
Age-friendly Built Environment Quick Guides

March 2026



About these guides

The Age-friendly Quick Guides provide an easy-to-read overview of key considerations to support age-friendly built environment projects.

The guides are designed for:

- **Built environment professionals** and local council teams who want to know how to build in age-friendly considerations.
- **Council officers working on ageing and older people's issues** who want to understand how their built environment can become more age-friendly and how to advocate for those changes.
- **Older people and community members** who want to champion age-friendly changes in their community.

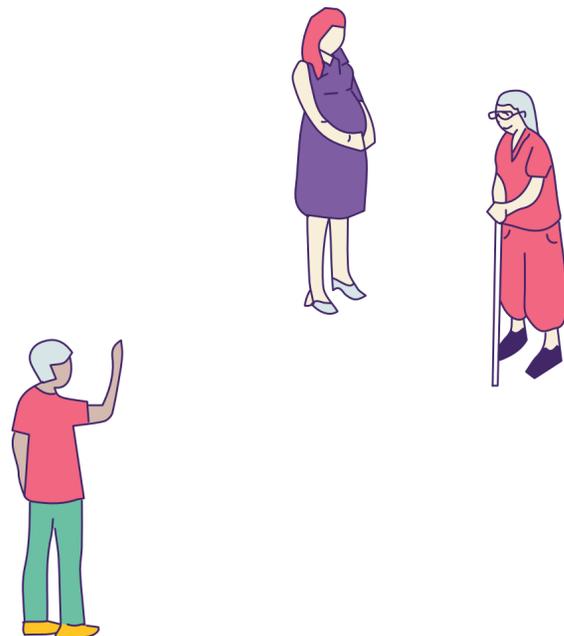
From cities to rural environments, there are interventions that can make our built environment more age-friendly. New spaces, buildings, and features should be designed to be entirely age-friendly. Existing spaces, buildings, and features should be improved wherever possible, even if only a few age-friendly considerations can be integrated. These guides have been created to support you to do both.

They are intended as a starting point rather than a comprehensive manual and should be used alongside further reading, engagement, and local knowledge. Examples of relevant further reading have been highlighted on each Quick Guide and a long list of resources has been included in the Appendix.

Centre for Ageing Better worked with Arup and Housing LIN to create these guides, alongside local authorities and community members to identify both the topics for the guides and to develop the guidance points.

The Age-friendly Quick Guide collection contains:

- Age-friendly Quick Guides on seven topics:
 - Bus Stops
 - Parks and Green Spaces
 - Public and Community Building
 - Seating and Rest Areas
 - Streets and Pavements
 - Toilets
 - Wayfinding and Signage
- Implementation considerations
- Resources for further reading
- A checklist for each guide that can support high-level access audits
- Case study examples



What is an age-friendly built environment?

The physical environment plays a vital role in health and wellbeing at any age. Age-friendly design ensures the physical environment is accessible and inclusive as we age. It helps us access the essential services, social spaces, and activities that promote our ability to age well whilst making sure the community remains welcoming and inclusive if our health declines. An age-friendly physical environment also benefits carers, families and the wider community. It creates places that are safe, comfortable and supportive of people of all ages, as well as promoting intergenerational connection.

Older people in the UK are a large and diverse group, with different abilities, needs, interests and preferences. Many people will not require all accessibility features in order to use their built environment. However, age does increase the likelihood of being affected by changes such as hearing or vision loss, reduced manual dexterity or mobility, and/or cognitive impairment. Health conditions like diabetes, heart disease and dementia also become more common with age. For people already more likely to experience inequalities, such as those living in under-invested areas, these declines often begin at younger ages. As a result, the need for and benefits of age-friendly environments are wide-reaching.

An environment that includes age-friendly bus stops, streets and pavements, public toilets, wayfinding and signage, parks and green spaces, seating and rest areas, and public and community buildings can reduce the impact of these changes and in some instances, even delay onset. Key features include barrier-free navigation, clear information, and opportunities for rest and social interaction.

Legal and policy context

The Equality Act 2010 protects against age discrimination, as well as 8 other protected characteristics. The intersectionality between age and other protected characteristics may impact people's experiences, including disability, faith, race, gender, sexual orientation, and/or family structures. Equality Impact Assessments are often required or encouraged to assess the impact of an environment on different protected characteristics. Age-friendly built environment features aim to support a range of intersecting experiences, which means they complement related approaches such as dementia-friendly design, accessibility requirements, and inclusive design principles.

The Equality Act also places a legal duty on employers, service and facility providers, and the public sector to make reasonable adjustments to prevent discrimination of disabled people. The 2023/24 Family Resources Survey, run by the Department for Work and Pensions, indicated that 64% of people aged 85 or over report a disability. This shows the importance of proactively considering what adjustments can help create age-friendly environments.

Local authorities and service providers have a responsibility to maintain and improve facilities to prevent this discrimination, which includes the creation of accessible built environments.

Age-friendly built environments are also an essential part of a preventative approach that helps people live independently and safely in their communities for longer. This aligns with the [NHS 10 Year Health Plan for England: fit for the future \(2025\)](#), [MHCLG's Pride in Place Strategy \(2025\)](#), the National Planning Policy Framework and related local and supplementary guidance, which seek to create sustainable, accessible, and inclusive places.

Stories

When creating these guides, we spoke to older people from across the country about their experiences of their community's built environment.

Here's what they told us:



"There may be toilets in the community but they often aren't maintained properly and it puts me off using them. Like in the local library."



"Only one park has a toilet. I've been put off going to the park because of it. I end up doing the maths on how long I can be out and how long I can wait without a toilet. And it doesn't just affect older people."

"I am partially sighted and I struggle with the pavement near my house. It's uneven, it's like potholes in the pavement and I keep tripping up. It's making it totally inaccessible."



"Seating has been put in outside my local library so that people can take a rest whilst waiting for the library to open. The seating is curved so people will talk to each other while they wait."



"Near me there is a bench facing the main road where you breathe in all the fumes from cars and it isn't sheltered. Who is going to want to sit at that bench?"



"Someone I know used a public building and the automatic door started to close on her before she was fully through the door."



"We [older people's group] have been working with the council to put in benches where we need them. Our priorities have been benches outside of GP surgeries and benches on the way to the park, so people are able to walk confidently to the park."



"Where I live you might be able to get to a bus stop easily in the city centre but as you go along the bus route there can be massive distances between the stops. What about getting in and out and around the centre?"



"At my local bus stop the print for the timetable can be too small to read and the bus stop doesn't tell you how long you have to wait for the next bus. I know younger people have that information on their phone, but I don't."

"In my local area seven years ago we wanted to put a new bench in. People didn't want to because they were worried about vandalism. Seven years later there's been no problems."



"Proper signage supports independence. You want to be able to know where you are going, so you could get to the library or go for the coffee without having to ask someone."



What are age-friendly bus stops?

Age-friendly bus stops enable people of all ages to reach services, activities, workplaces, and social spaces. In England, concessionary journeys accounted for 28% (1.0 billion) of all local bus passenger journeys in 2025. Locations with design limitations, such as some rural communities, can still provide accessible locations, information and seating.

Why do they matter?

The Equality Act (2010) places a duty on both public transport operators and highway authorities to ensure no protected group is disadvantaged by inaccessible bus stop design. The design of the bus stop and the information provided are essential to help people navigate confidently throughout their journey.

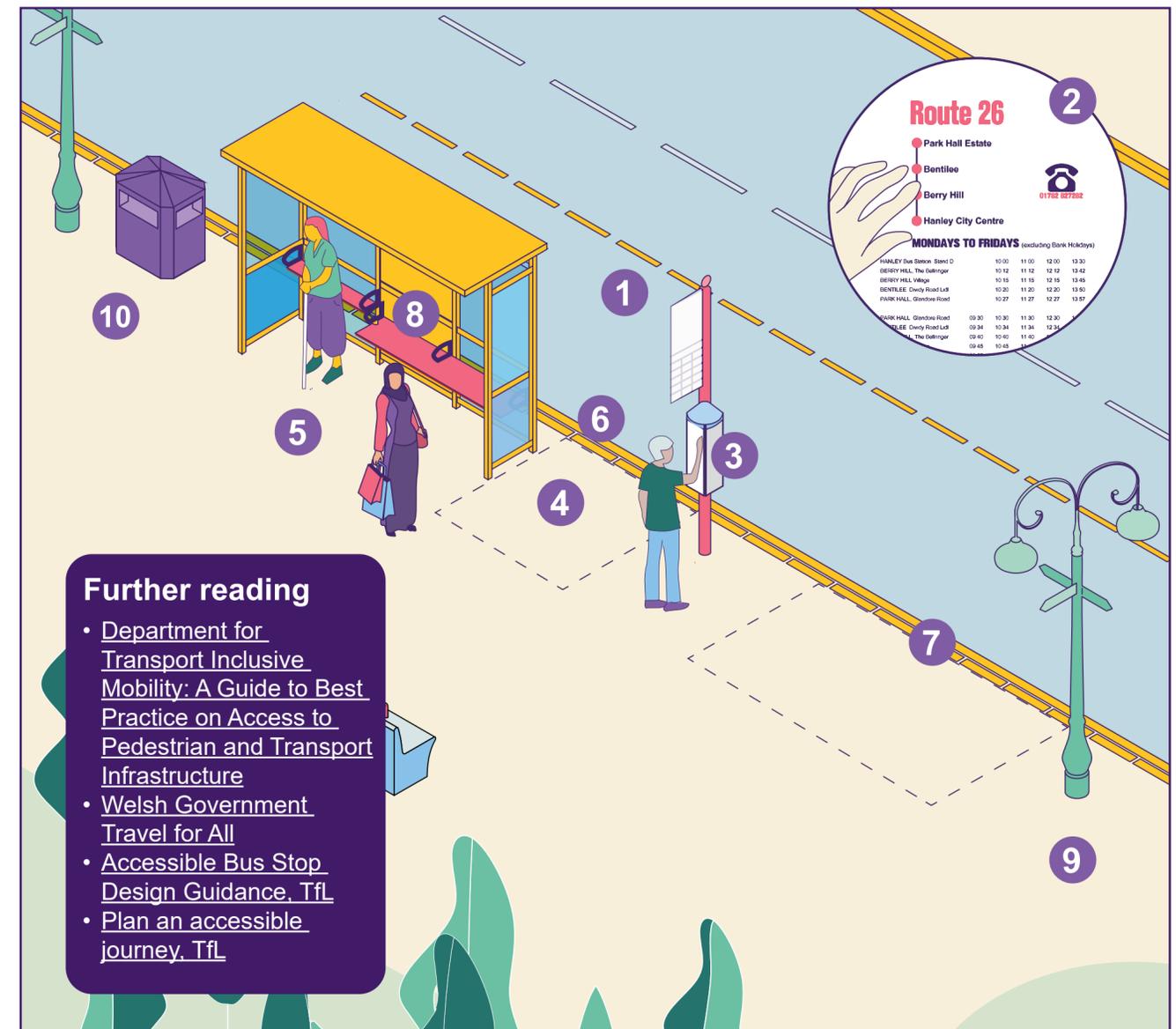
Age-friendly implementation considerations

- Listen to lived experiences** to learn what a diverse range of local residents, including older people, want and need from their bus stops. Undertake an access audit with older people / intergenerational groups.
- Identify stakeholders** such as relevant council departments (e.g. planning, transport, community services), and relevant authorities (e.g. the Highway Authority, public transport operators).
- Develop solutions** with residents, stakeholders, road users, pedestrians, and cyclists to ensure the bus stop is safe and usable for all. Discuss priorities and agree improvements for implementation.

