

Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Thursday, 13 February 2025 at 10.00 am
Council Chamber - South Kesteven House, St. Peter's Hill,
Grantham. NG31 6PZ

Committee Members: Councillor Nikki Manterfield (Chairman)
Councillor Steven Cunningham (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Pam Byrd, Councillor James Denniston, Councillor Richard Dixon-Warren, Councillor Robert Leadenham, Councillor Habibur Rahman, Councillor Vanessa Smith and Councillor Peter Stephens

Agenda

This meeting can be watched as a live stream, or at a later date, [via the SKDC Public-I Channel](#)

1. **Public Speaking**
The Council welcomes engagement from members of the public. To speak at this meeting please register no later than 24 hours prior to the date of the meeting via democracy@southkesteven.gov.uk
2. **Apologies for absence**
3. **Disclosure of Interest**
Members are asked to disclose any interest in matters for consideration at the meeting.
4. **Minutes from the meeting held on 12 December 2024** (Pages 3 - 8)

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Karen Bradford, Chief Executive
www.southkesteven.gov.uk

5. **Updates from the previous meeting** (Page 9)
To receive updates on actions agreed at the previous meeting.
6. **Announcements or updates from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members or the Head of Paid Service**
7. **Road Safety & Speeding in Communities Presentation**
8. **South Kesteven Agricultural Sector** (Pages 11 - 22)
To inform the Committee of the challenges facing the local agricultural sector and the communities centered on that business
9. **Age Friendly Communities** (Pages 23 - 91)
To provide an update on the progress of South Kesteven District Council becoming an Age Friendly Community.
10. **SK Community Fund - Review of Eligibility Criteria 2025** (Pages 93 - 96)
To consider proposed changes to determine access to the SK Community Fund: Main and Small Grants Scheme and provide a recommendation to the Cabinet Member on a revised eligibility criteria.
11. **Community Awards Working Group - Verbal Update**
12. **Armed Forces Covenant Update 2024** (Pages 97 - 107)
This report provides an update on the Council's actions to meet its responsibilities under the Armed Forces Act and the Armed Forces Covenant; achievements under the Council's Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award; engagement and advocacy agendas and plans for the coming year.
13. **Work Programme 2024 - 2025** (Pages 109 - 111)
To receive the Work Programme for 2024 – 2025.
14. **Any other business which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, decides is urgent**

Meeting of the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

Thursday, 12 December 2024,
10.00 am

Committee Members present

Councillor Nikki Manterfield (Chairman)
Councillor Steven Cunnington (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Pam Byrd
Councillor Robert Leadenham
Councillor Habibur Rahman
Councillor Matthew Bailey
Councillor Tim Harrison
Councillor Gloria Johnson
Councillor Charmaine Morgan

Other Members present

Councillor Sarah Trotter

Officers

Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and Section
151 Officer
Debbie Roberts, Head of Corporate Projects, Policy
and Performance
Carol Drury, Community Engagement & Manager
Peter Harrison, Environmental Protection Officer
Hannah Rowe, Performance Analyst
Joshua Mann, Democratic Services Officer

99. Public Speaking

There were none.

100. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Vanessa Smith, being
substituted by Councillor Charmaine Morgan.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Richard Dixon-Warren,
being substituted by Councillor Gloria Johnson.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor James Dennison, substituted by Councillor Tim Harrison.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Peter Stephens, substituted by Councillor Matt Bailey.

The Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Member for People and Communities and the Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance and Licensing also sent notice of their absence.

101. Disclosure of Interest

There were none.

102. Minutes from the meeting held 16 October 2024

The minutes of the meeting held 16 October 2024 were proposed, seconded and AGREED as an accurate record.

103. Announcements or updates from the Leader of the Council, Cabinet Members or the Head of Paid Service

There were none.

104. Corporate Plan 2024-27 Key Performance Indicators: 2024/25 Mid-Year (Q2) Report

The Corporate Plan 2024-27 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): 2024/25 Mid-Year (Q2) Report was introduced by the Head of Corporate Projects, Performance and Climate Change.

The report was intended to update on the key actions, indicators and targets agreed by the Rural & Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) at the 28 March 2024 meeting.

To break this down, the report presented the overall performance against ten actions using a RAG system. The results were as follows:

- Eight of the actions were rated Green overall. These were actions which were on, or above target as planned.
- Two actions were rated as Amber, these were off target by less than 10% or where milestone achievement was delayed but with resolution in place to be achieved within a reasonable timeframe.
- Zero actions were rated as Red. These were actions that were significantly below target.

The KPIs were developed in close consultation with the relevant Officers for each service.

It was confirmed that an all-Member briefing had been arranged to demonstrate how KPI results could be viewed on the SKDC online dashboard area of the website.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- Regarding the COM7 action of delivering the Community Engagement and Development Strategy and accompanying action plan, it was queried how this was monitored as engagement should be on an ongoing basis. This question was deferred for a response from the Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer and Community) – **ACTION.**
- Regarding the COM9 action to deliver the Safer Streets Programme and seek opportunities to develop a legacy applied districtwide once the funding period ends, clarity was sought as to why the results were below target. It was confirmed by the Environmental Protection Officer that this was because there had been insufficient staffing available during the summer months given that the individuals were already working full time.
- Members praised the work of the Safer Streets Team.

The Committee noted the Corporate Plan 2024-27 Key Performance Indicators: 2024/25 Mid-Year (Q2) Report.

105. Armed Forces Covenant Update

It was proposed by the Chairman that the Armed Forces Covenant Update was deferred until the 13 February 2025 meeting to allow for the presence of the Armed Forces Champion. This motion was seconded and AGREED by the Committee.

106. SK Community Awards 2024

The SK Community Awards 2024 report was presented by the Community Engagement Manager.

The SK Community Awards were introduced in 2021 following the upsurge in volunteering during the Covid-19 pandemic. For 2024, the categories were as follows:

- Inspirational Young Person
- Community Contribution by Business
- Neil Smith – Beyond the Call of Duty
- Community in Bloom
- Judy Smith – Lifetime Community Champion
- Volunteer of the Year
- Community Group of the Year.

It was noted that the quantity of nominations received in 2024 had reduced from previous years.

The three finalists in each category nominated by the public, along with the recipients of the volunteer of the year and community group of the year award were invited to attend a celebratory dinner held in Bourne in November 2024 at which the winners were announced.

The winners and runners up, who are invited to bring a guest with them to the Awards evening were presented with a crystal trophy by members of the Cabinet and the Chairman of the Council.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- Members supported the recommendation to establish a working group to assist in reviewing the nominations. It was AGREED that the group would comprise of the following Members, led by Councillor N. Manterfield:
 - o Councillor R. Leadenham
 - o Councillor T. Harrison
 - o Councillor P. Byrd
 - o Councillor C. Morgan
 - o Councillor S. Cunningham.
- The Community Engagement Manager confirmed that the group would meet to discuss the nominations in the new year.
- It was confirmed that there was district-wide representation on the judging panel.
- It was suggested that awareness of the awards should be promoted in order to combat the reduced quantity of nominations received in 2024.

In addition to the formation of the Working Group, the Committee noted the SK Community Awards 2024 report.

107. Work Programme 2024 - 2025

It was requested that the following were incorporated on the Work Programme for the upcoming Committee meetings:

- Update in respect of the Working Group formed for the SK Community Awards 2024.
- The deferred Armed Forces Covenant Update,
- LCC Health Scrutiny Committee update,
- Verbal update on the implementation of the community group section of the SKDC website.
- Review of the Corporate Plan in the context of agriculture and farming.
- Community Fund Review of Eligibility Criteria.

Members were invited to attend the Budget OSC meeting scheduled for 14 January 2025.

108. Any other business which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, decides is urgent

The meeting adjourned at 10:26AM to allow for the presence of Councillor Trotter. Councillor Trotter entered the Chamber, and the meeting resumed at 10:40AM.

As a Member of the Lincolnshire Police & Crime Panel, Councillor Trotter delivered a verbal update on the status of Lincolnshire Police.

It was confirmed that Lincolnshire Police were subject to stage two enhanced monitoring following a Police Efficiency Examination in October 2024. The following five areas of concern had been identified by the Police inspectorate:

- Attend calls for service in line with its published target attendance times.
- Improve how it allocates, supervises and carries out investigations to make sure victims get the support they need.
- Make sure that it has the capacity and capability to manage the risks posed to the public by registered sex offenders.
- Improve its understanding of demand.
- Have adequate strategic plans in place.

Councillor Trotter confirmed that a strategic management team were formed in June 2024 following the concern identified regarding response times.

During discussions, Members commented on the following:

- Whether the imposition of enhanced monitoring would result in additional funding being released by central Government. This was unclear but both Councillor Trotter and the Cabinet Member for Planning had queried the funding formula.
- The effectiveness of the financial management within the existing funding. It was suggested that this was dependent on the quality on the software systems used.
- It was noted that the overtime budget for 2024 had been depleted by mid-year.
- The suggestion was made for the Fleet Management Plan to be reviewed.
- It was noted by the Chief Executive that the working relationship between SKDC and Lincolnshire Police had improved in the last four years and that there was regular dialogue between the two organisations.
- It was queried how the funding for Lincolnshire Police compared to other forces.

- Concern was raised that Lincolnshire may become a target for criminality given the publicized nature of the issues with Lincolnshire Police.
- It was identified by a Member that they felt a significant lack of strategic vision and leadership within Lincolnshire Police which could undermine any requests for additional funding. The Member cited the decision to move the Police Station in Grantham whilst coinciding with removal of some of the fleet, had caused significant time to be wasted with Officers travelling across town.
- It was agreed that the Chairman would write a letter of support to the Chief Constable on behalf of the Rural & Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee - **ACTION**.

The meeting concluded at 11:27 AM.

Action Sheet

Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Actions from meeting of 12 December 2024

| Min no | Agenda item | Action | Assigned to | Comments/Status | Deadline |
|--------|-------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|----------|
| | | Regarding the COM7 action of delivering the Community Engagement and Development Strategy and accompanying action plan, it was queried how this would be monitored on an ongoing basis | Claire Moses/Carol Drury | Email response sent to Cllr Morgan, 17/12/24 | COMPLETE |
| | | Supporting letter sent to Chief Constable of Lincolnshire Police on behalf of the Rural OSC | Cllr N Manterfield as the Chairman. | | |
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**SOUTH
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COUNCIL**

Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 13 February 2025

Report of Councillor Ashley Baxter,
Leader of the Council

South Kesteven Agricultural Sector

Report Author

Charles James, Policy Officer

✉ charles.james@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To provide an overview of the district's agricultural sector and to inform the Committee on the challenges facing the sector and the communities centred on that business.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the information in the report.

Decision Information

| | |
|---|---|
| Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? | No |
| What are the relevant corporate priorities? | Connecting Communities Sustainable South Kesteven Enabling Economic Opportunities |
| Which wards are impacted? | All |

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

1.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Completed by: Paul Sutton, Interim Head of Finance (Deputy s151)

Legal and Governance

1.2 There are no significant legal or governance implications arising from this report, which is for noting.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer

2. Background to the Report

2.1. At the meeting of the Committee on 12th December 2024, it was agreed that an item on the district's agricultural sector would be added to the Work Programme.¹ Specifically this would inform the Committee on the sector's value to the local economy, the challenges facing the sector and the policy context for state support.

Scope and Sources

2.2. This report is intended to provide an overview to the Committee. The report is desktop research, rather than engagement with the local sector. The two data sources used for the report were:

- Gross Value Added² (GVA) and employment statistics produced by the Office for National Statistics (ONS)
- Agricultural statistics produced by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA).³

¹ Rural & Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee, 12th December 2024, Minutes, Item 9: Work Programme 2024 – 2025, [Agenda for Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Thursday, 12th December, 2024, 10.00 am | South Kesteven District Council](#)

² Gross Value Added (GVA) is computed as Gross output minus intermediate consumption and represents that contribution of a business, sector or industry to Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

³ The key DEFRA collections are [Structure of the agricultural industry in England and the UK at June](#) (annual land and crop areas, livestock populations and agricultural workforce estimates, including local, sourced from the annual June Survey of Agriculture and Horticulture), [Agriculture in the United Kingdom](#), and the [Aggregate agricultural accounts](#).

- 2.3 Both have significant limitations at the district level. The ONS provides a single GVA estimate for Primary Industries: the combined category of 'Agriculture, Mining, Electricity, Gas, Water & Waste'. This category cannot be disaggregated at the local level but from local knowledge the assumption would be that the majority of the GVA in this category for South Kesteven will be from agriculture.
- 1.1 DEFRA provides statistics for the local authority level on the number of holdings, individuals employed, land under cultivation (hectares) and for what purpose, and the number and type of livestock but there is no measure for local output. Output statistics are available in more detail from the county level upwards.
- 1.2 The key statistic DEFRA produces is the Total Income From Farming (TIFF). This is the total amount of money made by farming after paying for all the goods, labour, services, capital and so on required in the production process (subsidies are included), and is used to measure performance of the whole agricultural industry. TIFF is only available from the national to the county level.⁴
- 1.3 Therefore it is impossible to reliably quantify the size or output of the agriculture sector in South Kesteven.
- 1.4 Given the limitations of the local data, the report will primarily present an overview of the sector at the local level and describe challenges at the regional and national level, with the assumption that the trends described will also reflect the sector in South Kesteven. Unless otherwise specified the data will be presented in 2023 prices.⁵

Policy Context - National

- 1.5 Agricultural support is primarily delivered at the national level. Britain's exit from the European Union (EU) caused a significant shift in agricultural policy. Under the Agriculture Act 2020, a new support regime is being rolled out in England between 2021 to 2027 to replace the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).⁶
- 1.6 Under CAP more than 80% of government support was delivered through the area based direct payments, where farmers would be paid based on the amount of land farmed. The new support regime is designed to incentivise the production of 'public goods' such as environmental improvements and contributions to other policy agendas. For example, delivery of biodiversity net gain targets, transition to low carbon farming and achievement of Net Zero targets.
- 1.7 There are three main tiers of Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS) in the new policy:
- Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) - pays farmers to adopt and maintain sustainable farming practices that can protect and enhance the natural

⁴ Agriculture in the United Kingdom, Agriculture in the United Kingdom data sets, Chapter 4 – Accounts, [Agriculture in the United Kingdom data sets - GOV.UK](#)

⁵ HM Treasury, GDP Deflators at Market Prices and Money GDP (Quarterly National Accounts) – December 2024, [GDP deflators at market prices, and money GDP December 2024 \(Quarterly National Accounts\) - GOV.UK](#)

⁶ Coe S & Uberoi E (2023), Farm funding: implementing new approaches, House of Commons Library, [Farm funding: implementing new approaches - House of Commons Library](#)

environment alongside food production. Examples include improving soil quality or planting hedgerows.

- Countryside Stewardship - pays for more targeted actions relating to specific locations, features and habitats, with an extra incentive through 'Countryside Stewardship Plus' for land managers to join up action across local areas.
- Landscape Recovery - pays for bespoke, longer-term, larger scale projects to enhance the natural environment.

1.8 Further grants are available to improve farm productivity, research & development, innovation and animal health and welfare.

1.9 The government has committed to the nation continuing to produce at least 60% of its food domestically. The new support regime aims to 'boost sustainable food production while delivering positive outcomes for the environment'. Future policy developments will likely stem from the balancing of the twin objectives. In 2024, the SFI scheme was modified to cap the amount of land used for environmental schemes following concerns that food production may be impacted by farmers seeking to maximise SFI payments.⁷

Policy Context - Regional

1.10 In 2023, Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) undertook a review of the agricultural sector in Lincolnshire and the support LCC currently provides. A key recommendation of that work was the reestablishment of the Greater Lincolnshire Forum for Agriculture and Horticulture (G)LFFAH. The forum is a partnership between LCC, agri-business and other stakeholders to influence the local and national agenda, and to provide a regional voice for local farming to inform decision-making.⁸

1.11 The Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership (GLLEP) has identified agri-food as a priority sector for Greater Lincolnshire. The UK Food Valley (centred on South Lincolnshire) is a key GLLEP programme, along with the establishment of Agricultural Growth Zones and Food Enterprise Zones (FEZ) to support clusters.

1.12 The government has instructed all strategic authorities (in Lincolnshire the imminent Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority GLCCA) to develop Local Growth Plans. Agriculture will be a key focus of the Greater Lincolnshire growth plan.

Policy Context – Local

1.13 The SKDC Corporate Plan 2024-27 does not explicitly reference or include policy interventions for agricultural. This is because it is a high level strategy focused on the district and the corporate organisation rather than addressing individual sectors, demographics or communities.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Lincolnshire County Council, Report by Scrutiny Panel B on behalf of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee, Lincolnshire Agricultural Sector Support, May 2023, [5.1 Appendix A - Scrutiny Panel B Final Report.pdf](#)

- 1.14 The SKDC Economic Development Strategy & Action Plan 2024-28 sets out the priorities and programme of the Council's Economic Development function. The Strategy commits the Council to work to identify the particular difficulties and needs of rural business, with agriculture, food & drink and horticulture production specified.

South Kesteven Agriculture

- 1.15 As of June 2021 (latest release), there were 452 holdings in South Kesteven farming a total area of 71,920 hectares. This equates to 12.93% of the total holdings and 14.71% of the total farmed area in Lincolnshire. The total farmed area of Lincolnshire is 488,915 hectares – 5.4% of the national total.⁹

| Table 1: South Kesteven Holdings and Total Farmed Area | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| South Kesteven | 2007 | 2010 | 2013 | 2016 | 2021 |
| Number of Holdings | N/A | N/A | 471 | 494 | 452 |
| % of Lincolnshire Total Holdings | N/A | N/A | 13.17 | 13.18 | 12.93 |
| Total Farmed Area (Hectares) | 74,163 | 70,517 | 75,326 | 79,268 | 71,920 |
| % of Lincolnshire Total Farmed Area | N/A | 14.56% | 15.58% | 15.63% | 14.71% |

Table 1 - South Kesteven Holdings and Total Farmed Area, 2007-2021, Source: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

- 1.16 Both the number of holdings and farmed land is in decline. Holdings have fallen by -4% since 2013 (data prior to 2013 is unavailable) and -8.5% since 2021. 9.27% less land is farmed compared to 2016. These trends are mirrored regionally.

| Table 2: Change in Holdings and Total Farmed Area, South Kesteven vs Comparators | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Area | % Change Total Holdings | | % Change Total Farmed Area | |
| | 2013-21 | 2016-21 | 2013-21 | 2016-21 |
| South Kesteven | -4.03% | -8.50% | -4.52% | -9.27% |
| Lincolnshire | -2.24% | -6.72% | 1.11% | -3.58% |
| East Midlands | 1.25% | -3.09% | -0.33% | -2.14% |

Table 2 – Change in Holdings and Total Farmed Area, 2013-2021, South Kesteven vs Comparators, Source: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

- 1.17 Data on the size of holdings, ownership and the type of farm is unavailable at the district level. Typically holdings are larger in Lincolnshire. County wide, 87% of the farmed area is farmed by holdings with more than 100 hectares. The national figure is 75%.
- 1.18 55,357 hectares, or 76% of the total South Kesteven farmed area (excluding horticultural crops) is used for arable crops (including cereals). This land use pattern is replicated at the county level, where 84% of farmed land is arable land. Nationally, 46% of farmed area is designated this land type.
- 1.19 The dominant category of crop locally is cereals with 41,722 hectares under cultivation or 58% of farmed area. Further detail on specific cereal crops, for

⁹ Structure of the agricultural industry in England and the UK at June, English geographical breakdowns, Local Authority, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, [Structure of the agricultural industry in England and the UK at June - GOV.UK](https://gov.uk/statistics-and-research/publications/structure-of-the-agricultural-industry-in-england-and-the-uk-at-june)

example, wheat and barley is unavailable at the district level. Cereals have grown in prominence since 2013, whilst other arable crops have declined. Horticulture has expanded, although from a significantly lower base. In neighbouring South Holland and North Kesteven, horticulture consists of 6,788 ha and 2,080 ha respectively.

| Table 3: South Kesteven Land Use – Crops (hectares) | | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|
| Crop | 2013 | 2016 | 2021 | % Change | |
| | | | | 2013-2021 | 2016-2021 |
| Cereals | 33,837 | 38,805 | 41,722 | 23.30% | 7.52% |
| Arable Crops | 22,173 | 22,211 | 13,635 | -38.51% | -38.61% |
| Horticulture | 204 | 316 | 397 | 94.61% | 25.63% |
| Permanent Grass | 11,289 | 10,654 | 10,435 | -7.57% | -2.05% |

Table 3 - South Kesteven Land Use: Crops (hectares), 2013-2021, Source: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

- 1.20 The limited prevalence of horticulture is a key difference between South Kesteven and its neighbours. 79% of total horticulture undertaken in the East Midlands is located in Lincolnshire. 2.09% of that land is in South Kesteven. 15.31% of Lincolnshire farmed cereals land is in South Kesteven, and 8.34% of the East Midlands activity.

| Table 4: Share of Regional Activity Located in South Kesteven, Crops 2021 | | |
|--|---|----------------------|
| Crop | % of farmed land located in South Kesteven | |
| | Lincolnshire | East Midlands |
| Cereals | 15.31% | 8.34% |
| Arable Crops | 9.68% | 6.80% |
| Horticulture | 2.09% | 1.66% |
| Permanent Grass | 16.70% | 2.93% |

Table 4 - Share of Regional Activity Located in South Kesteven: Crops, 2021, Source: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

| Table 5: Lincolnshire Land Use – Crops (hectares), 2021 | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|----------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Authority | Total Farmed Area | Cereals | Arable Crops | Horticulture | Permanent Grass |
| South Kesteven | 71,920 | 41,722 | 13,635 | 397 | 10,435 |
| Boston | 31,813 | 12,864 | 6,990 | 6,013 | 3,452 |
| East Lindsey | 137,272 | 70,998 | 29,704 | 4,173 | 21,492 |
| North Kesteven | 81,560 | 43,476 | 19,873 | 2,079 | 8,811 |
| South Holland | 66,689 | 33,280 | 18,350 | 6,787 | 3,056 |
| West Lindsey | 98,819 | 51,043 | 20,912 | 2,430 | 15,209 |

Table 5 - Lincolnshire Land Use: Crops (hectares), 2021, Source: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

- 1.21 As of 2021, there were 8,488 cattle in the district, 34,989 sheep, 15,403 pigs and 1,107,895 poultry. The number of cattle underwent a substantial reduction between 2013 and 2021, sheep have remained constant, whilst both pigs and particularly poultry have grown in number.

| Table 5: South Kesteven Land Use – Livestock (total) | | | | | |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|
| Livestock | 2013 | 2016 | 2021 | % Change | |
| | | | | 2013-2021 | 2016-2021 |
| Cattle | 11,776 | 11,553 | 8,488 | -27.92% | -26.53% |
| Sheep | 34,592 | 35,305 | 34,989 | 1.15% | -0.89% |
| Pigs | 13,913 | 13,266 | 15,403 | 10.71% | 16.11% |
| Poultry | 778,218 | 956,640 | 1,107,895 | 42.36% | 15.81% |

Table 6 - South Kesteven Land Use: Livestock (total), 2013-2021, Source: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

- 1.22 Considered at the regional level, only small proportions of the total farmed livestock are located in South Kesteven. Within Lincolnshire, the district is home to 11.54% of the county's cattle and 23.74% of sheep. South Kesteven's total herds and flocks are typically smaller than its neighbours.

| Table 6: Share of Regional Activity Located in South Kesteven, Livestock 2021 | | | |
|--|---|----------------------|--|
| Livestock | % of total livestock located in South Kesteven | | |
| | Lincolnshire | East Midlands | |
| Cattle | 11.54% | 1.98% | |
| Sheep | 23.74% | 2.89% | |
| Pigs | 8.76% | 3.97% | |
| Poultry | 6.88% | 4.11% | |

Table 7 - Share of Regional Activity Located in South Kesteven: Livestock, 2021, Source: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

| Table 7: Lincolnshire Land Use – Livestock (total), 2021 | | | | |
|---|---------------|--------------|-------------|----------------|
| Authority | Cattle | Sheep | Pigs | Poultry |
| South Kesteven | 8,488 | 34,989 | 15,403 | 1,107,895 |
| Boston | 5,446 | 2,466 | 762 | 411,949 |
| East Lindsey | 36,567 | 38,576 | 36,401 | 4,967,566 |
| North Kesteven | 5,109 | 26,261 | 33,894 | 3,807,698 |
| South Holland | 2,665 | 7,207 | 2,796 | 2,061,352 |
| West Lindsey | 15,284 | 37,787 | 86,547 | 3,751,711 |

Table 8 - Lincolnshire Land Use: Livestock (total), 2021, Source: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

- 1.23 Overall, South Kesteven agriculture appears to be less intensive compared to its neighbours, lacking a particular specialism and is of lower importance to the local economy. This is perhaps unsurprising, despite its rurality, the district's landscape and degree of urbanisation lends it a different economic character to North Kesteven and South Holland. The fastest growing activities: horticulture, poultry, and to a lesser extent cereals, are behind other Lincolnshire authorities. The activity where South Kesteven has an outsized role (sheep farming) has remained essentially static for the past decade.
- 1.24 As discussed in paragraphs 2.3-6, there are significant difficulties in calculating the value of the sector to the local economy. Estimates have been calculated

using regional level output figures and the proportion of activity located in South Kesteven.¹⁰

- 1.25 This produces an estimated total value for the sector of £146.64 million (2023 prices). Of this £108.64 million would be contributed by crops and £38 million by livestock. The ONS Primary Industries GVA estimate is £176.24. That figure includes agriculture, mining, energy, water and waste.

| Table 8: Speculative Estimates of South Kesteven Agricultural Output (£ millions 2023 prices) | | | | | | |
|--|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----------|-----------|
| Activity | 2010 | 2013 | 2016 | 2021 | % change | |
| | | | | | 2010-2021 | 2016-2021 |
| GVA Primary Industries | 123.40 | 149.17 | 147.54 | 176.24 | 42.83% | 19.45% |
| Total Agricultural Sector Estimate | 105.26 | 140.58 | 120.34 | 146.64 | 39.32% | 21.86% |
| Total Crops Estimate | 82.07 | 109.72 | 89.37 | 108.64 | 32.37% | 21.57% |
| Total Livestock Estimate | 23.18 | 30.86 | 30.97 | 38.00 | 63.91% | 22.70% |
| Cereals Estimate | 36.57 | 53.04 | 40.81 | 62.50 | 70.90% | 53.14% |
| Arable Crops Estimate | 41.88 | 51.34 | 39.55 | 31.61 | -24.51% | -20.06% |
| Horticulture Estimate | 3.63 | 5.34 | 9.01 | 14.53 | 300.63% | 61.32% |
| Cattle Estimate | 5.46 | 6.25 | 5.27 | 4.64 | -15.07% | -11.91% |
| Sheep Estimate | 2.20 | 2.30 | 2.42 | 3.35 | 52.58% | 38.61% |
| Pigs Estimate | 3.58 | 4.69 | 3.76 | 4.54 | 26.67% | 20.72% |
| Poultry | 11.94 | 17.63 | 19.53 | 25.47 | 113.30% | 30.45% |

Table 9 - Speculative Estimates of South Kesteven Agricultural Output, 2010-2021, Source: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, and Office for National Statistics

- 1.26 The sector employs 1,426 people as of 2021. The size of the workforce is slightly larger than in 2013. Key trends are the reduction in part time farmers and the consequent growth in full time farmers, regular workers and salaried managers. Since 2016, casual labour and part time labour saw substantial reductions.

| Table 9: South Kesteven Farming Employment | | | | | | |
|---|-----------|------|------|------|-----------|-----------|
| Type | | 2013 | 2016 | 2021 | % Change | |
| | | | | | 2013-2021 | 2016-2021 |
| Farmers, partners, directors and spouses | Full time | 396 | 399 | 418 | 5.41% | 4.62% |
| | Part time | 381 | 397 | 353 | -7.33% | -11.12% |
| Salaried managers | | 76 | 86 | 99 | 30.05% | 15.09% |
| Regular workers full time | | 276 | 300 | 350 | 26.76% | 16.71% |
| Regular workers part time | | 109 | 131 | 103 | -5.48% | -20.94% |
| Casual workers | | 105 | 180 | 102 | -3.53% | -43.40% |
| Total labour | | 1346 | 1495 | 1426 | 5.99% | -4.57% |

Table 10 - South Kesteven Farming Employment, 2013-2021, Source: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

¹⁰ Structure of the agricultural industry in England and the UK at June, English geographical breakdowns, Local Authority, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, [Structure of the agricultural industry in England and the UK at June - GOV.UK](#), and Total income from farming for the regions of England, [Total income from farming for the regions of England - GOV.UK](#), and Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: local authorities by ITL1 region, TLF East Midlands (South Kesteven), Office for National Statistics, [Regional gross value added \(balanced\) by industry: local authorities by ITL1 region - Office for National Statistics](#)

British Agriculture and Challenges

- 1.27 Food production is vulnerable to a range of factors including: changes in climate and extreme weather events, prices offered by purchasers, high energy costs, international supply chains, labour shortages, biodiversity, soil and water quality, and biosecurity and animal health.¹¹
- 1.28 Since 2020, farming has come under particular pressure from the inflationary and supply chains crisis initially caused by the pandemic, then intensified by the onset of the conflict in Ukraine in 2022. Input prices for fuel, fertiliser, pesticides and feed reached near record levels, ameliorated partially by a rise in output prices. For example, wheat.

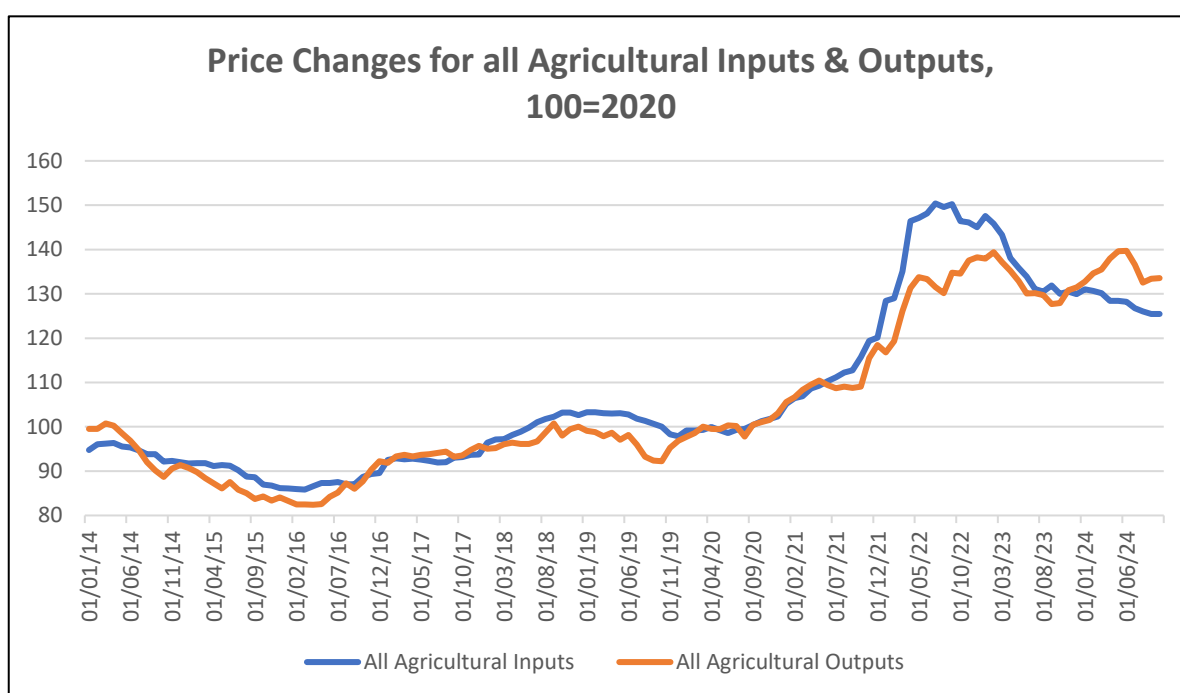


Figure 1 – Price Changes for all Agricultural Inputs & Outputs, United Kingdom, 2014-2024, Source: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

- 1.29 The above chart (adjusted for inflation) shows the Agricultural Price Index of agricultural inputs (money spent) and outputs (agricultural revenue) in Britain, with the 2020 value as 100. There were sharp price increases in 2021 and 2022. Prices have started to drop since July 2022 but remain above pre-war and pre-pandemic levels.¹² Note the tight relationship between input and output prices even in the pre-crisis period. This is the basic economic problem facing British farmers.
- 1.30 The below chart shows Total Income From Farming (TIFF) indexed to 2020 (adjusted for inflation). This shows that the sector has experienced significant fluctuation since 2010, but overall the value of this income has increased.

