

Heneiddio'n Dda  
yng Nghymru

Ageing Well  
in Wales



# Ageing Well in Wales

Ensuring Wales is a good place to grow older for everyone

Progress Report

October 2014 - May 2018



AGE-FRIENDLY  
*communities in Wales*

*Cymunedau sy'n Gyfeillgar*

I OED YNG NGHYMURU

# About Ageing Well in Wales

Ageing Well in Wales is a national partnership programme chaired and hosted by the Older People's Commissioner for Wales. It brings together individuals and communities with public, private and voluntary sectors to develop and promote innovative and practical ways to make Wales a good place to grow older for everyone. Ageing Well in Wales challenges negative and outdated stereotypes about older people and celebrates the massive contribution that older people make to our society, culture and economy.

## What does Ageing Well in Wales want to achieve?

- To make Wales a nation of age-friendly communities
- To make Wales a nation of dementia supportive communities
- To reduce the number of falls
- To reduce loneliness and unwanted isolation
- To increase learning and employment opportunities

## What is the Ageing Well Programme doing?

- Bringing people together: conferences, workshops and training sessions are organised across Wales
- Sharing good practice: the Ageing Well in Wales website features good practice throughout Wales, the UK, Europe and further afield
- Building networks: a rapidly-growing network of hundreds of individuals and organisations has been established to share ideas and work together
- Making change happen: Ageing Well is actively supported by the Welsh Government, key national organisations and all Local Authorities

**Ageing Well in Wales**

**Cambrian Buildings // Mount Stuart Square // Cardiff // CF10 5FL**

**029 2044 5030**

**[www.ageingwellinwales.com](http://www.ageingwellinwales.com)**

**Email: [ageingwell@olderpeoplewales.com](mailto:ageingwell@olderpeoplewales.com)**

**Twitter: [@AgeingWellCymru](https://twitter.com/AgeingWellCymru)**

# Contents

<b>Foreword</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>2014-2018 in reflection</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Ageing Well in Wales in numbers.....	1
Ageing Well in Wales: Events across the country.....	2
Bringing people together .....	3
Supporting network members .....	3
<b>Looking forward</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Age-friendly communities</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Dementia Supportive Communities</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Falls Prevention</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>Opportunities for Learning and Employment</b> .....	<b>26</b>
Employment.....	27
Learning.....	29
<b>Loneliness and Isolation</b> .....	<b>31</b>

# Foreword

When the Ageing Well in Wales programme was launched in October 2014, it was difficult to predict its impact and the extent to which it would be rolled out across Wales. Now, in early 2018, I am delighted at how the movement has grown and embraced by our partners, friends, colleagues and individuals across Wales. Over 70 national strategic partners are on-board, every Local Authority is working on its own Ageing Well plan, and over 1,600 network members are involved and supporting and working with older people in villages, towns and cities across Wales.



Ageing Well events and publications have provided help, support, inspiration and encouragement, whilst the work and national commitments undertaken by strategic partners is helping to strengthen work at the community level. At a Local Authority level, the local Ageing Well plans, supported by the Strategy for Older People coordinators, the Older People's Champions and the 50+ Forums, are addressing the five programme themes and coordinating action in collaboration with key partners locally. In the context of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, I am delighted that some of the draft Local Well-being Plans produced by Public Services Boards have embedded the 'ageing well' approach, building on the work already in place to help, support and empower older people, our greatest assets.

The Ageing Well agenda has also helped to strengthen and raise the profile of Welsh Government efforts to make Wales a good place to grow older for everyone. Since the programme launch, for example, there is more emphasis on ensuring that our public transport is accessible and inclusive for all. Further work is also being undertaken on developing age-friendly practices, and falls prevention work is now being taken forward by the National Prudent Healthcare Falls Prevention Taskforce. The importance of providing learning and employment opportunities for people aged 50+ has been highlighted and supported by action to deliver change. Ensuring that older people are considered in the digital and financial inclusion agendas is also rightly seen as a priority. Finally, the publication of the National Dementia Action Plan for Wales 2018-22, the forthcoming national strategy to tackle loneliness and isolation, and the Strategy for Older People 2013-23 are clear commitments by the Welsh Government to help and support people as they age, to develop preventative actions and to build towards an age-friendly Wales.

At a European level, Ageing Well in Wales has participated in the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP-AHA) since 2013 and is also part of the Reference Sites Collaborative Network. Wales' active and healthy ageing work has been recognised by the European Commission and Ageing Well has received the highest 4-star Reference Site status for its impactful and innovative work. This status has enabled Wales to work with partners from across Europe, share good practice, discuss ideas for collaboration and exchange information.

Ageing Well can be described in a number of ways. It is an enabler and agent of change, empowering people to work on community-based solutions that are low-cost, but high-impact. It is a social movement, encouraging people and partners to come together, share experiences, highlight good practice and discuss how successful schemes and initiatives can be adopted elsewhere. It is also a platform for partners – ranging from large public sector bodies to small community-owned businesses – to experiment, innovate, challenge and work out ways to help people to age well wherever they may live.

Work is underway across Wales to develop age-friendly and dementia supportive communities, and this would not be possible without the significant input of our partners at all levels. The falls prevention agenda is being developed, with an increasing number of older people across Wales aware of the dangers of falling, and what they can do to help themselves. The learning and employment agenda for older people is growing, with increasing recognition that developments on this agenda benefits everyone. Finally, the acknowledgement of loneliness and isolation as a significant public health risk is welcomed and work is now underway to improve older people's resilience and make them less susceptible to the harmful and far-reaching effects of loneliness.

Whilst significant achievements have been delivered, there is much more to do to ensure that Wales is a good place for all older people. Older people already make a huge contribution to Wales' economy, over £1 billion annually as volunteers, carers and workers<sup>1</sup>, however, provided with the right support, facilities and infrastructure, older people can contribute so much more and improve their health and wellbeing outcomes as a result.

I do not underestimate the work ahead and the challenges involved. However, I am certain that the partnerships established through Ageing Well provide the right foundations to progress with this work. Ageing Well in Wales has developed at a time of financial hardship and great economic uncertainty. It is a testament to the

---

<sup>1</sup><https://bit.ly/2qlwXVd>

hard work and commitment of our partners to deliver more with fewer resources for older people in rural, coastal and urban communities across Wales.

This report highlights some of the key achievements of the programme since its launch in October 2014. It acknowledges where Wales stood on a number of key issues when the programme was launched, and the progress made to date. It recognises some of the exciting and inspiring work underway across Wales and highlights the good practice achieved by partners at all levels and across the five core themes. And, perhaps most importantly, it celebrates older people for what they are: people with a wealth of skills, knowledge and experience, huge societal assets who, given the opportunity, can continue to contribute and live healthy, active, safe and happy lives across Wales.

This report is complemented by the Ageing Well in Wales Impact and Reach report<sup>2</sup> (available on the Ageing Well website), which highlights some of the notable practice and key achievements made by partners over the previous 12 months, and our new publication, Ageing Well Stories, which collects a series of interviews with Ageing Well in Wales network members who are making a real difference to their communities.

Over three years ago I stated that Ageing Well in Wales is a movement to address frailty, dependence and loneliness being incorrectly seen as an inevitable part of growing older, to challenge negative perceptions of older people, and that a clear focus on outcomes for older people is required. Whilst there is still some way to go, my discussions with older people across Wales show that the Ageing Well movement is developing in the right direction.

It has been a pleasure and privilege to chair Ageing Well in Wales. My sincerest thanks to all those who have participated and contributed, to my team for driving the work forward, and to older people for taking part, sharing their thoughts and ideas, and working with partners to develop an age-friendly Wales.



**Sarah Rochira**

**Older People's Commissioner for Wales // Chair, Ageing Well in Wales**

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://bit.ly/2rPE5Qf>

# Ministerial Foreword

Wales is a nation that recognises and values the contribution that older people make to creating vibrant and supportive communities. We believe that every older person in Wales should feel valued and respected.

Prosperity for All, our national strategy to take Wales forward, commits to supporting everyone to live healthy, prosperous and rewarding lives.

The Ageing Well Programme has made a significant contribution to achieving this goal by encouraging people of all ages to work together. Connecting people can create the friendships, support networks and partnerships that help to build resilient communities.

I have been pleased by how Ageing Well in Wales has raised the profile of older people's issues. The Ageing Well events, held across Wales, have inspired people to make a difference where they live.

Ageing Well has also enabled more older people to be involved in decision making at a national and local level. Ensuring that all older people have a voice is key to making Wales a great place to grow older.

I am proud that Wales was the first country in the world to establish a Commissioner for Older People. The partnership formed between Welsh Government and Older People's Commissioner on the Ageing Well agenda has been very productive and I would like to thank the Commissioner for her work in leading the Programme.

