



AGEnda
AGE north down & ards

Strategic Plan 2021-2023

Ensuring older people in the Ards & North Down area are comfortable with growing older.

Our Vision

To ensure older people in the Ards & North Down area are comfortable with growing older

Our Purpose

To support older people to live healthy, independent and fulfilling lives

Our Values

To be Collaborative

Partner with those interested in improving the lives of older people.

To be Open & Transparent

Share experience that makes a difference within our community in an appropriate and timely manner.

Treating all with Dignity & Respect

Everyone should be treated fairly and their contribution within our community valued.

To be Inclusive & Accessible

All older people should have a voice within our community on issues that affect how they live.

From the Chair

The population of Ards and North Down which AGEnda serves has the highest percentage of older people (65+) in Northern Ireland. By 2030 the total number is projected to be around 60,000 – approximately 30 percent of the total population.

This aging demographic has some very specific requirements from health and social care to transportation, and from safety in the home to the management of our public spaces.



The recent experience of the COVID 19 pandemic has highlighted the issues of isolation for many of our older residents both physically and mentally as well as practically when a lack of IT skills restricts engagement in a digital age.

As such, the challenge for AGEnda is to represent our constituency effectively and to ensure a strong representation of the needs of the people we support.

Our recent survey has provided us the information we need to develop new programmes and innovative approaches to existing problems.

As we move into this new phase of our development, the Board, management and staff of AGEnda have a clear view of the needs of the older people in our community.

With a commitment to the resources we need to put them in place, we are confident of delivering the challenging targets within this Plan and achieving our stated purpose to support older people in our community to live ‘healthy, independent and fulfilling lives’.

Gavin Walker, Chair

Board of Directors

AGE North Down & Ards

The services we provide

Good Morning Call

Good Morning Call is a free confidential daily service available to all residents of Ards and North Down Borough Council area who are over 65 years of age.

Those who have registered with the service receive a daily telephone call from a trained volunteer between the hours of 9:15am and 11:00am. The purpose of this call is to offer support and reassurance to those who might be isolated or vulnerable.



Support & Signposting

Support & Signposting provides those who are over the age of 50 and residents of Ards and North Down with a place they can discuss any of their concerns.

The Support & Signposting programme provides a listening ear and a cup of coffee to those who need reassurance and support.

If we can't help the clients we can pass them on to the person or organisation who can support them.

Floating Support

Floating Support is assistance provided in a person's home by a support worker. The support worker provides short term advice and help to make it easier for people to maintain their independence in the home and community.

Floating Support involves a range of services, such as:

- Advice on housing rights and responsibilities. Welfare rights advice.
- Information on local facilities.
- Help with claiming benefits, budgeting, paying bills and debts.
- Learning to plan meals, shop and cook.
- Networking with specialist support agencies to meet individual needs.



Ards & North Down Profile

Demographics

Ards and North Down has the oldest age profile in Northern Ireland. Within Ards & North Down there will be 10,000 additional over 50s by 2041.

The over 65s will increase by 35%; whilst those over 80 will double (up 94.2%) in that time.

There will be long- term rising demand for older people's services.

Age Brackets / Year	2021	2026	2031	2036	2041	%
0-49	92,473	90,651	88,467	85,907	83,434	(9.8%)
50+	70,241	73,889	76,509	78,622	80,416	14.5%
65+	35,866	39,876	43,943	47,189	48,697	35.8%
80+	4,164	4,754	6,308	7,531	8,085	94.2%
Total	162,714	164,540	164,976	164,529	163,850	

Source: NISRA.

Socio-Economic Statistics

Official statistics provide insight into older people's lives (65+) within Ards & North Down:

- 65% of older people are living with a long-term health condition and 7% of older people are providing unpaid care.
- 35% of older people live alone.
- 25% households are adapted for disability or mobility issues.
- 70% of older people's journeys are made by car (with 4.5% made by bus).
- 8% older people undertake volunteer work.

This illustrates a need to provide 'age friendly' services and opportunities for older people – especially those living alone.

Older people are heavily involved in caring, volunteering and participating in activities and have significant skills and experience.

Indeed, many are still working, with some even busier in retirement.

There is a need to provide a more positive, and realistic, perceptions of older people.