¹¹ Collyer Merritt, E. (2024), Budget 2024: Inheritance tax, family farms and food security, House of Lords Library, [Budget 2024: Inheritance tax, family farms and food security - House of Lords Library](#)

¹² Agricultural price indices, Latest agricultural price indices, Agricultural Price Index (2020 =100) time series: January 2014 onwards, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, [Latest agricultural price indices - GOV.UK](#)

Farming in Lincolnshire was in a better overall position on this measure in 2023, compared to the national and regional picture.¹³

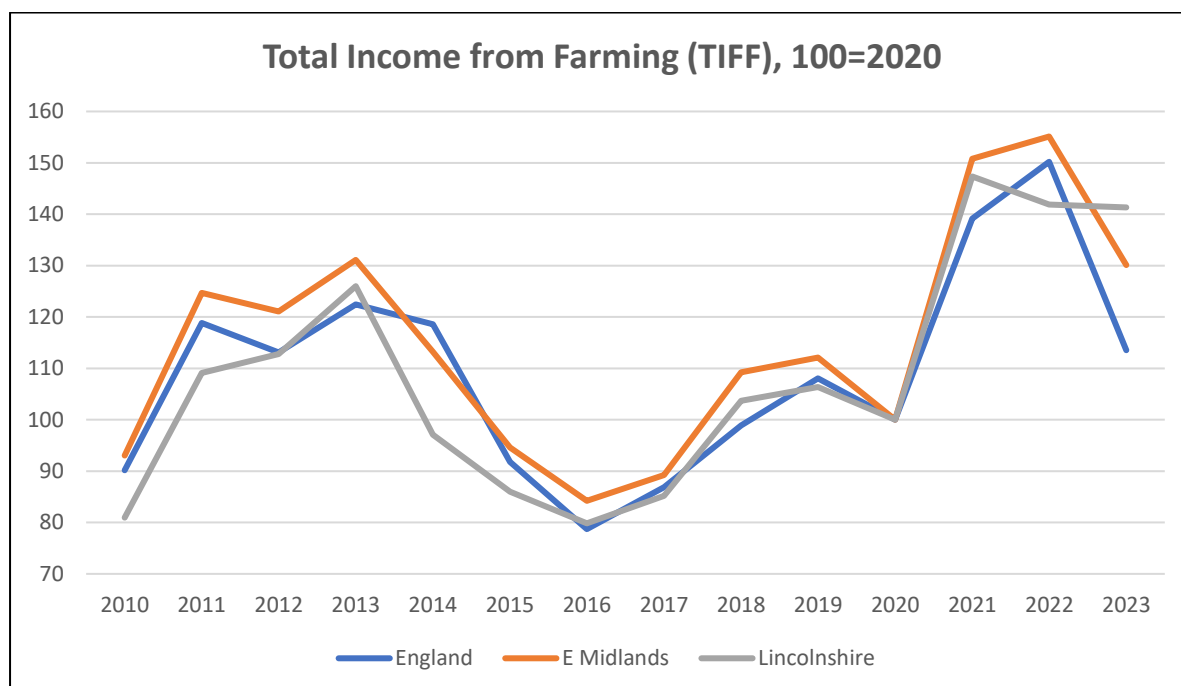


Figure 2 – Total Income from Farming (TIFF), England and the East Midlands, 2010-2023, Source: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs

- 1.31 TIFF includes subsidies. The proportion of TIFF made up by subsidies was smaller in 2022 (39.4%) than in 2021 (48.7%) and in 2020 (64%); the 2022 figure was the lowest it has been since 1992 (31.4%). In 2023, the subsidy proportion rose slightly to 40.8%. The fall in subsidy share is the result of an increase in TIFF driven by increased output prices and a decline in overall subsidies. Note TIFF is a high level measure for the sector as a whole, and will have a complex relationship with the situation the ground.

Wellbeing

- 1.32 Physical and mental health was a key focus of the LCC review.¹⁴ Individuals in the agricultural sector are at an elevated risk of developing physical and mental health issues. Citing the RABI Big Farming Survey 2021¹⁵, the review noted that:
- Over a third of the farming community suffered depression and a further 30-36% of the community have notably low mental wellbeing which is a cause of significant concern.
 - Almost half of the farming community recorded experiencing anxiety.

¹³ Agriculture in the United Kingdom, Agriculture in the United Kingdom data sets, Chapter 4 – Accounts, [Agriculture in the United Kingdom data sets - GOV.UK](#)

¹⁴ Lincolnshire County Council, Report by Scrutiny Panel B on behalf of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee, Lincolnshire Agricultural Sector Support, May 2023, [5.1 Appendix A - Scrutiny Panel B Final Report.pdf](#)

¹⁵ Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RABI), The Big Farming Survey (October 2021), [Big Farming Survey - RABI](#)

- Working age 16- to 64-year-olds suffered from significantly lower levels of mental wellbeing and higher levels of anxiety within the farming community. This is strongly linked with never taking a break or leaving the farm; and 49% do not take a holiday with 20% never leaving the farm itself for any leisure purpose.
 - Over 52% of the farming community are recorded as experiencing pain and discomfort every day.
- 1.33 Contributing factors include the volatility of the global market, uncertainty from the new domestic subsidy regime, and other policy changes such as inheritance tax relief, rural crime, proximity to services and the general nature of physical work in often adverse conditions.
- 1.34 LCC invests in partnership working with the Lincolnshire Rural Support Network (LRSN) to provide mental health service provision for farmers through that organisation.
- 1.35 Neighbouring Melton BC recently undertook a similar initiative delivering health screenings for farmers at the Melton Cattle Market, delivered by LRSN and funded by UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) monies. This built upon a successful pilot self-funded by LRSN with the Farmers Community Network.¹⁶ These are examples of how targeted support to address health inequalities can be delivered to agricultural communities. The Council will support similar schemes led by LCC, LRSN and other partners undertaken the district.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. There are significant limitations with the local agricultural statistics produced by the ONS and DEFRA. Therefore it is impossible to reliably quantify the size or output of the agriculture sector in South Kesteven.
- 3.2. Speculative estimates have been calculated by comparing local activity with regional output. This produces an estimated total value for the sector in South Kesteven of £146.64 million (2023 prices). Of this £108.64 million would be contributed by crops and £38 million by livestock.
- 3.3. British farming faces significant changes from adverse global macro-economic conditions with the cost of key inputs such as energy, fertiliser and feed impacted. Domestically, farmers are adjusting to the post-Brexit subsidy regime.
- 3.4. Lincolnshire County Council coordinates work regionally through the Greater Lincolnshire Forum for Agriculture and Horticulture. Strategic Sector support and growth is a key focus of the Greater Lincolnshire Enterprise Partnership and will be a priority for the incoming Greater Lincolnshire Combined County Authority.

¹⁶ Breakfast and health checks for agricultural sector workers at Melton Livestock Market, Melton BC, January 2024, [Health checks for farmers – Melton Borough Council](#)

- 3.5. Individuals in the agricultural sector are at an elevated risk of developing physical and mental health issues. There is greater scope for policy support and intervention at the district level in this domain, for example successful programmes delivered with the Lincolnshire Rural Support Network by the county council and by Melton BC.

4. Other Options Considered

- 3.1 The report is for information as added to Committee's Work Plan in the December 2024 meeting.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 4.1 The report is for information only.



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 13 February 2025

Report of Councillor Richard Cleaver,
Cabinet Member for Property and
Public Engagement

Age Friendly Communities

Report Author

Bethany Goodman, Physical Activity and Wellbeing Lead

✉ bethany.goodman@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To provide an update on the progress of South Kesteven District Council becoming part of the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1. Agree that the Rural and Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee receives a six-monthly progress report as part of the scheduled South Kesteven Health and Wellbeing Action Plan update.**
- 2. Note the progress of the work by Council Officers to proceed with an application to become part of the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities.**

Decision Information

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? | No |
| What are the relevant corporate priorities? | Connecting communities |
| Which wards are impacted? | All Wards |

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. Should any budget or investment be required for any of the initiatives identified, then an appropriate business case will be developed to demonstrate the cost and associated benefits to the community.

Completed by: Paul Sutton, Interim Head of Finance (Deputy 151)

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 This is a progress update to ensure that members remain briefed on this issue.

Completed by: James Welbourn, Democratic Services Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion

- 1.3 The Equality Act 2010 protects people from discrimination based on a range of characteristics, one of which is age. It is therefore against the law to treat someone unfairly or discriminate against them on the basis of their age.
- 1.4 In addition to this legal duty, there are many advantages to providing an environment in which people can grow old well and feel supported. Feeling disconnected from society can have an adverse effect on people's mental and physical health, which in turn can lead to increased support being required from the Council and community health services.
- 1.5 The ability to grow old well and live an independent life does not only rely on an individual's personal capability but also on the social and physical environments in which they live. Ensuring the district provides a supportive environment can play an important role in assisting older residents to maintain activity levels and their independence for longer.

Completed by: Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1. Within the Council's Corporate Plan (2024 - 2027) the Council has identified its mission to be 'A thriving District to live in, work and visit'. This is under-pinned by the priority of Connecting Communities which aims to enhance the strength, wellbeing and capacity of communities across the district, and work towards providing a cohesive society that all our residents can be proud to belong to. Particularly pertinent to this report, the Corporate Plan recognises that South Kesteven has an aging population.
- 2.2. At a meeting of Cabinet held on 5 November 2024 it was agreed that the Council proceeds with an application to become part of the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities. Subsequently, engagement between Council Officers and partners has commenced to fulfil the criteria set out by the Centre for Ageing Better. A copy of the Cabinet report is provided in **Background Papers at point 6 below**.
- 2.3. The Council will need to follow the four-step programme as set out by the World Health Organisation (WHO), with the first step being 'Engage and Understand'. As political commitment has already been obtained, the next steps are to form a committee of stakeholders and gather findings.
- 2.4. Resource has been identified from appropriate service areas across the Council to create an operational group which will be the driving force behind the application to become part of the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities.
- 2.5. The group consists of the following service areas:

Leisure Services: The Council's Physical Activity and Wellbeing Lead will be the key contact and will Chair meetings to ensure agreed actions are carried out.

Community Engagement: This team will work to ensure that the voice of our local communities is represented. The team holds a budget which will support the age-friendly action plan and manages several funding pots through which community-led projects can be supported. This team has a long-established relationship with the voluntary and community sector of the district, and holds an extensive database of contacts.

Communications: This team will be responsible for ensuring all PR and consultation is carried out in an age-friendly manner.

OD and Change: A researcher from this team will support in the creation of the baseline profile and further data required to establish how age friendly South Kesteven currently is.

Housing: To gather insight and data, setting up a housing voices platform or similar.

2.6. In order to fulfil the initial requirements of becoming a member of the National Network the Council needs to produce a baseline profile document over the next twelve months, which will establish how well it caters to the needs of older people across eight domains. The eight domains will assess the following areas:

- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Housing
- Transport
- Social Participation
- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Civic Participation and Employment
- Communication and Information
- Community Support and Health Services

A copy of East Lindsey's Baseline Profile can be found in **Appendix A** as an example.

2.7. It is the intention to proactively promote opportunities for older people to be actively involved and their views incorporated into the work we do. At this initial stage we will engage, both through questionnaires to agencies working with older people, and with older residents themselves, to ascertain their lived experiences. This work will help form our baseline and the creation of a more detailed survey as the work progresses.

2.8. A strategic steering group is also being formed which will meet on a quarterly basis. This will include older people from across the district and partners that work with older people. The individuals that sit in this group will champion the work, collect data and feedback, and help establish what the baseline profile is within South Kesteven. As work progresses, this group will also scrutinise the effectiveness of the action plan and its delivery.

2.9. One of the actions already identified is the creation of an older people's forum and/or an ambassador scheme. The benefits of this include assurance that the voice of older people is being heard within the Council's work and the services being delivered. This forum will be utilised for consultation and learning from lived experience as well as providing an opportunity for residents to champion progress in their local areas. The involvement of the Council's Community Engagement Team will be key to ensuring all voices are heard, including those from disadvantaged communities.

2.10. In addition to the above, Officers have met with the Age Friendly Communities Officer at East Lindsey District Council to gain insights regarding the process which they started in 2019. This will ensure South Kesteven District Council is taking the right steps to meet the application criteria, along with the learning from neighbouring authorities.

- 2.11. The deadline to submit an application to The Centre for Ageing Better (CFAB) is the 28 March 2025. Applications to join the Network will be reviewed week commencing 7 April 2025. It is the Operational Group's intention to submit an application by this deadline.
- 2.12. Should the application to the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities be successful, work will commence to produce the baseline profile. Further support and resources will also be available from the network.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1. The Council has an opportunity to demonstrate political and community leadership by applying to become part of the UK Network of Age Friendly Communities. This would support the Council's corporate ambition and help the district become a great place to grow old in.
- 3.2. In addition, becoming a member of the Network would support the Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Board's strategic ambition to coordinate a county-wide response to the opportunities and challenges presented by ageing.
- 3.3. Becoming an Age Friendly Community would allow the Council and its residents to access tools, support and guidance from the Centre for Ageing Better and other networks across the UK.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1. Cabinet has approved the Council working towards becoming an Age Friendly Community and therefore the option to do nothing has been discounted.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. At the meeting of Cabinet held on the 5 November 2024 it was requested that Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee monitors the progress of the Council's work towards becoming an Age Friendly Community to maximise the impact of the opportunity.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1. *Age Friendly Communities* – Report to Cabinet, Published 28 October 2024, available online at:
<http://moderngovsvr/documents/s43999/Age%20Friendly%20Communities.pdf>

7. Appendices

- 7.1. Appendix A - [East Lindsey District Council Baseline Profile 2021](#)



Age Friendly Baseline Assessment Report **for East Lindsey**

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This Age-friendly Baseline Assessment has been developed by TED Ageing Better in East Lindsey and East Lindsey District Council

TED Ageing Better in East Lindsey is funded by The National Lottery Community Fund and managed by YMCA Lincolnshire

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Welcome



The district of East Lindsey has an ageing population, with 30% of residents currently over 65 years old and that number is likely to increase.

As a district, we have been explicit in our commitment in supporting people to live and age well. For the past 7 years, we have had the Ageing Better Programme, TED-Talk, Eat and Drink, which is extremely successful. In 2019, the council's Executive Board was expanded to incorporate a Better Ageing Portfolio.

The Better Ageing Portfolio is confirmation of East Lindsey's commitment to its Age-friendly journey. In fact for many years, there has been an Older Persons Champion. Along side this in 2019, East Lindsey became the first district council in the country to join the UK network of Age-friendly Communities.

As a result of a partnership between ELDC and YMCA Lincolnshire an Age-friendly Principal Officer post was created. This role was created in order to assess the age friendliness of East Lindsey and to develop an Age Friendly Strategy for the district.

The assessment process involved: focus groups; a selection of 1:1 chats; on-line surveys for professionals and community leaders; walking audits; desk based research. It's important that it is clear what it means to be an Age-friendly community. Even more so what needs to happen so that people can live healthier, happier, more comfortable older lives.

The assessment process showed us that the experiences of older people living in East Lindsey are not equal. The likelihood of them ageing well, is dependent on the intersection of a number of factors. The process is providing us with a fantastic opportunity to make significant changes for people as they grow older in East Lindsey. Following on from the baseline, we will create an Age-friendly Strategy and Action Plan. This will be developed through multi-agency engagement.

We will build on what is already going well, including initiatives that are in their early stages, and we will use the Decade of Healthy Ageing (2020-2030) as a springboard for this work.

East Lindsey has a commitment to listen to the needs of our ageing population. We will assess and monitor the age friendliness of the area. We will work in collaboration with older people and across sectors, to create an age friendly physical and social environment.

People will live and age well in East Lindsey.

Cllr William Gray BSc (Hons) MRICS
Portfolio Holder for Housing Communities and Better Ageing
Older Persons Champion
East Lindsey District Council

Executive Summary



We are pleased to present the first 'Age-friendly' Baseline Assessment for East Lindsey. Like much of the country and indeed globally, East Lindsey has an ageing population. East Lindsey District Council has been explicit in its commitment to support people to live and age well. In 2019, East Lindsey District Council became the first District Council in the country to join the [UK Network of Age-friendly Communities](#) (links are available on page 115). ELDC is preparing to submit its application to the World Health Organisation to become a member of the Global Network of Age-friendly Communities.

The [Age-friendly Communities Framework](#) was developed by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in consultation with older people. It is built on the evidence of what supports healthy and active ageing in a place. Established in 2010, the network seeks to connect cities, communities and organisations worldwide with the common vision of making their community a great place to grow old in. It proposes eight interconnected domains that can help to identify and address barriers to the wellbeing and participation of older people.

To help us to make an informed and evidence based application to the WHO, we have worked hard to understand our starting points and where we may need to focus in the future. The process of becoming Age-friendly begins with a self-assessment (described as a baseline assessment) based on the eight domains; completed using a collaborative approach at both an operational and strategic level and taking account of services, local communities, policies and systems. The Centre for Ageing Better notes that "the eight domains of age-friendly are all the aspects of community life that need to be considered when making your plans. All eight domains interlink but can be broken into two spheres covering the social and the built environment".



The baseline assessment is a key part of the continuous development and improvement approach and will guide our action planning, service delivery and partnership working over the coming years.

We would like to thank everybody who has played their part in developing this Baseline Assessment and we look forward to working together to ensure that East Lindsey is a place that supports and enables people to live and age well, in whatever way is right for them.

Overview of Delivery Plan resulting from the Baseline Assessment

- Increase awareness and understanding of housing options for older people (including to support people to remain safe and independent at home) and pilot new ways of working to increase the options available
- Positively address the issue of ageism through our communication channels, using the library of resources developed by the Centre for Ageing Better
- Seek to improve the accessibility of outdoor spaces
- Positively influence the development of a health and wellbeing strategy across Lincolnshire, ensuring that Better Ageing (supporting people to live and age well) is recognised as an important cross cutting theme
- Encourage a focus on good physical and mental health for our communities
- Support the implementation of the Lincolnshire physical activity strategy, working with key partners (including Magna Vitae) to implement recommendations from local research and suggestions made by older residents to encourage and increase physical activity
- Use the United Nations ‘Decade of Healthy Ageing’ (2020-2030) as a springboard for our delivery and focus
- Build on what is working well and ensure that the work in East Lindsey adds value to the Lincolnshire rural strategic partnership and enables learning across Lincolnshire and in other rural and coastal places
- Ensure a focus on sustainability, legacy and learning in TED Year 7 [extended programme]
- Deliver and share learning from the Age Friendly Futures project (YMCA Lincolnshire)– Employment programme for 50+ and reflect specifically on its impact in a post Covid economy
- Establish an Older Person’s Forum. To do this we will build on the knowledge of previous forum members and we will look at what has worked in other areas
- Working with Economic Growth and Prosperous Communities colleagues, develop the concept of Age-friendly Tourism/ Recreation with a particular focus on Wolds AONB and the coastal towns
- Establish and support (taking a co-production approach) an Ageing Without Children (AWOC) network for the region. Support the network to self-manage with the support of the national AWOC network and raise awareness across Lincolnshire
- Work with Lincolnshire County Council and other District Councils to embed Better Ageing across Lincolnshire (age-friendly county is a commitment of the Rural Strategic Partnership)
- Work with the Economic Growth Team to raise awareness of and develop the Age-friendly Business Accreditation model and opportunities to enhance this, particularly in a post Covid economy

Introduction

Across the world, in almost every country, people are living much longer. However for many older people these extra years are not necessarily as healthy or happy as they might be. There are multiple factors that contribute to how people experience their older years. There are also many ways in which communities can improve the experience of people as they age.

In 2006 the World Health Organisation (WHO) developed a framework to be used for cities to assess their “Age-friendliness”. The framework is research based and identifies the key elements that a community need to address, in order to “support active and healthy ageing”. Originally focused on urban/ city environments, in recent years the focus has expanded to include all types of communities [1],

“The WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities was established to foster the exchange of experience and mutual learning between cities and communities worldwide. ... What all members of the Network do have in common is the desire and commitment to promote healthy and active ageing and a good quality of life for their older residents.”

[2]

To achieve Age-friendly Status, a community must make an application to the WHO, providing evidence of political commitment to work towards becoming a great place for older people to live. There needs to be a willingness among senior managers to work towards a community that fosters healthy and active ageing. This must be done with the support and engagement of older people and relevant stakeholders.



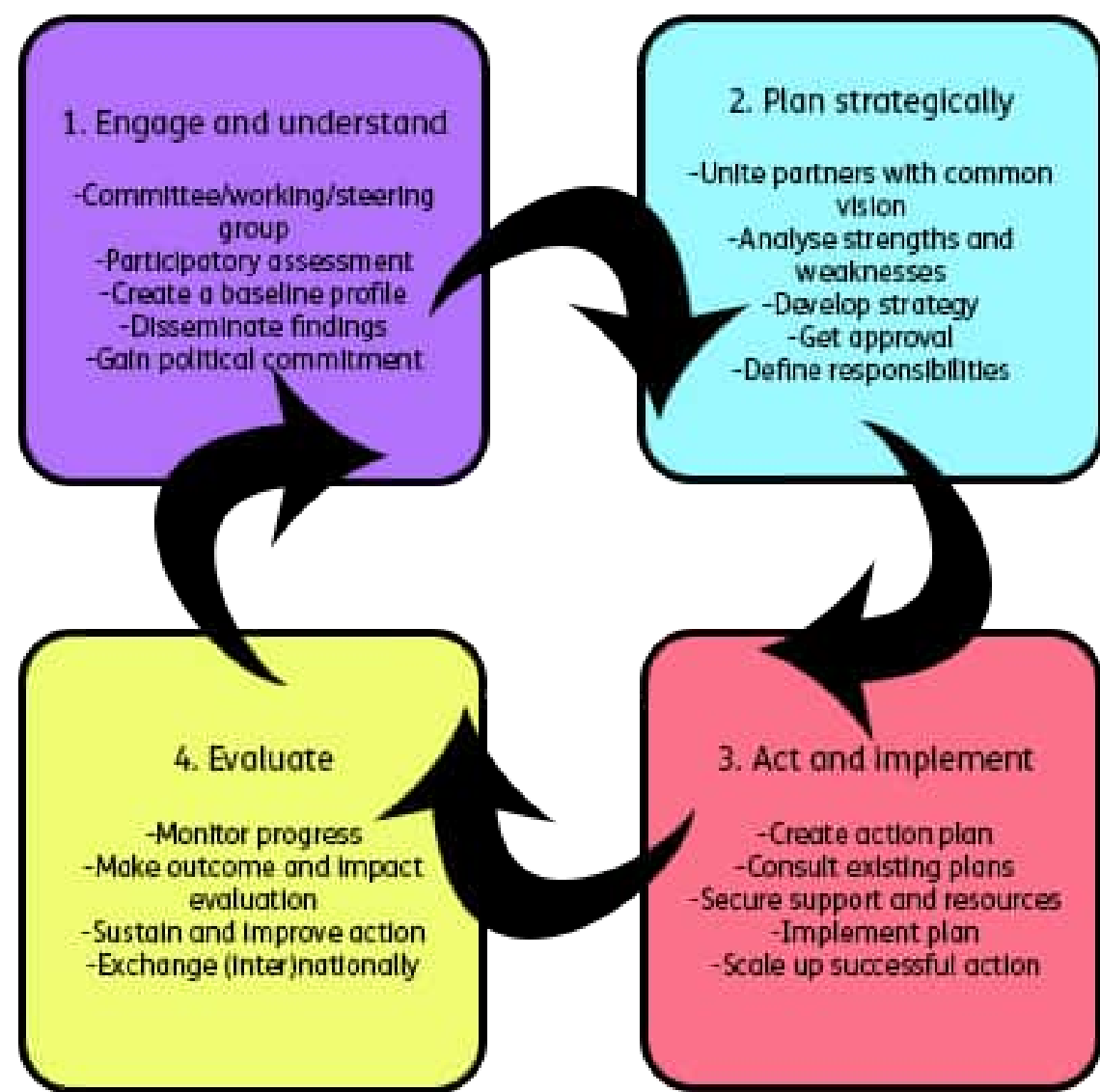
What is Age-friendliness?

The WHO have identified eight ‘domains’ that make up the Age-friendly Framework, these are:



An age-friendly perspective is about adopting a different ‘lens’ through which to view policies and services across the community– focusing attention on the issues of particular relevance to older people and all of us as we age. Age-friendly status is not a quality standard achieved, that is then assessed by regular inspection. It is a long term and ongoing commitment to make improvements at whatever pace you can, in line with the ‘Eight Domains’. The process is a continuing cycle of Engagement, Planning, Delivery and Evaluation. The WHO refer to this as the **Cycle of Continuous Improvement**. Membership of the WHO Network of Age-friendly Cities & Communities is also dependent upon regular sharing of good practice with other members.

Cycle of Continuous Improvement



The WHO expects communities to use the Cycle of Continuous Improvement (diagram above) to achieve the necessary changes to become an Age-friendly Community.

The Centre for Ageing Better

In the UK ‘The Centre for Ageing Better’ (CFAB), [3] is part of the UK Government’s ‘What Works Network’. It is also the official UK affiliate of the WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities & Communities. The CFAB offers guidance and support to those communities who want to commit to and achieve Age-friendly Status in the UK. They also manage the UK Network of Age-friendly Communities.

*“Our mission at the Centre for Ageing Better is that everyone should enjoy later life. We work across four priority areas – **employment, housing, health, and communities**. We also work across wider issues that underpin these priorities – including shifting public attitudes to ageing and addressing inequalities in how we age.” [4]*

East Lindsey became a member of the UK Network of Age-friendly Communities in September 2019, the Network is supported by the CFAB. Its Aims are to

- ▶ INSPIRE change by showing what can be done and how it can be done
- ▶ CONNECT cities and communities to facilitate the exchange of information, knowledge, and experience
- ▶ SUPPORT cities and communities to find appropriate innovative and evidence-based solutions



Membership of the UK Network mirrors the WHO Network in its principles of sharing good practice and learning with other members. Early in 2020 East Lindsey successfully gained a place on the Steering Group of the UK Network of Age-friendly Communities. The Steering Group is there to “*support the UK Network through guidance, vision, oversight and leadership, as well as acting as individual champions for the work.*” [5]

Building on our success East Lindsey will be applying to become a member of the World Health Organisation’s (WHO) Global Network of Age-friendly Cities & Communities. In order to inform this application and the work that will be needed to improve the health and wellbeing of older people in the district, a Baseline Assessment of the Age-friendliness of East Lindsey has been undertaken. Referring to the WHO Cycle of Continuous Improvement, this process fits within the “Engage & Understand” phase. This report explains the process, sets out a range of information gained and data received, in relation to the eight domains. It gives examples of good practice and presents some of the themes that have come out of the assessment. These can be used to inform our next steps.

“Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity...This definition has not been amended since 1948.” [6]

Our Place

East Lindsey is one of seven districts in the county of Lincolnshire. The district is located on the east coast of the county and is one of the largest districts in England, covering 700 square miles. It is sparsely populated with a number of market towns, seaside towns and many villages. Due to the expanse of sandy beaches on its coastline and the hills of the Lincolnshire Wolds (*a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty*), East Lindsey is attractive to residents and to visitors. It is also a location that many people choose as their place to retire, because the cost of housing is lower than in many parts of the UK and they are able to live in comfort while retaining a good disposable income.

East Lindsey has a population of 141,727, 53% of residents are over 50 years old and 38% of residents are over 60 years old (7). Life expectancy is lower than National Average at 77.8 years for men and 82 years for women. The national average is 79.9 years for males and 83.6 years for females. It is also reported that 1 in 4 of the population have long term illness or disability [8].

The increasing ageing population means that by 2037, a quarter of the total UK population will be over 65 [9]. Lincolnshire, and in particular East Lindsey will continue to have a higher than national average number of older residents. Projected numbers state that 30% of the population of Lincolnshire will be over 65 by 2041; while in East Lindsey 40% of people will be over 65 [10]. Additionally, it has been identified that the highest proportion of visitors to East Lindsey are 55 – 64 years of age. This all has huge implications for future service delivery and the local economy.

In 2019 East Lindsey was ranked as the 30th most deprived district out of the total of 317 English districts. Some parts of the district are more deprived, with the coastal towns of Skegness and Mablethorpe ranked amongst the 10% most deprived in the country [11]. As a result of the economic impact of Covid-19 Mablethorpe and Skegness are now considered to be in the ‘top towns for absolute deprivation’ in England & Wales. Mablethorpe is at the top of the list, being the most deprived, while Skegness is joint third on the list. As the second and joint third towns are both located in Wales, we can conclude that Mablethorpe and Skegness are considered to be the most deprived towns in England as a result of the impact of Covid-19 [12].

In September 2019 the UK Government launched a £3.6 billion fund and announced 101 towns that they wanted to work with to create a ‘Town Deal’. Mablethorpe and Skegness were included in the list of towns. This is providing the coastal towns of East Lindsey with a unique and exciting opportunity to make great changes in their community for the immediate and long term future.

“This funding will help to increase economic growth with a focus on regeneration, improved transport, better broadband connectivity, skills and culture.” (Towns Fund Prospectus 2019, p.4) [13]



TED Ageing Better Programme

East Lindsey is also one of 14 areas covered by the National Lottery ‘Ageing Better’ Programme.

“Ageing Better is a seven-year, £87 million investment to improve the lives of people aged over 50 by addressing social isolation and loneliness within local communities.” [16]

The National Ageing Better Programme is gathering evidence of what works to reduce isolation and loneliness, in order to inform the design of future service for people over 50 in the UK. The Talk, Eat and Drink Ageing Better Programme (TED) is a partnership of older people and voluntary and public sector organisations, led by Community Lincs (now part of Lincolnshire YMCA), working closely with partners and communities in East Lindsey. TED has been delivered in the district since 2015 and has been successful in achieving its objectives (primarily in reducing isolation and loneliness within an ageing population), developing and delivering innovative programmes of work and contributing effectively to the national programme.

TED can be summarised into three distinct, core arms of activity. These are:

1.

The creation and facilitation of Friendship Groups which grew from initial ‘Teas with TED’ group meetings. Friendship Groups are established and supported with an employed Friendship Officer, with a view to becoming self-sustaining past the lifetime of the current Ageing Better funding for TED in East Lindsey. These groups recruit and draw on a significant number of volunteers to run their groups
2.

The promotion of Age-friendliness in Businesses via the Age-friendly Business Award. Over 100 businesses in the District now hold the award, which recognises the efforts of businesses to acknowledge the role of age and ageing in how they design, deliver and sustain their services, premises and products
3.

7 diverse projects delivered by 5 ‘specialist’ Delivery Partners. These projects range from a focus on Digital Inclusion, Men and Male Carers, Citizen’s Advice (on finance, benefit and debt rights) and Food, Health and Wellbeing projects

There are also areas of the East Lindsey where there is substantial affluence and residents live very comfortably. One of the most desirable locations, often cited in good places to visit or to retire is Woodhall Spa. It is strongly associated with the history of the RAF during World War Two and it is the location for the National Golf Centre (the home of ‘England Golf’). It also has a distinctive cinema, the ‘Kinema in the Woods’:

“An amazing back projection cinema nearly 100 years old and still offering traditional ‘going to the pictures’ experience!”. (Trip Advisor feedback, October 2019) [14]

In 2019 the Council’s Executive Board was expanded to incorporate a Better Ageing portfolio. Confirmation of East Lindsey District Council’s commitment to its Age-friendly journey.



In 2020 East Lindsey launched their 10 year Corporate Strategy “Looking to the Future 2020-2030”, with the aspiration: *“East Lindsey – a place where everybody has a chance to thrive”*. The strategy also clearly sets out the following intention:

“Achievement of Word Health Organisation ‘Age-friendly’ accreditation – creating opportunities for people to live and age well; focusing on homes, communities, work and health”. [15]

Further reference will be made to the ELDC strategy at relevant points in this report.





Together, East Lindsey District Council and YMCA Lincolnshire via TED Ageing Better in East Lindsey have formed a unique partnership and are working towards achieving Age-friendly Community status for the East Lindsey District, as recognised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities.

More detailed information about the activities delivered by the TED Ageing Better programme can be found in the Social Participation section.

A formal partnership was agreed between YMCA Lincolnshire (TED Programme) and East Lindsey District Council (ELDC) in their shared aim to achieve Age-friendly Status for the District and building on the successful work of the TED Programme. The ‘Age-friendly East Lindsey’ programme aims to support the development and implementation of a district-wide action plan, leading to the vision of a truly ‘Age-friendly Community’ as recognised by the WHO. This partnership created a full time post to drive the work forward. The Age-friendly Principal Officer (AFPO) was appointed in 2019 with the remit of:

“... working directly with strategic partners to develop an action plan” (the Baseline Assessment is the foundation on which the Strategy & Action plan will be developed) and to “ensure it remains on track...” (AFPO Job Description, 2019).

ELDC’s partnership with the TED programme is one of the factors that contributed to them becoming a signatory to the Memorandum of Understanding for Lincolnshire’s (5 year) Strategic Partnership with the National Centre for Ageing Better. Other signatories being Lincolnshire County Council and the Greater Lincolnshire Local Enterprise Partnership. The Lincolnshire Health & Wellbeing Board becoming the Lincolnshire Partnership’s governance mechanism.

The impact of Covid-19 on the Assessment Process

During the assessment process the Covid-19 Crisis emerged and most of the world was put into “Lockdown”. This had an immediate impact on some of the activities that we had planned with older people, which had to be cancelled. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a massive impact on everyone, particularly older members of the community, the ripples of this crisis are likely to be felt for some time. The report will therefore, where pertinent, make reference to the impact of Covid-19.

Summary of our methodology

An extensive amount of desk based research was carried out in order to better understand the principles of Age-friendly Communities, increase awareness of what was happening nationally and to gain a more detailed understanding of local service delivery.

Meetings were held with a wide range of organisations from the statutory and voluntary sector. Managers, some operational staff and Elected Members of the District Council were approached. In order to gain knowledge of how other areas had achieved or were pursuing their Age-friendly Status, phone discussions were held with colleagues at the Centre for Ageing Better, some of the National Lottery ‘Ageing Better Programme’ areas and recommended contacts in other parts of the UK.



To ensure the participation of older people a number of Focus Groups were planned within already established social groups for older people. This provided an opportunity for older people to discuss issues openly in a relaxed environment that they were comfortable with. A structured question and answer session was considered, but as the intention was to retain an informal atmosphere, the idea was discarded.

A proven way to assess the outside environment is to carry out ‘Walking Audits’ with members of the community to assess the “walkability” of the neighbourhood [17]. These audits also provide the opportunity for people to consider the Age Friendliness of their public spaces by casting a critical eye across their local streets and other public spaces. ‘Train and Bus Audits’ were also planned but had to be cancelled due to Covid-19 crisis.