**Huw Irranca-Davies AM**

**Welsh Government Minister for Children and Social Care**



# 2014-2018 in reflection

## Ageing Well in Wales in numbers

<b>1,600</b>	The Ageing Well in Wales network has grown to over 1,600 members.
<b>500</b>	Ageing Well in Wales network members represent over 500 different organisations, ranging from Welsh Government and Health Boards to local businesses and community groups.
<b>70</b>	Ageing Well in Wales has over 70 national strategic partners who have all committed to taking action to achieve the goals of the programme.
<b>45,000</b>	Over 45,000 Ageing Well in Wales guides have been distributed across Wales.
<b>22</b>	Every Local Authority in Wales has produced a local Ageing Well Plan, and signed the Dublin Declaration, a commitment to supporting the development of age-friendly communities.
<b>50</b>	50 Ageing Well in Wales learning and networking events have been organised, covering the whole of Wales (and we've attended many more events organised by partners!).
<b>3,200</b>	Over 3,200 people have attended Ageing Well in Wales events between October 2014 and April 2018.
<b>90%</b>	Over 90% of the people who have attended an Ageing Well in Wales event have rated them as "very good" or "excellent"

# Ageing Well in Wales: Events across the country



## Bringing people together

Since launching the programme in October 2014, the Ageing Well in Wales network has grown to over 1,600 members. Ageing Well in Wales network members come from all over Wales and from all walks of life, ranging from Health Boards, Local Authorities, and national charities to local businesses, individuals and volunteers from community groups.

At the time of writing, we have organised 50 events all over Wales, covering a wide variety of topics. Ageing Well in Wales events are designed for anyone wanting to make the places that they live or work in good places to grow older in. Over 3,200 people have attended our events, and feedback shows that they are useful in supporting the work and projects of those who have attended.

As well as organising our own events, we attend numerous events organised by our partners, raising awareness, promoting good practice and running training sessions or workshops. We have run workshops for a variety of partners, including the Wales TUC, Local Authorities, Universities, Health Boards and community groups.

As a member of the National Falls Prevention Taskforce, we are currently running training with community partners across Wales. The training helps people to identify falls risks, to signpost people to where they can get advice and help to reduce their risk of falling, and to provide people with the confidence to start conversations with older people about falls.

Along with partners Age Cymru, Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales and the Arts Council of Wales, we launched the Age-Friendly Culture Network of Wales in 2017. This network brings together individuals and organisations from arts, culture and heritage sectors from all over Wales to share skills, knowledge and good practice and to develop innovative and practical ways to use arts and culture to improve the lives and wellbeing of older people.

## Supporting network members

We support network members to make positive changes in the places they live and work. The Ageing Well in Wales website contains useful resources and contacts relating to the five themes of the programme, as well as case studies to share good practice and inspire people to take action.

We have also produced our own publications in response to requests from network members. Ageing Well in Wales publications provide clear, practical guidance and are developed in collaboration with partner organisations and older people.

- **A guide to being an age-friendly business** shows how being age-friendly is good for business, and doesn't have to be complicated or expensive. The guide contains simple hints and tips on how businesses can become more age-friendly.
- **A guide to setting up a community learning club** supports people to set up learning groups in their communities. The guide includes details of existing organisations which run community learning activities, as well as those which can provide help in setting up new clubs.
- **A pocket guide to being dementia supportive** provides practical advice on the things we can all do to be more supportive of people living with dementia.
- **Ageing Well Stories** is an inspiring collection of interviews with Ageing Well in Wales network members who are already making the places they live and work better places to grow older
- **How to age well: A guide to planning for a better later life** covers some of the important things to consider if you would like to age well. The guide is designed to change attitudes and to help start conversations with family, friends and colleagues about getting older.
- **Making a difference: A pocket guide to help you deal with loneliness** details some of the effective ways that some people combat loneliness, as well as contact details for organisations that can provide help.
- **Making Wales a nation of age-friendly communities: A practical guide to creating change in your community** has been produced for community groups and explains how to make your community more age-friendly.
- **Ageing Well Cards** provide simple, clear messages that older people, particularly those living with dementia and/or sensory loss, can use when using public transport or visiting shops, cafés and other businesses. The Cards are approved by Ageing Well partners from across Wales and are being rolled out via partners and older people's forums/groups.

All Ageing Well in Wales publications are available to download from our website. Please contact us if you would like to receive a printed copy.

We are currently developing schemes to recognise community groups and organisations that are working to make their communities more age-friendly.

Alongside our national partners, we also support campaigns to raise public awareness, such as **Steady On... Stay SAFE**, the public awareness campaign which challenges the myth that falls are an inevitable part of growing older and provides simple advice on how people can reduce their risk of falling.

# Looking forward

Ageing Well in Wales has helped to raise the profile of the older people's agenda in Wales, has received praise and been supported by local and national politicians, has featured in local media, and is increasingly embedded in communities across Wales. By celebrating the contribution of older people, Ageing Well is helping to counter negative perceptions of older people and is building up positive images whilst challenging the narrative that frailty and dependence are inevitable parts of growing older. There is huge potential for the programme to build on its foundations and achieve greater and lasting impact. Whilst good progress has been made, more work is needed to ensure that Wales is a good place to grow older for everyone.

Ageing Well will continue to develop its collaborative links with the Welsh Government, and complement key pieces of legislation, strategies and action plans. There are clear synergies not only with the Strategy for Older People 2013-23, but also with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. There are also links with the Public Health (Wales) Act 2017, particularly its aim to improve public toilet provision across Wales. Ageing Well is about improving outcomes for people and ensuring that older people across Wales have better health and wellbeing; the programme complements the seven national well-being goals and can contribute to the national indicators of relevance to older people.

The Welsh Government's National Dementia Plan 2018-22 should help to drive forward action to help people living with dementia and expand the dementia supportive communities movement across Wales. Similarly, the forthcoming National Strategy to tackle loneliness and isolation, expected in 2019, should also help to drive forward improvements and bring key partners together to combine knowledge and resources and come up with collaborative actions to reduce the number of people who experience loneliness and isolation. The Employability Plan should also help to ensure that older jobseekers have adequate levels of help and support to secure employment, and that older workers have the right skills and opportunities to improve their skills to stay in employment.

Further work will be undertaken to ensure that the local Ageing Well plans feed into the Local Wellbeing Plans, published by the Public Services Boards (PSBs) in May 2018. The Ageing Well agenda, and its five themes, should be seen as core work for PSBs across Wales and further work is needed to ensure that Wales has more age-friendly and dementia supportive communities, more learning and employment opportunities for older people, a reduction in the number of older people who fall, and a reduction in the number of older people who are experiencing loneliness.

Looking ahead to the next phase of Ageing Well in Wales, I believe that the key aims should be to:

- Empower and inspire older people and communities in Wales to create positive change in the places they live and work, making them better places to grow older for everyone. Creating new opportunities for partnership work, sharing good practice, learning and innovation. Developing practical tools and resources to help people and organisations in their endeavours.
- Fulfil the ambition and potential of making Wales a nation of age-friendly communities, ensuring that the Dublin Declaration commitments translate into tangible improvements to the lives and wellbeing of older people in Wales. Working closely with Local Authorities and Public Services Boards, ensuring that the principles of Ageing Well and age-friendly practices are embraced and embedded into future actions and Local Wellbeing Plans.
- Continue to influence and shape the policies and decisions made at all levels of government in Wales. Ensuring that the views, needs and aspirations of older people are reflected in plans, policies and delivery of services at national, regional and local levels throughout Wales.

Crucially, I think it is vital that Ageing Well in Wales continues to work with older people as equal partners, recognising that they are the 'experts by experience'. Only by harnessing the knowledge, skills and experience of older people, and building on their ideas and solutions can we ensure that Wales becomes a good place to grow older for everyone.

**If you're not already a member, you can join the Ageing Well in Wales network by contacting us on 02920 445 030 or at [ageingwell@olderpeoplewales.com](mailto:ageingwell@olderpeoplewales.com).**

# Age-friendly communities

**Strategic Aim:** To make Wales a nation of Age-Friendly Communities

If Wales is to be a good place to grow older for everyone, then empowering and enabling older people and supporting the development of age-friendly communities must be the overarching aim. Wales is a nation of older people, and yet all too often older people feel excluded, isolated and unable to participate in their communities due to a range of barriers.

An age-friendly community is inclusive of people of all ages and considers how best to support people as they age. It works with older people to ensure that the provision of facilities, infrastructure and services enable and empower everyone to have full and active lives within their community. A high value is placed on encouraging people of all ages to come together, share ideas, discuss concerns and priorities, and identify solutions that are low-cost yet high-impact.



