



International Centre for Integrated Care

Wellbeing in Later Life

End of Project Report

October 2021 – April 2022



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Foreword

The [International Centre for Integrated Care](#) (IC4IC), the home of the International Foundation for Integrated Care's hub in Scotland, is grateful for a £15k legacy grant from Life Changes Trust, and for the support of our collaborating partners in delivering this Wellbeing in Later Life (WeLL) discovery project from October 2021 to April 2022. Inspired by the UN [Decade of Healthy Ageing](#) 2021-2030, the project addressed the first two Decade priorities:

- ❖ **changing how we think, feel and act towards age and ageing;**
- ❖ **developing communities in ways that foster the abilities of older people;**
- ❖ **delivering person centred integrated care and primary health services responsive to older people; and**
- ❖ **providing older people who need it with access to long-term care.**

The project team established a virtual learning network, overseen by a cross sector advisory group of national partners (Annex 1). Partnership with the [Scottish Older People's Assembly](#) (SOPA) ensured the voice of older people informed the project and that it supported the joint SOPA and Age Scotland [Campaign](#) for every Scottish local authority to appoint an Older People's Champion to amplify the voices of older people in local communities.

In nine interactive sessions and two international webinars we explored the Five Ways to Wellbeing through the lens of later life and in the context of a shared ambition to create age friendly, inclusive and compassionate communities. Each virtual session was accompanied by a flash report with a list of useful resources – these reports are available [here](#).

The WeLL project builds on valuable learning from Dementia Friendly Communities and from community led and third sector support during the pandemic, as described in the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland (the ALLIANCE) [Community in Action](#) learning report. It also draws on the insights from our independent evaluation of [Compassionate Inverclyde](#) and recent experience facilitating a [Compassionate Communities Active Learning Programme](#).

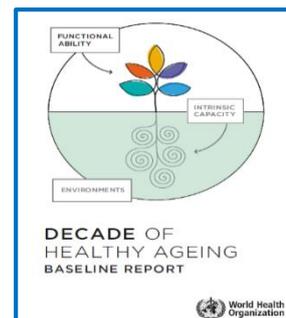
Many thanks to all the 'experts by experience' who brought their insights, passion and creativity to our learning network. I have been inspired by the great energy and wisdom that older people and local community groups from across Scotland have brought to the network and welcome their very positive feedback. It is heartening to see a growing number of national organisations engage with this agenda. Now I challenge these national partners to sustain the network, and continue to work together to realise our collective ambition to create a stronger, fairer more equal Scotland that is the best place to grow old.

Professor Anne Hendry

Director IFIC Scotland, International Centre for Integrated Care

1. Overview

Healthy Ageing is based on a complex interaction between our physical, sensory, vitality and psychological capacities and the environment we live in. Places, spaces, relationships and communities have a big impact on how we develop and maintain the functional ability that enables wellbeing in later life.



The World Health Organisation describes wellbeing in later life as the outcome of five domains of functional ability in order to:

- ❖ meet basic needs to ensure an adequate standard of living
- ❖ learn, grow and make decisions
- ❖ be mobile and participate
- ❖ build and maintain relationships
- ❖ contribute to society

These five domains broadly reflect the evidence based five steps we can all take to improve our wellbeing, as described in the New Economics Foundation's 2008 report for Foresight's Mental Capital and Wellbeing: [Five Ways to Mental Wellbeing](#).

The WeLL project explored these Five Ways to Wellbeing through the lens of later life and in the context of a shared ambition to create health and wellbeing through age friendly, inclusive and compassionate communities. An advisory group of national partners contributed their extensive expertise and networks (Annex1) alongside older adults as 'experts by experience'. The co-production and collective learning approach was underpinned by principles of Openness, Inclusion, Creativity and Collaboration.

Due to the constraints of the Covid-19 pandemic, the programme was delivered online. **Chapters 4 - 6** describe the highlights from nine interactive sessions and two webinars delivered between October 2021 and April 2022. Flash reports and recordings were available for those unable to participate in the live sessions. These materials can be accessed [here](#).

Co-Lab Sessions	Conversation Cafes	Café Themes
Co-Lab 1: 26 October 2021	November 18	Connect
Webinar: 15 December 2021	December 9	Keep Active and Eat Well
Co-Lab 2: 25 January 2022	January 12	Take Notice
	February 16	Give
Co-Lab 3: 30 March 2022	March 16	Keep Learning
Webinar: 27 April 2022	April 14	Reflections

Overall, 70 organisations and communities in Scotland participated in the WeLL learning network activities (Annex 2). Our knowledge exchange was enriched by international learning partners and through two webinars on healthy ageing involving people from 22 countries.

To network with other organisations locally, and to share and learn from good practice.

Increased contact with other organisations aiming to improve the health and wellbeing of their community. Greater learning and involvement with others. Sharing ideas!

Our participation in this initiative will help to promote and sustain the conversations that give voice to the lived experience of older people and how we can all work together to add life to years

Project lead Mandy Andrew, Associate Director, the ALLIANCE, facilitated themed monthly WeLL cafes as ‘all teach, all learn’ conversations, creating the conditions for participants to come together as experts by role and by experience. The online cafes were a place to share, learn and be curious about a particular theme but with no fixed agenda. Mandy was ably supported by Alison Bunce, Programme Lead for Compassionate Inverclyde/Inverclyde Cares, and by a diverse range of guests who shared practical insights and signposted useful local and national assets to support wellbeing in later life. Highlights of these Café sessions are contained in flash reports available [here](#).

Three Co-Labs, co-chaired by SOPA and by local government councillors as Older People Champions, facilitated networking across communities in Scotland and with [Age Friendly Manchester](#) and [Age Friendly Ireland](#).



Feedback was obtained from an end of programme survey, two online focus groups, and semi-structured interviews with a sample of four participants. **Chapter 7** presents a summary of the reflections shared. The programme was timely and universally very well received.

This is a brilliant way to gain more ideas and to see what is working in different areas

The great ideas are out there, often locally. Sharing knowledge about these and networking across Scotland is a must for everyone's benefit

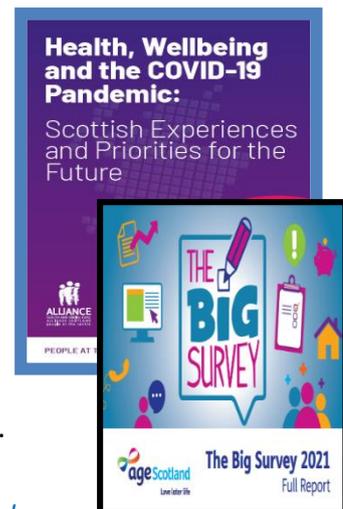
It's been incredible, it's been inspiring it always is. It's a pleasure and a privilege to be to part of this group. To all of you thank you very much.