- 1 Location of bus stops:** Are bus stops in safe, easy to access locations near key local facilities and residential areas (including where high concentrations of older people live)? Are stops close to main junctions? Do stop locations minimise walking distance between destinations? Are sufficient stops provided within a community (not just into/out of the centre)? Does the pick-up location allow wheelchair users to board?
- 2 Information (pre-journey):** Is information about routes, timing, ticketing, accessibility features and assisted transport services available online and by post/phone so people can plan their journey in advance?
- 3 Information (at stop):** Is clear and up to date information about bus routes, timing, and fares provided at the bus stop? Is live bus arrivals information provided where possible? Is information available in large print format and tactile/audio formats? Is local information (e.g. social and volunteering activities) shared at the stop?
- 4 Free from obstructions:** Are driver and waiting passengers clearly visible to each other? Are bus stops located where there is adequate footway width? Is access to the bus free of trip hazards and barriers?
- 5 Waiting area:** Are stops located where there is space for a weather protected shelter? Is seating offered at different heights with arm rests / back rests? Is a wheelchair space and a transfer seat provided?

- 6 Drainage:** Is good drainage provided so water does not pool on footways or the carriageway kerbside? Are people protected from being splashed while they wait?
- 7 Kerb features:** Is the kerb height at least 100mm to allow buses to deploy a ramp safely? Is appropriate tactile paving used to indicate the kerb edge at the boarding point? Are 'Kassel' kerbs used where needed to allow level boarding?
- 8 Contrast:** Is information/signage provided with enough contrast to be read easily? Are features such as seats and bus shelters contrasting from their surrounding environment so people can easily identify them? Is the kerb contrasting from the carriageway so people can discern where the pavement ends?
- 9 Lighting / perceptions of safety:** Inadequate street lighting can contribute to poor perceptions of safety. Are good levels of illumination provided at the bus stop (and journey to the bus stop)? Is the bus stop lighting uniform and even? Does the design of the bus stop allow people to be seen and offer clear exit routes?
- 10 Maintenance:** Local highway authorities are responsible for maintenance of bus stop areas. Is a management plan in place to ensure street cleaning, maintenance of the footway / carriageway, vegetation clearing, and winter maintenance is performed? Can people easily report issues on and offline?

Age-friendly bus stops: top 10 design considerations



Further reading

- [Department for Transport Inclusive Mobility: A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure](#)
- [Welsh Government Travel for All](#)
- [Accessible Bus Stop Design Guidance, TfL](#)
- [Plan an accessible journey, TfL](#)

What are they?

Age-friendly parks and green spaces are barrier-free, comfortable to navigate, and offer a choice of activities that foster a sense of belonging for all ages. While local authorities are responsible for managing parks and green spaces, older people have an opportunity to support and contribute to the vitality of their local parks and green spaces.

Why do they matter?

Access to parks and green spaces can reduce loneliness and enhance mood while improving mental wellbeing, increasing physical activity and intergenerational social connection. However, older people may encounter physical or logistical barriers which make them unable to realise these benefits if the space is not designed with age-friendly considerations.

Age-friendly implementation considerations

- Listen to lived experiences** to learn what a diverse range of local residents, including older people, want and need from parks and green spaces. Undertake an access audit with older people / intergenerational groups.
- Identify stakeholders** such as relevant council departments (e.g. planning, public health, environment, parks and community services departments), relevant authorities and local businesses.
- Develop solutions** with residents, stakeholders and local groups to ensure the parks and green spaces are safe and useable for all. Discuss priorities and agree improvements.

- 1 Location:** Is green space available for residential areas that need them within a reasonable walking distance? Are entrances at appropriate locations? Are larger parks accessible by public transport?
- 2 Wayfinding and signage:** Is wayfinding / signage clear, intuitive, and directs to toilets, exits, and key locations? Is information (e.g. maps, opening hours, walking routes, activity schedule) available / easy to find?
- 3 Accessible routes:** Are ground surfaces firm, even, step-free and slip-resistant for safe and comfortable wheeling and walking in all weather conditions? Are routes at least 1.8m wide to allow people to walk with mobility devices or walk safely alongside another person? Are objects (e.g. signage, bins) located and overhanging branches maintained so route widths are not reduced?
- 4 Changes in level:** If routes have a change in level, are handrails provided for steps? Do stepped areas have a step-free route nearby? Are sloped areas shallower than a 1:20 gradient? If routes are steeper than 1:20, do they provide handrails?
- 5 Perceptions of safety:** Do sight lines and lighting allow visibility and make people feel safer? Is consistent, even lighting illuminating the routes, key features and people without pooling or creating glare? Does the design avoid dead ends and/or narrow routes surrounded by dense planting where people might feel trapped?

- 6 Toilets:** Well-maintained, free-to-use, open public toilets enable people to participate in parks and green spaces. Are clearly marked toilets available? Are accessible toilets and/or a Changing Places facility provided?
- 7 Seating/rest areas:** Is seating provided at regular intervals? Are there options with arm rests, back rests, and space for wheelchair users? Is some seating weather protected?
- 8 Participation in the park:** Is a variety of trees/planting provided? Does some planting engage the senses and support people living with dementia? Are experiences that enable older people to engage with nature encouraged (in audio, tactile, olfactory formats in addition to visual)? Are older people supported to use and participate in the park space (e.g. volunteering opportunities, community groups, events)? Are there areas where dogs must be kept on leads? Do activities and design enable socialising and connection?
- 9 Inclusive play/movement:** Does the park provide inclusive play, fitness, and activity options for all ages to use or feel welcome to watch? Do activities and design support intergenerational connection?
- 10 Maintenance/care:** Are management and maintenance plans in place to ensure the routes are kept even and clear throughout all seasons, lighting is working, and toilets / facilities are maintained so they are trusted and reliable? Are trip hazards removed?

Age-friendly parks and green spaces: top 10 design considerations



What are they?

Age-friendly public and community buildings provide a place for people of all ages to gather, learn, and share. They do not exclude older people from equitably participating in community activities due to inaccessible design. Whether spaces are owned, leased, or rented, age-friendly features can be incorporated into the building.

Why do they matter?

Accessible, inclusive building features enable people to participate in health-promoting, purposeful activities. Existing buildings should be improved where possible, such as through seating or signage, and new buildings should be designed to be entirely age-friendly. Buildings should be chosen to host activities based on whether they provide these features.

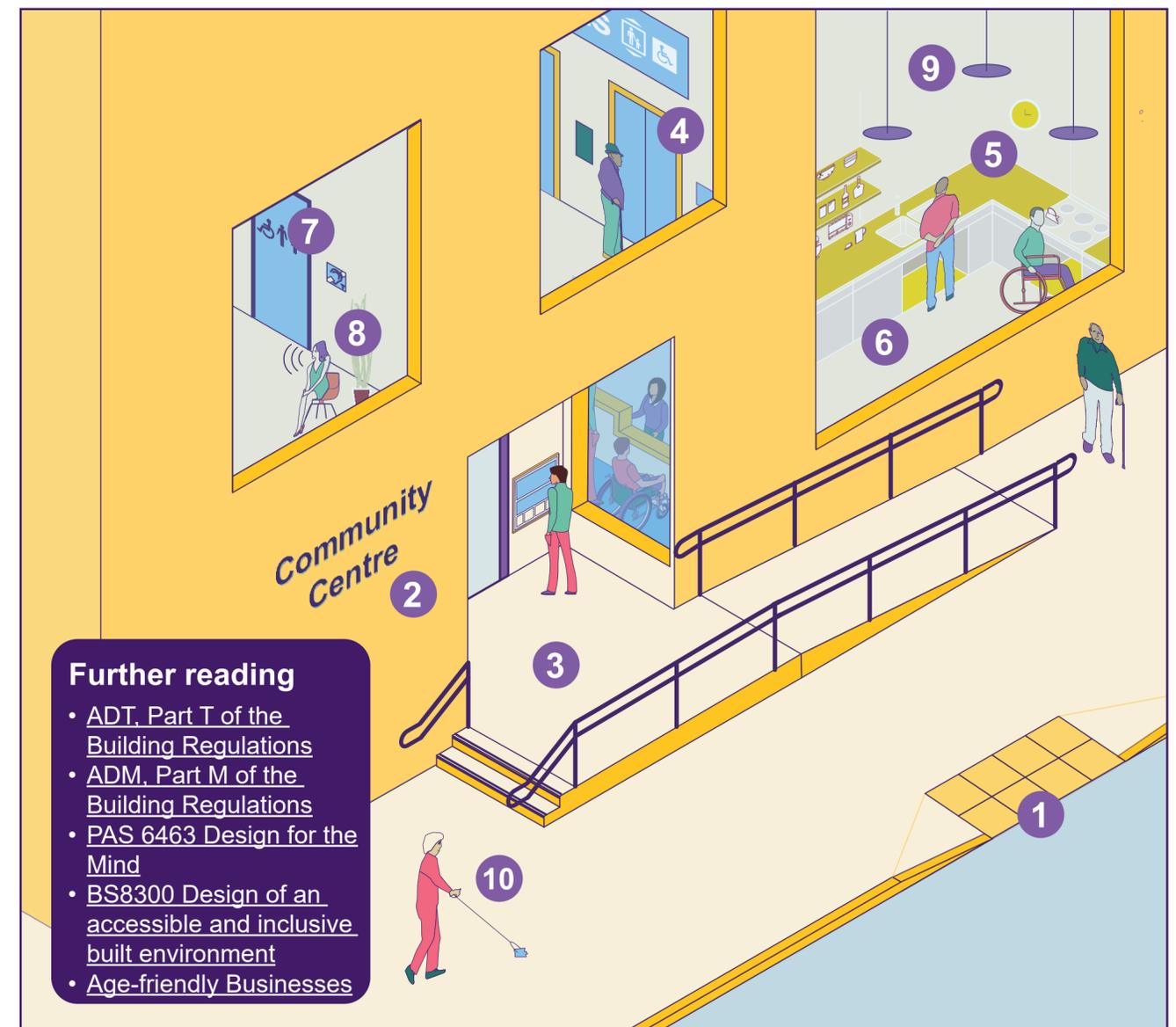
Age-friendly implementation considerations

- Listen to lived experiences** to learn what a diverse range of local residents, including older people, want and need from community and public buildings. Undertake an access audit with older people / intergenerational groups.
- Identify stakeholders** such as relevant council departments (e.g. planning, public health, environment, and community services departments), relevant authorities and local businesses.
- Develop solutions** with residents and stakeholders to ensure public and community buildings are usable for all. Discuss priorities and agree improvements for implementation.

