



KILKENNY AGE FRIENDLY STRATEGY 2025-2028

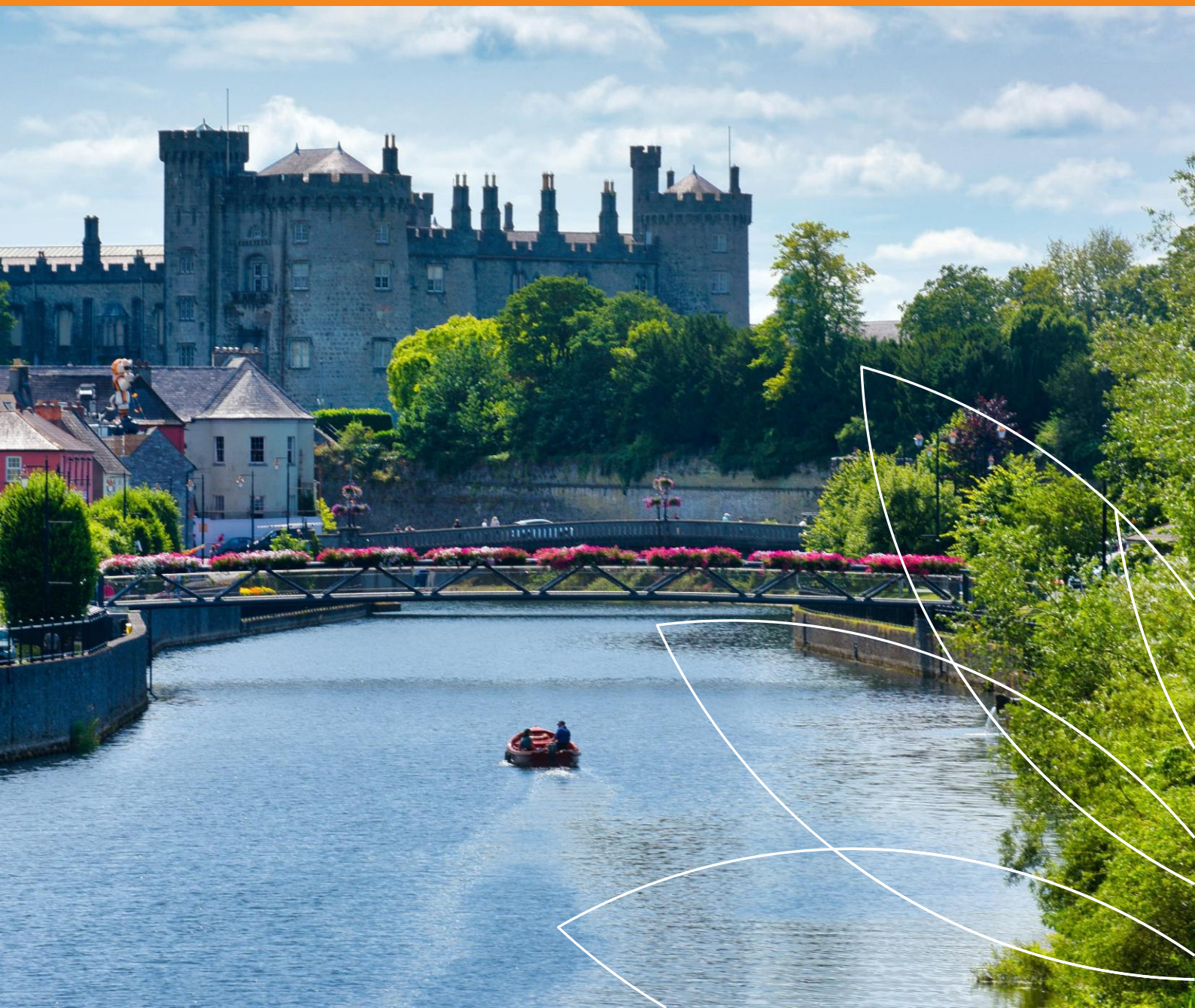






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Foreword by the Chairperson of the Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance



Kilkenny County Council is fully committed to the National Age Friendly Programme. Along with our Age Friendly colleagues in other Local Authorities Kilkenny County Council support the programme at local, regional, and national levels. This is the third Age Friendly Strategy for Kilkenny and it presents an excellent opportunity to enhance the quality of life for older people in Kilkenny. Kilkenny County Council aim to achieve several outcomes that will facilitate the creation of a more age-friendly county.

To realise this Age Friendly Strategy Kilkenny County Council conducted community consultations in each of Kilkenny's Municipal Districts which gave the opportunity to explore what the issues are for older people in the county and how they can be addressed. All this evidence has been collated and developed collaboratively in this strategy. These insights and feedback have been invaluable in shaping a plan grounded in the real experiences and needs of older adults. Kilkenny County Council engaged with the various agencies and organisations which form the Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance and garnered their support in identifying the lead partner to drive the implementation of the actions set out in this Kilkenny Age Friendly Strategy. The vision for this strategy is to not only build on the successes to-date, it is to ensure a more socially inclusive age friendly approach throughout the county.

Life expectancy is increasing, therefore the need to ensure that Kilkenny becomes a great place to live and in which to grow old is increasing too. Kilkenny County Council and the Alliance members will continue to adapt and respond to the challenges and changing needs and endeavour to provide the necessary supports. The physical, social and cultural environment impacts hugely on how we live. The onus is on all of society to adapt in a manner that provides older people with the physical, social, economic, and cultural opportunities to ensure they enjoy the best quality of life. The Age Friendly Alliance will seek to ensure that this strategy achieves measurable outcomes for older people that demonstrates improvements in the quality of life for all. It is clear that no one agency can improve these outcomes, progress requires various agencies to continue to work collaboratively to improve the lives of older people.

This strategy represents the next chapter in our ongoing efforts to make Kilkenny County a great place where people of all ages, particularly our older residents can thrive. This strategy focuses on several key areas including housing, transport, health services, social inclusion and safety. It aims to foster an environment that supports active, healthy aging while addressing barriers that may limit participation in community life. Kilkenny County Council is committed to implementing this strategy in partnership with the Age Friendly Alliance, state agencies and local communities. Together we will work together to ensure Kilkenny County continues to be a great place to grow older, where services are accessible, communities are connected, and older people feel valued and empowered.

Lar Power
Chief Executive, Kilkenny County Council

Welcome message from the Chairperson of Kilkenny Older People's Council

Kilkenny Older Peoples Council (OPC) established as part of Kilkenny's Age Friendly Programme central role is 'to be the voice of older people' throughout Kilkenny City and County. The OPC have been involved in the programme since its inception in 2010 and have actively engaged with previous Age Friendly strategies.

The OPC are delighted to be part of this new Age Friendly Strategy and will work to support its implementation. The success of the strategy is the collaborative work of all agencies on the Alliance, both statutory and non-statutory. It is this cohesive and collective work that ensures the delivery of the OPC will contribute and are dedicated to ensure that this progress continues and Kilkenny older people's lives are enhanced as they grow old within our city and county.



