

# *Age Friendly Check In: Give us your input*

# *Communication & Information*



## **Older people in Bristol are able to stay connected and access relevant information that they require**

Bristol Ageing Better has been working with the City Council and partners to get Bristol recognised as an Age Friendly City by the World Health Organisation.

To gain status as an Age Friendly City, we have been building up an action plan that will demonstrate what Bristol is currently doing as a city to help older people, and also what needs to change in the city to make it even better for older people in the future.

This document is one part of the action plan and focuses on the Communication and Information domain. We have created this based on conversations and involvement from older people and partners. This draft document contains some examples of age friendly work that is happening in the city, however more examples can be found on the age friendly website here:

<http://agefriendlybristol.org.uk/>

We would like to invite you to take a look at this draft document and give your input before we submit it to the World Health Organisation.

When you are looking through this draft action plan please consider the following questions:

- 1) **Do you think that the “what do older people think” section reflects opinion in the city?**
- 2) **Do you think we have identified the right factors affecting communication and information? Would you want to include anything else?**
- 3) **Do you agree with the outcomes?**
  - i. **What actions do you think are needed?**
  - ii. **What can you do to help?**
- 4) **What other age friendly examples are you aware of for the communication and information domain?**

If you would like to give your input please fill out the online form here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/R2PFHWG>

Please do this by 5:00pm on 24<sup>th</sup> July.

# Communication & Information

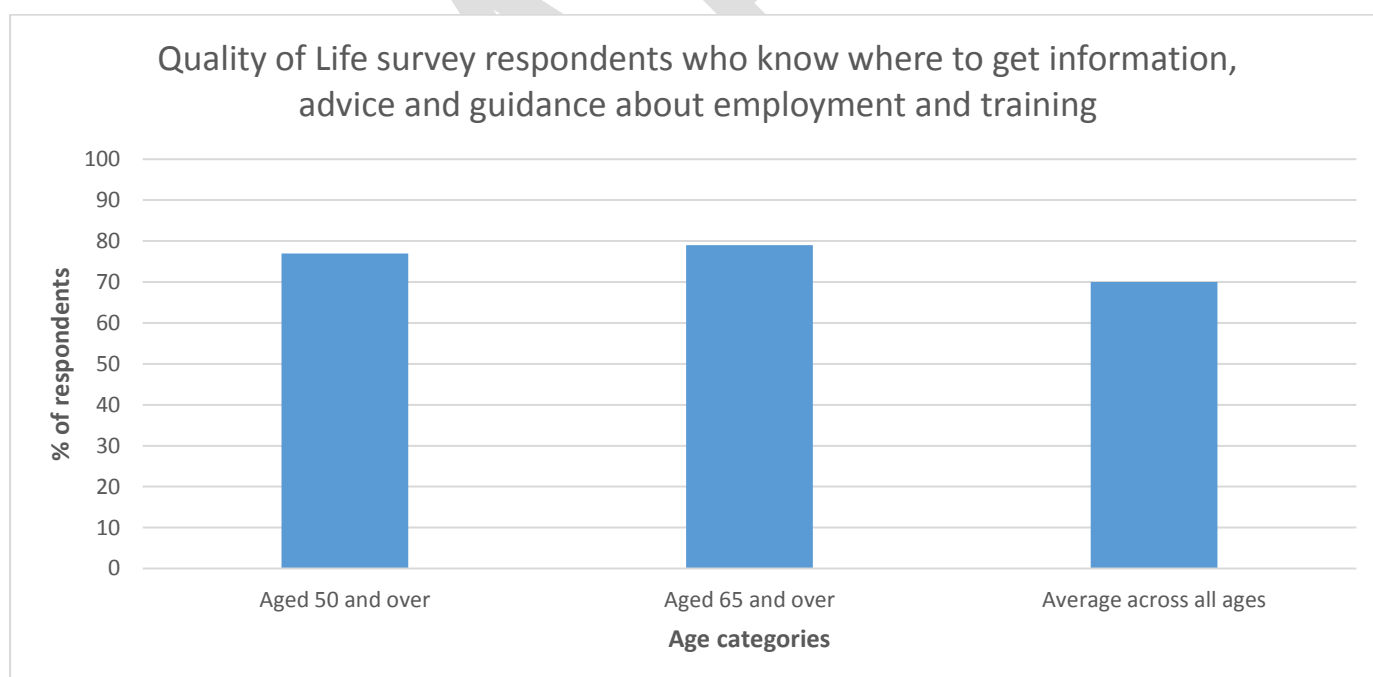
Older people in Bristol are able to stay connected and access relevant information that they require



Staying connected to events, people and getting timely, practical information to manage life and meet personal needs is vital for active ageing. The World Health Organisation states that in an Age-friendly city it is important to have relevant information that is readily accessible to older people with varying capacities and resources. This is particularly important in an age when rapidly evolving information and communication technologies are both welcomed as useful tools yet also criticised for excluding older people who may not have access to the internet.