An ‘Age-friendly Survey’ was created and sent out to professional colleagues and community leaders. It was not circulated publicly. The survey was designed to explore East Lindsey’s current performance against the eight Age-friendly Domains. The survey was shared widely across statutory and voluntary sector organisations, who were also encouraged to share the survey with any of their professional contacts. When reporting survey results we use percentages and rounded them up or down to the nearest percentage.

As a result of the feedback received during the assessment process and the overwhelming amount of available and ongoing research into coastal deprivation, much of this report will focus on the coastal communities in East Lindsey. It is worth noting that the majority of the issues identified will be relevant to older people across the district. For example an older person living in Mablethorpe and one who lives in Alvingham (a village 4 miles outside the Market Town of Louth), are going to have similar challenges when they are struggling to organise transport to a hospital appointment.

(A full methodology with resources can be found in the Appendix)



“I don't think people recognise the worth of someone over a certain age” (survey respondent)

Findings

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

“The outside environment and public buildings have a major impact on independence and happiness in later life.” [18]



Even the fittest of older people, as they move into their later years, will notice reduced strength and balance. Over time this change is likely to impact on their confidence and ability to move around, particularly outside their home. Their ability to sit down and stand up from public seating and therefore most public toilets will also be affected. Other age related changes, for example deterioration in eyesight, in hearing; or the cognitive deficits of early dementia, while not enough to be defined formally as a disability, might have a negative impact on the way in which older people experience outdoor spaces and public buildings.

Developing and sustaining age-friendly public spaces and buildings, supports active and healthy ageing, helping older people maintain their mobility. Maintaining mobility into old age is a major challenge [19]. The most frequent (mobility) activity among older people is walking, particularly in their local neighbourhood.

Promoting and maintaining “walking-friendly” environments to enhance mobility and stimulate physical activity in older adults, can be one potential and sustainable strategy to promote healthy ageing. We can assess the “walkability” of an area using walking audits. Studies have been shown that areas with different walkability can affect active ageing [20]. For example, older people ageing in less walkable environments are generally less motivated to walk and become increasingly immobile. This has a negative impact on their physical and emotional wellbeing. On the other hand, older people ageing in highly walkable environments are more likely to get out for regular walks and retain higher levels of mobility, leading to improved physical and emotional wellbeing. Walkability also takes into consideration whether the area is easily usable by those who use mobility aids such as walking sticks, frames and rollators; also for those who use wheelchairs or mobility scooters.



When planning the **walking audits** in East Lindsey, it was apparent that some of what might have initially been considered ‘good’ walk options, were not suitable. The reason was that they either wouldn’t be safe, or practical for a general walk with older people. For example when planning our walk in Horncastle we considered a route from the local Garden Centre into the town centre. Due to the distance of the walk and the lack of any footpaths in some places, this idea was dismissed. Due to the rurality of East Lindsey, there are numerous places where local residents are unable to walk to local amenities (e.g. shops, libraries, leisure facilities) due to lack of safe footpaths or pavements. This will be true of people living in many of the villages across the district and for some people living on the outskirts of our Market Towns. Any route that does not have a safe footpath for people to walk on with or without mobility aids will not be considered Age-friendly.

The design of public spaces might also impact on an older person’s ability or willingness to use public transport. A person might lack confidence about the condition of the pavement or where to actually catch a bus. They might worry about whether there are toilets on their journey, or whether there is shelter with a seat. People might also be confused by inadequate signage, unclear about bus times and connections, or whether they will have to pay and how much. Consequently they will be less likely to venture out.

With about 30% of the population in East Lindsey over the age of 65, and that number likely to increase, service providers & businesses would be wise to consider how the natural changes of ageing impact on all of us and how we can adapt our environment to not only accommodate but encourage interaction with older clients and customers.

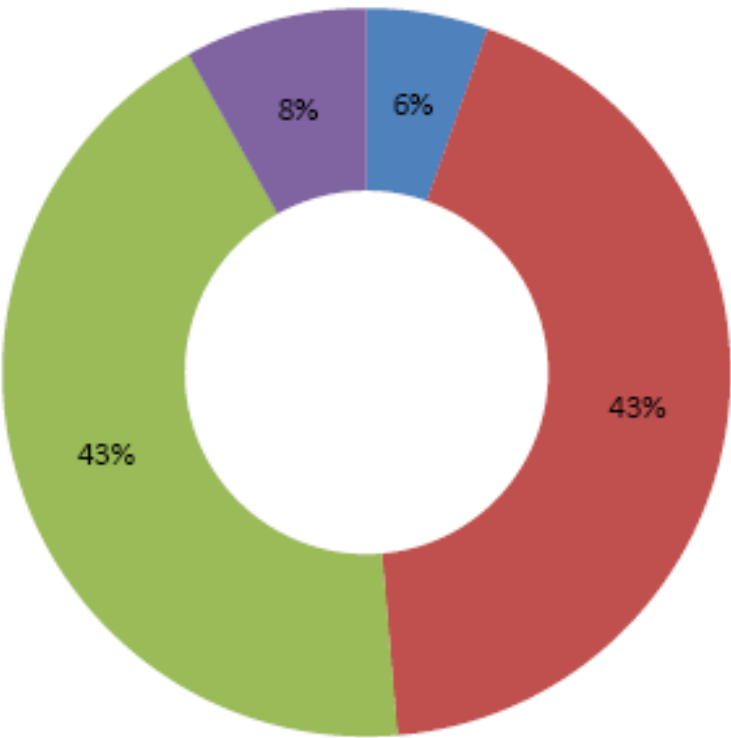
“We have lots of old market towns with poor access to many buildings such as steps. Town centres have narrow busy pavements which must make it difficult for older people. We have many lovely outdoor spaces but many won’t be accessible to older people due to access gates and poor quality paths.” (Survey Respondent)

Fortunately there are actions, supported by research based practice, which can be taken to improve the experience, confidence and ability of older people when in public spaces and buildings. While some of these actions require planning and high levels of resources, many small cost effective changes can be made that will result in immediate improvements. These could include:

- ❑ **Age-friendly seating** – Across regular walking routes, shopping and community areas. Consider, is the seat too low and does it have arm rests that a person can use to push themselves up?
- ❑ **Age-friendly signage** – Consider the size of the signs and the writing on them. Consider where they are placed, are they pictorial so that those who find reading difficult can understand them?
- ❑ **Age-friendly boundaries** – Consider the placing, the materials and the colours of boundaries in the community. Would an older person find it easy to determine where and what the boundaries are? e.g. path borders, fences, railings and bollards.

In our survey asking about the outside environment and public buildings in East Lindsey:

- The outdoor spaces & public buildings are EXCELLENT for older people and require little change
- The outdoor spaces & public buildings are GOOD for older people, but some improvement is needed
- The outdoor spaces & public buildings are GENERALLY OK for older people, but require quite a lot of improvement
- The outdoor spaces & public buildings are NOT GOOD for older people and extensive change is needed



These responses reflect what we found when we listened to older people in our focus groups. There was a general feeling that East Lindsey was a good place to live, there were lots of pleasant outside spaces with the countryside, beaches and historic market towns; but there were also issues with some elements of the outside environment and accessing public buildings.

“A lot of pavements and roads have uneven surfaces and potholes that are hazardous to older people whose mobility is not as good as it was whether on foot or using scooters, there are not enough dropped curbs to help them cross roads safely. Some public buildings have non-automated fire doors which are very heavy to open for older people.”(Survey respondent)

Suggestion on MY Town site

MY Town site (Mablethorpe):

“Wooden board walk/beach sand paths ... to allow access for wheel chairs/push chairs/ease of access for all those who would like to access the beach area but unable to walk or travel over the sand easily. [21]

MY Town site (Skegness):

“Enhance the coastal path for disabled, bikes and pushchairs to encourage more healthy exercise between Skegness and Mablethorpe... increases the health of local residents who could walk or bike across this track, whilst being disabled user friendly. We have a stunning coastline and this would enhance our tourist offering. ” [22]

MY Town site (Skegness):

“... I would like to see a solid non-slip walkway built from the promanade right across the sand and into the sea. It would be so great if disabled people and wheelchair users in particular had access to allow them to be able swim, paddle or fish in the sea too.” [23]

Some of the things that people said they enjoyed about living in East Lindsey were:

*“Generally a lovely place to live”
“Safe place to live”
“Quieter, slower, friendly”
“Flat, level walking, fresh air”
“I love the space”
“The beaches are fabulous”*

Feedback from Focus Groups:

Our public toilets

- They are closed in the evenings and overnight which is not good
- Accessing public toilets through the 20p entry turnstiles can be difficult
- ‘Non-disabled toilets’ are not age friendly (including the cubicle, the toilet and in some cases the washing facilities)

Our beaches

- Accessibility onto the beaches is an issue –can this be resolved. Maybe the availability of beach wheelchairs
- Quiet spaces needed? Mention of music being too loud in shops and projected out onto street
- There was recognition for the Age-friendly Businesses in the District (TED). Part of the assessment for AfB would involve consideration for the impact of your business’s surroundings on older people
- Better seating and better signage needed
- Position of seating at the sea front – e.g. Sutton on Sea, the sea wall and the fence not a pleasant view, however the proposed new colonnade development might provide an opportunity to improve the options for older people to view the sea

Our seaside towns

- Cyclists and mobility scooters on the pavements without care for other people. A few people also mentioned the need for people to have some training, or a licence to use mobility scooters

“Too many mobility scooters hired by those who don’t need them” (focus group)

Our market towns

- People felt that some of the pavements are too narrow and the buildings not very accessible. However there was an acknowledgment that due to the historic nature of the towns and some of their buildings, that changes and adaptations might not be easy or possible

Street lighting

- Some people mentioned that ‘after dark’ is not good in lots of places (in the winter this can be as early as 4pm). This can be due to no lighting at all in some places, or due to street lighting being turned off later in the evening as a cost saving. Older people do want to socialise in the evening and their ability to do so can be reduced if they don’t feel able to walk safely near their home. The fear of falling and the consequences of a fall as people age, can and does prevent older people from going out of their house. Concerns about the lack of late night street lighting were also expressed by contributors to the Towns Fund “My Town Campaign Pages” for Mablethorpe & Skegness [24]

“... some residents do not feel safe travelling on the uneven footpaths in their communities, particularly in the dark.”[25]

Walking Audit findings & other related feedback

Crossings

- Most people felt that more time is needed at ‘time limited’ crossings. It might only need a few seconds more, but this would need to be fully assessed
- It was evident that more crossings are needed in some places. An example of this is in Horncastle on North Street. If someone is walking up the side of the pavement from The Bull Pub towards Louth Road and then wants to cross over to go down Conging Street towards the Co-Op & Tesco, they need to negotiate a busy road. There is actually a dropped kerb with ‘tactile paving’ at one point on North Road, but there is no actual crossing and no matching dropped kerb or ‘tactile paving’ on the other side. This could be dangerous for someone who is visually impaired. *“When moving around the pedestrian environment, visually impaired people will actively seek and make use of tactile information underfoot, particularly detectable contrasts in surface texture.” [26]*
- More consideration is needed for the width of traffic islands in some places. A good example of a large “safe feeling” traffic island is in Sutton on Sea. In Horncastle at the main crossroads there are small traffic islands half way across the road. The heavy traffic, including large lorries, together with a limited crossing time, can mean that people are left standing in the midst of the traffic feeling quite vulnerable. Anyone with a wheelchair or a pushchair would feel particularly exposed on one of these traffic islands



Sutton on Sea Crossing



Horncastle Crossing



Skegness Lights

Pavements & Walkways

- Cracked uneven pavements in some places, usually where there are drains or ‘ironworks’ in the pavement. Overall the standard of pavements was ok
- Sloped kerbs, not flush with the road was a persistent issue, very few of these are level. This is causing a lot of concern among older people about going out, in case they get stuck or fall trying to get up the slopped kerb. Negotiating these kerbs can be very challenging for those in a mobility scooter
- Parked cars or other pavement obstacles make movement along pavements very challenging for some older people. Issues we encountered included a bike locked to a lamppost where the pavement was very narrow, a number of ‘A’ boards outside various retail premises, or even groups of people who showed no indication of moving out of the way
- Businesses with steps and no ramps or hand rails to assist access are a problem. Although there was a realisation that this is sometimes due to the age of the building and the available space on the pavement (for a ramp)
- Cobbled streets, found in Horncastle & Louth, look nice but don’t feel very safe for walking on, for some older people
- Horncastle Market square: The movement/ direction of traffic was confusing. One group witnessed an older person looking anxious trying to cross and another who almost got knocked by a slow moving car

“... some residents do not feel safe travelling on the uneven footpaths in their communities, particularly in the dark.” (‘Let’s Move - A scoping exercise to explore physical inactivity in older adults in Lincolnshire’ p.6, 2020)

Boundaries

The colour of railings and bollards can cause issues. They should show clearly what is a barrier or boundary, and what isn't. This is useful for everyone but can be a particular issue for those who are visually impaired or those with some cognitive impairment, for example those with dementia.

- A good example of this is the blue bollards around the sea front car park and in other places in Sutton on Sea
- A bad example is the railings along the river in Horncastle. As a consequence it is hard to discern the green railings from the green grass and the grey green water of the river. A similar issue occurs at the entrance to the library in Horncastle



Sutton on Sea Bollards



Horncastle River Railings

Signage

Signs communicate information to people, and were found to be generally not age friendly. The signs that people observed were small and didn't stand out. For example even though walkers knew where the toilets were in both audit locations, it wasn't easy to find any signage despite actively looking for it. Not all older people read well so larger, clearer pictorial signs would be good. In addition some older people may have literacy issues that they have hidden for decades.

Seating

The quality and frequency of seating varied. For example around Horncastle market square there are many benches with arms that are all quite accessible. However walking around the rest of the town there is little or no seating available. So for someone living a short distance from the town centre they may feel reluctant to venture out without the reassurance of a few seats along their journey to the shops.



Horncastle Library

Focus on 'The Hildreds Shopping Centre'

Age-friendly Businesses

The Hildreds Shopping Centre in Skegness, welcomes over 4 million visitors every year to its 30 stores, particularly during the height of the summer season where visitors from outside of the area flock to Skegness for their summer break.

In December 2019 'The Hildreds' was officially awarded the TED East Lindsey Age-friendly Business Award (AFB), becoming the first recognised Age-friendly shopping centre. The AFB award developed and managed by the TED Ageing Better in East Lindsey Programmes, gives customers the confidence that a business meets a range of criteria including respect and inclusion, customer comfort, clear marketing and communication, and accessibility [27].

The award is further recognition of 'The Hildreds' ongoing commitment to the local community and to improving the physical and social environments of the centre in order to better cater for customers aged over 50. This has included ensuring that there is ample seating for people to take a rest, clear signage to customer services and access to facilities such as toilets are in line with age friendly advice as well as listening to and implementing suggestions from the public.

As a result of work by 'The Hildreds' Centre Manager and the AfB Officer, the number of AfB in the Centre steadily increased. The majority of retail premises in 'The Hildreds' Centre have achieved their Age-friendly Business Awards.

"It is an absolute pleasure to work with Steve and his staff at the Hildreds. The interest shown in working with TED and the commitment to ensure older people are welcomed and accommodated is outstanding" (TED Age-friendly Business Officer)



The Banter Bench

Out of season Skegness becomes much quieter. During these quieter months, the Hildreds centre staff come to recognise regular visitors, especially those on their own. Staff therefore make a special note to say hello and where possible spend a little time with those who have affectionately come to be known as the ‘regulars’. Staff reported that after a while people would begin to open up, and they would find out that many had moved to the area to retire with their partner and sadly their partner has since passed away. The ‘regulars’ often reported feeling alone as a result of this, and that coming to the centre was a great way for them to get out and about and see others. For some this was the only personal contact they got that day or all week.

Recognising this as a possible opportunity to develop something bigger the manager of the Hildreds Shopping Centre, in partnership with the TED AfB Officer, embarked on a project which became known as ‘The Banter Bench’. The benches provide an opportunity for people to simply sit down, take a load off their feet and talk to someone about absolutely anything and everything, as well as receive advice and suggestions on clubs, societies, and events being run that might be of interest to them, providing opportunities for them to socialise.

*“It was so nice to have someone different just come and show and interest in me and want to talk to me”
(Local Resident)*



Findings

Transport



“Looking at every aspect of transport infrastructure, equipment and service is an integral part of creating an age-friendly community.” [28]

‘Transport’ refers to the process, the systems and the means of someone travelling from one place to another, usually for the purpose of taking part in some activity. Across the world people have become increasingly more reliant on using their own vehicles to transport themselves to school, work, social events, for shopping and appointments. This is particularly the case in rural communities where there are often higher numbers of older people residing, and public transport networks are limited and sometimes non-existent. However as people move into older age, particularly those over 70 , when the DVLA starts to request medical information, many have to stop driving due to health issues, or they might choose to stop due to reduced confidence in their ability.

“Sparsity and the increasing scarcity of public transport links are recognised as having a significant impact both on daily living costs of rural households and on access to services.” [29]

Those people who have routinely used public transport through their adult life, may find that the physical changes they encounter as they move into older age have an impact on their ability and confidence to use these services. So reduced mobility, aching limbs, sensory impairment, or just generally feeling slower and less responsive than you used to, might mean that what was once a simple journey is now a dreaded ordeal. While many buses are now adapted to be more accessible for wheelchairs, pushchairs or those using mobility aids; there is still a lack of consideration for those with less “obvious” restrictions. On the Isle of Wight, Age UK as part of their Ageing Better Programme, developed a training package that highlighted some of the challenges faced by older people. This was initially delivered to staff at the local bus company and had an incredible impact on the drivers’ ability to empathise with older passengers, leading to raised customer satisfaction and many examples of positive behaviour towards older passengers. The programme is so successful that it has been rolled out to other local services and is now being taken up by other areas in the UK [30].

If people are not able to comfortably access transport in their older years, then they will become increasingly isolated from previous as well as future activities, and contact with their community. The impact of reduced or no transport options on older people has been proven to have a detrimental impact on the person’s physical and emotional health [31]. Lack of transport will also impact on the person’s ability to attend medical appointments when illness is already diagnosed or suspected, thereby further increasing risks to health.

For those that don’t have access to convenient public transport there is the option of private hire, but this is usually more costly, and becomes unrealistic for those on a limited income. It is proven that it is those with *“the worst health and the lowest incomes who struggle the most to travel to health services”* [32].

In our focus groups many people explained the huge challenges of attending regular hospital appointments. One person described travelling the 90 mile round trip, five days a week for six weeks, for cancer treatment. Getting up at 4.30 am to be ready for hospital transport, waiting for fellow passengers to finish treatment and subsequently not returning home until late in the day. Similar examples of difficulties getting to places, particularly health appointments, were shared a number of times.

A common dilemma and one that has a huge impact on those living in rural communities, is the impact of when one person in a couple (usually the man), who is “the driver” passes away and their partner (usually the woman) is left without transport. In this situation the bereaved partner is immediately physically isolated in addition to all the elements of dealing with the grief of losing their companion. This scenario was repeated a number of times in our focus groups, with one woman explaining that she planned to move to a city near her children as since her husband died she was not able to get around as she used to and felt very isolated.



An overview of public transport in East Lindsey

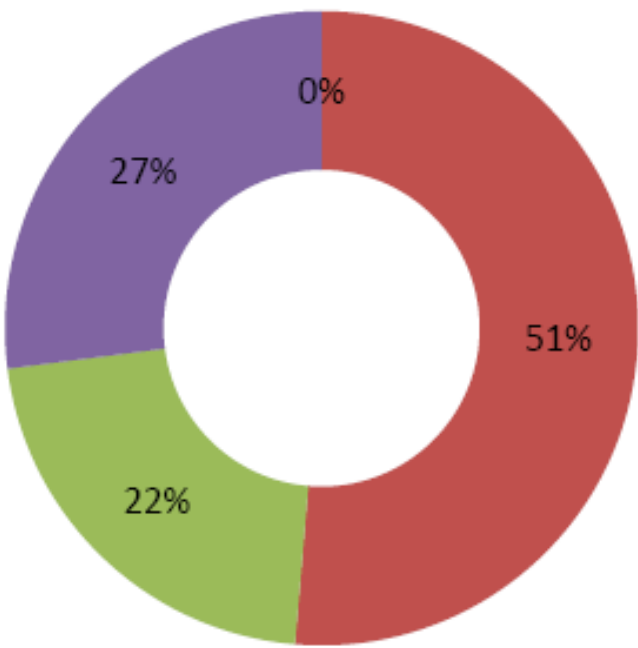
Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) is the Local Transport Authority and is responsible for overseeing transport services across Lincolnshire, including East Lindsey. Information was gained through a meeting with the LCC Transport Manager and members of his team; and additional desk research. Most of this was completed prior to the Covid-19 crisis. As a result of the pandemic a planned Train Audit had to be cancelled and the intended Bus Audits were also not carried out. However there was some relevant feedback from our focus groups which will be included.

“Thinking about public transport, community transport & private hire in East Lindsey... Which statement best matches your opinion?”

The results from our survey (see on right) suggest that improvement is needed in transport services across the district. Not one person believed that services were excellent with no change needed. Just over half of respondents felt that while some areas provided good transport options, that there were other areas where change was needed.

“Horncastle Town for example has good bus links to the coast and towards Lincoln. More rural communities have to rely on community transport and taxis. Taxis are particularly expensive and at certain times of day difficult to get hold of. Hospital transport is nigh on impossible to arrange now.” (Survey Respondent)

Over a quarter of respondents felt that transport options required extensive change in all areas of the district.



- are generally excellent & no improvement is needed
- vary across the district, some areas are good while others need considerable improvement
- are generally good some minor improvements would make them excellent
- are disappointing & extensive changes are needed in all areas of East Lindsey

“Public transport across the district is generally poor, apart from the Call Connect service but this isn't accessible for all. In my experience participants do struggle to get to sessions unless they have access to a car.” (Survey Respondent)

“In some villages in East Lindsey public transport is non-existent... to get any sort of public transport you have to travel or walk approximately 2 miles to the main road.” (Survey Respondent)



Bus services in East Lindsey

Bus services are provided by a combination of LCC and private companies. Bus route and timetable information for all providers is available at the Lincs Bus Website [33]. East Lindsey is covered by the following bus services:

- Interconnect buses (Stagecoach) on main routes: 51 (Louth- Grimsby), 56 (Lincoln – Horncastle- Skegness), 57 (Skegness – Boston), 59 (Skegness – Mablethorpe – Louth)
- Various regular daily routes provided by Hunts, Grayscroft and Brylane
- Various market day buses
- Some school services are ‘open’ and allow passengers other than students to travel
- Call Connect which is managed mostly by LCC. Hunts run three of the services

The LCC team explained that seasonal visitors to the coast leads to an increase in passenger numbers through the summer months. The increased income from tourism allows some bus routes to run all year. Without the increase in seasonal usage there would have to be a reduction in some services for the rest of the year.

All buses must be accessible by wheelchair or pushchair from the pavement. Accessibility is ensured by a ramp or a hydraulic system that lowers the entrance to the bus.

In the Horncastle and Spilsby areas PCSO’s go onto some of the Call Connect and Interconnect Buses. This was described as “Bus Beat”. This allows PCSO’s to be visible, talk to passengers, create connections, and potentially gather information that might be relevant to criminal activity. It is also likely to help older people feel safer because there is a visible police presence in their community. There has been no information provided to say that “Bus Beat” has happened in other parts of the district, it might be that this is something that could be considered.

One issue voiced in focus groups, is the confusion that having multiple bus service providers can cause. Some people compared local service provision to other areas where all bus services are run by one company, and timetables “seem to make more sense”. However one man from a coastal location was very happy with the local buses. He expressed satisfaction at knowing that buses usually arrived on time (in line with the set timetable) and that there was always seating for him, whereas his experience living in a city for many years was that buses, although more frequent, “came when they wanted to” and were more crowded.

Another common criticism of local bus services focused on the times that buses ran and the impact that had on people’s ability to engage in activities. The issue fell into two distinct categories:

1. There are limited numbers of buses through the day. For some this might mean one bus an hour, but for many this means only one or two buses a day. Focus group participants shared how this impacts on their ability to attend activities. For example one woman said she had the choice of arriving at the TED Friendship group location over an hour early, or about 15 minutes late. She also had to leave early, or hang around for quite some time to catch her return bus. Similar challenges were expressed across focus groups relating to both social activities and health appointments
2. In most locations there are no buses running on Sundays or later into the evening. Focus group members and survey respondents both identified these as issues that limited people’s ability to socialise and attend other activities

The issue of transport and accessing health appointments was the cause of a lot of discussion in the focus groups. People in the coastal communities expressed frustration and upset at the very real challenge they faced to attend appointments, particularly hospital appointments. This issue will be discussed more fully in the Community Support and Health Services section.

Concessionary Bus Travel

Concessionary bus passes are issued at the state pension age as part of the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme, and allow older people to travel free of charge on public buses (with some time restrictions). In a number of focus groups people voiced that they needed to go to Lincoln to collect their “free bus pass” and that this was preventing people from applying, They said that previously they could go to their local council office to do this. Conversation with LCC Transport staff and on line research confirmed that while the applications are processed by the Concessionary Fares team who are based in Lincoln, that there are a number of ways that people can apply:

- Apply and renew a pass **online** using the online portal
- Apply **by post** after completing the application form. Forms can be
 - Downloaded from the website
 - Collect from your local District Council office or library
 - Ring 0345 456 4474 to request a form to be sent to you by post
 - Request a form by emailing: Concessionaryfares@lincolnshire.gov.uk

There is an approximate 5-day turnaround on applications and people can use a smart phone to take and send ID pictures (they do not need to be passport photos). As many people seem to believe that they have to travel to Lincoln, to collect and submit the application form for concessionary travel, it might be that some awareness raising is needed to inform people of the process. For example if all district council and library staff were made aware of the procedure, and had easy access to application forms, then older people approaching them for help would not feel that obtaining their bus pass was so onerous.

Further information about Concessionary Fares in Lincolnshire can be found online. (links are available on page 115)



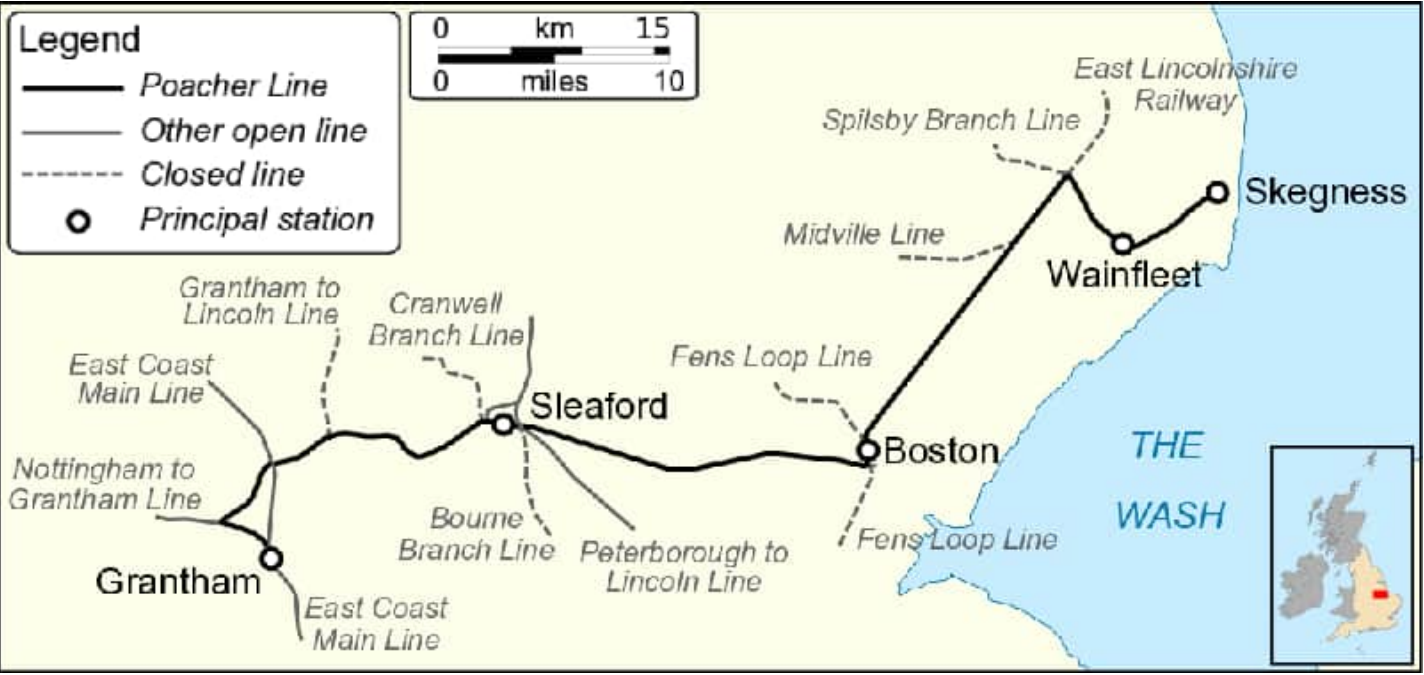
Train Service in East Lindsey

The seaside town of Skegness is the final stop on the Poacher Line. The line is a community rail project that runs the 55 miles between Grantham and Skegness. It is funded by LCC, Nottingham CC, East Midlands trains and the Department for Transport & Network Rail. The line is serviced by East Midlands Trains originating in Nottingham. **It is the only working rail line in East Lindsey**, and links with the East Coast Mainline at Grantham. The line between Grantham and Skegness includes stops at Sleaford, Boston and Wainfleet [34].

East Midlands Railways (EMR) were taken over by a new provider, Abellio, in August 2019. Abellio plan to invest £600 million in EMR during their eight year franchise. They have stated that improvements will include “faster, modern, refurbished trains”, also “transformed stations, improved ... accessibility, enhanced training” [35].

One of our focus group members spoke about how difficult it was for her to travel on the trains. She has a number of health issues and limited mobility. She had previously attempted to use the train but had been so upset by the experience that she was too scared to attempt it again. She said that getting from the platform to the train was nearly impossible and that there was nobody to help her. She didn’t share how long ago this was. Other members of the focus group, although less vocal, did say they wouldn’t use the trains as they didn’t feel confident in how accessible the trains would be. Unfortunately we were not able to conduct our Train Audit due to Covid-19 and so have not been able to complete a full assessment of train travel in East Lindsey.

"As a Community Rail. Partnership we do look at regional and national objectives and have identified loneliness as an issue, especially with the older generation and will be looking to implement some initiatives in the future - like Knit and Natter trains, inter-generational working with schools etc. We also operate a station adoption scheme, where local communities come together to look after their local station with planting and tidying etc., the majority of our volunteers are over 50." [36]



Community Transport in East Lindsey

According to the Community Transport Association, there are a multitude of Community Transport schemes across the UK that have been set up to provide “flexible and accessible community-led solutions in response to unmet local transport needs” [37]. Most users of community transport are older people and the services are particularly useful in rural areas like East Lindsey.

The Lincolnshire Community Transport Forum run by Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) state that there are 17 Voluntary Car Schemes in Lincolnshire. Three of these are in East Lindsey, they are Sutton-on-Sea VCS, Horncastle VCS and Louth VCS. The official website for Lincolnshire public transport service information, states that the volunteers in each of these schemes [38]:

- Have a current DBS check
- Have undergone online Safeguarding Training
- Have badges issues by LCC

In 2013 an LCC report “Rural Transport & Older People in Lincolnshire”, based on research undertaken by Lincoln University reported that there was “*a serious lack of knowledge... about what community transport schemes exist, how they operate and what services they offer*” [39]. Our findings during this assessment process suggest that some improvement is still needed to raise awareness of where services are available and what they offer. The information given by the transport helpline was clear and useful regarding the three registered schemes in the district. However voluntary car schemes were only mentioned by a few older people in focus groups, and very few professionals seemed to have a clear idea of what was available.

What about Age-friendly Bus and Train Services?

There was a willingness expressed by LCC Transport Manager and colleagues to consider Age-friendly Training and the Age-friendly Business Award for transport services. One of the local providers (Hunts Coaches) has already achieved its Age-friendly Business Award, so a precedent has been set.

A starting point for wider Age-friendly Training and achieving the Age-friendly Business standard, might be the Call Connect Service which appears to already have a number of age friendly qualities.



Focus on Call Connect

While our assessment revealed some criticism of the ‘Call Connect’ service, on the whole feedback is very good and the value of the service is evident.

“It’s difficult in a rural and sparsely population area to provide transport services but I feel the Call Connect Service provides a very good service increasing provision across East Lindsey to onward connections...” (Survey Respondent)

Call Connect buses run across Lincolnshire from Monday to Saturday, feeding into the main ‘Interconnect’ routes. Call Connect have 12 fixed route buses and 5 of these routes are in East Lindsey. Other bus routes are not fixed but are determined by customer bookings.

All passengers must register with the service first. This is something that can be done very quickly online through the website, or over the phone. Registration can be completed by a care giver or support worker if the passenger briefly gives permission at the beginning of the call. The service is available to anyone, but is most often used by older members of the community. When passengers register the call taker will record information about disability and will also ascertain if the person is able to get to the nearest pick up point. If the passenger doesn’t have a free pass and it seems they should be eligible, then they will be supported to get their free pass.

Pick up points are not necessarily at established bus stops, there are thousands of pick up points on the various routes. If the caller is not able to get to one of the set pick-up points, then they can be registered as ‘Call Connect Plus’ and can be collected at the “gate of their property”. If passengers share any train or bus connections that they need to meet, the call taker will assist them to “get where (they) want to be”. Journeys can be booked an hour before or up to 7 days in advance by phone or online.



