



Healthy Ageing Challenge
Social, Behavioural and
Design Research

UNIVERSITY of
STIRLING



Impact Report

Social Behavioural and Design Research Programme

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Foreword

Healthy ageing has been framed as a challenge, yet it brings opportunities to rethink how we want to live in later life and how we achieve healthy longevity. The Grand Ageing Challenge, a £98m Government investment, delivered through UKRI, set out to achieve positive impact by enabling people to enjoy five years of extra healthy and independent life by 2035 and by reducing the gap in the experiences of the richest and poorest in the UK. To do this required a cross sectoral approach which stimulated business to engage in developing and scaling an ageing market. The research strand of the Healthy Ageing Challenge was to develop the evidence base and understand the needs of an ageing population, informing innovators and influencing market behaviours particularly focusing on the creation of healthy and active environments.

At the heart of healthy ageing is how we design our communities and environments to be age inclusive and cognitively healthy; how we support an ageing workforce with 'hidden' health issues; how we encourage social connectedness across generations; and how we support entrepreneurship and innovation in care settings. All these questions require evidence through a social, behavioural and design lens. They also require co-produced solutions with older people, businesses, policy makers and academics.

Here we illustrate a shared 'mission-led' approach by researchers, business, third sector and importantly older people to explore opportunities to make a positive difference to improving the lives of older people. We are doing this by helping businesses become more aware and understand the opportunities emerging from healthy ageing.

In the following pages we present a range of impacts achieved by our projects in the Social, Behavioural and Design Research Programme. Making a difference on policy, practice, behaviours, business models and the lives of older people and our researchers are illustrated through the voices of our early career researchers and case studies focusing on housing, work and retail environments.

Impact is not 'a one off' or linear process and the projects will accumulate impact over the next decade. This report captures a snapshot in time at the end of the funding period and provides a platform for further discussion on what gaps in research we need to address to achieve healthy longevity and make an impact in the lives of millions of people.

Professor Judith Phillips, OBE
University of Stirling

Introduction



The Healthy Ageing Social, Behavioural and Design Research Programme (SBDRP) is part of the Healthy Ageing Challenge.

The challenge aims to help people remain active, productive, independent and socially connected across generations for as long as possible. It does this by enabling businesses, including social enterprises, to develop and deliver beneficial products, services and business models which can be scaled up to reach a global market.

Academic research plays a crucial role in understanding the key issues facing, and opportunities offered by, an ageing population, and the ways in which innovative ideas, products, services and systems can support healthy ageing. SBDRP projects critically engaged with one or more social, behavioural and design aspect of the Healthy Ageing Challenge themes (see Framework).

SBDRP provided £12.8m to fund interdisciplinary academic-led teams to carry out research into social, behavioural and design aspects of healthy ageing.



-  **£12.8M Funding**
-  **12 Projects**
-  **110 Business partners**
-  **47 Early career researchers**

Our Team



Judith Phillips
Research Director

Judith oversees research across the Healthy Ageing Challenge and as Director of SBDRP provides academic leadership for the programme.



Elaine Douglas
Programme Manager

Elaine is the central point of contact for the SBDRP research projects and works closely with the projects range of activities and with staff across the Healthy Ageing Challenge.



Kimberley Coutts-Murray
Programme Administrator

Kimberley provides administrative support to Judith and Elaine on all activities within the programme and liaises with the projects.