The valuable learning from this discovery project has helped us understand the synergy between the various actions to enhance wellbeing in later life and to create age friendly places and communities. We challenge our national partners to continue this learning network to raise awareness of what works to enable wellbeing in later life and support the development of age friendly communities in Scotland. Our recommendations are outlined in **Chapter 8**.

The work of this network must be heard at the highest levels if we are to achieve change.

2. Wellbeing and Covid Recovery

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated longstanding inequalities. Recent reports by Age Scotland and the ALLIANCE show that urgent action is required to address the harms experienced by people at all life stages but particularly by older people and carers who have experienced loneliness and isolation, deconditioning, poor mental and physical health, digital exclusion and reduced community services and support. The learning network participants are seeking ideas for actions to support older people to recover and to live well.



As we move forward from the pandemic, we are looking to rebuild and revitalise our organisation. We are hoping that our participation with the WeLL Co-lab will give us fresh ideas and contacts.

Looking to better identify the scalable initiatives and better understand the evaluation process which will lead to the improvement in the quality of life of our older citizens post pandemic. Understand, adapt, and reengage with our communities within the current landscape

Support us in the development of local self-sustaining peer support groups for unpaid carers, in rural North Perthshire and provide a springboard for future work across Perthshire, supporting those in later life to have full and active lives.

As public services and communities move forward to recover from the combined health and economic shocks of COVID-19, we must build on the new ways of working that have emerged in the last year. That means strengthening local relationships, nurturing the new alliances formed and sustaining the countless community led initiatives that have supported older people and helped to create wellbeing and resilience. Now more than ever, we need to empower older people, enable wellbeing in later life and support age friendly communities of people, of identity and of place.

Older people must sit shoulder to shoulder with decision makers and people designing services.



The pandemic has demonstrated what can be achieved by working together in a more agile way across organisations and with local communities: better collaboration and trust, greater ability to pivot and innovate and to make practice changes at unprecedented speed. The power of community led social movements and third sector support is described in the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland's [Community in Action](#) learning report. Sustaining these gains requires capacity building that is hyper-local and sensitive to the community context, particularly for communities that face significant disadvantage.

3. Inclusive Age Friendly Communities

Community led action, strong social capital and solidarity are central to Public Health Scotland's priorities on creating good relationships and mental wellbeing, eliminating discrimination and stigma, and improving health and wellbeing in communities that experience the worst outcomes. They are also at the heart of the [report](#) of the Scottish Government's Social Renewal Advisory Board.

***This is not always about money – it's supporting communities to do it themselves.
Christie in Action!***

Ageism is the most prevalent form of discrimination in the UK. Ageism is a combination of how we think about age (stereotypes), how we feel about age (prejudice) and how we behave in relation to age (discrimination). It affects how we think and feel about others we perceive as 'old' or 'young', and how we feel about our own ageing process. Ageist attitudes and behaviours can be created or reinforced by the language we use.

*One of the things that really bothers me is the ageist language. It's everywhere we talk and it is engrained, I am sorry to say, in the NHS language. We need to look seriously at the department for Medicine for the **Elderly** and the Frail and **Elderly** Falls Prevention Programme. There are far superior ways of referring to our older people.*

Some of it has been as basic as knowing which language is appropriate and not appropriate when talking about the people I work with, but it has also given me an excellent insight into some of the key issues and challenges in older people's lives.

[Guidance published by the Centre for Ageing Better](#) illustrates small changes we can make to how we speak and write about ageing and older age. [Age Scotland's new guide](#) challenges us to change the prevailing negative perceptions of ageing and older people. Participants spoke of the exclusion associated with both ageism and racism.

It is really hard in the 21st Century to hear that people are still facing racism particularly our older people and it breaks my heart.

The co-founders of African and Caribbean Elders in Scotland explained that making time to understand a new culture and welfare system can be challenging when people are busy with family and work and this contributes to feeling excluded.

We can have a sense of not belonging – for example, I was born in Kenya and live in Scotland. In Scotland I am seen as different and then I go home to Kenya and again I am seen as different as they say I am Scottish! When I am flying, I often think and feel that is my space of belonging - in the airspace, that is when I am home!

Engagement takes a lot of energy. Sometimes we don't engage as we often feel like an afterthought. We don't want to be seen as a minority group - we want to be human beings

Participants were keen to learn more about Age friendly and dementia friendly initiatives.

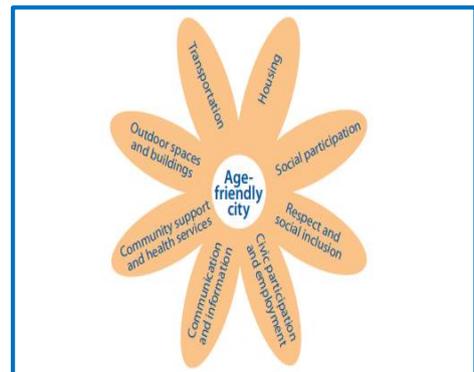
Having the opportunity to learn from different networks, organisations and services. Being part of a programme and learning network that will help us to share and grow our opportunities to make our local and city-wide communities inclusive and dementia friendly.

It has provided invaluable groundwork which SOPA hopes to build on with the development of an Age-friendly Communities network

Age Friendly Manchester is a dynamic partnership with Greater Manchester Moving and Greater Manchester Ageing Hub @GMAgeingHub. Collaborative activities featured in Co-lab 2 and in our [previous webinar](#) are underpinned by intergenerational approaches and work on inequalities. Examples include:

- ❖ **Proactively challenge ageist stereotypes:** an open letter to UK media on language and images ; #ValuableNotVulnerable campaign; Old Frame New Picture competition
- ❖ **Collective action on deconditioning:** collaborative investment in falls prevention; a city wide reconditioning event; Older and Greener active travel
- ❖ **Promoting the pension credit campaign**
- ❖ **Keeping Well at Home / Keeping Well this Winter** booklets (BSL, audio, diversity)
- ❖ **Digital inclusion and accessibility:** programme to get >75s online; older people's choir on zoom.

