



# Northumberland County Council

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

14<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2022

---

### Ageing Well Service Review

**Report of:** Liz Morgan, Interim Director of Public Health and Community Services

**Cabinet Member:** Cllr Wendy Pattison, Adult Wellbeing

---

#### **Purpose of report**

To provide an update on healthy ageing activity; a refreshed consideration of the evaluation of the Ageing Well programme completed in January 2020; and propose next steps.

#### **Recommendations**

The Northumberland Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:

- Comment on the evaluation of the Ageing Well programme.
- Agree and support the refresh of a strategic Northumberland Healthy Ageing Board accountable to the Health and Wellbeing Board and
- The refreshed Northumberland Healthy Ageing Board will be chaired by the Director of Public Health
- Delegate to the Director of Public Health, in consultation with the portfolio holder for adult wellbeing, the decision to appoint an independent chair of the Healthy Ageing Board.

#### **Link to Corporate Plan**

This report is relevant to the overarching theme of 'Tackling inequalities within our communities, supporting our residents to be healthier and happier' in the NCC Corporate Plan 2021-2024 and the 'Living' and 'Learning' priorities.

#### **Key issues**

Northumberland's population overall is ageing, but this change is more marked in the rural population. In recent years, Northumberland's rural population has become disproportionately older than its urban one and overall, 25.1% of the population were estimated to be over 65 years in 2020 compared with the England average of 18.5%.



# Northumberland

## County Council

A service review of the Ageing Well programme was undertaken in 2019 to support the future planning and commissioning of the programme. The overarching aim was to understand how the Ageing Well programme supported the needs of the residents in Northumberland, its impact on health, wellbeing, and inequalities, and to identify opportunities for development. The executive summary of the full review is at Appendix 1.

The main recommendations of the evaluation relate to refreshing and relaunching the Ageing Well Board with an option to identify an independent chair in the future.

### **Background**

#### **Population profile**

Northumberland has a higher proportion of people aged 65+ (25.1%) compared to England (18.5%) and the Northeast (20.1%) according to the 2020 mid-year population estimates provided by ONS. This is seen across both the male and female population and a population profile is at Appendix 2.

Life Expectancy at Birth for men in Northumberland is 79.3 and 82.9 for women, a 3.6-year difference. This gap widens between areas and gender. Depending on where you live in Northumberland, you could expect to live from 73 years to 85 years for men (a 12-year gap) and 76 years to 92 years for women (a 16-year gap).

#### **Ageing Well Review**

At the time of the evaluation of the Ageing Well programme in 2019, the Ageing Well Partnership Board was in place to provide strategic leadership to the Ageing Well Programme. It was convened by the Ageing Well Programme and chaired by the Portfolio Member for Adult Wellbeing & Health. It did not report to other strategic groups within Northumberland, although it did have a link to the Health and Wellbeing Board through the Chair. In 2017/18 it approved an annual report and strategic action plan, which resulted in three work streams being developed but with no clear outcome measures to measure progress.

The delivery of the Ageing Well programme currently sits within the Integrated Wellbeing Service (IWS) team. The Board is no longer in operation although the Ageing Well Network continues to operate and has done so throughout the pandemic.

In 2019, responsibility for funding the Ageing Well Programme transferred to Public Health. Following this change in commissioning responsibility, a service review was undertaken to support the transition along with future planning and commissioning of the programme. The overarching aims were to understand how the Ageing Well Programme supported the needs of the residents in Northumberland; its impact on health, well-being, and inequalities; and to identify opportunities for development. To achieve these, the following objectives were set:



# Northumberland

## County Council

- To review the structure and processes in place to describe the services delivered and increase understanding of challenges and opportunities faced.
- To review the outputs and outcomes of the service to see how effectively the needs of the population are met.
- To utilise administrative, quantitative and qualitative data in addition to evidence-based guidance and peer reviewed literature in answering the evaluation questions.
- To produce an evaluation report that supports the ongoing commissioning of services and interventions.

The review considered current policy and evidence-based practice. It considered routine administrative information generated by Ageing Well and collected primary information from stakeholders. Stakeholders contributed through meetings, a consultation session held at the annual Northumberland HealthWatch conference, and through interviews over the telephone. The review looked at the overarching programme, and key components of the service including the Ageing Well Partnership Board, network, events such as the roadshows, and training. This information was then analysed using two different quality frameworks.

### **Recommendations from the review**

Several recommendations were made as part of the review, highlighted in Appendix 1.

