

## OLDER PEOPLE'S PLAN UPDATE

<b>Cabinet Member &amp; Portfolio</b>	Cllr Jane Palmer, Cabinet Member for Health & Social Care
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Sandra Taylor, Corporate Director of Adult Social Care & Health
<b>Report Author &amp; Directorate</b>	John Wheatley – Corporate Services Directorate
<b>Papers with report</b>	None.

## HEADLINES

<b>Summary</b>	This report updates Cabinet on developments regarding services for older people and the Council's Older People's plan over the last year.
<b>Putting our Residents First</b> <b>Delivering on the Council Strategy 2022-2026</b>	<p>This report supports our ambition for residents / the Council of: Live active and healthy lives</p> <p>This report supports our commitments to residents of: Safe and Strong Communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Council Strategy 2022-2026</li><li>• Joint Health &amp; Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2025</li><li>• Better Care Fund Plan 2023 - 2025</li></ul>
<b>Financial Cost</b>	There are no costs arising directly because of this report: services cited are covered through existing budget setting processes.
<b>Relevant Select Committee</b>	Health and Social Care Select Committee.
<b>Relevant Ward(s)</b>	All

## RECOMMENDATION

**That the Cabinet notes the activities underway across services and with partners to support older people in Hillingdon.**

## **Reasons for recommendation**

To provide Cabinet with oversight of activity particularly related to support for older people.

## **Alternative options considered / risk management**

The alternative would be not to receive a report or update on such services, this would not provide Cabinet with the direct oversight of such activity.

## **Democratic compliance / previous authority**

The last report to Cabinet on the Older People's plan was in September 2023. This is for information and demonstrates the Council's long-standing commitment to supporting older residents.

## **Select Committee comments**

The Health and Social Care Select Committee welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Older People's Plan report. Whilst the work undertaken to support older tenants living in the Council's housing stock is commended, Members are concerned that there does not appear to be as much support available for older homeowners who are asset rich but cash poor in relation to home improvements such as insulation and replacement boilers.

The Committee is aware that falls are the major cause of admittance to residential care following a hospital stay for residents aged over 65. The provision of activities such as chairbics classes had helped with falls prevention by increasing residents' strength. The chairbics sessions had been very popular so sessions had been recorded to enable more people to get involved and take part at home. Whilst in-person activities such as chairbics provide participants with social contact, concern has been expressed that this is just not possible from a video. Consideration needs to be given to the social integration opportunities available to those residents who participate in remote activities such as chairbics as well as how to monitor the impact that the activity is having on their lives.

Insofar as digital access is concerned, Members are keen to ensure that all residents are able to access services. To this end, the Committee is pleased that measures are being put in place to support those older residents in the Borough who are unable to use devices to ensure that they continue to be able to access services.

Members commend the action to provide activities that older residents love and ask that statistics and stories be included in future reports to provide an understanding of the actual benefits of the activities and the impact of the action. Further work is also needed to ensure that the Council is satisfied that those residents who need the services that are provided are aware of (and using) them and more thought could be given to how rising risk groups can be encouraged to live healthier lifestyles when they get older by targeting health and social care resources upstream and making sure that the right people are being targeted locally.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### Council Strategy 2022-2026

- 1) The Council Strategy 2022-2026 superseded the Older People's Plan which coordinated support for older people provided by the Council and by voluntary sector partners and had been in place for over 15 years.
- 2) The Council Strategy carries forward many of the actions contained within the Older People's Plan. Our vision for residents remains Putting Residents First. We will continue to engage with older residents and organisations that work with and represent older people, through partnership working and through engagement, including the regular consultation forum, the Older People's Assembly.
- 3) The following ambitions contained in the Council Strategy are particularly relevant to older people. We want all our residents to:
  - Live active and healthy lives
  - Be/feel safe from harm
  - Stay living independently for as long as they are able.
- 4) In addition, the new Strategy sets out the Council's commitments to residents, including older people. It states that we will:
  - i. Work to keep residents safe from harm
  - ii. Enable children, young people, their families and vulnerable people and older people to live healthy, active and independent lives.
  - iii. Develop housing options for vulnerable adults and older people that promote active independent living.
  - iv. Work with the NHS and other partners to continue to develop joined-up services to meet the health, care and support needs of residents in the community.
  - v. Work with partners to ensure better access to healthcare in the community.
  - vi. Explore ways to work innovatively with the voluntary sector to help improve health and wellbeing outcomes for residents.
  - vii. Improve digital access for all.