The Centre for Ageing Better hosts a [UK Network](#) of communities that share an ambition of creating more age-friendly communities. Members share learning about what works to create the conditions for ageing better in cities and communities. The Centre provides training, information and support to adopt the [WHO Age Friendly Communities Framework](#) of eight interconnected domains for changes to the built and social environments to enable us to live life to the full.



The UK network is affiliated to the Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities that is hosted on the [Age Friendly world](#) website.

Ireland is recognised as the world's first Age Friendly nation. A cross government national advisory group, that includes the voice of older people, oversees 31 local [Age Friendly Ireland](#) programmes. This is a Shared Service that promotes age friendly policies and services in all 31 local authorities. Each has an Age Friendly Programme Manager, a technical advisor, a local cross sector Age Friendly Alliance and a Local Older People's Council.



4. WeLL Co-Labs

WeLL Co-Lab 1 brought together 40 people to establish our virtual learning network on age friendly communities and wellbeing in later life. The session highlighted Dementia Friendly Aberfeldy, Dementia Friendly East Lothian and Compassionate Inverclyde. All of these projects offered lessons for those seeking to create inclusive, age friendly communities.

It's really important that the story is the community's story. Be very clear how this is different to an organisation setting up things that sound the same but don't feel the same.

Start by talking with people who have lived experiences and their carers in your community and actively listen. It grows from there

*Potential to herald resources, build connections and raise the profile of the range of work.
Can we align disparate projects so that we are not duplicating? – let's not be precious!*

Life Changes Trust learning resources on Dementia Friendly Communities is available [here](#).
The evaluation report can be accessed [here](#).
The evaluation of Compassionate Inverclyde is available [here](#).
Compassionate Communities Active Learning Programme resources can be accessed [here](#).

In breakout sessions, it was agreed that nutrition is an important enabler of wellbeing. Participants considered **Eat Well** should be framed as a sixth Way to Wellbeing in Later Life. They suggested Love and Kindness should underpin all ways to wellbeing, highlighting [Kitwood's Flower](#) that places love at the centre of five petals representing what people with dementia need to achieve wellbeing.



Participants co-designed our WeLL logo. This builds on the Tree metaphor from our 2018 evaluation of Compassionate Inverclyde.

The tree depicts the ways to wellbeing as six branches that are mutually reinforcing and are supported by strong roots of kindness embedded within an age friendly and compassionate community.

Co-Lab 2 featured guest speakers from Age Friendly Ireland, Age Friendly Manchester and from Scotland's [Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme](#), a cross sector collaboration led by the Improvement Service and Public Health Scotland. This aims to create and maintain places and spaces that enable wellbeing and participation across the life stages. It is currently working with communities in Clydebank, Alloa, Ayr and Dunoon to improve the impact of our places on wellbeing outcomes and equity. Many "age-friendly" initiatives also address wider issues such as digital inclusion, poverty and access to food.

Participants explored snapshots on WeLL themes: **Connect, Keep Active and Eat Well**

[Unforgotten Forces](#) - a partnership of armed forces and civilian charities, coordinated by Age Scotland, that is working to extend the reach and coordination of support services for older members of the ex-service community.

[Kirrie Connections](#) - a vibrant community hub at the heart of Dementia Friendly Kirriemuir.

[Active Fife](#) challenged us to Make Physical wellbeing FUN in later life and [Scottish Ballet](#) outlined their range of resources to support wellbeing and health.

Part of the Food Train charity, [Meal Makers](#) connects people who love cooking and are happy to share an extra portion of a home cooked meal with an older neighbour.

A home cooked meal and the friendship of the cook's extended family creates a new lease of life for the diner - Eat Well, Age Well and Live Well !

I have thoroughly enjoyed this morning of shared learning about wellbeing in later life and age friendly communities. I now have a clear understanding of places, spaces and people - thank you, I will be using this in my work. The speakers showed practical and simple ways to fight ageism. Meal Makers is simply making a big difference to people and dance on prescription - what a fabulous idea! Discussions about age friendly and intergenerational approaches are so energising.

Thoroughly enjoyed the WeLL Co-Lab 2 session - passionate speakers who conveyed their enthusiasm and passion for the work they are doing. The opportunity to share information regarding the work being undertaken in different parts of Scotland and further afield is so valuable. Overall, a very encouraging and inspiring event leaving one looking forward to the next!

Co-Lab 3 opened with uplifting music from the [Sensory Singing Choir](#) a group of visually impaired people who meet at Forth Valley Sensory Centre, followed by a presentation from Dr Anna Dixon, former CEO of the [Centre for Ageing Better](#) and author of the [Age of Ageing Better](#)

Anna highlighted that healthy life expectancy or disability free life expectancy have not kept pace with the gains in life expectancy, with over half of >65 years have two or more long term conditions. Earlier onset of limiting conditions in the poorest areas mean people are unable to stay in work, are financially insecure, require care and support and are unable to enjoy life to the full or contributing to their communities.

Taking all the elements and learning from the pandemic has highlighted the importance of healthy ageing and the huge challenge we face to ensure that everyone is able to age well.

Dr Anna Dixon's full presentation is available at: <https://vimeo.com/691940528>

Louise Scott introduced the Scottish Government [consultation](#) on a new Health and Social Care Strategy for Older People. Key themes from previous engagement with older people are:

- **Place and Wellbeing**
- **Preventative and Proactive Care**
- **Integrated Planned Care**
- **Integrated Unscheduled Care**

The aim is to make Scotland the best place to grow old

A national strategy will give a commitment to healthy ageing and encourage support for community buy in. It should demonstrate how strategy can be weaved in locally and bring together innovation, community activists, and practical activities.

Covid recovery needs to be equitable and have a human rights based approach as the impact is different on every group. We need to have inclusive communications as the norm and digital inclusion and self management are a crucial expertise to build upon. We need to support communities to come into their own as solutions and strength based approaches are often in our communities with diversity being a strength. We need to focus on interventions that help people to live their best quality of life.

Participants explored snapshots on WeLL themes: **Take Notice, Give and Keep Learning**. In East Kilbride, organisations working together as Connected East Kilbride will connect local people with services and supports with the aim of improving physical and mental health and wellbeing, reducing social isolation and loneliness, addressing inequalities and supporting the most disadvantaged people and communities.

