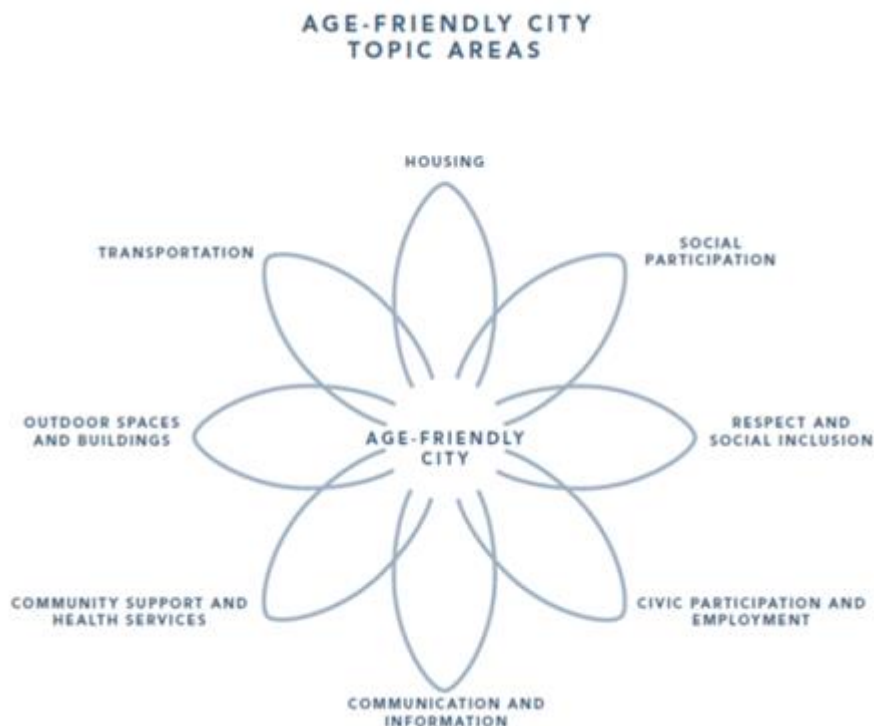


# Age Friendly Services and Neighbourhoods



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Source: World Health Organisation

## What we do and why

### Who are we?

Southway Housing Trust is a committed and forward-thinking not for profit local housing company. We are passionate about providing excellent homes and outstanding customer care. We own and manage almost 6000 homes across South Manchester.

### What do we do?

Our Age Friendly Team researches, designs and delivers projects in partnership with Older People living in our neighbourhoods.

In 2012 we commissioned Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) School of Architecture to develop world leading approaches to Age Friendly neighbourhoods using architecture and social science research techniques. Combined with expertise in ageing, housing, urban design and transformative community development, the research received local, national and international recognition and support from Manchester City Council (MCC), Manchester Institute for Collaborative Ageing (MICRA), the Centre for Ageing Better and the World Health Organisation (WHO).



### Why do we do it?

50% of Southway tenants are aged over 50 and a significant number live on below average incomes, are not in employment and are in receipt of some form of benefit. The socio economic status of many of our tenants negatively impacts their health and wellbeing and life expectancy.

In particular, Old Moat, the subject neighbourhood for the Age Friendly research, has a high proportion of older residents who live on low incomes; suffer from a life limiting illness or disability and who have a lower life expectancy than the Manchester average.

## How we do it

The term 'Age Friendly' is used to describe projects, services and neighbourhoods that support and include older people. It enables older people to actively take part in their community, to have a voice and to remain connected. It creates opportunities for older people to keep healthy and active, to learn and to engage with others.

An age-friendly world enables people of all ages to actively participate in community activities and treats everyone with respect, regardless of their age. It is a place that makes it easy for older people to stay connected to people that are important to them. And it helps people stay healthy and active even at the oldest ages and provides appropriate support to those who can no longer look after themselves. (World Health Organisation)

The Old Moat research project applied World Health Organisation "ageing in the city" principles at a neighbourhood level on the basis that older people spend the majority of their time in their home and immediate neighbourhood. The extent to which a neighbourhood is age friendly is therefore a significant determinant of quality of life and well-being.

The research element of the project was carried out by MMU and co-produced with older people. 114 actions were identified to reduce social isolation and loneliness, improve health and wellbeing and provide improvements to housing, transport and the physical environment. The resultant [Toolkit](#) shares our learning and provides a resource to examine the age-friendliness of a neighbourhood.

The project has also allowed Southway to influence the Ageing agenda across the City with officers regularly attending and updating partners through the Manchester Housing Providers Partnership, Age Friendly Housing Board, Age Friendly Senior Strategy Group, advising on and evidencing policy and good practice.

In 2016 MMU and Southway were appointed as delivery leads for the citywide Ambition for Ageing (AfA) creating Age Friendly neighbourhoods with a sharper focus on isolation.



**Examples of our most significant achievements in Old Moat and other Age Friendly projects are detailed in the following sections:**

- Age Friendly Champions
- Take a Seat Campaign
- Physical Improvements
- Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC)
- Lifetime Homes
- Age Friendly Gardens
- Digital Inclusion
- Social Activities



## Age Friendly Champions

Starting as a collaboration with Older People in Old Moat who were co-researchers during the project, the Champions continue to influence a range of projects and promote the benefits of ageing well to the wider Manchester community, linking to the Age Friendly Design Panel and the Manchester Culture Champions.