- Overall, the Ageing Well Programme was found to be highly respected and valued by stakeholders. The Ageing Well team were seen as accessible, knowledgeable and consistent. The Network was found to enable collaboration and partnership work. Those involved shared how it enabled them to reach communities and deliver their own interventions.
- The review found that the Ageing Well Programme in Northumberland had developed over the previous 12 years. The programme aim is to focus on the strengths and assets of older people and communities and to support older people to feel “active, connected, and well”.
- Stakeholders consulted as part of the review felt it was important to have a strategic Board in place, though it could be more effective. It was felt the Board should have more influence; responsibilities of Board members needed to be clearer; and representation should include those from other sectors important to healthy ageing. Stakeholders were not always sure about the impact the programme was having, and outcome measures important to older people and communities were needed. Community participation was through third sector organisations on the Board. This could be improved by working with stakeholders and reviewing participation models.
- One of the key findings of the review demonstrated scope to increase the strategic influence and impact of the Programme by reviewing the current processes in place for delivery of the Partnership Board. The Board offers the opportunity to develop a systems leadership approach, through the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders. This would help influence determinants of healthy ageing across



# Northumberland

## County Council

sectors. This finding is still relevant and increasingly so due to the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic.

### **Current situation**

Governance. The Ageing Well review describes the Ageing Well Partnership Board which was in place to provide strategic leadership to the Ageing Well Programme. It was previously convened by the Ageing Well Programme and chaired by the Portfolio Member for Adult Wellbeing and Health. At the time of the review, it did not report to other strategic groups within Northumberland, though it did have a link to the Health and Wellbeing Board through the Chair. In 2017/18 it approved an Annual Report and Strategic Action Plan, which resulted in three work streams being developed. No outcome measures were set to understand progress against the Strategic Action Plan.

At the time of the review, the Board did not formally link to strategic forums delivered by NCC, the Clinical Commissioning Group, or the North of Tyne Combined Authority, though representation on some groups was maintained through the Ageing Well team. There was concern that processes used to deliver the Board meetings could result in duplication of the Network, with a focus on information sharing, rather than collaboration. It was felt that the Board should provide opportunities for development of partnership working when gaps and needs are identified.

The strategic partnership is not meeting now and the existing Ageing Well Network reports into the IWS management team. There is currently no governance arrangement for the strategic group.

Current membership of the strategic group and network. The current members of the Ageing Well Network and previous Ageing Well Board covered a wide range of partners from public, private, and voluntary sector organisations as well as volunteers and residents. It is recommended that membership of the strategic board is reviewed to ensure that all relevant partners are represented within the work of the programme.

The current Ageing Well network forum. Following the Covid 19 pandemic, the team were required to review how activity could continue to be delivered to reach service users. Use of digital technology meant that the network was able to continue, and numbers increased during this time, recognising the increasing need to support older residents during the pandemic, and providing a valuable resource to support residents across Northumberland. The network continues to be a valued resource with strong membership.

Staffing. In October 2021, the IWS service transferred from Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust (NHFT) to Northumberland County Council. Previously, the Ageing Well team within NHCT worked closely with the Integrated Wellbeing Service (IWS), with staff from IWS supporting the programme and training delivered. From the start of the Covid 19 pandemic, work in respect of ageing well ceased within the NHCT team apart from two members of staff from the IWS team equating to 1.6 FTE.



# Northumberland

## County Council

Following the transfer of the IWS team to NCC, current dedicated staffing for Ageing Well delivery remains at 1.6 FTE staff. Support is also given to service delivery by Health Trainers.

Work programme / delivery. Since the Covid 19 pandemic, activities continue to be delivered within the programme by the IWS team. This includes:

- Ongoing delivery of the Ageing Well training programme to support capacity building and the aims and objectives of the original strategic board (dementia awareness, falls awareness etc).
- Delivery of the Ageing Well Network, coordinating network meetings and support with partners with regular information updates via digital platforms
- Maximising intelligence from the Ageing Well network with the offer of smaller community engagement events to target resources to the most in need
- Supporting healthy active ageing and independence so older people can enjoy long and healthy lives, feeling safe at home and connected to their community
- Promote awareness of relevant national screening and immunisation campaigns
- Support a minimum of 2 health roadshows aimed at older people
- Align Ageing Well activity with community engagement
- Distribution of 'active at home' resources to residents across Northumberland
- Delivery of Ageing Well Allies programme; delivering training and support to professionals and volunteers across localities, with plans to deliver to older people/residents going forward.