Each action in the strategy identifies a lead agency from the Age Friendly Alliance. The Older People's Council along with all members of the Alliance are committed to ensuring the age friendly programme continues to grow and make Kilkenny a great place to grow old for the increasing population of older people in the City and County.

Mary O'Hanlon
Chairperson, Kilkenny Older People's Council



From left: Members of Kilkenny Older People's Council Executive Committee; Kathleen Meagher, Michael Delahunty, Nickey Brennan; Age Friendly Ambassador, Mary O'Hanlon and Betty Dewberry

1. Introduction

This document presents the Kilkenny Age Friendly Strategy 2025-2028. This is the third Kilkenny Age Friendly Strategy, the first strategy being launched in 2010, and it demonstrates the continued commitment by Kilkenny County Council and local partner organisations and groups to making Kilkenny an Age Friendly County and City.

Kilkenny has made significant progress under the previous two strategies, developing a wide range of best practice initiatives and being recognised nationally for its leadership in age inclusion. This strategy seeks to build on these achievements and sets out an ambitious Action Plan that is focused and achievable and will ensure that the Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme continues to be a model of best practice.

This strategy document incorporates the global, national and local background and context to Age Friendly Programmes, the key findings from the research and consultations for this strategy. The Action Plan that has been devised to continue to make Kilkenny an Age Friendly place to live in and to visit.

Age Friendly Programmes – from the Global to the Local provides a summary of how and why Age Friendly Programmes have been developed across the world by the World Health Organisation and also the policy framework that supports these programmes at global, national and local level.

Kilkenny's Age Friendly Journey acknowledges the impressive achievements of the Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme over the past 15 years, highlighting the many examples of best practice Age Friendly initiatives developed locally.

Findings from the Research and Consultations presents the key messages and findings in terms of the main issues and challenges affecting older people. These were identified from the research and consultations that were undertaken as part of the development of this strategy.

The Action Plan contains the strategy's Action Plan outlining 27 different strategic actions under the eight Age Friendly Themes identified by the World Health Organisation. The strategic actions are designed to respond to the main issues identified in the research and consultations and also seek to build on the achievements and local partnerships established over the past 15 years.

Implementing the Strategy – Partnership and Collaboration describes the overall approach to implementing the strategy through the Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance including the ongoing monitoring and review mechanisms to ensure that the strategy and its actions are being progressed effectively.



2. Age Friendly Programmes – from the Global to the Local

The Global Age Friendly Network

Age Friendly Programmes have been in place across the world for nearly two decades. They first commenced in 2006 as part of the World Health Organization's (WHO) response to population ageing at a global level. Between 1974 and 2024 the proportion of the world's population aged 65 or older almost doubled from 5.5% to 10.3% and it is projected that between 2024 and 2074 this figure will double again to 20.7% or 1.4 billion people.¹

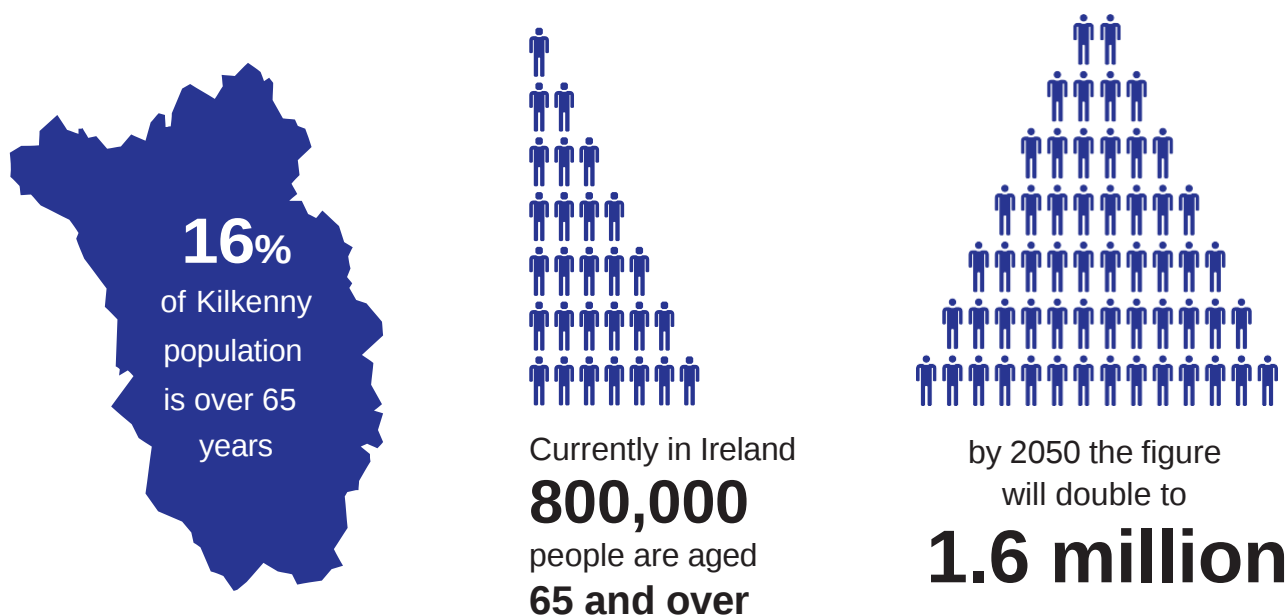
Ireland shares this pattern of population ageing. Today there are over 800,000 people aged 65 and over and it is projected that by 2050 this figure will double to 1.6 million. In Kilkenny there are currently 17,056 people aged 65 and over which is just over 16% of the population.²

Since 2007 Age Friendly Programmes have become increasingly important in helping countries to respond to the challenges and opportunities that arise with population ageing. As people continue to live healthier and longer lives we need to strive to ensure that our public services and our communities are accessible, inclusive and support the full participation of older people.

The World Health Organisation defines an Age Friendly community as:



