Clarification questions- Impact Report for UK Network of Age-friendly Communities (2nd May 2024)

1) Is there capacity within the Ageing Better team to carry out some of the focus groups etc or is the winning bidder org arranging and delivering all the engagement and should cost accordingly?

It is expected that the winning bidder will design and deliver any primary research activities such as focus groups. The Ageing Better team will be able support with logistical arrangements (finding dates, sending invites, writing notes etc) as well as helping with recommendations on participants.

2) Is there historical comparison data to share to the winning bidder on areas in the UK that aren't age friendly communities/data from before areas became age friendly communities?

No there is not. This project is not expected to provide a comprehensive evaluation which might include a quantitative comparison between communities that are and are not age-friendly communities.

We do not directly fund or collect data on Age-friendly Communities. There is aa range of publicly available data on local areas on demographics, as well as data related to the 8 domain areas of Age-friendly Communities (e.g. housing, civic participation and employment.) We do not anticipate that changes in this data could directly correlate with the impact of becoming an Age-friendly Community because of the range of influencing factors.

Different communities will collect different data to track the impact of adopting the Age-friendly Communities approach, and baseline where they started. We can put a call out for this data within the project (where GDPR allows it to be shared.) We do not anticipate all or most of the communities in this network to have this comparable data 1) because communities have different approaches to collecting data and capacity/ capability to analysis it, 2) because communities have been adopting the approach for different lengths of time – those who have adopted it in the last year or two are unlikely to see quantitative differences in the data.

3) How many people do you envisage will be part of the steering committee? Are they able to provide good overall level of feedback on activities for the network?

The steering group is made up of 9 Network members, as well as associate members from Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales. The steering group is for the network, to give guidance on our overall direction, it has not been specifically set up for this project. They have been selected to represent a cross section of of the network (e.g. length of time working on the approach, rural vs urban communities, local authority vs voluntary sector led.) They will be able to provide good overall feedback on the approach to this project, as well as activities conducted in the network in general. However, we don't anticipate that the steering group are the only group within the network that will

be engaged in this project. The steering group are some of the members of the Network who we are closest to, and we want to use this project as an opportunity to understand the impact of other members of the network.

4) For the survey to the Age-friendly lead coordinators – would all respondents be able to fill out an online survey without too much trouble or will multiple survey methodologies be necessary?

Yes, Age-friendly lead coordinators could fill in an online survey.

5) Would the lead coordinators be able to recommend/ provide an exhaustive list of local stakeholders and relevant decision makers?

Yes, they should be able to provide an exhaustive list appropriate for the scale of this project.

6) In terms of reports and case studies what has worked well in past to engage stakeholders? (longer, greater depth or lighter summary pieces)

We have not created case studies and reports in this exact form, for this specific purpose, before so can't directly answer the question. In terms of case studies, previously we have worked on case studies aimed at practitioners highlighting age-friendly practices and how they were implemented, so in this case they have been longer with more detail. For decision-makers we have prioritised creating shorter, more Q&A documents and presentations over reports. With this report we would anticipate case studies priortising evidence of impact over detail on implementation so think the case studies/ the report would be shorter (but the information behind them may have more depth.)

7) Will the steering committee/ group be able to recommend key locations for potential interviews or any areas already in mind

The Centre for Ageing Better team will be able to provide initial recommendations for locations for potential interviews, and future recommendations based on any surveying work/ initial primary research activity. The steering group is not specifically for this project, it is made up of current Network members who bring their own perspective on delivering Age-friendly work, therefore could suggest if they themselves would be open to be interviewed rather than recommending others.

8) Does there exist any baseline data or information to track progress/ trends or to ascertain what it was like in a community before any activity had started? To provide objective benchmarks?

Please see question 2 answer

9) Have you conducted this type of work before? What has worked well, or not so well?

We have not conducted an impact report like this before. We have worked to communicate the benefits of the age-friendly communities approach and how communities are implementing it in their areas. Identifying a range of benefits and practices has been beneficial to appeal to a range of stakeholders and types of community.