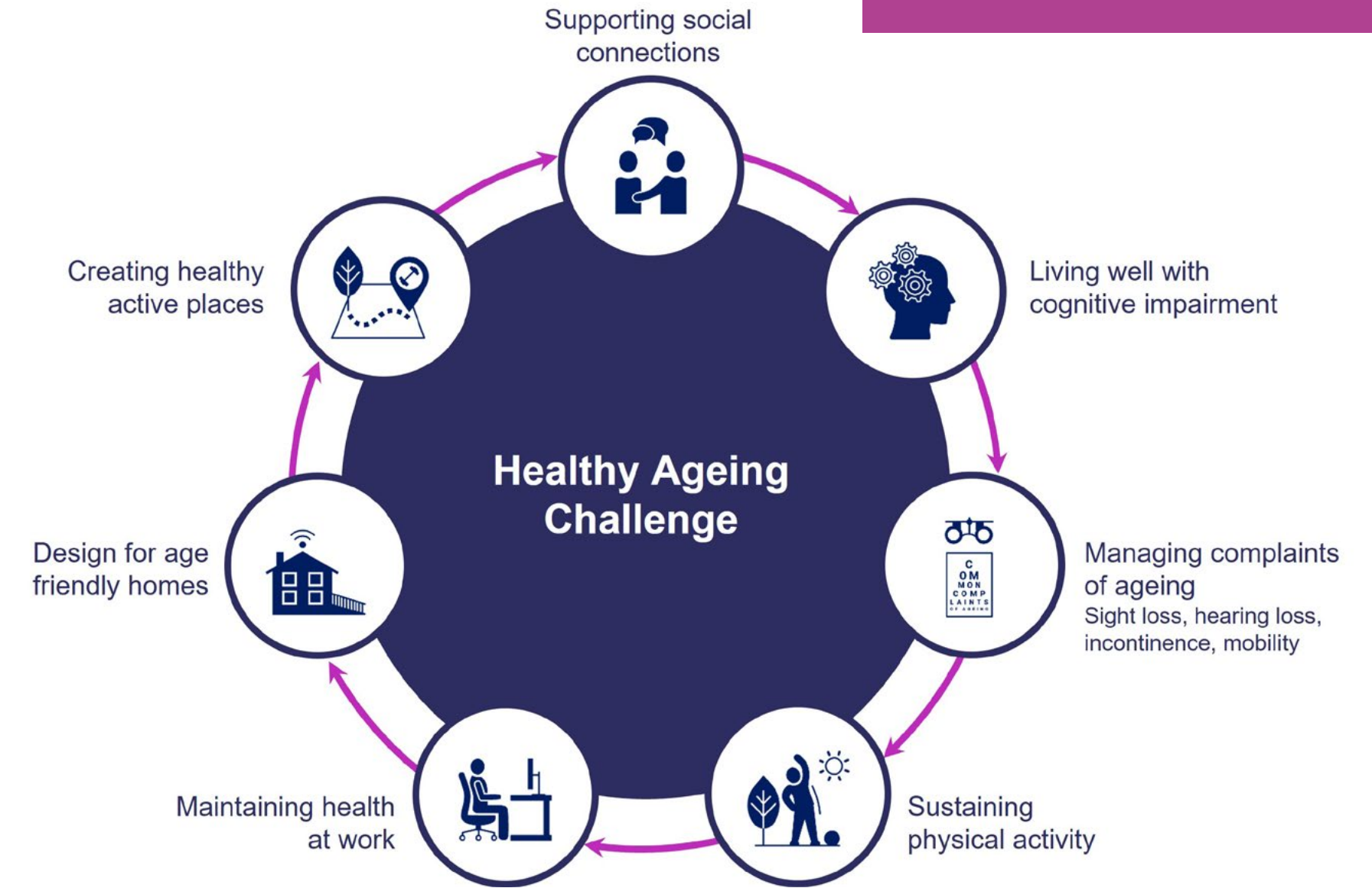
Healthy Ageing Challenge Framework



The Centre for Ageing Better proposed a framework for the Healthy Ageing Challenge in areas thought to provide “the greatest opportunities to tackle market failures and stimulate innovation in the pursuit of longer, healthier lives for all” (Healthy Ageing Challenge Framework¹, 2019, p1). The Framework comprised seven themes: Supporting social connections; Living well with cognitive impairment; Managing complaints of ageing; Sustaining physical activity; Maintaining Health at Work; Design for age friendly homes; and Creating healthy active places (see Figure 1). The Framework prioritised these areas for the research to be included in the Social Behavioural and Design Research Programme.