### **Next steps**

The recommendations of the report have been reviewed and are largely still relevant. The main recommendations to refresh this programme of work are:

- Re-establish the strategic board and review partners to include transport, housing, and communities and linked into the North of Tyne Combined Authority.
- Rename and relaunch the Board as the Northumberland Health Ageing Board to reflect the national and international narrative.
- Develop a strategy and workplan linking into the Northumberland Inequalities strategy, North of Tyne Combined Authority and academic partners.
- Setting outcome measures linking with the WHO Domains for an Age Friendly Communities framework (Appendix 3).
- Utilising support of the wider team through age friendly employers, MECC (Making Every Contact Count) and work in the community.
- Exploration of an increase of a creative digital presence and resources.

It is proposed that the new Board is chaired by the Director of Public Health but that in the future, an independent chair should be considered, that decision and the choice of



# Northumberland

## County Council

incumbent being delegated to the Director of Public Health and the portfolio holder for Adult Wellbeing.

The new Board needs to consider the interface across other boards / partnerships / key work programmes which have older people as their focus e.g., Physical Activity Strategy Steering Group, the Northumberland Inequalities Plan, a new dementia strategy, the Council’s Health in All Policies approach and other relevant workstreams. Consideration could also be given to WHO age friendly cities framework as a model to ensure that Ageing Well activity is looked at through an equity lens. The Population Intervention Triangle could also be considered as a framework for the new strategic plan for older people as this links to the emerging inequalities plan for Northumberland.

Several recommendations in the evaluation related to the commissioning arrangements for the Integrated Wellbeing Service but this now sits within Northumberland County Council Public Health Team following its transfer from Northumbria Healthcare Foundation Trust.

### Summary

The COVID-19 pandemic interrupted the implementation of the recommendations of a review of the Ageing Well Board and programme. Whilst there have been some changes to the Ageing Well infrastructure, the recommendations remain largely unchanged. With a disproportionately ageing population, many of whom will have been adversely affected by the pandemic and will be impacted by the increasing cost of living, this is a priority area for action.

### Implications

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Policy</b>                      | The NCC Corporate Plan 2021-24 has a commitment to help people stay active connected and well. This report and its recommendations links into other strategies and plans within the council such as the Northumberland Local Plan, Housing Strategy, and Extra Care and Supported Housing Strategy. The Equality Impact Assessment process should ensure that policies, practices and decisions are fair, meet the needs of residents and staff and that they are not inadvertently discriminating against any protected group including older people. |
| <b>Finance and value for money</b> | The Ageing Well programme is funded from the Public Health ring-fenced grant. Any additional funding requirements will be considered as part of the overall management of that grant.  |
| <b>Legal</b>                       | The Health and Social Care Act 2012 and the National Health Service Act 2006 put a legal duty on the council to take appropriate steps to improve the health of their population.  |
| <b>Procurement</b>                 | None identified as part of this report   |



# Northumberland

## County Council

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Human Resources</b>   | The refreshed Ageing Well Board will require support by various departments within the council through attendance and contribution to the development and delivery of an action plan.   |
| <b>Property</b>  | None identified as part of this report  |
| <b>Equalities</b><br>(Impact Assessment attached)<br><br>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/><br>N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | The work to be taken forward must consider healthy ageing through an inequalities and equality lens   |
| <b>Risk Assessment</b>   | No identified need for this report  |
| <b>Crime &amp; Disorder</b>  | Fear of crime restricts older people's mobility and social capital.   |
| <b>Customer Consideration</b>  | The delivery of the Ageing Well programme will continue to benefit older residents across the county.   |
| <b>Carbon reduction</b>  | None identified   |
| <b>Health and Wellbeing</b>  | Improving the health and wellbeing of the county's disproportionately ageing population is a priority; will help to mitigate against future demands on services; and any future action plan will endeavour to support residents to live longer, healthier and productive lives. |
| <b>Wards</b>   | All wards   |

**Background papers:**

None

**Report sign off.**

***Authors must ensure that officers and members have agreed the content of the report:***

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
|  | Full Name of Officer |
|--|----------------------|



# Northumberland

## County Council

|   |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| Monitoring Officer/Legal                                | Suki Binjal         |
| Service Director Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer | Alison Elsdon       |
| Relevant Executive Director                             | Liz Morgan          |
| Chief Executive   | Rick O'Farrell      |
| Portfolio Holder(s)                                     | Cllr Wendy Pattison |