The eight WHO domains of age-friendly communities

The original work undertaken by World Health Organisation (WHO) to define what it means for communities to be age-friendly has helped to guide, inspire and encourage partners to develop such communities across Wales.

Whilst substantial progress has been made since the programme's launch, there is much more to be done to ensure that Wales is an age-friendly nation, inclusive and considerate of everyone.

Notable achievements of Ageing Well in Wales partners to make Wales more age-friendly include:

- All 22 Local Authorities have signed up to the **Dublin Declaration**, a commitment to establish age-friendly communities locally. The Declaration has helped to push forward the age-friendly agenda and has played a key role in the development of Local Authority Ageing Well Plans<sup>3,4</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://bit.ly/2qlqh9u>

<sup>4</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HMxrBI>

- The publication of **‘Making Wales a nation of age-friendly communities: A practical guide’** has helped individuals, community groups and volunteers to make their neighbourhoods more age-friendly. The guide, produced in partnership with Cymru Older People’s Alliance (COPA), describes a simple eight-step process to make a difference where you live<sup>5</sup>.
- The **North Wales Ageing Well Network** brings together relevant partners across the region and forms a platform to exchange information and good practice, as well as highlighting key pieces of work relevant to the Ageing Well agenda. The Network adds value to the six local Ageing Well plans in the region and helps to bring consistency to the work underway in each Local Authority.

“The Ageing Well in Wales programme has certainly improved the strategic partnership working between organisations in North Wales. Setting up the North Wales Ageing Well in Wales Network has provided the means for numerous organisations including from health, local government and the third sector to come together on a regular basis to discuss the various aspects of ageing well in the region, to identify local solutions and to share existing good practice.”

**Aled Evans**

Business Development Manager, Age Cymru Gwynedd a Môn

- In 2015, the communities of **Fishguard and Goodwick** in Pembrokeshire participated in a WHO pilot. The pilot included global cities such as Shanghai, New Delhi and Washington DC, and encouraged people in Fishguard and Goodwick to look at the barriers in their communities and identify solutions that help to ensure that people of all ages feel more inclusive. The WHO pilot’s findings were published in a report entitled ‘Measuring the age-friendliness of cities’<sup>6</sup>, and the ‘Age-Friendly City Indicator Pilot Final Report’ provides a summary of the work that took place in Fishguard and Goodwick, including how it has helped to make these communities more age-friendly<sup>7</sup>.
- Ageing Well in Wales has also contributed to and helped to strengthen the **UK Network of Age-Friendly Communities**. The network, led by the **Centre for Ageing Better**, brings together cities and communities active on age-friendly work across the UK. The participation of Ageing Well has helped to ensure that partners are aware of the good work underway in Wales and are

<sup>5</sup> <https://bit.ly/2njZDoC>

<sup>6</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HyJrsE>

<sup>7</sup> <https://bit.ly/2J6OPk0>

signposted towards relevant partners for the exchange of good practice, advice and information.

“We have been working with the Ageing Well Programme as part of the steering group of the UK Network of Age-friendly Communities for a year now. The resources produced by the Programme are excellent, serving in particular rural communities and in an accessible way that support the many older activists who might not be specialists, to take the work forward. We’re delighted to be able to share these resources so that they reach a wider audience. The team at Ageing Well who helped plan the network conference in 2017, make for helpful, willing and informed colleagues in our efforts to create more age-friendly communities across the UK.”

**Natalie Turner**

Senior Programme Manager – Localities, Centre for Ageing Better

- The **Rural Wisdom** project, delivered by **Volunteering Matters**, is helping to develop and establish age-friendly communities across Wales. In Flintshire, the **Leeswood** and **Pontblyddyn** community has established an Age-Friendly Community Steering group. Following a series of consultation and engagement activity, priorities that will enable everyone in the community to age well have been identified and an Action Plan has been developed. Initial actions include increasing the use of the community centre by installing Wi-fi, transforming the facilities into a multi-purpose community space and improving communication about the range of facilities, activities, and events in the community. Local skills, expertise and resources are being developed and will support other communities to become age-friendly<sup>8</sup>. In Pembrokeshire, people in **Milford Haven** are enjoying weekly social groups based around board games and handicrafts, a much-missed lunch club is up and running again, 70 people receive news on the Milford Small Steps email group, and very local, low-cost or no-cost activities are being publicised on a monthly basis<sup>9</sup>.
- On Anglesey, the **Cynghrair Pobl Seiriol Alliance** has been developed to improve local facilities, encourage the sharing of resources, skills and knowledge, and promote intergenerational linkages. A community transport scheme has been introduced to help younger and older people, social activities are regularly held in three local community hubs, including Llanfaes Community Centre, and improvements have been made to Llanddona Village Hall to make it more accessible<sup>10</sup>.

---

<sup>8</sup> <https://bit.ly/2qIHlaT>

<sup>9</sup> <https://bit.ly/2J7NYiV>

<sup>10</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HLGKSx>

At Arts4Wellbeing, we share Sarah Rochira's passionate belief that older people make a massive contribution to our culture, our society and our economy. Creating opportunities for older people to contribute and play an active role in our communities benefits all of us.

When we first met up with The Ageing Well in Wales team about three years ago, it was like a breath of fresh air! We were extremely impressed and inspired from the word go. We had found an organisation that was incredibly approachable, friendly, professional and genuinely interested in hearing all the issues. We had also found kindred spirits; a group of individuals who passionately cared about addressing the real issues and making a positive difference at the community and national level.

Ageing Well in Wales creates opportunities to gather together, to share existing ideas and to develop new ones in a very accessible, positive and celebratory way. Being a part of Ageing Well in Wales has given us a national platform to showcase our very local community work and enabled us to collaborate widely with new partners across Wales.

**Mike Hotson & Sara Wentworth**  
Arts4Wellbeing

- In **Conwy**, work continues to build on the previous Age-Friendly Communities project funded by the European Regional Development Fund through the Ireland Wales INTERREG 4A Programme<sup>11</sup>. In 2017, Llandrillo College hosted intergenerational training events open to staff and third sector organisations. The Conwy Community Wellbeing Service and the Participation officers continue to work with the third sector to embed intergenerational practice across all ages.
- **Great Western Railway (GWR)** / First Travel Group are working to make journeys on their trains more age and dementia friendly. Over 3,000 frontline GWR staff have become Dementia Friends. GWR recognise that making rail journeys accessible to all means making changes not only to their own services and staff, but to all aspects of the journey, and are working with Swansea University and other partners to improve announcements and signage both on trains and in stations.
- In **Newport**, work continues to establish an age-friendly city. An age-friendly Newport event was held in February 2017 to bring together a range of partners, older people's groups and others who are active on age-friendly

---

<sup>11</sup> <https://bit.ly/2J7Wn60>

activities. The event was a great success and has helped to accelerate the age-friendly work underway across the city<sup>12</sup>.

- The publication of '**A guide to being an age-friendly business**' supports businesses of all sizes across Wales with practical guidance on how to become more age-friendly. The guide provides practical advice and support, and was produced in partnership with Cymru Older People's Alliance (COPA)<sup>13</sup>. Postcards signposting the guide have been developed in partnership with older people's groups, enabling older people to engage directly with their local businesses to promote age-friendly businesses and consider the needs of people of all ages<sup>14</sup>.
- In **Pembrokeshire**, **Solva Care** is an innovative community-based project focusing on social care. Solva Care enables older people to stay in their own homes and remain part of the community, offers a way to tackle loneliness and isolation, and provides extra support for families and carers<sup>15</sup>.
- The **Good Neighbour Scheme**, also in Pembrokeshire, has helped a number of older people. The scheme provides practical help and support to people dependent on their needs and circumstances, such as home maintenance, transportation or bringing shopping home to the individual<sup>16</sup>.
- The **Age-Friendly Culture Network** was launched in 2017. The network was created with Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales and working with the Arts Council of Wales, Ageing Well in Wales, Gwanwyn – Age Cymru and others to help to ensure that museums, galleries and libraries in Wales are age and dementia friendly. The network aims to develop better ways to engage with older people and improve their quality of life and wellbeing through involvement with arts, culture and heritage.

“Working with Ageing Well in Wales has enabled the Arts Council of Wales to have contact with like-minded organisations across a range of sectors. It has raised the profile of a collaboration across the arts, health and care sectors to celebrate older people, their creativity and their role in promoting a strong and compassionate society.”