¹ Industrial Strategy Challenge Fund, Healthy Ageing Challenge Framework, 2019, Centre for Ageing Better. ageing-better.org.uk

Figure 1 Healthy Ageing Challenge Framework



Our Projects

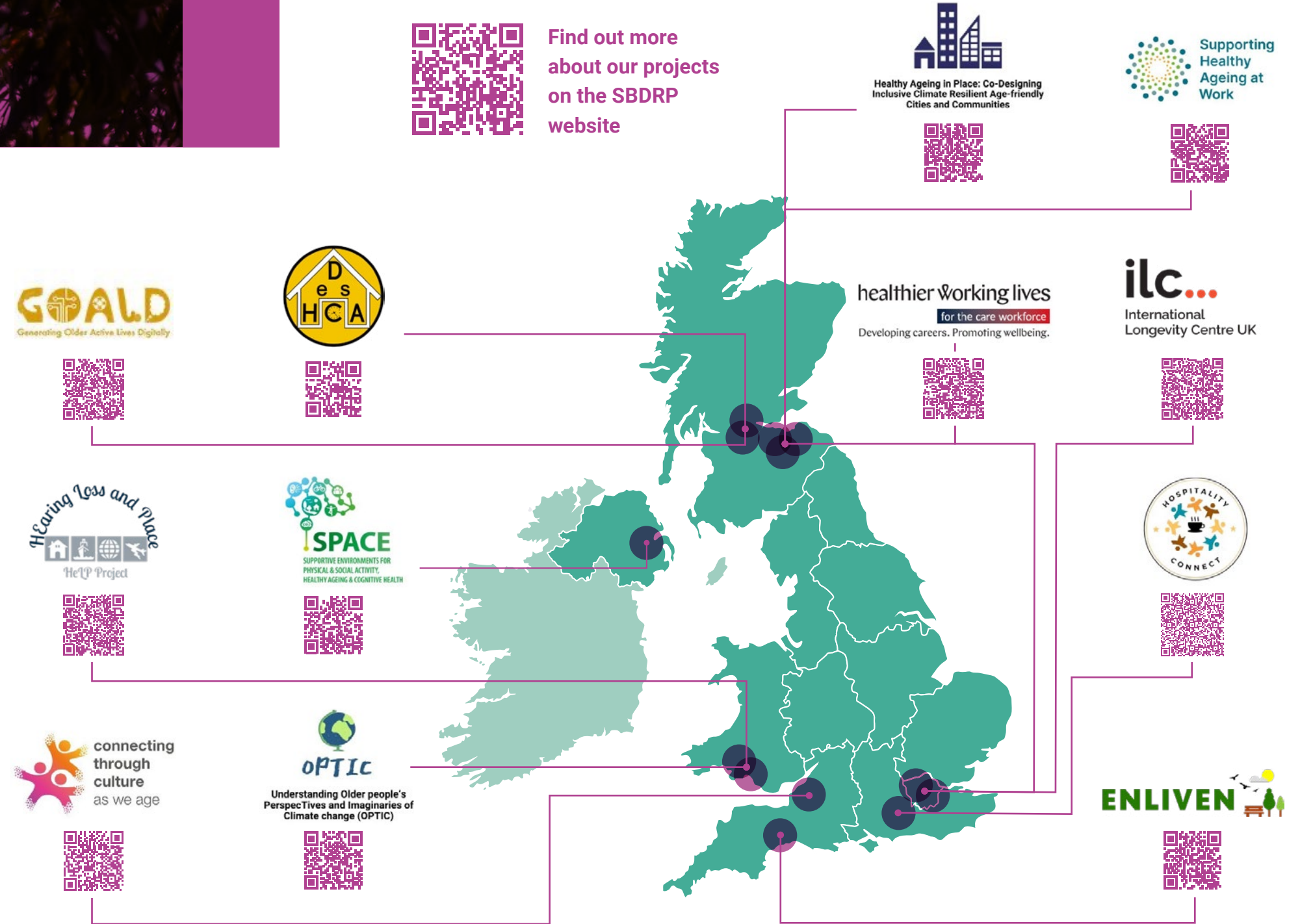


The Social Behavioural and Design Research Programme funded 12 projects in total covering all four nations of the United Kingdom.

Seven projects were funded for 3 years as part of the UKRI/ESRC research call for the Social Behavioural and Design Research Programme. These projects were As We Age, Designing Homes for Healthy Cognitive Ageing (DesHCA), Extending active Life for older people with cognitive impairment through innovation in the visitor economy of the natural Environment (ENLIVEN), Generating Older Active Lives Digitally (GOALD), Supportive Environments for Physical and Social Activity, Healthy Ageing and Cognitive Health (SPACE), Healthier Working Lives for the Care Workforce (HWL), Supporting Healthy Ageing at Work (SHAW). These projects covered one or more of the themes in the Healthy Ageing Challenge Framework (see Figure 1).

