



Age-Friendly
Futures Summer

Walking audits to create age-friendly environments

14:00-15:00 / 14:30 – 15:30

#AgeFriendlyFutures

AGEING
IN PLACE
PATHFINDER



Part of
LIVE WELL
DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY WITH
GREATER MANCHESTER'S COMMUNITIES



Taking Up Space

Celebrating two years of the
Ageing In Place Pathfinder, 2022-2024

October 2024

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Ageing in Place Pathfinder

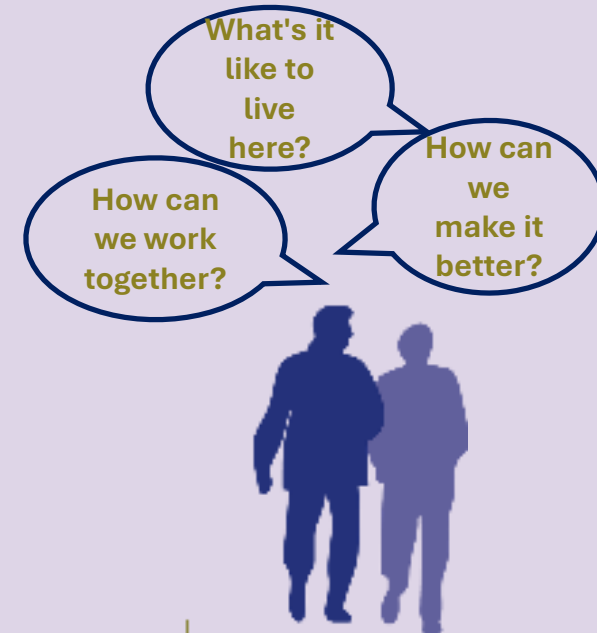
Age Friendly Futures Summit
26th March 2025

Lauren Foster,
Ageing in Place Project Manager
GM Ageing Hub

Ageing in Place Pathfinder

Creating great places to grow older

- £4 million partnership (match funding) between GMCA, Manchester School of Architecture (MMU) and 10 neighbourhood Pathfinder Partnerships.
- Utilising WHO Age-friendly framework; developing place-specific preventative responses to ageing well.
- Creating strong, supportive neighbourhoods to improve connection, health and wellbeing in later life, tackling inequalities in ageing well across the city-region.
- Ensuring voices of people in mid and later life are heard and valued where they live.
- Working and learning with partners to sustain, grow and spread a neighbourhood approach to ageing well.
- Supports delivery of a Live Well in later life blueprint part of Greater Manchester's prevention and reform ambitions and accelerating community-led responses.



**AGEING
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**AGEING
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DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY
FOR GREATER MANCHESTER

Pathfinder Lead:



Resident-led walking group in Abbey Hey, Manchester

Age-Friendly Futures Summit

26th March, 2025

What are we doing?

Southway Housing is the Pathfinder Lead for Abbey Hey, Manchester in the 3-year Ageing in Place Project starting from October 2022.

Our ambition is to make the neighbourhood a supportive and inclusive place for people over 50s to grow older with better health, wellbeing and social connection.

What method do we use?

Place-based approach + collaborative partnership



Identify a
specific area



Understand the local area,
local people, local
resources, local groups and
community organisations,
local issues and
opportunities



Develop an
action plan



Co-produced
projects with
residents



Evaluation and
sustainability
plan

Why is a local walking group needed?



- Barriers/ issues:
 - Cannot walk too far to join other walking groups
 - Not affordable to take transport to other districts to walk
 - Existing walking group is too advanced; fear of joining existing group
 - Fear of walking in the community due to crime and anti-social behaviour



- Residents value most: gardening and nature, history and memory
- The most significant improvements residents would like to see:
ACCESS to green spaces, more community activities, better healthcare and transport, comfortable and secured home...

What have we done?