### **Authors and Contact Details**

Clare Elliott, Senior Project Manager, Public Health  
Email: [clare.elliott@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:clare.elliott@northumberland.gov.uk)

Gill O'Neill, Interim Deputy Director of Public Health  
Email: [gill.oneill@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:gill.oneill@northumberland.gov.uk)





**Ageing Well Service Review Executive Summary (2020)**

## Executive Summary

Fewer births, and longer life-expectancy have led to an increasingly older population in the UK. Gains in life-expectancy are a major public health success story. However, for some, quality of life can be limited by social isolation, poor health, and chronic conditions. Good health and gains in life expectancy are not experienced by all equally and those who face the most disadvantage, are more likely to live shorter lives and in poorer health. Older people contribute much to society; knowledge and skills, volunteering and often supporting others as unpaid carers. Yet the narrative that surrounds ageing can be negative, concerned with the burden and pressures on systems and resources, rather than focusing on the value older people bring.

In Northumberland, the Ageing Well Programme has developed over the last decade. It focuses on the strengths and assets of older people and communities and aims to support older people to feel “active, connected, and well”. In 2019, funding responsibility for the Ageing Well programme moved from Adult Social Care to Public Health at Northumberland County Council (NCC). To support this transition, a review of the Ageing Well Programme was conducted.

The review considered current policy and evidence-based practice. It took into account routine administrative information generated by Ageing Well and collected primary information from stakeholders. Stakeholders contributed through meetings, a consultation session held at the annual Northumberland HealthWatch conference, and through interviews over the telephone. This information was then analysed, utilising two evaluation frameworks, Donabedian’s Structure, Process, Outcome model and Maxwell’s Six Dimensions of Quality.

The review looked at the overarching programme, and key components of the service including the Ageing Well Partnership Board, Network, events such as the Roadshows, and training.

### Findings

Currently the Ageing Well team work closely with the Integrated Wellbeing Service (IWS), with staff from IWS supporting the programme and training delivered. Resources are limited and funding mainly covers staffing costs. The Programme team are based at Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. Therefore, all policies and procedures adhered to are provided by this organisation. Currently there isn’t a contract management process in place between NCC and Ageing Well, though members of the NCC Public Health team have worked with Ageing Well for some time. No overarching performance indicators are in place for Ageing Well.



# Northumberland County Council

## Ageing Well Partnership Board

The Ageing Well Partnership Board is in place to provide strategic leadership to the Ageing Well Programme. It is convened by the Ageing Well Programme and chaired by the Portfolio Member for Adult Wellbeing & Health. It does not currently report to other strategic groups within Northumberland, though it does have a link to the Health and Wellbeing Board through the Chair. In 2017/18 it approved an Annual Report and Strategic Action Plan, which resulted in three work streams being developed. No outcome measures were set to understand progress against the Strategic Action Plan.

Stakeholders consulted felt it was important to have a strategic Board in place, though it could be more effective. It was felt the Board should have more influence, responsibilities of Board members needed to be clearer, and representation should include those from other sectors important to healthy ageing. Stakeholders were not always sure about the impact the programme was having, and outcome measures important to older people and communities, are needed. Current community participation is through third sector organisations on the Board. This could be increased by working with stakeholders and reviewing participation models.

The Board does not formally link to strategic forums delivered by NCC, the Clinical Commissioning Group, or the North of Tyne Combined Authority, though representation on some groups is maintained through the Ageing Well team. There was concern that processes used to deliver the Board meetings could result in duplication of the Network, with a focus on information sharing, rather than collaboration. It was felt that the Board should provide opportunities for development of partnership working when gaps and needs are identified.

## Ageing Well Network

The Network is highly valued by stakeholders. It reports a large membership of over 200 individuals, with at least 10% of members attending meetings. Its core function involves sharing and disseminating information through emails and meetings. At meetings it is clear partnership work and collaboration takes place. At the meeting observed for this review, members agreed to work together on campaigns and events, and offered to share resources.

Network members discussed how being involved enabled them to be more effective in their own roles as they were able to identify and work with others more effectively. The Network also supported problem solving, and the Ageing Well team were viewed as a trusted and reliable team to work with. Outcomes such as these are not captured by the Programmes current processes. Stakeholders also suggested the need for a digital presence. There was concern that emails could be missed; a digital hub would be more sustainable and could support interaction from members.

