AGEING IN URBAN ENVIRONMENTS: Developing age-friendly cities

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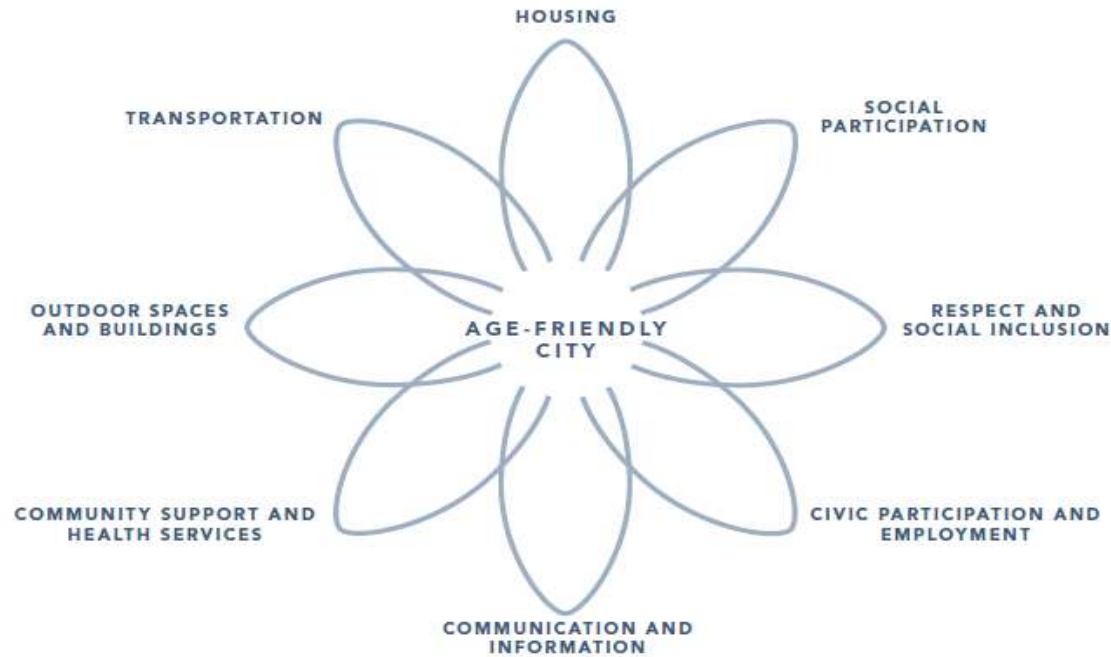
The University of Manchester

TOPICS COVERED

- What is an age-friendly city?
- Why the debate on age-friendly cities and communities (AFCC)?
- What is the case for AFCC?
- Manchester as an 'age-friendly city'
- Partners in the age-friendly Manchester programme
- Contribution of the research
- What are the key policy questions for AFCC to address?

DEVELOPMENT OF AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES/COMMUNITIES

- Concept developed by World Health Organization. Part of a policy to develop supportive urban environments as a way of encouraging '**active ageing** by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age' (WHO, 2007)

- Launch of global network of age-friendly cities in 2010 – currently 258 cities and communities involved in the network

- Manchester first UK city to join the network

WHAT MAKES A CITY AGE-FRIENDLY ?

HOUSING

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

TRANSPORTATION

AGE-FRIENDLY CITY

OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES

CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

WHO GUIDE (2007)

"**Manchester has established itself at an international level as a leading authority in developing one of the most comprehensive strategic programmes on ageing.**"
John Beard, Director, Department of Ageing and Life Course, World Health Organisation

WHY THE DEBATE ON AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES?

- **Demographic drivers**

  - 2030
    - *Two-thirds* of the world's population living in cities.
    - *One-quarter* of urban populations in high income countries 60 and over.

  - 2050
    - *One-quarter* of urban populations in less developed countries 60 and over.

WHY THE DEBATE ON AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES?

- ## Urban drivers

  - ▪ Development of 'world' or global cities with commanding economic and political influence.

  - ▪ Emergence of 'shrinking' / 'distressed' cities

  - ▪ Cities characterised by extremes of wealth and poverty (Burdett and Sudjic, 2011).

  - ▪ Inequality between cities of different sizes and economic specializations (Davis, 2006)

  - ▪ Importance of rural-urban migration influencing age-structure of cities (e.g. Mumbai, Shangai, Mexico City).

WHY SHOULD WE BE CONCERNED WITH DEVELOPING AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES?

- Research evidence on impact of urban environment on social exclusion/inclusion

- Importance of neighbourhood in everyday life

- Neighbourhood as a source for building social connections

- Opportunities to guarantee human rights

The case for age-friendly cities?

- Challenges in urban areas

  - **80% of the time of people aged over 70 is spent at home or the immediate environment**; hence the importance of a high quality physical environment (Wahl et al., 2012).

  - Contrast between *ageing in place (>40 years)* and highly *mobile* populations (<5 years).

  - Fear of Crime/Feelings of insecurity (despite low levels of victimisation) may limit participation in 'normal daily life': **33% -50% of older people may feel unsafe moving around their neighbourhood at night** (Scharf et al., 2002; De Donder et al., 2010).