Four projects were funded for 12 months to address potential gaps in the research portfolio and were included in the wider Social Behavioural and Design Research Programme. The Ageing and Place: Pandemic Recovery and Action on Climate Change (APPROACH) research call was funded by the University of Stirling as part of the Research Director's additional Flexible Funding. These projects include Hearing Loss and Place (HeLP), Hospitality Connect, Understanding Older People's Perspectives and Imagineries of Climate Change (OPTIC), and Healthy Ageing in Place.

In conjunction with the International Longevity Centre UK (ILC-UK), the SBD RP funded a two-year Retail Impact project to support retailers in better understanding the evidence about what healthy ageing means and inspiring action in relation to their healthy ageing role.



How We Made A Difference

The Social Behavioural and Design Research Programme made a difference across five key areas:

Co-production

Tripartite co-production between older people, business partners and research is a distinctive feature of the research programme.

Business-academic relationships

SBDPR supported research and business to work together in partnerships to develop new products and services to support us all as we age.



1

CO-PRODUCTION

Through co-production, SBDPR fosters meaningful collaborations between researchers, older adults, and businesses, ensuring research outcomes that directly benefit and are informed by those most impacted.

BUSINESS-ACADEMIC RELATIONSHIPS

SBDPR bridges the gap between academia and industry, creating partnerships that translate into real-world solutions for healthy ageing.

2



3

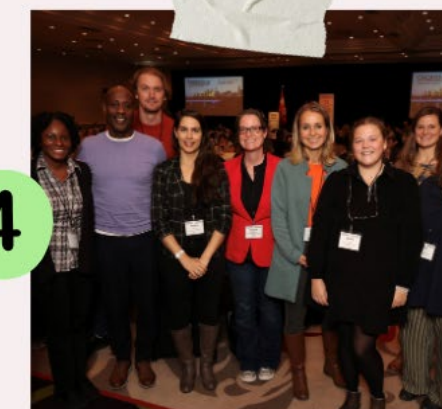
INTERDISCIPLINARITY

Our projects embody interdisciplinarity, combining insights from across disciplines to address the complex challenges of ageing, promoting holistic and inclusive solutions.

BUILDING CAPACITY

SBDPR is dedicated to building research capacity in the field of ageing, empowering a new generation of researchers with the skills and knowledge to make significant contributions to healthy ageing initiatives.

4



POLICY IMPACT

Research conducted under the SBDPR informs and shapes policy, leading to actionable strategies that improve the lives of older individuals, ensuring they remain active, productive, and connected.

5



Interdisciplinarity

SBDPR brought together people with skills, knowledge and perspectives from many disciplines and sectors to enhance our work.

Building capacity in ageing research

SBDPR offered many opportunities for early- and mid-career researchers to develop their skills and to support a new generation of ageing researchers.

Policy Impact

SBDPR projects have policy impact in many areas. In this report we highlight four areas in particular: Housing & Environment; Work; Hospitality & Retail; and Staying Active.

Read, watch and listen in the pages ahead to what our projects, older people, business partners and funders consider important factors in these areas.

Co-production

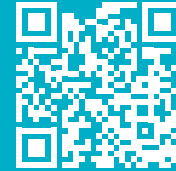
SBDPR research brought together researchers, older people and businesses to co-produce and co-design the research project, its aims and objectives, its processes and ultimately its final outputs and impact. This tripartite co-production is a distinctive feature of the research programme.

SBDPR prescribed meaningful engagement with older people across the life of all our funded projects from the outset. This included co-design of research, collaborations and governance. Our projects engaged with people from many different communities across the UK, including those from disadvantaged, disabled and diverse backgrounds, those who were digitally excluded, and people living in both residential and care home settings.

Co-production in research is an effective way to enrich research and ensure impact. In SBDPR it provided the platform for researchers to include older people as co-researchers and learn from their ideas and to embed their insight and knowledge into the design of products and services.

