



**ROSCOMMON**  
Age Friendly County

# Roscommon Age Friendly Strategy 2025 - 2030



Comhairle Contae  
Ros Comáin  
Roscommon  
County Council





## Contact Information for Age Friendly Roscommon

Roscommon Age Friendly Programme Manager  
Roscommon County Council  
Community Section, Áras an Chontae,  
Roscommon, F42 VR98

**Tel: 090 66 37100**

**Email: [agefriendly@roscommoncoco.ie](mailto:agefriendly@roscommoncoco.ie)**



# Table of Contents

Foreword ..... 4

A Message From Us..... 5

Introduction..... 6

World Health Organisation..... 7

Age Friendly Ireland ..... 8

County Roscommon: A Snapshot..... 9

What is Age Friendly Roscommon? ..... 10

Roscommon’s Age Friendly Vision ..... 13

Monitoring, Implementation and Review ..... 19

**Theme 1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings ..... 20**

**Theme 2 Transportation ..... 22**

**Theme 3 Housing ..... 24**

**Theme 4 Social Participation ..... 25**

**Theme 5 Respect and Social Inclusion ..... 27**

**Theme 6 Civic Partnership & Employment ..... 30**

**Theme 7 Communication and Information ..... 32**

**Theme 8 Community Support and Health Services ..... 34**

Action Plan ..... 37

# Foreword

Roscommon County Council's mission includes a commitment to ensuring Roscommon is an all-inclusive county by doing the best for all citizens from the very young to the more senior members of our society. This is embedded across all our departments and work plans and reflected in Goal 1 of our newly developed Local Economic Development Plan with the objective of ensuring Roscommon is a county that supports and celebrates active inclusion for all.



**Shane Tiernan,**  
Chair of Roscommon's  
Age Friendly Alliance

Roscommon County Council is fully committed to the National Age Friendly Programme, linking together with our 35 other Local Authorities Age Friendly colleagues to ensure a collective support to the programme at local, regional and national levels.

I am delighted to launch this Age Friendly Strategy 2025 - 2030 for County Roscommon. We are pleased with the progress made over the life of our outgoing strategy despite the unprecedented challenges which Covid presented to us all. The resilience shown by our older population is something that we can certainly take comfort and learn from in the county.

The number of people aged 65 years and over is estimated to have increased by more than 40% in the past 10 years, from 569,000 people in 2013 to 806,000 people in 2023. The section of the population over the age of 65 in County Roscommon has grown by 21% since 2016 to 13,041. Roscommon is one of the counties in Ireland with the older population.

The rapid increase in our ageing population and the associated increase in life expectancy are both great achievements and challenging opportunities.

Our vision for County Roscommon Age Friendly Strategy 2025-2030 is to not only build on our progress to date but to ensure a more socially inclusive and sustainable approach throughout all age friendly work in the county. This strategy reflects the high level of commitment and focus to continue improving the lives of older people that has been established in the county over the last number of years.

I would like to thank our partners on the Alliance who have committed to the delivery of their objectives in the strategy, the older people of Roscommon for their collaboration and input to inform the core objectives and finally to the Age Friendly Team here in Roscommon County Council for all their work and commitment in delivering this Strategy. I look forward to working with you all over the life of our Age Friendly Strategy 2025 - 2030.

*Shane Tiernan,*

**Chief Executive**  
**Roscommon County Council**

# A Message From Us

## Chairperson of Roscommon Older People's Council

The Older People's Council has existed in Roscommon for ten years. The previous Chairperson was Margaret Mulligan who took a big interest in a better lifestyle for the older population working with the agencies to achieve those goals.

The world population is ageing, living longer with more active lifestyles than previous generations. The Older People's Council gives a voice to Older People to influence decisions that make their lives more comfortable.



It is wonderful to think that Ireland was the first country in the world to be declared Age Friendly. It is great to see a Roscommon Age Friendly Strategy which contains so many

realistic and achievable actions aiming to make Roscommon more age friendly.

It is my vision and that of the Older People's Council to work to achieve the goals set out in the strategy but it is very important that all we achieve at County and National level we bring to our own communities, that would be the real success.

*Bernard Kearney*

Chairperson of the Older People's Council

## Age Friendly Ambassador for County Roscommon

I'm Paddy Joe Burke, it's a privilege and an honour to represent County Roscommon as your Age Friendly Ambassador. I'm enthusiastic about bringing passion, encouragement and wisdom to my role, in order to enhance all of

our lives as we grow old gracefully and to enjoy the magic of life in the present moment.

*Paddy Joe Burke*

Age Friendly Ambassador



# Introduction

As our country's population ages, communities are increasingly recognising the importance of creating inclusive environments that cater to the needs of older adults. County Roscommon is no exception to this trend. With a commitment to enhancing the quality of life for its ageing population, Roscommon County Council has developed an Age-Friendly Strategy that aims to foster a supportive and vibrant community for all our residents. This Age-Friendly Strategy is built on the principles of inclusivity, engagement, and empowerment. It seeks to ensure that older residents can live active, fulfilling lives within their local communities.

This initiative aligns with the World Health Organization's Age-Friendly Cities Framework, which emphasises the need for a holistic approach to ageing that encompasses various aspects of life, including health, social engagement, transportation and housing. By addressing these key areas, Roscommon aims to create an environment where older adults can thrive.

One of the primary objectives of the strategy is to promote active ageing. This concept encourages older adults to stay physically, socially and mentally active, enabling them to maintain their independence and enhance their overall well-being. Through a variety of programmes and activities, Roscommon will provide opportunities for older residents to engage in sports, arts and community service, fostering a sense of purpose and belonging.