Bus drivers are given a certain amount of information about the passengers but confidentiality is respected. As drivers have a list of passengers that they are due to pick up, they will call the office if a passenger does not turn up. The office will then call the passenger to check if they are ok. There have been a number of occasions when either a driver or the call centre have noticed that a regular user has not been booking and steps have been taken to ask for a Safe & Well check by the police.

Most Call Connect buses are converted 8 to 12 seater vans. Wheelchair access is at the rear of the vehicle through a hydraulic lift. The larger vehicles are “coach built” and they have side accessibility. The vehicles have low floor steps and high visibility grab rails. All vehicles have seat belts.

Anyone who is not able to move from their wheelchair to a seat can remain in the wheelchair which is secured through a harness system for safety. Anyone wishing to use this facility must provide the make and model of their chair to ensure that it conforms to the securing system in the buses. If people are not able to provide this when they register for Call Connect, then someone can come out and make an assessment of the chair to ensure safety. The buses do not have passenger assistance but carers & support workers can go on the bus.

Call Connect, as with all other public transport services were directly affected by the ‘rules’ brought in to reduce the spread of Covid-19. However their services started to resume from early July 2020 and all passengers are expected to follow government guidelines.

For up to date information visit their website (links are available on page 115).



Findings

Housing

“Housing and support allows people in later life to age comfortably and safely within their community.” [40]



One of the most significant and fundamental elements in a person’s life, whatever their age, is their home. The quality and suitability of our homes is a key factor in determining the health and wellbeing of everyone. This is particularly true for older people who are more likely to be living with chronic health conditions, reduced mobility, cognitive or sensory impairments. Ideally our homes are situated within a familiar neighbourhood providing social networks, daily access to amenities and good transport links. A decent and accessible home sustains wellbeing and can support independence. This could mean the difference between an older person managing their own personal care unaided and them needing costly regular care provision. Whereas homes that are not of a suitable standard can create or aggravate health conditions and even lead to early death. There is a proven ‘causal link’ between inadequate housing and chronic conditions such as heart disease, respiratory issues and arthritis.

“Poor housing can cause or worsen health conditions, reduce a person’s quality of life, exacerbate inequalities and can even result in premature death” [41]

It is well established that falls in the home are one of the biggest causes of injury and hospital admission in older people, often leading to a deterioration in their future mobility and confidence [42]. Given what we know about the impact of poor housing on the health of older people, it is not too big a leap then to suggest that improved housing conditions would lead to reduced costs on the NHS and other support services. It has been estimated that poor quality housing costs the NHS £1.4 billion per year, with £500 million relating to older people, although reviews suggest that this is likely an underestimate of the true cost [43].

UK housing stock is by and large unsuitable for people to grow old in [44]. The UK has the oldest housing stock in Europe. With 38% of homes dating from before 1946, it is unsurprising to hear many of these older homes are in a poorer state of repair and have more risks, including cold, damp, fire hazards and falls risks [45]. The majority of UK housing is also failing accessibility standards - 93% of current homes do not have the features that make them visitable to most people (a level access entrance, sufficiently wide doorways, a toilet at entrance level etc.) [46].

“In the case of homes headed by someone aged 75 and over, the number of non-decent homes has risen from 533,000 in 2012 to 701,000 in 2017.” [47]

Generally older people tend to spend much more of their time in their homes. Researchers have also found that in the UK, more than 80% of homeowners aged 65 and over want to stay living where they are and not move into specialist older person’s accommodation [48]. Experts agree that minor ‘home adaptations’, made through the Disabilities Facilities Grant (DFG), provide a cost effective intervention to improve health & wellbeing issues linked to unsuitable housing.

Effective home adaptations could lead to a possible 26% reduction in falls requiring medical treatment and a significant reduction in the need for older people to go into high cost residential care [49]. The Disability Facilities Grant (DFG) is a mandatory means tested grant available from local authorities to both home owners and tenants. The purpose of the DFG is to:

“... pay for essential home adaptations which can give disabled people better freedom of movement into and around their homes and provide access to essential facilities within the home.”[50]

The DFG is funded by the National Government through the Better Care Fund. The total amount available nationally has recently increased. In 2014/15 the amount available was £220m compared with £500m available in 2019/20.

One of the issues that has been highlighted nationally is a lack of awareness among older people of the availability of the DFG. A report by Care & Repair England shared examples of good practice in parts of the UK, where there had been “pro-active awareness raising” about housing adaptations and financial assistance to achieve these. This is an approach we may wish to pursue in East Lindsey [51].

“I know people who are eligible for a Disabled Facilities Grant get a good service but many people possibly aren't aware of this service or eligible” (Survey response)

A Lincolnshire Health Watch Survey in 2019 asked respondents to choose the most important factor that would allow them to stay independent and healthy as they grow older. The top choice (56%) from respondents was “I want to be able to stay in my own home for as long as it is safe to do so”. [52]

The stereotypes society holds of older people, has an enormous impact on the assumptions that are made about how and where older people want to live. Despite common assumption that most people want to downsize or enter specialist accommodation as they age, recent research has shown that when it comes to choosing a home, older people are motivated by the same desires as other age groups [53]. For example, wanting more space for guests, moving to a nicer area, and better access to green spaces.

Research published in 2019 calls for UK authorities, planners and developers to shift their emphasis from downsizing to ‘rightsizing’, described as an older person’s active, positive choice to move home as a means of improving their quality of life [54].

The Housing Learning & Improvement Network produced a comprehensive two stage “Review of Housing & Accommodation need for older people across Greater Lincolnshire to inform future housing & accommodation options,” [55].



The review produced an extensive list of recommendations. Among these was the need to develop a mixture of “housing types and tenures that will facilitate downsizing/rightsizing”

These include:

- Contemporary ‘care ready’ sheltered/retirement housing, for rent and for sale
- Mainstream developments to include ‘care ready housing, but as part of an inter-generational housing offer
- Increase the delivery of housing with care options including extra care housing, for rent and for sale
- Identify existing sheltered housing schemes that can be improved, remodelled or adapted to better support ageing in place
- Consider decommissioning some existing sheltered housing schemes that are not ‘fit for purpose’ – and replace
- Proactively consider the housing and accommodation requirements of the increasing number of people living with dementia

The ELDC Corporate Strategy acknowledges that poor quality housing is a factor in health outcomes. It has housing as one of its strategic aims, stating that over the next 10 years in East Lindsey we will see:

“Housing that is meeting the needs of the ageing population” [56]

ELDC is a member of the Housing, Health and Care Delivery Group (HHCDG). The HHCDG was set up by the Lincolnshire's Health and Wellbeing Board which has ‘housing’ as one of its priorities set out in its Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The Group is made up of Lincolnshire County Council, the seven district councils, registered housing providers, local National Health Service bodies and the Department for Work & pensions. ELDC has endorsed the Lincolnshire Homes for Independence Blueprint (produced by the HHCDG) which states:

“Our vision is for people to live independently, stay connected and have greater choice in where and how they live.”p4[57]



The Lincolnshire Homes for Independence blueprint does not claim to tackle all aspects of housing, it is a ‘call to action’ for stakeholders to *“work together to secure the best possible homes and services for Lincolnshire’s residents, now and in the future.”*p4 [58]

In our focus groups surprisingly little was said about the suitability or the condition of people’s homes. This might be because participants are satisfied with their living accommodation, or it might be that in comparison to other elements of their life, housing was neither seen as the worst issue or something to celebrate.

Had the focus groups been held during or directly after the recent Covid-19 crisis, a time when people have been forced to stay within their homes, it might be that we would have had a wider range of comments about people’s relationship with their homes.

What was apparent is that East Lindsey is a popular place for people to move to for their retirement years. For home owners one of the reasons given for this was the cost of housing and the quality of what people could get for their money. East Lindsey has a large quantity of ‘Park’ homes available on the coast for people to buy. For many older people these are a good choice but for some, as they age, the park home does not provide the best options. Two participants reported how they sold their park home after only a year and moved into a permanent brick building, but this had impacted greatly on their financial situation. They were happy with their choice to move from a Park home, but felt they now had less flexibility with their finances (Park homes cost considerably less than brick built homes)

There were few issues that arose for those in social housing, these tended to focus on delays around improvements or adaptations to the home. For example some expressed frustrations that showers were not being fitted to replace baths, an alteration which they felt was important for people as they age. In Skegness older people expressed a need for more social housing to be built, while in Mablethorpe there were some who argued that they wanted less new housing in their town as they were concerned about the “effect of new housing on local resources” (e.g. School & GP Surgery)

There are a number of social housing providers with properties in the district, the largest one being Platform Housing Group who in 2018 had 6649 properties in the district [59]. Platform have an extensive range of Strategic and policy documents available on their website, but there is no apparent strategic focus on the housing needs of older people.

In late 2019 ELDC took back management of the Housing Register. In July 2020 there were 1028 live applications on the register, 363 of these were aged over 50 years old. Eligible applicants are categorised into four bands, with ‘Band 1’ being the highest need and ‘Band 4’ the lowest need. Of the 363 older applicants, 243 are in bands 3 & 4. This implies that there isn’t too much wrong with their current property. (Information received from the ELDC Homelessness, Housing and Wellbeing Service Manager- July 2020)

Approximately half the 37 professionals who took part in the Age-friendly Survey expressed a lack of awareness about the availability of suitable accommodation and support services for older people (see below and on the next page). Suggesting that some awareness raising across sectors, about what housing and related services are available would be beneficial.





With regard to the availability of privately rented housing, 16% felt there was generally enough available, while 32% felt there wasn't enough.

"... many properties are not suitable either because of poor access, poor condition or the environment is not suitable for an older person (surrounded by young people)" (Faith group)

With regard the availability of social housing, 22% felt there was generally enough, while 38% felt there wasn't.

"I think we are pretty lucky with housing provision in this area compared with many areas" (Third Sector Organisation)

With regard to the availability of suitable housing available to purchase, 38% felt there was enough. While 14% believed there was not enough suitable housing to buy.

"There is a large owner occupation market but bungalows are expensive and there is a short supply of adapted homes for sale" (Survey Respondent)

One focus group member voiced a strong appreciation for her telecare service. She explained how after a fall in her home, the service had kept in touch with her at regular intervals over the 2 and a half hours she was waiting for an ambulance (not uncommon in rural areas). Her story was echoed by others in the group who also appreciated the "safety net" that these services provided for them. Telecare services are paid for by the resident and there are a number of options available in East Lindsey.

Focus on Wellbeing Lincs Service

"Wellbeing Lincs supports people through life's changes, achieving better wellbeing and independent living across Lincolnshire" [60]

Some very positive feedback was received from professionals and from focus group participants about the Wellbeing Lincs Service. The service is county wide and is available for adults who meet certain criteria. Although not specifically for older people, the majority of their clients are over 50 years old. While the focus is on supporting the 'wellbeing' of the individual, there is an emphasis on supporting the person to live as independently as possible in their home. The service demonstrates the way in which a person's home environment can play a significant role in their health and wellbeing. The service is one of the ways in which LCC exercises its prevention duties – 'to avoid, prevent or delay the need for hospital admission or social care intervention'.

"As a service we work with EL Housing, Wellbeing Service and OTs (Occupational Therapists). We have always found that housing issues and required adaptations have always been provided in a timely manner." (Survey Respondent)

The Wellbeing Lincs service tailors a package of support, advice and guidance to support the client over a period of time, up to 12 weeks. The service does not provide personal or medical care. An initial short phone assessment is carried out and then an Assessor will conduct a home visit, usually within a week (this process may be adapted during the Covid-19 crisis dependent upon government guidance). While the core element of the service is free (support, advice & guidance), there may be some cost to the client for aids and adaptations that may need to be installed to sustain independent living.

"Support is free of charge, while we do charge for actual equipment supplied, we ensure equipment remains affordable by allowing customers to pay over longer periods without additional charges, and we will assist any customer who is having difficulty paying... Additionally we install equipment free of charge, using our own full time installers." (Survey Respondent)



In addition to the standard service offered, the Wellbeing Lincs service also provides:

- Hospital In-Reach – this service enables patients to transfer out of hospital and into their own homes safely and without delay. Dedicated Wellbeing Lincs staff will work with hospital staff, starting while the patient is still receiving in-patient care. The support eases the transition home and supports the patient to retain independence in their own home
- Resettlement – this service operates between 10am and 10pm, providing a transition from hospital to home for those who don't have family or friends available to support them in this. Working with hospital discharge teams, the Wellbeing Lincs responder will meet the patient upon their return home. They will have ensured the home is warm and safe, made sure there are basic provisions, settle the person in and then if needed a referral for the ongoing Wellbeing Lincs support is made
- Response Service – this service is available for a small fee to anyone who uses telecare equipment and doesn't have a nominated relative or friend close by who can respond. When an alarm is raised with the telecare provider a Wellbeing Lincs Responder can be with the client within 45 minutes. The service is available 24/7, 365 days a year
- Minor Aids & Adaptions – this service is available (for a reasonable cost) for those who might need small adjustments or aids in their home, in order to continue living independently

Alongside the services they deliver, the Wellbeing Lincs service works in close partnership with many agencies. One of these is the Lincolnshire Fire Service. When the Fire Service go to do their checks in people's homes, they are also mindful of the Wellbeing Lincs assessment and services. Similarly when the Wellbeing Lincs staff go to a home to undertake an assessment they will be including an assessment of whether smoke alarms or other fire prevention measures are needed.

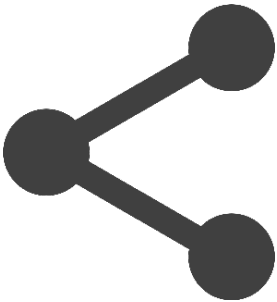
For further information visit the Wellbeing Lincs website (links are available on page 115).



Findings

Social Participation

“Social participation is strongly connected to good health and wellbeing throughout life.” [61]



The problem of ‘Loneliness & Social Isolation’ is a global challenge for people of all ages, but it is a common and serious problem for many older people. Apart from the immediate feelings of being sad or feeling alone, the consequences of persistent loneliness and isolation can have a serious impact on health in older people. There is evidence linking it to a risk of severe depression, a risk of premature death, increased cognitive impairment, an increased chance of getting dementia and a higher risk of developing cardiovascular disease [62] [63].

It is worth noting that while loneliness is subjective and describes “the gap between a person’s desired levels of social contact and their actual level of social contact” (Age UK), isolation is something that can be measured objectively. Isolation is measured as the number of contacts that someone might have, regardless of the quality of those contacts. Loneliness is never desirable, however people sometimes choose to be isolated from others in society.

“17% of older people report they are in contact with family, friends and neighbours less than once a week; 11% report this contact is as infrequent as less than once a month” [64]

There are various explanations as to why loneliness and isolation are a problem for older people these include a lack of social networks, the impact of poor health, where they live and of course their individual characteristics will play a part.

Lack of Social Networks

We live in a world where many older people reside a long distance from their adult children or extended family. They have found that their circle of friends has reduced, maybe due to retirement or because people have died. They may have lost interest in a social life, or feel that what is available is not for them. In East Lindsey many older residents do not have local extended family. We have found that this is often because their grown up children moved away, usually for better work opportunities; or because they moved to the district in their retirement leaving their extended family in another part of the country.

Poor Health

As people age they often find that they are affected by health issues. This can lead to problems with mobility where it is physically very difficult to get out of their home. It can lead to a lack of confidence in their ability to get out and interact safely with the world. Cognitive impairments can mean that their experience of the world is confusing and frightening (for example with dementia). Public health data about the area (particularly the coastal towns) suggest higher than average rates of chronic health problems.

Where they live

They may live somewhere rural with limited transport options. Maybe they previously drove but have had to give it up due to age related health issues. They may not feel very safe where they live and are frightened of leaving their home. They may live somewhere that is not adapted to their mobility needs and either be unable to afford the changes, or be too proud to seek help. As East Lindsey is mainly rural, there are extensive areas that have no pathways. The roads at night are very dark, with street lighting only present in towns and villages. For older people there can be a lack of confidence driving in the dark or in certain weather conditions. As previously identified there is also an issue with limited public transport.

Individual Characteristics

Everyone is an individual and some people find that their individual situation can have an isolating effect on them. So someone’s ethnicity, or faith or sexual orientation might lead to them being marginalised, or even persecuted in the community that they live in. Those living on a very low income will find many aspects of life difficult and will have no extra money for social activities. As previously described there are some communities in East Lindsey that are amongst the most deprived in the country.

East Lindsey’s population is overwhelmingly White British, with only 2% of residents from the BAME community. There also seems to be an expectation that people are heterosexual, and if they have a faith they are probably Christian. So anyone ageing in East Lindsey that is from the BAME community, or has a faith other than Christian is likely to feel very much in the minority, which may add to their isolation and feelings of loneliness.

“Rural areas have more ‘white British’ people living in them (95 per cent as compared with 77.2 per cent in urban areas). Minority ethnic groups are therefore represented in very small numbers and may lack social and community support found in urban centres.” [65]

There is evidence to show that older people from the LGBTQ+ community are not treated equitably when it comes to provision of services or being resident in a care homes. They can be bullied and isolated due to their sexuality. Or their sexuality can be seen as irrelevant, because of the assumption that older people are not sexually active. This assumption misses the point that someone’s sexuality is part of their identity, not just what they do [66].



Centre for Ageing Better Image Library

TED LGBTQ+ research and training

The TED Ageing Better Programme commissioned Think2Speak, to conduct research and develop awareness training for staff in the TED team and among TED partner agencies. TED had previously identified that there was a lack of engagement with, and understanding of, the older LGBTQ+ community in East Lindsey. It was apparent that there was very limited support for older LGBT+ people, with the only known source through small private Facebook groups.

“These groups do not really advertise their existence and are very much perpetuated through personal connection to respect people’s privacy and provide a level of safety. These groups do not have external funding or organisational support and whilst very valuable, they have limited reach.”[67]

Think2Speak conducted a consultation with TED delivery staff and partner organisations. To find out what they would need in order to confidently support older people who were LGBT+. They provided guidance and awareness training to TED delivery staff.

“The training aims to support people to feel confident, creating environments that are welcoming and inclusive and are reaching and engaging with people over 50 who may identify as being LGBTQ+.”[68]

The importance of feeling connected

It is so important that older people feel part of a group or community. It might be that they don’t have, or don’t see family. But connections with other people will improve their sense of worth and raise their mood, ultimately improving their emotional and physical health.

“Always something going on, there is good community spirit”. (Focus group participant- Mablethorpe)

Feedback we received from focus groups, discussions with agencies and the survey suggest that there is a range of social activities for older people to become involved in, but often whether people access these opportunities is dependent upon a number of factors. These might be:

- Where they live – some towns & villages have more going on and those that live in rural locations may have nowhere close by for activities
- Whether they have their own car, or good public transport links
- Whether the activity is something they are interested in
- They may have tried the activity or group before and not felt it was for them
- There may be a cost that for many is not affordable
- They might not know what is available, because they may not know where to look for information. This is particularly an issue for those that don’t use digital technology, as most organisations use digital as their main form of communication for events and activities

“Participants often rely on family members or friends to get to sessions. Those without that luxury do struggle to afford taxis, and that is if they can get one ... The availability of voluntary car service is good but this is often only available for medical appointments, not social activities which are essential to keep older people connected and well.” (Survey respondent)

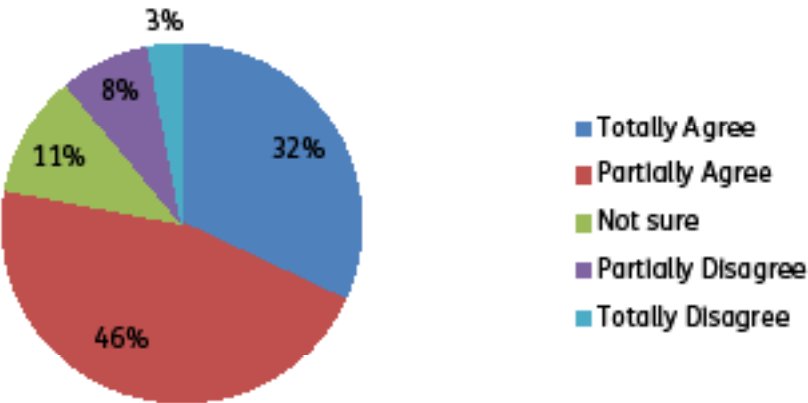
“There are lots of art & craft activity clubs – other things needed” (Focus Group Member)

“There are opportunities, but many older residents are not aware of them or cannot get to them due to poor public transport infrastructure. Better communication of what is available... but remember that many older residents do not have digital access or digital knowledge.” (Survey Respondent)

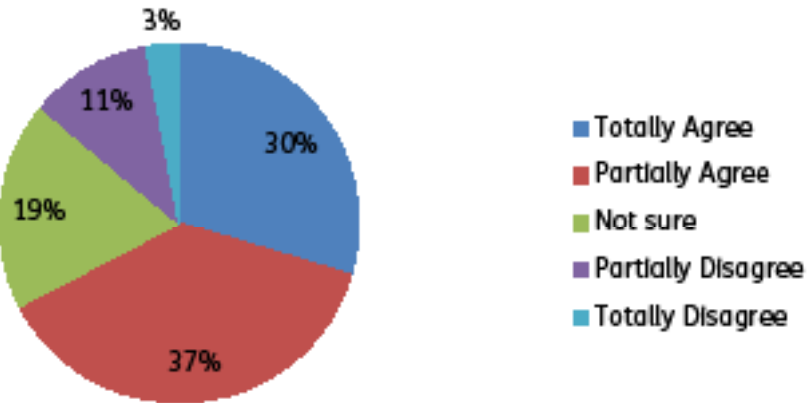
Our survey asked about the opportunities available for people in different age groups.

“There are many opportunities available for people age...”

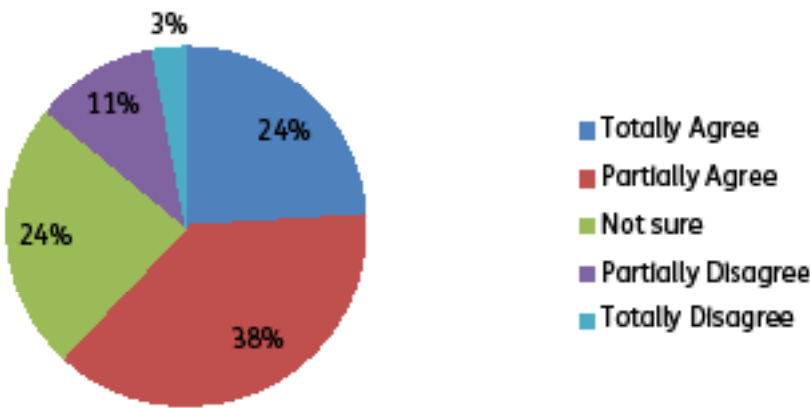
50-65 years



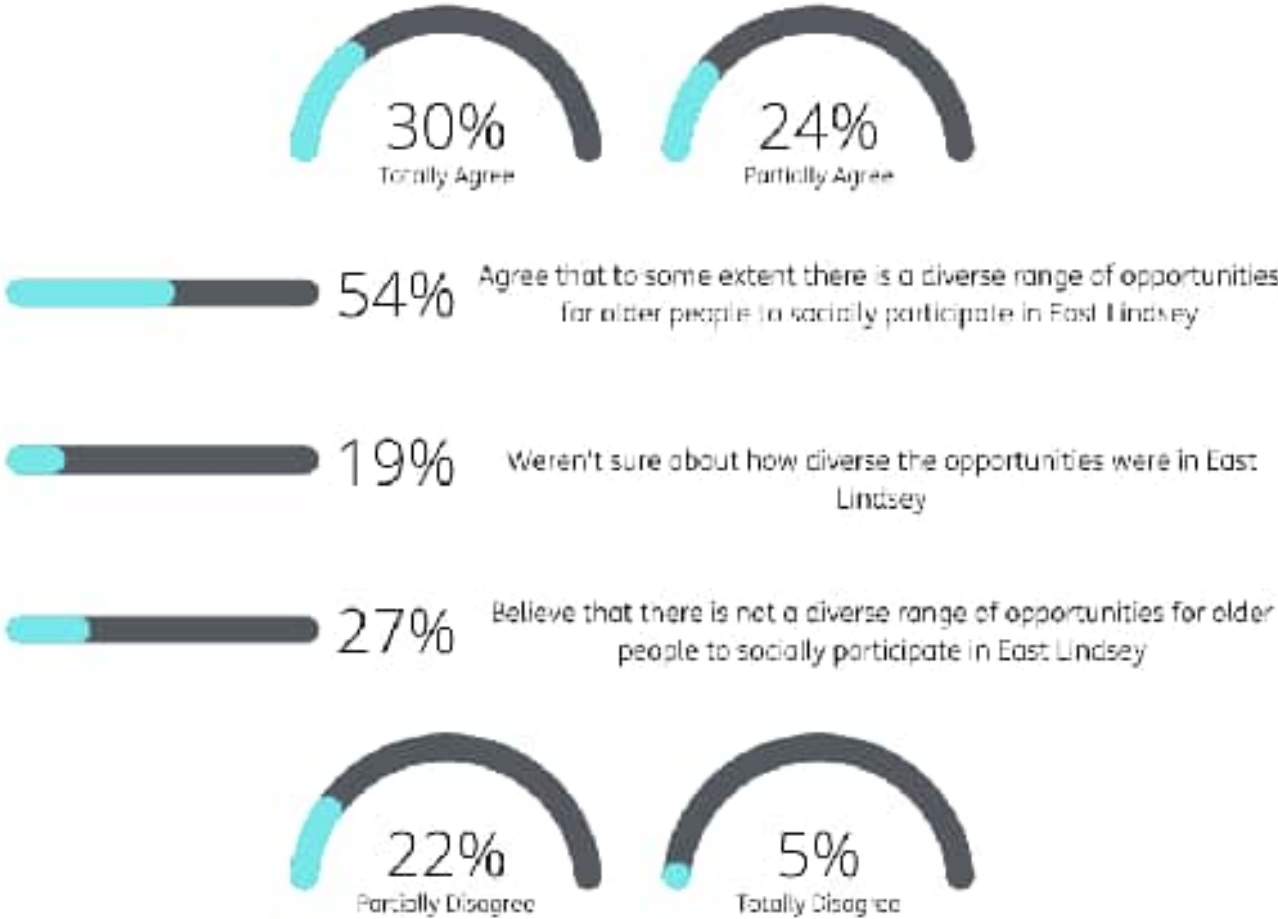
65-75 years



Over 75 years



In response to there being a diverse range of opportunities for all older people:



Focus on the TED Ageing Better Programme

TED in East Lindsey (TED) is part of the National Ageing Better Programme, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund. Since 2015 TED has been delivering support to older people in East Lindsey in order to tackle loneliness and isolation. Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic the services that were being successfully being delivered through TED were:

TED Friendship Groups: The ‘Ageing Better’ test and learn approach enabled the team to build on the learning gained from earlier ‘Tea with TED’ sessions. As a result the self-sustaining, community Friendship Groups were developed in 2018. The aim of the groups is to welcome and encourage anyone over the age of 50 to get involved with their local community, meet new people, and take part in social activities. Friendship groups are led by volunteers and support is provided by the TED Friendship Officer. Volunteers are encouraged to plan activities, outings and engage members of the group to ensure the groups success and longevity.

Learning and evaluation data from the Friendship Groups has been collected since March 2019, via detailed written field notes, semi-structured interviews and informal conversations with volunteers, service users and the TED Community Officer. Additionally a coproduction workshop entitled “Through Their Eyes”, at the 2019 Ageing Better Celebration, provided extra feedback.

- Participants were invited to share their thoughts and ideas on
- What does a Friendship Group mean to you
 - What benefits would you gain from connecting with a TED Friendship Group
 - What are the barriers you face in terms of connecting with a TED Friendship Group
 - How could TED Friendship Groups form good connections with you

It was found that for many older adults living in rural East Lindsey, Friendship Groups have made a positive impact in their lives. They have provided a safe space for older people to meet others and socialise, and they have encouraged and given people a reason to get out of their house:

Potential barriers that people may face in regards to attending TED Friendship Groups have been recognised. These include transport to get to sessions; lack of confidence when first attending group sessions; and the practicalities of attending sessions whilst also managing caring responsibilities. Knowing about these and any other barriers allows the TED Community Officer and volunteers to take steps to remove the barriers and enable people to attend.

‘Transport is a barrier for some people but if we know about it we will go and get them and bring them to the group and take them home again. All the volunteers do this. We do it every week.’ (TED Volunteer)

‘I think people with caring responsibilities would find it difficult to go every week. I know I do and it’s the guilt that’s what it is. You feel guilty about going and leaving and enjoying yourself. And there’s always things that come up that you have to do.’ (Service User, Ageing Better)

TED Age-friendly Business Award Scheme:
The TED Age-friendly Business Award scheme recognises local businesses who foster a positive approach to ageing. Businesses can be nominated by others or can approach the TED team directly. The TED Age-friendly Business Officer (AfBO) will discuss the criteria for achieving the free Award.

- The Award is open to businesses and services in East Lindsey who have been operating for more than 6 months and who meet the set criteria in the following categories:
- Respect and Inclusion
 - Customer Comfort
 - Clear Marketing and Communications
 - Accessibility

“We are so pleased to be an Age-friendly Business; it is so positive to be recognised for making the older generation feel welcome and comfortable”. (Age-friendly Business Owner)

“Knowing that a local business is Age-friendly means I can feel confident that I’ll get a friendly welcome and great service. It’s a great way to celebrate businesses who value their community”. (Local Shopper)



Until recently the assessment process involved the AfBO visiting the business to undertake an assessment with the business owner/manager. Following a successful assessment and review the business would be presented with a TED Age-friendly Business Award certificate and window sticker which can be displayed for customers to see.

In autumn 2020, post Covid-19, a new process is being piloted with a handful of businesses in East Lindsey. The business owner/manager will complete a self-assessment. The self-assessment will have to be supported with relevant evidence. This can include photos, examples of what they do or have done, and statements. A month has been allowed for the businesses to return the self-assessment. Once they have been received by the TED team the AfBO will make a follow up call to add any other detail or provide further information on the criteria and/or action plan. Once this process has been completed a review will take place before deciding if the business has met the criteria and therefore receive the award. The TED team are keen to make sure there is a way of maintaining the robustness of the award and so will be asking for testimonials and complete follow up calls to ensure the action plan is being met. Further information can be found at the TED website (links are available on page 115).

Fitness, Food and Friends (FFF): Sessions are delivered by Magna Vitae. The 12 week course involves nutritional advice, gentle physical activity, some practical cookery, and social activities. Each course is run at a different location across the district, allowing people from different communities to benefit. The FFF programme employs a flexible curriculum shaped by its members. As each new member joins the programme, they are asked to complete an expression of interest form in regard to the sorts of activities that would interest them. This allows those facilitating the programme to tailor its delivery towards their member's needs, wants, and interests. The programme is refreshed every 12 weeks based on further feedback and any other events that may be happening in the area that would be suitable. By having this flexibility, it allows FFF to remain current and up to date with the needs of its beneficiaries, as well as being able to connect with, and bring in, outside partners and delivery personnel.

"Connecting with people, seeing the green trees, doing some planting, and being with more motivated and enthusiastic people just makes you feel better" (Participant FFF)



The variety of activities offered has included Thai Chi, Digital Skills and Alexa Training, Bushcraft, and Mental and Physical Health awareness. These sessions often include an activity and an educational element in order to shine a light on how a number of health problems faced in older age can be interrelated, for example, diabetes and depression. Additional topics covered have also included: Glycaemic load in nutrition; antioxidants, fats and oils; food and mood; the role of protein in the diet; the Mediterranean diet; Indian food; mental health, heart health; type 2 diabetes; and arthritis.

"We were absolutely delighted with the success of our Fitness, Food and Friends project. The sessions focused on how to improve mental health and physical wellbeing using practical tools which were easily transferable into the home" (Community Engagement Officer, Platform Housing Group)

Becoming Digital: Lincs Digital have been providing digital outreach for older people within East Lindsey. Their programme of sessions have been delivered in venues requested by community groups. Covering all aspects of essential digital skills and supporting groups with online safety, use of devices, and awareness of online services e.g. banking.

During the Covid-19 crisis Lincs Digital have continued to provide support and training for their previous TED clients. They have also been available for new 'older people' that have approached them for support to access digital communication for shopping, information and for socialising with friends and family.

"Being part of the community and understanding our target group is what helps to make our learning groups successful. Everything is done with our learner at the centre of our group, to make sure that they have achieved what they wanted to do." (TED Delivery Partner, Lincs Digital)



TED Specialist Advice from Citizens Advice Lindsey: Citizens Advice provide support for older people in East Lindsey, including registered TED members. They offer a range of appropriate tailored free advice and advocacy. Topics include: benefits, debts, housing, and consumer issues. Prior to Covid-19 crisis this service was delivered in various locations across the district. During the recent pandemic Citizens Advice have continued to provide the service using the telephone.

"It's great to see all the services working together to help older people like us." (Citizens Advice User)

"I thank Citizens Advice for their help and feel I can now cope on my own."

Age UK services: Lunch Clubs: Prior to the Covid-19 Crisis AGE UK Lindsey were running Lunch Clubs at various locations in the District. These provided an opportunity for older people to meet regularly for a good meal, while being able to socialise with other people. Possibly leading to new friendships. Unfortunately due to the pandemic these had to be cancelled. However Lunch Club members, like all Age UK clients were contacted regularly by phone to ensure that they were coping and had all they needed.

Befriending: Age UK provide a befriending service which is delivered by trained volunteers. Since the Covid-19 Crisis, this like most support services has been delivered through phone support.