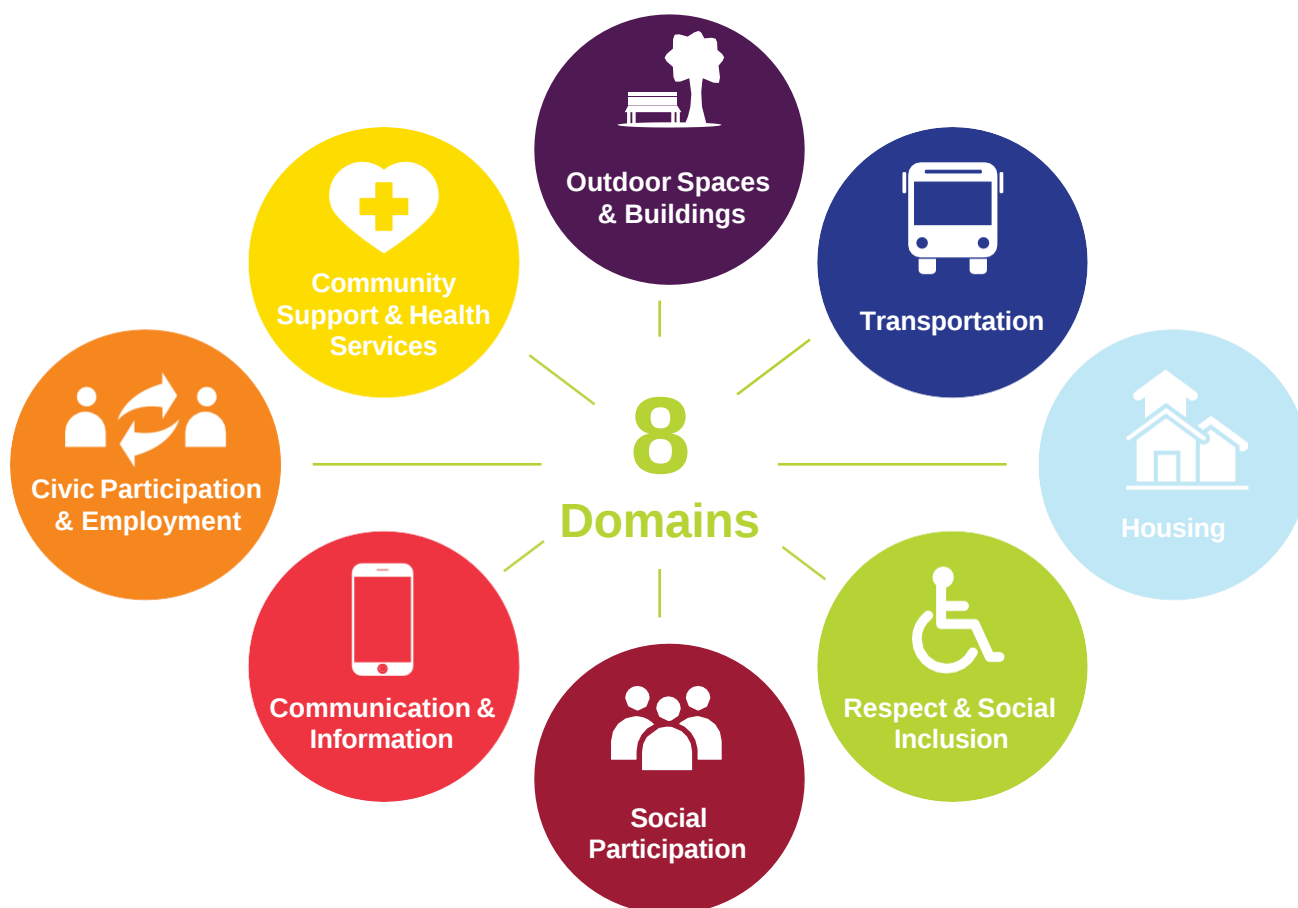
“An age-friendly community encourages active ageing by optimising opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age.”



[1] World Health Organisation (WHO), October 2024

[2] Central Statistics Office (CSO), Census 2022

The World Health Organisation provides a common framework for the design of Age Friendly Programmes which is set out under eight different themes.



World Health Organisation Age Friendly Themes

Ireland is very much part of the global Age Friendly movement and in many ways is viewed as a genuine leader and a champion of Age Friendly Programmes. Since 2009 Age Friendly Programmes have been developed in all local authority areas across the country. This widespread level of support was acknowledged by the World Health Organisation in 2019 when it officially recognised Ireland as the first Age Friendly country in the world.

At national level Age Friendly Programmes are promoted and supported by Age Friendly Ireland, a national shared service hosted by Meath County Council. Age Friendly Ireland has been central in raising the awareness and profile of Age Friendly issues and in developing best practice approaches to achieving greater inclusion of older peoples across a wide range of sectors. Best practice guides and toolkits that have been developed include Age Friendly Towns, Age Friendly Housing, Age Friendly Business Recognition Scheme, Age Friendly Libraries, Age Friendly Hospitals and Primary Care Centres and many other sectors.

Age Friendly Programmes in all local authority areas also have two essential local structures that support their ongoing development and implementation. These structures are the Age Friendly Alliance and the Older People's Council. Age Friendly Alliances are broad-based structures that reflect the eight WHO Age Friendly Themes and bring together different organisations and groups that can support local Age Friendly initiatives. A list of the members of the Kilkenny Age Friendly

Alliance is included as an appendix to this strategy document.

Older People's Councils represent the voice of local older people and play a key role in Age Friendly Programmes. The membership of Older People's Councils is made up of individual older people and representatives of older people groups such as active retirement groups. Older People's Councils support the development and implementation of local Age Friendly Programmes by identifying priority issues for local older people, advocating for improvements and providing the lived experience perspective of older people in the design of Age Friendly initiatives.

Policy Framework

A strong policy framework exists at international, national and local level that supports the development of Age Friendly Programmes. The United Nations has declared 2021-2030 the *UN Decade of Healthy Ageing*, an initiative that seeks to improve the lives of older people through collective action in four main areas as follows:

- Combating Ageism
- Providing Integrated Care
- Creating Age Friendly Environments
- Access to Long Term Care

The *UN Decade of Healthy Ageing* is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals and a commitment by all Member States to improve the lives of current and future generations of older people.

In Ireland the National Positive Ageing Strategy has been in place since 2013 and is centred on four National Goals.³

National Positive Ageing Strategy

Goal 1 - Remove barriers to participation and provide more opportunities for the continued involvement of people as they age in all aspects of cultural, economic and social life.

Goal 2 - Support people as they age to maintain, improve or manage their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Goal 3 - Enable people to age with confidence, security and dignity in their own homes and communities for as long as possible.

Goal 4 - Support and use research about people as they age to better inform policy responses to population ageing in Ireland.

[3] World Health Organisation (WHO), October 2024

Successive Programmes for Government have committed to supporting the goals of the *National Ageing Strategy* and also other key policies in the area of positive and healthy ageing such as the *Healthy Ireland Framework* and *Sláintecare*. The current Programme for Government 2025 Securing Ireland's Future commits to the continued implementation of Age Friendly Strategies and support to the Age Friendly Ireland national office. There are key commitments in areas such as housing, community inclusion and health including the ongoing work of the Commission on Care for Older People which will examine the provision of health and social supports for older people and make recommendations to the government for their strategic development.

At local level, Age Friendly goals and objectives are reflected in both the current *Kilkenny Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2028* and the *Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027*.