## Take a Seat Campaign

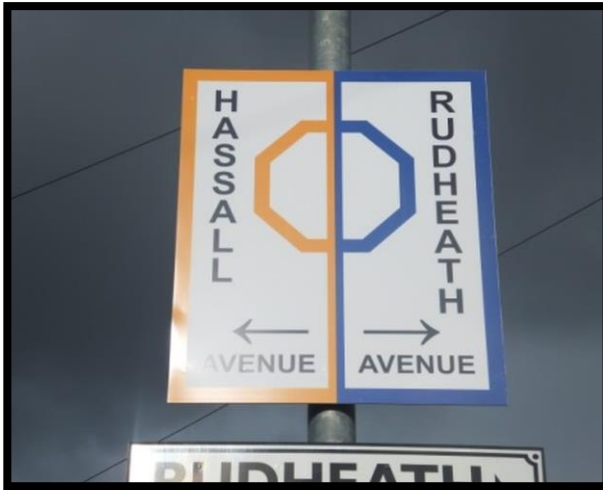
This project is about embedding Age Friendly into every-day life by engaging local retailers to provide Older People with a seat, access to a toilet and a glass of water on request. We are doing this in all our areas in partnership with local residents and community groups, for example in Chorlton the scheme roll out is being co-ordinated in conjunction with Chorlton and Whalley Range Dementia Action Alliance. In addition Age Friendly benches have been situated at key points along regular routes across neighbourhoods.





## Physical Improvements

In Old Moat we carried out legibility work to improve the physical environment and signage around the neighbourhood. This was to assist older people to be able to navigate the area, with a particular focus on those living with dementia in the community. For example we colour coded the signage and included visual indicators, putting distinctive features on the signs.



## Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC)

Old Moat is an example of a NORC, which is a natural occurrence of older people in a neighbourhood. This project is about us and partners, particularly Health and Social Care, redesigning and delivering services in a more integrated, efficient and effective way involving the Age Friendly Champions, South Manchester Clinical Commissioning Group, local GP's, Community Health and Wellbeing service and other registered landlords in the area. A key priority of the NORC is to provide regular meaningful activity in Old Moat to engage Older People and tackle social isolation.

"LINKages" is our social prescribing service, which provides a mechanism to connect primary care staff and older people to community based assets, linking older people into sources of non-medical support. Working in partnership with GP surgeries we have identified housebound and socially isolated people as well as those who may be living with long-term health conditions. 35 referrals have been made in the last 6 months.

Empowering the community is a key outcome of the NORC project to this aim we are developing a Peer Support Network run by older people for older people, to organise events and activities in community venues or their own homes to reduce isolation. A group of older people have taken part in Community Organiser training to build confidence developing local activities.

We are working with students from the University of Manchester to develop a Connected Community project that will particularly help housebound and more

isolated residents to connect with others through locally shot film footage, SMART TVs and SMART phones, social media, SKYPE and other ICT.



### Lifetime Homes

Given the demographic of older people residing in our homes, increasing their housing options across our neighbourhoods continues to be a key priority. We own and manage two [Sheltered Housing Schemes](#). Two further developments, [one of which is in Old Moat](#), have been designed to lifetime homes standards with specifications being reviewed by the Age Friendly Design Panel (link to Westbrook Close on website).





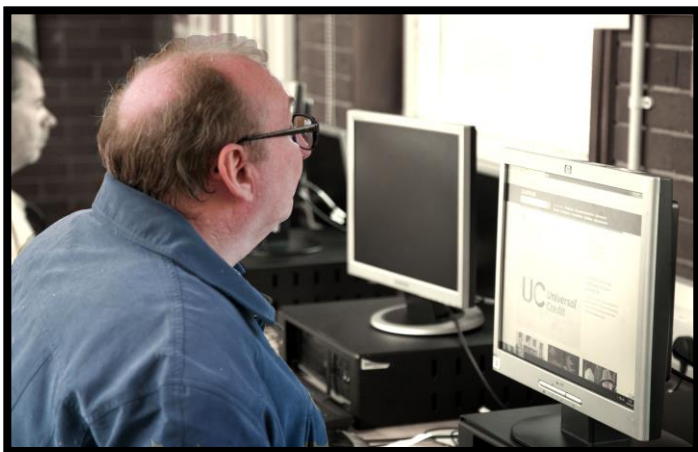
## Age Friendly Gardens

We have worked with local environmental groups to design adapted and accessible gardens to encourage older residents back into their gardens, providing raised beds and food growing support. The HOME project (Helping Old Moat Eat) directly led to the setting up of Old Moat Greenies, a resident led community gardening group, and their work continues to support older and isolated residents.



## Digital Inclusion

Designing and delivering bespoke IT training and support for older people has been a hugely successful and popular Age Friendly project. We have created internet hubs in key community locations including Sheltered Schemes, commissioned training courses, facilitated weekly drop in sessions alongside helping older people get access in their own homes. Many older tenants who attended training now act as Digital Champions, and train other tenants and residents.



## Social Activities

We aim to increase the range of activities available in our neighbourhoods for older people to access in order tackle social isolation. To do this we work in partnership with voluntary groups and other partners. In our Sheltered Schemes we host weekly physical exercise classes, coffee mornings and U3A groups, all accessible to local residents. As part of the NORC project we hold monthly social events (such as Strictly Scooter mobility scooter events, and On Yer Bike cycle events), bi-weekly coffee mornings and chair-based exercise classes.

We have worked with Good Neighbour Groups to develop a Dementia Café and to facilitate a Men's Sheds project offering activities specifically for older men.

The Ambition for Ageing project builds community assets, established or new groups can apply for funding from a resident led board, supported by the project team to develop their proposals to run social activities targeted to the isolated older people making neighbourhoods more Age Friendly.







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