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  - **Extreme weather conditions** and impact on older people in urban areas (Klinenburg, 2002; Ogg, 2005; Muramatsu and Akiyama, 2011).
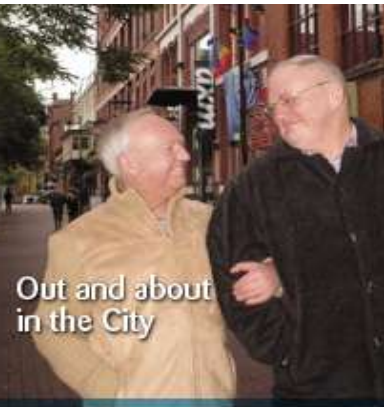
The case for age-friendly cities?

- Build on benefits of urban areas

  - **Access to Amenities and Services:**
    Research suggests higher levels of social and cultural participation for those with access to facilities such as corner shops, libraries and parks'

  - **Specialist resources for minority groups** – may be of particular importance in old age (Buffel et al., 2011).

  - **Broader range of social networks**
    – importance of strangers & neighbours as well as friends and family (Gardner, 2011)

  - **Innovation in and creativity of cities** e.g. smart city movement (Ratti and Townsend, 2011)

AGE-FRIENDLY MANCHESTER PROGRAMME

- Age-friendly **neighbourhoods**
- Age-friendly **services**
- **Communication** and **engagement**
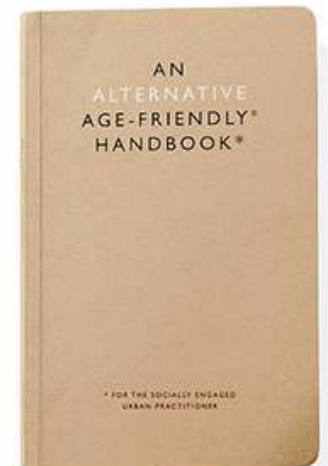- **Governance**
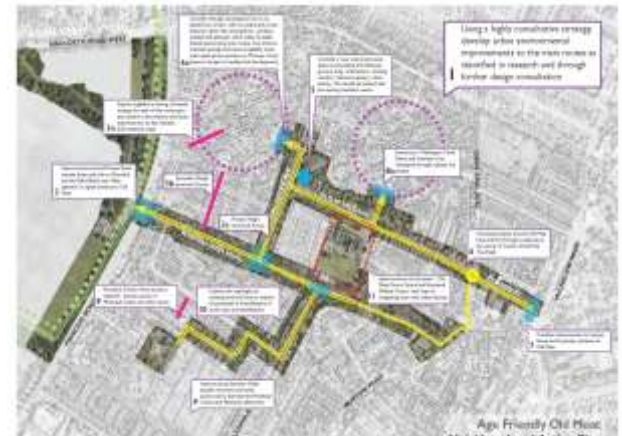- **Research** and **innovation**

AGE-FRIENDLY MANCHESTER PROGRAMME A PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY

- MANCHESTER CITY **COUNCIL** – AGE-FRIENDLY MANCHESTER
- MANCHESTER SCHOOL OF **ARCHITECTURE**
- SOUTHWAY **HOUSING** TRUST
- UK **URBAN AGEING** CONSORTIUM
- **COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS**
- **VOLUNTARY SECTOR**
- MANCHESTER INSTITUTE FOR COLLABORATIVE **RESEARCH** ON AGEING

RESEARCH PROJECTS

1. A RESEARCH AND EVALUATION FRAMEWORK FOR AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES

2. OLD MOAT NEIGHBOURHOOD RESEARCH PROJECT

3. AN ALTERNATIVE AGE-FRIENDLY HANDBOOK

RESEARCH PROJECTS

4. RESEARCHING AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES: Stories from **older people as co-investigators**

Film 'Researching age-friendly cities' featuring older co-researchers who were involved as experts and actors in all stages of the research project

Researching Age-Friendly Cities (2015) - Full Film

films@manchester

Subscribe 52

Winner of the Making a Difference award 2015

Book focusing on the advantages and disadvantages of training and working with older residents as co-researchers in examining the age-friendliness of their neighbourhood

WHAT ARE THE KEY POLICY QUESTIONS FOR AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES AND COMMUNITIES TO ADDRESS?

1. Cities are viewed as key drivers for economic success – 'the urban renaissance' – but can they integrate ageing populations as well?

2. Can the resources of the city be used to improve quality of life in old age – only 1 in 20 older households may have the money to take advantage of what great cities have to offer.

3. Can cities be designed in the interests of all age groups?

WHAT ARE THE KEY POLICY QUESTIONS FOR AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES AND COMMUNITIES TO ADDRESS?

4. Investigate new ways of securing participation of older people in regeneration and planning.

5. New approaches to bringing together urban designers, developers, architects with older people to assess

- accessibility of built environment
- location and accessibility of services
- development of secure public space

6. Development of *rights to the city*

- Cities viewed as drivers of nation's economic and cultural success but often to the detriment of those outside the labour market.

- Ensuring full rights of older people as 'urban citizens' essential to achieving an age-friendly city including:
  - the 'right' to *appropriate* urban space
  - the 'right' to *participate* in decision-making surrounding the production of urban space
  - the 'right' to *shape* strategies for urban planning and regeneration

UN/HABITAT 2010

'Cities are...vehicles for social change: places where new values, beliefs and ideas can forge a new type of growth that **promotes rights and opportunities for all members of society**….
the concept of an '**inclusive' city**, or **a 'city for all'**, encompasses the social and economic benefits of **greater equality**, promoting positive outcomes for each and every individual in society'.

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More info

Resources (Alternative handbook, research guide to working with older people as co-researchers, Old Moat report, ...) can be found at:

www.micra.manchester.ac.uk

Or email:

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Thank you for your attention

Questions?