**Phil George**

Chair, Arts Council of Wales

---

<sup>12</sup> <https://bit.ly/2J7WT3W>

<sup>13</sup> <https://bit.ly/2o6tVtR>

<sup>14</sup> <https://bit.ly/2nCZnPQ>

<sup>15</sup> <https://bit.ly/2EZyKtS>

<sup>16</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HCmBAM>

“Through our partnership with Ageing Well in Wales, the work of Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales has reached many more people. Many of these are socially isolated and vulnerable people, who probably wouldn’t have engaged with our museums otherwise. It has helped create new strategic partnerships which are informing and shaping our practice to ensure we are relevant to the communities we are working with. The programme has supported us in improving our age-friendly practice, and inspired us to push the age-friendly agenda in communities surrounding our museums. With Ageing Well in Wales, we have also been able to launch the Age-Friendly Culture Network, which is bringing together people from different sectors towards improving life for older people in Wales.”

**Sharon Ford**

Learning, Participation and Interpretation Manager, Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales

“Our involvement with Ageing Well in Wales has been inspirational. Not only does it give us membership of probably one of the most effective networks in Wales; it has also been the medium for some brilliant events, in which practical measures to improve the lot of older people have been developed and implemented. Having an advocate like Sarah Rochira has been invaluable for charities like Music in Hospitals & Care, which try to improve the quality of life of people whose lives are constrained by health issues. It would be hard to think of anyone in recent times who has contributed more to making Wales a better place for older people than Sarah. We are most privileged to have had the opportunity to work with her, her office and the Ageing Well in Wales team.”

**Robert Aitken**

Director, Music in Hospitals and Care Wales

- Ageing Well in Wales guides are produced in partnership with older people including the Cymru Older People’s Alliance (COPA). Older people’s forums, groups and networks have played a full and active part in Ageing Well events, with representatives often participating as speakers and playing an active role in workshops. At a Local Authority level, the focus on age-friendly communities and the publication of local Ageing Well plans has helped to strengthen the work of the 50+ Forums, empowering older people to have their voices heard and enabling them to directly engage with and influence decision-makers.

“I feel the Ageing Well in Wales programme has become the ‘go to’ place for all Local Authorities and older people’s groups and the Commissioner should be congratulated on chairing and hosting it. The publications are excellent and very useful to many organisations. I attended an Ageing Well event in Cardiff recently which was excellent. There was up to date information on what is happening around Wales, plus drama, which made me laugh and cry and I have been told that this was replicated around Wales. Our partnership with Ageing Well has been enormously helpful to COPA. The opportunity to work together on the age-friendly agenda, to be able to network with partners across the country and to share ideas with like-minded people has been of great benefit and also helped us with our mission to give older people in Wales a strong voice plus achieve charitable status.”

**Gaynor Davies**

Chair of Cymru Older People’s Alliance (COPA)

“Ageing Well in Wales has made a huge difference to the older people’s agenda in Wales. It has helped to raise awareness of key issues such as dementia, falls prevention and tackling loneliness and isolation. At all times it has involved older people as equal partners and provided an opportunity for older people across Wales to voice their concerns, priorities and solutions. Ageing Well is about action. The publications and events produced by Ageing Well are excellent, it is a pleasure to support the programme and I will continue to encourage older people to get involved and expand the Ageing Well community across Wales.”

**Phyllis Preece**

Chair, National Pensioners Convention

- **Swansea University’s Centre for Innovative Ageing** has designed and published **OPERAT (Older People’s External Residential Assessment Tool)**<sup>17,18</sup>. This tool enables people to make simple assessments of how well their neighbourhoods meet the needs of older people. In conjunction with Ageing Well in Wales, Swansea University is training groups of older people to carry out the assessment in their communities, as well as capturing results of assessments nationally. Swansea Council and Swansea University have been successful in a funding application to the Social Care Research Capacity Building Grant to roll out OPERAT in conjunction with Age-Friendly Communities guidance, community development skills and an introduction to appreciative enquiry. This will be piloted in two communities in Swansea and will include the production of a short film and a celebration event.

<sup>17</sup> <https://bit.ly/2JnOee7>

<sup>18</sup> <https://bit.ly/2qZLTPN>

# Dementia Supportive Communities

**Strategic Aim:** To make Wales a dementia supportive nation by building and promoting dementia supportive communities

It's been estimated that there are over 45,000 people in Wales living with dementia, with well under half of these having received a formal diagnosis<sup>19,20</sup>. In the next five years, the number of people living with dementia in Wales is expected to rise to over 55,000.

At some stage of their lives, the majority of people in Wales are likely to be affected by dementia, whether living with dementia themselves, caring for a loved one living with dementia, or through the experience of friends, family, neighbours and colleagues. Making Wales a nation of dementia supportive communities is therefore crucial for the lives and wellbeing of older people.

A dementia supportive community is one in which people living with dementia, along with those who care for them, are involved with and engaged with their communities. It is a community in which their voices are heard and they are able to make a positive contribution. Through being more compassionate, more caring and understanding, a dementia supportive community does not just benefit people affected by dementia – it benefits all who live there.

When the Ageing Well programme was launched, the focus on dementia in Welsh policy and decision making was not as evident as it is today. Over the past three years, there has been a step change in how society and public services talk about, perceive and address dementia. Research published in 2016 found that dementia has overtaken heart disease as the leading cause of death in England and Wales<sup>21</sup>. Whilst the increased focus and attention on dementia is welcomed, there is much more to be done to ensure that Wales is a dementia supportive nation.

My 'Dementia: More than just memory loss' report found that whilst there pockets of good practice, too many people living with dementia in Wales are experiencing barriers that prevent them from accessing the services and support they need<sup>22</sup>. These include public services that have an insufficient understanding and knowledge of dementia, negative and misguided perceptions about people living with dementia, and communities that do not have the know-how to make people

---

<sup>19</sup> <https://bit.ly/2Hc4FNR>

<sup>20</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HegrDs>

<sup>21</sup> <https://bbc.in/2f8gh2d>

<sup>22</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HypSRh>

living with dementia, their families and carers, feel welcomed and integrated into society.

The publication of the Welsh Government's National Dementia Action Plan 2018-22 in February 2018 shows the growing recognition that dementia support needs to be addressed by all levels of government and society<sup>23</sup>. The plan should provide the impetus for Local Authorities, Health Boards and others to come together, listen to the thoughts and experiences of people living with dementia, and plan how to address the barriers and develop solutions that help to ensure that Wales is a good place to live for all people affected by dementia.

Notable achievements and good practice from Ageing Well in Wales partners include:

- The **Ageing Well 'Pocket guide to being dementia supportive'** has been hugely popular and provides individuals, volunteers and groups with practical advice and support on how to establish dementia supportive communities. A number of Ageing Well partners are promoting the guide across Wales<sup>24</sup>.

"I first became aware of Ageing Well in Wales through their booklet 'A pocket guide to being dementia supportive'. The guide was written in a format that was simple to read but also informative. I remember saying to my colleague 'I wish I had been given this when I was a carer looking after someone with dementia' and 'everybody needs to read this booklet'. I found out more about Ageing Well in Wales, and after getting in touch, have had the opportunity to work with the team on further publications relating to how to age well. Through our partnership work, we have made sure that the topic of advance care planning was embedded into the 'How to age well' booklet and have also developed a specific after care planning guide jointly between the Health Board and Ageing Well in Wales. The Ageing Well in Wales approach and concept is now incorporated into our own public engagement events throughout Gwent, and we regularly distribute their guides at events we attend."

**Christine Fretwell**

Macmillan Advance Care Planning Facilitator, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

- The **Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust** launched its three-year Dementia Plan in October 2017. The plan aims to improve the experience for people living with dementia who use their services, as well as considering the impact it will have on the workforce<sup>25</sup>.

---

<sup>23</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HebGdj>

<sup>24</sup> <https://bit.ly/1XwtZhf>

<sup>25</sup> <https://bit.ly/2DuRHEq>

- **Gwent Police** has developed and implemented the **Herbert Protocol**, which encourages care homes, carers, families and friends to hold information about the person with dementia that can help the police find them if they do go missing<sup>26</sup>. All Gwent Police officers and community support officers have attended Dementia Friends sessions and new staff will receive sessions via their induction. Other police forces in Wales are now looking into adopting the Protocol.
- The **Alzheimer’s Society in Wales** has been central in the drive to develop, promote and roll out dementia supportive/friendly communities<sup>27</sup>, and there are currently nearly 112,000 Dementia Friends in Wales. Supported by the advice and support of Alzheimer’s regional coordinators and other partners, there are over 50 villages, towns, cities in Wales that are already recognised as Dementia Friendly Communities, as well as national organisations that are recognised as being Dementia Friendly, such as the **Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust** and **North Wales Police**, with more working to receive this recognition<sup>28</sup>.

