



AGE FRIENDLY STRATEGY

2023-2026

Background:

The Southway Housing Trust vision is of **Thriving Communities**. Our values are being **Caring, Committed** and **Successful Together**.

Our Age Friendly strategy and work is a key part of our corporate strategic objectives and Futures Strategy 2020 - 2025. It provides us with a framework to deliver services and projects to help older people (for the purposes of this strategy aged over 55) living in our homes and neighbourhoods to age well, particularly during this period of post-pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis.

This new Strategy sets the scene for the next three years of our Age Friendly journey. We will continuously improve by reflecting on and evaluating what we have achieved so far and what are the new challenges and the areas we can do it better, then act on what we still want to achieve and to explore the new opportunities and any gaps in services.

Southway is a key partner in a broader “movement” across Greater Manchester to raise awareness and promote age friendly principles to make sure all residents can age well. This Strategy is therefore aligned to and will support the delivery of the Greater Manchester ageing well work and the Manchester Age Friendly Strategy.

Context

By 2043, 1.14 million people in Greater Manchester will be over 50 (37% of the population) and of these 596,000 will be over 65 and 328,000 will be over 75 (a 61% growth). Greater Manchester has the lowest life expectancy and healthy life expectancy in England (ONS).

The position in Manchester from the 2021 Census is:

- About 18% of Manchester’s current population is aged 55+ (comparatively lower than other boroughs and much lower than the average GM 27%)
- However, in terms of numbers, more than 100,000 Manchester residents are aged 55 and over (higher than other boroughs)

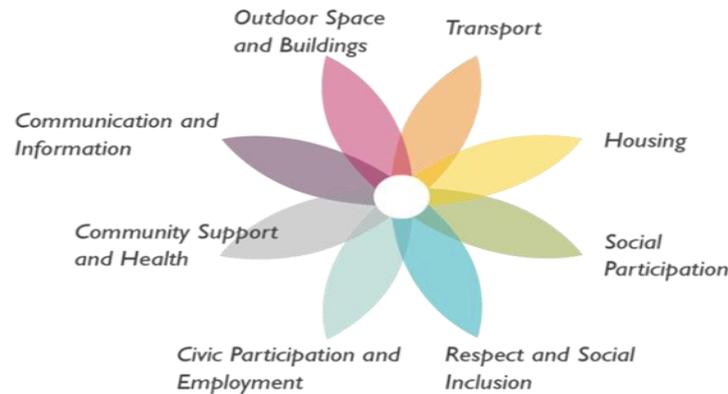
Our Aims and Our Approach

We aim to:

- Make our homes, neighbourhoods, and services more age friendly.

- Support older people to have happier, healthier, and more active (economically, physically, and socially) lives.

Our Age Friendly work will continue to be underpinned by the eight domains (petals) of an age friendly community, as defined by the World Health Organisation.



This next stage in our journey is to embed our age friendly approach in planning all projects and delivering all services. We will demonstrate that we listen to and care about the needs of older people. We are committed to working successfully together with older people and community stakeholders to make ageing better.

As a lead organisation in the Age Friendly movement in Manchester and Greater Manchester, we have built up a reputation for our commitment and innovation.

We will continue to represent the housing sector and lead work bringing partners together, aligning our work, aims and objectives to the Age Friendly Manchester strategy refresh 2023-2028 and Greater Manchester Age Friendly Strategy 2023-2033 (to be launched in October 2023)

To deliver services with ageing in mind we will be **Inspired by our Communities**. We will hear and understand older resident's views and wishes to influence our resource allocation and priorities. We will bring an ageing lens to the themes of:

- Communication
- Good customer access
- Quality of life including in the home and the environment

- Community Safety
- Shaping Services around our older tenants

We will adopt Age Friendly Manchester's **Equalities Approach**, recognising that:

- People in mid to later life come from a range of social, cultural, economic, and generational backgrounds,
- People may experience a range of inequalities and ageism, including racism and sexism, disablism, homophobia and all other forms of discrimination, and
- Intersectionality - multiple forms of inequality, can compound and create additional barriers to accessing support and services and feeling part of the community.

We will promote a positive approach to ageing, challenging ageism and changing the way we think, talk about, and respond to ageing.

When delivering our Strategy, we will use the three themes of our current Futures Strategy of People, Homes, and Neighbourhoods the context of how we will work is:

Theme 1 People

In terms of Southway tenants 4366 main tenants are over the age of 55 , of which 43 % have told us they have physical or other health conditions that may affect and limit their daily life.

Support for people living in our homes and in neighbourhoods that were not designed with ageing in mind, is going to increase in response to population changes. Whilst we have a specific team and approach with our Age Friendly Homes (55+), we have recognised the need to develop an approach for older people living in family homes.

This includes but is not limited to having an awareness of increased risks due to:

- Hazards (slip, trips, and falls) within and outside the property
- Food and fuel poverty for people living only on their state pension
- Being an older carer, which increases social isolation and poor wellbeing
- Developing memory issues

- Difficulty with daily living tasks and activities within home and also garden maintenance
- Becoming housebound or restricted in leaving home due to decreased mobility or sensory impairment, decreased confidence.

Over the past 18 months we have conducted a pilot of this approach in Old Moat and Withington, the learning from this informs this strategy.

Theme 2 Homes

Most people want to stay living in their existing home and be supported to age in place.

Over 1300 single people and couples over the age of 55 live in our family homes (2 bed+) which were not designed with older people and ageing in mind. Only 7.7% (461) of our homes are designated for people over the age of 50 to live in, including 162 built between 2020 and 2023. Creating more age-friendly homes to increase this supply and providing adaptations (major and minor) to existing homes, needs to sit alongside providing housing choices for people ready to plan for mid and later life, as our main priorities.