At Strathclyde University's [Centre for Life Long Learning](#), over 2500 adult learners aged 50+ years take a range of classes each year.

The ['Growing the Impact of Nature'](#) report describes the positive impact of nature based health activities, reducing anxiety, boosting self- confidence and supporting wellbeing.

.....the very different type of tiredness having been involved in gardening/ forestry activities over the course of a day, a tiredness that helped still their minds and properly rest.

Well Café 1: CONNECT

Compassionate Inverclyde/Inverclyde Cares, Dementia Friendly Aberfeldy and the Rural Wisdom project spoke about creating places where people can connect, share experiences and reduce social isolation and loneliness. Compassionate Inverclyde's first meeting hub had a focus on bereavement but quickly blossomed into a successful Friendship Hub open to all. It runs weekly, supported and managed by local people. Aberfeldy's sensory garden and family friendly cinema screenings connect the community across generations. [Generations Working Together's](#) new network will share information and resources, facilitate peer learning, and grow the community of intergenerational housing, places and spaces.



A place to have a chat builds your networks

Trust and have courage to let the community lead

The University of Worcester Support Programme identified the [essential features of a meeting centre](#) for people living with dementia:



UK Meeting Centres Support Programme (UKMCSPP)

Essential features of a Meeting Centre	
1 On-going regular Meeting Centre Club	2 We are in this together
3 ? Adjusting to change	4 Skilled and stable team plus volunteers
5 Meeting Centre Leadership	6 Focus on both members living with dementia and family carers
7 Programme of activities	8 Location
9 Community engagement	10 Community of learning and practice
11 UK Meeting Centres data collection	



The internet is now an essential lifeline to stay connected with friends and family, informed and entertained, and able to learn, work, shop and access services. SCVO's [Connecting Scotland programme](#) aims to get every citizen in Scotland online.

[ALISS](#) (A Local Information System for Scotland) can support people to connect with over 5,500 services that are registered on ALISS.

Well Café participants explored the barriers for people to become digitally involved and confident and welcomed the [ALLIANCE](#) Discover Digital resources to help people connect with family, friends and communities.

Well Café 2: KEEP ACTIVE and EAT WELL

The session explored the synergy between Eating Well and Keeping Active. Many people who live alone may be unmotivated to cook for themselves. Food, eating and cooking are social – and have a value beyond nutrition on lots of levels.



The [Eat Well Age Well](#) team offer a wealth of resources and training. Participants shared some local examples of nutrition initiatives: In Clackmannanshire, some projects involve older people sharing food and recipes with youngsters. In Dementia Friendly Dunblane, older people give shopping lists to youngsters who go out, buy the food and then they cook together.

It's easy to forget how some communities have been really badly affected by Covid. For example, the Chinese association in Stirling lunch club found it hard as culturally people share dishes and don't like to sit separately

After the Café about Eat Well, I reflected on living by yourself during lockdown and losing interest in food. That sparked an idea and at 3Ls we created two online cook-alongs with a university lecturer who is Chinese. We received positive feedback. It makes you think about how food can bring us together. My kitchen was a mess, but it was great fun and I really enjoyed it.



Many voluntary organisations are now involved in growing and gardening - a real chance to get people to think about what they eat and be physically active.

Paths for All announced [new funding](#) to develop community path projects. The Care Inspectorate's [CAPA programme](#) has highlighted the benefits of physical activity for wellbeing in later life and supported care professionals working with older people across Scotland. CAPA used ordinary language and 'all teach all learn' principles to create and collate ideas, case studies and resources that are available to all.

I will be applying these movement messages in team meetings and other settings



Sharing resources and networking across Scotland is a must, there is such a wealth of knowledge & ideas out there it is amazing.

Amazing things going on, this is a brilliant way to gain more ideas and to see what is working in different areas.

Well Café 3: TAKE NOTICE

This session explored the benefits of nature to enhance, wellbeing and reflected on the specific needs and support for people with sensory impairment.



COPE (Caring Over People's Emotions) Scotland, a mental and emotional wellbeing charity led by the voices of lived experience, shared practical tools and resources to help support mindfulness, self-care and self-management. Participants explored the connection between nature, personal wellbeing and wellbeing of our planet, and welcomed the current opportunities for social prescribing.

I was one of those shielding and the best thing that I had was the ability to go out in my garden. It was the best my garden had ever looked; I will be brutally honest. When I was feeling completely rotten, I'd go outside bare foot in the grass and start puddling about in a flower bed and I felt instantly better. It is obviously really important that there is an understanding of the ability to prescribe something other than a tablet. My concern is not everyone will be aware of every opportunity that can be prescribed. The fear of change, the loss of control for some people in their prescribing ability. The oddness of taking that leap of faith to do something different!

Just looking at images of nature can improve our feelings of wellbeing.

Sometimes it's the simplest of things offers great comfort and joy

Face masks limit opportunities for lip reading and to gauge emotions. Repeatedly asking a person to repeat themselves can impact on self-confidence, increase sense of isolation and impact on mood

[Forth Valley Sensory Centre](#) receives around 500 clients, including veterans, per week with the ethos of supporting independent living. Produce from the kitchen garden supplies the Tiki café which is open to all and supports people to connect and engage with the activities supported by volunteers. The Sensory Garden has been a huge success with clients, staff and the community, including with local schools and intergenerational projects.

Lovely meeting everyone, together we can be the change the world does need to see

When we share and work together, we may not find a perfect solution but we can find something which may just be good enough

Enjoyed the relaxation video as well as the presentations which were interesting

Positively uplifting discussions, food for thought, inspiring

Breath of fresh air

Well Café 4: GIVE

The household survey identifies two peaks in volunteering in young people and in older adults. Volunteer Scotland's report [Contribution of Volunteering to Scotland's Health and Wellbeing: 2020 – 2040](#) highlights the reciprocal benefits from volunteering for Scotland's 1.4 million volunteers.



[Volunteer Edinburgh](#) aims to inspire more people to volunteer so they can enhance their own lives, the lives of others and build resilient communities. The initial focus on mental health and supporting those facing barriers has now extended to pioneering ways for people to get involved and volunteer, partnering with communities to overcome adversity, tackling social isolation and loneliness, and improving health. Volunteer Edinburgh are only now seeing an increase in applications from older people to volunteer, post pandemic.