“People with dementia have told us that they have a right to continue with day-to-day life and family life without discrimination, to be accepted and included in our communities and not live in loneliness or isolation. Alzheimer’s Society has been pleased to work alongside Ageing Well in Wales to raise awareness and understanding of dementia in Wales, shifting hearts and minds and creating communities that recognise, respect, value and support people living with dementia so that they feel enabled and empowered to continue to lead the lives that they choose. Working together and with others have put us in a strong position to achieve our ultimate aim, which is to create a Dementia Friendly Wales.”

**Sue Phelps**

Wales’ Operations Director, Alzheimer’s Society Wales

- The **Dementia Empowerment and Engagement Project (DEEP)** in Wales supports people living with dementia to have their voices heard. A growing number of DEEP groups in Wales support people living with dementia, their families and carers to improve services and policies that affect their lives. DEEP members provided crucial feedback to the Welsh Government on the National Dementia Action Plan<sup>29,30</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> <https://bit.ly/2Hzf45y>

<sup>27</sup> <https://bit.ly/2qJxia1>

<sup>28</sup> <https://bit.ly/2voZULu>

<sup>29</sup> <https://bit.ly/1HLo3YF>

<sup>30</sup> <https://bit.ly/2qGFc50>

- **Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales** is developing a dementia programme across all its sites. A dementia friendly audit has been carried out at a number of national museum sites, providing valuable information for future planning. A dementia friendly underground tour was launched at Big Pit in 2017, and a series of creative activities for people living with dementia took place at the National Museum, Cardiff.
- **Brecon Dementia Friendly Community** was the first in Wales to be officially recognised by the Alzheimer’s Society. A growing community partnership is now in place, helping Brecon to become more inclusive and supportive of those living with dementia. The ‘ripple effect’ has now gone beyond Brecon, with other villages and towns in Powys now being recognised for their dementia friendly work<sup>31</sup>.

“For little acorns to grow in to great oaks there needs to be nurturing and encouragement. Over the past four years, Ageing Well in Wales has undoubtedly provided these essentials for the much-needed development of dementia support in Powys. From the small beginnings of establishing Brecon as a dementia friendly community, showcasing the potential and sharing the learning, to recommendation for financial support from the Big Lottery, Ageing Well has been there every step of the way. As a result, within Powys, there is now a far greater understanding of need, an ever-growing number of towns and villages being recognised for their dementia friendly work, and a new Powys-wide charity, Dementia Matters in Powys, has been established to assist with developing community, voluntary and statutory partnerships and broaden the scope of the work. Powys has a lot to thank Ageing Well in Wales for, and we are very grateful for such a wonderfully positive, open and forward-thinking relationship.”

**Rhiannon Davies**

Co-founder, Dementia Friendly Brecon & Founder member of Dementia Matters in Powys

- **Glamorgan County Cricket Club** is working to be recognised as dementia friendly. The club has become a Dementia Friendly Cardiff member and will support staff and volunteers to receive Dementia Friends information sessions, as well as reviewing the accessibility of the Sophia Gardens stadium for people living with dementia<sup>32</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HKPurU>

<sup>32</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HeKJ8Y>

- **Llanelli Dementia Friendly Community** includes a broad range of partners, including the Town Council and local businesses. Actions include the introduction of slower shopping Tuesday for people living with dementia, the introduction of the UK's first dementia friendly market and the launch of the 'Toilet Paper Pack' in Llanelli, encouraging businesses to make their public toilets dementia friendly. All community facilities owned by the Town Council will be made dementia friendly by the end of 2018<sup>33,34</sup>.
- **Dementia Matters in Powys** has begun a three year Big Lottery funded project to assist and support people living with dementia. Some of their early achievements include the establishment of several Dementia Meeting Centres in Powys. Meeting Centres are low-cost community-based ways of supporting people living with dementia and their families<sup>35</sup>.
- In **Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan**, communities are working together to develop a Dementia Friendly Region. **Cardiff West** and **Barry** have already received formal recognition by the Alzheimer's Society. There are now over 7,000 Dementia Friends and the movement continues to expand<sup>36</sup>. Cardiff Council is also working with a range of partners to help to ensure that Cardiff becomes a dementia friendly city<sup>37</sup>.
- In **Gwynedd**, the Leisure Service in the Local Authority is responsible for running the pioneering **DementiaGo scheme**, which aims to make a physical and mental difference to those who live with dementia, and those who care for them. The scheme, supported by the National Exercise Referral Scheme, currently runs in five centres and participants take part in physical and social activities in the centres<sup>38</sup>.
- **St Joseph's RC High School** in Newport has been accredited as the first Dementia Friendly school in Wales<sup>39</sup>. This has been closely followed by other schools in Wales including **Blaen-y-Cwm** in **Blaenau Gwent** and **Griffithstown Primary** in **Torfaen**<sup>40,41</sup>. Blaenavon Post Office has also become the first dementia friendly Post Office in Gwent<sup>42</sup>.

---

<sup>33</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HzX8YA>

<sup>34</sup> <https://bit.ly/2JXyf7v>

<sup>35</sup> <https://bit.ly/2qKJJDI>

<sup>36</sup> <https://bit.ly/2JZO6ST>

<sup>37</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HaW361>

<sup>38</sup> <https://bit.ly/2JVzXGi>

<sup>39</sup> <https://bit.ly/2EXI2H5>

<sup>40</sup> <https://bit.ly/2qOFtmv>

<sup>41</sup> <https://bit.ly/2qImgBK>

<sup>42</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HKdqvF>

- **Prestatyn Dementia Friendly Community** involves the Artisan’s Collective Community Interest Company, local businesses, the Town Council, North Wales Police and the Health Board. Over a hundred people have attended Dementia Friends sessions and working with the Alzheimer’s Society has led to at least six local Dementia Friends Champions. Older people and others are invited to the Artisan’s Collective to participate in dementia friendly drop-ins, use adapted bikes, and enjoy mind music<sup>43</sup>. The work of the Artisan’s Collective CIC has been recognised and shortlisted for the Voluntary Arts Epic Awards 2018<sup>44</sup>.

“It is my pleasure as Director of Artisans Collective, founder member of Prestatyn Men’s Shed, and Chair of Prestatyn Dementia Friendly Community to talk about the great support and help that we receive from the Ageing Well in Wales team. For the past three years we have worked closely with the team on all aspects of the voluntary work that we are engaged with in Prestatyn, and have been fortunate to have been invited to talk about our experiences across north Wales. The events organised by the team have been fantastic with brilliant opportunities to find out about what other organisations both governmental and voluntary are doing to help our older population. We have certainly picked up a lot of knowledge about what is being done across Wales and it has certainly helped us grow and develop our activities. Because of our work with Ageing Well we have been motivated and inspired to help those people not just to live longer but to have a decent quality of living. We believe that many of the initiatives supported and promoted by Ageing Well are helping us work towards that.

“The Ageing Well team has made everybody feel as if we are all working together as one team to improve the quality of services and day to day living for the older citizens of Wales. All of us involved in Prestatyn are proud of our association with Ageing Well in Wales and look forward to many years of working together to help the agenda nationally and at our local level. Thank you for all you do.”

**Pete Harrison**

Prestatyn Artisans Collective

---

<sup>43</sup> <http://prestatynfriendly.co.uk/>

<sup>44</sup> <https://bit.ly/2voZdSh>

- **Re-Live** theatre company are taking their award-winning play **Belonging / Perthyn**<sup>45</sup> on tour around Wales following successful performances in 2017. This bilingual play reflects the real-life experiences of people living with dementia. Ageing Well in Wales and partners will be providing support and signposting at performances in Wales.

“The Ageing Well in Wales team headed by Sarah Rochira and supported by her fantastic team, is a vital and important programme which enables services and organisations across Wales to connect, share and learn from each other. The team are passionate about highlighting best practice and the great work organisations and services are doing to support older people in Wales. Re-Live are hugely grateful to the Ageing Well in Wales team for all their support.”

**Karin Diamond**  
Re-Live Co-Director

- **The Elephant Who Forgot** book, written and published by the Caerphilly Parent Networking Group, helps children to better understand dementia<sup>46</sup>.
- In **Caerphilly**, partnership between the Local Authority, the Alzheimer’s Society and town centre businesses has led to work that will make Town Centres more inclusive for people living with dementia. The development of ‘Town Centre Digital Memory Books’ using local history images are accessible at a growing number of Memory Cafés as well as libraries. The Winding House in New Tredegar was the first dementia friendly museum in Wales and includes a Memory Café, where people living with dementia can meet and socialise<sup>47</sup>. Blackwood Miners Institute and the local cinema also schedule dementia friendly performances.