## Ageing Well Events

The Ageing Well Roadshows are delivered across the county. Local groups and volunteers are supported to deliver their own events. Attendance varies between areas, but current data collection prevents more detailed understanding of this. Evaluation surveys are completed at the time of the



# Northumberland County Council

event and are used to inform future planning. These need to be separated for stall holders and participants to support analysis. There is currently no follow up to understand medium and long-term outcomes. Participants in the Network shared how events enabled them to reach communities more effectively, and that being associated with the Ageing Well brand provided them with better standing when working with communities for the first time.

The Ageing Well conferences are also evaluated at the time of the event. The conference format is now being revised by the Programme team to reach more isolated communities. The Events and Roadshows could be used to develop greater participation in Ageing Well with local communities.

## Ageing Well Allies and training

Ageing Well Allies is a scheme that involves training practitioners and individuals from across Northumberland on the health and wellbeing needs of older people. Many topics are covered and over 200 Allies have been trained to date. Refresher training was offered for Allies, but uptake was poor. The number of Allies trained has declined in recent years. Allies are not followed up over time for evaluation, so the impact of the intervention is not known. Use of an evaluation framework such as RE-AIM, will increase understanding effectiveness.

Ageing Well training is delivered to individuals and organisations on topics such as Dementia Awareness and Falls Prevention. As with Allies, improved data collection and evaluation would support better understanding of the reach and impact of this intervention over time.

## Conclusions

Overall, the Ageing Well Programme is highly respected and valued by stakeholders. The Ageing Well team are seen as accessible, knowledgeable and consistent. The Network enables collaboration and partnership work. Those involved shared how it enabled them to reach communities and deliver their own interventions.

There is scope to increase the strategic influence and impact of the Programme by reviewing the current processes in place for delivery of the Partnership Board. The Board offers the opportunity to develop a systems leadership approach, through the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders. This would help influence determinants of healthy ageing across sectors.

The community-asset based approach could be enhanced by increasing mechanisms for greater community participation in planning and evaluation, supporting community empowerment. Processes in place for evaluation and data collection need to be improved to help evidence the impact of this work and to support investment in effective interventions.

## Recommendations

### Commissioning



# Northumberland

## County Council

- € Incorporate Ageing Well into the existing IWS and Public Health Partnership arrangement.
- € Reporting on how policies are adhered to, should be shared to support governance.
- € Overall outcomes measures should be identified in collaboration with communities. These should be included with the programme's own strategic action plan.
- € Processes should be established to enhance data capture and evaluation.
- € NICE standards QS148 should be included as a quality measure.
- € Cost-effectiveness should form part of evaluation.

### Ageing Well Partnership Board

- € Responsibility for convening the Partnership Board should move to a strategic partner.
- € Introduce formal reporting to the Health and Wellbeing Board through their work plans.
- € Develop a formal link to the North of Tyne Combined Authority.
- € Link to wider strategic groups in Northumberland such as transport or forums within the CCG.
- € Continue to support the involvement of elected representatives.
- € Develop a systems leadership approach through review of the membership and systems mapping.
- € Ensure representation and participation of key organisations and communities.
- € Develop and agree on an Ageing Well Partnership Board work plan.
- € Review the strategy to include progress measures.
- € Introduce an outcomes framework to support monitoring and measurement of progress.
- € Present evidence of need to the Board to support planning at least annually.
- € Build in time and processes to support development of ideas and collaboration.
- € Review terms of reference to enable the recommendations implementation.

### Ageing Well Network

- € Review the current digital presence and resources.
- € Consult current members on a digital profile.
- € Develop a strategic business case for a digital hub/profile.
- € Work with Network members to identify priority outcome measures.
- € Include network members in the development of an outcomes framework.
- € Capture outcomes of the Network linked to collaboration and partnership.
- € Agree a formal way of sharing intelligence gathered through the Network with the Board.
- € Agree a process that supports the wider Network to feed into strategic development.
- € Review and update the terms of reference.

### Strategy Development

- € Strategic work should focus on priorities important to communities.
- € Strategic work should consider the impact of Ageism on healthy ageing.
- € Interventions should be considered through a life course perspective.



# Northumberland

## County Council

- € Strategic work should also focus on the needs of those approaching older age and retirement.
- € Current activities with communities such as the conference and roadshows could provide a vehicle for greater community participation in strategy development and evaluation.
- € Strategies developed should answer the questions – “Where are we now? Where do we want to be? How are we getting there? How will we know we have got there?”