Roscommon's Age-Friendly Strategy represents a proactive approach to addressing the challenges and opportunities associated with an ageing population. By promoting active ageing, reducing social isolation, improving transportation and ensuring suitable housing, Roscommon is committed to creating a vibrant, inclusive community where older adults can thrive. This strategy not only enhances the lives of older residents but also enriches the entire community, fostering a sense of shared responsibility and care for all. As we move forward, the success of this initiative will depend on the involvement of all, ensuring that we build a future that values and respects the contributions of our older citizens. This strategy aims to improve the lives of all people in County Roscommon as they age by supporting a County where future generations can reach old age feeling healthier, more positive and more engaged. The overarching goal of this document is to make Roscommon an "Age Friendly County" with all agencies working together to promote and maintain the best possible health and well-being of older people and to make our County a great place to grow up and grow old in.

# World Health Organisation

Ireland commenced its journey to become an Age Friendly country in 2009, aligning with the World Health Organisation's global Age Friendly framework. This WHO programme was established in 2007 to respond to population ageing at global level.

Roscommon's Age Friendly Strategy 2025-2030 aims to extend the initiatives of its previous iteration, focusing on strategic planning to address the needs of our ageing population.

Our Strategy aligns with the themes of the World Health Organisation (WHO). The WHO has outlined eight themes to promote age-friendly environments, aiming to enhance the quality of life for older adults.

1. **Outdoor Spaces and Buildings:** Ensuring that public spaces and buildings are accessible, safe and welcoming for older adults, facilitating mobility and social interaction.
2. **Transportation:** Providing reliable, affordable and accessible transportation options that enable older adults to maintain their independence and engage with the community.
3. **Housing:** Promoting age-friendly housing that is adaptable, affordable and located in supportive environments, enabling older adults to age in place.
4. **Social Participation:** Encouraging opportunities for older adults to engage in social, cultural and recreational activities, reducing isolation and enhancing community bonds.
5. **Respect and Social Inclusion:** Fostering a culture that values older adults, promotes their contributions and enhances their participation in decision-making processes.
6. **Civic Participation and Employment:** Supporting the involvement of older adults in civic activities and the workforce, recognising their skills and experience.
7. **Communication and Information:** Ensuring that information is accessible and relevant to older adults, helping them stay informed and engaged.
8. **Community Support and Health Services:** Providing accessible health care and social services that cater to the unique needs of older adults, promoting their health and well-being.

These themes collectively aim to create environments that empower older individuals, promote their active participation in society and enhance their overall quality of life.

The WHO definition of Age-Friendly describes a society in which “service providers, public officials, community leaders, faith leaders, business people and citizens recognise the great diversity among older persons, promote their inclusion and contribution in all areas of community life, respect their decisions and lifestyle choices, and anticipate and respond flexibly to ageing-related needs and preferences”

# Age Friendly Ireland

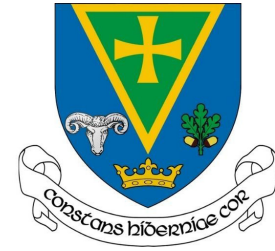
Age Friendly Ireland is a shared service of Local Government hosted by Meath County Council. The shared services manage the national Age Friendly Programme, affiliated to the World Health Organization’s Age Friendly Cities and Communities Network. The national programme is operated through a team-based framework of 35 local Age Friendly Programmes hosted in local government.

The National Age Friendly Shared Service supports cities, counties, towns, villages and rural communities across Ireland to prepare for the rapid ageing of our population by paying increased attention to the environmental, economic and social factors that influence the health and well-being of older adults.

## Age Friendly Ireland Structures and Governance



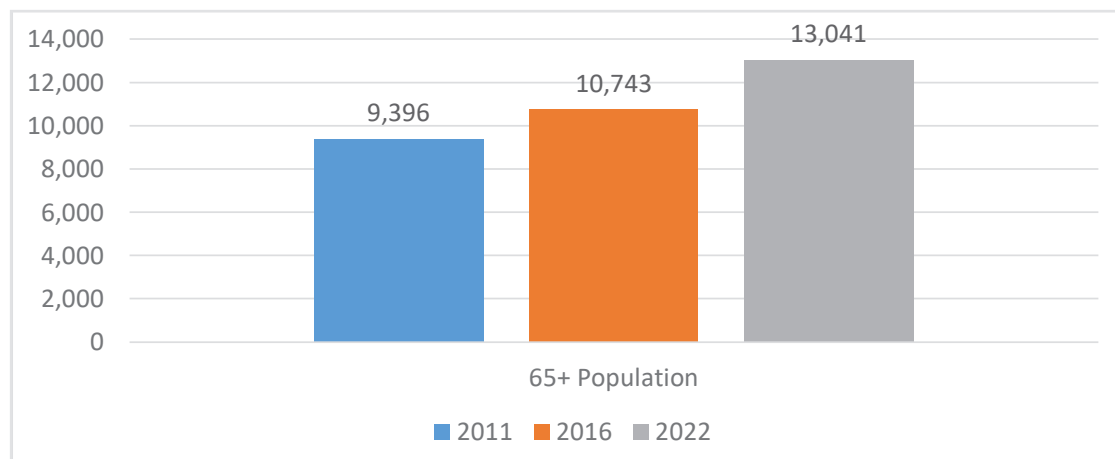
# County Roscommon: A Snapshot



Making cities and counties age-friendly is one of the most effective policy approaches for responding to demographic ageing.

The population of Ireland is ageing, with life expectancy increasing and older people continuing to be an active and vibrant part of our community.

According to the Census 2022 results, the total population of Roscommon is 70,259 people. Roscommon's ageing population is growing faster than the national average.



Roscommon 65+ Population

The number of people aged 65 years and over in Ireland is estimated to have increased by more than 40% in the past 10 years, from 569,000 people in 2013 to 806,000 people in 2023. The number of people 65 years and older is expected to double to 1.6 million by 2051.