---

<sup>45</sup> <https://bit.ly/1W8AyWy>

<sup>46</sup> <https://bit.ly/2Hdo5xT>

<sup>47</sup> <https://bit.ly/2JZpp9k>

# Falls Prevention

**Strategic aim:** To support older people to reduce their risk of falling, reducing the number of falls amongst older people in Wales

Between 230,000 and 460,000 people over the age of 60 fall in Wales every year. A fall for an older person can be life-changing, impacting their confidence, their independence and their mobility. Falls are estimated to cost the NHS in the UK more than £2.3 billion per year. Despite this, a great many falls could be prevented<sup>48,49</sup>.

There is increasing recognition amongst key partners that more needs to be done to tackle falls amongst older people in Wales. In 2017, the **Prudent Healthcare National Falls Prevention Task Force** was established by the 1,000 Lives Improvement Service. The Task Force was based upon the former Ageing Well in Wales Expert Advisory Group on Falls, and contains representatives from every Health Board in Wales, key third sector agencies and the Welsh Government. The taskforce supports the Ageing Well in Wales aim through a preventative approach which benefits everyone: it improves the resilience and quality of life of older people, while reducing the need for costly health and social care interventions.

“Thanks to Ageing Well in Wales, falls prevention has a strong profile across Wales, from Ministers, through public services to older people in their homes. Its practical and urgent community approach is linked to a consistent strategic buy-in that is envied across the UK. Our ‘Steady On, Stay Safe’ message has created an active, engaged citizen model, promoting prudent health, reducing dependency and focusing on what matters most to older people themselves. Its potency is exemplified by the creation of a national public service falls prevention taskforce, that unites partners from every corner and sector in Wales with the NHS. Our falls brief intervention training, embeds key messages in the natural discourse of every service...demanding us all to ‘have your conversation today!’ This has the potential to spread like wildfire and become a common approach in public service and community life. Now there is a genuine belief that we can reduce falls amongst older people if we all work together. This spark of enthusiasm and energy, lighting a beacon in every corner of Wales, was kindled by Ageing Well in Wales.”

**Neil Williams**

Chair, National Prudent Healthcare Falls Prevention Taskforce

---

<sup>48</sup> <https://bit.ly/2coPZ9G>

<sup>49</sup> <https://bit.ly/2vlgltC>

Notable achievements and good practice from Ageing Well in Wales partners include:

- **Steady On...Stay SAFE**<sup>50</sup> is the national falls awareness campaign developed by the Ageing Well in Wales and the Task Force. The key messages of Steady On...Stay SAFE are that falls are not an inevitable part of growing older and that it's never too late to reduce your risk of falling. The campaign is the heart of partnership work led by the taskforce to incorporate good practice on falls prevention throughout Wales.

“Ageing Well in Wales has been the catalyst for community falls prevention efforts becoming focused, coherent, consistent and evidence based. Ageing Well in Wales was solely responsible for the development of “Steady on Stay Safe”; the brand for raising awareness about falls nationally and delivering falls prevention efforts. The vision that Ageing Well in Wales brought was to encourage collaboration and partnership working between all organisations working to prevent falls. As a result, Wales has a task force that is putting in place a sustainable approach to community falls prevention and is an approach which other Home Nations are now looking to copy.”

**Dr. Sarah Jones**

Consultant in Environmental Health Protection, Public Health Wales

- In 2017, **Community Pharmacy Wales** adopted Steady On...Stay SAFE as one of their national health promotion campaigns<sup>51</sup>. All 715 community pharmacies across Wales and a number of community activities supported the initiative.
- A **Falls Brief Intervention** training module has been developed by Ageing Well in Wales and the Task Force and is currently being rolled out to partners across Wales. The course helps people to identify falls risks, start conversations with older people about falls, and signpost them to where they can get practical help and expert advice.
- In February 2018, Public Health Wales and the Task Force hosted the UK's first ever **Falls Prevention Summit**, which including participants from Scotland and England as well as Wales<sup>52</sup>. Task Force members highlighted the work which has progressed in Wales under the three key pillars of strength and balance, safe home environments and falls history.

---

<sup>50</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HcKNdg>

<sup>51</sup> <https://bit.ly/2vsehyC>

<sup>52</sup> <https://bit.ly/2vuT3jy>

- An annual **Falls Awareness Week** has been established, led by **Care & Repair Cymru, Age Cymru** and **Age Connects**. During the week, partner agencies are encouraged to talk to their clients and customers about falls, helping to destigmatise the fear of falling and to make having conversations about falls commonplace.

“The Ageing Well in Wales Programme has enabled Age Cymru to highlight the focus and work of our Healthy Ageing Team, but more importantly it has facilitated and forged great partnership working between multi sectors and crucially participation of older people who have a knowledge and lived experience of the communities that we serve across Wales.

“Through collaborative working we have been able to raise the profile of our messaging around healthy ageing, dispelling myths and challenging the negative stereotypes of getting older. With a shared vision and passion, we have enjoyed a successful partnership that has complemented the Welsh Government’s Strategy for Older People, empowering older people to take charge of their own health, destiny and future through information around illness prevention and health promotion.”

**Angharad Phillips**

Health Initiatives Officer, Age Cymru

- **Care & Repair Cymru** supports 45,000 older people to continue to live independently in their homes each year. Over 12,000 older people have received a **Healthy Home** assessment from Care & Repair, with 4,300 being supported through its flagship **Rapid Response Adaptation Programme (RRAP)**, which ensures a safe return to home following a hospital discharge. These interventions combine prudent health advice with practical interventions such as aids and home adaptations to reduce the real risk of a fall<sup>53,54</sup>.
- **Cardiff and Vale University Health Board** has produced a short animated film, the **Falls Prevention Fuel Tank**<sup>55</sup>, which provides guidance on how people can take action to reduce their risk of falling.
- **Cwm Taf University Health Board** has developed a resource pack and handbook for sheltered housing schemes and community groups to run their activities to inform, educate and provide practical advice on falls awareness. This project has expanded to include Registered Social Landlords across Cwm Taf. The sessions include activities such as Tai Chi, and have also helped with social interaction and tackling loneliness.

<sup>53</sup> <https://bit.ly/2xduzv7>

<sup>54</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HgU93C>

<sup>55</sup> <https://bit.ly/2GcBaLv>

- A number of publications have been produced to raise awareness of the dangers of falls, to encourage preventative actions and to ensure that people are aware of the importance of keeping healthy and active. The **Chartered Society of Physiotherapy's** 'Get Up and Go' guide is a central part of the National Falls Prevention campaign. The guide is supported by a 'six exercises for staying steady' supplement and a useful video<sup>56,57,58</sup>. **Age Cymru** has produced 'Avoiding slips, trips and falls'<sup>59</sup>, and Ageing Well in Wales has published '8 Myths about Falls'<sup>60</sup>. Ageing Well in Wales and the Task Force have also worked with ElderFit<sup>61</sup> on a DVD which shows simple exercises that people can do in their own homes to reduce their risk of falling.

"It has been an honour being involved in the Ageing Well in Wales Programme. The CSP has been able to play a full part in the falls prevention strand of the work and it has provided the profession with an opportunity to showcase the full range of resources created to support the falls prevention agenda. We would like to thank the Older People's Commissioner for focussing on falls. The 'Ageing Well' programme has seen the creation of a very powerful campaign #steadyonstaysafe and this will result in a greater awareness of falls prevention saving pain and misery for older people"

**Pip Ford**

Policy Officer for Wales, Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

- **'Pimp my Zimmer'**, led by **Aneurin Bevan University Health Board**, is a project that aims to reduce falls in care homes. Staff in care homes noticed that residents were falling because they could not pick out their walking frames from those of other residents. By offering a range of colours and themes that appeal to the individual, 'Pimp my Zimmer' is leading to a significant reduction in falls. One care home saw falls reduce by up to 60%. The project has received significant media interest and is looking to expand beyond south east Wales<sup>62,63</sup>. Working with Citizens Cymru, the Health Board and its partners are lobbying manufacturers to produce zimmers and other walking aids in a range of colours.

<sup>56</sup> <https://bit.ly/1j9QNmy>

<sup>57</sup> <https://bit.ly/2JVfOLM>

<sup>58</sup> <https://bit.ly/2fIM1T6>

<sup>59</sup> <https://bit.ly/2J7AweZ>

<sup>60</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HNDcPm>

<sup>61</sup> <https://bit.ly/2qKhCU8>

<sup>62</sup> <https://bbc.in/2B1WnnD>

<sup>63</sup> <https://bit.ly/2JakG3j>

- In **Bridgend**, the Local Authority and partners, including Bridgend College and **Sport Wales**, hosted the latest **OlympAGE Games event** in December 2017. The games form part of a wellbeing initiative that has been rolled out in local care settings to improve physical and mental wellbeing. The event, hosted in Cefn Cribwr, attracted hundreds of older people and promoted ways of staying healthy and active. Groups from local care homes and day centres participated in Olympic-themed events, with a range of games and activities that can improve physical and mental wellbeing and reduce the risk of falling. Satellite OlympAGE events are now being planned by a number of Bridgend third sector agencies in partnership with the Council. The message is clear: You're not too old to go for gold!<sup>64</sup>.