National Network of Older People's Council Convention 2024 hosted by Kilkenny County Council

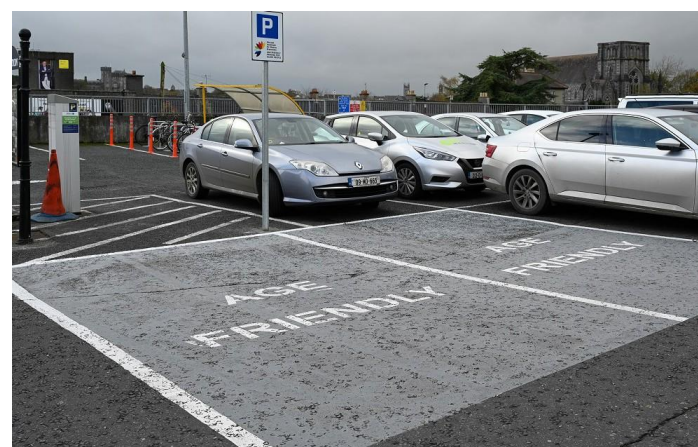
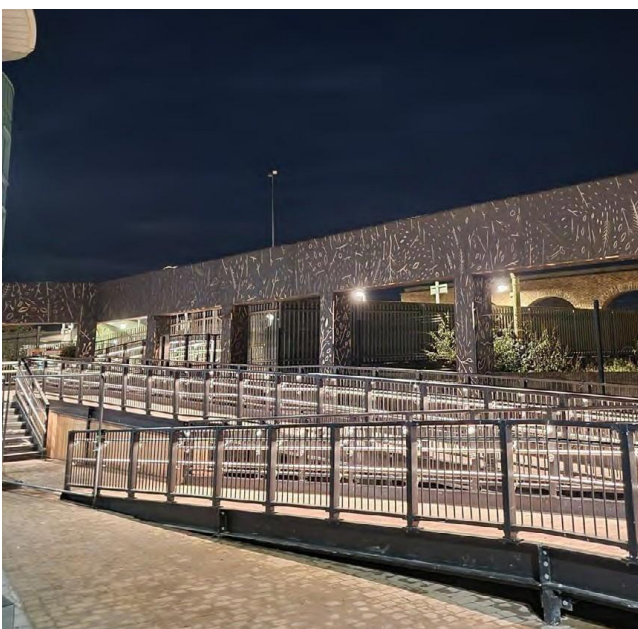


The Kilkenny Local Economic and Community Plan 2023-2028 has a number of Goals and Objectives that seek to support the greater inclusion and participation of older people and align well with the Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme and this strategy. These include objectives in the areas of accessible environments, accessible public services, addressing loneliness and isolation and supporting the inclusion of older people from all cultures and communities.

Similarly, the Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027 incorporates a clear focus on positive ageing and commitments to making Kilkenny City and County more inclusive and accessible for older people. Specifically, the plan commits to continued work in the areas of Universal Design and Age Friendly urban planning and increased Age Friendly parking, seating and other public amenities.



Linda Kirwan, Kilkenny Age Friendly Healthy Homes Coordinator presentation to older people at the Age Friendly Information Programme 2024 held in the Mayfair Library



Mayfair Library with Age Friendly status; MacDonagh Junction, Ireland's first Age Friendly Train Station; Pedestrian Bridge at MacDonagh Junction Train Station; Age Friendly Seating; Alison McGrath, Kilkenny County Council, Minister Mary Butler and Anne Marie Shortall, Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme Manager at the National Network of Older Peoples Council Convention 2024 and Age Friendly Car Parking

3. Kilkenny's Age Friendly Journey

This strategy is the third Kilkenny Age Friendly Strategy. The first Kilkenny Age Friendly Strategy was launched in 2010 by Hollywood legend Maureen O'Hara and since then Kilkenny has established a distinguished track record in developing best practice Age Friendly initiatives.

The second Kilkenny Age Friendly Strategy was launched in 2017 and like the first strategy, it brought together local agencies and older persons representative groups and provided a partnership approach to highlighting and addressing the main issues and challenges facing older people in Kilkenny.

Over the course of the previous two strategies Kilkenny's Age Friendly journey has been marked by an ambitious vision and a proactive approach to making Kilkenny an Age Friendly place to live in and to visit. Some of the notable achievements of the Kilkenny's Age Friendly journey over this period include:

Best Practice in Age Friendly Initiatives in County Kilkenny

- Kilkenny City was the first city in Ireland to officially receive Age Friendly status
- St. Luke's General Hospital was recognised as Ireland's first Age Friendly Hospital
- MacDonagh Train Station was recognised as Ireland's first Age Friendly Train Station
- The Ormonde Hotel Kilkenny was recognised as Ireland's first Age Friendly Hotel
- MacDonagh Junction Shopping Centre was recognised as Ireland's first Age Friendly Shopping Centre
- Age Friendly Libraries – all branches of Kilkenny Library Service have received Age Friendly status
- Kilkenny County Council hosted the Age Friendly Ireland National Network of Older Peoples Council Convention 2024
- Established strong Older People's Council

In addition to the above recognitions and achievements a wide range of best practice Age Friendly initiatives have also been successfully developed in Kilkenny under the two previous strategies including the Kilkenny Age Friendly Business Recognition Programme, Age Friendly Parking and Seating in the city and towns, Dementia Friendly programme and other initiatives.

The new strategy seeks to build on the progress and achievements of the previous two strategies and to maintain Kilkenny's track record of developing best practice Age Friendly initiatives. This will be achieved through continued partnership and collaboration with Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance members, Kilkenny Older People's Council and all other relevant stakeholders at local and national level.

4. Findings from the Research and Consultations

This section presents a summary of the main findings and key messages from the research and consultations undertaken for the Kilkenny Age Friendly Strategy. The research and consultation process included the following elements:

- Community consultation sessions in Kilkenny City and County
- Survey with participants at the community consultation sessions
- Consultations with stakeholder organisations, agencies and groups
- Literature review of Age Friendly research, policy and best practice resources

Details of the consultation process are outlined in Appendix 2.

The research and consultation process also included a review and incorporation of the findings from the *Having Your Say* report, a consultation report undertaken by Kilkenny Older People's Council in 2022. The preparation of the *Having Your Say* report included seven consultation sessions with older people across Kilkenny city and county utilising the WHO Age Friendly Themes.⁴

Key Messages for the Kilkenny Age Friendly Strategy

- Kilkenny is recognised locally and nationally as being **one of the strongest and most proactive** Age Friendly Programmes in the country. Its track record of leading out on best practice Age Friendly initiatives gives it a strong platform to develop and implement its third Age Friendly Strategy.
- The **core principles, vision and overall approach of the Age Friendly model is well** understood and valued by local agencies, organisations and stakeholder groups.
- There is a recognition and motivation at local and national level that Age Friendly Programmes should continue to broaden their engagement with older people from all communities with particular a particular emphasis on **strengthening engagement with older people in minority and marginalised communities.**



Community Consultation for the Age Friendly Strategy

[4] *Having Your Say*, Kilkenny Older Person's Council, 2022

Main Issues and Challenges Facing Older People in Kilkenny

Isolation and Loneliness was the most common issue identified across all elements of the research and consultations. Isolation is commonplace and complex with many different factors contributing to it, including the shrinking of family and social networks, health issues and lack of transport. Isolation can have negative impacts on a person's mental and physical health and undermine their capacity to engage in community life and pursue active, healthy lifestyles.



One of the music sessions as part of the 'Live Music Events in Retirement Homes' initiative

Accessing Services was a commonly highlighted issue in the consultations. This is a broad ranging issue that intersects with other issues such as access to information and digital skills. The consultations highlighted that many older people are finding accessing services increasingly challenging due to a general reduction in in-person customer service to provide practical guidance and assistance. This issue applies to a broad range of services including local authority and other public services, banking and public transport.

Access to Health Services was often highlighted as a specific area of concern for older people and while this relates to health services broadly, one area of particular concern highlighted in the consultations is the ever-increasing difficulty that older people are experiencing in accessing GP services.