- 1 Approach to the building:** Can you access the building by public transport? Is there ample step-free drop-off space, Blue Badge parking, and inclusive cycle storage? Is access to the building entrance step-free?
- 2 Wayfinding and signage:** Is wayfinding / signage to and within the building clear and intuitive? Does signage point to key destinations such as entrances/exits, toilets, reception areas, or rooms? Is it provided in multiple formats (visual, tactile, audio, large print)? Is information about what is going on and opening hours available and easy to find?
- 3 Entrances and doors:** Are entrances step-free and thresholds level? Are entrance doors at least 1000mm wide and easily openable either with limited force or an automatic door opening device?
- 4 Circulation:** Do routes to and within the building have at least 1800mm clear width to allow people to pass with mobility devices and at least 1200mm clear width for one-way movement? Do stairs have handrails and contrasting edge? Are lifts or ramps provided in addition to stairs? Are rooms with step-free access used for community events/activities so no one is excluded?
- 5 Social use:** Are staff trained to offer a warm welcome and support user needs? Do the building's activities appeal to all ages and enable social connection? Does the building promote what is going on in the community?

- 6 Facility use:** Are a range of seats including arm rests, back rests, and higher seats available? Are tables provided at appropriate heights for the activities? Is space provided around tables/chairs to comfortably navigate with a mobility device? Is the temperature inside comfortable to spend time there? Is drinking water publicly available?
- 7 Toilets:** Are a range of toilet types available, including wheelchair accessible toilets, ambulant accessible toilets, gendered toilet and gender neutral toilet options? Is a Changing Places facility available? If only one toilet is available, ensure it is a unisex accessible toilet with step-free access.
- 8 Acoustics:** Do the acoustics allow people to hear each other without strain? Are soft materials such as curtains used to improve the acoustics where possible? Are hearing enhancement systems (e.g. hearing loops) available in the building, or are alternatives like personal devices supported?
- 9 Lighting/finishes:** Is the lighting even and consistent so people can see the space and tasks they may perform? Are reflective finishes and highly-repetitive patterns avoided so people are not disoriented?
- 10 Maintenance:** Are management and maintenance plans in place to ensure the building is kept clean, lighting is working, and toilets, bins, and facilities are maintained so they are trusted and reliable? Are any trip hazards removed?

Age-friendly public / community buildings: top 10 design considerations



- Further reading**
- [ADT, Part T of the Building Regulations](#)
 - [ADM, Part M of the Building Regulations](#)
 - [PAS 6463 Design for the Mind](#)
 - [BS8300 Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment](#)
 - [Age-friendly Businesses](#)

What are they?

Age-friendly seating and rest areas provide opportunities to recharge along a route, encouraging people to feel that longer journeys are possible because they will be supported along the way. Seating and rest areas provide important opportunities for socialising and engagement that positively impacts the health and wellbeing of people of all ages.

Why do they matter?

Standing or walking for long periods can prevent people from going out, while age-friendly seating and rest areas improves access to activities of daily life, such as a service, health appointment, or spending money in a local business. A choice of age-friendly seating can help foster a greater sense of belonging in a community.

Age-friendly implementation considerations

- Listen to lived experiences** to learn what a diverse range of local residents, including older people, want and need from seating and rest areas spaces. Undertake an access audit with older people / intergenerational groups.
- Identify stakeholders** such as relevant council departments (e.g. planning, public health, environment, parks and community services departments), relevant authorities and local businesses.
- Develop solutions** with residents, stakeholders and local groups to ensure the seating and rest areas are safe and usable for all. Discuss priorities and agree improvements for implementation.

- 1 Location of seats:** Are seats located on routes between home and a destination to allow rest in between, with rest areas every 50m where possible? Are seats located where people expect to wait or linger, such as bus stops, community buildings, town centres, parks, etc.? Are enough seats provided in busy areas? Are there sight lines to seating areas to give people confidence? Do seats face a pleasant/interesting view?
- 2 Social seats:** Are seats designed to enable/encourage socialising (e.g. facing each other, high backs to help acoustics, etc.)?
- 3 Seat dimensions:** A variety of seat heights and widths should be provided. Is there a choice of seat heights between 380-580mm from floor level? If only one seat is provided, is the height 480mm from floor level? Is there a space between arm rests of at least 500mm?
- 4 Wheelchair spaces:** A wheelchair user should be able to sit next to someone and transfer onto a seat. Is a level transfer space at least 1200mm wide located at one end of the seat/bench? This space may also be useful for guide dogs. Arm rests should not be located on the end of a seat where wheelchair users transfer. Is an arm rest set in 500-750mm from the transfer space?
- 5 Back rests:** Are back supports provided at a height of at least 300mm from seat level and at an angle of 90-100 degrees from the seat surface?
- 6 Arm rests:** Arm rests should be provided (except at transfer seats) to help people lower themselves to sit and stand up. Are arm rests provided at a height of 200mm from the surface of the seat? Do they extend from the back support forwards to cover at least 80% of the depth of the seat? Is the arm rest diameter 32-50mm and comfortable to grip?
- 7 Materials:** Seating should be comfortable to touch, made of natural materials where possible, and easy to dry/prevent water pooling if outside. Are the materials selected not too cold, too hot to touch, or too damp?
- 8 Contrast/priority seating:** Do seats and arm rests contrast visually with their surroundings so they are easily identifiable to people who are partially sighted? Is priority seating marked?
- 9 Choice of seating:** A mixture of seating types should be available to suit different people's requirements such as seating for taller or shorter people, for people who want to socialise or for those who need a moment to themselves, and those who want sun or shade. Does the space provide a choice of seating? Are some seats weather protected?
- 10 Maintenance and care:** Are management and maintenance plans in place to ensure the seating and surrounding area is kept clean and usable? Is the community encouraged to care for the local seating and rest areas?

Age-friendly seating and rest areas: top 10 design considerations

		Further reading	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wheels for Wellbeing Guide Benches and Seating in Public Spaces • PAS 6463 Design for the Mind • BS8300 Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment • Age-friendly Ireland Seating • Take a Seat initiative • Accessible Seating Review and Inclusive Design Framework. City of York 			

What are they?

Age-friendly streets and pavements are barrier free, easy to navigate, and offer active travel, such as walking and cycling, for all ages. Age-friendly streets and pavements enable older people to participate meaningfully in society, have greater confidence in their journey, and a greater sense of belonging to a community that considers their requirements.

Why do they matter?

An inaccessible and unwelcoming environment puts people at greater risk of injury or feeling unsafe or isolated. Under the Highways Act 1980, local authorities have a duty to ensure streets and pavements are safe and usable. Age-friendly streets and pavements help to fulfill this duty while promoting health and social connection along the way.

Age-friendly implementation considerations

- Listen to lived experiences** to learn what a diverse range of local residents, including older people, want and need from streets and pavements. Undertake an access audit with older people / intergenerational groups.
- Identify stakeholders** such as relevant council departments (e.g. planning, public health, environment, and community services departments), relevant authorities and local businesses.
- Develop solutions** with residents and stakeholders to ensure public and community buildings are usable for all. Discuss priorities and agree improvements for implementation.

- 1 Ground surfaces:** Surfaces should be free from trip hazards. Are ground surfaces firm, even, step-free and slip-resistant for safe and comfortable wheeling and walking?
- 2 Width of pavement:** Pavements should be wide enough for people to pass with mobility devices, shopping, luggage, prams, etc. Is the walking width at least 1.8m? Can people comfortably pass each other?
- 3 Clear pavement:** The pavement walking width should be clear from obstructions such as signs, A boards, bins, trees, planters, bus stops, leaves, overhanging vegetation, tree roots, cracks, etc. Permanent or temporary objects on the pavement should not obstruct people walking/wheeling. Is the pavement clear from obstructions and hazards?
- 4 Crossings:** Step-free crossings should be provided at key crossing points, and busy roads should have controlled crossings. Is a zebra crossing located where most people cross the street? Is there a dropped kerb with a gentle slope or raised table crossing to provide a step-free route? Is there tactile paving to inform blind or partially sighted people of the crossing?
- 5 Lighting:** Lighting should allow visibility and make people feel safer. Lighting that creates high contrast should be avoided, as it can make it harder to perceive the space and people. Is there consistent, even lighting illuminating the street and people without pooling and/or creating glare?

- 6 Safety/perceptions of safety:** Safety features should be in place to reduce risk to pedestrians from other road users. Is there clearly marked separation between cars/ cyclists, and pedestrians? Is there a kerb or tactile paving to communicate to blind or partially sighted people where the road is?
- 7 Wayfinding and signage:** Wayfinding and signage should be intuitive and point people to key destinations such as toilets, bus stops / transport hubs, parks, hospitals, and community centres. Is clear and adequate wayfinding and signage provided along the street and pavement?
- 8 Rest areas:** Seating should be provided regularly along people's journey and be enriched by handrails or features people can safely lean on for support. Are benches, spaces to perch, dwell, rest and/or socialise provided every 50m where practicable?
- 9 Weather protection:** Weather protection should be provided at regular intervals throughout the street so people can be protected from the elements. Is there adequate shading and rain cover to be able to enjoy areas of the street rain or shine?
- 10 Maintenance:** This is key to ensuring streets and pavements remain age-friendly. Are management and maintenance plans in place to ensure the pavement is kept even and clear, lighting is working and not flickering, and call points / phone booths are working so they are trusted and reliable?

Age-friendly streets and pavements: top 10 design considerations



Further reading

- [Age UK Isle of Wight Pavements for People](#)
- [Care and Repair Age-friendly Street Design](#)
- [Centre for Ageing Better Walking Audit Case Study](#)
- [Healthy Streets](#)
- [l'DGO Design of Streets](#)
- [PAS 6463 Design for the Mind](#)
- [BS8300 Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment](#)

What are they?

Age-friendly toilets provide independence, safety, ease of use for individuals and carers, and are well maintained. They are also accessible, available, and located where they are needed, including town centres, parks, community buildings, etc. Age-friendly toilets give people confidence that a toilet will meet their needs and preserve dignity.

Why do they matter?

Age-friendly toilets promote participation in society and address people's diverse requirements to support them to go out in the community. Lack of access to toilets can be a barrier to going out or lead people to reduce fluid intake which can result in dehydration. Even if a toilet does not meet all requirements, it may still be helpful as an option.

Age-friendly implementation considerations

- ❑ **Listen to lived experiences** to learn what a diverse range of local residents, including older people, want and need from toilets. Undertake an access audit with older people / intergenerational groups of toilet features and location(s).
- ❑ **Identify stakeholders** such as relevant council departments (e.g. planning, public health, environment, parks and community services departments), relevant authorities and local businesses.
- ❑ **Develop solutions** with residents, stakeholders and local groups to ensure the toilets are safe and usable for all. Discuss priorities and agree improvements for implementation.

- 1 Availability of toilets:** Can people find where toilets are freely available for use and does signage point to them? Are accessible toilets located on step-free routes that are easy to navigate? Are toilets provided at key destinations? Are businesses encouraged to open up their toilets to the public?
- 2 Types of toilets:** Do people have a choice of accessible, gender-neutral, and gendered toilets? Is a Changing Places facility provided? If only one toilet is provided, is it a unisex wheelchair accessible toilet? Are bins provided in all toilets regardless of gender?
- 3 Ambulant accessible toilet dimensions:** Are accessible toilets for non-wheelchair users (e.g. ambulant people who may use a mobility device or require support) at least 1000mm wide and 2125mm long installed with an outward opening door and support features? Is the toilet a comfortable height?
- 4 Wheelchair accessible toilet dimensions:** Is the clear turning space at least 1.5m by 1.5m and room size at least 1.7m by 2.2m with required supports, fixtures and fittings? Are building services, ducts, and loose items outside of required clear spaces? Are baby facilities provided separately to not reduce access to the toilet? Where space allows, can people transfer from left or right?
- 5 Doors:** Are outward-opening doors provided to make it easier to open in an emergency? Are doors easy to open or automatic and wide enough for all people?