We formed a weekly walking group in Abbey Hey in October 2023 with the funding from Transport for Greater Manchester

- Walks on every Wednesday 11am-12pm
- Start and end at a community centre (near to Gorton Mill House, an Extra Care social housing scheme for over 55s)
- Resident-led, 1-hour community walk

Aims:

- Co-create a walking group suitable for people over 50s
- Encourage older people to build a healthy walking habit to increase their level of physical activity

To build up this new walking group, we provided:

- 12 free walk sessions and 2 training sessions led by an experienced walk guide
- Incentives: quarterly free meals walk lunch (social eating), free waterproof jackets (walking equipment support)



Walk lunch





Walk to the
parks and
reservoir



Walk over
the bridge,
under the
bridge



Walk to
faith,
historic,
cemetery
spaces



Walk on roads,
streets,
cycleways



Positive feedback from the walking group:

“I love this walking group. The people are so welcoming. It helps to cope with my illness and mental health” **Denise**

“The walking group is good for the soul and giving me structure in the day. We support each other on our journey of life” **Donna**

“I like coming and meeting different people. It gives you more confidence to go outside. You are not scared about walking, more support”
Joan

“I get out and about in the fresh air, get plenty of exercise, good for mental health” **Pat C**

“I love this walking group. I have made some lovely new friends” **Chris**

“It gets me out of the house and to meet more people. I’m retired now and not doing a regular thing, so get out there and do something” **Pat W**

- **Good for physical and mental health**
- **A welcoming and inclusive space** - people with mobility difficulties; slow walkers; older men; Pakistani women joined to learn English
- **Make friends, get peer support** - improve social connection, reduce loneliness and isolation
- **Feel more confident to go out to walk**

Achievements



- Got wide support from community stakeholders e.g. promotion at General practitioners (GPs)
- Welcome to interested people: Social prescribers with patients; mothers with babies
- Share experience to interested organisations: Manchester Settlement; neighbourhood team of Manchester City Council
- Extend to other districts: a new walking group has been started in Burnage in January 2025
- A successful story of Abbey Hey walking group is featured by GMCA filming video:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXJqSG3VJOc>

- Older people involvement in walking project:
 - ✓ Completed training to become Walk Ambassadors and promote walking
 - ✓ Lead the weekly walks
 - ✓ Maintain the group, e.g. communication in Whatsapp group, show caring, welcome new members
 - ✓ Identify interesting routes for submission to the Greater Manchester Walking Festival each year as one of the public walks
- Older people involvement in improving the environment:
 - ✓ Reflected voices of unsafe pavement
 - ✓ Took part in bench project
 - ✓ Took part in map workshops
 - ✓ Will try to use the community audit checklist in the Walk Handbook

- ✓ Reflected voices of unsafe pavement in some areas to the local council through the Pathfinder

Before



Uneven pavement;
wet, muddy, slippery



After



Completed
resurfacing of Yellow
Brick Road (a local
cycleway) in February

Good for walking,
wheeling and cycling



- ✓ Walked around the neighbourhood to identify potential locations for Age-Friendly benches with the Pathfinder team and the local council colleagues



Provide a seating to rest

- ✓ Took part in the map workshops to co-create four walking routes and a community map
 - Tested the routes, checked accessibility, provided views on the route design and map design

