

Statement from the Greater Manchester 2025 Age-Friendly Futures Summit:

Summit statement

*‘Advancing, leading and creating
city regions and communities for
an age-friendly world’*



Background

The 2025 Age-Friendly Futures summit gathered over 300 leaders in research, policy and practice from across the world to explore how to grow and sustain Age-Friendly programmes and to address future opportunities and challenges of population ageing. It took place over three days in Greater Manchester, UK.

Built around the themes of advancing, leading and creating, the summit offered a platform for participants to discuss research advances, share learning and be inspired by leading practices, make connections and work towards an Age-Friendly future.

The summit was delivered by a partnership of the Centre for Ageing Better, the World Health Organization, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Manchester Metropolitan University and the University of Manchester.

This statement was prepared to reflect and respond to discussions and workshops held over three days and was agreed through active consultation during and post the summit with over 90 researchers, older people as experts by experience, policy makers and practitioners from around the world who took part. It sets out the shared commitment of participants to advancing Age-Friendly Futures through collaboration, innovation, and action across research, policy, and practice.

An Age-Friendly Future for all generations, cultures and communities

Advancing Age-Friendly research

With 2 billion people to be 60 years and older in 2050, double the number in 2020, and 300 million people currently living in a place which has an age friendly community programme, the summit recognises an Age Friendly future as a universal goal, supporting all people to age well across the life course. It also recognises there is further to go.

The summit celebrated ageing as a societal success with considerable progress around the globe enabling many people to live healthier and longer as valued members of civic, social and family life. However, we also recognise that a key challenge is to make this future available to all. We believe that policy, practice and research should be directed towards extending the right to age well to everyone, everywhere.

Leading Age-Friendly policy

The Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities has grown and matured since its launch in 2010 and now includes 1705 cities and communities in 60 countries. The summit recognised the success of the movement and the importance of Age-Friendly Frameworks in supporting local, national and regional initiatives to develop across a range of governmental and cultural contexts.

The Age-Friendly Futures Summit was conceived to strengthen a broad coalition of cross-sectoral stakeholders including policy makers, practitioners, researchers, older people as experts by experience and communities around the globe. We believe that building these eco-systems locally, nationally and globally underpins the effective leadership of Age-Friendly Programmes.

Creating Age-Friendly practices

The Summit presented grassroots examples from Greater Manchester, alongside case-studies from around the world, to celebrate the essential role of older people and their communities in creating Age-Friendly futures. Yet the effectiveness of Age Friendly programmes – especially in areas with the greatest risk of social isolation and inequalities – depends on making community-led civic and social participation a routine reality.

We believe that this requires the development of inclusive, age-friendly interventions that are accessible across all demographic groups, socio-economic contexts, and geographic locations.

Objectives

We propose the following ten objectives for advancing, leading and creating Age-Friendly futures:

- 1** Convene research, policy and practitioner expertise to facilitate collaboration, accelerate momentum and build resilience for Age-Friendly Futures including establishing enduring funding streams.
- 2** Extend and strengthen evidence and policy to ensure Age-Friendly frameworks and strategies robustly address the impacts of spatial inequalities, challenge ageism and prioritise equity, diversity and inclusion.
- 3** Develop adaptable tools and implementation approaches to deliver programme objective across diverse contexts ensuring sustainability of age-friendly initiatives.
- 4** Advocate for Age-Friendly Futures across global and regional, national and local programmes to enable strong connections and mutual learning across diverse policy and practice contexts.
- 5** Build capacity across all generations to ensure continuity and growth of age-friendly initiatives, fostering leadership and participation at every age.
- 6** Support funding for Age-Friendly Futures research, policy and community action to enable the scaling and sustainability of impactful practice.

- 7 Embed positive, inclusive perspectives on ageing across sectors, disciplines and generations.
- 8 Grow and amplify the voice of older people within governance systems at all levels by routinely working with older people, particularly those from marginalised geographies and demographics, as peers.
- 9 Create co-produced leadership models that actively involve older people in shaping decision-making, services, and systems in places they live.
- 10 Co-create research which embeds Age-Friendly principles by bringing together policymakers, practitioners and communities as equal partners in knowledge, action, and change.

Call to action

To address the above objectives, Summit delegates committed to initiating and developing a Global Age-Friendly Futures Research Network. The network is open to all researchers interested in advancing, leading and creating Age-Friendly futures. To keep in touch, [sign up here](#).



WHO Global Network
for Age-friendly Cities
and Communities