- 6 Support features:** Are fixed and drop-down grab rails provided? Do grab rails have a surface that provides a good grip when wet? Is the wall construction and fixings strong enough to support people using the rails to lower themselves or pull themselves to a standing position? Is a colostomy shelf provided to support people using a stoma?
- 7 Operable controls:** Are all controls (e.g. levers, locks, flushes, etc.) visible and easily operable with one hand, without the need to grasp or twist? Is there signage to explain how to use locks or sensor controls?
- 8 Contrast and finishes:** Do support rails and grab rails contrast visually with the wall? Does the toilet seat and cover contrast visually with the toilet pan and cistern? Do sanitary fittings / accessories contrast visually with their surroundings? Are floors slip-resistant, especially when wet? Are shiny floor or wall surfaces avoided to prevent disorienting reflections/glare?
- 9 Emergency alarm:** Are emergency alarm systems provided and reachable from the toilet and from the floor? Is a reset control provided on the wall next to the toilet in case the alarm is activated by mistake?
- 10 Maintenance:** Are toilet facilities regularly maintained for hygiene and functionality to ensure all features are clean, working, and the emergency cord is not tied up? Is information about public toilets (e.g. public toilet maps, signage, etc.) kept up to date?

Age-friendly toilets top 10 design considerations

Further reading

- [Lifting the Lid Age UK](#)
- [British Toilet Association's "Legalise Loos"](#)
- [ADT, Part T of the Building Regulations](#)
- [ADM, Part M of the Building Regulations](#)
- [BS8300 Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment](#)
- [Wee the People: A declaration for better public toilets](#)
- [Stoma-friendly toilets](#)

What is it?

Age-friendly wayfinding and signage provides logical layouts and legible choices of visual, auditory, and tactile cues. This enables us to more confidently navigate familiar or new environments both indoors and outdoors as we age. Wayfinding is the overall experience of navigating spaces and signage refers to the specific communication tool.

Why does it matter?

Wayfinding and signage design significantly impacts whether a journey is comfortable. Wayfinding and the location of signage is in the remit of planning departments while the content of signage requires engagement with specific operators - it is important age-friendly considerations inform both to reduce the risk of feeling confused, concerned, or unsafe.

Age-friendly implementation considerations

- Listen to lived experiences** to learn what a diverse range of local residents, including older people, want and need from wayfinding and signage. Undertake an access audit with older people / intergenerational groups.
- Identify stakeholders** such as relevant council departments (e.g. planning, public health, environment, transport and community services departments), relevant authorities and relevant local businesses.
- Develop solutions** with residents and stakeholders to ensure wayfinding and signage is usable for all. Discuss priorities and agree improvements (e.g. set out a wayfinding / signage strategy).

- 1 Intuitive layout:** Is the layout and location of key facilities (such as entrances, reception, choice of lift/stair/ramp, landmarks, personalised features) easily identifiable, predictable, intuitive, and equitable?
- 2 Key destinations and information:** Does the signage and wayfinding direct people to key destinations like toilets, hospitals, parks, community centres, town halls? Is key, relevant information provided such as opening times, bus schedules, etc? Are street name signs easy to find?
- 3 Consistent and regular:** Is the signage style consistent and provided at key decision points, intersections, and regular intervals to give people confidence they are on track?
- 4 Multiple formats:** Is information and wayfinding provided in multiple formats so that it is accessible to people with sensory requirements, according to the principle of at least two senses: audible and/or tactile and visual? Is multi-sensory information provided where possible?
- 5 Visual communication:** Visual information is important for D/deaf and sighted people. Is the signage information clear, not shiny, in plain font, and a large enough text/symbol size based on the viewing distance? Is there visual and tonal contrast against the background, including retail fronts so they stand out from their surrounds? Is there good lighting to avoid excessive reflections, glare, and shadowing on the signage?

- 6 Graphic communication:** Are graphic signs, maps, and pictograms provided to complement text and help people whose first language is not English? Are maps, information, or directories that require a closer look provided at an accessible height with large enough visuals?
- 7 Tactile communication:** Is tactile communication provided such as embossed signage, tactile maps, Braille signage, changes in floor level and/or surface that are cane detectable, and/or tapping rails?
- 8 Audible communication and sounds:** Audio options are imperative for blind and partially sighted people. Are audible features implemented such as talking signs and simple announcement systems that provide audio descriptive wayfinding information? Do acoustics support clear interpretation of sound and speech? Are assistive listening systems provided such as induction hearing loop systems?
- 9 Non-ageist graphics and language:** Any graphics and language used should not include any references that proliferate negative ageist stereotypes. Does the wayfinding and signage use age-positive graphics and language where possible?
- 10 Maintenance:** Is the signage and wayfinding regularly maintained and updated to be legible and accurate? Is outdated signage removed? Is temporary signage located so as not to cause obstruction or clutter?

Age-friendly wayfinding and signage: top 10 design considerations

Further reading

- [Alzheimer's Society Dementia-friendly signage](#)
- [Age without limits age-positive icons](#)
- [RNIB tips for accessible signage and wayfinding](#)
- [Sign Design Guide+](#)
- [PAS 6463 Design for the Mind](#)
- [BS EN ISO 7010 Safety signs](#)
- [BS8300 Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment](#)

Implementation considerations

The following implementation considerations aim to support those looking to create a more age-friendly built environment.

Some of the ways the guides may be used include, but are not limited to:

- Inform planning, regeneration and pre-application discussions.
- Support internal cross departmental conversations and buy-in.
- Use as practical tools for training and capacity building.
- Support audits and engagement with local communities.
- Share good practice with external partners and stakeholders.

Collaborating with others

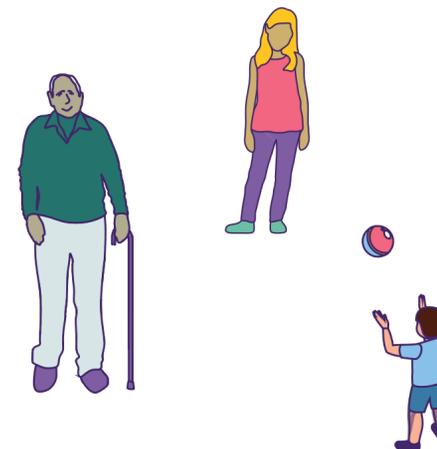
- **Work with residents:** Actively engage with a diverse range of local people, including older residents, to understand what they need from the space and develop solutions together. This might include consulting with an access panel, speaking to people who are part of an [Ageing Well Ambassadors](#) scheme, using co-production methods, or undertaking an experience walk / wheel or access audit with older people / intergenerational groups to assess a site.
- **Bring together stakeholders:** Engage all relevant council departments (such as planning, public health, environment, parks and community services departments), relevant authorities (such as the Highway Authority and public transport operators), and relevant community members and local businesses to discuss priorities and agree improvements.

Identifying opportunities

- **Conduct an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA):** EqIAs help to identify if significant changes to places or services could disadvantage people or groups with protected characteristics (including age). Any identified groups should be proactively engaged and involved in decision making. An EqIA may be legally required for some projects and are worth undertaking for all projects to review if a proposal could have unintentional negative consequences for some groups and may be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010. [Manchester City Council has a guide to completing assessments focused on age.](#)
- **Embed commitment:** Include age-friendly built environment commitments within local strategies and plans or create new supportive strategies and plans e.g. kerbside strategy, local plans, age-friendly communities action plan.
- **Secure council, community, or charitable funding:** Explore council funding, charitable grants, or community funds – there may also be some funds available for the community engagement required to co-design your changes.
- **Seek support through planning charges/obligations:** If there are some new developments in the area, find out if Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or Section 106 agreements could fund the project (contact the ward councillor/s and the council planning department for more information).

Planning and delivering

- **Consider all practical requirements:** Check if the project requires planning permission. Check what insurances are required, for example for any professional consultants, contractors, land owners. Check land registry to understand relevant land ownership.
- **Address gaps:** Review if any further skills are required to deliver the project based on the needs identified (such as architects, accessibility consultants, structural engineers, mechanical, electrical, and plumbing engineers, civil engineers, etc).
- **Deliver the project as planned:** Review the project to ensure it is built to the age-friendly design requirements including site visits to monitor progress during construction.
- **Audit the site during use:** Undertake a walking and wheeling audit with older people / intergenerational groups to assess the resulting site to see if it works as intended and refine where needed.



Ensuring impact

- **Plan for sustainability:** Ensure people know about the age-friendly built environment features (e.g. through creating user-friendly maps with the community, press releases, etc.)
- **Phase improvements over time:** Implement age-friendly guidance as built environment features are being replaced or newly built (e.g. public toilets, bus stops).
- **Make sure people can report issues:** Communicate with local residents how to report any access issues or damage to infrastructure, both by phone and online, via signage in the location and in regular communications about council services. Share who is responsible for addressing issues and what has already been reported.
- **Plan for ongoing maintenance:** Schedule regular maintenance for both safety and comfort. Support volunteer groups to get involved with ongoing care (e.g. to do park maintenance).
- **Advocate for policy change:** Advocate for age-friendly considerations during consultation opportunities. Encourage raising the standard of building regulation and policy requirements for age-friendly built environments.

Further reading

Emerging policy

National policy that can be used to influence the development of age-friendly communities and features of the built environment

NHS Long Term Plan is the 10-year strategy published by NHS England. It includes emphasis on helping people age well and enabling care and support within communities rather than institutions. It is a policy lever for age-friendly communities because it shifts the health system toward prevention and community-based care, both of which can be supported by creating places that support older people.

Learn more: <https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-term-plan/>

MHCLG National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is the UK Government's overarching planning policy for England which sets out how Local Planning Authorities (LPA) should prepare local plans and make decisions on planning applications. Although there isn't a specific reference to 'age-friendly communities', the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions 'should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places' (page 28). It also expands on this on page 40 requiring LPA's to create places that are also accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users'.

Learn more: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aafe8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf

MHCLG Design and Placemaking Planning Practice Guidance is a UK Government planning guidance document (published as draft for consultation in January 2026). It is intended to support the NPPF and planning system in England by providing practical advice on creating high-quality, well-designed places and buildings. By setting out guidance on delivering 'liveable' places it can be used to influence the development of age-friendly communities.

Learn more: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/design-and-placemaking-planning-practice-guidance/design-and-placemaking-planning-practice-guidance>

MHCLG Pride in Place Strategy sets out the governments vision to create safer, healthier neighbourhoods where communities in England, Scotland and Wales can thrive. The Pride in Place (PIP) Programme and PIP Impact Fund gives communities the resources and tools to shape neighbourhoods themselves by directly funding Neighbourhood Boards comprising local people. Underpinning the funding are three core objectives that align with the intentions of these Quick Guides, community spaces, public spaces and hight street and town centre revitalisation.

Learn more: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pride-in-place-strategy/pride-in-place-strategy>

New Local Plan-Making System (Launching Early 2026) is the new local plan-making system that aims to strengthen the role of local plans by making them faster, clearer, and outcome-focused, enabling councils to embed and implement age-friendly design, housing, and infrastructure priorities systematically across their areas.