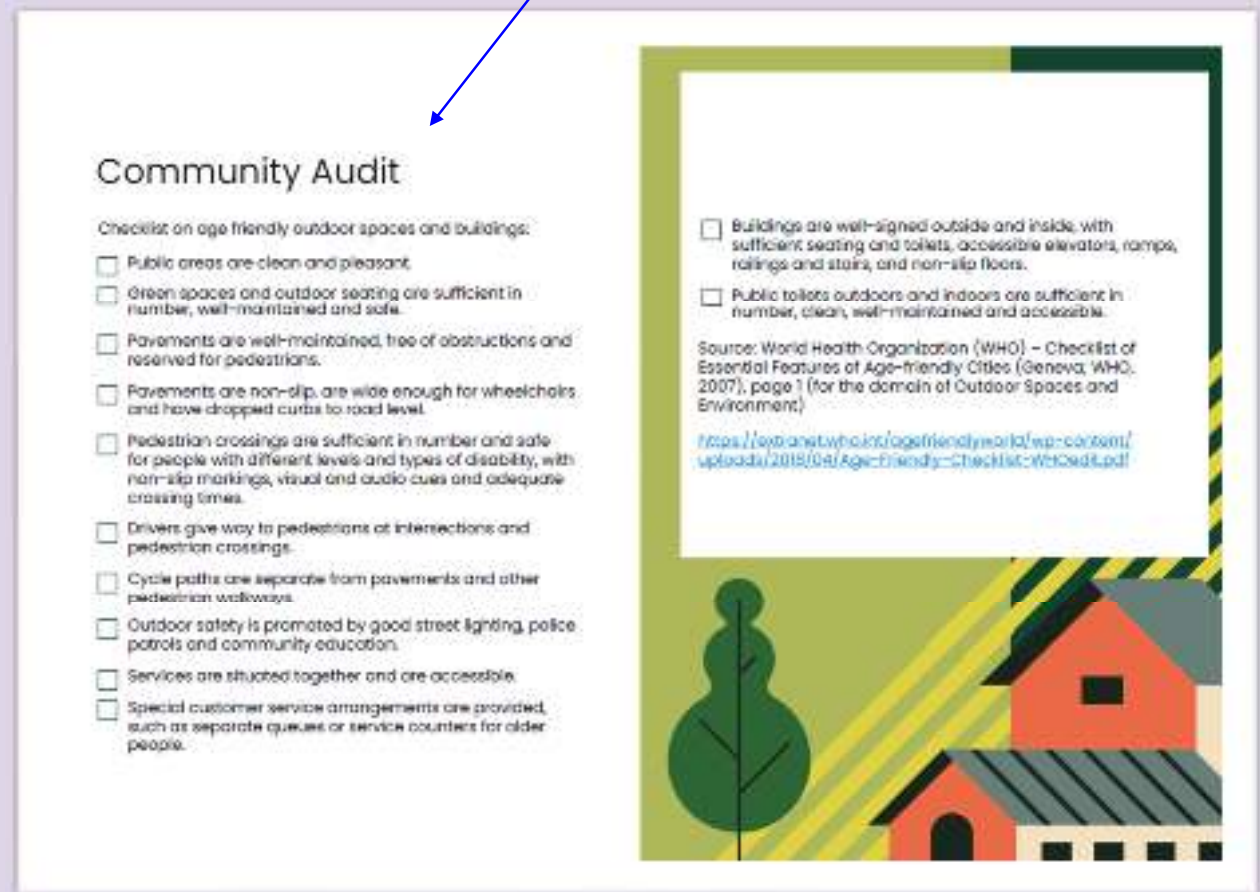
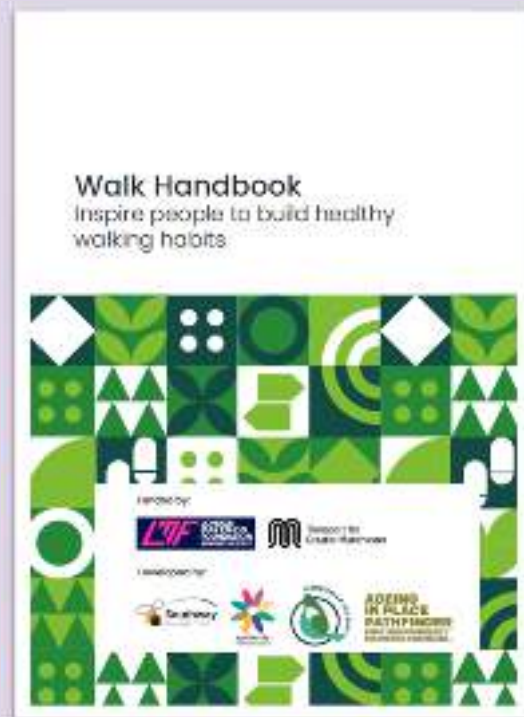


The map shows:

- 4 Age-Friendly routes
- Age-Friendly facilities (bench, community café, noticeboard, toilet)
- Major landmarks and points of interests (parks, allotments, cycleways, library, market etc)

✓ Will be using the Walk Handbook (coming soon)