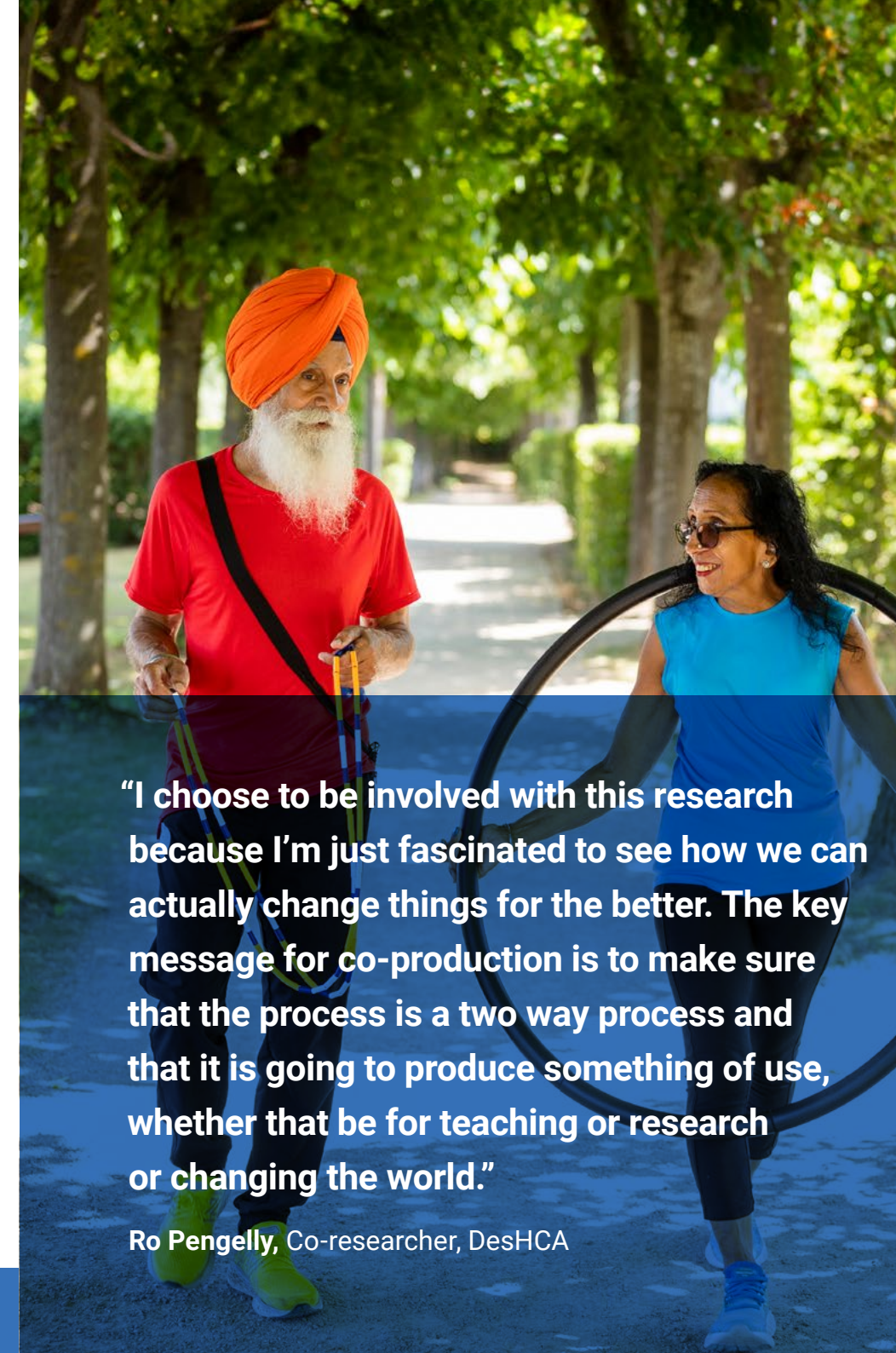


Watch **Judith** on
co-production



“Having older people as part of the research team itself has been very important because we’ve always had a voice which specifically has the remit to represent older people’s views. It’s incredibly worthwhile. It’s also very challenging and you shouldn’t expect it to go smoothly all the time. It’s an opportunity to really learn and enhance the research that you’re doing.”