Learn more: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-local-plan-system-launching-early-2026-latest-update>

Emerging policy

National policy that can be used to influence the development of age-friendly communities and features of the built environment

Older Persons Housing Taskforce Report is an independent report accompanied by two pieces of government-funded research. It was commissioned by the previous government in 2024, and has been recognised by the current government. It specifically focuses on how we can support people to live well in age-friendly communities. Its fourth recommendation for government is to 'create age-friendly, dementia-inclusive, faith and culture-sensitive communities'.

Learn more: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-older-peoples-housing-taskforce-report>

Bus Services Act 2017 is UK legislation that gives local transport authorities (mainly in England) powers to improve bus services. It can be used to influence the development of age-friendly communities as it gives local authorities stronger powers to shape bus services so they better meet the needs of older people. The Act enables the council to better control routes, fares, and standards, as well as mandating Enhanced Partnerships with operators and also requirements for open data and better information.

Learn more: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/id/ukpga/2017/21>

Bus Back Better 2021 is the National Bus Strategy for England that sets out the government's plan to modernise and improve buses using the powers created by the Bus Services Act. It influences the development of age-friendly communities by setting a national strategy to make bus services more reliable, affordable, integrated, and accessible.

Learn more: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bus-back-better>

The Bus Services Act 2025 is UK legislation that increases and expands the powers of local transport authorities (mainly in England) to improve bus services. Building on 2017 legislation it allows better local control of routes, fares, and standards, as well as mandating Enhanced Partnerships with operators and also requirements for open data and better information. It can be used to influence the development of age-friendly communities as it gives local and strategic authorities powers to shape bus services so they better meet the needs of older people.

Learn more: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2025/24/contents/enacted>

Bus Service Improvement Plans is a plan that each local transport authority had to produce following Bus Back Better. They can be used to secure investment in reliable, accessible, and well-connected bus networks that enable older people to access public transport.

Learn more: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bus-service-improvement-plans-local-transport-authority-allocations>

The Green Flag Award supports age-friendly communities by setting a recognised quality standard for safe, accessible, and well-managed green spaces that promote health, social connection, and inclusive placemaking.

Learn more: <https://www.greenflagaward.org/>

Further reading

General Age-friendly Built Environment Design Guidance	
This built environment guidance is applicable across all topics / contexts	Link
BS 8300-1:2018 Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment - External environment. (British Standard Institute, 2018)	https://knowledge.bsigroup.com/products/design-of-an-accessible-and-inclusive-built-environment-external-environment-code-of-practice
BS 8300-2:2018 Design of an accessible and inclusive built environment - Buildings. (British Standard Institute, 2018)	https://knowledge.bsigroup.com/products/design-of-an-accessible-and-inclusive-built-environment-buildings-code-of-practice
PAS 6463 Design for the mind: Neurodiversity and the built environment. (British Standard Institute, 2022)	https://www.bsigroup.com/en-GB/insights-and-media/insights/brochures/pas-6463-design-for-the-mind-neurodiversity-and-the-built-environment/
RIBA Inclusive Design Overlay to the RIBA Plan of Work. (RIBA, 2023)	https://www.riba.org/work/insights-and-resources/inclusive-design-overlay-to-riba-plan-of-work/#available-resources
National Building Regulation changes – Part M (Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), 2025)	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-research-on-demographic-and-ergonomic-requirements
Access to and use of buildings: Approved Document M (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2018 to 2021) and DLUHC, Published 2015, Last updated 2024)	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m
Cities Alive: Designing for ageing cities (Arup, 2019)	https://www.arup.com/perspectives/publications/research/section/cities-alive-designing-for-ageing-communities
Walking for Everyone (Arup and Sustrans, 2022)	https://www.arup.com/perspectives/publications/promotional-materials/section/walking-for-everyone
Cycling for Everyone (Arup and Sustrans, 2020)	https://www.arup.com/perspectives/publications/research/section/cycling-for-everyone-a-guide-for-inclusive-cycling-in-cities-and-towns
Aural Diversity Toolkit (Arup and Aural Diversity Network, 2024)	https://www.arup.com/perspectives/publications/research/section/aural-diversity-toolkit

Intersectional Age-friendly Design Guidance	
This built environment guidance is applicable across all topics / contexts	Link
Racial Equity and the City: Experiences of People of Colour in London (Arup and United Nations Development Programme, 2024)	https://www.arup.com/insights/racial-equity-in-the-city/
LLDC Creating places that work for Women and Girls Handbook (Arup and London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC), 2024)	https://www.queenelizabetholympicpark.co.uk/about-us/how-we-work/handbook-creating-places-work-women-and-girls
Queer Perspectives on Public Space (Arup and University of Westminster, 2024)	https://www.arup.com/insights/queer-perspectives-on-public-space
Cities Alive: Designing cities that work for women (Arup and United Nations Development Programme, University of Liverpool, 2023)	https://www.arup.com/perspectives/publications/research/section/cities-alive-designing-cities-that-work-for-women
Queering Public Space (Arup and University of Westminster, 2021)	https://www.arup.com/perspectives/publications/research/section/queering-public-space

Dementia-friendly Design Guidance	
This built environment guidance is applicable across all topics / contexts	Link
DESIGN for DEMENTIA Volume 1 - A Guide (The Halsall Lloyd Partnership 2015)	https://www.hlpdesign.com/images/case_studies/Vol1.pdf
Dementia and co-creation: A practical guide to designing products and services (Alzheimer's Society, 2022)	https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/research/our-research/dementia-innovation/guide-designing-dementia-products-services
Designing for dementia: what to specify for this growing market (Architectural Ironmongery Journal, 2023)	https://aijmagazine.co.uk/designing-for-dementia-what-to-specify-for-this-growing-market/

Further reading

Specific Age-friendly Built Environment Design Guidance	
Bus Stops	Link
Inclusive Mobility: A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure (Department for Transport, 2021)	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/61d32bb7d3bf7f1f72b5ffd2/inclusive-mobility-a-guide-to-best-practice-on-access-to-pedestrian-and-transport-infrastructure.pdf
Travel for all: improving access and inclusion across transport in Wales (Welsh Government, 2025)	https://www.gov.wales/travel-all-improving-access-and-inclusion-across-transport-in-wales.html
Accessible Bus Stop Design Guidance (Transport for London, 2017)	https://content.tfl.gov.uk/bus-stop-design-guidance.pdf
Plan an accessible journey (Transport for London)	https://tfl.gov.uk/transport-accessibility/plan-an-accessible-journey
Inclusive design at bus stops with cycle tracks (Living Streets, 2024)	https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/media/hdlfxpio/ls_inclusivedesign_busstopscycletracks_main.pdf
Floating bus stops provision and design (Department for Transport, Active Travel England, 2026)	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/floating-bus-stops-provision-and-design/floating-bus-stops-provision-and-design
Bus Stops (Active Travel England)	https://www.activetravelengland.gov.uk/planning-active-places/bus-stops
Local Transport Note 1/24: Bus User Priority (Department for Transport, 2024)	https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/65f48b65811225001a579f7c/local-transport-note-124-bus-user-priority-report.pdf
Parks and Green Spaces	Link
Guide for developing Green Infrastructure Strategies and Policies (Natural England, 2024)	https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/downloads/Green%20Infrastructure%20Framework%20Process%20Guide%20for%20Local%20Planning%20Authorities.pdf
Engaging older people in nature (British Ecological Society)	https://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/content/engaging-older-people-in-nature-heres-how-to-overcome-barriers-for-health-and-well-being/

Specific Age-friendly Built Environment Design Guidance	
Parks and Green Spaces	Link
Active Design (Sport England)	https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/active-design
Physical activity: Encouraging activity in the community (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, 2019)	https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs183/chapter/Quality-statement-3-Public-open-spaces
Outdoor Accessibility Guidance: Supporting inclusive outdoor access in the UK (Paths for All and Sensory Trust, 2023)	https://www.sensorytrust.org.uk/uploads/documents/outdoor-accessibility-guidance-18April2023.pdf
Public and Community Buildings	Link
How to be an age-friendly business: A framework for customer-facing settings (Centre for Ageing Better)	https://ageing-better.org.uk/age-friendly-businesses
Seating and Rest Areas	Link
Benches and Seating in Public Spaces (Wheels for Wellbeing Guide, 2025)	https://wheelsforwellbeing.org.uk/benches-and-seating-in-public-spaces/
Age Friendly Seating (Age-friendly Ireland)	https://agefriendlyireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/AFI-Seating-Guide.pdf
Take a Seat how-to guide (Centre for Ageing Better, 2026)	https://ageing-better.org.uk/resources/eight-steps-delivering-take-seat-initiative
Accessible Seating Review and Inclusive Design Framework (City of York Council, 2022)	https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/10395/accessible-seating-and-inclusive-design-framework
Streets and Pavements	Link
The role of lighting in supporting town centre regeneration and economic recovery (Arup, 2020)	https://www.arup.com/globalassets/downloads/insights/t/the-role-of-lighting-in-supporting-town-centre-regeneration-and-economic-recovery/the-role-of-lighting-in-supporting-town-centre-regeneration-and-economic-recovery.pdf
Pavements for People (Age UK Isle of Wight)	https://www.ageuk.org.uk/isleofwight/our-services/information-and-advice2/pavements-for-people/

Further reading

Specific Age-friendly Built Environment Design Guidance	
Streets and Pavements	Link
Age-friendly Street Design (Care and Repair, 2016)	https://careandrepair-england.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Age-Friendly-Street-Design-Sept-2016.pdf
Walking Audit Case Study (Centre for Ageing Better)	https://ageing-better.org.uk/enabling-older-people-help-shape-their-environment-through-walk-audits
The 10 Healthy Streets Indicators (Healthy Streets)	https://www.healthystreets.com/what-is-healthy-streets
The Design of Streets with Older People in Mind (IDGO Manual for Streets, 2012)	https://www.idgo.ac.uk/design_guidance/pdf/DSOPM-Seating-120820.pdf
Streets Ahead: building health on the high street (Royal Society for Public Health)	https://www.rsph.org.uk/our-work/publications/streets-ahead-building-health-on-the-high-street/
Being Age Friendly in the Public Realm: Guidelines and Good Practice (Age-friendly Ireland)	https://agefriendlyireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Public-Realm-Guidelines.pdf
Toilets	Link
Toilet accommodation: Approved Document T (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and DLUHC, published 2024, updated 2025)	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/toilet-accommodation-approved-document-t?utm_source=chatgpt.com#full-publication-update-history
Lifting the Lid Age UK London	https://www.ageuk.org.uk/wp-assets/globalassets/london/campaigns/out-and-about/ageuk_lifting-the-lid_final-17march-25--.pdf
British Toilet Association's "Legalise Loos"	http://www.btaloos.co.uk/?page_id
Designing Inclusive Public Toilets: Wee the People (Bloomsbury, 2025)	https://www.rca.ac.uk/news-and-events/news/wee-the-people-a-declaration-for-better-public-toilets/
Stoma Friendly Accessible Toilets (Colostomy UK)	https://www.colostomyuk.org/campaigns/toilets/
Changing Places Toilets (Changing Places Consortium)	https://www.changing-places.org/
The Toilet Map (Public Convenience)	https://www.toiletmap.org.uk/