Between 2012 and 2022, the number of people aged 70 and over holding a full driving licence rose by almost 80%, from 205,000 to 366,000 people. The number of marriages registered from people aged 60 years and over also saw a notable increase, with the number of new marriages among older people more than doubling between 2012 and 2022, from 505 marriages to 1,028 marriages. Between 2017 and 2021, the number of domestic overnight trips taken by those aged 65 and over also more than doubled, from approximately 125,000 to 269,000.

People worldwide are living longer. Today most people can expect to live into their sixties and beyond. Every country in the world is experiencing growth in both the size and the proportion of older persons in the population. The pace of population ageing is much faster than in the past.

# What is Age Friendly Roscommon?

County Roscommon's Age Friendly Strategy has been compiled in recognition of the changing demographics of older people in the County. In its development it also takes account of the international context of policy and best practice led out through the World Health Organisation (WHO) Age Friendly Cities Programme. The Strategy is based on an agreed framework setting out the main objectives relating to older people and identifying practical actions that can be achieved in order to improve the quality of life throughout County Roscommon.

The ethos of the programme is about better collaboration, more effective use of resources and the inclusion of the community as drivers of change.

## Roscommon County Council's Age Friendly Local Structure

### Older People's Council

Roscommon Older People's Council (OPC) represents the voices, needs and lived experiences of our older people, and promotes their inclusion in all areas of community life. The role of the Roscommon OPC is to identify areas of need, raise issues of importance, inform and influence the decision-making process of the Roscommon Age Friendly Programme, and participate in national level structures.

### Age Friendly Interdepartmental Team, Roscommon County Council

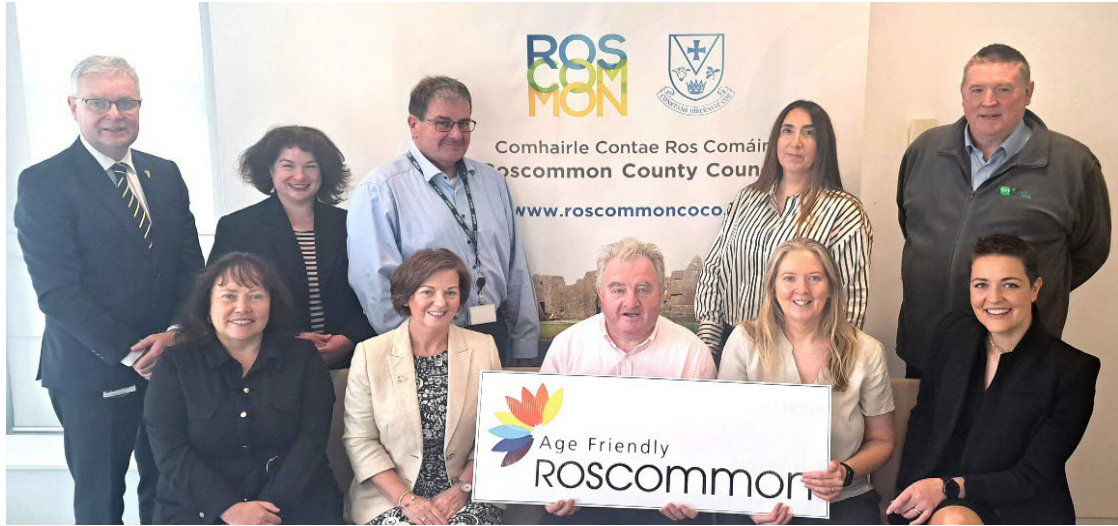
The Inter-departmental team is made up of representatives from across each of the Local Authority departments, including Housing, Communications, Transport, Planning, Community and Economic Development who are working collaboratively to ensure that the Age Friendly agenda is incorporated into all local government work. **The primary aim of the team is to work together to identify opportunities for collaboration supported by the Age Friendly Programme Manager and Age Friendly Technical Advisor.**

### Age Friendly Ambassador

As part of the Age Friendly Programme every local authority in Ireland has their own Age Friendly Ambassador. This role is carried out by a local high profile person in each county who represents the local Age Friendly Programme on behalf of the Older Peoples Councils, it is an honorary position. Roscommon's Age Friendly Ambassador's role includes promoting the need to be Age Friendly and support the local Age Friendly Programme to raise awareness of Age Friendly initiatives.

## Age Friendly Alliance

The Age Friendly Alliance is a collaborative effort that unites older people, community groups, and service providers from various sectors to transform attitudes towards ageing and improve the design and delivery of services for the older people.



Roscommon Age Friendly Alliance Members with AF Regional Manager



### Healthy Age Friendly Homes Co-Ordinator

The Healthy Age Friendly Homes Programme is a new programme and it’s co-ordinator aims to support older people to live in their own home with dignity and independence, for as long as possible. The programme’s ambition is to enable everyone to live longer healthier lives by keeping care close to home and expanding the range of health and social care services in the community. It is about providing a range of alternatives for older people who may otherwise transition into long term residential care prematurely.

### Age Friendly Technical Advisor

There is an Age Friendly Technical Advisor in every local authority providing specialist housing advice to members of the public and organisations. They provide specialist advice to the authority itself, to private sector organisations interested in providing age friendly housing and to the general public.

### Age Friendly Programme Manager

Each Local Authority Age Friendly Programme is coordinated by the Age Friendly Programme Manager who plays a fundamental role in the implementation of the Age Friendly Programme across Ireland. They work with their local Alliance to develop and implement an Age Friendly Strategy and Action Plans.

The Programme Manager adopts initiatives that respond to priorities raised at local level and supports the scaling up and replication of good practices across all participating age friendly programme areas. They support the local Older People’s Council and are the primary contact for same. Technical guidance is given to Programme Managers on a day to day basis through the shared service programme office and onsite visits by the Regional Programme Manager to support specific objectives where required.



# Roscommon's Age Friendly Vision

Our County Programme has been informed by the Age Friendly Alliance, the Older People's Council and consultation with older people throughout the County.

At the heart of the work of our Age Friendly Strategy 2025-2030 is our vision, mission and our values that will support and inform every aspect of our work and will continue to do so over the life of our programme.

A County where people can age positively, where older people are highly valued and where they are recognised as an integral part of families and communities. Making County Roscommon a positive place in which to age, where older people can say that they live in a society that values them, acknowledges their contributions and encourages their participation.

**Our Vision:** Roscommon is a vibrant, connected, natural inclusive and positive place to live and grow old in.

## Our Objectives:

The Roscommon Age-Friendly Strategy is a dynamic plan committed to improving the lives of older residents. It emphasises the importance of their contributions and the value of their insights in shaping a community that respects and includes all ages. The strategy is built on principles of respect, inclusion and inter-generational collaboration, ensuring that as people age, they do so in a community that cares for and values them. Actions to support this vision are detailed within the strategy, highlighting a collective effort to foster positive ageing and make Roscommon an exemplary place to grow old.

Through effective collaboration, the primary goal of this Strategy is to serve as a unifying voice that advocates for and alongside our older people. It aims to enhance support systems, initiate actions and foster open communication channels between seniors and service providers. This approach not only empowers older individuals but also ensures their needs and voices are heard and addressed in community planning and service delivery.

## Consultation Process

The consultation process was framed by input from older adults and relevant stakeholders. The eight themes identified in the WHO's Age-Friendly Cities programme were used as a framework for conversation and basis to consider what improvements had been advanced, and were yet to be progressed to ensure that Roscommon is 'an Age-Friendly place'.



In order to ensure that the priorities and ambitions of all key groups, particularly older people and their organisations, are reflected strongly in the Age Friendly Strategy for County Roscommon, we undertook a consultation process which involved in-person focus groups and workshops, surveys, pop-up/pop-in street consultations.

Throughout the course of our consultation process we met with numerous groups, organisations and individuals. It was crucial to have as many voices heard as possible from every part of the county.



### Older Person's Groups

- Surveys
  - Surveys were conducted to gather insights and feedback directly from older persons about their experiences and needs.

### Older Person's Council (OPC)

- The OPC worked together with the Age Friendly Programme Manager to provide guidance on the strategy development based on feedback from older persons.

### Alliance Group

- This group that partners with external stakeholders, such as advocacy organisations, community leaders and other key groups worked together to align and share insights for the age-friendly strategy.

### Interdepartmental Group

- A working group involving multiple departments within Roscommon County Council ensured the strategy incorporates a broad range of policy areas.

### Surveys (General Public)

- Broader surveys were organised that engaged the general public to gauge their perspectives on age-friendly policies and needs. This ensured that the consultation process was inclusive and considered the broader societal views.



Bealtaine Day 2024, Percy French Hotel, Strokestown



Christmas Festival 2024, Kilbride Community Centre

## Positive Ageing in County Roscommon

From the Consultation Process the following are the positives of what is working well in Roscommon!

**Park  
Facilities**

**Library &  
Cultural  
Facilities**

**Maintenance of  
Graveyards**

**Public  
Transport**

**Access to  
information.  
PPN**

**Development  
of Men's &  
Women's Sheds**

**Access to  
Local  
Services e.g.  
libraries**

**Hosting events to  
celebrate ageing**

**Meeting places for  
older people e.g.  
restaurants, parks,  
community centres**

**Volunteering  
opportunities**

**Active  
retirement  
courses**

**Nutritional  
& educational  
workshops**

## Agreeing the Actions

At a meeting of the Roscommon's Older People's Council in February 2024, attendees had an opportunity to hear about and comment on the outcome of the community and stakeholder consultation and to review the action areas identified for consideration in the strategy action plan.

Alliance members were also presented with the findings of the community and stakeholder consultation and were invited to identify actions that member organisations could sign up to in the new strategy (see actions).

Participants were presented with findings of the community and stakeholder consultation and invited to identify actions that member organisations could sign up to in the new strategy.

The Age Friendly Programme Manger followed up on a 1-1 basis with each organisation to formalise and consolidate actions to address the issues which arose from older people in Roscommon. These were presented to the Age Friendly Alliance and the OPC for review.

The main issues facing older people as identified by older people and organisations working with older people are outlined under the eight Age Friendly Themes:

- **OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS**
- **TRANSPORTATION**
- **HOUSING**
- **SOCIAL PARTICIPATION**
- **RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION**
- **CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT**
- **COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION**
- **COMMUNITY SUPPORTS AND HEALTH SERVICES**



Paddy Joe Burke, Age Friendly Ambassador attending his first Older People's Council meeting in February 2024



## Monitoring, Implementation and Review

An important part of the County Roscommon Age Friendly Strategy is the monitoring and reporting mechanisms that support the co-ordinated approach to positive ageing and ensure continued assessment. The Roscommon Older People’s Council will be an inherent part of this monitoring process and will have the opportunity at alliance level to challenge organisations heads if commitments are not being carried through.

In addition to monitoring progress on actions, a report will be presented on a quarterly basis to the Age Friendly Alliance and the LCDC. These reports will help to identify issues requiring action as part of an ongoing Age Friendly Strategy. We would encourage all older people in Roscommon, who identify an issue that is impacting the health and wellbeing of people as they age to use the structure of the Roscommon Older People’s Council to raise the issue and inform the development of this strategy going forward.

# Theme 1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

**OBJECTIVE: To make outdoor spaces and buildings pleasant, clean, accessible and safe for older people, creating walkable age friendly communities**

Creating an age-friendly environment involves designing buildings and outdoor spaces that promote health, well-being and independence for individuals of all ages. This approach not only benefits older adults but also supports those with disabilities, caregivers and families, ensuring everyone has the opportunity to participate fully in community life. Key features include barrier-free access and amenities that facilitate mobility and social engagement, fostering a sense of belonging and enabling people to age in place comfortably.

## The Voice of Our Older People

▶ Accessibility	▶ Age Friendly public services
▶ Seating	▶ Lighting
▶ Library and cultural facilities	▶ Feeling safe
▶ Public Toilets	▶ AF Hospital
▶ Graveyards	▶ Park facilities

## Key Actions:

1	To ensure towns in County Roscommon are age friendly, including safe paths that are obstacle free with accessible parking and pedestrian crossings. Walkability studies will be completed in the three Roscommon Municipal Districts (MD's) with the respective area engineer.
2	Ensure all library buildings are age friendly, accessible for older people – welcoming and inclusive.
3	Work with relevant state agencies to achieve Age Friendly status in your county hospital and train stations.
4	Roscommon County Council in partnership with relevant businesses will explore the provision of public toilets in towns throughout County Roscommon via the “Nette Toilette or Nice Toilet” concept. This concept is based on a voluntary partnership arrangement between the Local Authority and hospitality businesses.
5	Support the use of “Universal Design” of any development of a public space and/or public buildings in County Roscommon.
6	Work with relevant departments/external stakeholders to promote safe access to public spaces/towns/villages/parks and graveyards.



92-year-old Michael Hanley throws a scraw skyways, to the delight of the large gathering, at the turning of the sod of the new waterways development at Dundermott, Ballymoe, County Roscommon. Pic: Gerard O'Loughlin



96-year-old Eileen Coen cuts the tape at the new waterways development at Dundermott, Ballymoe, County Roscommon with help from Martin Caulfield, Rose Moran, Sheila Malone, Paddy Malone, Marian Voyget, Andy Treacy, Annie O'Brien, Michael Hanley and Teresa Flynn. Pic: Gerard O'Loughlin

# Theme 2 Transportation

**OBJECTIVE: Support the provision of safe and accessible transport and infrastructure to enable older people to engage actively in all aspects of life in Roscommon.**

One of the most common causes of social isolation is limited access to transport. Access to inclusive public transport can help older people to avail of goods, services, employment and other activities, as well as being a passport to independent living and full participation in society. In general where services are centralised or closed, older people are often those most affected. Access to safe, flexible and accessible transport options is a key factor in older people's ability to remain independent and to actively participate in their community.

### The Voice of Our Older People

▶ Limited frequency and routes in rural areas	▶ Lack of affordable transport to Health Appointments
▶ Lack of shelters and seating at bus shelters	▶ High cost of private transport
▶ Difficulty accessing timetables on public transport	▶ Need more community cars, etc.

### Key Actions

1	Support Age Friendly Transport initiatives.
2	Identify gaps in transportation and work with relevant organisations to improve services.
3	Work with the Active Travel team on consultation submissions to state agencies in identifying safe and accessible bus stops in our towns and villages.
4	Support the provision of footpaths that encourage people to make a more active journey designed in accordance with national guidelines under the Active Travel Programme.
5	Support the provision of safe and secure pedestrian crossing points as per the Active Travel portfolio designed in accordance with national guidelines throughout County Roscommon.
6	Develop a promotion and communication campaign to ensure awareness of all transport services available.



Age Friendly Walkability Audit at Carrick on Shannon Train Station in October 2024

**“You don’t stop laughing  
when you grow old, you grow  
old when you stop laughing”**

*(George Bernard Shaw)*

# Theme 3 Housing

**OBJECTIVE: Support the provision of lifetime adaptable housing choices and solutions to enable older people live independently in their own homes for as long as possible.**

Across the country, there is a clear desire from people to grow old in their own home and community. This requires that, as people age, their homes enable them to live there in a manner that is safe, affordable and connected to the community where the supports and services they need are available. Given the growing proportion of time spent in the home in older age, housing and the meaning attached to ‘home,’ take on considerable importance. Good quality, affordable, well-designed housing is an important element in an Age Friendly County to ensure older people are supported to stay living independently in their homes.

Local Authorities throughout the country have supported the role out of Age Friendly Housing Technical Advisors. This initiative was assigned under the national policy ‘Housing Options for our Ageing Population’. The Advisor provides specialist advice to the authority itself, to private sector organisations interested in providing age friendly housing and to the general public.

Age Friendly Ireland has also recruited an Healthy Age Friendly Homes Coordinator for each local authority area. The Coordinator promotes safe, accessible housing for older adults, ensuring well-being through home assessments, resource connections and community engagement to enhance independent living and quality of life.

## The Voice of Our Older People

▶ Information on accessing adaptation grants	▶ Better Choice of housing for older people
▶ Social Supports	▶ Information on “Right Sizing”
▶ Supports to enable older people to live in their own home for longer	▶ Promote Universal Design

**“Design for the young and you exclude the old; design for the old and you include the young”**

*(Bernard Isaccs)*

## Key Actions

1	Collaborate with and support the work carried out by the Age Friendly Healthy Homes Coordinator.
2	Promote various housing grants and supports that are available.
3	Support the use of ‘Universal Design’ in Social Housing.

# Theme 4 Social Participation

**OBJECTIVE: Encourage opportunities for our older population to engage in social, cultural and recreational activities.**

Social participation plays a crucial role in enhancing the lives of older individuals, providing them with opportunities to connect, engage and contribute to their communities. As people age, maintaining social ties becomes increasingly important to combat feelings of loneliness and isolation, which can adversely affect mental and physical health. By actively participating in community activities such as clubs, volunteer initiatives, and educational programs, older adults can share their knowledge and experiences, fostering a sense of belonging and purpose. Engaging in social activities not only enriches the lives of older individuals but also positively impacts the community at large.

Intergenerational interactions can bridge the gap between age groups, allowing for the exchange of ideas, stories and cultural values. Such connections promote understanding and respect, benefiting societal cohesion.

Moreover, social participation has been linked to improved cognitive function and overall well-being. Regular engagement in stimulating activities can enhance mental sharpness and emotional resilience. To support this enrichment, communities must create inclusive environments that cater to the diverse needs of older adults, offering accessible transportation, varied programming and opportunities for involvement. By prioritising social participation, we empower older individuals to lead fulfilling lives, ensuring their voices are heard and valued within society.

The Voice of Our Older People	
▶ Events/activities for older adults	▶ Digital skills and social media training
▶ Support community day centres/cafes	▶ Greater opportunities for getting involved in physical activity
▶ Build capacity of groups working with older people	

**Key Actions**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 | To work collaboratively with the Roscommon's Culture & Creative Team in promoting age-friendly social and cultural events across the county to support social participation on an annual basis.  |
| 2 | Increase opportunity for older people from all communities to break down barriers to social exclusion through a diverse range of activities and workshops that build social networks and diminish stereotyping of our older population.  |
| 3 | Prioritise the development of real inter-generational initiatives which harness the expertise from across the generations to make Roscommon a county for all ages. Work with local schools to look at the creation of an Age Friendly module under their Transition Year Programmes. |



Roscommon OPC members at 50+ Event in 2025

# Theme 5

## Respect and Social Inclusion

**OBJECTIVE: Increase awareness of diversity and the positive contribution of older people to County Roscommon.**

Respect and social inclusion of the older population is critical for fostering a cohesive and supportive society. As individuals age, they often face various challenges, including health issues, mobility limitations and social isolation. Recognising and valuing their contributions can significantly enhance their quality of life and promote a sense of belonging.

Respect for older adults encourages intergenerational dialogue and understanding, breaking down stereotypes associated with ageing. It allows for the sharing of wisdom and experiences, enriching community life and fostering empathy among younger generations. When older individuals feel valued, they are more likely to engage actively in social, cultural and civic activities, which can combat feelings of loneliness and isolation.

Social inclusion ensures that older adults have access to necessary resources, services, and opportunities for participation in society. It promotes their autonomy and self-determination, allowing them to live fulfilling lives. Communities that prioritise inclusivity create environments where older adults can thrive, contributing to their physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

Ultimately, respecting and including our older population not only benefits them but also enhances the overall health and harmony of society. By embracing diversity and fostering connections, we create a more compassionate and resilient community for all ages.

### The Voice of Our Older People

▶ Respect and Social Inclusion	▶ Affordable Trips and Activities
▶ Services and access to Pubs, Bars, Restaurants	▶ Social Cultural Events

### Key Actions

1	Establish Age Friendly Recognition Programmes.
2	Increase older people's participation through increased promotion of access to sports.
3	Assist Older People's Council to support groups to influence change in their county.
4	Support Older People's Groups when applying for funding under appropriate schemes to facilitate affordable trips and activities.



Harvest Festival in Castlerea in October 2023



Organisers & Speakers at Age Friendly Christmas Festival 2024, Kilbride Community Centre



Elphin Day Care Centre, Roscommon - June 2024



Launch of Roscommon Nursing Home Project in Shannon Lodge Nursing Home, Rooskey in May 2025

# Theme 6 Civic Partnership & Employment

## **OBJECTIVE: Promote and support volunteering, lifelong learning and employment opportunities at local level**

As our population ages and enjoys longer periods of good health, it is essential that they remain active and connected to their communities. Many older people make valuable contributions in their communities through their voluntary work. Volunteering is one of the ways people participate in their communities, develop social networks and contribute to society.

A wide range of volunteer and employment opportunities caters to older people's diverse preferences, needs and skill sets and awareness on the vacancies available connects seniors to these opportunities. Age-friendly infrastructure removes any physical barriers seniors may face in accessing the volunteer or job opportunity. Continued training for older people also helps them remain relevant and connected.

Older people's participation in the political process must be facilitated. Seniors may be involved through platforms to voice their concerns and views to government officials, or through participating in interest groups. They should also be involved in decision-making on issues that may impact them.

### The Voice of Our Older People

▶ Networking Meetings for Older People	▶ More Age Friendly Information Events
▶ Include older people in consultations	▶ Encourage and help with registration for form filling and joining groups

### Key Actions

1	Roscommon County Council's Community Department will continue to support community initiatives for older people through links with the members of the Local Community Development Committee.
2	To promote continued civic engagement of older people in County Roscommon, secure county-wide commitment to the active promotion of older people's rights and ability to participate in the consultation processes carried out by services and agencies on their plans, policies and practices that affects them and their communities.
3	Support the registration of the many older people's groups to the PPN.
4	Encourage and support the increase in membership of our Older People's Council .
5	Increase the participation of older people in volunteering.



Roscommon County Library receiving their Age Friendly Library Charter from Roscommon's Age Friendly Ambassador Paddy Joe Burke and Roscommon's Age Friendly Older People's Council.

**“As people live longer, healthier lives, they continue to play important economic and social roles in society”**

(World Health Organisation (WHO), 2002; Goode and Fitzgerald, 2005; Birren, 2009)

# Theme 7 Communication and Information

**OBJECTIVE: Support the provision and encourage the delivery of good quality information to older people in County Roscommon through effective communication using all relevant methods**

Successful organisation, communication and information leads to better community engagement. Engagement provides people with opportunities to have a greater say in what happens in their community and their county and to have a greater say in decision-making.

- The need for better coordinated information and communication in Roscommon emerged as an important issue for older people. Older people considered it difficult to find information about services available to them. Information for older people needs to be available in a range of formats as the older age spectrum covers a number of generations, many of whom may not be familiar with using current technology. Providing accessible, relevant and accurate information is essential for older people.

## The Voice of Our Older People

▶ Mobile Phone/Internet/Social Media Training	▶ Printable Application Forms
▶ Updated Directory of Services	▶ Clear Simple English

## Key Actions

1	Promote the use of plain language when producing information and encourage the provision of user friendly, coordinated information as a way to meet the needs of older people.
2	Provide an up to date directory of services which provides a list of supports available.
3	Work with external stage agencies and our library services to role out relevant Age Friendly IT training.
4	Establishment of an Annual Expo for the older population of County Roscommon.
5	Advocate for older people's groups throughout the county and support what they deem to be important.



Roscommon County Council's Joint Policing Committee (JPC) Meeting in 2023



Roscommon OPC members at 50+ Event in May 2025

# Theme 8 Community Support and Health Services

**Objective: To support a positive approach to health and well-being and independent living through access to community supports, cultural programmes and health services in County Roscommon**

Healthy ageing and social care ranges from nutrition and physical activity interventions for seniors to actions dedicated to promote independent living and tackle social exclusion and loneliness.

Community supports and health services matter. They ultimately determine whether healthcare is available, and availed of, in an efficient and effective way in the towns and villages across the county. Such supports and services organise and deliver healthcare on the ground level through private and public healthcare professionals and through public, private and non-profit healthcare facilities.

The achievement of positive healthcare outcomes in any village or town is linked to the quality of the community in that village or town. There must be people who are willing: to work together to support local enterprise; to represent all older people in the community and work with local representatives on healthcare issues and agendas; to develop and defend healthy environments and facilities; to ensure a range of public and social activities. Without such community involvement towns and villages are simply places where people live.

## The Voice of Our Older People

▶ Local Health Providers	▶ Nutritional Information & Education
▶ Support for People Living Alone	▶ Hospitals/Emergency Services
▶ After Hospital Care Support	▶ Age Friendly Hospitals
▶ Enhance Meals on Wheels	▶ Health & Wellbeing Activities

## Key Actions

1	Continue to develop and prioritise accessible Age Friendly physical and wellbeing initiatives.
2	Work with other agencies to promote health and wellbeing education and awareness.
3	Work with the HSE and other agencies on projects with the aim of attaining AF accreditation.



Croí Nurse in attendance at Age Friendly Christmas Festival 2024



Ballaghaderreen Men's Shed at Roscommon's Age Friendly Christmas Festival 2024

## Going Forward: Critical Success Factors

Achieving our vision depends on the involvement of a number of different agencies. Everyone has a part to play. The success of this Age Friendly Strategy will depend on everyone working together.

People need to think about where they are now and the choices they will want to make to have a positive older age. Most people want to continue to contribute to society. There is a role for all of us to work within our communities to enable this to happen. There is much debate to take place on how this will best be achieved and this debate needs to take place at local level.

The Age Friendly Strategy has been developed in partnership with a wide range of people and organisations. It is a living document. Continuing and building on these relationships is essential in order to achieve our goals.



County Roscommon Age  
FriendlyStrategy

2025 - 2030

# Action Plan

**Theme 1 Outdoor Spaces and Buildings**
**Objective Older people are supported to be ‘out and about’ by the built and social environment in County Roscommon.**

No.	Action	Lead Agency	Partners	Timescale	Outcome
1	Work with relevant departments and agencies to support making towns in County Roscommon age friendly, including safe paths that are obstacle free with accessible parking and pedestrian crossings. Walkability studies will be completed in the three Roscommon Municipal Districts (MD's) with the respective area engineer.	OPC	RCC/AFI/ Town Teams	Longterm/ Ongoing	Completion of Walkability studies in all three MD's.
2	Ensure all library buildings are age friendly, accessible for older people – welcoming and inclusive.	RCC	Town Teams/ RCC/OPC	Longterm/ Ongoing	Maintain our libraries Age Friendly accreditation.
3	Work with relevant state agencies to achieve Age Friendly status in your county hospital and train stations.	Roscommon Hospital / Iarnród Éireann	OPC	Longterm/ Ongoing	WHO's four stage process initialised on all Age Friendly accreditation initiatives.
4	Roscommon County Council in partnership with relevant businesses will explore the provision of public toilets in towns throughout County Roscommon via the “Nette Toilette or Nice Toilet” concept. This concept is based on a voluntary partnership arrangement between the Local Authority and hospitality businesses.	OPC	RLP/RCC	Longterm/ Ongoing	Work with Area Offices and local businesses to roll this out.
5	Support the use of “Universal Design” of any development of a public space and/or public buildings in County Roscommon.	RCC	AFI	Longterm/ Ongoing	Work with Housing and Town Teams.
6	Work with relevant departments/external stakeholders to promote safe access to public spaces/towns/villages/parks and graveyards.	RCC	All Agencies	Shortterm/ Ongoing	Keep accessibility to the fore in Walkability Audits.

**Theme 2 Transportation**

**Objective Support the provision of safe and accessible transport and infrastructure to enable older people to engage actively in all aspects of life in Roscommon**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Lead Agency</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Timescale</b>	<b>Outcome</b>
1	Support Age Friendly initiatives by 'Active Travel'.	RCC	Local Links	Ongoing	Include Active Travel in all Walkability Audits.
2	Identify gaps in transportation and work with relevant organisations to improve services.	OPC	NTA/Local Links/HSE	Ongoing	Improve scheduling and connectivity of services.
3	Work with the Active Travel team on consultation submissions to state agencies in identifying safe and accessible bus stops in our towns and villages.	Active Travel		Ongoing	Increase number of accessible bus stops.
4	Support the provision of footpaths that encourage people to make a more active journey designed in accordance with national guidelines under the Active Travel Programme.	RCC		Longterm/ Ongoing	Identify locations county wide.
5	Support the provision of safe and secure pedestrian crossing points as per the Active Travel portfolio designed in accordance with national guidelines throughout County Roscommon.	Active Travel	Area Engineer	Longterm/ Ongoing	Identify locations county wide.
6	Develop a promotion and communication campaign to ensure awareness of all transport services available.	RCC	All Agencies	Shortterm/ Ongoing	Increase awareness of services to older people.