Alison Bowes, PI of DesHCA



“I choose to be involved with this research because I’m just fascinated to see how we can actually change things for the better. The key message for co-production is to make sure that the process is a two way process and that it is going to produce something of use, whether that be for teaching or research or changing the world.”

Ro Pengelly, Co-researcher, DesHCA

Co-production with Older Adults

The SBDPR projects engaged in co-production with older adults in various ways, here are some examples:

DesHCA worked to identify innovations that engage with the real-world experiences and aspirations of older adults using exciting and involving ways to collect data which inform the design of the demonstrator houses. For example, to collect data, they asked older people to map and evaluate their own homes and to experience and comment on new design features using virtual reality (VR).

OPTIC held workshops with older and younger people in South Wales using various creative methods (games, comic-creation, mobile and on-line interviews, storyboarding) to encourage intergenerational conversation and explore ideas around environment and climate change.

Connecting through Culture worked alongside disabled older adults and those that identify as socioeconomically and racially minoritised to tackle inequalities in arts and cultural provisions for healthy ageing outcomes. Older people from these communities were involved through every stage of the project from supportive sessions on digital literacy, workshops with local artists and designers to helping design the six prototype projects.



Interdisciplinarity

Supporting people as we age in our everyday lives is key to helping people live healthier for longer. This requires the skills, experience and knowledge from people across a wide range of disciplines working together with a common goal. That's why working in interdisciplinary teams is an essential component of our work.

Social science is at the heart of the work and impact of SBD RP. Social science brings together the broad range of disciplines to support people as we age across every aspect of our lives: in our homes; our workplaces; the environment in which we live; our leisure activities and places of interest; and where we shop and eat.

SBD RP has increased the visibility of social science and arts and humanities in ageing research.

“The landscape of research is changing and increasingly there is a focus on promoting cross-sectoral collaboration... we know that’s when research is really effective. Social benefits often occur when this occurs together... but that’s a really complex range of skills to be grappling with. Healthy ageing itself is a hybrid domain in which the needs of older people cuts across many different business models, services and products.”

Dr Lucy Gresley, ESRC Research Investment Lead, Healthy Ageing Challenge

Range of disciplines include:

Education			Nursing
Computing science			Applied Social Science
Arts			Sport
Medicine, Dentistry & Biomedical Science			Communications, Media & Culture
Business School			Art, Design & Architecture
Arts, Humanities & Social Science			Law, Criminology & Government
Social & Political Science			Computing, Electronics & Maths
Population Health			Hospitality
Psychology			Retail
Architecture			Geography
Public Health			Biosciences, Geography & Physics



“I have learnt so much from working within a team that is multi-disciplinary. We have people working in psychology, working in education, working in gerontology, working in digital technology, people who are Occupational Therapists. There is just so much to be learnt from a team perspective.”

Dr Simone Tomaz, GOALD



“Managing large projects with large expectations, managing those schedules, managing those deadlines... and also relationships with partners and with people with different expectations. It definitely does inform decisions about later going onto a PI role and what’s involved in that.”

Dr Claire Cleland, SPACE

Business–Academic Relationships

One of the key ambitions of the Healthy Ageing Challenge is to support businesses to develop new products and services for our ageing population. In the Social Behavioural and Design Research Programme we brought together interdisciplinary researchers with businesses to find these solutions together – to their mutual benefit. Business could benefit from the insights from research findings, the application of research methodologies and, the opportunities to engage with communities that had already established trust with the researchers. Researchers have benefitted from the opportunity to see their work make a difference in the real world, often at a much faster pace, than might be possible in other settings. They have learned from business employees, their challenges and opportunities and in doing so have learned more about how to support businesses and their employees.

Most importantly, by having older people as an integral part of the co-research process, businesses have also learned first-hand of the views and needs of older people to shape the design and delivery of their products and services.