Specific Age-friendly Built Environment Design Guidance	
Wayfinding and Signage	Link
Dementia-friendly signage (Alzheimer's Society)	https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/dementia-professionals/resources-professionals/resources-gps/dementia-friendly-signage
Age without limits age-positive icons (Centre for Ageing Better)	https://www.agewithoutlimits.org/image-library/collection?id=44&page=1
RNIB tips for accessible signage and wayfinding (RNIB)	https://www.rnib.org.uk/documents/1954/Tops_Tips_for_accessible_signage_and_wayfinding_2023.docx
Sign Design Guide+ (Sign Design Society, 2024)	https://signdesignsociety.co.uk/sign-design-guide-plus/
BS EN ISO 7010:2020+A8:2024 Graphical symbols. Safety colours and safety signs. Registered safety signs (British Standards Institute, 2025)	https://knowledge.bsigroup.com/products/graphical-symbols-safety-colours-and-safety-signs-registered-safety-signs-6

Bus Stops

No.	Design considerations	Y/N	Issues and actions notes
1 Location of bus stops			
1.1	Are bus stops in safe, easy to access locations near key local facilities and residential areas (including where high concentrations of older people live) and close to main junctions?		
1.2	Do stop locations minimise walking distance between destinations?		
1.3	Are sufficient bus stops provided?		
1.4	Does the pick-up location allow wheelchair users to board?		
2 Information (pre-journey)			
2.1	Is information about routes, timing, ticketing, accessibility features and assisted transport services available online and by post/phone?		
3 Information (at stop)			
3.1	Is clear, up to date information about bus routes/timing/fares provided at the stop?		
3.2	Is live bus arrivals information provided?		
3.3	Is information available in large print format and tactile/audio formats?		
3.4	Is local information (e.g. social and volunteering activities) shared at the stop?		
4 Free from obstructions			
4.1	Are driver and waiting passengers clearly visible to each other?		
4.2	Are bus stops located where there is adequate footway width?		
4.3	Is bus access free of hazards/barriers?		
5 Waiting area			
5.1	Are stops located where there is space for a weather protected shelter?		
5.2	Is seating offered at different heights with arm rests / back rests? Is a wheelchair space and a transfer seat provided?		

No.	Design considerations	Y/N	Issues and actions notes
6 Drainage			
6.1	Is good drainage provided so water does not pool on footways or the carriageway kerbside?		
6.2	Are people protected from being splashed while they wait?		
7 Kerb features			
7.1	Is the kerb height at least 100mm to allow buses to deploy a ramp safely?		
7.2	Is appropriate tactile paving used to indicate the kerb edge at boarding points?		
7.3	Are 'Kassel' kerbs used where needed to allow level boarding?		
8 Contrast			
8.1	Is information/signage provided with enough contrast to be read easily?		
8.2	Are features such as seats and bus shelters contrasting from their surrounding environment so people can easily identify them?		
8.3	Is the kerb contrasting from the carriageway so people can discern where the pavement ends?		
9 Lighting / perceptions of safety			
9.1	Are good levels of illumination provided at the bus stop (and journey to the stop)?		
9.2	Is the bus stop lighting uniform and even?		
9.3	Does the design of the stop allow people to be seen and offer clear exit routes?		
10 Maintenance and care			
10.1	Is a management plan in place to ensure street cleaning, maintenance of the footway / carriageway, vegetation clearing, and winter maintenance is performed?		
10.2	Can people easily report issues on and offline?		

Parks and Green Spaces

No.	Design considerations	Y/N	Issues and actions notes
1 Location			
1.1	Is green space available for residents within a reasonable walking distance?		
1.2	Are entrances at appropriate locations?		
1.3	Are larger parks accessible by public transport?		
2 Wayfinding and signage (see specific Quick Guide for more info)			
2.1	Is wayfinding / signage clear, intuitive, and directs to toilets, exits, and key locations?		
2.2	Is information (e.g. maps, opening hours, walking routes, activity schedule) available / easy to find?		
3 Accessible routes			
3.1	Are ground surfaces firm, even, step-free and slip-resistant?		
3.2	Are routes at least 1.8m wide to allow people to walk with mobility devices or walk safely alongside another person?		
3.3	Are objects (e.g. signage, bins) located and overhanging branches maintained so route widths are not reduced?		
4 Changes in level			
4.1	If routes have a change in level, are handrails provided for steps?		
4.2	Do stairs have a step-free route nearby?		
4.3	Are slopes shallower than 1:20 gradient?		
4.4	If routes are steeper than 1:20, do they provide handrails?		
5 Perceptions of safety			
5.1	Do sight lines and lighting allow visibility and make people feel safer?		
5.2	Is consistent, even lighting provided without pooling or creating glare?		
5.3	Does the design avoid dead ends and/or narrow routes surrounded by dense planting where people might feel trapped?		

No.	Design considerations	Y/N	Issues and actions notes
6 Toilets (see specific Quick Guide for more info)			
6.1	Are clearly marked toilets available?		
6.2	Are accessible toilets and/or a Changing Places facility provided?		
7 Seating and rest areas (see specific Quick Guide for more info)			
7.1	Is seating provided at regular intervals?		
7.2	Are there options with arm rests, back rests, and space for wheelchair users?		
7.3	Is some seating weather protected?		
8 Participation in the park			
8.1	Is a variety of trees/planting provided?		
8.2	Does some planting engage the senses and support people living with dementia?		
8.3	Are experiences that enable older people to engage with nature encouraged (in audio, tactile, olfactory, visual formats)?		
8.4	Are older people supported to use and participate in the park space?		
8.5	Are there areas where dogs must be kept on leads?		
8.6	Do activities and design enable socialising and connection?		
9 Inclusive play and movement			
9.1	Does the park provide inclusive play, fitness, and activity options for all ages to use or feel welcome to watch?		
9.2	Do activities and design support intergenerational connection?		
10 Maintenance and care			
10.1	Are management and maintenance plans in place to ensure the routes are kept even and clear throughout all seasons, lighting is working, trip hazards removed, and toilets/bins/facilities maintained so they are trusted and reliable?		

Public / Community Buildings

No.	Design considerations	Y/N	Issues and actions notes
1 Approach to the building			
1.1	Is the building accessible by public transport?		
1.2	Is step-free drop-off, Blue Badge parking, and inclusive cycle storage provided?		
1.3	Is access to the building step-free?		
2 Wayfinding and signage (see specific Quick Guide for more info)			
2.1	Is wayfinding / signage to and within the building clear and intuitive?		
2.2	Does signage point to key destinations?		
2.3	Is it provided in multiple formats (visual, tactile, audio, large print)?		
2.4	Is information about what is going on and opening hours available and easy to find?		
3 Entrances and doors			
3.1	Are door thresholds level and step-free?		
3.2	Are entrance doors at least 1000mm wide and easily openable with limited force or an automatic door opening device?		
4 Circulation			
4.1	Do routes to and within the building have at least 1800mm clear width to allow people to pass and at least 1200mm clear width for one-way movement?		
4.2	Do stairs have handrails and contrasting edges?		
4.3	Are lifts or ramps provided next to stairs?		
4.4	Are rooms with step-free access used for community events/activities?		
5 Social use			
5.1	Are staff trained to offer a warm welcome and support user needs?		
5.2	Do the building's activities appeal to all ages and enable social connection? Does the building promote what is going on in the community?		

No.	Design considerations	Y/N	Issues and actions notes
6 Facility use			
6.1	Are a range of seats including arm rests, back rests, and higher seats available?		
6.2	Are tables provided at appropriate heights for the activities?		
6.3	Is space provided around tables/chairs to navigate with a mobility device?		
6.4	Is the temperature inside comfortable to spend time there?		
6.5	Is drinking water publicly available?		
7 Toilets			
7.1	Are a range of toilet types available, (wheelchair accessible, ambulant accessible, gendered, gender neutral)?		
7.2	Is a Changing Places facility available?		
7.3	If only one toilet is available, is it a unisex accessible toilet with step-free access?		
8 Acoustics			
8.1	Do the acoustics allow people to hear each other without strain?		
8.2	Are soft materials such as curtains used to improve the acoustics where possible?		
8.3	Are hearing enhancement systems (e.g. hearing loops) available in the building, or are alternatives supported?		
9 Lighting and finishes			
9.1	Is the lighting even and consistent so people can see the space and task?		
9.2	Are reflective finishes and highly-repetitive patterns avoided?		
10 Maintenance and care			
10.1	Are management / maintenance plans in place to ensure the building is kept clean, lighting is working, trip hazards removed, and toilets/bins/facilities maintained so they are trusted and reliable?		

Seating and Rest Areas

No.	Design considerations	Y/N	Issues and actions notes
1 Location of seats			
1.1	Are seats located on routes between home and a destination to allow rest in between, with rest areas every 50m where possible?		
1.2	Are seats located where people expect to wait or linger, such as bus stops, community buildings, town centres, parks, etc.?		
1.3	Are enough seats provided in busy areas?		
1.4	Are there sight lines to seating areas to give people confidence?		
1.5	Do seats face a pleasant/interesting view?		
2 Social seats			
2.1	Are seats designed to enable/encourage socialising (e.g. facing each other, high backs to help acoustics, etc.)?		
3 Seat dimensions			
3.1	Is there a choice of seat heights between 380-580mm from floor level?		
3.2	If only one seat is provided, is the height 480mm from floor level?		
3.3	Is there a space between arm rests of at least 500mm?		
4 Wheelchair spaces			
4.1	Is a level transfer space at least 1200mm wide located at one end of the seat/bench?		
4.2	Is an arm rest set in 500-750mm from the transfer space?		
5 Back rests			
5.1	Are back supports provided at a height of at least 300mm from seat level?		
5.1	Are back supports provided at an angle of 90-100 degrees from the seat surface?		

No.	Design considerations	Y/N	Issues and actions notes
6 Arm rests			
6.1	Are arm rests provided at a height of 200mm from the surface of the seat?		
6.2	Do arm rests extend from the back support forwards to cover at least 80% of the depth of the seat?		
6.3	Is the arm rest diameter 32-50mm?		
6.4	Is the arm rest comfortable to grip?		
7 Materials			
7.1	Are the materials comfortable to touch/sit (e.g. not too cold, too hot, or too damp)?		
7.2	Is this seating made of natural materials where possible?		
8 Contrast and priority seating			
8.1	Do seats and arm rests contrast visually with their surroundings so they are easily identifiable to people who are partially sighted?		
8.2	Is priority seating marked?		
9 Choice of seating			
9.1	Does the space provide a choice of seating to suit different people's requirements (such as seating for taller or shorter people, for people who want to socialise or for those who need a moment to themselves, and those who want sun or shade)?		
9.2	Are some seats weather protected?		
10 Maintenance and care			
10.1	Are management and maintenance plans in place to ensure the seating and surrounding area is kept clean and usable?		
10.2	Is the community encouraged to care for the local seating and rest areas?		

