

JULY 2024 - IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT – COUNTY WIDE INIATIVE

Age UK Herts, North Herts CVS, and Hertfordshire County Council Public Health Join Forces to Make Hertfordshire Age-Friendly

Age UK Hertfordshire, in collaboration with North Herts CVS and Hertfordshire County Council Public Health, are proud to announce a groundbreaking initiative to transform Hertfordshire into an Age-Friendly Community, making it the only 2-tier authority currently aiming for accreditation. This joint venture will involve working with residents, local organisations, government bodies, and the national Centre for Ageing Better with the aim of ensuring older people in Hertfordshire are valued, and able to live well throughout later life, with a vision to make Hertfordshire the best county to age in.

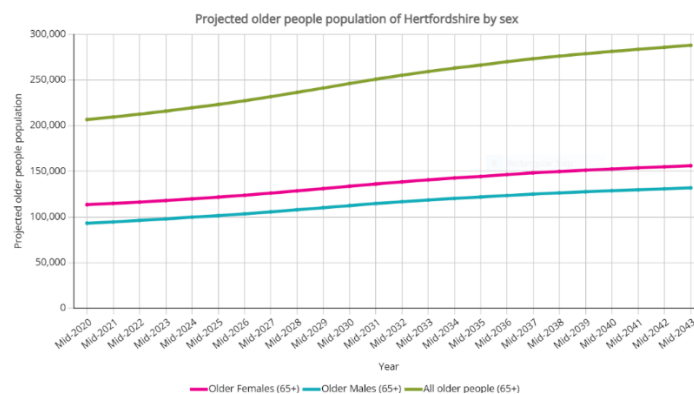


What Does It Mean to Be an Age-Friendly Community?

An Age-friendly Community is a supportive environment where individuals can enjoy a healthy and fulfilling later life. A community where the physical and social environments are designed to enable older residents to participate fully in society by enjoying good health, engaging in meaningful activities, and actively contributing to their communities for as long as possible. This involves adapting structures and services to be accessible and inclusive, in addition to challenging ageism.

Why Is This Initiative Necessary?

By 2043, it is estimated that over 23% of Hertfordshire residents will be over 65 years old, up from the current 18%.



This demographic shift makes it crucial to address the challenges and opportunities of an ageing society. Creating an Age-Friendly Hertfordshire will not only improve the quality of life for our older residents but also benefit the entire community by fostering a more inclusive, supportive, and vibrant environment. This initiative can reduce health and social care costs and social isolation, improve mental health, increase volunteers, and stimulate local economies by encouraging older adults to remain active and engaged.

Addressing Inequalities

In Hertfordshire, significant inequalities impact various communities differently. Socio-economic factors, ethnicity, and geographical location contribute to disparities in health and quality of life.



Residents in more deprived areas experience lower life expectancy and poorer health outcomes. Ethnic minorities often face additional barriers, including limited access to healthcare. By highlighting these disparities, we can work together to address and mitigate inequalities, fostering a more equitable Hertfordshire for all.

Locally, "Ageing well" is one of our Integrated Care Strategy priorities and has support of the leader of Herts County Council as well as being championed by the council's cabinet lead for Adults, Health & Wellbeing. As the Hertfordshire population continues to age, it will become even more important to ensure we are all able to stay as healthy, happy and independent as possible.

Cath Fenton, Consultant in Public Health, Herts County Council

"This is a fabulous initiative to support and accommodate the needs of our ageing population. It will facilitate change within our communities, workplaces and public spaces to be more accessible, inclusive and respectful of the diverse needs and abilities of older individuals."

How Can You Get Involved?

This is a collaborative project, and we need your help! The first 12 months we will engage residents and local organisations to understand our current status and what's needed to make Hertfordshire an "age friendly" county. We will conduct a resident survey to hear directly from older people. From this, an evaluation report will summarise our strengths and opportunities, whilst an action plan will identify what's needed to ensure sustainable movement towards an "age friendly" status.

We invite residents, community groups, businesses, and voluntary sector organisations to join us in this vital endeavour. Let us know about any projects currently underway that align with our goals, or your interest in including older people in future strategic planning. Your insights, experiences, and support are crucial to making Hertfordshire the best county to age in.

How to Register Your Interest

Email: Agefriendly@ageukherts.org.uk

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Together, we can make a positive difference and create a community where everyone, regardless of age, can thrive.