---

<sup>64</sup> <https://bit.ly/2Btd3Vk>

# Opportunities for Learning and Employment

**Strategic aim:** To ensure the experience of older people in Wales is optimised through continued learning and employment

When the programme was launched, there was very little attention placed on learning and employment opportunities for older people. Over the past three years the discussion and narrative around these key issues has changed and improved dramatically. A number of publications have been produced at Wales and UK levels to raise awareness of the issues and to promote the benefits of including older people in the workplace and improving their skillsets. These include Business in the Community / PRIME's 'The Missing Million'<sup>65</sup> reports; 'Age in the Workplace'<sup>66</sup>, also from Business in the Community; and 'A New Vision for Older Workers: Retain, Retrain, Recruit', a report prepared by the former Business Champion for Older Workers to the UK Government<sup>67</sup>.

With an ageing population an increasing number of older people want or need to work. Employing older people benefits everyone: it improves older people's financial resilience and can improve their health and wellbeing. Older workers strengthen workplaces, enabling younger workers to benefit from the exchange of skills and knowledge. Provided with the right support and opportunities, older people can make a significant contribution to the economy, and yet older workers and jobseekers often experience ageism. As highlighted by the Welsh Government's 'Prosperity for All' national strategy, now is the time to "use the talents of all our people for longer and we must ensure that we do not waste the abilities of our older workers"<sup>68</sup>.

Significant funding reductions to adult and community-based learning across Wales has had a huge impact on older people's lives. In one year (2014/15), funding for adult community learning was reduced by over a third<sup>69</sup>. For some, learning is essential to gain new skills and qualifications to remain in or return to the workplace. For others, learning is about social interaction, seeking new challenges, self-fulfilment and mental stimulation. Whilst learning opportunities for older people have been reduced, there are a number of community-based initiatives, schemes and

---

<sup>65</sup> <https://bit.ly/2qUgDRX>

<sup>66</sup> <https://bit.ly/2qVvj2E>

<sup>67</sup> <https://bit.ly/1S3JVEN>

<sup>68</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HQe78W>

<sup>69</sup> <https://bbc.in/1i0eWcg>

classes that provide older people with a wealth of learning opportunities across Wales.

Despite some key developments, there is much more to do to ensure that employers in Wales recognise the benefits of employing older people; that older employees are provided with the right skills and support to remain in the workplace; that older jobseekers are provided with adequate levels of help, support and information to get back into employment; and that older people are able to access lifelong and community-based learning, regardless of where they live.

Notable practice and key achievements from Ageing Well in Wales partners include the following:

## Employment

- In March 2018, **Welsh Government** produced an **All-Age Employability Plan**<sup>70</sup>. The plan recognises that employers will need to be more flexible to take advantage of the skills and abilities of an ageing workforce. The plan commits the Welsh Government, Careers Wales and others to ensure that older workers are encouraged to think proactively about their career opportunities and skills needs. The plan is supported by the ‘People Don’t Have a Best Before Date’ campaign, which encourages employers to recruit and train older workers. The campaign promotes the benefits of an age-diverse workforce<sup>71</sup>, including case studies, a toolkit for managers of older workers, and myth busting information.

“Ageing Well in Wales quickly identified that one of the key barriers to employment for older people is ageism. Through Ageing Well’s influence and guidance, Welsh Government has recognised that we need a culture change in this area and have funded campaigns such as ‘People Don’t Have a Best Before Date’ to encourage employers to recruit, retain and retrain older workers.”

**Terry Mills**

Chair, Ministerial Advisory Forum on Ageing

- The Welsh Government has also committed to making apprenticeships available to all ages, promoting this during Apprenticeship Week Wales, an annual awareness raising week<sup>72</sup>.

---

<sup>70</sup> <https://bit.ly/2GKyIsy>

<sup>71</sup> <https://bit.ly/2xyEv2d>

<sup>72</sup> <https://bit.ly/2Kcprec>

- The **Centre for Ageing and Dementia Research (CADR)** is leading on an **‘Opportunities for Learning and Employment’ (OLE) research group**. The group, formed in 2017, brings together key partners and is a platform to improve learning and employment opportunities for older people, identify barriers and develop solutions. The group brings together many of the key partners involved in the former Ageing Well Expert Advisory Group.
- **Agile Nation 2** is a European Social Fund/Welsh Government funded programme that is delivered by **Chwarae Teg**. It has been developed to help improve the position of women of all ages in the workforce across priority sectors in Wales. Older women continue to benefit from the programme in terms of increased confidence, the ability to deal with work challenges and improving personal skills<sup>73</sup>.
- **Wales TUC** has been very active in supporting older workers. In conjunction with Ageing Well in Wales, workshops have been run at Union Reps conferences<sup>74</sup>. The publication of **The Menopause: a workplace issue** has highlighted how the menopause affects many working women<sup>75</sup>. Wales TUC has also worked with Ageing Well in Wales to develop a toolkit for older workers.
- In **Anglesey, Gwynedd, Conwy and Denbighshire**, the European Social Fund **OPUS project** has helped to provide older jobseekers with mentors to establish links with local business and improve employment prospects<sup>76 77 78</sup>. In **Torfaen**, older people are supported to get back into the workplace via the **WCVA ‘New Challenge’ project**, which is funded by the European Social Fund<sup>79</sup>.

---

<sup>73</sup> <https://bit.ly/2Kcps1K>

<sup>74</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HMMPQS>

<sup>75</sup> <https://bit.ly/2gElKjL>

<sup>76</sup> <https://bit.ly/2Hs5A8Z>

<sup>77</sup> <https://bit.ly/2qTVx6o>

<sup>78</sup> <https://bit.ly/2KaSE9o>

<sup>79</sup> <https://bit.ly/2vHCsw>

# Learning

- The **Royal Voluntary Service**, in partnership with **Amgeuddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales** and Ageing Well in Wales brought **GrandFest** to Wales for the first time<sup>80</sup>. GrandFest is a one-day festival that celebrates the skills and talents of older people, and shares these with younger generations. The first GrandFest Cymru was held at St Fagans National Museum of History in July 2017.
- The Ageing Well in Wales '**Guide to setting up a community learning club**' provides advice and support on how communities can use skills, knowledge and facilities to establish local learning clubs<sup>81</sup>.
- The **University of the Third Age (U3A)** provides a wealth of learning opportunities for older people across Wales<sup>82</sup>. Around 14,000 older people belong to the 59 U3As in Wales where members contribute to a wide variety of interest groups in a friendly and supportive atmosphere. U3As offer learning opportunities on a broad range of issues, including learning languages, art, local history, walking and ten-pin bowling.
- **Digital Communities Wales (DCW)**, a Welsh Government programme delivered by the **Wales Co-operative Centre**, aims to ensure that people of all ages are not digitally excluded and have the skills to benefit from digital services and technologies. Within DCW, Digital Heroes are young volunteers who help other people to get online in their local community. Heroes are trained by DCW and come from various settings. Following their training, the Heroes deliver their digital sessions in a range of settings including care homes and hospital wards. The outcomes are proving to be hugely beneficial to both the Heroes, who develop new skills and confidence from helping others, and the people they are helping to learning new digital skills. With over 1,000 Heroes now trained across Wales, this intergenerational movement is proving very popular.

---

<sup>80</sup> <https://bit.ly/2rFr9ed>

<sup>81</sup> <https://bit.ly/2oduH8S>

<sup>82</sup> <https://bit.ly/2JoXC14>

- **The Money Advice Service (MAS)** ‘Financial Capability Strategy for Wales’ aims to ensure that people of all ages have the right financial skills and learning in order to improve their resilience and capability<sup>83</sup>. The Strategy, supported by the Welsh Government Financial Inclusion Strategy for Wales<sup>84</sup>, encourages older workers to build their financial resilience and plan for the future, and helps to ensure that older people make the best use of their money in retirement.
- The **Money Advice Service** ‘What Works Fund’ project is run in partnership with **Age Cymru Swansea Bay**<sup>85</sup>. The project works with older people in Swansea, supporting them to plan ahead to manage their finances through life events.
- **Caerphilly County Borough Council** has developed a range of learning resources that they have shared online for others to make use of<sup>86</sup>. The ‘Tidy Gin’ Dignity Games include quizzes, word search and adaptations of Snakes & Ladders and Scrabble that tackle issues around dignity, respect and equalities, offering informal, easy to use and effective ways of generating discussion, challenging stereotypes and raising awareness. The ‘**Simon Says**’ campaign cartoons address falls prevention, rogue traders, and reducing poverty through increasing entitlement uptake. Caerphilly has used these effectively in a range of ways including social media, on bin lorries and as concertina leaflets<sup>87</sup>.