Streets and Pavements

No.	Design considerations	Y/N	Issues and actions notes
1 Ground surfaces			
1.1	Are ground surfaces free of trip hazards?		
1.2	Are ground surfaces firm?		
1.3	Are ground surfaces even?		
1.4	Are ground surfaces step-free?		
1.5	Are ground surfaces slip-resistant?		
1.6	Does anything else impede safe and comfortable wheeling/walking?		
2 Width of pavement			
2.1	Is the walking clear width at least 1.8m?		
2.2	Can people with mobility devices, shopping, luggage, prams, etc. comfortably pass each other?		
3 Clear pavement			
3.1	Is the pavement clear from permanent and temporary obstructions and hazards such as signs, A boards, bins, trees, planters, bus stops, leaves, overhanging vegetation, tree roots, cracks, etc.?		
4 Crossings			
4.1	Is a step-free zebra crossing located where most people cross the street?		
4.2	Is there a dropped kerb with a gentle slope or raised table crossing?		
4.3	Is there tactile paving to inform blind or partially sighted people of the crossing?		
4.4	Are crossings at busy roads controlled crossings?		
5 Lighting			
5.1	Is there consistent, even lighting illuminating the street and people without pooling and/or creating glare?		
5.2	Is lighting that creates high contrast avoided, as it can make it harder to perceive the space and people?		

No.	Design considerations	Y/N	Issues and actions notes
6 Safety/perceptions of safety			
6.1	Is there clearly marked separation between cars/cyclists and pedestrians to reduce risk to pedestrians from other road users?		
6.2	Is there a kerb or tactile paving to communicate to blind or partially sighted people where the road is?		
6.3	Does anything else related to streets and pavements reduce different people's perception of safety?		
7 Wayfinding and signage (see specific Quick Guide for more info)			
7.1	Is clear and adequate wayfinding and signage provided along the street and pavement to point people to key destinations such as toilets, bus stops / transport hubs, parks, hospitals, and community centres?		
8 Rest areas (see specific Quick Guide for more info)			
8.1	Are benches and/or spaces to perch, dwell, rest and/or socialise provided every 50m where practicable?		
8.2	Are there handrails and/or other support features along common routes?		
9 Weather protection			
9.1	Is there adequate shading and rain cover to be able to enjoy areas of the street rain or shine?		
10 Maintenance			
10.1	Are management and maintenance plans in place to ensure the pavement is kept even and clear, lighting is working and not flickering, and call points / phone booths are working so they are trusted and reliable?		
10.2	Is there anything else related to streets and pavements that needs to be added to the management and maintenance plan?		

Toilets

No.	Design considerations	Y/N	Issues and actions notes
1 Availability of toilets			
1.1	Can people find where toilets are freely available for use and does signage point to them?		
1.2	Are accessible toilets located on step-free routes that are easy to navigate?		
1.3	Are toilets provided at key destinations?		
1.4	Are businesses encouraged to open up their toilets to the public?		
2 Types of toilets			
2.1	Do people have a choice of accessible, gender-neutral, and gendered toilets?		
2.2	Is a Changing Places facility provided?		
2.3	If only one toilet is provided, is it a unisex wheelchair accessible toilet?		
2.4	Are bins provided in all toilets?		
3 Ambulant accessible toilet dimensions			
3.1	Are ambulant accessible toilets at least 1000mm by 2125mm with outward opening doors and support features?		
3.2	Is the toilet a comfortable height?		
4 Wheelchair accessible toilet dimensions			
4.1	Is the clear turning space at least 1.5m by 1.5m & room size at least 1.7m by 2.2m with required supports, fixtures, fittings?		
4.2	Are building services, ducts, and loose items outside of required clear spaces?		
4.3	Are baby facilities provided separately to not reduce access to the toilet?		
4.5	Where space allows, can people transfer from left or right?		
5 Doors			
5.1	Are outward-opening doors provided to make it easier to open in an emergency?		
5.2	Are doors easy to open or automatic and wide enough for all people?		

No.	Design considerations	Y/N	Issues and actions notes
6 Support features			
6.1	Are fixed / drop-down grab rails provided?		
6.2	Do grab rails have a surface that provides a good grip when wet?		
6.3	Is the wall construction / fixings strong enough to support people using the rails?		
6.4	Is a colostomy shelf provided?		
7 Operable controls			
7.1	Are all controls (e.g. levers, locks, flushes, etc.) visible and easily operable with one hand, without the need to grasp or twist?		
7.2	Is there signage to explain how to use locks or sensor controls?		
8 Contrast and finishes			
8.1	Do support rails and grab rails contrast visually with the wall?		
8.2	Does the toilet seat and cover contrast visually with the toilet pan and cistern?		
8.3	Do sanitary fittings / accessories contrast visually with their surroundings?		
8.4	Are floors slip-resistant when dry or wet?		
8.5	Are shiny floor or wall surfaces avoided to prevent disorienting reflections/glare?		
9 Emergency alarm			
9.1	Are emergency alarm systems provided / reachable from the toilet and the floor?		
9.2	Is a reset control provided on the wall next to the toilet in case the alarm is activated by mistake?		
10 Maintenance and care			
10.1	Are toilet facilities regularly maintained for hygiene and functionality to ensure all features are clean, working, and the emergency cord is not tied up?		
10.2	Is information about public toilets kept up to date?		

Wayfinding and Signage

No.	Design considerations	Y/N	Issues and actions notes
1 Intuitive layout			
1.1	Is the layout and location of key facilities (such as entrances, reception, choice of lift/stair/ramp, landmarks, personalised features) easily identifiable, predictable, intuitive and equitable?		
2 Key destinations and information			
2.1	Does the signage and wayfinding direct people to key destinations like toilets, hospitals, parks, community centres, town halls, etc?		
2.2	Is key, relevant information provided such as bus schedules, opening times, etc?		
2.3	Are street names easy to find?		
3 Consistent and regular			
3.1	Is the signage style consistent and provided at key decision points, intersections, and regular intervals to give people confidence they are on track?		
4 Multiple formats			
4.1	Is information and wayfinding provided in multiple formats so that it is accessible to people with sensory requirements, according to the principle of at least two senses: audible and/or tactile and visual?		
4.2	Is multi-sensory information provided where possible?		
5 Visual communication			
5.1	Is the signage information clear, not shiny, in plain font, and a large enough text/symbol size based on viewing distance?		
5.2	Is there visual and tonal contrast against the background, including retail fronts, so information stands out from its surrounds?		
5.3	Is there good lighting to avoid excessive reflections, glare, and shadowing on the signage?		

No.	Design considerations	Y/N	Issues and actions notes
6 Graphic communication			
6.1	Are graphic signs, maps, and pictograms provided to complement text and help people whose first language is not English?		
6.2	Are maps/information/directories that require a closer look provided at an accessible height?		
7 Tactile communication			
7.1	Is tactile communication provided such as embossed signage, tactile maps, Braille signage, changes in floor level and/or surface, tapping rails?		
8 Audible communication and sounds			
8.1	Are audible features implemented such as talking signs and simple announcement systems that provide audio descriptive wayfinding information?		
8.2	Do acoustics support clear interpretation of sound and speech?		
8.3	Are assistive listening systems provided such as induction hearing loop systems?		
9 Non-ageist graphics and language			
9.1	Any graphics and language used should not include any references that proliferate negative ageist stereotypes. Does the wayfinding and signage use age-positive graphics and language where possible?		
10 Maintenance			
10.1	Is the signage and wayfinding regularly maintained and updated to be legible and accurate? Is outdated signage removed? Is temporary signage located so as not to cause obstruction or clutter?		
10.2	Is there anything else related to wayfinding and signage that needs to be added to a management and maintenance plan?		

Community Shelters Project  

Relevant Quick Guides: Age-friendly Bus Stops, Seating
Location: Hertfordshire



What they did

Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) has improved bus shelter sites so they better support everyday journeys for local communities, including older people.

The project focused on upgrading a small number of high-use locations across Hertfordshire, particularly those near village halls, colleges, shopping areas and residential communities. Improvements included installing new or upgraded shelters, providing seating usually with backs and armrests, improving lighting and visibility, upgrading kerbs to support step-free boarding, and improving pedestrian access routes. At several sites the upgrades also involved making the shelters more aesthetically pleasing. For example, local schools provided artwork and green roofs have been installed.

The project forms part of the council's Bus Services Improvement Plan (BSIP), developed under the Bus Services Act 2017 to set out how Local Transport Authorities will improve bus services. As of March 2026, nine bus shelters have been improved with several more in the pipeline.

How they did it

Delivery was supported through HCC's Intalink Enhanced Partnership with local bus operators, enabling formal collaboration on agreed improvements. Following submission of the BSIP, the Department for Transport indicatively allocated £29.7 million to deliver a range of passenger transport initiatives, including the Community Shelters project.

Sites were initially identified by the Project Manager (PM), who assessed shelter condition, accessibility and proximity to community services. As the project progressed, additional sites were nominated by residents and councillors. The PM engaged parish councils and community groups to confirm local need and co-develop proposals. Age UK Hertfordshire's Age Friendly Communities Lead attended selected site visits to advise on age-friendly design. The PM coordinated delivery with highways teams and contractors.

The total cost of shelter upgrades over the past 4.5 years is approximately £250,000.

Learn more: <https://www.intalink.org.uk/stevenage-asda-community-shelter>

Public toilets in the People's Park  

Relevant Quick Guides: Age-friendly Toilets, Parks and Green Spaces
Location: Banbury



What they did

Banbury Town Council delivered new public toilets in People's Park, improving accessibility and supporting the town's age-friendly ambitions.

The project was sparked by the development of a new café in the park and championed by a local councillor and the Mayor of Banbury. Although the café included customer toilets, it was recognised that publicly accessible facilities were still needed. The new accessible toilets were funded by the town council as part of wider improvements to the park and café area.

How they did it

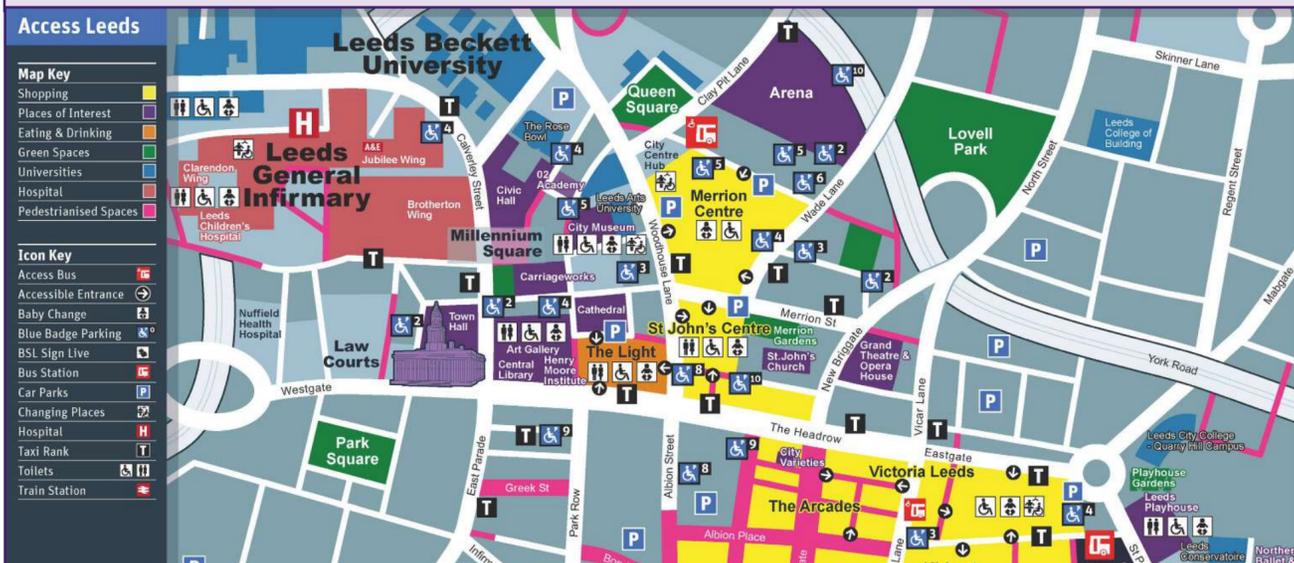
The project began when a local town councillor recognised the lack of public toilets on the west side of Banbury and brought the issue to the town council through a formal motion. The proposal gained traction partly because it aligned with plans to develop a new café in People's Park and improve the surrounding public space. To understand local support, the local councillor informally consulted residents living near the park, surveying around 200 households. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with only one objection raised.