Time is compassion - giving back to the community

We have been shocked at the deterioration in some of our members and volunteers through the impact of the pandemic and lockdown, with some unable to take up their previous volunteering roles

The activities of Larkhall and District Volunteer Group are created and led by members. One example is [Heart of Africa](#) – a charity developed by a family from Africa so their son could feel part of the local community through the medium of food. He cooks Scottish fare with African fusion for the local lunch club. Lunch has become a fun social occasion involving African dancing.

[Generations Working Together](#) (GWT) shared examples of their intergenerational work and how this has had to adapt through the pandemic:

Collaborating with the Soil Association which included developing online training with Argyle Carers which won an award	Eating lunch together via zoom: older people joining school children which generated interesting conversations and laughs 😊
Older people reading stories online to classrooms of younger people. The children were captivated!	Intergenerational gardening projects involve schools, care homes, day care centres and many more
Older people and teenagers sharing skills at a Volunteer Centre	Working with Linwood Housing Association and school next door to grow plants

Intergenerational work is breaking down barriers between older and younger people which is positive as ageism can affect a person's health and wellbeing

The difference to all involved is palpable. It's good for everyone's wellbeing

Well Café 5: KEEP LEARNING

Strathclyde University's Learning in Later Life (3Ls) Student Association highlighted a range of activities for the 50+ 'younger people of older age'. These include a series of club programmes, lunchtime talks, social outings, walking groups and events - all with an important social aspect of meeting new people and trying new things. Working virtually during the pandemic brought new challenges but opportunities to maintain interests and continue to meet new people.



The University of the Third Age (u3a) is a UK-wide collection of 1000+ charities that provide the opportunity for those no longer in work to come together and learn for fun. Each u3a manages their own membership and sign-up process that includes an annual membership fee. More than 430,000 members are exploring new ideas, skills and interests.

Lifelong learning becomes a joy when you do it for pleasure not work

Lifelong learning opportunities need to be accessible and affordable for all as the cost of classes could be prohibitive for some people

Launched in February 2022, the Collective Force for Health and Wellbeing Action Plan aims to build collaboration between libraries, schools, health and social care and voluntary organisations, to make libraries the go-to place in communities for:

- trusted information for health, wellbeing and recovery
- health literacy skills
- facilitated reading for wellbeing.

<https://vimeo.com/680276499/9800b1b812>



Participants were invited to encourage their communities to express interest as Pathfinder sites to implement the Action Plan to promote Active independent living; Early intervention; Self management and wellbeing; and Right care, right place, right time...

Port Glasgow libraries online Chatty Cafes are an opportunity to meet and blether about topics on crafts, gardening, reading and climate. As services and libraries opened up, the 'Books on wheels' service delivered books to people's own homes, supporting them cope with isolation. Inverclyde Cares 'no one grieves alone' initiative includes supplying easily accessible books on bereavement.

The Well Café prompted the idea to include a leaflet about what is on offer from libraries in Compassionate Inverclyde's Back Home Boxes.

Libraries have a key role in connecting communities

I am going to spread the word about libraries and their benefits for health and wellbeing

6. International Webinars

The team hosted two webinars as part of IFIC Scotland's Integrated Care Matters webinars.



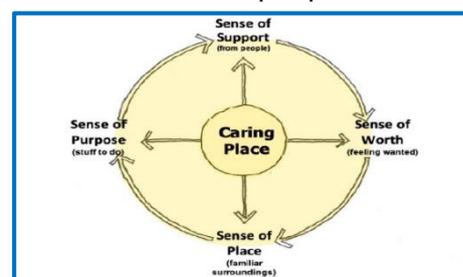
In December 2021, 98 people from 18 countries registered to discuss [Healthy Communities, Places and Spaces](#) with 7 panellists

[Mid & East Antrim Agewell](#) Partnership's (MEAAP) 18 community Hubs have received over 1800 referrals for their holistic and neighbourhood approach to health, wellbeing and the social determinants of health. The evaluation reports an impressive return on investment!

Local Area Coordination applies a neighbourhood and strength based approach to increase the capacity and resilience of individuals, families, communities and service systems, and decrease demand for and reliance on formal services and funding, wherever possible.

The [Shaping Places for Wellbeing Programme](#) aims to create and maintain places and spaces that enable wellbeing and participation across the life stages. It is working with communities to improve the impact of our places on wellbeing outcomes and equity.

Panellists reflected on the positive relationship between volunteering and health and wellbeing and benefits for more inclusive and engaged communities. But older people need improved accessibility, connectivity and transport to fully engage in such initiatives. [The Caring Place for Town Centre Living report](#) builds on learning from 20 minute neighbourhoods and on the principles of Placemaking: connecting people, place and care to help us redesign or think differently about services and spaces in a place.

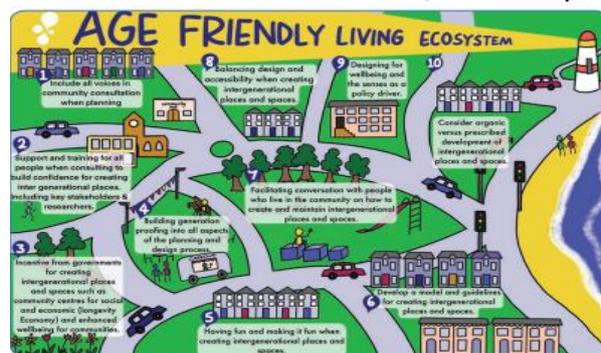


Lack of public toilets is a huge problem – handrails for inclines make a big difference.



In April 2022, 60 people from 15 countries explored *Creating Wellbeing in Later Life* with 7 panellists

Dr Anna Dixon, former CEO of the [Centre for Ageing Better](#) and author of the [Age of Ageing Better](#) was joined by Dr Mei Fang, Lecturer in the School of Health Sciences, University of Dundee and Adjunct Professor, Department of Gerontology at Simon Fraser University, Canada. Dr Fang's research focuses on co-creating ecosystems of intergenerational and inclusive places and spaces with and for people working and living in the community. The report of the Age Friendly Living Ecosystem project can be accessed [here](#)



Worldwide, much of the attention for start-ups centres on younger individuals but research however shows that seniors are the fastest growing group of entrepreneurs and importantly they are also more successful. Silver Starters, established by the Leyden Academy of Vitality and Ageing and the Medical University of Lodz, aims to encourage, support and empower European citizens 50+ to start on new paths. It offers an adaptive, blended 8 week training course on start-up principles uniquely focusing on seniors and delivered in Dutch, Polish, Portuguese or Italian. The course presents life experience as an asset rather than a limitation.

