



DEVELOPING AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES IN WALES

Cymru Older People's Alliance (COPA) have today [22 May 2023] renewed our commitment to support the development of Age-Friendly Communities (AFCs) across Wales through co-productive collaboration with local authorities and other partners (1). Achievement of the World Health Organisation (WHO) requirements (2) for AFCs can have a fundamentally positive impact on the quality of life for older people and help improve the help and support we all need.

We want AFCs to be recognised as an essential starting point to ensure that the human rights of older people can be upheld in communities and through the services older people rely on to maintain their independence. COPA have agreed the following general principles and expectations for older people to be engaged in the development of AFCs as required by the WHO. We want to see these principles encapsulated in guidance to local authorities in Wales to help to achieve greater consistency in how older people are engaged.

General Principles for Engagement of Older People

- Involving older people in the design and delivery of AFCs on a basis of co-production and collaboration - decisions made together and from the outset – not to or for but with older people. Genuine partnership and relationship building is needed on a consistent and sustained basis.
- Empowering older people to have a voice and take an active role in local decision-making about AFCs - with a variety of methodologies for engagement and a rationale for membership of local AFC Steering Group, which has an agreed Terms of Reference and funded Annual Work Plan.
- Local AFCs increase multi and intergenerational contact, understanding and exchange through structured and purposeful engagement with diversity of representation and no use of a negative portrayal of ageing.
- Securing progress and momentum in applications for and developing AFCs – taking a “cross cutting approach” and engaging with older people who are able to have a role of co-creation, development, scrutiny, monitoring, evaluation.
- Engage with older people to combat ageism, strengthen community cohesion, and ensure the independent “self-determined” voice of older people is heard on a rights basis.



Expectations of Older People

- older people are valued, feel respected and portrayed positively and are appreciated and seen as assets to the community, to which they feel connected;
- challenge and work with older people to remove the barriers (structural and social) faced by older people including ageism and other inequalities;
- ensure older people have the opportunities, choices and support they need and their income is maximised and poverty addressed;
- work co-productively with older people across a diverse range of issues, including health, social care, housing, transport, community facilities etc utilising innovation and research;
- leadership is demonstrated in developing age-friendly initiatives at all levels and across all WHO themes and sectors including through political and officer level champions, as well as older people, their forums, and their representative organisations.

Cymru Older Peoples Alliance

May 2023

Notes

(1) COPA Framework for Engagement of Older People in Developing Age Friendly Communities in Wales <https://www.copacharity.com/2022/11/03/framework-for-engagement-of-older-people-in-development-of-age-friendly-communities/>

(2) The World Health Organisation approach to Age Friendly is underpinned by the United Nations Principles for Older Persons encouraging Governments to incorporate in policy the principles of Independence, Participation, Care, Self-fulfilment and Dignity. The Age Friendly requirements are set out in a Framework of 8 domains covering:

1. Outdoor space and public buildings
2. Transport
3. Housing
4. Social Participation
5. Respect and social inclusion
6. Civic participation and employment
7. Communication and information
8. Community support and health services

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