### Developing the Older People's Plan

- 5) The Hillingdon Older People's Plan grouped activities under the following headings:
  - Safety and Security
  - Preventative Care
  - Keeping Independent and Healthy
  - Supporting Older People in the Community.
- 6) Many of the activities contained in the plan are ongoing and remain important parts of the offer for older people. We have included these in an assessment of activities under the seven commitments to residents within the new strategy and these are set out below, to

form the basis of a revised, forward-looking Older People's Plan based on the Council's Strategy 2022-2026. The Council Strategy commitments are:

### **Work to keep residents safe from harm**

- 7) The Street Scene Enforcement team and Licensing team ensure pavements are kept clear from obstructions such as overgrowing hedges and tables or chairs outside cafes and restaurants so that pavement users are not forced to step off into the road to get by.
- 8) The Anti-Social Behaviour and Localities team investigate reports of issues affecting the quality of life in a local area and coordinate work across the Council's teams and with partners to tackle those problems.
- 9) The Environmental Protection team investigates reports of excessive noise disturbing residents in their homes, including operating a response service in the evening and night between Thursday and Sundays.
- 10) The Safer Communities team meet monthly with Police teams to agree joint action to tackle crime and disorder in the borough, including crimes which disproportionately impact on older people.
- 11) Trading Standards priorities include protecting vulnerable residents from rogue traders. Where an older resident is targeted by cold-callers, Trading Standards will respond and intervene to ensure the trader provides the legally required calling-off periods and that they do not mislead residents over the work required on their properties.
- 12) The Stronger Communities team work with the Police and other local organisations to promote good relationships between different parts of our community and to prevent hate crime. This includes delivering hate crime workshops to community groups, faith groups and local voluntary organisations, promoting the Hate Crime Upstanders scheme and supporting the Hillingdon Inter-Faith network.
- 13) Live monitored public space CCTV is provided across the borough to deter crime and aid the identification of persons involved in crime or anti-social behaviour. The CCTV network is also used to help locate people who go missing unexpectedly.
- 14) The Safer Communities team also support the Hillingdon Community Risk Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences which brings together organisations from across the area to review the support being provided to people who may be at increased risk of harm. Support for vulnerable older people can be sought at these conferences and they are attended by Hillingdon Mind and Age UK so comprehensive support can be facilitated. They are also working with partners to strengthen our support for people who 'hoard' in their homes, bringing risks to themselves and others who visit their homes.

**Enable children, young people, their families and vulnerable people and older people to live healthy, active and independent lives.**

Financial advice and support

- 15) For the winter of 2024/25, winter fuel allowances and the Pensioner Cost of Living Payment for winter will be withdrawn from people of pension age unless they are in receipt of the means-tested Pension Credit. This change has increased the importance of income maximisation work. The Council is working with the voluntary sector in Hillingdon to provide a proactive enhanced support service to increase the take-up of Pension Credit and other financial support that older residents are eligible to receive – this programme commenced in October.
- 16) In response to the cut in winter fuel payments by the government, the Council has introduced 3 new initiatives using the Household Support Fund to support pensioners within Hillingdon. Information on our initiatives has been published on our website. We will commission a local charity or other third party to reach out to all pensioners in the borough and assist those that may be entitled to Pension Credit to submit a claim. Pensioners who may need support to navigate the online application system will receive help directly in their homes.
- 17) We are prioritising our pensioner tenants for an energy efficiency improvement plan. Properties with older tenants which have an Energy Performance Certificate of D and below, will be prioritised for the programme, which will include new boilers, double glazing and improved insulation. There is more information on this below, under improving council homes for older tenants.
- 18) The Council has also created a Pensioners' Support Fund, to help eligible older residents stay warm this winter. Further details of this scheme will be provided in due course.
- 19) Age UK Hillingdon's Information and Advice Service helped older residents to secure in total £1.72m in benefit income during 2023/24, helping to improve quality of life and preventing build-up of debt arising from the cost of living, particularly utilities, and prevent homelessness. Age UK's Warm Homes programme has increased capacity and has enhanced the incomes of older clients by an average of £6k per annum.
- 20) The Household Support Fund has been used to provide a food and meals support service to older residents, financial assistance for those that are eligible and funding for partner voluntary sector organisations, including Bell Farm Christian Centre (BFCC) – to provide early intervention and prevention support services. Older people support, the Doorway information advice service delivered alongside the Yiewsley and West Drayton food bank, and social/recreational activities and training courses are all available to Hillingdon's older residents. In the first quarter of this year BFCC provided support to around 85 older people.

Keeping Warm and Well

- 21) The Council's Public Health Team works with partners to provide a network of Warm
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Welcome Centres network. In 2023/24 more than 7,000 residents attended a variety of locations, including churches, community centres, libraries and leisure centres that offered a range of activities from coffee mornings to exercise classes, film screenings and game afternoons, as well as health talks, all with warm drinks and an opportunity to chat to others. 12 Health Champions were trained to provide winter wellness information to residents accessing the centres.

- 22) For winter 2024/25, Warm Welcome Centres across the Borough will provide as a minimum a weekly offer, free hot drinks, have a nominated health champion and a commitment to support the wider health offer that is being developed, including information and guidance about keeping well in the cold weather, signposting to local service, and the importance of accessing winter vaccinations.
- 23) The Council is also providing training for Health Champions in Warm Welcome Centres that will help the targeted work on falls prevention, training on Winter Wellness, Active Bystander Training, Mental Health First Aid, Safeguarding, and promoting winter vaccinations aligned to providers; GPs, pharmacists, and the NWL NHS roving vaccination team. There are also planned mini health pop-ups where residents can access information and mini health checks; blood pressure testing, atrial fibrillation readings, diabetes management, energy advice (Green Doctors) and financial advice supported with a published Winter Wellness Directory.
- 24) We have allocated funding for the purchase and distribution of warm blankets to those residents identified as living in fuel poverty and in receipt of financial support. Age UK and H4All are facilitating this programme.
- 25) In September 2024 the Council once again organised a Day of the Older Person event in Uxbridge town centre. There were 34 stalls providing information and advice alongside activities and entertainment, and 480 people attended and provided positive feedback.
- 26) Two Healthy Ageing events are being arranged, for men in November 2024 and for women in March 2025.

### Dementia support

- 27) Hillingdon has held Dementia Friendly Community Status since 2018. Many organisations work together as members of the Hillingdon Dementia Action Alliance to make Hillingdon a Dementia friendly Borough.
- 28) The Council website now includes an online dementia pathway to enable residents to access information on services and activities relating to dementia from point of diagnosis to end of life. The content was developed in conjunction with partners including Alzheimer's UK and Age UK Hillingdon and follows the model of the NHS Dementia and Wellbeing pathway. The pathway helps explain the journey of someone living with dementia and offers guidance to prevention, help and support, services and activities in Hillingdon. To date, the online dementia pathway has had around 2000 views with around 1000 people making use of the content.

- 29) Two dementia wellbeing days have been held, in Hayes in October 2023 and in Uxbridge in March 2024.
- 30) There are 7 Tovertafels in libraries. The 'magic tables' are used by dementia groups, with Care homes and the hospital Memory Service using them for their cognitive stimulation groups with residents living with dementia. The table in Uxbridge Library will be relocated to its own room in the new location.

### Falls prevention

- 31) A new Falls Prevention partnership was formed in January 2024, including Public Health, CNWL, H4ALL, Age UK Hillingdon and Adult Social Care to look at how to improve falls pathways for residents across the Borough. The partnership was awarded ICB funding to do a piece of work with the top ten Care Homes with A&E attendances related to falls. During 2024/25 the Public Health team will commission an exercise programme for Care Homes and a training programme for Care Home staff.
- 32) In the first round of the Strength and Balance 12-week programme, between June and August 2024, 277 residents attended sessions, with an average of 16 people per class. On average people attended 8 out of 12 possible classes. In addition to the classes, 18 filmed videos are to be made available to residents.
- 33) Brunel University undertook evaluation of the programme which showed that 74% of respondents reported an improvement in balance function and 80% reported an improvement in their perceived control over falling.

### Tea Dances

- 34) Dances are running monthly at 3 locations across the borough: Christchurch, Uxbridge; Botwell Leisure Centre and Winston Churchill Hall. The monthly attendance is 120 residents.

### Chairobics seated exercise

- 35) The seated exercise and Strength and Balance classes have been combined to create a 12-week programme for residents. This pathway has been set up to increase throughput, enabling more and new participants to join the sessions and for those who have attended the existing chairobics for some time to be given opportunities to progress to other available sessions. The classes are at full capacity in 11 libraries with 17 sessions running weekly. Figures show 255 residents are attending each week.

### Walk Hillingdon programme

- 36) Between April 2023 and March 2024 there were 1,561 attendances (this is 10% lower than pre-Covid). There have been 203 walks across the year with 18 different routes to choose from. The walks remain popular and continue to be led by local volunteers.

## Sport and Physical Activity Strategy

37) The Sport and Physical Activity Strategy will be replaced with a Healthy Lifestyle Framework. This Framework will incorporate a broader range of partnerships and interventions across Hillingdon Health and Care Partners, with a focus on prevention, early intervention and supporting vulnerable residents and the 'rising risk' group. Public Health remains committed to offering older residents with a range of physical activities to support people stay healthy and remain independent.

## Brown Badge preferential parking scheme

38) The Brown Badge Older Person's parking scheme continues to be popular with older residents. Between April 2023 and March 2024 (inclusive), a total of 1,028 new Brown Badges were issued, along with 417 replacement badges where they had been lost or misplaced. At the start of April 2024 there were a total of 13,936 active Brown Badge users.

## Free Allotment scheme

39) There are currently 374 allotment plots allocated to over 65s and 120 allotment plots allocated to over 60s and those that are disabled and receive benefits on the concessionary rate.

40) The drainage ditch at Church Hill Allotments in Harefield, which is always the site of severe flooding, has been cleared - this has alleviated the problems. The water tanks and waterpipes have been replaced at Field End Allotments in Ruislip.

41) The Council continues to carry out regular maintenance jobs, including repairing water leaks to troughs, repairs to fencing and gates along with any substantial waste being removed as required. The Spring borough wide communal area cut took place in July/August 2024 and the Autumn Cut started in October 2024.

## Age UK Hillingdon services

42) Age UK Hillingdon has been able to deliver a range of services to enable older people to live healthy active and independent lives. These include information and advice, exercise and social classes, befriending and Good Neighbours and Trusted Traders schemes along with domiciliary support services. From this programme of support:

- 5,693 requests for information and advice, 2,200 signposted or referred, 1,395 supported with casework and 699 seen with intensive casework,
- £1.7m secured for older residents through benefit entitlement,
- 46 warm throws delivered to housebound residents with financial needs, funded by Hillingdon's Public Health programme,
- 1,544 face-to-face visits made by befriending volunteers, plus 1,570 phone calls,
- 412 participated in group activities,
- 255 Good Neighbours tasks completed
- 14,533 hospital patients supported



- 346 clients seen at home through the Help at Home scheme, with a total of 11,353 visits and
- 635 people signposted to the Trusted Traders scheme.