"We have been working with a very isolated lady who had recently moved into the area shortly before lockdown. The befriending calls have made such a difference to her life that she now would like to become a volunteer for Age UK Lindsey so that she can make the same difference to other people's lives." (Befriending for Age UK Lindsey)

'Men only' projects delivered through the TED Programme: While the other TED activities are open to all older people. The following two projects have been designed to engage older men, as it was evident that men were less likely to participate in the other TED activities. Traditionally, interventions designed to tackle social isolation and loneliness have been designed on a gender-neutral basis, not focusing on men or women in particular. Anecdotal evidence, however, shows that these services are often disproportionately used by women. Data collected by the TED programme highlighted how this was a problem in East Lindsey, with only 38% of TED members in April 2019 being men.

In recognition of this issue there has been a rise in the number of 'male-specific' interventions internationally. For example 'Mens Sheds', that take into account the views of men and adapt in order to respond to their needs and preferences.

"Men typically find it more difficult to build social connections than women, and unlike women of a similar age, less older men have networks of friends and rarely share personal concerns about health and personal worries." [69]

The Ageing Better Programme's paper on "Working & Engaging with Older Men" based on learning from across all projects, found that older men are *"particularly at risk of social isolation and loneliness... Programmes need to specifically consider these risk factors and how they can be mitigated or addressed."* [70]

As a result of an awareness of the need for 'men only' activities, in order to address loneliness & isolation for older men, TED commissioned two new projects in 2019:

CHAPS (Community Health Activity project for men): Sessions are delivered by Magna Vitae. Using sport as a theme, weekly sessions allow men to meet and socialise whilst doing familiar and popular past times such as, watching televised sport, playing pub games (darts, dominoes, shive ha'penny and cards etc.), reading and talking about the latest sports news and sharing their sporting memories.

"Now, I don't want to seem rude but sitting around drinking tea and coffee is just not for me. This [Men's Gym Take-over] is perfect really, just the job. It has to be things [activities] that people want to do, and it has to come from the people" (service user)

TED Men Do: Delivered by Carers First, Men Do is a programme of male orientated events that take place in various locations across East Lindsey. The project is based on the carer's voice and geared towards creating opportunities to build sustainable friendships, reduce loneliness and social isolation. Organised trips, activities and tailored support that provides opportunities and social interaction for men only.

"the project has been great in helping isolated and lonely older men build or rebuild social relationships and networks. We have even had men want to come along to events that we have put on knowing that they may not be able to partake but simply wanting to be with the other guys. For me it is these intangible, personal and social benefits that are the real cornerstone of projects like this, and I am lucky to be able to give these men the opportunity to do things that they may have thought they were no longer able to do or access." (Project Co-ordinator, Men Do)

TED Programme delivery through the Covid-19 Pandemic

Since March 2020 when the Covid-19 crisis resulted in the first UK 'lockdown' the TED Programme team and delivery partners have adapted their services in line with official government guidance. TED Delivery partners ensured that all service users were contacted and offered the option of phone or on line support. The TED Learning Officer produced a report "Enhancing Resilience in East Lindsey Communities". The report explained that building strong trusting relationships with service users, based on an understanding of their needs, has led to 'adaptable and sustainable services'.

"In the transition to social distancing these existing characteristics have given strong foundations on which to adapt and offer alternative forms of support, togetherness and entertainment. Service offers are situated in the local knowledge that providers, volunteers and the TED team have developed about their 'local' communities."

[71]



Findings

Respect and Social Inclusion

“Feeling valued and respected is important for older people from all backgrounds.” [72]



Ageism is inherent in most societies across the world. In the UK the Equality Act 2010 makes it illegal for people to discriminate against others because of their age. Yet older people continue to report feeling discriminated against when it comes to employment and access to medical treatment. Evidence suggests that people over 70 are less likely to receive surgery, cancer treatment or talking therapy for mental health issues [73].

The World Health Organisation states that:

“For older people, ageism is an everyday challenge. Overlooked for employment, restricted from social services and stereotyped in the media, ageism marginalises and excludes older people in their communities... it is the most normalised of any prejudice ... (and has) negative impacts on health & wellbeing.” [74]

Messages received through the media are both obviously and subtly ageist. The beauty industry advertises a wealth of products that will keep us young, prevent ageing and bring us back our youth. Implying and reinforcing that ageing must be something to avoid. The everyday language that we use is littered with phrases that strengthen the concept that ageing and being older is something to dread and definitely not something to enjoy or celebrate. So when we hear terms like ‘you look great for your age’ or ‘I’m having a senior moment’ they might seem harmless, even fun. However many experts are now advising that we should think more about the language we use around ageing, and where possible challenge it [75].

Another characteristic of ageism is the ‘lumping’ of all people over a certain age as ‘old’ as if they are a collection of clones. Although there is variation in when this ‘old age’ starts, the destination is not portrayed as desirable. The entrance age into ‘old age’ can be from the 50+ label that is used by many organisations, to the 60+, the 65+ and sometimes the ‘over 70’s’. In her book ‘Extra Time’, Camilla Cavendish reports on a Japanese approach to ageing that defines people as the ‘Young-Old’ and the ‘Old-Old’ and is not necessarily age dependent.

“The group who are still hale and hearty and rushing around after their grandchildren they call the ‘Young-Old’. Those who are frail and in need of support they call the Old-Old’.” [76]

Cavendish reflects on how ideas of ageing are routed in a time when life expectancy was shorter and suggests defining old age by our expected years left to live. She also proposes that as a consequence of or longer lives that maybe there should be two stages of middle age rather than an extended period of old age.

“Ageism can take many forms. These include depicting older people as frail, dependent, and out of touch in the media, or through discriminatory practices such as health-care rationing by age, or institutional policies such as mandatory retirement at a certain age.”[77]

The Covid-19 pandemic has not helped attitudes to ageing, in fact there are those that consider that it has had a detrimental impact on our perceptions of older people. When the crisis emerged across the world the official messages evoked fear and confusion among older people. Messages that all older people were weak and frail and at most risk, that they were vulnerable and that they should lock themselves away. When deaths were reported there was inevitably a reference to the age of those who had passed away, implying that if you are younger then you don’t need to worry so much about the virus.

“In times of public emergency, social truths are revealed. The coronavirus crisis is one such emergency, and it reveals that the lives of the elderly appear to matter less and, in some cases, are even deemed disposable.” [78]

The impact of all of these messages is that people of all ages hold the idea that as we age we will become weaker, more passive; we will be more confused, less employable, less attractive, physically unwell and definitely a burden to society. So it is not surprising that many older people have low self-esteem. As a society we need to address this problem so that the ageing process can be seen as a natural and positive part of the life course, resulting in higher levels of self-esteem. There is evidence to suggest that those people who have a positive attitude to ageing can live longer, up to seven & a half years [79].

In 1990 the United Nations declared the first of October as the International Day of Older Person (IDOP) [80]. The day provides an opportunity to increase awareness, celebrate achievements, and when needed gather political will and lobby for change. In October 2019, the IDOP theme was celebrating the ‘Journey to Age Equality’. At this time two significant commitments were made by national organisations and local leaders, leading the way to challenging ageist attitudes and behaviours in England and the wider UK.

1. The Centre for Ageing Better and Public Health England and partners delivered a consensus statement on healthy ageing. The statement is supported by over 60 wide ranging organisations, these include the British Dental Association, the Design Council, the House Builders Association, the Institute for Employment Studies, the Mental Health Foundation, Natural England, Sport England, The Race Equality Foundation, the Royal Town Planning Institute and The University of the Third Age.

All signatories signed up to five commitments, these were:

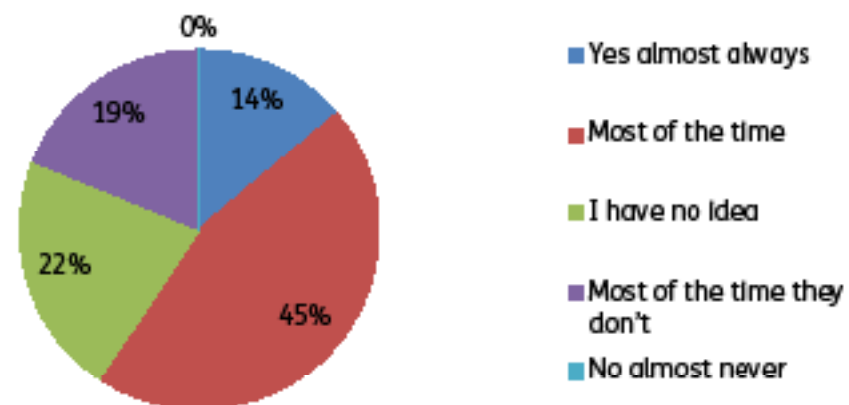
- Putting prevention first and ensuring timely access to services and support when needed
- Removing barriers and creating more opportunities for older adults to contribute to society
- Ensuring good homes and communities to help people remain healthy, active and independent in later life
- Narrowing inequalities
- Challenging ageist and negative language, culture and practices wherever they occur

2. An open letter was sent out by a number of local leaders from across the UK, including Cllr Craig Leyland Leader of East Lindsey District Council. The letter declared a commitment to challenging outdated attitudes to ageing and was co-ordinated by the Centre for Ageing Better [81].

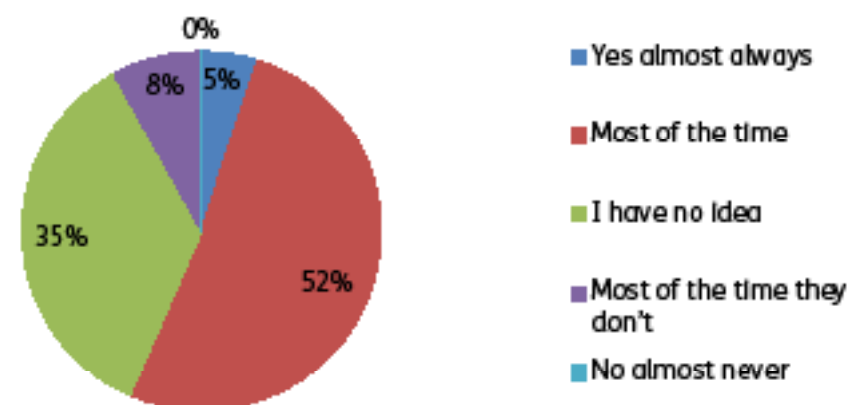
“If we are to make real progress towards age equality, we must all work to root out ageism in our own communities and organisations. We will challenge ageism wherever we see it, whether it’s in public or in private, and ensure that the voices of older people are at the heart of our local decision-making.”

Older people feel respected and included by:

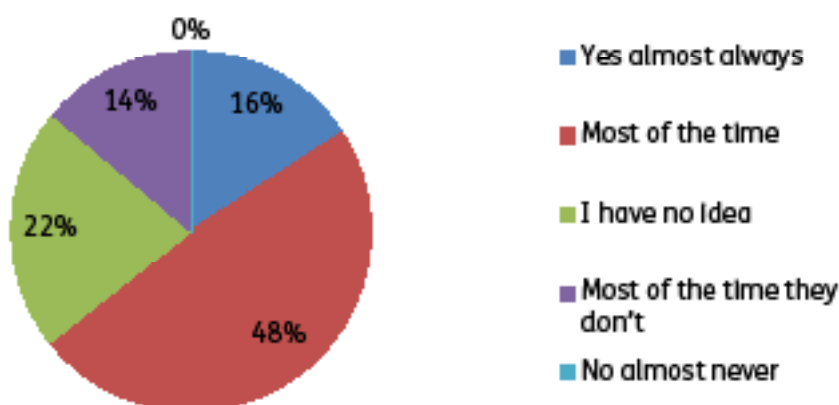
Health & Social care services



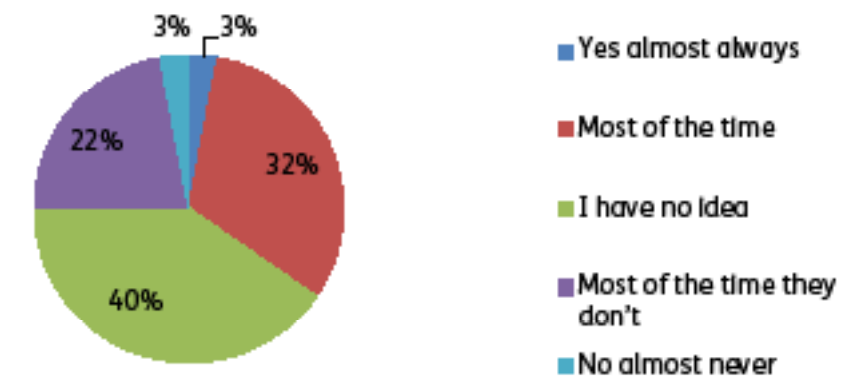
Shops & Businesses that they use



People in their community



Young people (under 25) in their community



It is of interest that while survey respondents thought that 65% of older people felt respected & included by people in their community, this number dropped significantly to 35% when the focus moved to respect from those people who were aged under 25. As the survey was completed by representatives from organisations, further enquiry among older people themselves might be needed to ascertain if they concur with these findings.

"There is a large population of elderly people in my immediate surrounds and there is constant feedback from them about how poorly treated they feel." (Survey respondent)

"Horncastle has older people included in many of their businesses and social groups which helps the older generation to feel included. The surgery has 2 nurses dedicated to the older generation that we can call on to do home visits when needed." (Survey Respondent)

"Lincolnshire people are friendly & welcoming" (focus group participant)

Focus on “Age Proud”

"Society will benefit from this ageing population if we all age more healthily ...But to do that, we must stamp out ageist prejudices." [82]

In 2019, Craig Leyland, Leader of East Lindsey District Council and other political leaders across the UK, co-ordinated by the Centre for Ageing Better, signed an open letter with a commitment to tackling ageism and having a more positive approach to later life [83].

We know that there are issues that can begin or develop, and cause difficulties, as we age. We know that the focus of government, of public services and community organisations is on supporting older members of the community as these difficulties arise. What is less well known and certainly less of a topic in popular media, are the positive things that we might experience or gain as we age. The huge weight of negativity about ageing that comes through the various media sources can become internalised by older people. Believing these messages of what being older ‘should be’ will have a detrimental impact on health and wellbeing of people as they age. In the same way if there are enough positive messages being conveyed about the opportunities available and the achievements of older people, then people would adopt a more optimistic and ‘can do’ approach to ageing.

“A negative view of old age, whether held by others, or by ourselves, is harmful. It affects health, mental and physical, social wellbeing, and the extent to which we enjoy life.” [84]

The Centre for Ageing Better is heading an “Age Proud” campaign that is “challenging ... outdated, ageist attitudes that prevent too many of us from making the most of our longer lives.” [83] UK Network members are able to pick up the ‘Age Proud’ mantle in their locality and lead a local campaign. One area that has effectively taken up this challenge, with a range of activities and related resources, is Leeds. Age Proud Leeds focuses on five key messages (links are available on page 115) [86].

These are:

1. Let's talk about Ageism - Find out how widespread ageism is and how you can get involved in the campaign
2. Ageism affects people of all ages - Younger, middle aged, older? Ageism affects us all
3. Ageism. What does it do to us? - Age discrimination has many negative effects. Having a positive attitude to ageing can help you live well for longer
4. Older, different, equal -Older people are diverse. Ageing and ageism affect us differently
5. Time to feel good about ageing - Ageing brings many benefits. Share the positives and celebrate the contributions made by older people

East Lindsey District Council, its partners and other local organisations have an excellent opportunity to endorse and promote the ethos of “Age Proud” locally.



Findings

Civic Participation and Employment

“... help keep older people engaged in paid or unpaid work through processes including better transport to the workplace, accessibility and increased employer flexibility.” [87]



Employment in later life

There is a growing argument that we should all be encouraged and supported to remain in the workforce for longer. This would increase consumer spending power, tax revenues and the GDP (Gross Domestic Product). It would also help to improve the health and wellbeing of older people by keeping them mentally and physically active for longer [88]. The number of workers aged 50 and over in the UK stands at 10.4 million - an increase of 2.4 million in the last decade. This is equivalent to nearly a third of the UK workforce and is a proportion set to grow as we live and work for longer. Despite this, 28% of 50-64 year olds in the UK are not in work [89].

Between 2012 and 2022, an estimated 13.5million jobs will be opened up by people leaving the workforce and an additional 2 million jobs will be created - yet only 7 million younger people will enter the workforce to fill them [90]. This shift in demographics must be harnessed by the employers, who will need to rely on older workers to fill vacancies. Against this backdrop, working longer is seen as a key solution. The promotion of extended working lives remains a policy priority in the UK [91], accompanied by a steadily increasing state pension age and abolition of compulsory retirement.

We need to be supported to have longer and more fulfilling working lives, gleaning the benefits of being in a good job, which are not just limited to income and pension savings. For this to happen, employers must adopt age-friendly practices, the Centre for Ageing Better have developed five steps to becoming an age friendly employer, based on their research.

1. **Be flexible about flexible working:** Offer more flexibility, manage it well and help people know their options
2. **Hire age-positively:** Actively target candidates of all ages, and minimise age bias in recruitment processes
3. **Ensure everyone has the health support they need:** Enable early and open conversations, and early and sustained access to support for workers with health conditions
4. **Encourage career development at all ages:** Provide opportunities for people to develop their careers and plan for the future at mid-life and beyond
5. **Create an age-positive culture:** Equip HR professionals and managers to promote an age-positive culture, and support interaction and networking among staff of all ages [92]

Challenges – The Menopause

At some point in her working life a woman will experience menopause, a natural part of ageing for women, but a stage of life that can bring new challenges. As a result of hormone changes some women can experience severe physical and/ or psychological symptoms which may impact on their work life. Increasingly age positive employers are being encouraged to have a menopause policy and awareness training in place. Further information about how employers can develop their approach to menopause is available from these sites (links are available on page 115):

- ACAS
- CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development)
- NHS Staff Council's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Partnership Group

Challenges - Caring Responsibilities

- One in five people aged 50-64 are carers
- Almost 1.3 million people in England and Wales aged 65 or older are carers [93]

We are aware of the responsibilities that parents have with childcare and the way in which employers have changed their approach to working parents over recent years. This has had positive outcomes not just for the parents who are given more flexibility and feel more valued, but for the employers who retain their experienced staff. Employers for Carers, are leading the way in the UK, with support from Carers UK, for a similarly flexible approach for those working adults who also have caring responsibilities.



They are doing this through their ‘Care Confident Benchmark’ which *“supports employers to build a positive and inclusive workplace for staff who are, or will become, carers and to make the most of the talents that carers can bring to the workforce.”* [94]

An example of some of the flexible working options that a ‘Care Confident’ employer might implement are:

- home working
- part-time working
- term-time working
- working compressed hours
- working staggered hours
- working annualised hours
- flexi-time
- shift working
- job sharing

ELDC and partners might want to lead the way for a range of local employers to make the necessary changes to become ‘Care Confident’ employers.

Volunteering in later life

The Centre for Ageing Better has worked with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to review the contributions that older people make through formal and informal volunteering. They identified three types of barriers that older people might experience, preventing them from volunteering and made recommendations on how organisations can address these barriers [95].

“With rural areas volunteers need to be able to travel. If you can’t it becomes very difficult” (Survey Respondent)

| Practical Barriers | Structual Barriers | Emotional Barriers |
|---|---|---|
| Costs Transport needs Physical access Language | Inflexible offers Lack of neutral spaces Bureaucracy Lack of resources Digital divide | Lack of confidence Stigma/stereotype Lack of welcome Fear of over commitment Not feeling valued |

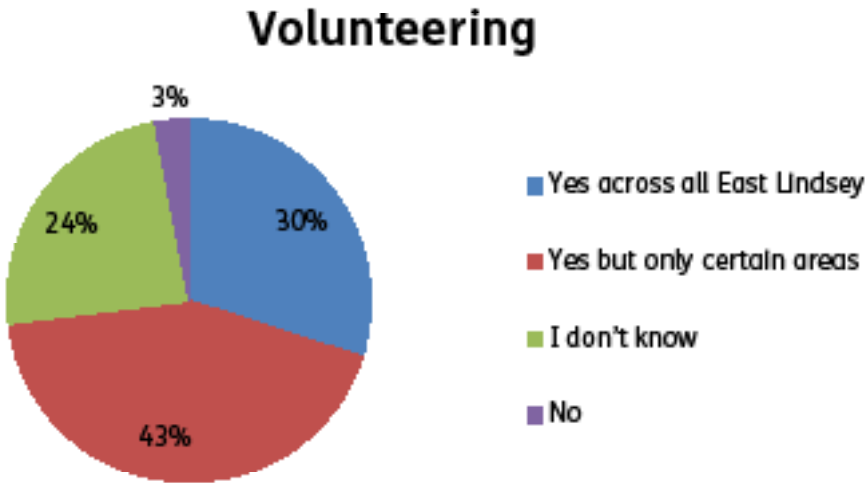
In East Lindsey Lincolnshire Community and Voluntary Service (LCVS) supports community organisations with the recruitment of volunteers, connects individuals with volunteering opportunities and offers relevant training courses to support volunteer development.

“We provide advice and information equipping both your staff and volunteers with the skills and knowledge they need to ensure volunteers are successfully integrated into your organisation.” [96]

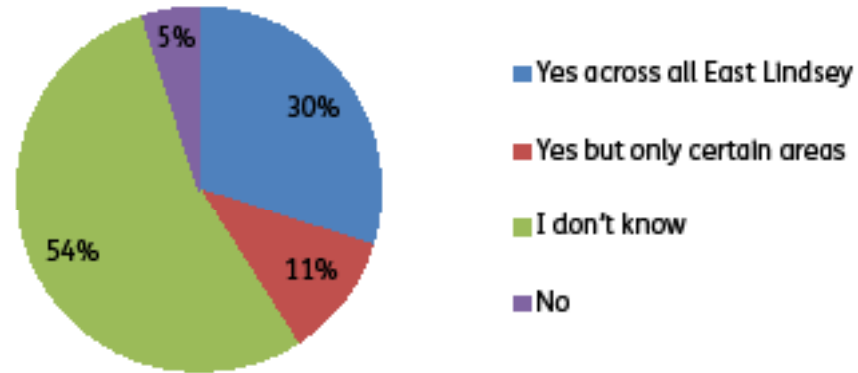
Many older people also choose to volunteer through local churches and community centres. This has historically been the way that most volunteers within village communities were recruited. Other volunteering opportunities arise in local politics, with a large number of district and parish councillors being over 50 years old.

Our survey provided an opportunity for professionals and community organisations to share their views on employment and volunteering opportunities available for older people in East Lindsey.

Are there enough opportunities to become involved in...?



Local politics



73% People think there are enough opportunities to become involved in volunteering across all or certain parts of East Lindsey

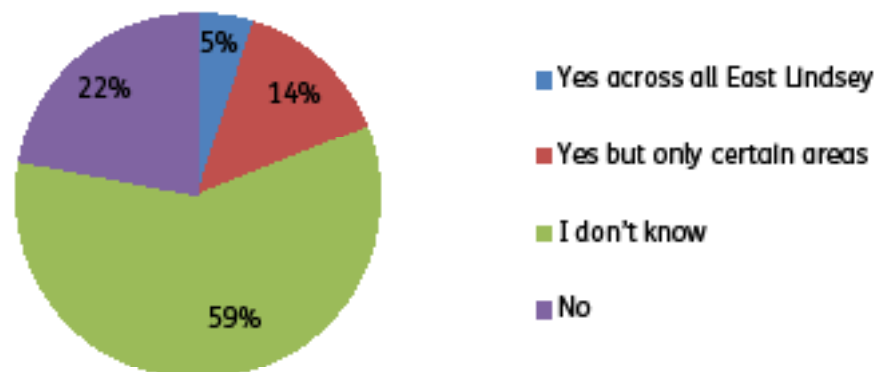
41% People think there are enough opportunities to become involved in local politics across all or certain parts of East Lindsey

"Due to the rurality of the area the opportunities vary considerably" (Survey Respondent)

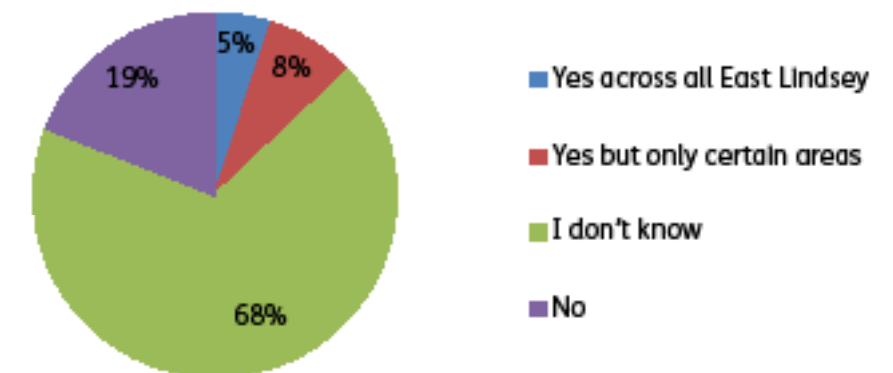
"There are 55 District Councillors, 13 County Councillors and over 850 Town and Parish Councillors in East Lindsey. In addition there are Parish Meetings. Therefore there are significant opportunities for local people to engage in local politics". (Survey Respondent)

Are there enough Employment & Training opportunities for people aged...?

50 to 65 years



Over 65 years



19% Think there are enough Education and Training opportunities in East Lindsey for 50 to 65 year olds.

13% Think there are enough Education and Training opportunities in East Lindsey for those over 65 years.

"Employment is very hard. A lot seasonal and minimum wage. Training 50 to 65 seems to be around programs of training" (Survey Respondent)

"I don't think people recognise the worth of someone over a certain age" (Survey respondent).



Focus on Fuller Working Lives and Age Friendly Futures

DWP Fuller Working lives

In 2014 the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) published its first Fuller Working Lives (FWL) Document [97]. FWL is the DWP programme that provided evidence of why there needs to be a focus on people over 50 being supported to stay in employment and a framework for this to be achieved. The evidence presented by FWL [98] includes:

- In 2010, one in four of the working age population were aged 50 years and over; this will increase to one in three by 2022, driven by changes in demographics and State Pension age
- The average age of leaving the labour market has increased over the past two decades, but it is still lower than it was in 1950 and is not keeping pace with the increases in life expectancy
- As people approach State Pension age, the level of employment falls and economic inactivity rises as they leave the labour market ‘early’
- For most people, being in good, appropriate and paid work can be good for both your physical and mental health

“We know that being in fulfilling work for longer is key to people being able to prepare for a good later life. Good work is important financially but is also a major source of social connections, good health, and provides a sense of purpose.” (Anna Dixon, Chief Executive, Centre for Ageing Better [99])

The economic profile of East Lindsey (EL) shows that many over 50s in the area find themselves economically inactive or unemployed for a range of complex reasons, including health, transitional life events such as death of a partner, caring for loved ones or retiring to the area. Residents are affected by the retraction of infrastructure in rural areas, as well as the local skills drain seen as young people move to urban areas where it is perceived that there are more opportunities in education, employment and lifestyle. EL coastal strip is also uniquely affected by seasonality which impacts both the local economy, businesses and the jobs market.

Age Friendly Futures

Age Friendly Futures (AFF) is an evidence based learning programme based on YMCA Lincolnshire’s experience of delivering the TED – Ageing Better Programme in East Lindsey. The AFF project began in July 2020 working directly with the over 50s community on the East Coast of the district.

AFF participants are supported to take part in training, confidence building activities and CV preparation. Thus encouraging them into employment, through job searches based on the new skills gained through AFF or into further training as well as providing motivation, team working and interpersonal skills.



AFF aims for participants to:

- build confidence
- develop new skills
- be better informed on local opportunities
- know they can play an important role in the local economy
- improved social skills
- benefit from taking part in a structured programme
- move into further training, job searches or employment

“We expect to impact past the individual into the wider community in line with the aims of ELDC and our commitment to achieving Age-friendly Community Status.” (Amy Thomas Director of Communities, YMCA Lincolnshire)

Working alongside The Hildreds Shopping Centre, who have been a proactive contributor to the success of AfB in Skegness, YMCA will deliver a six week learning programme which will include;

- Training in Manual Handling, First Aid and Customer Service
- Identification of participant specific training and support needs and creation of a personalised development plan
- Final session to reflect on the training and create a CV
- Facilitated introduction to TED Age-friendly Businesses with staff vacancies and a positive attitude towards employing older people (of which we have over 100 AfB in East Lindsey)

Where Covid-19 restrictions allow we will facilitate work experience opportunities via The Hildreds Shopping Centre, shadowing centre staff and working in identified age friendly accredited shops.

The AFF Coordinator will work closely with TED colleagues and partner organisations across EL, to recruit participants who for complex personal or practical reasons find themselves distanced from the labour market. The AFF coordinator will also work very closely with The Hildreds centre manager and The Hildreds shop owners to ensure work experience is beneficial for both the participants, the centre and its customers.

Support will be given to the participants to develop their social skills, help build their confidence and motivation by signposting them to local TED activities, such as friendship groups, digital learning and our wider network in East Lindsey, which includes YMCA CL Good Neighbour Schemes where volunteering and further work experience opportunities are available. Each participant will have their own learning plan, which will include training certification, work experience schedule, reflection record plus a next steps plan.

This project actively supports ELDCs vision to enable prosperous communities and its strategic commitment to enable Better Ageing. As a key partner, ELDC has expressed a commitment to fully support a programme of work made possible through the Employment and Skills ESF Grant Programme.



Findings

Communication and Information

“Staying connected with events and people and getting timely, practical information to manage life and meet personal needs is vital for active ageing” [100]



Definitions

Communication, n. The imparting or exchanging of information by speaking, writing, or using some other medium. ...The successful conveying or sharing of ideas and feelings. (Oxford English Dictionary)

Information, n. Facts provided or learned about something or someone. ...What is conveyed or represented by a particular arrangement or sequence of things. (Oxford English Dictionary)

Communication plays a key role in all social interactions and the ability to engage effectively with others has been shown to be an important part of an older adult’s life. Communication of information to members of the community is essential for everyone so that they can continue their everyday life.

For Communication to be effective it requires a **sender** (of the information) and a **receiver**, a **message** and **interpretations** of meaning from both parties. During verbal communication the receiver gives feedback to the sender of the message, both during the message’s conveyance and afterward. If the sender is visible to the receiver their non-verbal communication will also be interpreted by the receiver and will often reinforce the message that is being conveyed. Feedback signals can be verbal or non-verbal, such as tone of voice, nodding in agreement, sighing or looking away.

In written communication interpretation is usually based almost entirely on the written words (including grammar). If the receiver is familiar with the sender then they will also use their knowledge of the sender’s personality and their previous interaction to interpret the meaning. For all types of communication some factors that will impact upon the interpretation are the context of the message, the environment it is given in and the potential for interference or misinterpretation to occur.

As a person ages they may experience a number of physical and/or social factors that negatively impact on their ability to communicate effectively, or as well as they once did. Additionally, the type of information being shared, the persons understanding of a topic, and the communication style of the person delivering the information can all be perceived as barriers. It is therefore important to be aware of these factors, as only by taking them into consideration can we begin to challenge them, look for strategies to help and increase the Age Friendliness of our communication.

“The ability to receive timely and practical information to help manage life and meet personal needs is vital for active ageing. In addition, it’s important that older citizens are able to stay connected with people and events to avoid the difficulties posed by social isolation.” [101]

Tips for Interpersonal Communications - from TED Members

Previously the TED Learning Officer has discussed the topic of communication with TED members. They expressed a number of factors to take into consideration that related to what has been recorded in wider research. They expressed that, by placing yourself at the same, face to face level as the person you are communicating with and by maintaining eye contact, you can make the interaction feel more personal. This helps create a positive and trusting atmosphere, enabling people to feel more comfortable when talking, particularly if the subject matter is difficult or distressing. It is also important to remember to speak slowly and clearly, in a language and with terminology they will understand, without becoming or sounding patronising.

Focus on factors to consider in Age-friendly Communications and Information

Hearing Loss

Most of us are aware that as people age there is a strong chance that they’re hearing capacity will be reduced. However the age at which this happens and the numbers of people this affects might be surprising: Over 40% of people over 50 years old have hearing loss, rising to 70% of people over the age of 70. The process is often quite slow and this might account for why people wait an average of 10 years to seek help for their hearing loss. Even then their GP’s often fail to refer them on to audiology services [102].

A report based upon the hearing experiences of people in restaurants, cafés and pubs found that:

- 79% of people have left a restaurant, café or pub early because of the noise
- 76% would dine out more often if venues were quieter

The report reminds us that people over 50 control more than two-thirds of wealth in the UK and so businesses are missing out on custom and therefore income if they don’t take into consideration the hearing experiences of their customers [103]. The level of noise is often aggravated by the need for venues and retail premises to play background music. The report also recognises that the modern design of many places with the hard shiny surfaces means that sounds are not absorbed as they would be in softer furnishings, but bounce off surfaces. The TED Age-friendly Business Assessment takes into consideration how it would feel for an older person to be in the environment, including the impact of loud noises.

If we are going to develop more Age-friendly Services in East Lindsey then organisations will need to consider the impact of hearing loss on their service users, particularly in respect of how they communicate with them.

Support for Hearing Loss in Lincolnshire is provided by the national organisation, Action For Hearing Loss, on behalf of the Lincolnshire Sensory Services (links are available on page 115).



Visual Impairment

As people age, even those who have never had any difficulty with their vision, anticipate that they will need glasses due to the slow deterioration in eyesight common with ageing. However there are also some more life changing and sometimes disabling visual impairments that people are more likely to develop as they age. Information in this section has been informed by meetings with staff, volunteers and service users of the Lincoln & Lindsey Blind Society (LLBS). Also their “Lincolnshire: eye health and sight loss report” which is based upon the RNIB Sight Loss Data Tool [104].