- Include a number of sections - Explore reasons for a walk, Warm up exercise, Walking tips, Benefits of walking, Walking journal record, walking activity worksheet, [Community audit checklist on outdoor spaces and buildings](#), Walking resources information



Greater Manchester Moving > ^ < v

Walkability audits for Age-Friendly Futures
26th March 2025

Louise Robbins, Strategic Lead Walking and
Active Environments

Greater Manchester Moving



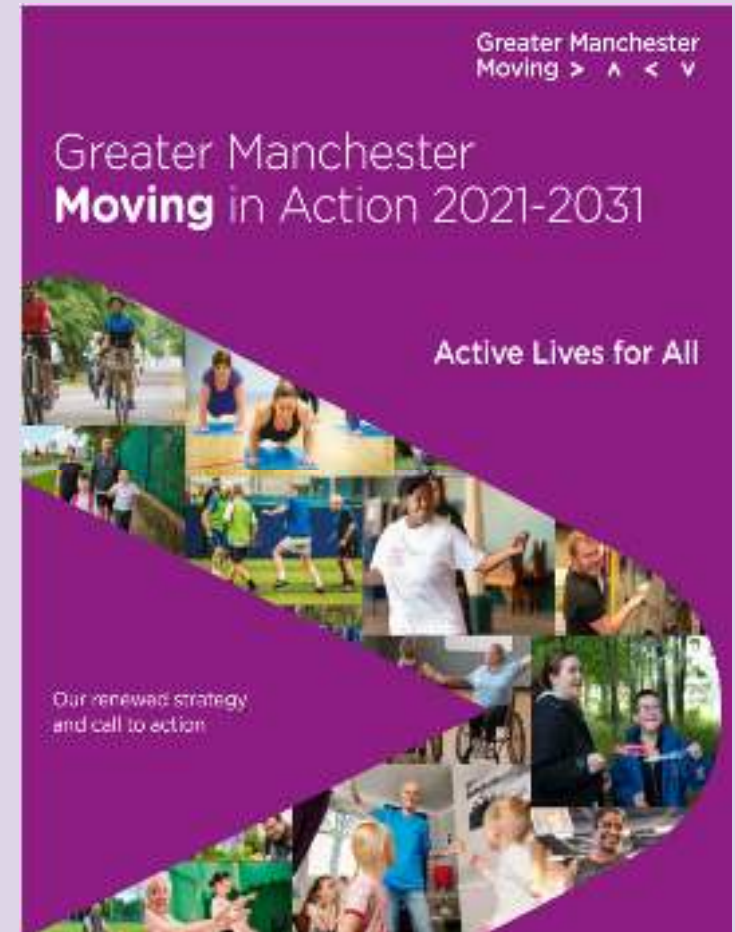
GM Moving (the organisation) **leads, supports and connects** the work we all do to change lives through movement, physical activity, and sport.

Leads a movement for movement.

Creating the conditions for Active Lives for All

GM Moving in Action is the 10-year physical activity strategy for the Greater Manchester city region.

Developed and owned by GM partners.



Why a movement for movement?

- Moving matters to all of us
- Together we can design movement back into life
- We all have a part to play

How? Creating environments for people

Connecting people

- With each other
- With greenspaces and nature
- With shops services and opportunities

Policy work to put people first

- E.g. timing phases of crossings in favour of pedestrians rather than motorised traffic
- Investment prioritising walkability and place making

Connecting people with public transport

- Integrated Bee Network
- From home to destination - First and



How? Healthy Active Resilient Places

- Nature and greening, attractive places
- Feeling safe and welcoming for all
- Noise reduction
- Environmental sustainability
 - Biodiversity
 - SuDS
 - Shade, shelter, CO2 reduction,



Why?

Connections to other people and the local area

Maintaining Independence

- catching a bus, accessing services

Supporting local businesses

Freedom and choice

Health and Wellbeing

- Confidence
- Keeping moving



GM Moving in Action shared ambition

“Enabling the greatest number of people to routinely walk, wheel or cycle for travel, pleasure, personal or environmental benefit.”

- Requires a shared purpose
- Requires alignment of investment
- Requires all of us



These are core to the GM Ageing in Place Pathfinder ways of working.