accurate information to disseminate. This could be linked to a coffee shop. This facility could also provide access to the internet.

The primary health care workers who assist Travellers are excellent and assist them with completing forms and advising them on their entitlements. The Traveller community have experienced a very positive service from both the library and the Citizens Advice Bureau and they do not feel any discrimination when accessing these services.

Telephones

Automated telephone services need to be improved and older people would prefer to talk to a person straight away or have dial 0 to speak to an operator. Automated phone lines can cause frustration and stress.

Telephone banking services are OK but older people prefer to call into their branch as they typically won't use online banking as they don't trust it. However, they will make payments online if they use Paypal and it is a trusted secure site. There is a need for simpler banking services which are not automated. There is also a need for a hand cover over the ATM machine.

Mobile phones and texting are very effect methods of immediate communication. Modern smart phones are also a good introduction into new technologies.

Entitlements

There is a need for clearer information on what older people are entitled to including community alert, personal alarms, safety in the home, emergency response, medical cards, grants and European Health Cards as not everyone is aware of these schemes. This is an issue for all older people but it is a heightened problem for the Traveller community.

People need to be made aware of their pension entitlements, in advance of retirement. Older people are aware they need to plan for their future needs and would like advice on sheltered housing schemes, grants for housing adaptations and other relevant entitlements etc.

Print Material

Ensure information is readily available in print form and not just on the internet. Ensure all information is available in an age friendly format. The active retirement booklets, Irish Pensioners Handbook, well-resourced community centres and Citizens Advice are very good. Communities would really like the Citizens Advice Bureau to operate a regular mobile service to rural areas. In addition, specific criteria for the establishment of a new Citizens Advice Bureau in towns which meet a certain population size could be explored. The 'Wexford for Older People' publication was excellent and they would like it reproduced every 2 years.

Participants asked that any information produced should be easy to read, eye-catching and to the point. Include a clearly marked telephone number on all print material. If government agencies could write to older people annually to inform them of their entitlements that would be valued.

Services must be prepared to post out information, speak on the telephone or talk face to face as older people do not like to be told 'go online' or use automated phone lines.

Form filling is not straight forward and older people feel uninformed about their entitlements. There needs to be support for completing forms and obtaining relevant information as it can often be too complex or not set out clearly.

An increase in font size on medication would be helpful so that dosage levels are easy to follow.

Government Agencies

Older people would like more information from WCC on issues relating to housing estates and their local area. Having contact numbers for housing estate landlords would be helpful.

The fear of crime and personal safety is an issue for older people. Organise a member of the An Garda Siochána to attend local meetings so older people can be advised of what to do in a crime situation and how to reduce the risk of crime.

Call operating systems in the health board can be confusing but text alerts from the health service are excellent reminders for appointments.

The library is a good source of information and provides training in new technologies. Having designated parking nearby would be helpful and organising bus trips would be valuable for those who don't drive. The rural mobile library service is appreciated. Older people thought community centres could set up as a 'local information point' and also provide training in IT.

Advertise and extend the WLD 'Little Jobs Scheme'.

Older people would like annual feedback on achievements in the Age Friendly Strategy.

Mobile Phones

Increasingly, more and more older people have access to mobile phones and it was identified that text alerts can be a great way to pass on short bits of information, as well as building confidence in using this technology. Older people really value their mobile phones and are generally confident taking calls and texting. Text messages for health appointment reminders are very effective. The text reminder facility could be further developed.

Internet

In some areas there is limited or no internet. A better internet and faster broadband services are needed although many older people do not access information via the internet.

With more important information going online or through text services, participants recognised the need for them to become more technology proficient. Participants asked for more training on how to use mobile phones and computers/tablets. This would be useful so older people can text, email, skype, book services online and access information electronically. The majority of participants had a very low level of internet usage so it is not currently an effective form of getting information to older people. However, it was widely acknowledged that initiatives to reduce the fear of new technologies should be introduced, so that older people can avail of the benefits from online services and resources.

Computer classes for the elderly would be useful. Some people would also benefit from training in how to use their mobile phone. The computer training service provided by the Education and Training Board is excellent. There is a need for more training in laptops, ipads and smart phones which could be undertaken in collaboration with schools and community groups. There is an excellent example in Carnew of one to one training through the school transition year programme.

Most respondents do not use internet banking but those who use telephone banking have a positive experience with it.