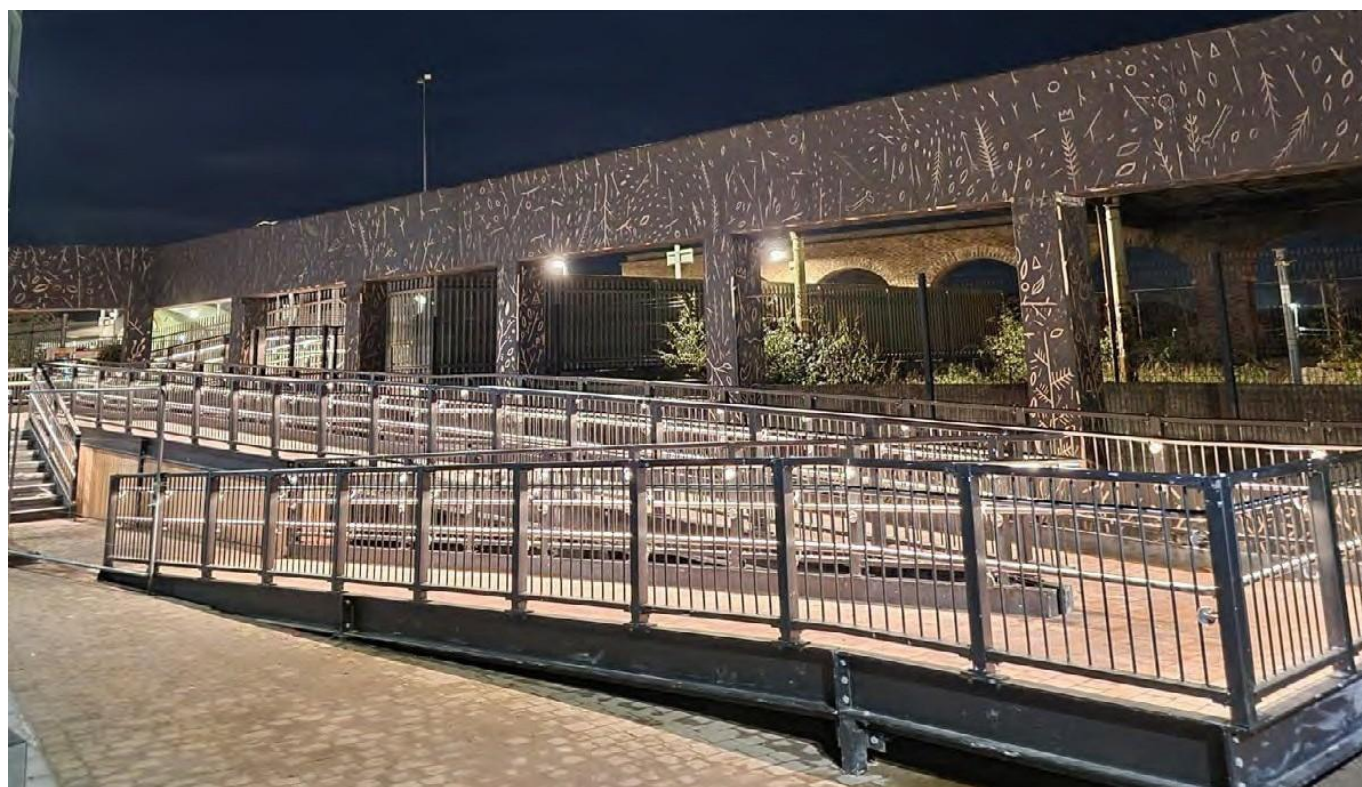
Digitalisation was regularly highlighted as a growing challenge for many older people. Whilst supports and good programmes in the area of teaching older people digital skills is widely acknowledged and valued, it is clear that many older people are finding the scale and pace of digitalisation very challenging and report feeling excluded from the online world.

Public Transport was also a commonly highlighted issue in the consultations. While not exclusively a rural issue, a lack of access to bus or other transport services was identified as a common challenge for older people living in smaller towns, villages and rural areas. The lack of access to transport can contribute directly to the isolation of older people and the complex challenges that it may bring. The significant improvements in bus services in Kilkenny City were widely acknowledged and welcomed and there is broad support and enthusiasm for the continued expansion of this service.

Access to Information was identified as a common and broad-ranging issue affecting older people. Whilst the issue of access to information is directly related to issues around accessing public services it is also much broader and relates the quality of information that older people have about public services and community activities that are available locally. A common issue reported in the consultations was that many older people are not aware of the range of services and activities in their areas and do not know where to look for this information. The consultations also indicated that there is a need and demand for information on services and activities to be accessible and written in 'Plain English'.

Housing was identified as a key area of concern for older people. There were many different aspects of housing identified as areas of concern such as difficulties in accessing housing adaptation grants; carrying out maintenance and repairs; and challenges with downsizing for people who wish to do so. However, the main housing issue raised in the consultations was the desire of older people to live in age friendly communities and housing developments where they are not isolated; have safe and comfortable housing; and have access to support services and social networks.