Once political support was secured, Age Friendly Banbury played an important role in shaping the project by providing a sounding board for ideas and ensuring the needs of older residents were considered. Through its Older People's Voice group, the organisation had already identified toilets, benches and buses as key priorities for older people locally. This helped reinforce the case for investment. The town council funded the project and incorporated accessible and disabled facilities into the design, ensuring the toilets supported Banbury's wider ambitions to create a more age-friendly environment.

Leeds City Centre Access Map

Relevant Quick Guides: Age-friendly Wayfinding and Signage

Location: Leeds



What they did

Leeds City Council's City Centre Management Team co-produced a redesigned Leeds City Centre Access Map, creating an accessible, easy-to-read version of the complex master map. The new map highlights pedestrianised spaces in pink, uses stronger colour contrast and introduces clearer symbols and a simplified, bold map key. Dementia-friendly landmarks were added, alongside accessible entrances and numbered Blue Badge parking spaces. Multiple QR codes link to online information about bus routes and booking community transport, as well as additional maps for toilets, indoor rest spots, safe space, and shopping centre accessibility, improving access to additional information.

The result was a wayfinding tool available in both print and digital formats, expanding the city's inclusive wayfinding offer. It has also led to the team considering other improvements such as how to increase the accessibility of the wayfinding plinths.

How they did it

The project was driven by the council's Age Friendly Strategy which commits to embedding lived experience into design. Through a structured co-production process with the Leeds Older People's Forum and the intergenerational All Age Activists group, the team engaged with people of different ages and with a range of disabilities.

The team met with stakeholders at a series of in-person events to gather their views on what would be most useful to see on the map and how the design of the map can meet the need of a broad range of people. Feedback was gathered first on print formats, then digitally, recognising that there is no 'one size fits all' in accessibility. This collaborative process ensured the final product reflected real user needs and increased confidence in its usability.

Improving neighbourhood spaces and walking routes

Relevant Quick Guides: Age-friendly Seating and Rest Areas, Streets and Pavements

Location: Rochdale Boroughwide Housing



What they did

Rochdale Boroughwide Housing's (RBH) Age-Friendly Advisor worked with residents in the Smallbridge and Kirkholt neighbourhoods to improve outdoor spaces and walking routes, making them safer, more accessible and more welcoming for older people.

Through local engagement residents highlighted barriers to moving around their neighbourhoods such as uneven paving, steep routes without handrails, limited seating and areas that felt unsafe or unwelcoming.

RBH introduced a series of practical improvements which included installing benches to provide rest points along walking routes, adding handrails on steep hills, and formalising an informal footpath that residents were already using by creating a safer paved walkway.

The project also enhanced community spaces including improvements around Stevenson Square and the creation and maintenance of community gardens. Together, these changes made outdoor areas easier to navigate and encouraged residents to spend more time outside and connect with neighbours.

How they did it

This project was delivered through the Greater Manchester Ageing in Place Pathfinder programme which was grant funded by the Worwin UK Foundation and worked across nine neighbourhoods in Greater Manchester. The programme was led by RBH in Rochdale.

In these partnerships local organisations work together with residents to agree and prioritise ways to improve the quality of life for residents as they grow older.

The project maximised existing resources by drawing on social value commitments of RBH suppliers. For example, the materials were provided by Groundworks Landscapes Limited. They were also able to utilise RBH's corporate volunteer days to make the changes.

Learn more: <https://www.rbh.org.uk/news/rbh-news/new-benches-on-smallbridge-as-part-of-rochdale-age-friendly-project/>

Improving how people navigate the Town Hall



Relevant Quick Guides: Age-friendly Public/Community Buildings, Wayfinding and Signage

Location: South Tyneside



What they did

South Tyneside Council commissioned Sense Ability Matters (SAM), a local organisation that helps older people, disabled people and/or neurodivergent people to conduct a walkability audit of South Tyneside Town Hall. The aim was to understand how easy the public building is to navigate and what could be improved from the perspective of visitors and staff. The focus was on realistic low cost changes that could still have a big impact given the Town Hall's constraints as a listed building and tight budgets for larger works.

The audit identified positive experiences but also a range of improvements to support older people, disabled people and/or neurodivergent people to navigate the Town Hall. From this, the council implemented a series of small yet meaningful improvements across the Town Hall.

The changes included improved external and internal signage, visibility markings on steps, installing electronic maps/boards, and using colour to support wayfinding by adding a different colour strip around the middle of each column on each floor. Consideration was also given to how staff provide directions to visitors to make this clearer and more consistent.

How they did it

In 2022 South Tyneside became an Age-friendly Community and created an age-friendly strategy and action plan. Undertaking walkability audits of local areas was a key priority.

The walkability audit of the Town Hall in 2025 built on the success of the 2024 South Shields town centre audit undertaken by SAM with National Lottery funding. The 2024 audit was the catalyst for a wider programme of walking audits across the borough with the Town Hall audit funded by some one-off funding to public health received from the Integrated Care Board (ICB).

The Town Hall walking audit convened local people with lived experience of disability, including, visual and hearing impairment, and neurodiversity, alongside council staff from the Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging networks. Together they agreed the audit's scope, ensuring recommendations would be practical within funding constraints and the restrictions of a listed building. SAM led the structured walk throughs and wrote up a clear actionable report and reconvened with council colleagues to prioritise feasible actions.

Both audits have resulted in a mindset shift at the council as small, affordable changes have been shown to have a big impact on people's lives. Five more walking audits are in the pipeline and it has attracted wider interest in the North East Combined Authority and public transport executive Nexus.

Community Toilets Scheme



Relevant Quick Guides: Age-friendly Toilets, Wayfinding and Signage

Location: Derry and Strabane

What they did

Derry City and Strabane District Council introduced a community toilet scheme to expand access to public toilet facilities in light of financial challenges to maintain and improve the ten council-owned toilets that had fallen into significant disrepair.

To address this, the council partnered with local businesses and community venues to make their existing toilets available for public use, as well as council buildings such as leisure centres and museums. Participating premises such as cafés, shopping centres, community centres and other local businesses display a sticker showing they are part of the scheme and are listed on a council webpage with an online map of locations. Wayfinding is supported through door stickers, street signage on nearby lampposts or bus stops and QR codes linking to an online map.

The scheme has significantly increased the number and spread of available toilet. To date there are 15 community toilet scheme premises, 20 public toilets on council premises and seven Changing Places toilets.

This approach also enabled the council to focus on repairing public toilets in rural areas where options for community toilet scheme are more limited.

Learn more: <https://www.derrystrabane.com/services/health-communitywellbeing/health,-housing-public-conveniences/public-conveniences/community-toilet-scheme>



How they did it

The council identified areas with limited toilet provision and approached suitable local businesses with appropriate facilities to participate in the scheme. In urban centres, this involved selecting premises with well-maintained toilets that were already informally allowing customers or visitors to use them. In rural areas with fewer businesses the council worked to identify suitable venues and fill gaps in provision where possible.

Participating businesses receive a small annual payment based on the type of facilities available, such as standard toilets, accessible toilets or baby-changing provision. The council also checks public liability insurance annually and undertakes occasional spot checks to ensure facilities remain clean, stocked and clearly signed.

The participating businesses were pleased to be part of the project and were open to the idea of supporting older people in their local community.

Placemaking Brochure



Relevant Quick Guides: All Age-friendly Quick Guide Topics

Location: South Lanarkshire

What they did

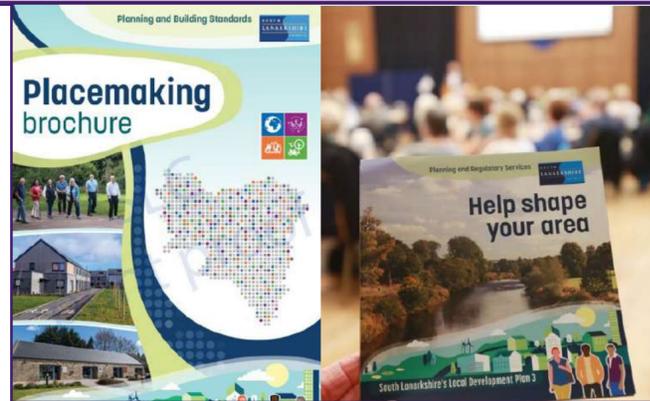
South Lanarkshire Council set out to embed people of all ages at the heart of place-making and planning. The planning team developed a placemaking brochure to sit alongside emerging Supplementary Planning Guidance and the Local Development Plan (LDP) Review. The aim was to ensure new developments are age-friendly, inclusive and walkable, supporting multigenerational living and reducing car-dominated layouts.

The council co-produced the brochure with Seniors Together, a council-wide older people's group supported by the South Lanarkshire Health and Social Care Partnership, providing activities and opportunities to encourage good physical and mental health and wellbeing.

The planning team explored in workshops how older residents experience their neighbourhoods. Key insights included the importance of frequent, well-located seating (e.g. on routes to bus stops) to give people confidence to explore more of their local area, and the need for adult-friendly outdoor spaces, not just play parks for children. Older people also highlighted limited opportunities to downsize within their own communities, reinforcing the need for a wider mix of housing types.

These insights have informed both the placemaking brochure and the emerging spatial strategy of the LDP Review.

Learn more: https://www.southlanarkshire.gov.uk/info/200168/getting_involved_in_your_community/1510/seniors_together



How they did it

The co-production approach first involved a round of workshops that provided Seniors Together groups with a very early draft of the brochure. The planning team explained simple concepts but was mainly blank so that older people could shape its direction. Facilitators asked about people's everyday experiences of place including what helps or hinders them getting out, meeting friends or feeling safe. These stories were then used by the planning team to shape the key themes in the brochure. Near the end of the project the planning team attended another Seniors Together event where they presented the themes and sense-tested the brochure with local older people.

The workshops and events were designed to feel welcoming and social, mirroring the Seniors Together usual format with large round tables, afternoon tea boxes, light physical activity such as stretches or yoga, and a focus on conversation rather than planning jargon.

This approach shaped the council's LDP participation statement and engagement culture which uses more plain English and listening-led sessions.

Author's note

The Age-friendly Quick Guide collection has been prepared by Arup and Housing LIN in collaboration with and on behalf of the Centre for Ageing Better.

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