Prof. Peter Gore's team at Newcastle University and ADL Smartcare's dedicated research department have shown that people lose their ability to undertake activities of daily living in a particular order. LifeCurve™ measures how people are ageing based on their ability to do everyday tasks. The App is freely available on Apple, Google and Amazon app stores for mobile or tablet devices. Older people can position themselves on the LifeCurve™ to see how they are ageing and can access hints and tips on how to age well, keep moving and stay stronger for longer at home. More information on LifeCurve™ is available [here](#).

7. Feedback and Reflections

The WeLL project team invited participants to reflect on their experience of the programme to inform this report and recommendations for further work. Feedback was obtained through two online focus groups; structured interviews with a sample of four participants; dialogue with national partners; and from 24 responses to questions in an anonymised online survey.

- How many online WeLL Conversation Cafes or Co-Labs were you able to attend?
- Please provide some feedback on what worked well for you.
- Please provide some feedback on what did not work so well for you.
- How meaningful are the WeLL themes - Connect, Keep Active, Eat Well, Take Notice, Give and Keep Learning?
- How useful has the learning network been for you, your community or organisation?
- Has your understanding of wellbeing in later life and age friendly communities changed in any way? Yes / No: If yes please add comment
- Does this project overlap / duplicate / complement similar work? If Yes please describe
- How can the WeLL project momentum be sustained?
- What sector do you work or volunteer in?
- What is your role within your organisation?

What Worked Well

Overall, the positive feedback highlights the programme approach and content landed well.

All of it! The range of speakers, the format, the Zoom platform are the three that come to mind initially. What I think worked particularly well though was the open, friendly, welcoming atmosphere throughout each session

This has been the most amazing opportunity and it's always absolutely inspirational listening to the speakers the ideas, the best practice that can be shared, replicated and help to improve lives which is what this is all about for us.

Amazing. I have floated in and out and this has allowed me to take things away and let them percolate up and link it all together. I am more inspired - this is Age Positive and Friendly and has given me energy.

The informal and reciprocal learning based on experts by experience has been warmly welcomed. Participants appreciated the informal, democratised learning approach where older citizens, volunteers, third sector partners and public sector employees come together as equal partners. Taking the time to come together and actively listen with open minds and open hearts creates the conditions for creative ideas and to co-produce solutions.

What didn't work so well?

Participants highlighted the gender imbalance at sessions, noting this often applies in local groups too, and suggested we should all do more to reflect diversity in later life and to involve older people in hardily reached communities. Five responses suggested three hours was too long for Co-lab sessions even with the short break. One person found sessions too broad and high level and would have welcomed a more in-depth discussion. Although the online delivery was appreciated, there was awareness of the need to shift to a hybrid approach in future.

I think there is a danger that as we move into more physical connections, there may be new exclusion to those who can't, or don't feel safe enough, to meet in-person.

A challenge for the future is how we embrace hybrid workshops/events in which there are some people in person and some joining online, such that both groups have a positive and comparable experience. Perhaps something we can work together on, sharing learning, experiences and maybe even access to facilities?

Relevance of WeLL Themes

The six WeLL themes were considered relevant and meaningful in all stages of our lives. 'Belonging,' 'work in partnership,' and 'culture and diversity' were also suggested as themes.

We kept coming back to them very naturally and they are the themes we found emerged in our celebrating communities project last year, but we use different language,

I always have to consider the 'Take Notice' one, as it is less obvious than the others. However I cannot think of creative way to describe it. I love the variety of the themes, especially the 'Learn' and 'Give' ones that are often neglected

I think the themes are great, really good banner headings for the important issues that were discussed

Synergies with Other Programmes

Two thirds of respondents identified synergies with other work but noted this as a strength.

Additionality for me not duplication

There are links with other areas of work, not necessarily duplication. Network building and information sharing is key to ensuring that work is complementary and we can build momentum towards shared goals.

It complements the work already going on, providing a forum for a wide group to share ideas and aspirations.

Very, very useful. It's made me aware of a range of projects and organisations throughout the UK which I would never normally have had the opportunity to come into contact with and learn from. It has informed my work and considerably enhanced my own project.

Four personal reflections illustrate the wider organisational learning from participation.

Colin Malkin, Living Well Support and Development Worker, [Voluntary Action South Ayrshire \(VASA\)](#)

The WeLL programme was recommended to Colin as part of his VASA induction and continuous learning and proved useful as he restarted the VASA active Seniors Forum, Club 52¾ and other activities paused during the pandemic. He summed his experience of participating in the WeLL programme as serendipity!

It has been invaluable as it was challenging to know where to start as I had no prior experience. I felt very welcomed into the conversation cafes and co-labs and this gave me the opportunity to hear from very interesting people which in turn inspired me with lots of take aways for my own role. I always came away energised and inspired – being in awe and able to take the learning and replicate it. The Flash Reports, which we have circulated widely, presented a good summary of the sessions and are easy to read. Also the snapshot presentations on the benefits of nature health have enhanced the VASA Living Well Walking Group. As the Seniors Forum restarts one of the aims is to support members to join and participate in the Community Planning Partnership groups to ensure their experiences and voices are informing decisions.

WeLL has given me confidence to bring kindness into my working life and to the VASA Senior Forum which will support Seniors' voices to be heard and decisions made with them and for them.

Catriona Mason, Seniors Together South Lanarkshire

[Seniors Together South Lanarkshire](#) is a community of older people living in South Lanarkshire who provide a collective voice for issues affecting older people's lives. Catriona considered the WeLL programme expanded her knowledge base which is very timely as Seniors Together South Lanarkshire are exploring becoming an Age Friendly Community. Participation is also supporting her as a SOPA Trustee and chair of SOPA's Age Friendly Project Steering Group.

As a committed lifelong learner, it was a gift that the WeLL cafes and co-labs were online as this meant I met and linked with so many different people and heard about different projects from different sectors. It was, also, great to see and connect with other older volunteers and professionals from different areas and to hear their stories and share their work and ideas in a relaxed atmosphere with the opportunity to ask questions – and with the advantage of no power point!