## **Develop housing options for vulnerable adults and older people that promote active independent living**

### Improving Council Homes for older tenants

- 43) We are continuing to improve council owned homes, for our residents, including improvements for warmer and cheaper to run properties. This includes measures such as loft and cavity wall insulation, energy efficient gas boilers, new double-glazed windows and for some properties external insulation. 1 in 4 of our Council tenants are aged 65 years or older (2,593 tenants).
- 44) Following improvement works 82% of properties have moved from lower energy-efficiency (EPC D-F) to the higher Band C energy efficiency rating. This helps to keep heating and hot water bills lower for our residents. The Council is accelerating the programme of works to ensure our tenants are benefitting from safe and warm homes, including those for older people, to help them keep warm and well this winter with lower energy bills.

### Telecare

- 45) This technology ranges from the traditional push button alarm to a variety of sensors and detectors that can help reduce risk and provide reassurance both to the older resident but also their relatives, especially those that may live far away. We have expanded our portfolio of Telecare equipment providers so we can keep future focused. Older people are the main beneficiaries of this service and are assessed on individual need as to the type of Telecare required to enhance their lives and support independence. The response service delivered by Comfort Care is particularly supportive to people who live on their own and means that they are less likely to suffer injuries or illnesses that can lead to hospitalisation or a decline in their overall health. This service is free to over 75s in Hillingdon.

### Community equipment

- 46) The community equipment service continues to support residents with the provision of daily living aids ranging from raised toilet seats to electric profiling beds and hoists. The service also provides adaptations to residents' homes, such as grab rails by a door or a toilet and/or bath, valued up to £1k, as well as door entry systems to facilitate authorised access to the homes of residents where the resident is unable to directly open their front door because of a disability. Currently, there are 22,662 Hillingdon residents benefiting from equipment in their homes.

### Age UK Hillingdon Housing Options Service

- 47) The service offers information, advice and practical support including on downsizing, moving into retirement housing or supported housing, or staying put with additional support

put in place. 98 clients were supported to make Locata housing applications online as well as making referrals to other services, including income maximization.

**Work with the NHS and other partners to continue to develop joined-up services to meet the health, care and support needs of residents in the community.**

Neighbourhood working

48) The Neighbourhood working model has made significant progress with the establishment of neighbourhood and borough-level structures, and the realignment of community services in health. The approach involves multi-agency teams working at a neighbourhood level, i.e., clusters of GP practices covering populations of around 50,000 people, proactively identifying the top 2% of the population aged 18 and above most at risk of hospital admission and target support with the aim of preventing a loss of independence. Older people are the main beneficiaries of this approach. Social work teams are aligned to the neighbourhood working model.

49) Key initiatives include the Hypertension Priority, which has seen the creation of a joined-up pathway, increased prevalence rates and the introduction of a library loan scheme. The Hypertension Priority initiative has been shortlisted for a Health Service Journal (HSJ) award and is transitioning to Business As Usual (BAU) within neighborhoods. Additionally, the Frailty initiative has trained staff to deliver retirement workshops, conducted a frailty pilot in supported living, and analysed findings from 50 assessments. There is an Anxiety and Depression initiative which has mapped mental health services and drafted a GIS map in collaboration with the Local Authority, with feedback currently being sought to layer neighbourhood services onto the map

End of life care

50) A new coordination hub led by Harlington Hospice provides a single point of access to information, advice and support for people at end of life and those caring for them.

51) The Palliative Integrated Care Service (PICS) is designed to ensure that people at the end of their life receive the right care at the right time and in the right place. This is achieved through coordination and signposting to various services. The goal is to provide a systematic, person-centered approach that includes acute support and proactive care planning to avoid crises and respect the wishes of clients and their carers. Key achievements include the operationalisation of the PICS hub, training existing staff in new ways of working, recruiting new Wellbeing and Social Support Officers, and integrating teams to work with the same data and feedback to maximise service design and improvements. The service has also developed clear pathways to minimise repetition and handovers, ensuring that resources are moved to where they are needed in the system.

52) Residents benefit from this approach as it ensures they receive the right care when and where they need it, through a coordinated and person-centered approach. The integration of teams working with the same data and feedback maximizes service design and improvements, supporting stays with the patient and ensuring resources follow the patient. Additionally, the service provides psychological bereavement support and reviews the

needs of next of kin (NOK) and carers, ensuring they receive the necessary support. This comprehensive approach enhances the quality of care for residents, ensuring a more coordinated and efficient delivery of end-of-life care.