The LLBS is a local charity that provides services for the blind and sight impaired throughout East Lindsey (and other areas of Greater Lincolnshire). They will support anyone who is blind or sight impaired to live the life they wish to live, as independently as possible. They also work with other organisation to raise awareness of the needs of the blind and sight impaired community.

“Life doesn’t stop after vision loss. LLBS will work with you to develop solutions and strategies so you have the confidence to live your life independently and in the way you choose.”[105]

In the UK over two million people of all ages, are estimated to be living with sight loss. This sight loss is severe enough to have a significant impact on their daily lives, it does not mean the person is registered. (NB: A Certificate of Vision Impairment (CVI) certifies a person as either sight impaired [partially sighted] or severely sight impaired [blind]).

In Lincolnshire, there are an estimated 28,300 people living with sight loss. It is estimated that in East Lindsey there are 6,280 people living with sight loss, which is 4.5% of the district’s population. East Lindsey has the highest estimated number of visually impaired residents compared to the other six Lincolnshire Districts. Given that the majority of people with visual impairment are over the age of 50, and the large number of older people living in the District, this is unsurprising.

The RNIB states that the main causes of sight loss in the UK are:

- **Uncorrected refracted error** – a refractive error happens when an eye is misshapen, preventing successful refraction.
- **Age-related macular degeneration (AMD)** - commonly affects people over the age of 50 and is the leading cause of blindness
- **Cataract** - a common eye condition prevalent in older people. The lens becomes less transparent and turns misty or cloudy
- **Glaucoma** - A group of eye conditions in which the optic nerve can be damaged due to changes in eye pressure. Damage can usually be minimised by early diagnosis in conjunction with careful regular observation and treatment
- **Diabetic eye disease** - People with diabetes are at risk of this, it can affect the blood vessels in the eye which can lead to permanent sight loss



Centre for Ageing Better Image Library

Estimated number of people living with sight threatening eye conditions by district 2018 (LLBS)

| District | Total late stage AMD | Cataract | Glaucoma | Diabetic retinopathy |
|----------------|----------------------|----------|----------|----------------------|
| Boston | 730 | 810 | 780 | 1,370 |
| East Lindsey | 1,910 | 2,190 | 2,050 | 2,870 |
| Lincoln | 780 | 840 | 840 | 1,920 |
| North Kesteven | 1,310 | 1,480 | 1,410 | 2,320 |
| South Holland | 1,120 | 1,270 | 1,190 | 1,900 |
| South Kesteven | 1,560 | 1,750 | 1,710 | 2,860 |
| West Lindsey | 1,070 | 1,220 | 1,190 | 1,910 |

Dementia

Information in this section was informed by research and a meeting with staff and service users from the Alzheimer’s Society in Lincolnshire. Dementia is a term that describes a set of symptoms, there is no one cause for dementia but the most common cause is Alzheimer’s disease. Cognitive processes are affected and so symptoms can include memory loss, difficulties with thinking, solving problems, carrying out routine tasks, or the use of language and the ability to communicate. A person may initially be diagnosed with mild cognitive impairment, but as symptoms worsen and a daily life is affected a diagnosis of dementia is likely. It is worth noting that some older people live with cognitive impairment without a diagnosis of dementia, and they may find communication and the processing of information very challenging.

Someone with dementia might struggle to find the correct word, or any words. They might repeat words or use inappropriate words. They may make strange sounds as they become ‘stuck’ trying to find the correct word. Someone with dementia will often have hearing or sight problems. This could be due to loss of these senses through ageing, but it can also be because the way in which their brain receives and process information has been affected. This doesn’t just manifest as visual or auditory loss. People with dementia sometimes see and hear things that are not there. One carer at an Alzheimer’s Society Support Group described the experience of observing this in her partner:

“....it was like the brain was playing tricks on them, they really believed that the people were outside when they weren’t” (Carer)

All of this can lead to the person with dementia feeling anxious, depressed and to them withdrawing from any social interaction. Raising awareness of dementia and how to support people living with it, is a key element of an Age-friendly Community.

East Lindsey’s progress with Dementia Awareness:

- **Dementia Friends** – Staff from many organisations in East Lindsey have undertaken the awareness session and become a Dementia Friend
- **‘Still Me’** - delivered by Magna Vitae, funded by Louth and District Hospice Limited, provides free social activity sessions for those affected by Dementia and other life-altering conditions. The programme won the Championing Diversity Award at the Alzheimer’s Society Dementia Friendly Awards in 2019.

- Dementia Actions Alliance (DAA)- there are two DAA Groups in the district that raise awareness and funds (Louth & Skegness)
- The Alzheimer’s Society provide tips for speaking to someone with dementia on their website

Digital Skills

“While the majority of information is now shared online, 47% of people aged 75 and over have never used the internet. The information may be out there, but it isn’t always accessible for older people.” [106]

In recent years there has been an increasing dependence upon using digital means in order to directly communicate with individuals and groups, or to share information about services. For many in society this is an effective and welcome way of communicating and of sharing information. However there are some people that are now disadvantaged due to the prevalence of information that is exclusively digitally available. Populations that are more likely to be digitally excluded are - older people, lower income groups; people without employment; those in social housing; those with disabilities and those with fewer educational qualifications [107]. If we consider the previously explored demographics of East Lindsey it is apparent that there is likely to be a considerable number of digitally excluded residents locally.

“A combination of the older demographic and the unavailability of high speed broadband and mobile phone networks are leading to an increasing digital gap between urban and rural areas.” [108]

It is generally agreed that the Covid-19 Crisis has hugely accelerated the use of digital communication across all services in recent months. An article in The Statesmen described the impact of an increasingly “digital first NHS” and its link to healthcare inequality.

“However, while virtually all adults (99 per cent) aged 16-44 in the UK were recent internet users in 2019, that figure drops to 47 per cent among adults aged 75 and over. There is, moreover, a close correlation between digital exclusion and social disadvantage.” [109]

Although some older people don’t use digital communication due to lack of skills or equipment, for some it is an informed personal choice not to use digital. As professionals this choice should be respected.

“There is a large portion of working age people who assume that everyone has access to the internet and that everyone wants to have access to the internet - as a rural community and county with some areas not having a good broad band supply this should not be assumed.” (Survey Respondent)

“None of our residents would be able to access online information as they are not computer literate and have expressed no interest in learning” (Survey respondent).

Producing hard copy information costs more, so digital has been used to save money. Digital information is also more easily updated, whereas hard copy information can become out of date within a short time of publication. It is apparent in East Lindsey that most parish or village newsletters/magazines are widely available in hard copy.

During the recent Covid-19 crisis many community groups were able to print and deliver information to older residents who did not have access to online information. While East Lindsey District Council (ELDC) partnered with Magna Vitae to provide comprehensive online information [110], they also sent out hard copy information booklets to every home in the district [111].

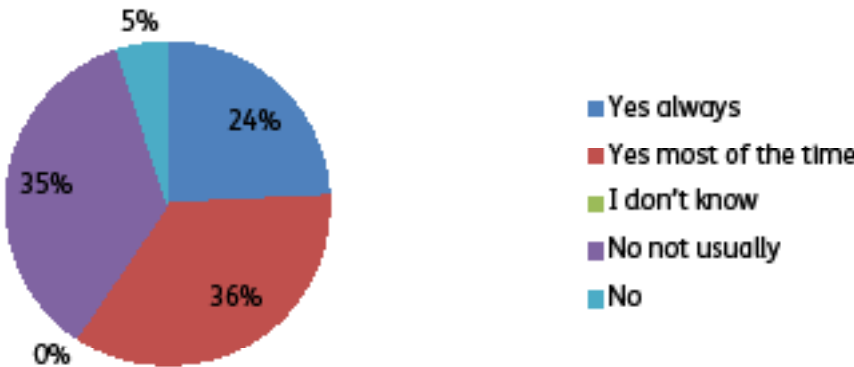
While for many digital technology provides the best, timely and most effective form of communication, it is essential that information is conveyed in a way that is accessible to all. This is particularly true within an Age-friendly Community.

“Alternative methods of communication are still important alongside supporting more people to upskill and be given the resources to get online.” (Survey Respondent)

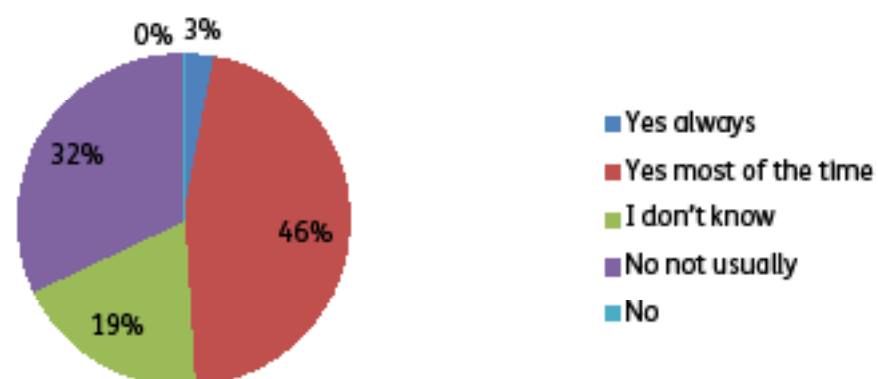
Maybe the most age friendly approach would be to clarify in what format people want information.

We asked professionals in East Lindsey...

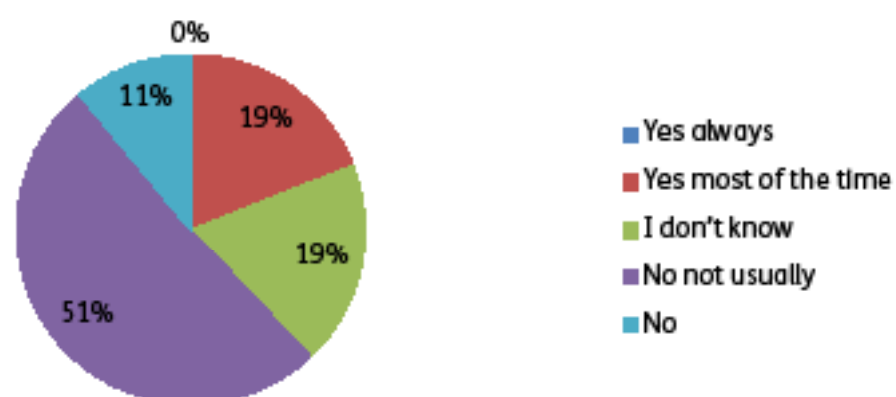
Is there an assumption that everyone will access information through the internet?



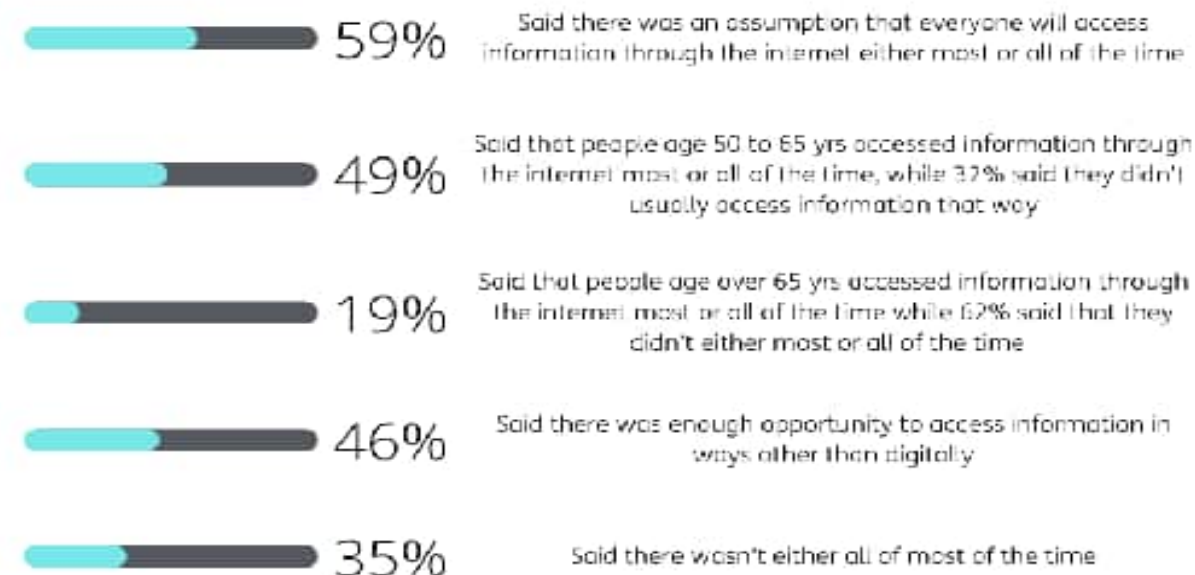
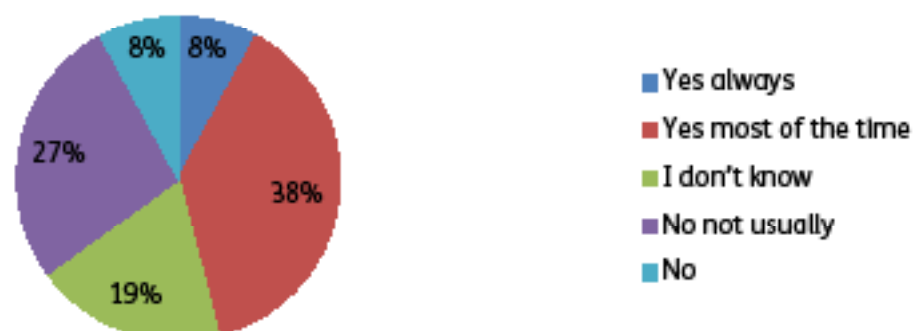
Do most people age 50 to 65 access information through the internet?



Do most people age over 65 access information through the internet?

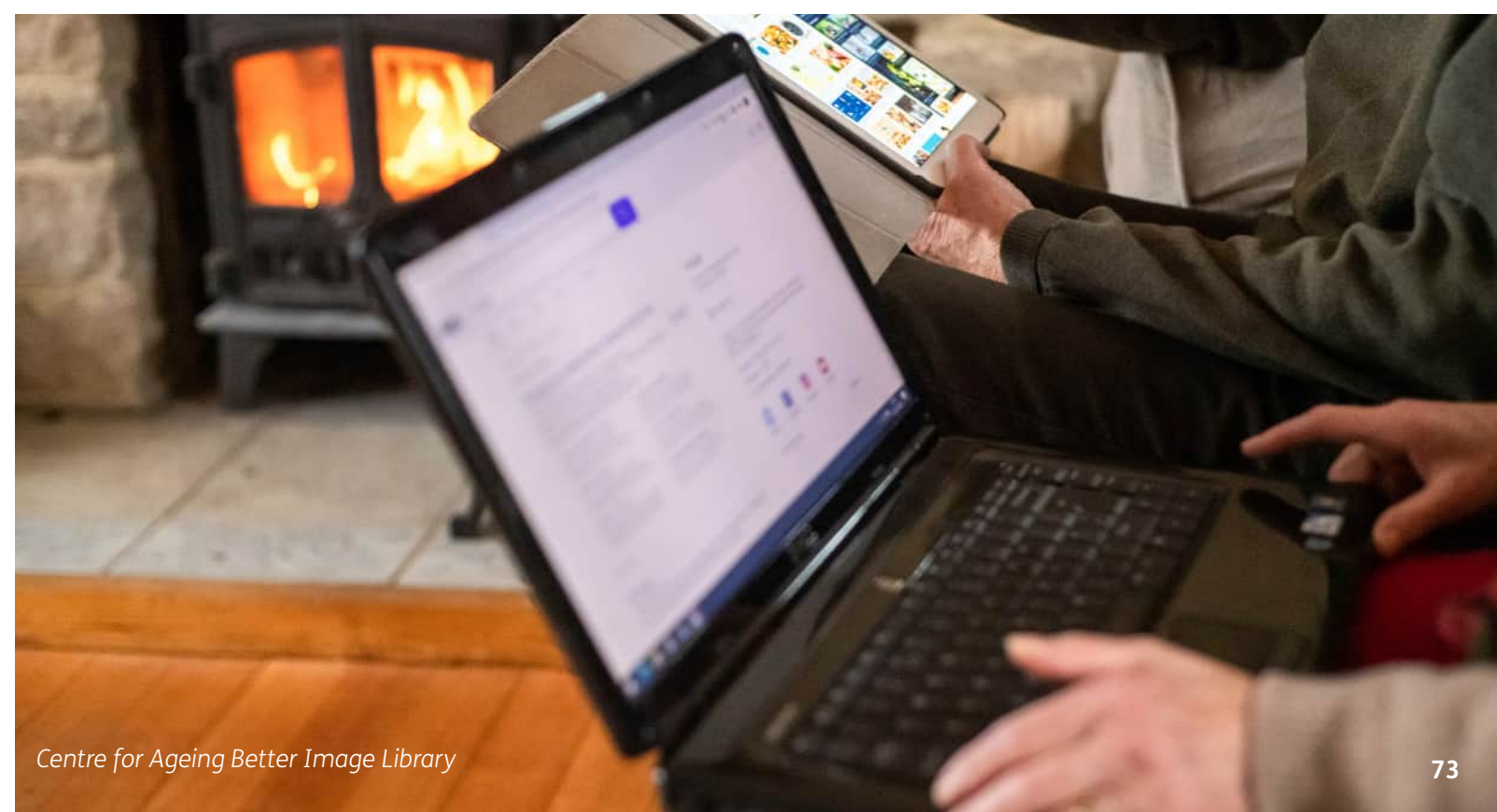


Is there enough opportunity to access information in other ways (e.g. leaflets, posters...)?



Not mentioned in survey or formally in focus groups – some older people have literacy issues and so their ability to access written information through any medium will be impacted. In the focus groups there were a few older people who declined to write any notes, some of who said their writing wasn't very good (One person asked if he could take the paper home to look at. Might this be so that a relative or friend could assist him?)

“Although residents want to know what is happening in their local area, not everyone is willing to actively look for this information. This is particularly true if the information is only available online, as many residents do not use the internet.” [112]



Findings

Community Support and Health Services

“Community support is strongly connected to good health and wellbeing throughout life, alongside accessible and affordable health care services.”
[113]



The extra years of life gained as a result of increased life expectancy are not always accompanied by good health. Although there is marked diversity in health at an individual level, a large number of older people experience poor health. The health of an older person is determined by a range of factors. While people do not have control over all the factors that contribute to their health in later years, there are some that they can have an influence on. One of the most significant is the health related choices they have made throughout their life. Therefore, if we want to promote good health into old age, we need to focus on a person’s health related choices through their lifetime.

“Good health as we age is fundamental to our quality of life. Being in good health allows us to remain independent, to work and be involved in our local community, to maintain relationships with friends and family, and to carry out activities that give us meaning and purpose” [114]

In 2015 the World Health Organisation (WHO) published the ‘World Report on Ageing and Health’. This report presented an argument that “public health action on ageing is urgently needed” across all nations, to improve the health of all people as they age. It provided a public-health framework built on the concept of ‘Healthy Ageing’ that will require a cross sector, multiple-level approach. The report defined Healthy Ageing as:

“... the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables wellbeing in older age” [p.28].
Maintaining functional ability is essential to ageing well. [115]

This concept of Healthy Ageing is not about the absence of disease or impairment, it is an acknowledgment of the complexity of the health states that might be experienced by people as they age. It is a recognition that the impact of any disease or impairments on the older person, will vary dependent upon the environments that a person lives in, the support they have and the health care that they have access to.



World Health Organisation: Key terms for Healthy Ageing

Functional ability is about having the capabilities that enable people to be and do what they have reason to value. There are five key domains of functional ability, each of which can be enhanced (or constrained) by environmental factors. These are the abilities to: meet basic needs; learn, grow and make decisions; be mobile; build and maintain relationships; and contribute to society. Being able to live in environments that support and maintain your intrinsic capacity and functional ability is key to Healthy Ageing. Functional ability is made up of the intrinsic capacity of the individual, relevant environmental characteristics and the interaction between them.

Intrinsic capacity comprises all the mental and physical capacities that a person can draw on and includes their ability to walk, think, see, hear and remember. The level of intrinsic capacity is influenced by several factors such as the presence of diseases, injuries and age-related changes.

Environments include the home, community and broader society, and all the factors within them such as the built environment, people and their relationships, attitudes and values, health and social policies, the systems that support them and the services that they implement.

In 2016, at the World Health Assembly, a Global strategy and action plan on ageing and health was agreed (2016 – 2030). It comprised an action plan for 2016 -2020, a time for learning and planning, leading up to a Decade of Healthy Ageing from 2020 to 2030. The Decade is led by the Word Health Organisation and the United Nations and provides a challenge and an opportunity for transformative change through connections and collaborations across sectors, to improve the health and wellbeing of older people now and in the future.

“... 10 years of concerted, catalytic, sustained collaboration. Older people themselves will be at the centre of this plan, which will bring together governments, civil society, international agencies, professionals, academia, the media and the private sector to improve the lives of older people, their families and their communities.” [116]

In 2019 the UK Government announced four Grand Challenges, as part of their Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future. One of these focused on the health of an ageing society. The mission for the Healthy Ageing strand is to:

“Ensure that people can enjoy at least 5 extra healthy, independent years of life by 2035, while narrowing the gap between the experience of the richest and poorest” [117]

Health care systems across the world tend to focus on the identification and treatment of diseases, often in isolation and without recognition of the whole person. In response to the need for a joined-up approach the World Health Organization have developed guidelines for integrated care for older people (ICOPE) which provide recommendations for health care professionals to prevent, slow or reverse declines in the intrinsic capacities of older people. [118]

The ICOPE (WHO, 2019) is based on 6 priority actions:

- 1. Improve musculoskeletal function, mobility and vitality
- 2. Maintain sensory capacity
- 3. Prevent severe cognitive impairment and promote psychologic wellbeing
- 4. Manage age-associated conditions such as urinary continence
- 5. Prevent falls
- 6. Support caregivers

So in order to promote Healthy Ageing, it's necessary to change the emphasis to having a more preventive and integrated perspective. It is about recognising a life course approach to health and about tackling health inequalities. The recent Covid-19 crisis has highlighted some of these inequalities with people from the BAME community and those from poorer communities being disproportionately affected [119].

“Prevention is about helping people stay healthy, happy and independent for as long as possible...Prevention is as important at seventy years old as it is at age seven.” [120]

The importance of attending to good health through all life's stages will increase the likelihood of the best health outcomes in later years. For those that have maybe not made healthy choices in their youth, it has been shown that midlife can be a good time for people to start investing in their future health. Much of the focus and research undertaken by the UK Centre for Ageing Better is on the opportunities to intervene across a range of life factors, from about the age of 50, for better outcomes in our later years. Interventions leading to healthy ageing focus on work, housing, health and communities.

One way to maintain good physical and mental health is to undertake regular activity. Active Lincolnshire did an extensive piece of research into the activity levels of older adults in Lincolnshire, almost a quarter of respondents were resident in East Lindsey. The report identified some of the barriers that prevented people from being more active and provided some recommendations for ways to increase activity in older people. The research revealed that physical activity among older people in Lincolnshire was much lower than the national average.



“31% of adults aged 55 – 74 and 59% of adults aged over 75 in Lincolnshire are inactive, compared with national averages of 27% and 49% respectively” [121]

In October 2019 the Centre for Ageing Better partnered with Public Health England and other organisations to publish a Healthy Ageing Consensus Statement [122]:

“It sets out our vision for making England the best place in the world to grow old.”

Signatories to the statement committed to five key principles:

- Putting prevention first and ensuring timely access to services and support
- Removing barriers and creating more opportunities for older adults to contribute to society
- Ensuring good homes and communities to help people remain healthy, active and independent in later life
- Narrowing inequalities in healthy ageing
- Challenging ageist and negative language, culture and practices

In the UK we are fortunate to have free universal healthcare through the National Health Service (NHS), which would suggest that a person's financial circumstances shouldn't impact on their access to healthcare and an equitable chance for healthy ageing. However there is evidence that a person's economic position is likely to have an impact on their health and wellbeing, particularly those who live in poverty, and those on low incomes. In the UK, a relatively affluent nation, 16% of pensioners are living in poverty [123]. Age UK have identified various ways in which older people adapted their behaviours to deal with poverty, these include:

| Adapted Behaviours (Age UK, 2019) | Possible Consequences |
|---|---|
| Going to bed early to avoid having to put heating on | Cold homes aggravate certain health conditions |
| Mashing up food because dental treatment is too costly | Delaying or avoiding dental treatment can lead to more serious dental and wider health issues |
| Going without food regularly | Leading to many health issues including those brought on by malnutrition |
| Not seeking medical advice, treatment or getting prescriptions | Leading to missed diagnosis and a decline in health |
| Getting rid of pets (who might be their only source of company) | It is recognised that caring for a pet can reduce anxiety and loneliness |
| Getting rid of a car or not being able to pay for travel | Impact on ability to access health appointments (particularly in rural areas) |
| Not going to social events or occasions | Increasing loneliness, isolation and emotional wellbeing |
| Give up mobile phones and internet costs | Unable to access digital information or contact people for support or information |

As previously identified East Lindsey has two of the most economically deprived towns in England. It is therefore likely that many of the older people living in our district will be living either in poverty, or fear of poverty, and may well be adapting their behaviour in order to cope with this.

The NHS Long Term Plan (LTP), published in January 2019, sets out the changes that the public should expect the NHS to deliver over the coming years. It was drawn up in consultation with health experts, frontline health staff and patient groups. The plan includes the intention to support people to age well. One way this will happen is through the promotion of a multidisciplinary team approach, where health professionals and community support services will work together to provide personalised support. The plan also states that people will be given more say about the care and support they receive and that carers will be given more support.

One of the key elements of delivering the NHS Long Term Plan has been the development of Primary Care Networks across the UK. Primary Care Networks (PCN) are:

“... groups of GP practices working together with other local organisations, such as community, mental health, social care, pharmacy, hospital and voluntary services. They will support the needs of a population that has grown, is living longer, and may need to access local health services more often.” [124]

The Lincolnshire Primary Care Network (PCN) Alliance was established in July 2019, it is made up of fourteen PCNs, East Lindsey is covered by two of these.

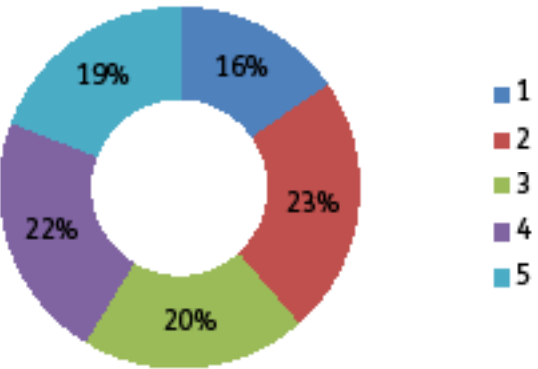
- East Lindsey PCN is made up of 11 GP practices and covers a resident population of 85,215
- First Coast PCN (formerly Skegness & Coast PCN), is made up of 3 GP practices and covers a resident population of 53,000. However the population on the coast increases dramatically during the summer months. This has a significant impact on the local health infrastructure

“With over 90% of care delivered in general practice, this level of integration will be vital to the future success of our system and to improve the health and wellbeing of our population.” (Lincolnshire Primary Care Network Alliance Annual Report 2019 -2020 [125]

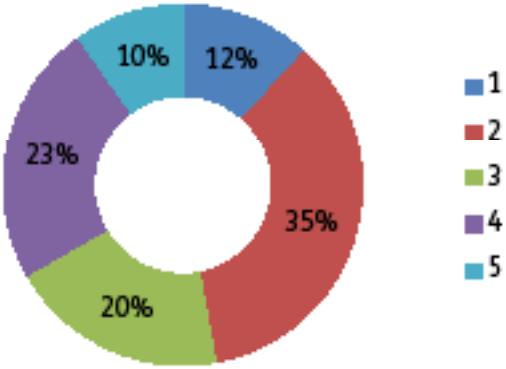
Public Health Data shows comparative levels of deprivation for each PCN as compared to Lincolnshire as a whole.

- Overall deprivation in East Lindsey PCN is higher than the Lincolnshire average with 47% of the population in the 2 most deprived quintiles.
- Overall deprivation in First Coast PCN is much higher than the Lincolnshire average with almost 91% of the population in the 2 most deprived quintiles

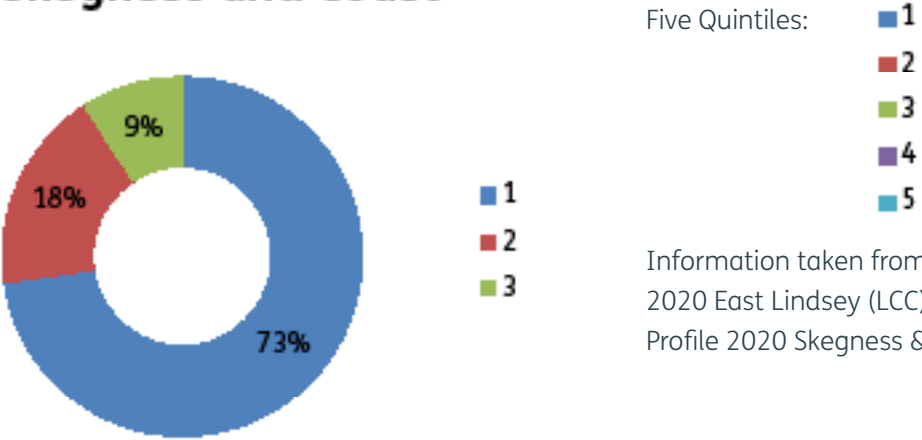
Lincolnshire average



East Lindsey



Skegness and Coast



Five Quintiles:

1
2
3
4
5

Information taken from Public Health PCN Profile 2020 East Lindsey (LCC) and Public Health PCN Profile 2020 Skegness & Coast (LCC) [126] [127]

One of the services being delivered through the PCN's is Social Prescribing. In East Lindsey this is being delivered in partnership with Lincolnshire Community Voluntary Service. Social Prescribing is an essential element of 'Universal Personalised Care', part of the NHS LTP, it is person centred and community based.

“Social prescribing is all about empowering people to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing and improve their quality of life, while respecting the choices they make.” [128]

A person is referred to a Social Prescribing Link Worker, who has the time to focus on what matters to the individual client. They take a holistic approach to improving their client's health and wellbeing. The link worker will support the person in creating an individual support plan. They will then provide up to twelve support sessions. During this time they will help the person in achieving their goals through supporting them to access organisations and activities in their community.

“In particular, in rural areas, the role of planning, housing, transport and digital infrastructure are important in contributing to improved health outcomes.” [129]

The Lincolnshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Lincolnshire (2018) has identified seven priorities for Lincolnshire, while none are specifically focused on older people, the issues they address have relevance to the older population. The priorities are:

- Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing
- Carers
- Physical Activity
- Housing & Health
- Obesity
- Dementia

In February 2020 a report was delivered to the Health & Well Being Board entitled 'Better Ageing in Rural Areas: Learning from East Lindsey' (agenda item 6d). One of the aims was for the board to consider opportunities to extend learning from East Lindsey across Lincolnshire. As already mentioned the Lincolnshire Health & Wellbeing Board perform the governance mechanism for Lincolnshire's Rural Strategic Partnership. ELDC has also positively influenced the development of an emerging health and wellbeing strategy for District Councils in Lincolnshire to ensure that Better Ageing is recognised as an important cross cutting theme.

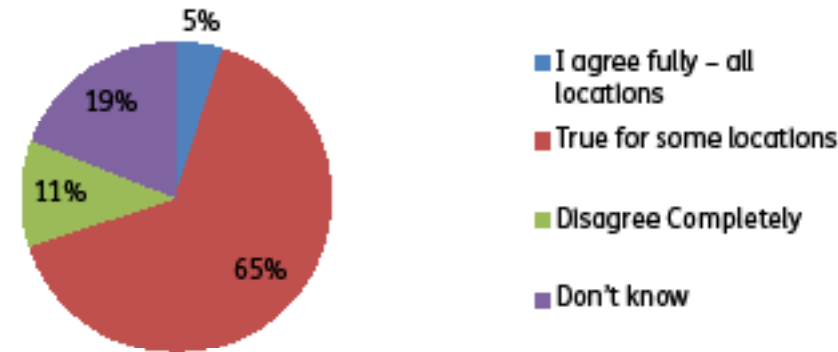
The ELDC Corporate Strategy [128] recognises that there are health inequalities in the district and that these are due to a range of factors. Working with partners they aim to reduce these inequalities and they aim to have:

“A national reputation for the district’s positive actions and attitudes to supporting an ageing population” (p11)

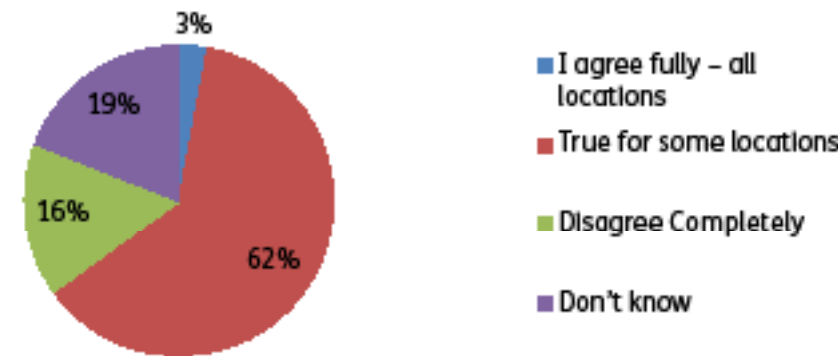
Findings from our Survey & Focus Groups

Thinking of the older people that your service has worked with please answer the following:

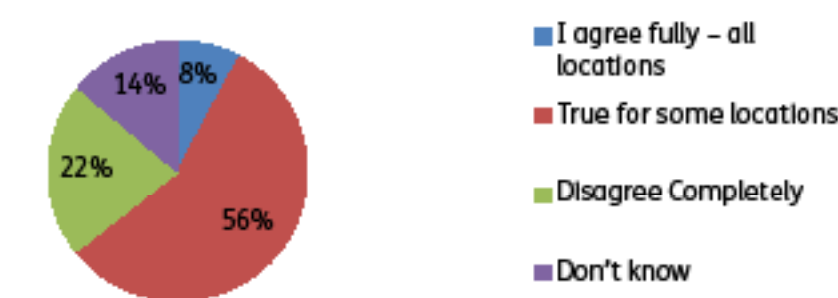
Community health services are available & easily accessible



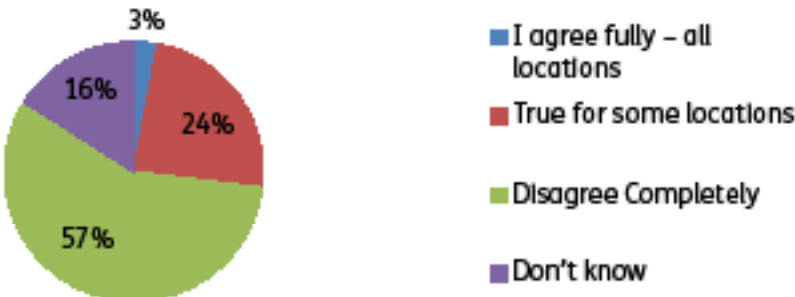
Hospital appointments are available & easily accessible



Other services to support health & well-being are available & accessible



Where a person lives does not disadvantage them accessing services



A person’s income does not disadvantage them in accessing services



Responses above suggest that availability and accessibility to all hospital, health & wellbeing services is not equal across East Lindsey. Responses confirm that a person’s location has an impact on the availability and accessibility of health &/or wellbeing appointments.

Only 3% of respondents are sure that a person’s location does not disadvantage them in accessing services. This result confirms the above findings. 16.22% answered that they don’t know, which means that 81% believe that a person’s location has some impact on their ability to access health & wellbeing services.

Only 11% of respondents are sure that a person’s income doesn’t disadvantage them in accessing health services. The 32% who felt that location was a factor in this may be referring to those who are on low incomes and struggle to pay for transport to hospital appointments. This is particularly an issue for those who live in the coastal area of East Lindsey, which has been defined as an area of deprivation and is furthest from hospitals and other centralised services.



“People who have lower incomes and less access to transport are undoubtedly disadvantaged when accessing services, this includes access to foot care, dental services and community health services.” (Survey respondent)

The availability of suitable transport and the cost of that transport has a direct impact on whether a person can easily and comfortably access health appointments, this is particularly true for hospital appointments. East Lindsey has two small hospitals at Louth and Skegness, however these only provide limited services. Most patients have to travel to Boston, Lincoln or Grimsby for hospital appointments. More specialist appointments require patients to attend hospitals in places like Hull, Derby or Sheffield.

“All local authority services are available in all areas of EL, however care package provision is more difficult to source in more rural areas of EL. Our service is available in all areas. Transport links and frequency does make it difficult for carers in rural areas to access Health services as easily as may be hoped for” (Survey respondent)

Some older people need carers to travel with them, this can result in extra costs on public transport if the carer is not in receipt of a concessionary pass. For some people public transport will not get them to their appointment so they have to find alternative transport and meet the additional costs themselves. At one focus group a resident of Mablethorpe explained the physical and financial challenges that he encountered when attending his annual (and sometimes more frequent) appointments at Castle Hill Hospital (Hull). He was not able to drive and public transport couldn't get him there. He therefore relied on the local Voluntary Car Scheme (VCS), which he was appreciative of as he knew that a private cab would cost much more. He explained that his costs included a cost per mile for the VCS, which at 120 mile round trip would be quite high. He then had to pay the Humber Bridge tolls and parking costs.

“Unless you have financial means you can't get to appointments if you don't have a car. Community health services are hit and miss depending on areas. Hospital appointments are very hard for people to get to. We have people who attend Lincoln County and it takes all day by using public transportation to get them there and back” (Survey respondent)

Another issue that was brought up by a number of focus group participants and supported by information in the Survey, is the waiting time for ambulances. One person, previously mentioned in this report who waited on her floor for over two hours, but was reassured by the contact received during this time from her telecare service. In one of the men's focus groups there seemed to be a consensus that this was one of the down sides of moving to a rural or coastal community.

They acknowledged that they would appreciate faster ambulance responses, but they appeared to accept the situation as inevitable.

“We are resigned to the fact that an emergency ambulance will take considerably longer than the target time of ten minutes to reach us here” (Survey respondent)

One of the ambitions of the NHS LTP is to make better use of data and digital technology. An example given in the NHS LTP, is the use of the NHS App which allows patients to book appointments, order repeat prescriptions and look at their medical records. All Lincolnshire GP's are now linked up to the NHS App [131] and so all registered patients in East Lindsey are able to use this facility if they want to. However as previously mentioned in relation to the use of digital communication, not all older people will have the equipment, the skills and the confidence to do so.

Another use of digital technology locally is the introduction of the Lincolnshire Care Portal, which has been acknowledged as positive advancement by health leaders and professionals across the county. The Care Portal gives primary care staff better access to patient information that has originated in a variety of health and care systems. This is done through accessing a single secure web page. Previously clinicians would be making medical decisions based on incomplete information while they waited for results from other sources. The Care Portal enables better and more efficient co-ordination of health care, it provides an immediate “joined up” view of a patients records.

“The biggest barrier to managing frail older adults is the ability to have a care and support plan that is instantly accessible to both patients, carers and health and care staff. The Care Portal is able to provide this.” [132]

The Covid-19 pandemic has hastened the use of digital technology within general practice and community support services. Prior to the pandemic Lincolnshire health services were already embracing technology and the potential for its increased use. However the need to keep people safe during the pandemic has forced health and community support services to trial and adopt digital ways of working. In East Lindsey, as well as GP practice staff carrying out the majority of their consultations remotely, other services have adapted most of their face to face support into phone or video engagement. This has meant that people have been able to stay connected, be heard and supported and one of the most challenging times in recent history.

“the pandemic has enabled our PCNs to accelerate the use of technology to provide safer and more efficient ways of delivering primary care.” [133]



Focus on Mental Health Services in East Lindsey

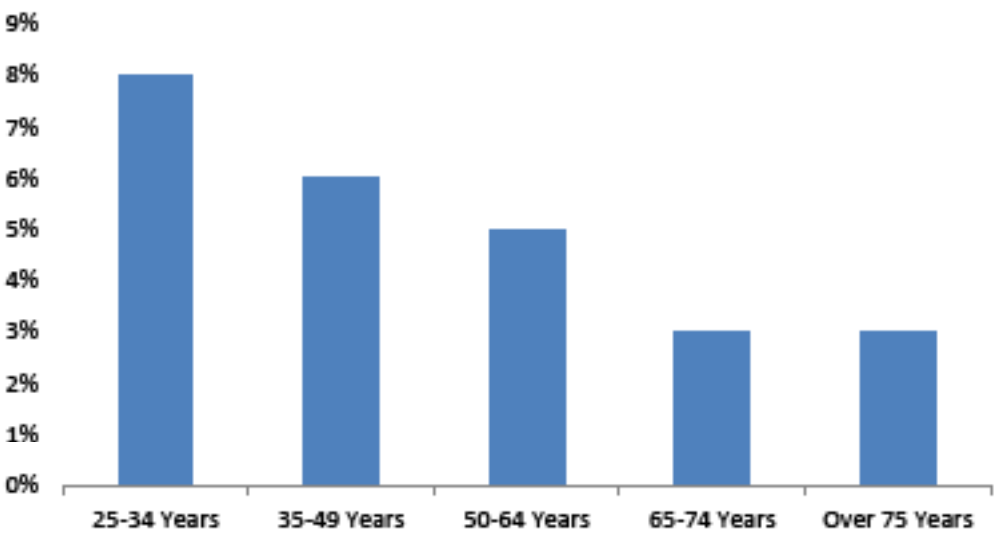
“Mental Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” [134]

Brendan Hayes, Chief Executive of Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust stated

“We are absolutely committed to working in partnership to deliver outstanding mental health care in our community mental health services so that people with moderate to severe mental illness will be supported to live well in their communities, with access to better care, closer to home.” [135]

The importance of people’s mental health has become more talked about over recent years. For a lot of people when they think of someone who might be struggling with their mental health or accessing mental health services it is likely that they are not immediately thinking of older people. One of the many stereotypes associated with ageing is that people are more likely to become lonely, isolated and feel low; and that somehow that is a universal feature of ageing. However, we know that this is not inevitable and it is certainly not acceptable to assume that loneliness and low mood are ‘normal’ just because someone is an older person [136]. All health and community support services that are designed to prevent, treat and support mental health should be equally accessible to people of all ages.

The Office of National statistics [137] when reporting on the percentage of those who felt lonely often or all of the time found that the level of loneliness reported actually decreased as people aged.



It is well documented that attitudes to ageing, both society’s and our own as we age, have a significant impact on the mental (and physical) health of older adults. The WHO reported on research that found that those who had a negative attitude to ageing ‘lived on average 7.5 years less’ than people with a positive attitude [138].

The presentation of tiredness, weight loss, apathy, confusion, or agitation that might be as a result of mental health issues or cognitive impairment, can often be misinterpreted by family, friends and even medical professionals as ‘just part of ageing’.

“Poor mental health can be overshadowed or taken for granted, meaning that an estimated 85 per cent of older people with depression receive no help from the NHS” [139]

Older people are more likely to be living with long term health conditions. Those with long term health conditions or chronic pain are understandably more likely to feel a negative psychological impact. Recognising this and supporting someone’s mental wellbeing as well as their physical health issues is likely to result in better physical and mental health outcomes. Investment in preventative mental health support should ultimately result in lower overall health costs for these patients.

“People with long-term conditions are two to three times more likely to suffer from a mental health condition, particularly depression or anxiety, and can end up receiving poorer-quality care as a result, for both their mental and physical health” [140]

The Mental Health Foundation’s guide “How to... Look after your mental health in later life” sets out ‘five key issues’ that according to research can impact the mental wellbeing of older people [141]

- Discrimination
- Participation in meaningful activities
- Relationships
- Physical health
- Poverty

The guide also provides ten practical ways in which older people can help themselves to stay mentally healthy. These include preparing for changes such as retirement, talking to others, asking for help, eating well and being active.

In 2019 Age UK produced a fact sheet that included a section on mental health, in which they cited the following findings (p11) [142]:

“It is estimated that 40% of older people in GP clinics have a mental health problem, this rises to 50% of older people in general hospitals and 60% of those in care homes (Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2018).”

“Mental health problems are under-identified by health-care professionals and older people themselves; somewhat linked to issues of stigma surrounding these illnesses which can make people reluctant to seek help (Royal College of Nursing, 2018).”

The NHS Long Term Plan made a commitment to improved mental health services. One of its key objectives is to develop “new and integrated models of primary and community mental health care [which] will support adults and older adults with severe mental illnesses” [143]. The NHS Mental Health Improvement Plan (2019) set out how these integrated models will be delivered. The framework for delivery presents a place based approach where services are available and provided within the patient’s community, ensuring that “care takes place in the context of people’s lives” [144]

The Mental Health Crisis Care Concordat is an agreement between national services and organisations that was signed in 2014. [143] The Concordat sets out how organisations will work together to improve outcomes for people experiencing mental health crisis (including prevention).

The Concordat focuses on:

- **Access to support before crisis point** – making sure people with mental health problems can get help 24 hours a day and that when they ask for help, they are taken seriously
- **Urgent and emergency access to crisis care** – making sure that a mental health crisis is treated with the same urgency as a physical health emergency
- **Quality of treatment and care when in crisis** – making sure that people are treated with dignity and respect, in a therapeutic environment
- **Recovery and staying well** – preventing future crises by making sure people are referred to appropriate services

The Lincolnshire Mental Health Crisis Concordat (MHCC) was signed in 2014 and an action plan to deliver the promises it made was developed [146].

Partners in the Lincolnshire MHCC have been working together to develop a Mental Health Hub for Lincolnshire that will improve access to support at an early stage. The Hub provides a central helpline which is staffed by skilled listeners that will support the caller and connect them with more local services through the 12 Neighbourhood Teams that cover the county. The partnership consists of statutory partners in health and local government, and also includes voluntary sector organisation [147].

Since 2008 the IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) programme has been providing talking therapies for adults with mild to moderate anxiety disorders and depression. The service in Lincolnshire is called “Steps2Change”. Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, who deliver the service received an overall rating of ‘Good’ by the CQC in a recent inspection. Including a rating of ‘Good’ for “Community-based mental health services for older people”

“Our aim is to provide the help you need, in convenient locations, within easy reach of where you live and work.”[148]

In January 2020 an open letter was sent to GP’s from Caroline Abrahams, Charity Director Age UK and Alistair Burns, National Clinical Director for Dementia and Older People’s Mental Health at NHS England and NHS Improvement [149]. The letter was triggered as a result of the underrepresentation of older people being referred to IAPT services. While people over 65 years make up 18% of the population, they account for 6.4% of referrals to NHS psychological therapies. The letter calls on health care professionals and GP’s to:

- Start the conversation about depression and anxiety with the older people you see
- Think twice before offering medication to treat depression and anxiety in older people as a first-line treatment option,
- And, refer more older people to NHS psychological therapy services without age restrictions.



The (IAPT) Pathway for People with Long-term Physical Health Conditions and Medically Unexplained Symptoms (2018) provides a framework for a co-ordinated approach to treatment for the patient’s physical and mental health issues.

An example of how Mental Health Services can be improved through the introduction of Primary Care Networks (PCN).

The mental health needs of the population are not always being met by existing services, and low level mental health presents overwhelmingly to general practice.

Because GPs have to refer to a different organisation with a waiting list, patients are at risk of deterioration, where some immediate mental health expertise within general practice could have provided the support they needed and prevented deterioration.

The PCN Alliance can work with commissioners and mental health providers to redesign the mental health pathway/provision so that population health needs are met.

Taken from the Lincolnshire PCN Alliance Annual Report 2019-2020. [151]

“Around 40% of people with depression and anxiety disorders also have an LTC. Around 30% of people with an LTC (Long Term Health Conditions) and 70% with MUS (Medically Unexplained Symptoms) also have mental health comorbidities. Currently, mental and physical health care are provided by separate services that are rarely coordinated. This is inconvenient for the person, costly to the NHS and likely to produce sub-optimal outcomes.” [150]

A gap in mental health service has been identified, when people don’t fit into the usual mental health referral pathway. They are assessed as too complex for the IAPT service, but not serious enough for specialist mental health services. As we know people are complex and it is often the complexity of people’s situation that leads them to this “gap” in provision. For older people the complexity could be linked to:

"growing levels of multimorbidity (having two or more health conditions), of which mental health is a key component (Barnett et al 2012), as well as increasing polypharmacy (being on multiple medications)". [152]

Other factors such as a person’s living environment, their income and their connection with their community will also play a part in the complexity of their situation.

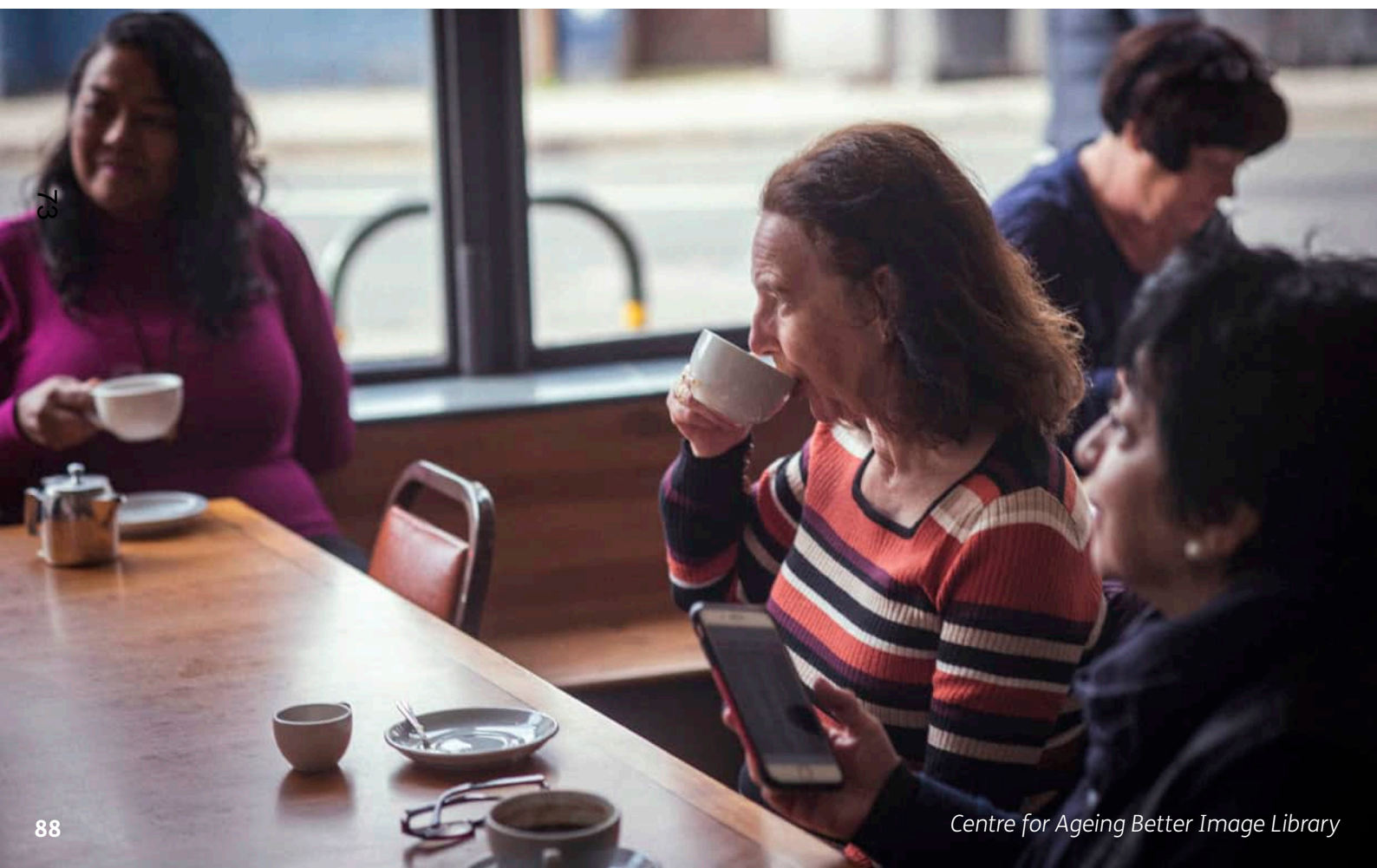
“Older people want to have enough money to afford decent housing, heating, travel, social activities and occasional “treats” – for themselves and for others – that allow full participation in family and community life.” [153]

If we consider the demographic profile of East Lindsey, focusing on the coastal towns with high levels of deprivation, or those living very rurally with limited transport options and increased isolated; then there is a likelihood that there will be higher than average numbers of older people living with these complex factors.

At a recent Lincolnshire Mental Health Event the issue of equitable access to mental health services was discussed. Someone from a community mental health project in Spilsby (rural market town) explained that for his service users with no access to a car, their journey to a scheduled community mental health appointment would require two buses and then either a lengthy walk or a private cab. He quite rightly asserted that this is not equity of access to mental health services. Another attendee, from Mablethorpe, and volunteer within the community, shared his concerns at the lack of available support in his town.

The Covid-19 crisis has increased reports of mental health issues among people of all age groups. The way in which many people have been coping is by staying connected through digital technology, but as previously reported not all older people are able to, or want to use digital technology. Many older people who previously attended activities in their community found these activities either cancelled or adapted to phone or digital delivery. For many people it was also the loss of familiar habits, like going for a coffee in the local café and saying hello to the same familiar faces. Befriending phone services were set up by small community groups and by larger organisations across the country, including in East Lindsey. Many organisations also arranged socially distance visits, with ‘care packages’ to show people that they are not forgotten (See appendix 5). All of which have provided a welcome connection for older people.

The promises of the NHS LTP and the NHS’s Community Mental Health Improvement Plan, provides an opportunity for providers and commissioners in Lincolnshire to prioritise these issues as they redesign our local services. Consideration will also need to be made of the short and long-term impact of the Covid-19 crisis on the mental health of older people in the community and in care settings.



Summary

Summing Up

This assessment shows that the experience of older people living in East Lindsey is not equal and the likelihood of them ageing well is dependent on the intersection of a number of factors, with all of the Age-friendly Domains playing a part. This reflects the situation of people ageing all over the UK.

“As we get older, the steady accumulation of a lifetime of advantages or disadvantages, together with differences such as our ethnicity, where we live, and our income, result in vastly unequal levels of health, wealth, happiness and security in later life.” [154]

What is going well for people ageing in East Lindsey?

- Attractive rural and coastal landscapes provide large open spaces and lots of fresh air
- Property prices are reasonable compared to the national averages, particularly for those who have chosen to retire here from higher priced areas, and buy property
- There is a willingness by the local authority and other organisations to improve things for older people. This is evidenced in the ELDC TED partnership, the creation of a Portfolio Holder for Better Ageing, membership of the CFAB UK Network (& Steering group) and the Rural Partnership CFAB (Formal partnership between CFAB, LCC and ELDC)
- In coastal and market towns there are a range of activities (pre-Covid-19). Some villages also have a variety of activities, often based around a community centre. Therefore some older people have very active and stimulating social lives
- The recent Covid-19 crisis has encouraged older people to engage more fully with digital communication. Giving some people the motivation to explore digital technology for the first time, while others have grown in confidence exploring a wider range of digital options, opening up more opportunities for people to feel informed and connected
- The Town’s Fund is bringing enormous opportunities to create new and life changing projects in our coastal communities. One example is the **‘The Campus for Future Living’** (featured below)

The Campus for Future Living

This will be a multi- sector project made possible by the Towns Fund in Mablethorpe. The concept of the Campus for Future Living has been positively received locally and nationally. It has been agreed as an anchor project for the Connected Coast town investment plan for Mablethorpe.

The Campus for Future Living’s building will be located close to other key community buildings in the town, which will increase the opportunities for partnership working and innovative ways of working. The community buildings include the local medical practice, the library, the Sure Start Centre and the Community Hub. It will also be a short walk from the new Learning and Leisure Hub. As the location is also close to the town’s largest supermarket, the likelihood of older people visiting and using the facilities is more likely.

“It provides scope to take the challenges facing our Town and to turn them into its greatest opportunities - a catalyst for change and an opportunity to be a national exemplar for living and ageing well.”

[155]

The Campus will provide

1. An innovation zone: focused on the development of new business activities pertinent to health and social care in remote and rural settings. Digital innovation, new technological applications and collaboration will be intrinsic to the ethos of attracting new business.
2. A learning zone: operating as a potential base for clinical placements, showcasing the challenges and opportunities around rural practice for students, thereby beginning a pipeline of future high calibre health and care workers for the coast. An opportunity to offer non clinical placements, to provide an in depth of the influence and importance of the wider determinants of health
3. An outreach zone: providing E-Medicine and treatment facilities in the form of consulting and medical procedure rooms linked to the local Medical Practice and other providers of health and care services
4. An enterprise zone: centred on a Carers Hub to support the development of new micro-care providers following the successful model in Somerset and other rural settings established by the charity and social enterprise - Community Catalysts
5. A skills zone: in the form of a base for the continuing professional development of clinicians working on our coast with accommodation for remote workers and a potential café.

*“this project can be a catalyst for change and innovation - and a national exemplar with national reach.”
(Taken from the Campus Briefing July 2020)*

For more information visit their website (links are available on page 115).

What are the challenges for people ageing in East Lindsey?

- The majority of people report that the provision of public transport is not satisfactory. That the limitations of the bus services (due to the large rural area and the cost of running buses that are often not full) means that people are not able to easily access social activities and carry out essential tasks, such as attending health appointments
- Despite the attraction of the large open green and blue spaces, for some people access to these spaces is restricted or impossible. This might be as a result of transport issues but is often due to the lack of age friendly walkways; and other outdoor barriers
- Many services, particularly health services have been centralised over recent years. So patients are required to travel outside of the district to the larger hospitals for most appointments (time and money is an issue)
- The local picture regarding suitable housing across all tenures
- There seems to be a lack of good clear knowledge across professional agencies, about the availability of housing and the provision of related services. This includes awareness of and application for the DFG
- Those living in smaller villages or in more isolated areas can find themselves disconnected from social and community activities, leading to increased loneliness and health problems
- The ability to successfully use digital technology is negatively impacted by rural connectivity issues
- Many older people live a distance from their extended family (For example their children have moved away or they moved away from their children) which can have implications for increased isolation, leading to increased risks to health as they age
- There is a lot of low paid seasonal work in tourism and in farming (picking). Many people over 50 are unemployed or employed in insecure jobs with few prospects

Opportunities to change things

“This can’t be about old versus young. Rather, it’s about how we create a society that everyone - regardless of their age, income or background - can enjoy every stage of life” [156]

This process is providing us with a fantastic opportunity to make significant changes for people as they grow older in East Lindsey. Here are some of the ways that we intend to make those changes:

- I. We will create an Age-friendly Strategy & Action Plan developed through multi-agency engagement. Items for consideration for inclusion within the strategy include:
 - Increase awareness for professionals, for businesses and the public
 - Address the issue of ageism
 - Improving outdoor spaces
 - Improving people’s health and maintaining the best health possible. Focusing on the link between health and its connections to the other Age-friendly Domains. Having an integrated approach to health
 - Increasing physical activity by implementing the recommendations from the Let’s Move, Scoping research 2020, and from extra ideas proposed by older people:
 - » Intergenerational activities – parents and children, or parents and grandchildren – e.g. of a granddaughter that wants to attend the gym with her grandparent to support her to get healthier...
 - » Timing – evenings and weekends as well as daytime. Most over 50’s health improvement activity is scheduled during daytimes

“If people are to truly be at the centre of how services are designed, then transport is a key element of how services and peoples care needs can be aligned and integrated at a local level.” [157]

- II. We will use the Decade of Healthy Ageing (2020-2030) as a springboard for our work. The Decade of Healthy Ageing is led by the World Health Organisation and the United Nations. It runs from 2020 to 2030 (<https://www.who.int/ageing/decade-of-healthy-ageing>). The Centre for Ageing Better, in communication with UK Network representatives, have developed their own ‘Common Messages’ for the ‘Decade’ and so anything we decide to do will need to fit in with those

Common Messages:

- Ensuring that active and healthy ageing is seen as everybody’s business by building relationships, learning and collaboration across sectors, services and between generations
- Ensuring that all older people are respected, listened to, and can contribute to decision making in the communities that they live
- Embracing the diversity of older people, addressing inequalities and ageism, building more equitable places for us all to age in
- Advocating for the physical infrastructure that meets the needs and aspirations of older people, including digital, housing, transport and public spaces



- III. We will build on what is already going well and initiatives that are in their early stages
- The Towns Fund agreed projects through Connected Coast (subject to funding)
 - The Lincolnshire Rural Partnership – aligning the ELDC AF Action plan with the aims of the LRP
 - The TED Ageing Better Programme has been extended by a year (year 7), providing an opportunity for sustainability and for additional learning
 - The Age-friendly Futures project (YMCA Lincolnshire)– Employment programme for 50+
 - Establish an Older Person’s Forum. To do this we will build on the knowledge of previous forum members and we will look at what has worked in other areas
 - Develop the concept of Age-friendly Tourism/ Recreation with a particular focus on Wolds AONB and the coastal towns
 - Ageing Without Children (AWOC) – there will be a self-managed social group and awareness of the issue will be encouraged across organisations



Appendices

Appendix 1: Methodology

The impact of Covid-19 on the process:

During the assessment process the Covid-19 Crisis emerged and most of the world was put into “Lockdown”. This had an immediate impact on some of the activities that we had planned with older people, which had to be cancelled. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a massive impact on everyone, particularly older members of the community, the ripples of this crisis are likely to be felt for some time. The report will therefore, where pertinent, make reference to the impact of Covid-19.

Meetings with managers and other stakeholders:

The AFPO arranged meetings with a wide range of organisations from the statutory and voluntary sector, who deliver services across East Lindsey. Managers and operational staff, as well as Elected Members of the District Council were all approached. The purpose of these meetings was to:

1. To provide a clear explanation of the WHO Age-friendly Communities Status to organisations delivering services across the district; and the intention to achieve AF status for East Lindsey
2. To gain an understanding of the work undertaken by the different organisations, in order to begin the assessment of local services, the environment and organisational approaches, against the eight domains

In order to gain knowledge of how other areas had achieved or were pursuing their Age-friendly Status, phone discussions were held with colleagues at the Centre for Ageing Better, some of the National Lottery ‘Ageing Better Programme’ areas and recommended contacts in other parts of the UK.

Focus Groups:

To ensure the participation of older people a number of Focus Groups were held within already established social groups for older people. Each session was facilitated by the AFPO, although the regular group facilitators that members were familiar with were always present. This provided an opportunity for older people to discuss issues openly in a relaxed environment that they were comfortable with. A structured question and answer session was considered, but as the intention was to retain an informal atmosphere, the idea was discarded. However because we needed to ‘focus’ group members into relevant discussions, we simply asked participants to consider the following questions:

- What is good/great, about growing older & living in East Lindsey?
- What is not so good/awful, about growing older & living in East Lindsey?

The questions were asked verbally and repeated intermittently through the session. The questions were also written down and visible during the focus groups.

The focus groups were held at:

- » TED Friendship Groups (four locations)
- » Lincoln & Lindsey Blind Society Social Group
- » Men Do Social Groups (three locations)
- » Alzheimer’s support Group

NB: A further three focus groups were planned but had to be cancelled due to the Covid-19 crisis.

Walking Audits:

A proven way to assess the outside environment is to carry out ‘Walking Audits’ with members of the community to assess the “walkability” of the neighbourhood. [158]. These audits also provide the opportunity for people to consider the Age Friendliness of their public spaces by casting a critical eye across their local streets and other public spaces.

The first walk was held in January 2020 as a pilot to test out the resources that had been created. It was planned as an intergenerational walk and Horncastle was chosen as the best location. Those due to take part were members of the local Friendship Group, three TED team staff and four young people doing work experience with the TED team.

Following a successful ‘pilot’, further walks were organised. The walks were all to be led by the AFPO, invitations to join were sent to all ELDC Elected Members through their internal communication process. The AF Principal Officer contacted local community leaders in each proposed location to discuss the walking audits and to encourage local older people to attend the walks. A total of seven walks were scheduled, three were completed and four had to be cancelled due to the Covid- 19 Crisis.

| Completed Walks | Cancelled Walks (due to Covid 19) |
|--|--|
| Horncastle (pilot) - two routes walked | Mablethorpe |
| Sutton-on-sea - three routes walked | Skegness |
| Horncastle - one route walked | Coningsby |
| | Louth - due to be an intergenerational walk with the Princes Trust |

Train and Bus Audits:

‘Train and Bus Audits’ are based on similar principals to the walking audits, with a focus on safety, accessibility and an enjoyable experience. A ‘Train Audit’ was planned for early April, with two TED Friendship Group Members - one who had complex health issues and reduced mobility. They were going to travel with the AFPO from Skegness railway station to Boston and return. This activity had to be cancelled due to Covid-19 crisis. While no date was set for the ‘Bus Audit’, this was also cancelled due to the risks of Covid-19.

Online Age-friendly Survey

An online ‘Age-friendly Survey’ was created and sent out to professional colleagues and community leaders. It was not circulated publicly. The survey was designed to explore East Lindsey’s current performance against the eight Age-friendly Domains, the questions were based on the following statements:

1. The outside environment & public buildings have a major impact on mobility, independence & quality of life of older people
2. Transportation is a key issue for people in later life. This includes accessible public transport, community transport and private hire. Please think about transport options available in East Lindsey
3. As people age their housing needs can change. This might mean the need for adjustments to their home or moving to different accommodation
4. Social participation is strongly connected to peoples' health & wellbeing. Thinking about opportunities for participation for older residents in East Lindsey
5. Many older people report that they are respected & included in society, while others report a lack of consideration and prejudice leading to them feeling excluded from society

6. An Age-friendly Community provides opportunities for people in later life to continue to make a contribution either through employment, volunteering or the political process
7. Staying connected with events & people and getting information to manage life & meet personal needs is vital for active ageing. Technology allows for fast easily accessible information for those who are able to access it
8. Community support & health services are vital to maintaining health & independence as people age

The survey was shared widely across statutory and voluntary sector organisations, who were also encouraged to share the survey with any of their professional contacts. The survey was shared with all ELDC Elected members and with Parish/Town Councils across East Lindsey. The survey was initially sent in early March. The initial response rate was very low and this was attributed largely to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The survey was resent in April with a new deadline. There were 37 responses to the survey from a range of organisations. When reporting results we used percentages and rounded them up or down to the nearest percentage.

Desktop Research

An extensive amount of desk based research was also carried out in order to better understand the principles of Age-friendly Communities, increase awareness of what was happening nationally and to gain a more detailed understanding of local service delivery. This research included:

- Gaining detailed information about local services
- Keeping up to date with UK Government information
- Researching and understating UK National good practice, mainly through contact with and events at the CFAB; and via the findings of the Ageing Better Test & Learn Programme
- Completing the WHO - “Healthy Ageing for Impact in the 21st Century” Global Online Leaders Training Course

Appendix 2: Walking Audit Materials

Walking Audits Session Plan:

Resources List:

- Risk Assessment
 - First Aid kit
 - High Visibility Vest if needed
 - Pens, post it notes
 - Questionnaire
 - Clip boards
- Notes Sheet
 - Maps
 - Camera (phone)
 - Refreshments if needed/ or means to pay if purchasing

| Activity | Notes |
|---|--|
| Everyone meet at arranged venue | |
| JB explains the rationale and route of the walk. What to look for Inform the group of people's roles People can observe on their own or in pairs | Check all ok with routes - e.g. crossing river on footbridge Give out details of time for participants to report back to base location (in case they wander off) Give our resources - route, notes, sheets, pents... |
| Walk begins Leader walks slowly allowing time for people to look around and stop intermittently | High visibility vest if needed Take photos when relevant |
| Return to venue for refreshments | Questionnaire to complete |
| Opportunity to discuss observations Complete questionnaire Explain what will happen with the collected information | Post it notes available for additional information |

Walking Audit Questionnaire

Thank you for taking part in our Walking Audit today. By joining us you are contributing to a wider assessment of how ‘Age-friendly’ East Lindsey is. This is part of a process that we are undertaking in order to become part of the Global Network of Age-friendly Communities, in line with the World Health Organisation Initiative. <https://www.who.int/ageing/age-friendly-world/en/>

| | | | |
|----------|--|-------|--|
| Name | | Date | |
| Location | | Route | |

For each of the FIVE questions please tick a box indicating your view

- **Excellent** – The area is **very Age Friendly**
- **Good** – The area is **moderately Age Friendly**
- **Fair** – The area is **somewhat Age Friendly**
- **Poor** – The area is **not Age Friendly**

In the ‘comments’ please explain the reason & give examples.

| 1: Paths and Pavements | | | |
|--|------|------|------|
| Consider: ... smooth or uneven surfaces; width; obstacles- hedges, parked cars; clear boundaries; feel safe from vehicles; clear signs... | | | |
| Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
| Comments: | | | |
| | | | |
| 2: Crossings and Traffic | | | |
| Consider... traffic flow & speed; driver attitude; are there enough crossings; crossing markings & signage; crossing timings; road layout... | | | |
| Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
| Comments: | | | |
| | | | |

| | | | |
|---|------|------|------|
| 3: Safety | | | |
| <i>Consider: ...street lighting (imagine it when dark); people walking about; layout of streets; good signage; movement of traffic; ...</i> | | | |
| Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
| Comments: | | | |

| | | | |
|--|------|------|------|
| 4: Pleasant Environment | | | |
| <i>Consider: ...clean and pleasant; nice buildings; good & bad smells; signs of anti-social behaviour; trees & greenery; good seating; toilets</i> | | | |
| Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
| Comments: | | | |

| | | | |
|---|------|------|------|
| 5: Overall Experience | | | |
| <i>Consider: ... through the “lens of an older person” reflect on your overall experience. Add any additional comments.</i> | | | |
| Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
| Comments: | | | |

Appendix 3: The Survey



Age Friendly East Lindsey
Age Friendly East Lindsey - Professionals Survey

I would appreciate it if you could complete this survey on behalf of your organisation. If you have any questions or need further information then please contact me directly. My email is jane.berni@lincsymca.co.uk
Please remember that 'Older People' refers to people over 50, unless otherwise stated.

ALL ANSWERS must relate to services in EAST LINDSEY.

Many thanks
Jane Berni

- * 1. The outside environment & public buildings have a major impact on mobility, independence & quality of life of older people.
How Age Friendly do you think the outdoor environment is in East Lindsey?
Please choose the statement that best matches your opinion.
- ☐ The outdoor spaces & public buildings are **EXCELLENT** for older people and require little change
 - ☐ The outdoor spaces & public buildings are **GOOD** for older people, but some improvement is needed
 - ☐ The outdoor spaces & public buildings are **GENERALLY OK** for older people, but require quite a lot of improvement
 - ☐ The outdoor spaces & public buildings are **NOT GOOD** for older people and extensive change is needed

Please explain the reasons for your answers

* 2. How does your organisation contribute to the Age Friendliness of outdoor spaces and/or buildings in East Lindsey?

* 3. Transportation is a key issue for people in later life. This includes accessible public transport, community transport and private hire. Please think about transport options available in East Lindsey.

Please choose the statement that best matches your opinion.

- ☐ Transport options are generally excellent and no improvement is needed
- ☐ Transport options vary across the district, some areas are good while others need considerable improvement
- ☐ Transport options are generally good some minor improvements would make them excellent
- ☐ Transport options are disappointing and extensive changes are needed in all areas of East Lindsey

Please explain the reasons for your answers

* 4. How does your organisation contribute to, or interact with, transport services suitable for older people in East Lindsey?

* 5. As people age their housing needs can change. This might mean the need for adjustments to their home or moving to different accommodation. Please think about all housing (the buildings) and related support options for older people in East Lindsey and choose the response that best suits.

| | Yes definitely | Yes for most people in most areas | Don't know the answer | Not for most people in most areas | Definitely not |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Is there enough suitable private rented housing | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Is there enough suitable social housing | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Is there enough suitable housing available to purchase | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Do older residents find it easy to secure the necessary adaptations to live well in their homes | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Is housing support for older residents easily available and of a high standard | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please explain the reasons for your answers

* 6. How does your organisation contribute to housing provision and/or housing support services for older people in East Lindsey?

* 7. Social participation is strongly connected to peoples' health & well being. Thinking about opportunities for participation for older residents in East Lindsey.

Please choose the responses that best suit your opinion.

| | Totally agree | Partially agree | I am not sure | Partially disagree | Totally disagree |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| There are many opportunities available for people between 50 and 65 to socialise | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| There are many opportunities available for people between 65 and 75 to socialise | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| There are many opportunities available for people over 75 to socialise | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

There are many opportunities available for people between 65 and 75 to socialise

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

There are many opportunities available for people over 75 to socialise

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

There are a diverse range of activities available for people to participate in

☐

☐

☐

☐

☐

Please explain the reasons for your answers

* 8. How does your organisation contribute to opportunities for social participation for older people in East Lindsey?

* 9. Many older people report that they are respected & included in society, while others report a lack of consideration and prejudice leading to them feeling excluded from society.
Thinking of older people you have worked with, please rate the following statements.

| | Yes almost always | Most of the time they do | I have no idea | Most of the time they don't | No almost never |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Older people feel respected & included by the health & social care services that work with them | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Older people feel respected & included by people in their community | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Older people feel respected & included by shops & businesses that they use | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Older people feel respected & included by young people (under 25) in their community | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please explain the reasons for your answers

* 10. What steps are you taking in your organisation to ensure that older people feel respected and included?

* 11. An Age Friendly Community provides opportunities for people in later life to continue to make a contribution either through employment, volunteering or the political process.
Thinking about the opportunities available to older people in East Lindsey please rate the following statements.

| | Yes across all of East Lindsey | Yes but only in certain areas | I don't know | No |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Are there enough opportunities to become involved in volunteering ? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Are there enough opportunities to become involved in local politics? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Are there enough employment & training opportunities for people aged 50 to 65? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Are there enough employment & training opportunities for people over 65? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please explain the reasons for your answers

* 12. How does your organisation provide opportunities and support for older workers and/or volunteers?

* 13. Staying connected with events & people and getting information to manage life & meet personal needs is vital for active ageing. Technology allows for fast easily accessible information for those who are able to access it. Thinking of older people in East Lindsey please rate the following statements.

| | Yes always | Yes most of the time | I don't know | No not usually | No |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Is there an assumption that everyone will access information through the internet? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Do most people age 50 to 65 access information through the internet? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Do most people over 65 access information through the internet? | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Is there enough opportunity to access information in other ways (e.g leaflets, post)?

☐☐☐☐☐

Please explain the reasons for your answers

* 14. How does your organisation ensure that older people receive information in a way that they prefer to receive it?

* 15. Community support & health services are vital to maintaining health & independence as people age. Thinking of the older people that your service has worked with please answer the following statements for locations in East Lindsey.

| | I agree fully for all locations | This is true for some locations but not all | I disagree completely | I don't know |
|---|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Community health services are available & easily accessible | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Hospital appointments are available & easily accessible | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Other services to support health & well being are available & easily accessible | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

| | I agree fully for all locations | This is true for some locations but not all | I disagree completely | I don't know |
|---|---------------------------------|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Where a person lives does not disadvantage them in accessing services | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| A person's income does not disadvantage them in accessing services | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Please explain the reasons for your answers

* 16. How does your organisation contribute to the provision of support & health services to older people in East Lindsey?

* 17. What organisation do you work for?

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Organisation | <div></div> |
| Name | <div></div> |
| Email | <div></div> |
| Which parts of East Lindsey does your service cover? | <div></div> |

If you require any further information please contact Jane Berni, Age Friendly Principal Officer by email jane.berni@lincsymca.co.uk

Appendix 4: Letter of commitment from Cllr Leyland 2019

The letter reads:

As this year's UN International Day of Older Persons (1st October) celebrates the 'Journey to Age Equality', we are coming together to show our commitment to ending the outdated attitudes that prevent too many of us from making the most of our longer lives.

2019 marks 50 years since the term 'ageism' was coined by Robert Butler in 1969. And yet research shows that today, later life is still strongly associated with being frail, lonely and sad.

Like all forms of prejudice and discrimination, even seemingly casual ageism is deeply damaging both to individuals and to our communities, with recent research suggesting that a quarter of people over 50 have felt discriminated against whilst doing everyday tasks or accessing services. Even seemingly positive phrases like 'you look young for your age' can reinforce damaging stereotypes.

So today, as leaders from across the UK who have committed to making our communities great places to grow old in, we are pledging to change the way we talk about ageing.

Many of us are living for longer, so it's vital we are all able to make the most of these extra years – and that must start with thinking and talking differently about ageing. From the greater self-confidence many feel in later life to the wealth of experience older workers bring to their workplaces, it's time we recognised the many opportunities of later life – and began to speak in a way that reflects them.

If we are to make real progress towards age equality, we must all work to root out ageism in our own communities and organisations. We will challenge ageism wherever we see it, whether it's in public or in private, and ensure that the voices of older people are at the heart of our local decision-making.

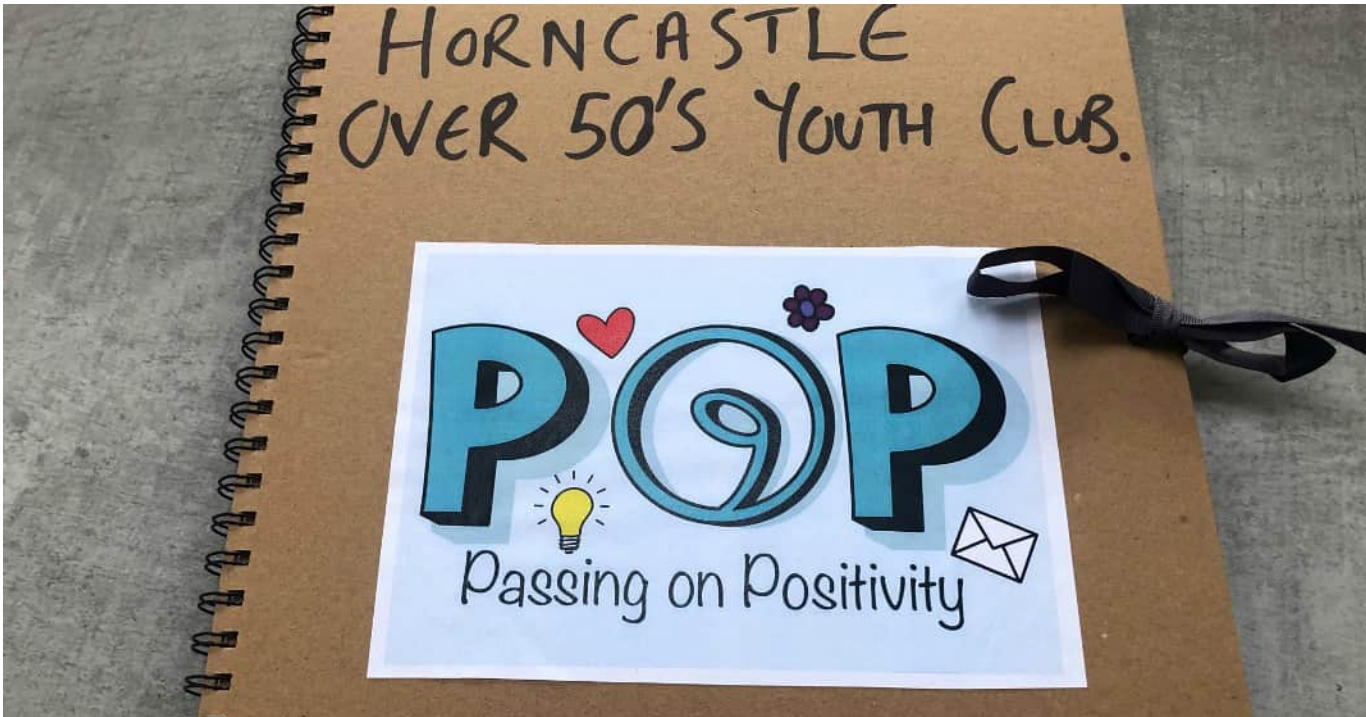
As well as making this commitment, we're asking everyone to join us: we can all re-think our own prejudices, think more carefully about the impact our words can have on others, and be part of a movement to end ageism once and for all.

East Lindsey (Cllr. Craig Leyland, Leader of the Council)

Appendix 5: Wellbeing Visits







Helpful Links

| Page Number | Link |
|-------------|---|
| 5 | https://www.ageing-better.org.uk/uk-network-age-friendly-communities |
| | https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/age-friendly-cities-framework/ |
| 31 | https://lincsbus.info/bus-services/concessionary-bus-pass/ |
| 35 | https://lincsbus.info/callconnect/more-information/ |
| 42 | https://www.wellbeinglincs.org/ |
| 45 | https://www.think2speak.com/ |
| 50 | https://tedineastlindsey.co.uk/age-friendly-business-award/ |
| 58 | https://timetoshineleeds.org/age-proud-leeds/age-proud-leeds---key-themes |
| 60 | https://www.acas.org.uk/archive/menopause-at-work |
| | https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/culture/well-being/menopause/people-manager-guidance#gref |
| | https://www.nhsemployers.org/articles/menopause-and-workplace |
| 67 | http://www.lincolnshiresensoryservices.org.uk/ |
| 69 | https://www.dementiafriends.org.uk/ |
| | https://magnavita.org/activity/health/still-me/ |
| 70 | https://www.dementiaaction.org.uk/local_alliances |
| | https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/about-dementia/symptoms-and-diagnosis/symptoms/tips-for-communicating-dementia |
| 90 | https://connectedcoast.co.uk/?p=627 |

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With thanks to the Centre for Ageing Better Image Library: <https://ageingbetter.resourcespace.com/pages/home.php>

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YMCA enables people to develop their full potential in mind, body and spirit. Inspired by, and faithful to, our Christian values, we create supportive, inclusive and energising communities, where young people can truly belong, contribute and thrive.

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**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 13 February 2025

Report of Cllr Paul Stokes, Deputy
Leader and Cabinet Member for
Leisure and Culture

SK Community Fund - Review of Eligibility Criteria 2025

Report Author

Carol Drury, Community Engagement Manager

✉ carol.drury@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

To consider proposed changes to determine access to the SK Community Fund: Main and Small Grants Scheme and provide a recommendation to the Cabinet Member on a revised eligibility criteria.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- 1. Note and comment on the changes proposed to the criteria of the SK Community Fund for 2025.**
- 2. Recommend the approval of the changes proposed to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture.**

Decision Information

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? | No |
| What are the relevant corporate priorities? | Connecting communities |
| Which wards are impacted? | All Wards |

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 The Community Fund is administered based on robust and clear criteria to ensure any funding allocation provides value for money and delivers agreed outcomes. The proposals set out in the report further refine the criteria as deemed necessary.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 There are no significant legal or governance implications arising from this report. The SK Community Fund is a discretionary scheme and the Council is able to determine an appropriate eligibility criteria.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Council has a strong record in supporting the voluntary and community sector by helping to enable communities to be more self-sufficient. This continues to be a key priority for the Council and is evidenced through its Corporate Plan aim of Connecting Communities. Working with and providing support for the voluntary and community sector is central to achieving this.
- 2.2 In support of such groups, the Council introduced the SK Community Fund in 2015 to offer grants to constituted community groups, charities and social enterprise organisations. This scheme has operated under three specific strands since that time:
- **Small Grants Fund:** Awards of up to £2,000 for eligible groups and projects, where 100% of required funding can be applied for. Fees for

sessional workers (freelance workers, not on the usual staff of the applying group/agency) could be considered for small community event applications

- **Main Grants Scheme** covering:
 - **Community Projects:** Capital funding only. Up to 80% of required funding to a maximum of £5,000 for eligible groups and projects. 20% match funding required from the applicant
 - **Community Events:** Generally capital funding, but fees for sessional workers (freelance workers, not on the usual staff of the applying group/agency) could be considered for community events. Up to 80% of required funding to a maximum of £5,000 for eligible groups and projects. 20% match funding required from the applicant.

- 2.3 Funding through the SK Community Fund is generally used to support small projects or events or to act as match funding for larger funding bids made by the voluntary and community sector to external funders.
- 2.4 When the SK Community Fund was first established, grants were available to groups or organisations that require people to pay a membership fee in order to participate: for example local sports clubs, scouts, guides etc.
- 2.5 This eligibility was removed in 2019 on recommendation from the elected Members who held the delegation for decision making in regard to awarding grants through the SK Community Fund. Members at the time felt that sufficient revenue should be being made from membership fees to sustain the operation of the group/club.
- 2.6 Evidence from working directly with these types of group shows that this is far from the case and, whilst some groups/clubs can sustain their basic function, there is no space for development or growth without the means of attracting additional, external funding.
- 2.7 It is therefore proposed that membership groups that provide activities accessible to a wide community of people (i.e. not closed community groups such as residents' groups, patient participation groups etc) have eligibility to apply to the SK Community Fund re-instated.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 Members of the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider the proposed change to the criteria of the SK Community Fund as outlined above.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 The Fund's criteria could remain unchanged.

- 4.2 The Committee could recommend other changes to the eligibility criteria.

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1 The recommended changes will improve opportunities offered by the SK Community Fund for the voluntary and community sector of South Kesteven



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 13 February 2025

Report of Councillor Phil Dilks, Cabinet
Member for Planning

Armed Forces Covenant Update 2024

Report Author

Debbie Nicholls, Armed Forces Officer

✉ debbie.nicholls@southkesteven.gov.uk

Purpose of Report

This report provides an update on the Council's actions to meet its responsibilities under the Armed Forces Act and the Armed Forces Covenant; achievements under the Council's Defence Employer Recognition Scheme Gold Award; engagement and advocacy agendas and plans for the coming year.

Recommendation

The Committee is recommended to:

- 1. Note the report and comment on the content.**

Decision Information

| | |
|---|---|
| Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? | No |
| What are the relevant corporate priorities? | Connecting communities Enabling economic opportunities Housing Effective council |
| Which wards are impacted? | (All Wards); |

1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, the following implications have been identified:

Finance and Procurement

- 1.1 There are no specific financial comments arising from this report.

Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer

Legal and Governance

- 1.2 There are no significant legal or governance implications arising from this report.

Completed by: Graham Watts, Monitoring Officer

2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The Armed Forces Covenant update details work carried out from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024. The document also includes actions for delivery during 2025 and is attached at Appendix A.
- 2.2 The report provides detailed background to, and further information on, how the Council ensures compliance with its Armed Forces Community Covenant responsibilities.
- 2.3 The report also illustrates the work of the Council's Armed Forces Officer, supported by the Authority's Elected Member, the Lead Member for Armed Forces, to deliver the Council's advocacy and engagement commitments under its Gold Award status within the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme.
- 2.4 The Council's commitments to its Armed Forces communities and associated actions are also reflected within the Community Engagement and Development Strategy action plan.

Armed Forces Covenant

- 2.5 The Council's commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant was last signed in 2022. The Council should consider re-affirming its commitment with an updated signature of the Armed Forces Covenant by 31 March 2025 to reflect the council's new administration.
- 2.6 Re-affirmation of the Council's commitment to the Covenant provides an opportunity to review the aims and objectives. The signing event will include military representation, the Leader, Cabinet Members, the Lead Member for Armed Forces and appropriate officers.

- 2.7 The review should also consider whether the Council wishes to re-sign following an election or change of administration.

3. Key Considerations

- 3.1 The appended report provides an overview of actions taken to date and outlines forthcoming projects, activities and engagement opportunities. Members are asked to consider the content of this document and provide comment.
- 3.2 Members are further asked to note that the actions outlined within the Armed Forces Compliance and Engagement report are delivered in support of the Council's current Gold status under the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme and also provide evidence toward its re-application in 2027.

4. Other Options Considered

- 4.1 This report is for information, therefore no other options were considered

5. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 5.1. To ensure that Members are kept up to date with actions taken to ensure the Council's compliance with the Armed Forces Act.
- 5.2. To ensure that Members are kept up to date with actions taken to advocate for the military community under the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme.

6. Appendices

- 6.1 Appendix A – Armed Forces Covenant Report 2024.

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2024



Armed Forces Covenant

A report and actions to ensure Council compliance



SOUTH
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COUNCIL

Introduction

South Kesteven District Council’s Armed Forces Covenant responsibilities and activities are focused on two main areas:

- To ensure that all elements of the authority comply with the Armed Forces Act of 2021, with the principal area being housing
- Advocacy and support for defence

The Armed Forces Act conveys a duty that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, suffer no disadvantage because of their service. It requires in-scope organisations such as South Kesteven District Council to ensure that serving personnel, reservists, veterans, and their families have the same equality of access to public services as civilians.

This recognises the unique obligations of, and sacrifices made by, the Armed Forces and the fact that for many the return to civilian life can pose problems, including:

- Veterans may find it hard to engage with and trust professionals who have no military background
- Many leaving the military have little lived experience of civilian life
- Veterans take longer on average than others before asking for help.

Census data confirms that there are 8,693 military veterans living in the District - 7.37% of the population aged over 16 - putting South Kesteven seventh on the national league table. This is the second highest number of veterans in any district of Lincolnshire.

Armed Forces initiatives come under the remit of the Council’s Community Engagement team. The Armed Forces officer identifies, develops and delivers engagement events, raising awareness of defence in the district and advocating for serving and ex-military.

The officer also monitors all new announcements of census data including veterans’ characteristics, living arrangements and financial situations - with more information continually emerging.

SKDC continues to honour the principles that resulted in the 2022 award of the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (DERS) Gold Award, notably advocacy for defence.

As the only local authority in Lincolnshire to hold the Gold award, the Council continues to take the lead within the Lincolnshire Community Covenant Partnership.

Our Gold award status shows the Council goes over and above in its efforts to support the military community.

Armed Forces activity covers four key areas, each helping to deliver SKDC’s corporate priorities of Connecting Communities, Housing, Enabling Economic Opportunity and Effective Council:

- Compliance
- Heritage
- Advocacy
- Engagement



South Kesteven District Council Armed Forces Covenant contacts

Lead Member for Armed Forces: Cllr Richard Dixon-Warren
Richard.Dixon-Warren@southkesteven.gov.uk

Armed Forces Officer: Debbie Nicholls
debbie.nicholls@southkesteven.gov.uk

- Corporate priorities:**
- Effective Council
 - Housing
 - Connecting Communities

Compliance

The Council is now co-funding a shared Armed Forces Officer for Lincolnshire, along with continuing its employment of a dedicated Armed Forces Officer for South Kesteven.

The Armed Forces Officer has worked closely with Paul Drury, a military veteran, since he started his new shared services post, introducing him to key networking groups and helping ensure that he is well informed to help local authority colleagues meet their legislative requirements with consistency on advice and delivery.

The Lincolnshire Community Covenant Partnership is now well established, with 40+ regular attendees at quarterly meetings representing local authorities, health, police, charity sector, military sites and support networks.

SKDC provides the secretariat for meetings.

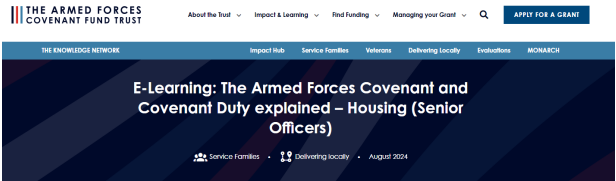
To date the Partnership has delivered an Aims and Objectives document and is developing a directory providing extensive information on support services available to military and former military personnel and families.

The Directory is a step towards the Partnership’s aim of making Lincolnshire ‘defence friendly’.

Armed Forces champions continue to be active across the Council’s workforce including within housing, revenues and benefits and cost of living enquiries should veterans present themselves.

The Armed Forces Officer has helped to keep the council’s housing teams up to date with legislation and new Government actions, notably:

- The Labour Government Homes for Heroes aim to end veteran homelessness
- Removing the former local connection need for all military in perpetuity



E-learning for Senior Housing Officers



Actions to date:

- ✓ Supported the revitalised Lincolnshire Armed Forces Community Covenant
- ✓ Supported and worked with the new shared services postholder
- ✓ Co-ordination of new e-learning module
- ✓ Helped develop an Aims and Objectives Document



Actions for 2025:

- AF Covenant re-signing and Covenant aims update
- Work with shared services postholder on charity / organisational guide for a shared website
- Work with shared services postholder to produce a Defence Transition Guide
- Work with Economic Development colleagues to include defence in February Skills Fairs

Corporate objectives:

- Sustainable South Kesteven
- Enabling Economic Opportunity

Heritage

SKDC has been successful in securing £147,550 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund - funding an 18-month ‘Soldiers from the Sky’ project. The project has also drawn £15,000 in match funding from the UKSPF.

It will illustrate the little-known backstories of airborne forces from three nations - Britain, America and Poland - in the district in the build-up D Day and Arnhem.

The bid represents a major opportunity to advocate for defence, building a visitor trail of international importance with a new website, information boards, a smartphone app and a Remembrance art project with schools for 2025.

The trail focuses on delivering economic benefits to the district, promoting visitor sites with airborne links, accommodation and rural retailers.

The Armed Forces Officer is co-ordinating the project with the support of various teams within SKDC and external Stakeholders and partners.

The 80th anniversaries of both D-Day and Arnhem have been marked with events, publicity and literature.

New collaboration with the universities of Oxford and Lincoln, plus military organisations, delivered a three-day Digging Market Garden archaeological excavation at Fulbeck Manor, a key site for British First Airborne in 1944.

Volunteers discovered WW2 memorabilia and proved the value of and interest in excavating sites with military heritage.

Actions to date:

- ✓ D-Day commemoration at RAF Saltby with visiting American military personnel
- ✓ Launch of Soldiers from the Sky project in August
- ✓ Airborne Tulip Memorials - 2,400 bulbs planted across the district
- ✓ Support for 156 Parachute Brigade Reunion RAF Saltby
- ✓ Attendance at Visitor Economy networking event promoting the airborne trail

Actions for 2025:

- VE and VJ Day commemorations
- Delivery of the Soldiers from the Sky project
- Work with tourism colleagues to support visitor sites in promotion of a new visitor trail
- Attendance at British Tourism and Travel Show - March 2025
- Celebrate flowering of Airborne Tulip Memorials



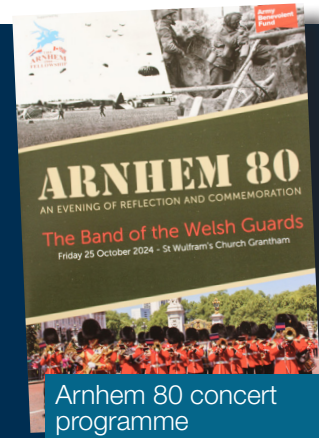
Authentic American jeeps on display at Saltby D-Day commemoration



Digging Market Garden participants celebrate event conclusion



Tulip planting at Wyndham Park with Street Scene



Arnhem 80 concert programme



Soldiers From The Sky Launch at Fulbeck Manor



Corporate objectives:

- Effective Council
- Enabling Economic opportunities

Advocacy

South Kesteven District Council was awarded Gold Award status in 2022, with renewal due in 2027, conferring a duty on holders to advocate for the defence community.

In its widest sense this includes public displays of council support, such as our flag raising and Remembrance activities.

It also allows SKDC to share good ideas and initiatives with neighbouring local authorities.

SKDC supported Armed Forces Week in June with a series of articles, including

a spotlight on the numerous veterans employed in the council’s Street Scene and Waste and Recycling teams.

Ex-military also play key roles in our CCTV monitoring, economic development and property teams.

Lincolnshire’s Community Covenant Partnership is critical in advocating support for defence across its 40-plus participants representing diverse sectors including health and education.



Cllr Johnson (centre) with David and Shelley Bathgate, Lt Col Duncan Lowe (standing right) and Army colleagues



Royal British Legion collection of Remembrance wreaths and crosses



The Amazing True Story of Flight Lieutenant John Henry Smythe

Actions to date:

- ✓ Partnered with Army Benevolent Fund to deliver Arnhem 80 concert
- ✓ Armed Forces Week; a programme of PR and events
- ✓ Remembrance commemorations
- ✓ Highlighted ethnically diverse troops’ wartime service – Black History month

Actions for 2025:

- Jobs board for Grantham HIVE information channel, shared nationally
- Heritage Trail information boards
- Commemorative events
- Poppies on Pebbles schools Remembrance programme

Former military now serving the council



Engagement

The Armed Forces Officer continues to engage at county, regional and national levels to keep the Council abreast of best practice and new initiatives.

Monthly meetings with Army representatives at Prince William of Gloucester Barracks discuss and deliver mutually beneficial engagement events such as the Chairman's charity cheque presentation to Military versus Cancer.

Military commemorations were flagged up as potential activities for applicants to the SK Community Fund.

The Armed Forces Officer regularly supplies information on veteran and serving military updates to the Grantham

HIVE, Prince William of Gloucester Barracks information channel shared across all UK military sites.

The Amed Forces Officer organised senior military attendance from the Life Guards, Capt Reginald Wyndham's Regiment, at the 100th anniversary of Wyndham Park's naming in his honour.

The Hive information pack contains SKDC's cost of living and debt advice documents produced by the council's staff Armed Forces champions.

Council champions from housing, revenues and benefits and cost of living attended the Veterans and Families event, a valuable networking and advice forum.



Centenary naming ceremony in Wyndham Park



D-Day Darlings funded by SK Community Fund to sing at Caythorpe's 216 Parachute Signals reunion

Actions to date:

- ✓ Prince William of Gloucester monthly engagement meeting
- ✓ SKDC Chairman inspecting troops at Pass Off Parade
- ✓ Co-ordinated military presence at Wyndham Park 100 year naming centenary
- ✓ Use of poppy falls for Remembrance memorial and service

Actions for 2025:

- Engage volunteers in Soldiers from the Sky programme activities
- Develop 'Walkshops' (wellbeing talks and walks) for SKDC ex-military employees
- Explore future opportunities for community archaeology digs



Cllr Paul Fellows inspecting Reserves at Prince William of Gloucester Barracks



SKDC representation on Veterans Support Day



Veterans Support Day in October 2024

Contact Details

Alternative formats are available on request:
audio, large print and Braille

South Kesteven District Council
01476 406080

✉ communications@southkesteven.gov.uk

🌐 www.southkesteven.gov.uk



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

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Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2024/25

WORK PROGRAMME

| REPORT TITLE | OFFICER | PURPOSE | ORIGINATED/COMMIITEE HISTORY DATE(S) | CORPORATE PRIORITY |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| 20 March 2025 | | | | |
| Crime Disorder, Local Partnership working and CCTV update (Presentation) | Ayeisha Kirkham | | | |
| Cost of Living Update | Claire Moses (Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer and Community)) | It will be intended for these to be every 6 months from 2025 | 1 February 2024 Last reported 16 October 2024 | Enabling Economic Opportunity Effective Council |
| Customer Service Update – Q3 position | Claire Moses (Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer and Community)) | To provide an update regarding Customer Service performance and specific activities impacting on Customer Service | 5 July 2023 | Effective Council |
| Customer Experience Strategy 2025 to 2028 | Claire Moses (Head of Service (Revenues, Benefits, Customer and Community)) | Committee to review and provide feedback on the draft Customer Experience Strategy 2025 to 2028 as part of stakeholder consultation | | |
| South Kesteven Health and Wellbeing Action Plan Update | Bethany Goodman (Physical Activity and Wellbeing Lead) | To provide an update on the progress and delivery of the South Kesteven Health and Wellbeing Action Plan. | | |

| REPORT TITLE | OFFICER | PURPOSE | ORIGINATED/COMMIITEE HISTORY DATE(S) | CORPORATE PRIORITY |
|---|---------|--------------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| LCC Health Scrutiny Committee update | | Update provided by Cllr Morgan | | |

Unscheduled Items

| Report title | Issue | Originated | Corporate Priority |
|--|--|------------|------------------------|
| Car Parking | | | |
| Impact of the Forbidden Forest Festival on South Kesteven's rural communities | | | |
| Crime Disorder Meeting | | | |
| Parish and Town Council liaison | To provide a review of the Parish and Town Council Conference | | Connecting Communities |

The Committee's Remit

The remit of the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be to work alongside Cabinet Members to assist with the development of policy and to scrutinise decisions in respect of, but not limited to:

- Allotments
- Anti-social behaviour, community safety and local policing
- Benefit claims
- Community engagement & cohesion
- Community funding and volunteering
- Community right to bid
- Community well-being
- Customer services
- Disabled facilities grant
- Equality and diversity
- Parish and town council liaison
- Public conveniences
- Safeguarding and individual wellbeing
- Shop front designs and funding
- Street furniture

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