We undertook surveys in 2021 to collate evidence to present an up-to-date picture; and will continue to be the voice of older people in Ards & North Down.

71% of older people think society doesn't recognise the contribution that older people are still able to make.

Northern Ireland Life & Times Survey

Priorities for Action 2021 - 2023

Promote a positive image of growing older in Ards & North Down

- Continue to represent older people's views on relevant key Boards, Committees and Alliances. Develop strategies to celebrate and promote national days for older people.
- Review and update our communication channels with service users and partners.
- Respond to consultations relating to older people.
- Link with the actions in the Borough's Age Friendly Plan.
- Develop a Communication Plan to raise the profile of AGEnda in the Community.
- Gather testimonials, case studies and evaluations and place online to build the positive profile of older people and AGEnda; and which can be easily shared.
- Represent older people's views on selected panels that match our strategic goals.
- Build-up regular email, newsletter and events that connect older people and highlight successes among older people and public bodies.

Provide services that keep people safe, well, connected & living in their own homes

- Seek regular feedback on our services from older people, staff & volunteers.
- Ensure services are understood by funders and compliant with relevant guidelines.
- Learn about technologies and new approaches that would enable a more effective and/or new service; undertaking a feasibility review where appropriate.
- Be a conduit between public bodies and older people; and be the voice of older people.
- Develop effective forums for older people to have a voice and be equal partners with decision makers of statutory agencies on the Age Friendly Alliance.
- Develop sound and effective business cases to develop needed services.
- Consider the impact of technology on keeping older people connected
- Keep up to date with research and best practice.



Develop effective & scalable operating procedures

- Appoint a Volunteer Development Role that will focus on recruiting, training and managing volunteers.
- Review operating procedures annually, and make them easily accessible for staff and volunteers in particular for remote working and business continuity.
- Consider how new and existing services could be scaled; and what partners, processes, people, funds and technology would be needed to achieve that.
- Continue to ensure effective governance.

Enable & engage our staff & volunteer team

- Review staff workloads to ensure good

work-life balance and positive well-being.

- Explore outsourcing options.
- Equip staff and volunteers with skills and abilities to meet the needs of older people.
- Design employee and volunteer experiences that improve performance.

Financial Sustainability

- Provide strong financial management and governance.
- Meet with funders regularly and keep abreast of funding opportunities.
- Explore the appropriateness and viability of non-grant income streams.
- Develop a revenue generation plan.

What our 2021 Survey told us

We sent out 1,400 surveys to over 65s in the area in Spring 2021. We received 555 responses. Here's what the people of Ards & North Down told us.

Overview

Many people have adapted to technologies but still prefer letter and face to face contact. Many have shown interest in befriending – a service we hope to develop.

Connected Older People

We asked our clients to tell us how they keep connected to family and friends.

- 99% of older people have either a phone or a mobile-phone; with 76% having both.
- Males and those aged < 80 are more likely to use a mobile, check email and have good internet access.
- People prefer to be contacted by letter.
- 80% people have used their mobile phone recently; for calls, texts and camera.
- 63% have an email they check weekly - but only 35% of females over 80 do.
- 28% of older people (*and 52% of females over 80*) can't access the internet at home. At least 10% are unable to access it.
- 35% (*rising to 56% of females over 80*)

don't have a computer or iPad in the house; and 39% don't have someone who can regularly help them with technology.

- Whilst many use the internet and apps; WhatsApp is the most popular and indicates that many older people are using technology to connect with family and friends

Planning for the future

We asked our clients to tell us how they would like to interact with AGEna.

- 50% of respondents would consider being part of an older persons' group.
70% of respondents attended AGEna events and/or read their newsletter.
- 60% of respondents would be interested in learning more about a befriending service.
- 25% of respondents would be interested in being a befriender volunteer.
- 35% of respondents had completed an on line survey in the last year.



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AGE north down & ards is registered as a company limited by guarantee in Northern Ireland (Company No. NI036126), is registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland (Charity No. NIC100496) and is recognised as a charity by HM Revenue & Customs (Reference No. XR30227).



supportingpeople

HSC Public Health Agency



Northern Ireland


Ards and North Down
Borough Council

HSC South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust