

Age-friendly Borough consultation and engagement programme

March 2015

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 At the Council Assembly meeting on 22 January 2014 the Consortium of Older Peoples' Services in Southwark (COPSINS) presented a deputation to the committee which asked the council to commit to becoming an age-friendly borough and to develop a strategy to make this a reality.
- 1.2 On 2 July 2014 Cabinet agreed its new fairer future promises, of which Promise 10 was an 'Age Friendly Borough', stating "We want you to get the best out of Southwark whatever your age so we will become an age friendly borough, including the delivery of an ethical care charter and an older people's centre of excellence".
- 1.3 As part of its commitment to becoming an age-friendly borough, on 18 November 2014 Cabinet agreed to become a dementia-friendly borough, to join the newly established Southwark Dementia Action Alliance, and to sign the National Dementia Declaration.
- 1.4 The WHO defines an age friendly community as one where "policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environment are designed to support and enable older people to 'age actively', that is, to live in security, enjoy good health, and continue to participate fully in society'.
- 1.5 The WHO has produced a checklist of essential features of age-friendly cities to assist cities in becoming more age-friendly. It consists of eight themes as follows:
 - Outdoor spaces and buildings
 - Transport
 - Housing
 - Social participation
 - Respect and social inclusion
 - Civic participation and employment
 - Communication and information
 - Community and health services.
- 1.6 It is proposed that Southwark applies to join the WHO global network of age-friendly cities. To become accredited as an age friendly city Southwark will need to demonstrate that it will:
 - Establish mechanisms for involving older people throughout the age-friendly cities and communities cycle
 - Develop a baseline assessment of age-friendliness of the city
- 1.7 These tasks will facilitate Southwark in developing a 3-year action plan and identifying indicators to monitor progress against the action plan.
- 1.8 To produce the outcomes above Southwark will launch a community conversation. It will be focused not only on understanding people's experiences of the borough in relation to the eight themes and understanding what the gaps are that the action plan should address, but support the development of relationships with the people we talk to so we are able to develop mechanisms that will deliver continuous involvement by older people in the age friendly and communities cycle.

- 1.9 To ensure that the conversation is framed in a way that will enable us to develop an action plan that will be SMART we will kick start the work with a co design workshop with key partners and academics in the field. This is intended to be held at the end of March 2015.
- 1.10 The tools Southwark uses to engage people in this conversation will reflect the need to build on-going relationships, capacity and confidence. The processes used will be focused on engagement and participation as much as asking people what they think. The plan aims to deliver both breadth and depth of engagement with this issue. The plan aims to encourage a range of organisations and bodies to take responsibility for the delivery of the action plan as well as identify how individuals can play a more active role in shaping their own way of “ageing well”.
- 1.11 Some engaged older residents will also be invited to the workshop to ensure that older residents are involved from the inception of the project. These residents will be identified by our voluntary sector partners.
- 1.12 The support of the community and voluntary sector will be critical to successful delivery of this plan. An additional outcome should be the strengthening of the older person’s networks and forums.

2.0 The Aims and Objectives of Community Engagement

- 2.1 In 2012 Southwark adopted a consultation framework that promised all our consultation would be:
 - Universal
 - Impartial
 - Comprehensive
 - Timely
 - Cost effective
- 2.3 Below we have indicated how this might be delivered, although the detail of the what and how will be defined during the co-design workshop:

Table 1 Consultation about Age friendly Borough	
1. Universal	<p>All stakeholders should have the opportunity to participate in the process and to have their views taken into account.</p> <p>The stakeholders are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All residents in Southwark • In particular those residents who are over 40 and beginning to think about ageing and how they might age well. • People who are working with older residents and providing support to older people, including health, council and voluntary sector providers and community groups such as Tenants and Residents’ Associations (TRAs), faith groups, BME groups • Carers of older people • Business in Southwark • Arts and Leisure organisations • Police • Transport for London

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPs and CCG • Networks bringing services for older residents together such as COPSINS, Southwark's Dementia Action Alliance, Older People's Partnership Board <p>The conversation will provide people with the platform to express their views and how they would like to continue to be involved in this conversation.</p>
2. Impartial	<p>WHO has established its criteria for an age friendly city and developed a comprehensive set of themes that have an impact on enabling older people to age well, lead full and active lives, and combat social and physical isolation; ensuring that older people have equal access and are fully included.</p> <p>This provides a useful framework for the conversations and developing our understanding of how we both meet and don't meet people's aspirations for an age friendly borough, resident priorities and developing the action plan to tackle the issues that emerge.</p> <p>As indicated above one of the goals of this conversation is to develop a core group of older residents who want to work with us to develop the action plan, monitor progress of the plan and support engagement on the emerging priorities with others living in ,working in and visiting Southwark.</p> <p>One of the issues we wish to explore is how can we frame our conversation as a means to encourage behaviour change in adults that means they are better prepared for their ageing and how they can put in place measures that will support ageing well, beyond pension planning.</p>
3. Comprehensive	<p>The plan should include a range of tools to ensure that the conversation delivers sufficient breadth of engagement to ensure that we achieve a comprehensive understanding of people's experiences to shape the action plan and depth to deliver a group of residents we are able to continue to work with throughout the cycle and beyond.</p>
4. Timely	<p>The conversation will build on our existing strategic and policy framework already adopted such as the Council Plan 2014-18, new Housing Strategy, the evolving New Southwark Plan, 11,000 homes consultation work and the dementia-friendly Borough.</p> <p>The consultation will take place over six months with the ground work laid during April and launched in May, and the first stage ending in September. This will enable sufficient time to both find out what people think and develop the relationships to move on to the next stages of the cycle.</p>
5. Cost effective	<p>The consultation will use web based tools to deliver universal consultation in the most cost effective way. This will target the over 40s cohort, recognising that many of our older residents are digitally excluded. Our new young person's tools will invite the thoughts of under 25s and we will work with the intergenerational network to begin conversations with a younger audience and understand some of the barriers to their thinking about this issue.</p>

	<p>We will recruit age-friendly champions to engage residents, and a peer to peer approach to fostering discussions.</p> <p>We will seek the support of VCS to facilitate workshops and opportunities to meet with older residents and their carers. We will use existing sessions and activity as we recognise that the VCS do not have the resources to deliver additional work.</p> <p>We will use existing networks and events to meet with a wide audience and older people with a range of needs, living in a variety of settings and different communities of interest.</p>
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3.0 Engagement Principles

3.1 The consultation process will follow the Code of Practice on Consultation issued by the Department for Business Innovation and Skills. The BIS guidance outlines its consultation principles:

3.2 **Criterion 1: When to consult**
Formal consultation should take place at a stage when there is scope to influence the policy outcome.

The conversations will inform the action plan and priorities.

3.3 **Criterion 2: Duration of consultation exercises (BIS recommends 12 weeks)**

The initial conversation will take place over an extended period as the work will also aim to develop a group of residents we are able to work with long term to deliver an age friendly borough.

3.4 **Criterion 3: Clarity of scope and impact**
Consultation documents should be clear about the consultation process, what is being proposed, the scope to influence and the expected benefit and costs of the proposals.

The conversation activity will be largely based on workshop and focus group approaches which will ensure that participants are able to develop a clear understanding of the process and the impact of their engagement.

3.5 **Criterion 4: Accessibility of consultation exercises**
Consultation exercises should be designed to be accessible to, and clearly targeted at those people the exercise is intended to reach.

This consultation will be web based, face to face and peer to peer, and delivered in partnership with the VCS organisations to ensure that there is reach of our target audience.

3.6 **Criterion 5: The burden of consultation**
Keeping the burden of consultation to a minimum is essential if consultations are to be effective and if consultees' buy-in to the process is to be obtained.

Many of the conversations will take place at venues and events that our target audience are already attending, which will ensure that they are both effective and do not over burden the audience.

3.7 **Criterion 6: Responsiveness of consultation exercises**
Consultation responses should be analysed carefully and clear feedback should be provided to participants following the consultation.

The findings from the engagement programme will be reported to Cabinet in the autumn. A report will be published.

4.0 **Consultation Methodology**

Who we will consult

- 4.1 All residents living in the Borough will have an opportunity to contribute to the conversation about becoming an age friendly Borough. However the focus of this consultation will be those residents who are over 40, carers, service providers for this age group and community organisations that offer support to and involve older residents.
- 4.2 **Tenants and Residents:** We will target sheltered housing residents in both council and registered provider accommodation and identify older council residents through our Area Housing Forums and Tenants and Residents Associations.
- 4.3 **Community Councils:** We will promote the opportunities to get involved through the community councils and their networks.
- 4.4 **Voluntary Sector Organisations:** We will work with voluntary sector partners to reach their user groups.
- 4.5 **Community Organisations:** We will target our existing networks of older people, faith and BME groups to reach their users and members
- 4.6 **Adult Social Care:** These services deliver activity and events in our day centres and other facilities for older people.
- 4.7 **Businesses in the Borough:** Businesses have a key role to play in delivering an age friendly borough and we should work with established business forums and groups to identify how we can work with the business community.
- 4.8 **Leisure Services:** We should work with public and private sector organisations who deliver leisure activity to understand how they may contribute to creating a more age friendly borough and support older people age well, e.g. parks services, leisure centres, gyms, local theatres and cinemas, libraries

Next steps

- 4.9 To kick start the consultation on this issue we are proposing to commission the Centre for Policy on Ageing to deliver a co-design workshop with our key partners, some older residents and national experts that will identify the questions we need to talk to people about so we are able to develop a programme for the conversation. This should ensure that the action plan we develop is able to identify a range of contributors to an age friendly city, including individuals, businesses, the voluntary, police, CCG, private and public sector and networks focused on older peoples services.

The benefits of using this approach are that we will be able to:

- Identify the focus of the consultation work across the themes
- Bring academic insight to the early planning stages of the work.
- Gain buy in for the work we are doing from a range of potential contributors to delivery of age friendly borough
- Ensure that the work we do in the following six months produces mutually agreed outcomes.

4.10 The outcomes we will be exploring in the workshop will be

- What we should be talking to residents about
- How we can use these conversations to gain greater engagement on this issue
- How we can use this conversation as a tool to encourage more people to think about how they can age well
- How we frame the discussion to encourage people who are not older to participate
- How we use the conversation to encourage service providers to address the needs of their older users and customers
- How the engagement process can also be used to strengthen older persons forums and networks in the borough
- How we describe what age friendly will look like so that many people will be able to see the stake they have in this and understand their individual responsibilities in this process.

4.11 Once we have established this we will use a range of tools to deliver the conversations and outreach work these will include:

- Using volunteers for peer to peer discussions
- Collecting diaries/stories of experiences of being an older person
- Web presence
- Printed materials
- Twitter and facebook
- Small group work
- Sheltered Housing Unit event

Key messages

4.12 Throughout the campaign and in our printed and social media pieces the following messages should be promoted and used to explain the consultation.

4.13 Anyone of whatever age can comment on this consultation as we want to talk to everyone. A borough which is age-friendly towards its older people will have benefits for all age groups.

4.14 Being age friendly has the same meaning as defined by the WHO - age friendly is about the needs of older people. The WHO defines an age friendly community as one where “policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environment are designed to support and enable older people to ‘age actively’, that is, to live in security, enjoy good health, and continue to participate fully in society’.

4.15 We have an ageing population but this should not been seen only in terms of the challenges this presents. The discussions should recognise older people for their wealth of experience and knowledge, and their contribution to society, for example, as workers, volunteers and carers.

- 4.16 Our older people should be able to be active and engaged citizens who have plenty of opportunities to have fun, and are enabled to age well.
- 4.17 The council does not have the power over all the areas that can have an impact on an individual's ability to age well, but can use its influence in areas that it does not control.
- 4.18 We need to understand how we can make it easier for our residents to make positive choices that affect their health and well being.
- 4.19 Being age friendly is good for business. Older people have a positive role to play in the workforce. Older people would like to continue to work and this should be supported.

5.0 Resources structure

Table 2.

Role	Function
Community Engagement	Developing Consultation plan: delivery of SHU event; drafting materials; participating in some of the engagement activity; arranging activity with its networks.
Communications	Creating consultation webpage and responsible for managing all social media (including Twitter and Facebook accounts). Responsible for maximising participation through a proactive communications campaign and facilitating the mail outs.
Programme manager	Responsible for the development and management of following aspects of the engagement programme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project plan and co-ordination of engagement activity • Drafting report to Cabinet and other stakeholders
Project Costs	
Printed materials	TBC

Additional resources will also be provided by Housing Strategy, Adult Social Care, the age friendly stakeholder reference group-COPSINS, Healthwatch & Southwark Pensioners' Group rep.