10) As an academic organisation, we are committed to the dissemination of our work in research, policy and practice arenas. We are pleased to see that the proposed impact report and case studies are to be shared with the network and in the public domain. Can CfAB confirm that it is, in principle, willing to give the research team permission to disseminate findings from the study through scientific peer review channels (conferences, journals etc)? We understand that this would be subject to contract.

We are open to findings being shared through peer view channels and would welcome opportunities to grow the knowledge base. A reminder that this project is not designed as an evaluation of the UK Network or the Age-friendly Communities approach, so would only be suitable for certain distribution. We would own the intellectual property from the contract and would need to approve any external sharing. As the project is delivered we would continue to keep these permissions under review to ensure we meet our duty of care to network members and that opportunities to share do not conflict with the aims of the project.

11) For us to conduct the work, our Research Ethics Committee will need to assess whether the study requires research ethics permission. Our initial enquiry to the Committee indicates that this may not be case and, that if ethical approval is required, a decision can be expedited quickly. However, is this a risk to the timeline that CfAB has considered? Might the risk of such a delay disadvantage a bid from an academic research agency

We haven't specifically accounted for ethics reviewing in the timetable, and any risk of shifts in timetable must sit with the contractor. The return requires bidders to share an indicative timeline, and we would want bidders to include any considerations ethics committees within this. We want the project to be completed by the deadline of beginning November but if bidders still feel they could submit a strong bid with a small recommended timeline change then we would encourage them to do so. Bidders won't be specifically disadvantaged because of the ethics review process but everything in the proposal will be taken into consideration together to assess overall strengthens and requirements of different bids.

12) We would like to request a few amendments to the proposed terms and conditions for the *Impact report for UK Network of Age-friendly Communities* tender. We note that the Contractor's liability under these terms is currently unlimited, which is an uninsurable position. Considering the low-risk consultancy services being provided, would you be willing to limit the Contractor's liability to a commensurate amount, such as 125% of the Contract Fees? Would you

also be willing to remove clause 10.1.3 so that the Contractor is only responsible for direct loss or damage sustained through the Contract?

Yes we would be happy to make these amends

13) Furthermore, to enable us to use knowledge generated during the course of the project, would you be willing to grant us a non-exclusive, non-assignable, non-sublicensable, royalty free license to use the Deliverable Intellectual Property in our business?

We would not be able to grant this permission.

14) Does the Centre for Ageing Better have a stakeholder list of leads for each of the projects and if so, would they be circulating calls for participation to the research activities or would the successful supplier be expected to?

Yes, we have a list of contact details for leads of each Age-friendly Community. Centre for Ageing Better would circulate any initial calls for participation in the research to these leads (and could ask those leads to pass this call on to others as appropriate). As research progresses we would be open to continuing to manage the contact with stakeholders in Age-friendly Communities (e.g. asking for interviews, organising dates) or for the contractor to manage this wholly or partly.

15) How many geographical areas do the 79 members cover - do they all represent a different locality?

Yes, each member represents a different locality though some do overlap, for e.g. we have members which are boroughs within Greater Manchester and the City Region itself is a member. These areas range from city regions through to cities, counties, boroughs and towns. A full list can be found at the link UK Network of Age-friendly Communities | Centre for Ageing Better (ageing-better.org.uk)

16) How many members do you expect to be involved in the qualitative methods?

This number would depend on other forms of engagement of network members (e.g. in surveys) and the insights gathered through these, as well as how many stakeholders within a community (member) are engaged. We would anticipate a minimum of 8 network member being engaged substantively through qualitive methods, to understand a range of experiences, alongside other methods. We would anticipate that most network members who show some engagement with the project would be open to being involved in qualitative research.