### Carer Support

- 53) The Carer Support Service, funded by the Council and currently provided by Carers Trust Hillingdon on behalf of the Hillingdon Carers Partnership, continues to offer a range of information, advice, and support services to carers of all ages. The service provides a single point of access for both adult carers and young carers to support them in their caring roles. Adult carers, who are aged 18 and above, have the right to a carer's assessment to determine whether they meet the national eligibility criteria for Council-funded support.
- 54) The Carer Support Service aims to ensure that carers receive the necessary support to manage their responsibilities effectively. In 2023/24, the service provided 4,686 individual pieces of information, performed 1,382 benefits checks, and conducted 1,001 face-to-face appointments. Additionally, they handled 2,035 telephone consultations and conducted 953 one-on-one support sessions. The service also secured £1,590,549.10 for residents in carer-related benefits, significantly improving the household incomes of at least 233 carers. These efforts demonstrate the extensive support provided to carers, ensuring they receive the necessary assistance to manage their responsibilities effectively.

### Admiral Nurse

- 55) The Council has contracted with Central North West London NHS Foundation Trust to provide an Admiral Nurse service. Admiral Nurses, supported by Dementia UK, are specialist dementia nurses who offer clinical, practical, and emotional support to families affected by dementia. The Hillingdon Admiral Nurse service, established in 2003, assists carers of individuals with a confirmed dementia diagnosis residing in the London Borough of Hillingdon.
- 56) Between April 2023 and March 2024, the service recorded 212 referrals, averaging 18 per month. The team supported an average of 143 people monthly, including new cases and ongoing ones. During this period, they delivered 1,924 activities through a mix of face-to-face and telephone contacts. The most common interventions included sharing knowledge and information, offering emotional support, and promoting physical well-being.
- 57) Resident feedback has been consistently positive, highlighting the invaluable support and expertise provided by the Admiral Nurse service to families dealing with dementia.

### **Improve digital access for all**

- 58) The Council's Digital Strategy 2024-2027 notes our commitment to be a digital-enabled, modern, well-run sustainable Council with sound financial management, achieving positive outcomes for residents. The Digital Strategy sets out our vision to embrace technology to be efficient and make it easier for residents to use council services, including supporting those who are unable to use technology. This will be achieved using the principles of prioritising customer needs, using an agile approach to delivery, delivering new business

models driven by data, and having a 'One Council' collaborative aim, facilitating cross-council project teams and sharing goals.

59) The Strategy confirms that the needs of residents will be prioritised through use of research and data to better understand what residents, including older people, need. This information will be used to build and develop products and services to meet those needs.

60) Our services will be accessible to all, with a range of measures to improve digital inclusion. Services will be tested to make sure they are simple and intuitive, and support those who are unable to go online.

## **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications arising from activities set out in the update on the older people's plan. All costs are covered in usual business planning and financial budgeting.

## **RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION**

### **The benefit or impact upon Hillingdon residents, service users and communities?**

The Older People's plan sets out activities across services and with partners that support older residents, and these are set out under the commitments of the Council's Strategy.

### **Consultation carried out or required**

The Council's strategy, which the Older People's plan delivers against, was widely consulted on before being adopted in 2022.

## **CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Corporate Finance**

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and concurs with the Financial Implications set out above, noting there are no direct financial implications associated with the recommendation included in this report.

Furthermore, it is noted that the activities set out in the Older People's plan are existing services contained within various service areas budgets, which have been factored into Star Chamber outputs and captured as part of the refresh of the Council's budget strategy to be presented to Cabinet in December.

### **Legal**

Legal Services confirm that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report. Whenever necessary legal advice is given in relation to specific issues as they arise to ensure that the Council always meets its legal obligations.

## Comments from other relevant service areas

The plan includes contributions from Public Health, Social Care, Green Spaces, Community Safety and from Age UK Hillingdon, Harrow and Brent.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Previous updates to Cabinet.](#)