Most older people do not utilise their own community website or facebook page for local information. Older people often ask family members to assist with internet bookings or to find out relevant information.

HaPAI Initial findings - Civic Participation and Employment

- National TV is the most common source of information for people in Wexford, 89% of people aged over 55 say they get their information from National TV.

- The three next most frequently reported main sources of information for people aged 55+ in Wexford were local radio (81%) national radio (79%) and newspapers (74%).

- Less than half of people (44%) age 55 - 69 get information from the internet and this drops to less than a quarter (23%) of people age over 70. This compares to 52% of the younger age group and 22% of over 70s in other counties.

- In the past 3 months, 41% of Wexford people aged 55 - 69 (compared to 46% in other counties in this survey) and 20% of the over 70s (17% in other areas) have used the internet every day or almost every day in the last three months. The national average in the TILDA survey was similar; 46% of those aged 55 - 69 and 17% of over 70s use the internet daily or almost daily (TILDA 2014).

- Almost two thirds (62%) of people aged 70+ in Wexford did not use the internet in the past 3 months, compared with less than half (40%) aged 55 - 69 (compared to 64% and 28% in other areas).

- Almost one in ten (10%) of people aged 55+ report difficulties getting information about local events or activities and 14% reported difficulty getting information on health or social care (compared to 8% and 11%).

Ferns Consultation Event

Theme 7: Communication and Information

GOAL: "To ensure that older people can access timely, practical information about what is happening in their communities." (AFI, 2015)

Communicating information through the local newspaper, radio, texts and the parish newsletter is typically how many older people acquire knowledge about what is happening in their community. The informal sharing of information through older people's groups and word of mouth is very effective. The role of the library and the Citizens Advice Bureau is invaluable. Publications like the Irish Pensioners Handbook is very helpful. There is a low usage of the internet and broadband coverage is patchy in some rural areas.

KEY PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Older People's Entitlements

Provide more printed information on the entitlements for older people as they are often unsure of what is available to them. Solutions include presentations at older people's events, mobile or new Citizens Advice Bureau, local drop in centres, written communication etc. Clear printed information is essential as internet usage is low.

Priority 2. Training in New Technologies on a One to One Basis

Organise transition year programme to deliver one to one training in mobile phones, internet, emails, skype, computers and tablets. This could be developed in collaboration with Comhairle na nÓg, youth organisations and training providers.

Priority 3. Local 'Drop in Services' through Community/Family Resource Centres

Provide support for completing medical forms, grant applications and other documents as required. This could be through the network of community/family resource centres located in the county that could provide 'drop in services'. This is a priority for geographical locations with diverse communities.

Priority 4. Banking/Credit Union Services

Older people prefer simpler banking and dealing directly with staff members. Older people who use telephone banking have had a good experience with this. Discuss these findings with the financial services' sector and address these concerns.

Theme 8:
Community Support and Health Services

There is a need to support older people so that they can stay healthy and independent in the community, where possible.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

Older people desire to stay in their own home and within their local community as they get older. To facilitate this vision, it is essential that a wide range of supports are available to enable people as they become frailer, to live safely in their home. The participants' experience of the health service was generally very positive but in some cases there was difficulty accessing medical care and there were examples of long waiting lists. In this consultation process older people identified a wide range of supports that would assist them to live safely and more healthily in the community.

Hospital Services

Older people use the hospitals in Dublin, Wexford and Waterford and feel the level of care from health professionals is of a very high standard and the new A & E department in Wexford Hospital is excellent. However, areas that could be improved include:

- Delays people experienced in accessing ambulance services which could be shortened. In some instances their GPS co-ordinates need to be revised. Using the Eircode could assist response times;

- Expansion of the range of facilities at Wexford Hospital. There is a need for more specialist services in the county to support Wexford hospital such as a free foot service for diabetics and more consultants in Wexford hospital;

- Shorter hospital waiting times - waiting times for public patients can be unacceptably long and this needs to be reduced. This was not reported as a problem for those with private health care insurance although some older people stated that the cost of private healthcare can be prohibitive, if living off a pension alone;

- A joined up service provision between the hospital discharge and the district nurse;

- Hospital appointment times to suit the journey distance;

- Better advertisement of HSE services and enhanced communication;

- Improved mental health and Alzheimer's supports;

- Additional private hospitals in Wexford.