I noted that people made a commitment to the WeLL programme making the effort to connect monthly and generously share their experiences and learning. I really liked the Flash Report format – easy read with links to follow up. We shared all the reports with all Seniors Together members. A highlight was hearing about the experiences from Age Friendly Ireland and Age Friendly Manchester which have given us ideas to build upon with South Lanarkshire Leisure.

The Wellbeing in Later life project has been very worthwhile to be involved in.

Sue Northrop, Dementia Friendly East Lothian

Sue's highlights were hearing about Age Friendly Ireland and the impacts of designing and being in nature. Her learning is contributing to work to establish an East Lothian Dementia Friendly meeting centre – a Hub and Spoke Model that can respond to local needs and context underpinned by the eleven essential adaptable features of meeting centres.

Whilst the timings of the sessions did not always fit with my commitments it is great to feel part of network, with likeminded people - never underestimate the feeling of being part of something. The Flash Reports are great and support that sense of belonging. It is all about relationships and connections - this was evident through Covid with people and communities being in touch and through established relationships they supported each other and made new connections. Coming together to talk as a group generates ideas and has the lovely ethos of co-production. It is the give and take ethos - you get back (more) than you put in. It is a fluid model which keeps the connections going – ideas are not imposed as ideas and connections come out of people coming together.

Delightful. It keeps us connected and valued. WeLL left me with a sense of what could I have done / contributed, if the timings had been better for me. Desire to continue to be involved as I have a sense of unfinished business. I continue to be committed to our journey!

Winnie Mallon, President, 3Ls Students' Association

Winnie's numerous highlights include the importance of nutrition and the impact of eating alone – this led to [3Ls](#) developing online cooking sessions which were a great success and fun. Hearing about greener activities supported the development of 3Ls walking group. The impact of digital exclusion and hearing about the African Caribbean elders community, Compassionate Inverclyde, Dementia Friendly Aberfeldy, East Lothian, Connected East Kilbride and Age Friendly Ireland were all valued.

WeLL enhanced my learning about the third sector and it was good to meet and hear perspectives from those employed and from a younger perspective. WeLL engaged and encouraged connections and participation. The Age Friendly Communities discussions sparked thoughts and reflections around how age friendly is the Academy which we will explore further. I feel WeLL has more than complemented and added value to what we do. It has given a sense of how we fit into the bigger picture. We will be following up WeLL connections after 3Ls AGM in May 2022.

The cafés and co-lab sessions were well hosted and the format worked well. It is very useful asking older people what they want and need - there is a lesson in there for us all. We have taken the learning from the format into our own meetings. The accompanying flash reports are attractive and concise and we shared them with 3Ls members and posted on our website.

The WeLL Co-lab was time well spent - We got hooked on Wellbeing in Later Life!

8. Passing the Baton

The WeLL Project helped us understand the interdependencies between wellbeing in later life and age friendly communities and to share examples of collective actions.

There is widespread recognition that wellbeing in later life has never been more important.

The current economic climate will have severe impact on many people with regard to their ability to feed themselves and keep warm, with subsequent negative impact on health. Priorities for community action may well have to be adjusted in the light of increased deprivation and hardship.

The 2019 framework [A Fairer Scotland for Older People](#) recognised that remaining active and engaged in communities is a clear priority for older people, that chronic loneliness is harmful to mental and physical health, and tackling social isolation and loneliness is fundamental to a thriving older age. An [update](#) on the 56 framework actions was published in June 2021 highlighting encouraging progress on a number of strategic actions but still much to do to deliver local change. As local health, care, housing, community and voluntary organisations rebuild and remobilise post pandemic in Scotland, we must ensure that older people are at the heart of that recovery and that there is a preventative, place based and integrated approach to healthy ageing. The forthcoming Scottish Government Health and Care Strategy for Older People includes a focus on Place and Wellbeing and on Prevention and Proactive anticipatory care. The focus on co-production with older people is very welcome. However it will also be important for this strategy to be co-produced and co-badged with COSLA to reflect the critical role of local authorities and community planning partners in creating the conditions for wellbeing and healthy ageing in place.

The end of project survey invited participants to comment on how to sustain the project momentum. The majority of respondents were interested in maintaining an online network, with follow up conversation cafes, and an opportunity to revisit the themes later in the year or early next year. There were suggestions for face to face sessions, facilitated visits and small group action learning on specific topics. There was recognition that the established learning network needs continued leadership and support for it to thrive.

A new network where ideas can be discussed, shared and developed will work well. We are particularly interested in being part of an Age Friendly network, which will raise the profile of older people, the challenges and issues they face, and help to develop communities where we respect, value and support older people

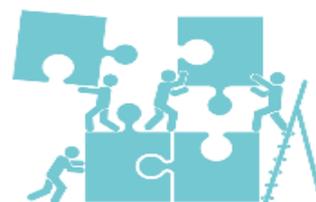
It has taken great leadership, connectors and facilitation to get us all together. Unfortunately it will be difficult to sustain the momentum without this leadership

Mandy has done such a good job of curating sessions, the late afternoon ones are so friendly, but I'm not sure if people would attend without the formal hook and her skills!

Our national partners are poised to build on the legacy of the WeLL project. Each national partner can bring valuable expertise and networks to the next phase of collaboration:

- **The ALLIANCE** delivers Self Management, Aliss and Discover Digital programmes.
- **SOPA** is launching a new Age Friendly Communities Pilot programme for 12 months.
- **Age Scotland's** new Health and Wellbeing Expert Friends Panel will develop and test interventions to motivate and support older adults to enjoy healthy active lifestyles.
- **Public Health Scotland** and the **Improvement Service** Shaping Places for Wellbeing programme aims to improve place and wellbeing outcomes and equity priorities across all life stages - *creating better places to grow, live, work, play and age well.*
- The **Care Inspectorate** has a new Care about Physical Activity: Supporting People's Wellbeing programme
- [Paths for All](#) has announced new funding to develop community path projects.

To ensure coherence and optimal public value, and to achieve traction in implementing the forthcoming Scottish Government Health and Social Care Strategy for Older People, we need to align our collective efforts and join up these national initiatives.



Comments about silos, or as I prefer to call them empires, resonate very strongly with me because people go into their own empire and it becomes an unshakeable process, which is the opposite of what we need. We need to be working together, we need to be in partnership one goal many parts interlinking and creating the best place for people to grow older in Scotland.