## What do older people think about Communication and Information?

In the most recent Quality of Life survey, 77% of respondents aged 50+ (and 79% of respondents aged 65+) reported that they knew where to get information, advice and guidance about employment and training. These figures are above the average for all ages in Bristol (70% of all respondents reported knowing where to get this information). This can be seen in the graph below:



The 2018 annual survey of the Bristol Older People's Forum found that 54% of respondents aged 55+ had access to the internet. This figure remained similar for those aged 65 and over, although decreased to 44% of respondents aged 75 and 30% of respondents aged 85 and over.

## **Factors affecting Communication & Information**

### **What should we feel positive about?**

Bristol has many activities and opportunities available for older people and there are many examples where older people have the information they need in order to take advantage of these. The internet provides a useful space to hold a lot of useful information that is easily accessible for more familiar with using technology. The Well Aware website provides information on a wide range of organisations; support groups, community groups, events and activities designed to help improve an older person's health and wellbeing in Bristol and South Gloucestershire.

Newsletters sent out by organisations are a great example of useful information being disseminated but not not all information should be provided online. The Bristol Older People's Forum posts hard copies of their newsletter to their members every quarter.

The charity LinkAge produces regular 'What's On' activity guides for people aged 55 and over in Bristol that can be accessed online or from local libraries and community centres. A number of local papers provide regular information about activities and events to peoples' doors as well.

Bristol also has more innovative ways of disseminating information. The weekly radio show called "the Babbers" enables older people to stay connected and is run by and for older people and features interviews, discussions and news of interest to older people in the city.

Bristol Ageing Better has undertaken to improve the level of communication for older people in the city and to encourage more positive examples of ageing. Aardman animation shone a spotlight on loneliness and their animation was shown across public screens in surgeries, community and public spaces.

### **What could be better?**

In a digital age with decreasing budgets, it is becoming default to put information online and not to print out hard copies. Bristol Council has a comprehensive website to provide information to Bristol residents and to connect them with available support. This growing reliance on digital technology for communication and information is proving to be problematic for older people who don't have the necessary skills in using information technology. Older people want information to be more easily accessible, for example encouraging local businesses to advertise local events, would be a positive step in the right direction.

We need to be thinking about the kind of tools we are using when communicating with older audiences, are we doing this in the right way? There is a lot of useful information out there, but for some older people it can be difficult to find the information they need. Perhaps this calls for a central point for accessing information, with help points relevant to older people in one place rather than fragmented in several places.

# Actions

[Building on from the charter and the above exercise, these actions will reflect that and set out some goals over the next 3 years.]

<i>Outcome</i>	<i>Actions</i>	<i>Guidance Indicator</i>
Organisations collectively co-ordinate a central directory of groups, organisations and services available for older people	Work with resources such as WellAware to achieve this	
Information is in easily accessible formats so that it is available for older people when they need it	Work with businesses and organisations around Bristol to create an 'Age Friendly Lens' that will function as a toolkit	
Local businesses find space in windows or noticeboards to advertise activities and services in the local area		
Older people feel confident going online to access the opportunities of the internet.		

## What is Bristol already doing to be Age Friendly?

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The Babbers present a what's on section every Monday which informs older people about activities and events in the coming weeks. This had proved very useful to raise awareness about what's on for older people across Bristol and helps those who do have access or are confident using the internet.

*The Babbers is a radio show hosted by Ujima Radio that is run by older volunteers that focuses on topics that matter to older people in Bristol*

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**Age UK Bristol : Information and Advice**

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Age UK Bristol offers a free confidential information and advice service for older people, their families and carers. The service is provided by a team of trained volunteers and offers advice and information on a wide range of issues including:

- Benefits and allowances, including Pension Credit & Attendance Allowance
- Help completing forms
- Housing
- Council Tax
- Priority debts, such as rent & utility arrears
- Social care services
- Care homes
- Lasting Power of Attorney
- Wills

*Age UK Bristol is an independent charity working in Bristol to offer support and services to older people*

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The LinkAge Network produces regular 'What's On' activity guides for people aged 55 and over in Bristol that can be accessed online or from local libraries and community centres.

*The **LinkAge Network's** mission is to create lasting solutions that reduce social isolation and loneliness, improve health and wellbeing and strengthen communities. It was created in 2007 by the Bristol Older People's Partnership Board to facilitate community provision for older people.*

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North Bristol Advice Centre's 'Community Support at Home' project offers a free home visit service providing information and support to people over 55 in North Bristol to help them stay independent in their homes and combat social isolation. Their friendly and experienced volunteers can visit older people at home, talk through their individual needs, and provide tailor-made help and guidance.

**North Bristol Advice Centre** provides free and independent advice and support in North Bristol and South Gloucestershire. They specialise in Welfare Benefits and Debt advice, including representation at tribunal, and can provide basic housing and employment advice.

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Well Aware is an interactive health and well-being website for local people. The resource provides support around the home, home maintenance and adaptations, help in getting around / transport, personal health services, socialising, exercising and getting out, emotional support, such as counselling and services for ethnic minority communities.

**Well Aware** is run by The Care Forum, a health and social care voluntary organisation working in partnership with the area's local authorities and clinical commissioning groups.