Accessibility

Transport to medical appointments is a significant issue for older people as many cannot drive home after a medical procedure or are not able to drive. Currently neighbours and relatives often provide the support required so that they can access facilities and services. However, many older people said there is a real need to provide transport to GPs and hospitals. A volunteer car scheme was suggested, like the cancer volunteer driver initiative to support older people attend medical appointments. The role of the Wexford Local Link transport service should also be explored.

Older people think there is a good public transport service from the urban areas to health services in Wexford. However, there needs to be better direct transport service to Dublin, Waterford, Carlow and Kilkenny.

In many rural areas there are few health services and infrequent or non-existent transport links to access the services in the towns. There is a need for better transport links between the rural and urban areas.

There is some concern over the new bypasses and if this will reduce the frequency of public transport in affected areas.

Out of hour GPs are not always suitable for older people, particularly if transport is an issue.

Parking at Wexford Hospital should be more affordable.

There are concerns about the distance needed to travel to access specialist procedures and follow up consultations. Can post operation appointments be undertaken locally?

Getting to the GP can be difficult using public transport due to the timetable and frequency of service as well as there being no bus shelters.

Oylegate Consultation Event

Home Care Support

- Older people would like the choice to be cared for within their own home if they do not wish to go into a nursing home. To ensure this is possible the following recommendations were identified by older people:

- More resources should be invested in home help services as the service provision is currently inadequate and more home help hours are needed for many older people;

- Shorten the waiting time from when you apply for home help or nursing facilities to when you get a response. The HSE supports for everyday living is too limited and is means tested and there can be long delays;

- Organise more back up services such as carers and care assistance;

- More supports and respite services should be offered to older people once they are released from hospital as they are often initially unfit to look after themselves adequately in their own homes;

- The 'Little Jobs' scheme is excellent and should be expanded. Home help services are required on a more widespread basis;

- Increase the number of visits by the district health nurse and have weekly access to a nurse at the community centre;

- Provide greater awareness of the role of a public health nurse and their services. Older people would appreciate a leaflet detailing the supports that are available to them;

- There should be a health focus on prevention not treatment. If a health nurse visited everyone over 80 years of age regularly this would be beneficial;

- Meals on wheels services provides an invaluable means of informally checking in on elderly people to make sure they are not sick or need something.

The Traveller community rarely go into nursing homes and as a result there is a need for more community carers to assist them in their own home for as long as possible. The older Traveller with a disability, typically receives very good support from carers.

If people are carers for older family members, this can be isolating for the carer as there is often little back up support.

A community care scheme would be beneficial so an older person could avail of care workers.

Services

The urban areas and some rural communities are well served by GPs, pharmacies, chiropodists and health centres although in some areas there was uncertainty around what services the health clinics offered. Home visits and the public health nurses are very much appreciated.

Older people are very happy with the care they receive from their GPs although they are not located in all communities; some are difficult to access because they are so busy; others can be located considerable distances from the chemist; Caredoc can take too long to reach in certain areas; and very few carry out home visits. The location of new GP services, health centres, pharmacists and dispensary services, in communities which don't have these services, would be welcomed.

In some rural areas people have to travel considerable distances to access their GP, chemist or health centre. Suggestions on how to reduce the impact of no local service provision include:

- Organise for a GP or nurse to hold regular clinics in community halls where there are no GPs or pharmacies;

- In some communities there is a prescription home delivery service which is very much welcomed and this could be expanded further;

- Increase the accessibility of Gardaí, public health nurses, doctors and chiropodists. If they visited daycare centres and older people's groups this would be much appreciated.

In rural areas where they have lost a GP service there is a real need to have it reinstated.

Increase the provision of nursing homes and hospices in areas where there are none.

Older people value health centres where they are available and think their range of services could be broadened.

Physiotherapy, speech and language clinics could be operated from GP surgeries weekly.

The Citizens Advice Bureau offers excellent advice on health and community issues.

Queues in the bank and post office can be long which causes discomfort for older people. If there was seating or a separate fast track queue for older people that would be appreciated.

Set up shopping home delivery services and Meals on Wheels to assist older people, where this is not available.

Older people would like the opportunity to have individual confessions at the local Catholic Church.