Now that we are no longer restricted by geography, we are keen to work more in local communities across Scotland to promote healthy ageing through learning. We are keen to explore what other organisations are doing in the area of health and wellbeing and look at opportunities for collaboration, particularly connecting with organisations that we have previously been unable to reach

We believe Scotland needs a cross sector national network that engages all 31 community planning partnerships in creating inclusive, compassionate Age Friendly Communities that enable Wellbeing in Later Life. This national network needs strategic leadership and dedicated support for facilitation.

There needs to be investment in someone to create the safe spaces and share information and follow up on new speakers etc. With capacity issues, risk if it falls to people doing it as well as day job it can slip – this needs dedicated hours to sustain

The national network should involve academic partners to exploit opportunities for innovation, research and evaluation through future UKRI funding calls.

Scotland should continue to seek international collaborations on healthy ageing and with the UK and Global Networks of Age Friendly Communities.

Annex 1: WeLL Advisory Group Partners

Name	Title and Organisation
Anne Hendry (Co-Chair)	Director, Scotland Hub International Foundation for Integrated Care (IFIC)
Diana Findley (Co-Chair)	Chair Scottish Older People's Assembly (SOPA)
Carol Sinclair	Chief Officer Public Health Scotland (PHS)
John Urquhart	Policy Officer, Health and Social Care COSLA
Alan Stevenson	CEO Volunteer Scotland
Sara Redmond	Chief Officer (Development) Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland
Lynne Douglas	CEO Bield Housing
Bella Kerr	Intergenerational Development Officer Generations Working Together
Fiona Cross	Director of Community Services Age Scotland
Louise Kelly	Programme Lead, Improvement Support Team Care Inspectorate
Stuart Muirhead	Head of programmes Iriss
In Attendance	
Mandy Andrew	Associate Director Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland
Alison Bunce	Programme Lead Compassionate Inverclyde / Inverclyde Cares
Marie Curran	Co-ordinator IFIC Scotland
Caroline Clark	Scottish Older People's Assembly (SOPA)
Sheena Fontana	Scottish Older People's Assembly (SOPA)



Annex 2: Participating Communities and Organisations

Local Communities, Groups and Organisations
Compassionate Inverclyde & Inverclyde Cares
Compassionate Wigtownshire, Dumfries and Galloway
Dementia Friendly Aberfeldy
Dementia Friendly East Lothian
Kirrie Connections, Perthshire
Peebles Dementia Friendly group
Angus Council
East Ayrshire Council
North Ayrshire Council
Scottish Borders Council
Dundee City Council
City of Edinburgh Council
Inverclyde Council
Orkney Council
Perth and Kinross Council
Fife Council
South Lanarkshire Council
Stay well stay connected Aberdeen
Westhill Community Aberdeenshire
Inverclyde CVS
Stirlingshire Voluntary Enterprise
Clackmannanshire Third Sector Interface (CTSI)
Voluntary Action South Lanarkshire
Volunteer Edinburgh
Voluntary Action South Ayrshire
Older and Active East Kilbride
South Lanarkshire Seniors Together
Resilient People, Happy Valleys, Clydesdale, Lanarkshire
Connected East Kilbride
Larkhall & District Volunteer Group
Learning in Later Life Students Association, Strathclyde University
Centre for Lifelong Learning, Strathclyde University
U3A Ayr
COPE Scotland
Weekday Wow Factor Charity and Social Enterprise
North Lanarkshire Carers Together
Aberdeen Hindu Temple Trust
Active Fife
Forth Valley Sensory Centre
Glasgow Life
Old Library Centre Kilbarchan
Aberdeen City HSCP
Moray HSCP
Scottish Borders HSCP

NHS Borders
NHS Lanarkshire
University of the West of Scotland
University of Dundee
Outside the Box & Rural Wisdom
National Groups and Organisations
Independent Age Scotland
African and Caribbean Elders in Scotland (ACES)
Scottish Government – Older Peoples Health, Cancer and End of Life Care Unit Improvement Service
Public Health Scotland
Scottish Older People’s Assembly
Care Inspectorate
Generations Working Together
Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland
Bield Housing
IFIC Scotland
Architecture Design Scotland
Iriss
Life Changes Trust
Age Scotland
Scottish Ballet
Food Train – Meal Makers
Eat Well, Age Well
SCVO
Digital Health & Care Innovation (DHI) Centre
Volunteer Scotland
Knowledge Partners
Age Friendly Ireland
Age Friendly County Kildare
County Cork Older People’s Council
Mid & East Antrim Agewell Partnership, N Ireland
Age Friendly Manchester & Greater Sport Manchester
Inclusive Neighbourhoods Ltd
Simon Fraser University, Canada
Bay of Plenty DHB, New Zealand
Silver Starters, Medical University of Lodz, Poland
NH Consulting
Dr Anna Dixon



Annex 3: Flash Reports and Resources

Topic	Link
Co-Lab 1	WeLL-Co-Lab-1-Flash-Report3252.pdf (integratedcarefoundation.org)
Co-Lab 2	WeLL-Co-Lab-2-Flash-Report-January-2022-fv.docx10826.pdf (integratedcarefoundation.org)
Co-Lab 3	Co-lab-3-Flash-Report-March-202226469.pdf (integratedcarefoundation.org)
Café: CONNECT	Connect-Flash-Report-Nov-20215181-1.pdf (integratedcarefoundation.org)
Café: KEEP ACTIVE and EAT WELL	Keep-Active-Eat-Well-Flash-Report6760.pdf (integratedcarefoundation.org)
Café: TAKE NOTICE	Conversation-Cafe-January-12th-Flash-Report9461.pdf (integratedcarefoundation.org)
Café: GIVE & KINDNESS	Conversation-Cafe-February-16th-Flash-Report15779.pdf (integratedcarefoundation.org)
Café: KEEP LEARNING	Conversation-Cafe-March-16th-Flash-Report24646.pdf (integratedcarefoundation.org)
Webinar: Healthy Communities, Places and Spaces	Flash-Report-Dec-20216922.pdf (integratedcarefoundation.org)
Webinar: Creating Wellbeing in Later Life	Flash-Report-April-202228069.pdf (integratedcarefoundation.org)

Each [Flash Report](#) contains quotes, references, links to useful resources and to the edited recording and [presentations](#).