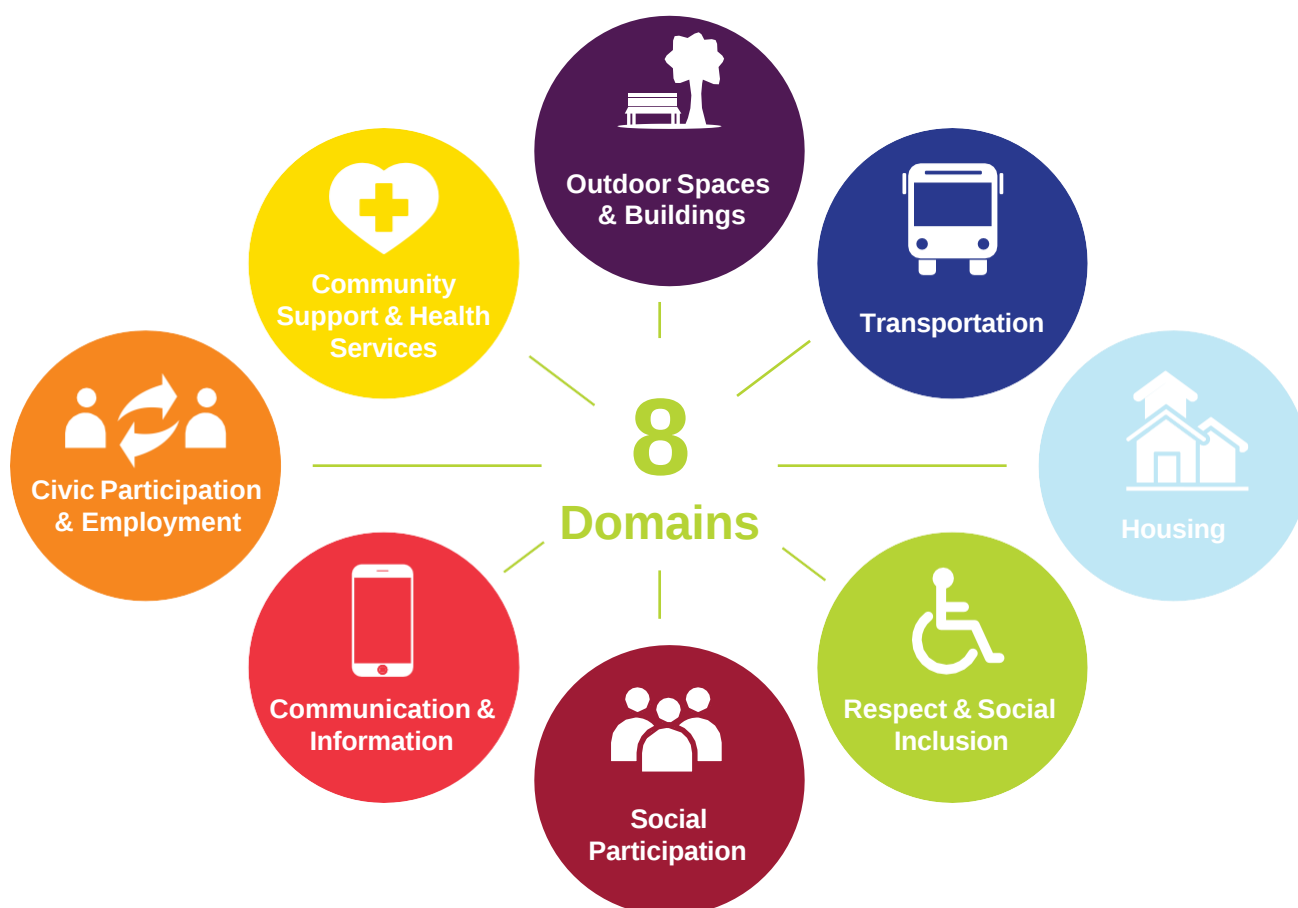
Accessible Environments was a common theme highlighted in the consultations. The built environment needs to be universally accessible in order for older people to be able to walk and travel safely and in comfort. This applies to a wide range of elements of our built environments including footpaths, pedestrian crossings, parking, public seating, public toilets and signage. The improvements that have been achieved in these areas in recent years through good age friendly planning and universal design are recognised and valued. This work needs to be continued and expanded throughout the city and county over the coming years.



Accessible Age Friendly pedestrian bridge connecting shopping centre with train station at MacDonagh Junction

5. Action Plan

In accordance with the National Age Friendly Ireland Age Friendly Strategy Guidelines the Action Plan is aligned to the eight Age Friendly Themes developed by the World Health Organisation. A range of broad actions are set out under each theme that seek to respond to the main issues, challenges and opportunities identified in the research and consultations.



World Health Organisation Age Friendly Themes

In addition to these eight themes, Kilkenny Age Friendly Strategy has also identified three Strategic Priorities that underpin the Action Plan and all of its actions. These Strategic Priorities were identified through the consultation process and reflect a number of core messages that emerged from the consultations that apply to all areas of strategy and how its actions are designed and implemented. The priorities will guide and support the strategy in achieving its overall vision of a more inclusive and caring society for older people.

Strategic Priorities for Kilkenny Age Friendly Strategy 2025-2028

Accessible Services

Ensure that public services are fully accessible to older people and that in-person customer service is available when required.

Diversity & Inclusion

Support greater engagement and participation of older people from minority and marginalised communities in Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme.

City & County Focus

Ensure an equitable and balanced spread of Age Friendly activities and resources across Kilkenny City and County.



Nickey Brennan, Kilkenny Age Friendly Ambassador and Lar Power, Chief Executive Kilkenny County Council and Chairperson of the Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance

Action Plan



Theme 1: Outdoor Spaces & Buildings

Action	Description	Lead Organisation & Supporting Partners
1.1 Support Age Friendly Planning	Ensure that age friendly principles, concepts and considerations are fully integrated into the main local plans and initiatives that guide the development of the built environment. This includes County Development Plans, Area Plans, Town Centre First Plans and Regeneration Plans.	Lead: Kilkenny County Council Supporting Partner: Age Friendly Ireland
1.2 Promote Best Practice in Age Friendly and Universal Design	Continued focus on integrating best practice in Age Friendly and Universal Design into all public realm projects. This will be achieved by ensuring that the required knowledge and expertise in these fields is embedded in the relevant planning and design teams in the local authority and that consultation and walkability audits with the OPC are carried out as part of the planning and design.	Lead: Kilkenny County Council Supporting Partners: Age Friendly Ireland Centre for Excellence in Universal Design
1.3 Promote Age Friendly Towns	Continuation of the roll out of the Age Friendly Towns model in selected towns around the county. This will involve walkability audits with local older people and collaborative planning with the local authority and other stakeholder organisations to agree specific actions and improvements in the relevant towns.	Lead: Kilkenny County Council
1.4 Increase Age Friendly Parking	Increase in the provision of Age Friendly Parking spaces in Kilkenny city and in towns throughout the county. Identify priority areas for new parking spaces through consultation with Kilkenny OPC, local business and other relevant stakeholders.	Lead: Kilkenny County Council Supporting Partner: Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce



Theme 2: Transportation

Action	Description	Lead Organisation & Supporting Partners
2.1 Improve Access to Public Transport in Rural Areas	Focus on improving public transport services in towns, villages and rural areas. The first step in this action will be to facilitate consultations with local transport providers to identify areas of greatest demand and need for improved transport services and to examine the feasibility of expanding existing services and introducing new services.	Lead: Kilkenny County Council Supporting Partners: National Transport Authority (NTA) Transport for Ireland (TFI) Kilkenny LEADER Partnership
2.2 Improve Bus Services in Kilkenny City	Support the continued expansion and improvement of the Kilkenny City Bus Service. From an Age Friendly perspective this will involve ensuring best practice in the provision of bus shelters with appropriate seating and signage.	Lead: Kilkenny County Council Supporting Partners: National Transport Authority (NTA)
2.3 Promote Sustainable Urban Mobility	Sustainable Urban Mobility has become central to transport and mobility planning in Kilkenny. This action will focus on ensuring that the needs of older people are fully integrated into all areas of mobility planning including train and bus services, cycling and walking infrastructure.	Lead: Kilkenny County Council
2.4 Disseminate Public Transport Information	Focus on disseminating clear and practical information on all public transport services that are available in Kilkenny city and county. This will be achieved through proactive engagement with Kilkenny Older People's Council, active retirement groups and other relevant community organisations and networks.	Lead: Kilkenny County Council Supporting Partners: National Transport Authority (NTA) Transport for Ireland (TFI) Kilkenny Public Participation Network