Community Supports

People value thriving communities if they have lots of local organisations, busy community centres, family resource centres, ICA, active retired groups, local shops, pharmacy, GP, nurse, church, recreational facilities and transport options. It is important to ensure there are plenty of activities and groups for people to join as older people enjoy social events and feel it is important to support them. Additional age friendly initiatives that could be developed in some communities include:

- Health awareness events as part of a social activity programme;

- Presentations by members of the HSE to address their area to assist in making the community a happy and safe place to live in;

- Meals on Wheels should be expanded to communities where they don't currently exist;

- The installment of defibrillators;

- Weekly exercise classes, appropriate to the needs of older people;

- Better support for community groups to assist them access grants;

- Inter-generational activities focusing on oral heritage or crafts;

- First aid courses as the nearest GP service is not in close proximity in some communities;

- Events for new people, so they get to know their community;

- Tidy Towns initiatives to enhance the visual appearance of the community;

- Ensuring everyone has a local emergency contact number to help when required.

Community facilities are ideal venues for local social events but it is important to have comfortable seats and be well heated. In some communities investment is needed in the community hall so that it is age friendly.

The older Traveller community would like regular organised groups within their community with age appropriate activities. This would be an important social setting for older people to meet each other (anti-isolation). The Traveller health programme could do this with more funding and include health outcomes (ensuring people make appointments and take the correct medication). This could be delivered by members of the Traveller community as older Travellers don't tend to mix with the settled community as it can make them feel intimidated.

The support of neighbours, relations and friends is very important. Older people think communities have a responsibility to look out for friends and neighbours and assist them where possible with transport or local shopping needs. This could be supported further through a 'befriending scheme' or a volunteer group to check on the elderly and sick.

Introduce a Garda vetted reliable tradesmen scheme.

Daycare Centres and Sheltered Housing

In communities where there are daycare services they are deemed excellent and provide an invaluable service to older people living in their own homes. They use minibuses to collect people who can't drive and provide lunches and additional supports like a visiting chiropodist. There was interest in exploring the use of the daycare minibus for other activities linked to older people, for example bringing them to medical appointments or attending local activities.

There is no sheltered housing in many communities and they would like advice on how to set them up.

Entitlements

Bureaucracy, administration and economic barriers are problems around health care. The cost of private health care can be prohibitive. There is a need to make more health care services freely available.

There is a perceived inequality in service provision between those who do and don't have a medical card. Medical card holders get free prescriptions, dentistry, GP visits etc. A medical card for all over 70s would be invaluable.

More information is needed on how to apply for home adaptation grants or health entitlements. Some people suggested:
- Weekly help centres to be set up where older people could go for information on health services, rights, legal or other advice as required;
- Information nights as part of the schedule of activities organised by older people's groups.

Older people value the good relationship with WCC, WLD, An Garda Siochána and other local organisations.

There are concerns over health service provision including long waiting lists for procedures and diagnostic tests. Older people would also like more diagnostic tests to be available in Wexford rather than having to go to Waterford. In addition there are concerns about the mental heath care provision in Wexford and people thought there should be a 24/7 mental health service in the county due to our high suicide rates.

Older Travellers need support to ensure they keep medical appointments as they may not be able to read letters from the hospital.

HaPAI Initial findings - Community Support and Health Services

- 63% of all over 55s say that their health is good or very good. In Wexford there is very little difference between the two age groups - 63% of those aged 55 - 69 (compared to 76% in other counties) report good or very good health and 62% of people aged 70+ (compared to 59% in other counties) say that their health is either good or very good.

Health Behaviours

- 22% of people aged 55 - 69 in Wexford are current (daily or occasional) smokers, this drops to 12% of those aged over 70. The average for both age groups is 18% while the figure nationally is 14%. (TILDA 2014) More men than women are daily smokers - 19% of men and 15% of women smoke on a daily basis.

- Older people are less likely to smoke on a daily basis; 20% of people in the 55 - 69 age group and only 12% of those in the 70+ age group are daily smokers.

- 43% of all people aged over 55 in Wexford did not drink any alcohol in the past 6 months - 52% of those aged over 70 and 38% of those in the 55 - 69 age group. This is higher than the number of non-drinkers in other counties (34%).

- 44% of Wexford people (lower than the average of 50% in other counties) do at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity every week - 49% of the 55 - 69 age group and 34% of over 70s.

- Nationally the figures are 53% in the 55 - 69 age group and 34% of the over 70s. (TILDA 2014)

The Faythe, Wexford Consultation Event

Social Care

- **Personal care needs;** Very few (4.5%) of those aged 55 - 69 have any personal care needs and unusually the difference for those aged over 70 is very small (5.4%). Of those aged 70+ who need assistance with personal care, 90% of them receive this assistance.