### **Interventions - Events and Training**

- € Map and plan interventions against need, ensuring delivery is proportionate in areas of highest need, such as those experiencing deprivation and with higher numbers of older people living alone.
- € Agree indicators to measure the level of need in different areas to inform this work.
- € Extend evaluation to include short-, medium- and long-term outcomes.
- € Consider use of an evidence-based health improvement evaluation framework such as RE-AIM, to help understand reach, uptake and effectiveness.
- € Incorporate an evaluation process into planning and delivery, such as “plan, do, study, act”, to enable continuous learning to inform practice.
- € Standardise and improve data collection to support evaluation. Incorporate data on individuals with increased vulnerability and geographical areas, to increase understanding of reach.
- € Follow up over time to measure longer-term outcomes.



**Northumberland**  
County Council

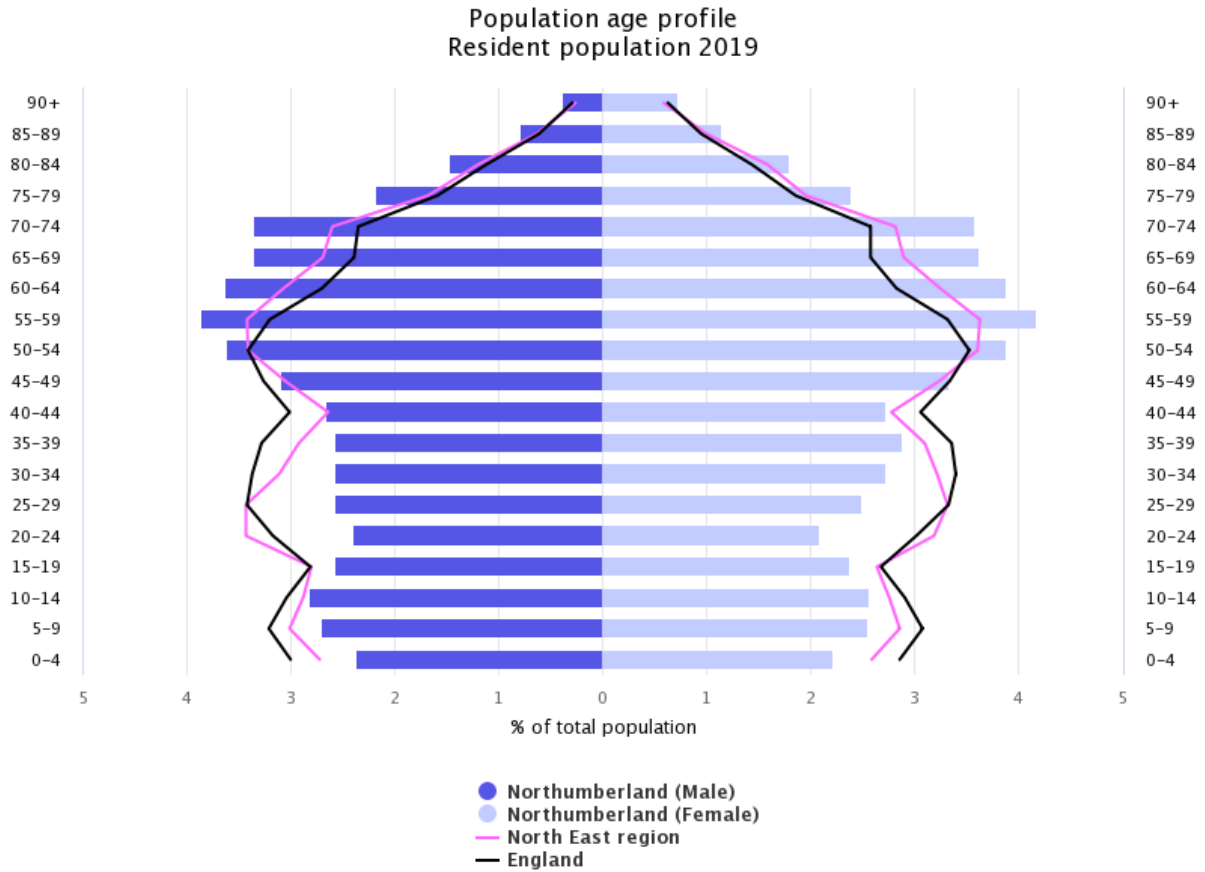


# Northumberland

County Council

## Appendix 2

### Northumberland Population Age Profile





# Northumberland County Council

## Appendix 3

### The World Health Organization (WHO) Age Friendly Cities Model