Nationally less than 10% of homes have the basic features that make them accessible for all ages. One quarter of homes headed by someone 75+ have at least one serious hazard (Centre for Ageing Better). A key risk for older people is falling and one in three people aged 65+ fall at least once a year.

Theme 3 Neighbourhoods

Age friendly communities are about more than regenerating the public realm; it is about making buildings and outdoor spaces accessible; but also providing opportunities for positive social interactions, where older people feel connected and included and have a sense of belonging. These factors enable older people to age well in place, in a community of choice.

We are proud of our achievements since 2012, creating age friendly neighbourhoods in Old Moat, Burnage and Abbey Hey in Gorton. Examples of our work, in line with best practice are:

- Take a Seat Campaigns
- Community Maps
- Resting Benches
- Walking Audits

To successfully scale up and replicate this work in neighbourhoods across our core area requires coordination. More can be achieved by working in partnership, through Bringing Services Together, both leading and influencing the actions of others.

Our Action Plan

Theme 1. People

Objective

To support older people to stay happy, healthy, active, and connected.

To be active economically, physically, and socially.

Age-friendly Domains

- Social participation
- Community support and health services
- Civic participation and employment

Actions

- Implement a checklist to identify the issues for people as they age in houses not built with older people in mind.
- Target the delivery of our core housing management services to support older people to age in place.
- Improve the intelligence and information we hold on older people to tailor our service provision, in particular for people living with age related illnesses and/or dementia, as well as identifying older carers and signposting them to support.
- Provide a range of social and cultural activities at our sheltered and With Care schemes to benefit older people's health and wellbeing.
- Promote and commission exercise classes and workshops to improve strength and balance as part of falls prevention measures.
- Promote the Pension Credit uptake campaign and be an active partner in the GM Ageing Hub Financial Hardship Steering Group.
- Work in partnership with statutory and voluntary organisations to identify opportunities to deliver place-based activities and events to improve health and wellbeing.
- Provide information, advice, and guidance to older people in relation to advice and support services we offer to help with the cost of living, to maximise income and provide help with energy bills.
- Make contact with all tenants and household members who are over 50 to offer advice and support to access employment opportunities.

- Identify older tenants who have served in the armed forces and offer to signpost to support through our Armed Forces Champions.

Success Measures

- Satisfaction that Southway services are Age Friendly.
- Number of older people with increased social connections.
- Levels of self-rated health improve.
- Older people supported into employment and training.
- Older people accessing volunteering opportunities,

Theme 2. Homes

Objective

To provide good-quality homes and schemes (Age Restricted, Sheltered and With Care) that support safe and independent living.

Age-friendly Domains

- Housing
- Communication and information

Actions

- Identify opportunities to widen choices by increasing the supply of homes for older people in Manchester and Greater Manchester.
- Deliver 42 new homes for older people in Tameside at Brickfields House and 2 new bungalows at Minden Close.
- Support older residents to plan for later living by providing high quality housing options advice, support to move and work in partnership to offer incentives to move especially for older people affected by Bedroom Tax .
- Work with our partners at Manchester Metropolitan University to research and design new housing models for older people to live together.
- Continue delivering adaptations, major and minor, to our homes, prioritising older people, enabling them to stay at home independently and safely.
- Continue delivering and learning from our age friendly repairs service, maintaining high levels of satisfaction, and adopting best practice into our wider service provision.

- Carry out improvements to age restricted bungalows to improve energy efficiency, insulation, and warmth.
- Carry out repair work that will reduce the conditions that cause damp and mould.
- Monitor demand for and satisfaction with homes provided at the With Care and Sheltered schemes.
- Working with the care provider at the With Care schemes, adopt the principles of Pride in Ageing and learn from good practice at other schemes.

Success Measures

- Satisfaction with the home
- Satisfaction with Repairs
- Satisfaction with scheme facilities and age friendly services.

Theme 3. Neighbourhoods

Objective

To create accessible and inclusive age-friendly neighbourhoods meeting the needs of older people and engaging them in local decision making.

Age-friendly Domains

- Outdoor spaces and buildings
- Transportation
- Respect and social inclusion

Key Actions

- Develop the community cafés at the With Care schemes by supporting and encouraging café providers to serve good quality food and hold activities and events that are sustainable as well as inclusive and attractive to the wider local community.
- Lead and work in partnership on the Ageing in Place Pathfinder Project for Abbey Hey and Gorton, listening to, and acting on, the voices of older people.
- Secure funding to review the outcomes from our first Age Friendly Neighbourhood project in Old Moat.

- Continue to provide accessible and well-maintained green spaces that are used by older people to promote exercise and active travel.
- Develop an Age Friendly Neighbourhood Checklist for use during neighbourhood walkabouts and work in partnership to make accessible infrastructure and environmental improvements.
- Continue to develop Gorton Mill House and Dahlia House as community hubs for scheme residents and the wider community by co-producing inclusive activities and events.
- Continue to offer and support opportunities for older people to be connected and feel a sense of belonging to their neighbourhood by either directly providing, facilitating / enabling, and funding, or by assisting with funding bids, for social activities that combat loneliness and promote healthy ageing.
- Continue to provide and promote opportunities for older people to be engaged in decision making through our customer involvement and Governance structures.

Success Measures

- Satisfaction with the neighbourhood.
- Satisfaction with the services provided at the With Care schemes.
- Level of connectiveness and sense of belonging to the community.
- Level of having a say in shaping the neighbourhood.

Reporting on our Achievements

An annual report confirming achievements made through the Strategy will be reported to the People and Places Committee on an Annual Basis.

Related Strategies and Policies

- Customer Care
- Single Equalities
- Community Investment
- Development
- Repairs
- Digital Access