---

<sup>83</sup> <https://bit.ly/2qVrGJQ>

<sup>84</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HqIwvd>

<sup>85</sup> <https://bit.ly/2JhYhB2>

<sup>86</sup> <https://bit.ly/2Ho6Eur>

<sup>87</sup> <https://bit.ly/2qUCOrf>

# Loneliness and Isolation

**Strategic aim:** To reduce levels of loneliness and unwanted isolation and their negative impact on health and wellbeing as experienced by older people

Of the five core themes that form Ageing Well, the discussion, narrative and developments around loneliness have seen the greatest differences since the programme's launch. There has been a transformation in discussions around loneliness and isolation, and an increasing recognition that loneliness has serious public health implications. It has been estimated, for example, that a lack of social interaction is as damaging to health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day<sup>88</sup>.

Older people are more likely to experience life changing events such as bereavement or long-term illness and are disproportionately affected by reductions in 'lifeline' community services such as public buses, toilets and libraries. As a result, loneliness and isolation can particularly affect older people, and at least 75,000 older people in Wales have reported 'always or often' feeling lonely<sup>89</sup>.

The 2017 National Assembly Inquiry into loneliness and isolation has helped to highlight some of the key issues<sup>90</sup>, whilst the Welsh Government commitment to publish a cross-government strategy on loneliness and isolation by March 2019 should provide strategic direction and collaborative actions<sup>91</sup>. The cost of not tackling loneliness and isolation for our health and social care services is too great, and the cost for the individual is far greater.

A number of other initiatives, schemes, and campaigns are now in place in Wales to tackle loneliness and isolation amongst older people. For example, Contact the Elderly groups meet monthly, usually on a Sunday afternoon, so that older people can socialise and have afternoon tea. This free service is not time limited and is supported by volunteer drivers and hosts. Contact the Elderly also launched their 'Break the Silence' campaign in January 2018<sup>92</sup>. Similarly, Age Cymru launched its 'No one should have no one' campaign in 2016<sup>93</sup>.

---

<sup>88</sup> <https://bit.ly/2ADI07C>

<sup>89</sup> <https://bit.ly/2kc1j2O>

<sup>90</sup> <https://bit.ly/2j3CG85>

<sup>91</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HHPnjd>

<sup>92</sup> <https://bit.ly/1swHcod>

<sup>93</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HIBYOI>

Notable achievements and actions by Ageing Well in Wales partners to combat loneliness include:

- The Ageing Well in Wales publication **‘Making a Difference: A pocket guide to help you deal with loneliness’** has been very popular. The guide provides practical advice and support on how to tackle loneliness. The guide was produced in partnership with the Centre for Ageing and Dementia Research (CADR) and has helped to start conversations about a subject that can often be deeply stigmatising to discuss and acknowledge<sup>94</sup>.

“I have been fortunate in that I have worked in close collaboration with Ageing Well in Wales over the last few years. Drawing on the extensive networks with community groups and grassroots initiatives built up by the team has enabled me to develop research ideas from the bottom up, developing research that is important to older people in Wales. At the Centre for Ageing & Dementia Research we have run joint events with Ageing Well, including hosting a community-led event for delegates at an international conference held at Swansea in July 2017. This event started conversations between researchers from across the world and community groups from across Wales, that will hopefully result in useful research collaborations, as well as showcasing how we do things differently in Wales. As Chair of the Emerging Researcher in Ageing arm of the British Society of Gerontology we ran a unique event bringing early career academics, practitioners and older people together to discuss what research needs to be done to address loneliness.

“On a personal level working closely with the team has been beneficial in disseminating my work far more widely than through traditional academic routes. The development of the ‘Making a difference: A pocket guide to help you deal with loneliness’ would not have been possible without the input of Ageing Well and has resulted in over thirty requests for my thesis from third sector agencies and individuals, requests for numerous talks, radio and media interviews and an invitation to deliver a TEDx talk on my work. This has resulted in impact from a PhD not normally achieved at this early stage of my research career. The positive impact of Ageing Well for the research community cannot be underestimated.”

**Dr. Deb Morgan**

Researcher, Centre for Ageing & Dementia Research, Swansea University

---

<sup>94</sup> <https://bit.ly/2nzSLPi>

- The **British Red Cross** and the **Royal Voluntary Service** have joined forces to deliver ‘**Camau Cadarn/Positive Steps**’<sup>95</sup>. The project supports older people across Wales to regain their independence and reconnect with their community following a crisis. The project focuses on confidence building and identifying practical solutions to any barriers that may hold older people back from social participation.
- **Men’s Sheds Cymru** has secured a three-year Big Lottery bid to strengthen and expand its work in Wales<sup>96</sup>. Nearly forty Sheds are already in place in Wales, and these Sheds make a real difference in the lives of older men. The Sheds are set up as autonomous community-run groups to ensure their long-term sustainability. They provide a range of activities, including woodwork, repairing motor vehicles, and playing ukuleles, and do much to reduce the impact of loneliness amongst older men, improve confidence, and promote social interaction.
- In various Local Authority areas – including Neath Port Talbot<sup>97</sup>, Newport<sup>98</sup>, Merthyr Tydfil<sup>99</sup>, Pembrokeshire<sup>100</sup>, Rhondda Cynon Taf<sup>101</sup> and Swansea<sup>102</sup> –, **Community Connectors** or **Local Area Navigators** have been recruited to work in communities, supporting people that are lonely or isolated. The connectors help people to access local services, activities and clubs, and to build relationships in their communities. In Swansea, the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service have seconded a staff member to work as a Local Area Coordinator, in order to support the needs of older people and promote closer collaboration between the Service and other partners. In **Pembrokeshire**, Community Connectors also support older people and others to take positive steps to improve their health, be more social, volunteer or get out and about using community transport<sup>103</sup>.

---

<sup>95</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HsVOUc>

<sup>96</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HmYhmZ>

<sup>97</sup> <https://bit.ly/2qWtiTJ>

<sup>98</sup> <https://bit.ly/2FcQeDk>

<sup>99</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HnHWOL>

<sup>100</sup> <https://bit.ly/2vCJ6Ri>

<sup>101</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HW0hQh>

<sup>102</sup> <https://bit.ly/2F9ZKqQ>

<sup>103</sup> <https://bit.ly/2qUiN3i>

- Following the second Annual Learning Network conference, held in partnership with Ageing Well in Cardiff in January 2016<sup>104</sup>, the **Campaign to End Loneliness** launched its work in Wales in September 2017. The Campaign is working on pilot projects to tackle loneliness and isolation in **Carmarthenshire** and **Pembrokeshire**. A number of workshops have been held to discuss the issues, identify gaps in provision, and to propose solutions to address loneliness in the area. The Campaign Manager for Wales works closely with the Ageing Well team and is co-located at the Commissioner's office. In May 2018, the Campaign launched its public awareness campaign across the UK<sup>105</sup>.

“The Campaign to End Loneliness has been working with Ageing Well in Wales since 2015: they are our official partner to assist in bringing the campaign to Wales in a joint conference in 2016, selecting an in-depth area and partners to work with for our BLF funded work in 2017; as well as actively supporting recruitment of our Campaign Manager for Wales. They are well connected, ambitious, strategic yet action-oriented, collaborative yet clear in their intent. They have shifted the issues of ageing and loneliness in Wales to a space where policy making has been ahead of the curve compared with the rest of the UK. And maybe, just as importantly, they are a delight to work with.”

**Laura Alcock-Ferguson**

Executive Director, Campaign to End Loneliness

- In Gwent, the ‘**Ffrind i Mi / Friend of Mine**’ initiative led by **Aneurin Bevan University Health Board** is creating a powerful social movement to tackle loneliness. The scheme works with older people and veterans who feel lonely through volunteering and befriending services. Funded through the Health Technology Wales Scheme and the **1,000 Lives Improvement** service, the initiative works with communities and existing volunteer befriending services to match those who feel lonely with volunteers around shared interests. ‘Ffrind i Mi’ was nominated for the 2017 South Wales Argus Health and Care Awards and the initiative has been featured on local, national and international stages<sup>106,107</sup>.

<sup>104</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HK4icD>

<sup>105</sup> <https://bit.ly/2qWreLD>

<sup>106</sup> <https://bit.ly/2vHc0PZ>

<sup>107</sup> <https://bit.ly/2HOaUah>