- **Housekeeping support needs;** 13% of people aged 70+ need help with housekeeping compared to 8% of those in the 55 - 69 age group. Of those aged 70+ who need assistance with housekeeping, 88% of them receive this assistance.

- **Mobility support needs;** 12% of people age 70+ need assistance with their personal mobility, compared to 8% of those in the 55 - 69 age group. Of those aged 70+ who need assistance with mobility support, 80% of them receive this assistance.

- Among those aged 55 - 69 in Wexford, 5% need assistance with personal care, 8% need assistance with housekeeping and 8% need assistance with their mobility.

- The number of younger people with long standing illness or health problems is higher in Wexford than other counties. 55% of people aged 55 - 69 compared to 37% of the same age group in other counties have a long standing illness or health problem.

- The numbers for the over 70s are similar, 55.5% of people aged 70+ in Wexford and 56.3% in the other counties. Among these people, 18% of the over 70s and 14% of the 55 - 69 age group are severely limited in their everyday activities because of this health problem.

- 79% of people are satisfied with the opportunities for sport/recreation in their area (78% in the 55 - 69 age group compared with 82% in other counties).

Grantstown Consultation Event

Theme 8:
Community Support and Health Services

GOAL: "To provide older people with easily accessible health and community services and help with access to everyday activities and high quality home care and residential facilities." (AFI, 2015)

Older people desire to stay in their own home and within their local community as they get older. To facilitate this vision, it is essential that a wide range of supports are available to enable people as they become frailer, to live safely in their home. The participants' experience of the health service was generally very positive but in some cases there was difficulty accessing medical care and there were examples of long waiting lists.

KEY PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Supports to Facilitate Living in your Own Home

Older people had concerns about home help service provision. They identified the need to expand the range of services that are available to them including: Home care (washing, dressing, meals etc.); and Health (e.g. discharge support from hospital, dressing wounds etc.). Ensure there is clear information on what is available and who is eligible.

Priority 2. Expand the Number of Daycare Facilities and Sheltered Housing Schemes

Daycare services are excellent and older people identified the need to expand the number of daycare centres in the county and deliver health care supports through these facilities. There is also considerable interest in developing sheltered housing within the community but people are unaware of how to set these up. The Grantstown model is an excellent example.

Priority 3. Accessibility to Attend Medical Appointments

Older people frequently cited concerns around accessing medical appointments. Some solutions include: A submission to the Department of Health to request an expansion of the range of services delivered by Wexford Hospital; and Setting up or expanding existing community transport schemes as outlined in theme 2.

Theme 9:
Safety and Security

This theme considers older people's concerns on both personal safety in the home and within the wider community.

WHAT PEOPLE SAID

Older people really value community schemes to reduce crime such as Neighbourhood Watch and Community Alert. In addition, home security systems and personal alarms make people feel safer in their home. Close knit communities, good neighbours, footpaths, lighting, cut hedgerow, speed ramps and pedestrian crossings help people to feel safer in their community. However, many communities reported a decrease in Gardaí within their community in recent years and a perception that crime rates have increased, leading to a heightened sense of fear, which is an issue for concern for older people. Some older people feel vulnerable and quite isolated, this is especially the case if there have been recent incidents of burglary in the area.

Training and Awareness

It is widely acknowledged that ongoing social events provide a very useful forum for older people to share their concerns and get informal advice on safety issues.

Using existing networks to promote safety can be effective such as the Irish Farmers' Association (IFA), schools, daycare centres, etc.

Farm safety awareness needs to be promoted through erecting posters in shops, schools and community buildings.

Older people recognise that social media e.g. facebook can help inform people of crime in their locality. Older people would like training in how to use these programmes and also training on the use of mobile phones so that older people are able to participate in text alert initiatives.

Safety in the Home

Older people feel concerned about the level of crime targeted at homes and farms although in some areas there was not a perceived high crime rate. In areas with close knit communities, people keep an eye out for each other. Single people feel a greater sense of crime than couples.

Some older people stated they do not feel safe in their own homes and the majority of people thought there was a need for increased security such as CCTV, electric gates, safety chains and alarms and they are not too expensive and act as a deterrent. There is also a need for other safety measures in the home such as fire extinguishers and safety rails. In some rural areas the broadband service needs to be improved so the personal alarms can work if there is no landline. Older people would like grants for security measures and a security application for mobile phones designed for older people.

