

Age and Dementia Friendly Leeds

Background and local picture



Background to this guide

Leeds Older People's Forum has produced this guide to help businesses and organisations become more age and dementia friendly.

We have one primary goal – to make sure every older person in Leeds has the opportunities, freedom and support to live the life they choose.

Following consultation with older people across Leeds, we worked closely with Leeds City Council in the development of the **Age Friendly Charter** for Leeds.

We believe that

- Older people should feel valued in their community and live healthy, fulfilling lives with adequate access to, and choice and control over, any support that they may need.
- Older people offer a wealth of knowledge, skills and experience to the city, and should never be made to feel invisible or disenfranchised from civic participation.
- Older people should be taken seriously in their concerns - whether about safety, health, social inclusion, their environment or political processes.
- Older people should be able to live, work and play where and how they want - free from fear - no matter their ethnicity, religion, sexuality, gender, gender identity or disability.
- Older people should have equal access to information that is accurate and easy to understand.
- Older people should have an active role in shaping the policies which affect them.

The Friendly Communities project brings together the Age Friendly and Dementia Friendly initiatives within Leeds Older People's Forum. We have produced this guide as part of our work to help make Leeds the best city to grow old in.



Leeds' Older Population

Here in Leeds, like the rest of the UK, our population is not only growing but also ageing. Around one in three people in Leeds are aged 50 and over¹. In addition, the number of Leeds residents aged 80 and over will increase by about 50% in the next 20 years.²



Based on average household expenditure data and household estimates in Leeds, households with people aged 65 and over contribute £38 million a week to the economy.³



About 8,500 people aged 65 and over are estimated to be living with dementia in Leeds. As people develop dementia they will do and spend less, unless businesses adapt to their needs. Research shows that 83% of people with memory problems have switched their shopping habits to places that are more accessible.⁴



Leeds older population will also become more diverse, with a higher percentage of people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, a wider range of religions represented and more people openly identifying as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Trans.



82% of 50-64 year olds in Leeds are in employment, 10% higher than the national average.⁵ Employers who offer flexible working to fit around caring responsibilities can make a big contribution to better lives for older people.



1 ONS, Mid-2020 Population Estimates, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalescotlandandnorthernireland>

2 ONS, Population projections for local authorities:

Table 2, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/localauthoritiesinenglandtable2>

3 National Data, Household Disposable Income and Inequality 2018/9, ONS

4 Dementia Friendly Retail Guide, Alzheimer's Society, 2018

5 Leeds Estimate: Labour Force Survey, June 2020, ONS: Employment Rate: <https://leedsc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=501cf82b33a84e0e8269cd6c5ca87792#>

Age Friendly Leeds

Leeds became an age friendly city in 2014. Age friendly communities enable people to stay in the place of their choosing as they age and to continue to play an active role in their communities. They pay attention to the issues that are important to older people; and place older people at the centre.

One of the priority areas of the Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy is that Leeds is an age friendly city where people age well. A place where older people are valued, feel respected and appreciated and are seen as the assets they are.

Age Friendly Leeds is one of the eight interconnected priority areas of work set out in the Best Council Plan 2020-2025.

The Age Friendly Leeds action plan is based on six topic areas:

- Housing
- Public and civic spaces
- Travel and road safety
- Active, included and respected
- Healthy and independent ageing
- Employment and learning



Cross-cutting themes across all the topic areas are:

- Effective communications
- Access to digital technology
- Engagement and co-production with older people
- Inequalities

Dementia Friendly Leeds

A dementia friendly community is a city, town or village where people with dementia feel understood, valued and able to contribute to their community.

Leeds is recognised by The Alzheimer's Society as a city which is working to become Dementia Friendly.

Dementia Friendly Leeds currently has three main areas of focus:

- Arts, culture, leisure and recreation
- Businesses and shops
- Housing



There are a number of local neighbourhoods across the city in which residents and businesses are working together to make their communities and high streets dementia friendly.

Many organisations across Leeds have already signed up to take specific action to make their business or organisation more dementia friendly.