Watch the
Project case studies



BSG SIG Ageing Business Society

The British Society of Gerontology's Special Interest Group (SIG) Ageing Business Society was initiated by Research Director, Professor Judith Phillips. The SIG work seeks to enhance collaborations between research and business, to support business development through better understanding of older people and ageing, and to contribute to the World Health Organization (WHO) and the UN Sustainable Development Goals for Health and Wellbeing and Reducing Inequalities. Over the last few years, they have held numerous workshops including 'How can gerontologists and business work together for mutual benefit?' The ongoing success of this group can be considered a legacy of the Social Behavioural and Design Research Programme.



“To work with the care workers... it really changed me. I am definitely not the same researcher after the co-design process within the care homes. I think from a research point of view when you empower others that are working with you and you make them co-researchers then you are making a change in a very sustainable way.”

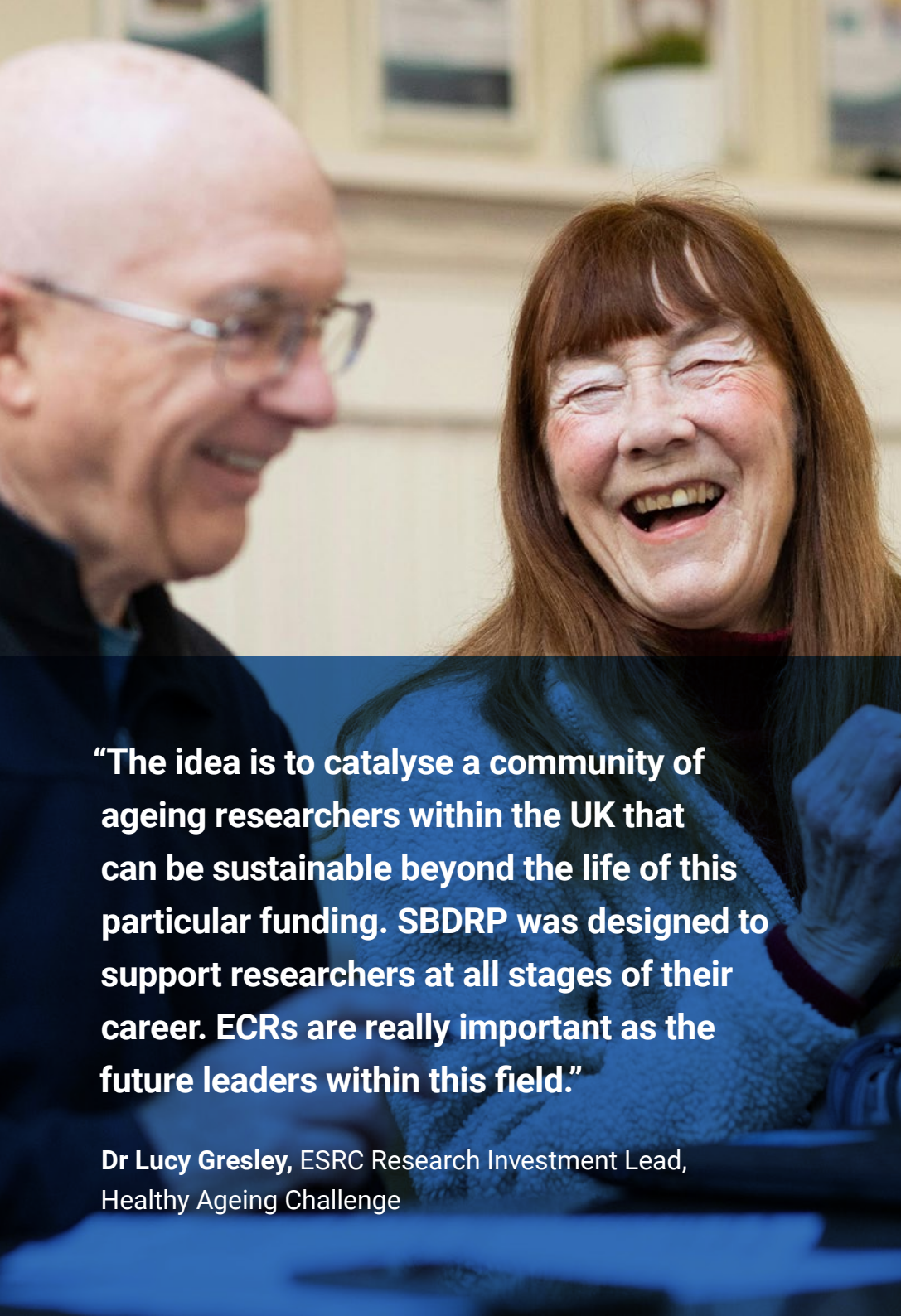
Luis Soares, Healthier Working Lives

“We were working with companies across different sectors from the financial sector, manufacturers, care sector, and also self-employed. Businesses have benefitted quite a lot from working with us... through the workplace health interventions that were developed as part of the project and the continuous engagement and conversations about ‘what does it mean to be healthy and to stay healthy in the workplace as we go from mid to later life?’”