Theme 3: Housing

Action	Description	Lead Organisation & Supporting Partners
3.1 Support Age Friendly Housing Provision	Kilkenny County Council will continue to strive to include an appropriate number of Age Friendly housing units in all new housing developments in the city and county and in line with national policy <i>Housing Options for our Ageing Population</i> . This action will focus on exploring the scope and capacity to provide dedicated Age Friendly housing developments in Kilkenny based on best practice models from elsewhere in Ireland and overseas.	Lead: Kilkenny County Council Supporting Partner: Approved Housing Bodies
3.2 Support Access to Housing Assistance Schemes for Older People & Home Support	Continued delivery of Home Supports and Housing Assistance schemes including the Housing Aid for Older People Grant, the Housing Adaptation Grant and the Mobility Aid Grant. The action will also focus on ensuring that the information on these schemes is clear and accessible and that supports are in place to assist older people to access these schemes where required.	Lead: Kilkenny County Council Supporting Partners: Kilkenny Age Friendly Healthy Homes Coordinator HSE
3.3 Support the Age Friendly Healthy Homes Programme	The Age Friendly Healthy Homes Programme has become an important support service for older people. This action will focus on supporting the delivery of the programme through promotion and awareness-raising and facilitating cooperation and linkages between relevant service providers.	Lead: Kilkenny County Council Supporting Partner: Age Friendly Ireland



Theme 4: Respect & Social Inclusion

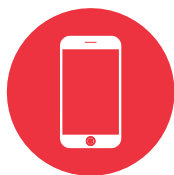
Action	Description	Lead Organisation & Supporting Partners
4.1 Support Engagement with Older People from All Communities	Greater inclusion of older people from minority and disadvantaged communities is a priority for the Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme. Provide an increased focus on engagement and outreach activities with older people in minority and disadvantaged communities in partnership with community development and social inclusion organisations and groups.	Lead: Kilkenny Public Participation Network Supporting Partners: Kilkenny County Council Kilkenny LEADER Partnership Kilkenny Older People's Council
4.2 Develop Intergenerational Projects	This action will focus on creating new intergenerational projects between older people and younger people. These projects will explore areas like skills exchange; heritage & culture; and shared issues and challenges in contemporary society.	Lead: Kilkenny Older People's Council Supporting Partners: Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme Kilkenny Comhairle na nÓg Youth Organisations Kilkenny Public Participation Network Creative Ireland





Theme 5: Social Participation

Action	Description	Lead Organisation & Supporting Partners
5.1 Reduce Isolation and Loneliness	Isolation and loneliness are widespread issues for older people and this action will focus on directly addressing this through increasing social contact with those who need it most. Supported by ALONE's Support and Befriending service and Community Connector service and other HSE supports and initiatives that are well positioned to provide direct contact to isolated older people.	Lead: ALONE Supporting Partners: Age Friendly Healthy Homes Programme Kilkenny Older People's Council HSE Public Health Nurse HSE Community Services
5.2 Develop Volunteering Opportunities	Focus on raising awareness of the wide range of volunteering opportunities that exist for older people to get involved in local community activities and expanding the range of volunteering opportunities available and developing new Age Friendly volunteer initiatives.	Lead: Kilkenny Older People's Council Supporting Partner: Kilkenny Volunteer Centre
5.3 Develop Age Friendly Cultural Projects and Events	Increase the range of Age Friendly cultural events and projects in Kilkenny and the numbers of older people attending and participating in them. This will involve working with Kilkenny Arts Office, Creative Kilkenny, Kilkenny Heritage Office, Kilkenny Night Time Economy programme, Women's & Men's Sheds and other relevant cultural and community initiatives.	Lead: Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance Supporting Partner: Creative Kilkenny
5.4 Promote Age Friendly Libraries	All of Kilkenny's libraries have achieved Age Friendly status and this action will focus on maintaining and enhancing libraries as vital community resources for older people through the provision of Age Friendly services, programmes, activities and events.	Lead: Kilkenny County Library Service



Theme 6: Communication & Information

Action	Description	Lead Organisation & Supporting Partners
6.1 Host Age Friendly Information Events	Information provision is key to ensuring that older people are aware of the wide range of support services and activities that are available to them locally. This action will undertake a series of open information events across the county bringing all service providers together to present the range of supports available to local older people.	Lead: Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance
6.2 Develop Digital Skills and Literacy	This action is designed to address the increasing digital exclusion that many older people are continuing to experience. This will involve providing different community-based classes and courses aimed at improving learner capacity to access online services and to utilise key devices such as smartphones, tablets and other digital devices.	Lead: Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board Supporting Partners: Kilkenny LEADER Partnership Kilkenny Library Service
6.3 Raise Awareness of Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme	This action will focus on raising awareness of the Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme. This will be done through the dissemination of regular news items, updates, interviews and announcements in all local media channels including radio, newspapers, parish and community newsletters and social media.	Lead: Kilkenny County Council Supporting Partners: Kilkenny Older People's Council Kilkenny Public Participation Network Age Friendly Ireland Alliance Members



Theme 7: Civic Participation & Employment

Action	Description	Lead Organisation & Supporting Partners
7.1 Promote Kilkenny Age Friendly Business Recognition Programme	Development and promotion of the Kilkenny Age Friendly Business Recognition Programme across the city and county. This will include supporting local businesses to integrate Age Friendly supports and services into their businesses and also the continued inclusion of an Age Friendly category in the annual Chamber Awards programme.	Lead: Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce Supporting Partners: Kilkenny County Council Kilkenny Older People's Council
7.2 Develop the Capacity of Kilkenny Older People's Council	A strong, active and well-supported Older People's Council is essential for the success of the Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme. This action will focus on capacity building measures with Kilkenny Older People's Council with a view to ensuring that the OPC can sustain broad and diverse membership and can participate effectively in the Age Friendly Programme and other community structures and programmes.	Lead: Kilkenny County Council Supporting Partners: Kilkenny Older People's Council Age Friendly Ireland
7.3 Embed Age Friendly Planning in Local Development Policy	Ensure the inclusion of a clear Age Friendly focus in the work of the main inter-agency structures and groups that are engaged with planning and local development policies.	Lead: Kilkenny County Council Supporting Partners: Kilkenny Local Community Development Committee HSE



Theme 8: Community Support & Health Services

Action	Description	Lead Organisation & Supporting Partners
8.1 Promote Active and Healthy Lifestyles	Focus on the continued supports for older people across the city and county in relation to exercise, recreation and healthy lifestyles. This will include a wide range of classes, programmes, activity groups and other supports aimed at supporting older peoples physical and mental health.	Lead: Kilkenny Recreation and Sports Partnership Supporting Partners: Healthy Kilkenny HSE Health Promotion
8.2 Support Access to Health Services	Support the delivery of Sláintecare at local level and improvements in access to health services for older people. Continue to work with and support St. Luke's Hospital Age Friendly Committee, the ICPOP Hub, GP Services, Discharge Services, Dementia Services and all other relevant health services.	Lead: HSE Integrated Care Programme for Older People Supporting Partners: St. Luke's Hospital HSE Health Promotion HSE Community Services
8.3 Protect the Safety and Security of Older People	An Garda Síochána engage directly with local older people and work closely with Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance members to ensure that safety and security issues are being reported and responded to.	Lead: An Garda Síochána Supporting Partners: Community Safety Partnership Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance
8.4 Promote Community Education and Training	Provide a wide range of education and training courses for older people throughout the city and county. Courses will be based on demand and need and will be identified in consultation with older people's groups and community organisations.	Lead: Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board



Collaboration

The Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance will oversee the implementation of the strategy and the Action Plan. This will be done through a process of partnership and collaboration between the Alliance members and the supporting organisations responsible for the different strategic actions.