**Theme 3 Housing**

**Objective** Support the provision of lifetime adaptable housing choices and solutions to enable older people live independently in their own homes for as long as possible

No.	Action	Lead Agency	Partners	Timescale	Outcome
1	Collaborate with and support the work carried out by the Healthy Age Friendly Homes Coordinator.	HHC	OPC	Longterm/ Ongoing	Continue to promote Healthy Homes Coordinator.
2	Promote various housing grants and supports that are available.	RCC	PPN	Shortterm/ Ongoing	Sign post to Healthy Age Friendly Homes Coordinator and the Housing Department
3	Support the use of 'Universal Design' in Social Housing.	RCC	AFI	Longterm/ Ongoing	Promote the use of 'Universal Design'.

**Theme 4 Social Participation**

**Objective** Encourage opportunities for our older population to engage in social, cultural and recreational activities

No.	Action	Lead Agency	Partners	Timescale	Outcome
1	To work collaboratively with the Roscommon's Culture & Creative Team in promoting age-friendly social and cultural events across the county to support social participation on an annual basis.	RCC	Arts Office	Ongoing	Keep older people up to date with all events.
2	Increase opportunity for older people from all communities to break down barriers to social exclusion through a diverse range of activities and workshops that build social networks and diminish stereotyping of our older population.	RCC	OPC/ Leader	Ongoing	Increased inclusivity of older people from all backgrounds.
3	Prioritise the development of real inter-generational initiatives which harness the expertise from across the generations to make Roscommon a county for all ages. Work with a local school to look at the creation of an Age Friendly module under Transition Year Programme.	RCC	Comhairle na nÓg/ Schools	Shortterm/ Ongoing	Organise annual inter-generational event.

**Theme 5**      **Respect and Social Inclusion**  
**Objective**      **Increase the awareness of the diversity and positive contribution of older people to County Roscommon**

No.	Action	Lead Agency	Partners	Timescale	Outcome
1	Establish Age Friendly Recognition Programmes.	RCC	OPC	Ongoing	Continue to work with businesses to roll these out countywide.
2	Increase older people's participation in learning through increased promotion of access to sports.	RCC	Sports Partnership	Ongoing	Role out an annual sports taster day.
3	Assist Older People's Council, help committees to reach and enhance their opportunity to influence change in their county.	RCC	PPN/SPC	Ongoing	Support the OPC in making submissions and influence change in areas of interest.
4	Support Older People's Groups when applying for funding under appropriate schemes to facilitate affordable trips and activities.	RCC	PPN	Ongoing	Support older people's groups to apply for various funding schemes.

**Theme 6**      **Civic Partnership and Employment**  
**Objective**      **Promote and support volunteering, lifelong learning and employment opportunities at local level**

No.	Action	Lead Agency	Partners	Timescale	Outcome
1	Roscommon County Council's Community Department will continue to support community initiatives for older people through links with the members of the Local Community Development Committee.	RCC	LCDC	Ongoing	Ensure that the views of Older People are represented on Council Committees
2	To promote continued civic engagement of older people in County Roscommon, secure county-wide commitment to the active promotion of older people's rights and ability to participate in the consultation processes carried out by services and agencies on their plans, policies and practices that effects them and their communities.	RCC	PPN	Ongoing	Ensure inclusion of older people have representation on boards.
3	Support the registration of the many older people's groups to the PPN.	RCC	PPN	Ongoing	Increase membership of older people's groups on PPN.
4	Encourage and support the increase in membership of our Older People's Council.	OPC	PPN	Ongoing	Carry out/partner on various event to support the increase of membership.

**Theme 7 Communication and Information**
**Objective Support the provision and encourage the delivery of good quality information to older people in County Roscommon through effective communication using all relevant methods**

No.	Action	Lead Agency	Partners	Timescale	Outcome
1	Promote the use of plain language when producing information and encourage the provision of user friendly, coordinated information as a way to meet the needs of older people.	RCC	Adult Literacy for Life	Ongoing	Continually promote within our own parameters.
2	Provide an up to date directory of services which provides a list of supports available.	RCC	OPC	Shortterm/ Ongoing	Update and circulate this document.
3	Work with external stage agencies and our library services to role out relevant Age Friendly IT training.	RCC	All Agencies/ Library	Ongoing	Number of events scheduled.
4	Establishment of an Annual Expo for the older population of County Roscommon.	RCC	OPC	Longterm/ Ongoing	Organise annually.
5	Advocate for older people's groups throughout the county and support what they deem to be important.	RCC	All Agencies	Ongoing	Regular engagement and communication.

**Theme 8 Community Support and Health Services**
**Objective "To support a positive approach to health and well-being and independent living through access to community supports, cultural programmes and health services in County Roscommon"**

No.	Action	Lead Agency	Partners	Timescale	Outcome
1	Continue to develop and prioritise accessible Age Friendly physical and wellbeing initiatives.	RCC	All Agencies	Ongoing	Organise regular information and events.
2	Work with other agencies to promote health and wellbeing education and awareness.	RCC	HI	Ongoing	Increased signposting to relevant services.
3	Work with the HSE and other agencies on projects with the aim of attaining AF accreditation.	RCC	HSE	Ongoing	Continue using WHO's four step process.



**MICHAEL COYNE**, Boyle on the occasion of his 107th birthday in January 2024 with Community Garda, Sergeant Deirdre Coleman. Michael was presented with a letter and medal from President Michael D. Higgins, he was the oldest person in Roscommon at the time and second oldest in Ireland. Sadly Michael is no longer with us, thanks to his nephew and carer Neil McGarry for letting us use this picture. May his gentle soul rest in peace.

*Old age is like everything else .  
To make a success of it,  
you've got to start young.*

Theodore Roosevelt