A large number of older people have personal alarms which are excellent and reasonably priced, although a few people commented that they might be too expensive for some people or they don't work if there is no landline. There is a need to increase the awareness of these alarms so all can benefit. There is also a need to ensure that the panic button can be linked to mobile phones as well as landlines.

The older Traveller community do not have mobile phones or personal alarms. There needs to be increased awareness of these devices amongst older Travellers to increase their safety.

People value home security systems. However, in some high crime rate areas people feel that even with locks and security systems they are still being burgled. There are also some concerns around the cost of the Phonewatch scheme but it was acknowledged that Phonewatch does offer a hardship scheme. Group discounts or grants would be helpful. Measures to improve safety in the home include:

- Provide grants to older people to install house alarms, sensor lights and windows/door locks. Consider a group discount scheme for home safety measures;

- Provide advice and leaflets on grants and how to improve the safety of your home;

- Install smoke and carbon monoxide alarms;

- House modifications to reduce the risk of falls;

- Ensuring older people have a 'Message in a bottle,' with medical details in their homes;

- Older people could wear wrist bands with contact information for emergencies.

Ensuring older people deal with trusted traders and not rogue traders is important. If older people have access to help in the home, it reduces the risk of accidents. Older people suggested creating a database of reliable tradesmen who older people can contact for house repairs, sweep chimneys, clean gutters, trim trees and install carbon monoxide alarms etc.

Safety in the Home *continued*

The 'Little Jobs' Scheme is helpful but it could be improved if it could deliver a wider range of services to older people in the home.

Older people prefer to use banks rather than ATM machines. It has also become difficult to lodge money as many banks have closed which means people are holding more cash in their homes which creates a risk for older people. Communication with banks is needed to address these issues.

Roads and Footpaths

Well-lit streets, footpaths, pedestrian crossings, traffic calming and CCTV create a feeling of personal security and older people would like to see these extended. If footpaths are poorly maintained there is a fear of tripping and this stops older people going out. There is also a problem with cars parked on footpaths.

Physical boundaries can heighten the sense of fear in an area such as tall hedges. There is also a heightened sense of fear on the streets in the evening time.

Many older people said they feel unsafe walking along the roads as they are too dangerous and they miss being able to walk to their neighbours. Country lanes are also dangerous for cyclists. Suggestions to improve road safety included:

- Strimming the ditches to improve visibility and give a verge for people to walk on;
- Review of speed limits and drivers should have dim lights on at all times;
- Develop more GAA tracks which are excellent facilities;
- High vis jackets are essential;
- There is a need for more footpaths and a wider margin on roads for pedestrians;
- Road safety education should be part of the curriculum from national school up;
- A review of the physical infrastructure of the villages and towns in the county.

Bunclody Consultation Event

Gardaí Supports

In some communities there are high crime rates and in other communities it is not such a problem. In general participants feel less safe than they did five years ago. An increased Gardaí presence in the community was frequently cited as being very important and it was felt that the number of Gardaí in County Wexford needs to be increased.

In communities with high crime rates, there is a significant level of fear amongst older people, both in their home and when they are out in their locality. In areas with high crime rates older people would value:

- More Garda patrols resulting in improved response times for call out and Gardaí with a better knowledge of the local community - this would reduce crime and vandalism;

- The installation of cameras;

- Closer links with the Gardaí and their attendance at community meetings to give presentations on home and personal safety;

- Garda stations to be manned for longer hours, particularly at weekends and evenings;

- Tougher sentencing for burglars.

In some cases where people had directly experienced burglaries the feedback on the Gardaí service was very positive as the response time was good and they got follow up advice.

Where Gardaí stations are manned at all times this is very much valued. Local Gardaí stations are also important for older people as it is easy to get forms signed.

Older people would like access to a confidential counselling service for those in fear or victims of crime.

Clonard Consultation Event

Community Supports

In communities where there is a strong sense of people looking out for each other and a good community spirit, it brings a sense of safety and security. Communities should encourage neighbours and family to look in on older people living alone.