The Action Plan is designed to be focused and achievable and the strategic actions are shared across the range of different organisations and groups who are best placed to implement each action. Lead Organisations and Supporting Partners have been agreed for each strategic action to ensure a clear focus and direction in the implementation of the actions.

The Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance will use the following process to progress, monitor and review the implementation of the strategy:

- Regular meetings of the Alliance at which progress reports on specific actions contained in the Strategy Action Plan will be presented.
- Annual reports each year during the lifetime of the strategy detailing overall progress in implementation and progress in the implementation of each action.
- Ongoing engagement with Age Friendly Ireland and other relevant national agencies and structures to ensure the incorporation of key policy development and best practice on an ongoing basis.
- The Alliance recognises the value of subgroups or working groups in assisting the implementation of strategic actions and as such may establish relevant subgroups where required.
- An evaluation of the Kilkenny Age Friendly Strategy 2025-2028 will be carried out at the end of the strategy to assess its achievements and outcomes.

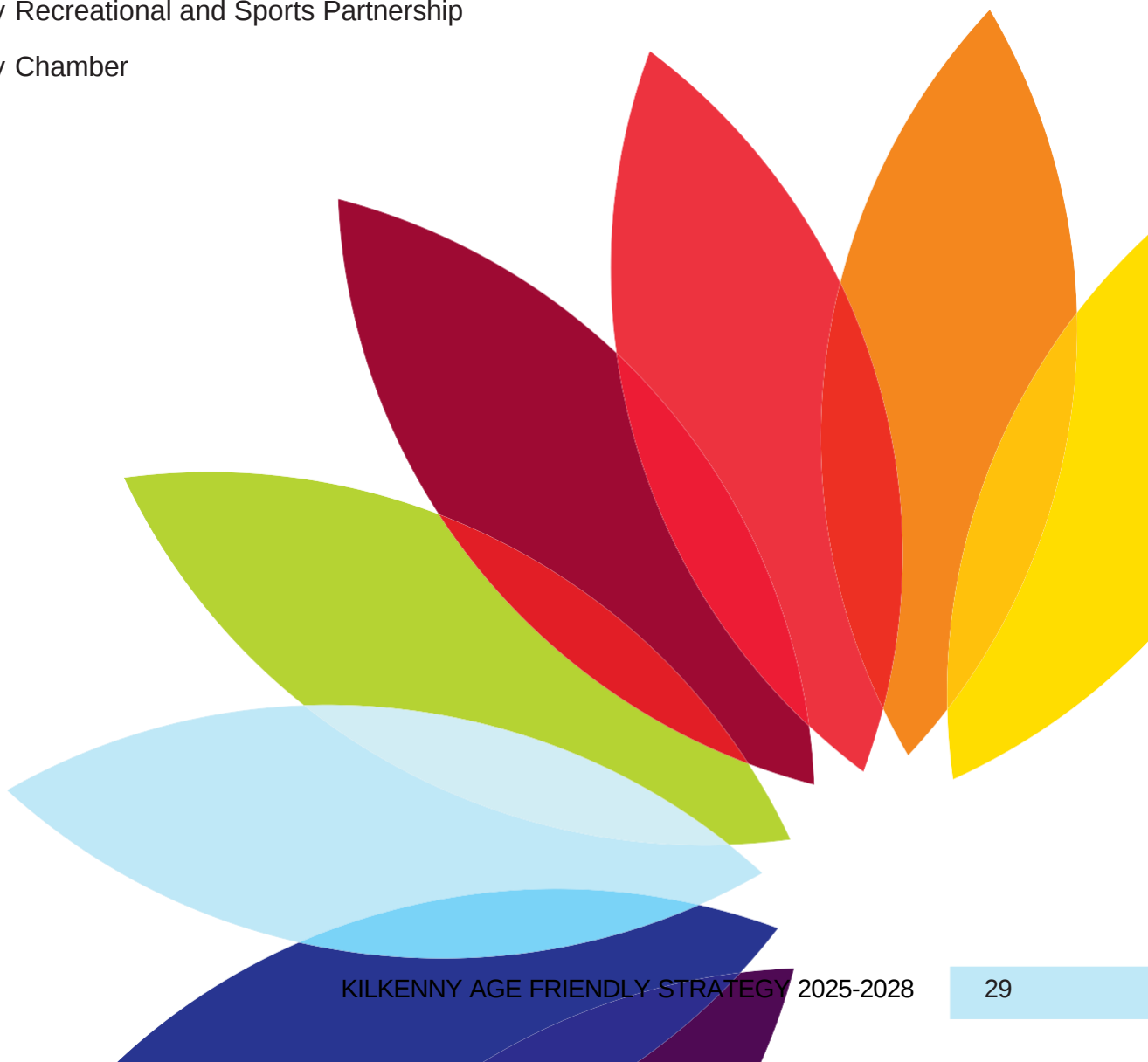


From left: Lar Power Chief Executive Kilkenny County Council, Anne Marie Shortall Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme Manager, Michael Doyle Cathaoirleach Kilkenny County Council and Mary O'Hanlon Chairperson Kilkenny Older People's Council at the National Network of Older People's Council Convention 2024

Appendix 1

Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance 2025 List of Representative Organisations:

- Chairperson: Chief Executive Kilkenny County Council
- Kilkenny County Council Director of Services
- Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme Manager
- Kilkenny County Librarian
- An Garda Síochána
- HSE
- Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board
- Kilkenny Leader Partnership
- Kilkenny Public Participation Network
- Kilkenny Volunteer Centre
- Kilkenny Older People's Council
- Kilkenny Recreational and Sports Partnership
- Kilkenny Chamber



Appendix 2

Overview of the Consultation Process

There were 5 community Public Consultations held with 95 attendees in total at the following locations:

- Mayfair Library Kilkenny City
- Loughboy Community Centre Kilkenny City
- Thomastown Community Centre
- Castlecomer Community Hall
- Mullinavat Community Centre

Community Survey

- 65 completed surveys

There were 3 Focus Groups held with the following organisations: -

- Kilkenny Older People's Council
- Kilkenny Age Friendly Alliance
- Kilkenny PPN Social Inclusion Linkage Group

Stakeholder Consultations carried out with the following agencies and groups:

- Kilkenny County Council
 - Housing
 - Transport
 - Planning
 - Community: Community Development, Creative Communities, Healthy Kilkenny
 - The Arts Office
 - Kilkenny County Library Services
- HSE Integrated Care Programmes for Older Persons
- HSE Health Promotion
- HSE St. Luke's Hospital
- Kilkenny Recreation & Sports Partnership
- Age Friendly Healthy Homes Programme
- Age Friendly Ireland
- Kilkenny Public Participation Network
- Kilkenny LEADER Partnership
- Kilkenny Volunteer Centre
- ALONE
- Kilkenny Chamber of Commerce
- Kilkenny and Carlow Education and Training Board
- Kilkenny Older People's Council
- Kilkenny Age Friendly Ambassador



Age Friendly Programme

For further information regarding Kilkenny Age Friendly Programme:

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Comhairle Chontae Chill Chainnigh
Kilkenny County Council