17) Are the words in the cost table included in the word count?
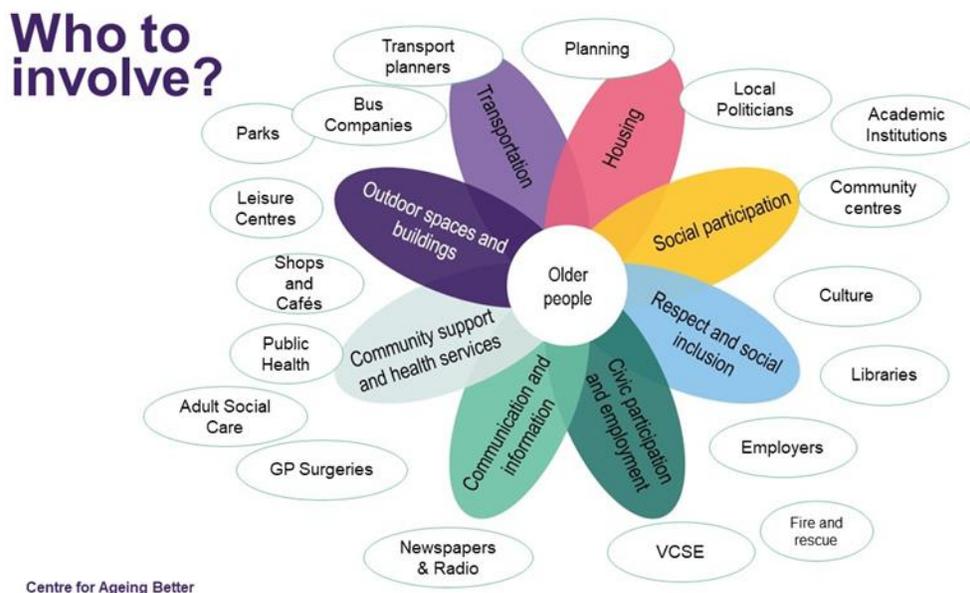
No they are not included

18) The intention is that the impact report will be used by "aspiring and current Age-friendly Communities to make the case for starting/continuing this work" (p6). In that situation, what would be the audience for the report? Who would the Communities want to show it to/influence?

The main audience would be senior leaders/ decision-makers in their area. This would be local elected councillors, directors of relevant departments in local authorities (e.g. Directors of Public Health, Directors of Adult Social Care, CEOs). This is because it is a requirement to secure political commitment to become an Age-friendly Community, and the approval of Directors can help to secure specific resource (staff time, budget) for the work.

The audience may also include external funders, in particular where a voluntary sector organisation is bidding for funding to lead age-friendly work in their area.

19) One of the desired system-level benefits of Age-friendly Communities is "promoting new partnerships across departments, organisations and sectors" (p7). Please could you expand on that slightly or give an example? What sort of partnerships are Communities aiming to promote?

Age-friendly Communities promote and developpartnerships between organisations and departments representing the 8 domain elements such as the below. They will also bring older people and elected representatives into those partnerships.

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The partnerships might take the form of:

- **An Age-friendly Communities steering group, with organisations who come together to drive the overall ageing and older people agenda locally.**
- **An Age-friendly Network, with a wide pool of organisations whose work impacts older people coming together to connect and consider what they can do to make their area a better place to age. The organisations will consider how their work overlaps, for example, at an in person Network event, services could become more aware of what else is available to older people locally, to better signpost support.**
- **Partnerships to work on a specific project together.**
  - **This could be something small like the [Take a Seat project in Barnsley](#) to build more benches in key locations for people to take a rest when out and about – these were sponsored by local businesses and built by the local Mens Shed (a community group of men socialising and doing woodworking activities.)**
  - **Or it could be for a substantial campaign, like the [Greater Manchester Pension Credit campaign](#) where teams in the Combined Authority worked with community groups to get the word out about the eligibility of older people to access a pension credit top up benefit, resulting in millions of pounds being brought into the local economy and older people's pockets.**

20) We would like to request further details on the available data for outputs, i.e. do they have a standardised recording framework and system across the network?

No there is not a standardised recording framework. Through this project we would be identifying the sorts of data being collected and asking communities to submit these. All communities are working at different scales, with different levels of resource. Please see other question responses for further information on data.

21) What is estimated number of impact reports we would have access to?

We are not confident on the answer to this and we hope this project will help uncover more of what exists. Reports or documents summarising the impact of Age-friendly work overall or specific elements within programmes will range in depth and length. We would anticipate 10 more substantive impact reports and 20 shorter impact summaries on specific activities.