Not all areas consulted have a strong sense of community and it is thought that lonely and isolated people feel a heightened sense of fear. Older people also feel unsafe in isolated, unlit areas where there is anti-social behaviour. Suggestions to increase people's feeling of safety included:

- Establish a 'befriending' system where a committee of people agree to visit elderly people once a week. An initiative is currently being piloted in South Wexford;

- Establish 'know your neighbour' groups;

- Set up a Meals on Wheels service to offer companionship and a heightened sense of security in the home;

- Encourage older people to be vigilant and report any issues of concern;

- Publicise break-ins and crime events on the radio and in community newsletters;

- Establish a volunteer patrol in the evenings so older people can walk to the shops;

- Clean up and redevelop areas with vacant buildings to reduce vandalism.

Older people think the Community Alert and Neighbourhood Watch initiative is very positive. Establish Community Alert groups and Neighbourhood Watch schemes in communities who do not have one. However, in some communities more members are required and there needs to be a process where new people are informed of how to join. Gardaí attend some of these meetings which is helpful. The text alert scheme has led to improved community spirit and it has helped build a community and allow people to get to know their neighbours, although there was slight concerns that text alerts could create a heightened sense of fear.

Communities could organise regular local events that promote safety in the home/ neighbourhood in collaboration with the Gardaí, fire services and government agencies. This includes issues such as fire protection, home security, careful driving, farm safety, machinery safety etc.

Defibrillators in the community are valued but they must be accessible.

Ensure there are activities and youth clubs for young people so that they are not bored as older people can find youngsters intimidating if they are loitering on the streets.

Vacant properties are an issue as is anti-social behavior, illegal drugs and the dumping of rubbish. Tidy Towns help to instill pride in communities and resolve these issues.

HaPAI Initial findings - Safety and Security

- Just over 1 in 4 people aged 55+ in Wexford (26%) have had an experience that has left them concerned about their personal safety. This is higher than the other counties we surveyed (15%).

- In general, the majority of people aged over 55 feel safe. The level of perception of safety ranges from 96% who feel safe at home during the day to just 64% who feel safe "Out and about" at night.

- The perception of safety tends to be related to age and gender; 24% of people over 70 feel unsafe or very unsafe when out and about at night compared to 20% of those aged 55 - 69.

- The gender difference is bigger in Wexford than in other counties, 34% of women in Wexford and 8% of men (compared to 26% of women and 12% of men in other areas) do not feel safe when out and about at night.

**Rosslare Harbour
Consultation Event**

Theme 9:
Safety and Security

GOAL: "To ensure older people feel safe and secure in their homes and community." (AFI, 2015)

Older people really value community schemes to reduce crime such as Neighbourhood Watch and Community Alert. In addition, home security systems and personal alarms make people feel safer in their home. Close knit communities, good neighbours, footpaths, lighting, cut hedgerow, speed ramps and pedestrian crossings help people to feel safer in their community. However, many communities reported a decrease in Gardaí within their community in recent years and a heightened sense of fear, which is an issue of concern for older people.

KEY PRIORITIES

Priority 1. Increase Gardaí Presence in the Community

A higher profile for the Gardaí in the community, with a good local knowledge of the area, is of considerable importance to older people. Inviting the Gardaí to local events to discuss safety in the home and community would also be useful to older people.

Priority 2. Safety Initiatives

Promotion and advice on personal safety and home safety devices with group discounts. Encourage the establishment of Community Alert schemes in locations where it is not currently established.

Priority 3. Close Knit Communities

Initiatives to encourage people to know their neighbours greatly enhances people's feeling of safety in their community. Befriending schemes, Meals on Wheels, daycare centres and active social groups all assist in creating close knit communities.

This Strategy outlines our collective response to the changing demographic situation and reflects our ongoing commitment to the vision of being a great place to grow up and grow old in. It provides the foundations for a place where everybody as they age are supported, connected and valued for their contribution to community and family life. We hope that this Strategy shows the achievements that can be made through effective partnership, creative thinking and a dedication to making our shared vision for the future a reality.

Section 4

Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

4.1 Overview

This Age Friendly Strategy has been developed in a dynamic and constantly changing context. New data is continuously becoming available which will influence the future direction of this Strategy, in particular the data from the 2016 census. It is understood, therefore, that the plan will continue to grow as new needs and gaps are identified and new Age Friendly Alliance members come on board. Moreover, once the Age Friendly Action Plan is completed, partners will be required to regularly report on progress against the agreed priorities and actions.