22) To what extent are you seeking researchers with experience of working on projects specifically about older people's needs?"

"Knowledge of the ageing sector" is one of the experiences we have asked for under the first question in the return. However we have asked for a number of skills/ experiences and are aware bidders may not have all of these.

23) Are you able to tell us more about what quantitative information may be available to the evaluation team? Do all the Age Friendly Communities share for example reach/number of older people engaged with you as a matter of course or not? Or would all information need to come from a survey?

All communities share with us the number of older people living in their communities when they join the network. They do not share the number of older people engaged or other quantitative information with us as a matter of course, this would need to come from surveying work/ other engagement methods. We anticipate in this contract there being some initial engagement work with a smaller number of network members to understand what sorts of quantitative information network members collect regularly so we can ask the right questions in a larger survey.

24) In terms of sampling communities for more detailed research – upon commissioning would you be able to provide the team with information regarding levels of engagement with your various learning activities at a community level?

Yes we can provide this. We can also provide information on other key features of communities to get an appropriate sample (size, urban vs rural, length of time delivering age-friendly work etc).

25) In the tender you are talking about quantitative and qualitative elements, what are you envisioning in terms of the balance of these in the final output?

Our priority is accessing the best data to communicate the impact of age-friendly communities. We anticipate the report will be more qualitative than quantitative, firstly because of the lack of standardised data collation across the network, and secondly because of the variety of activities and benefits we are looking to demonstrate with this report.

With the quantitative information collation, we want to give a sense of scale of activity, and we want contractors to advise on how we best do that when not every network member will engage in the project or be collecting the same type of data.

26) How do you think quantitative data can meaningfully communicate impact? For example, if you want to know "how many older people have been engaged?", do you mean a small amount of engagement like the thousands of older people participating in an event or in depth engagement like participating in an age-friendly steering group, and will communities interpret this differently?

As laid out in the tender, we anticipate this contract will involve initial engagement with a selection of network members to identify what quantitative information collection is in scope, that asks people what they are already collecting. So a decision on exactly what type of engagement we would ask a question on would be informed by this.

27) There will need to be compromise on depth and breath of impact you are looking for in this tender (i.e. a very small number of case studies showing detail on exactly how changed happened or a larger number of vignettes.) What is your priority here?

We are open to bidder recommendations on which approach to case studies would be best to communicate the impact we are looking for with this project. We anticipate wanting more shorter case studies rather than e.g. 2 very in-depth case studies. We are open to being led as this project develops by the sorts of impact communities are already aware of (e.g. through a survey) and creating case studies which tell these stories best. We want bidders to submit their initial thoughts on this.

28) In the context of austerity there is a limitation on the positive stories that can be told (e.g. telling the story of older people's voice being in the room to inform what services are cut.) Given this, what is your take on the nature of these good stories?

We anticipate being able to share a range of stories of impact, some of which are explicit about how Age-friendly Communities enabled change in this difficult context, or limited the negative impact of cuts to local authorities or reduced funding in the voluntary sector.

29) Is this project more about telling stories of the types of change, or understanding the mechanisms of change?

Ideally with this project we would identify both of these elements, but the priority is telling the stories of the types of change. However, there are certain key features of the age-friendly communities approach we already know are important which are laid out in the tender (e.g. building partnerships, putting a strategic focus on ageing) which we would anticipate being able to directly look for within the stories of change we identify.

30) Which perspective would you prioritise? Older people, stakeholders, community, system?

We want to consider all of these perspectives in the project. Demonstrating impact on older people is fundamental to this project- whether direct, or on community services/ opportunities which have a clear impact on older people (e.g. influencing a bus route in response to older people's involvement)

31) Are you comfortable not showing whether these impacts you uncover are universal amongst the network?

Yes, this project is about showing what is possible, not proving that the impact we uncover is happening in every community in the network.

32) What is the priority between showing the impact of the Age-friendly Communities approach and the impact of the UK Network?

The priority is showing the impact of the Age-friendly Communities approach. We would want to have a number of examples of how the UK Network has supported the work but this is not the overall focus of the report.