4.2 Roles and Responsibilities for Implementation

The County Wexford Age Friendly Alliance will jointly plan and oversee the implementation of this Strategy. The Alliance will also agree on the proposed implementation process for the Action Plan to ensure it is delivered in a timely manner having due regard to the availability of resources and other variables. It is foreseen that as a result of the many cross-cutting issues which have been identified, there will be significant opportunities for collaborative initiatives, to collectively address some of the concerns which have been identified.

4.3 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

In discussion with members, it will be one of the first actions of the Alliance to establish the necessary arrangements for monitoring, evaluation and review. Some requirements are foreseen:

- An annual cycle of meetings will need to be established to provide the structure for the members to work together in achieving the Age Friendly actions.
- Regular monitoring with regard to the progress of the plan, measurables and outcomes. These will need to be collected and analysed.
- An Annual Report to reflect the status and progress of the Strategy and the work of the Alliance.
- Annual presentation to the Older People's Council.
- Further consultation events may be carried out to assess the views of older people over the timeframe of this Strategy.

Appendices

Appendix 1 County Wexford Consultation Schedule

Location	Date	No. of Participants
New Ross District		**187 people**
Clonroche	27th October 2015	
Grantstown Daycare Centre	20th October 2015	
New Ross	6th November 2015	
Raheen	13th October 2015	
Ramsgrange	5th October 2015	
St Louis Daycare Centre	12th October 2015	
Taghmon	21st October 2015	
Wexford District		**259 people**
Castlebridge	13th January 2016	
Kilmore	22nd February 2016	
Our Lady's Island	27th January 2016	
Piercestown	10th December 2015	
Rosslare Harbour	1st December 2015	
Rosslare Strand	20th January 2016	
Tagoat, St Mary's Daycare Centre	9th December 2015	
Wexford 1: The Faythe	3rd December 2015	
Wexford 2: Clonard	27th April 2016	
Enniscorthy District		**73 people**
Oylegate	7th April 2016	
Bunclody	12th April 2016	
Ennsicorthy	9th May 2016	
Oulart	10th May 2016	
Gorey District		**122 people**
Ferns	14th April 2016	
Gorey	19th April 2016	
Askamore	4th May 2016	
Kilanerin	9th May 2016	
Kilmuckridge	10th May 2016	
Courtown	11th May 2016	
Traveller Community - County Wexford		**22 people**
Taghmon	1st June 2016	
Total Number Consulted in County Wexford		**663 people**

Appendix 2 References

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

Age Friendly Ireland (2015) How walkable is your town?

Age Friendly Ireland (2015) Ireland: A great country in which to grow old 2015 - 2017.

Age Friendly Ireland (2015) The Age Friendly Cities Programme. The story so far.

Age Friendly Ireland (2015) Housing for Older People: Future Perspectives.

Age Friendly Ireland (2015) Older People's Council Guide.

Age Friendly Ireland (2015) A Guide to Sharing Ambitions and Opportunities. What Age Friendly Cities and Counties can Achieve.

All Island Research Observatory (2015) Wexford Socio-Economic Baseline Report.

Central statistics Office (2011) Census data.

Wexford County Council (2013) Wexford County Development Plan 2013 - 2019.

Wexford County Council (2016) Local Economic and Community Plan.

Appendix 3 Abbreviations

A & E:	**Accident and Emergency**
AFI:	**Age Friendly Ireland**
AFCCP:	**Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme**
AIRO:	**All-Island Research Observatory**
ATM:	**Automated Teller Machine**
CCTV:	**Closed Circuit Television**
CSO:	**Central Statistics Office**
CES:	**Community Employment Scheme**
EQLS:	**European Quality of Life Survey**
GAA:	**Gaelic Athletic Association**
GP:	**General Practitioner**
GPS:	**Global Positioning System**
HaPAI:	**Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative**
HSE:	**Health Service Executive**
IT:	**Information Technology**
ICA:	**Irish Countrywomen's Association**
IFA:	**Irish Farmers' Association**
LGBTI:	**Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex**
LECP:	**Local Economic and Community Plan**
NDA:	**National Disability Authority**
NGO:	**Non-Government Organisation**
PPN:	**Public Participation Network**
RSS:	**Rural Social Scheme**
TD:	**Teachta Dála**
TILDA:	**The Irish Longitudinal Study on Ageing**
TV:	**Television**
WCC:	**Wexford County Council**
WLD:	**Wexford Local Development**
WHO:	**World Health Organisation**

Bunclody

Enniscorthy

Courtown

Kilanerin

Carrickbyrne

Kilmore