Dr Jakov Jandric, SHAW

“We’ve been working with older people and businesses within the retail project. What was so exciting was that the work was immediate. And so, the impact and the recommendations for businesses in the retail sector could be implemented immediately. There were very real best case practices and initiatives that could be drawn upon that businesses could implement the next day if they wanted to. Multiple high street retailers attended a ministerial meeting to debate and understand better the commercial benefits around healthy ageing and the responsibility of businesses and working together to roll this out. We had a really good response. The work’s ongoing. It’s the tip of the iceberg in a very good way.”

Ailsa Forbes, Retail Impact



“The idea is to catalyse a community of ageing researchers within the UK that can be sustainable beyond the life of this particular funding. SBDRP was designed to support researchers at all stages of their career. ECRs are really important as the future leaders within this field.”

Dr Lucy Gresley, ESRC Research Investment Lead, Healthy Ageing Challenge

Building Capacity in Ageing Research

SBDRP Early Career Researchers (ECRs) developed their own community through a series of events and activities organised and funded by the Research Programme. Initially, these took place online, largely due to COVID pandemic restrictions, however, subsequently the ECRs have met in various events across each of the constituent nations of the UK, as well as, in Canada and Sweden.

“One of the big values of SBDRP is its interdisciplinarity. The ability to come to events like this with people, some of whom are other social scientists with a slightly different topic interest, but others are from a completely different background... from arts and humanities, from sports or from computing science and these are people that we don’t often get to interact with because we don’t usually go to the same conferences or the same events.”

Dr Cate Pemble, DesHCA

Early Career Researchers Podcast
SOCIAL, BEHAVIOURAL & DESIGN RESEARCH PROGRAMME

Watch the ECR case study

“In terms of helping me develop... the multi-disciplinarity aspect has been very useful. As a design researcher learning to speak other languages, in a way, of other disciplines. So looking at the same topic through all those different lenses is really helpful and I think really transferrable over your career overall.”

Dr Kiersten Hay, SHAW



Canadian Association of Gerontology Conference: Regina, November 2022

SBDRP hosted a pre-conference workshop “Developing International Collaborations in Healthy Ageing Research” to bring together early career researchers from across the world to learn about international collaborations. The workshop included a group of SBDRP ECRs and their Canadian counterparts. Professor Judith Phillips (University of Stirling), Professor Norah Keating (University of Alberta), Associate Professor Elizabeth Russell (Trent University), Professor Mary Pat Sullivan (Nipissing University), and Associate Professor Elaine Douglas (University of Stirling) covered tips on how to engage in an international conference, build connections, and how to lead and manage an international research team.



SBD RP ECR Networking & Capacity Building Event: Queen's University Belfast, August 2023

In August 2023, 27 ECRs came together in a Networking & Capacity Building event hosted by Queens University Belfast. Over the two days they provided project overviews and demonstrations, heard from a variety of ageing experts from different disciplines (medicine, green political economy, social and cultural gerontology, and physical activity for health), and a range of inspirational career journeys. 'From Post-Doc to...:', discussed novel approaches to addressing ageing challenges and, importantly, what next for their network and what next for them.

"This has opened a door to gerontology... a completely new world to me. This has been amazing because I have been exposed to different methodologies and different studies that I was never exposed to before."

Dr Ione Avila-Palencia, SPACE

Swedish National Graduate School for Ageing & Health (SWEAH)

A group of ECRs attended the SWEAH post-doctoral course which aim is to prepare ECRs for an interdisciplinary and international career in ageing and health as an independent researcher. Professor Judith Phillips teaches on this course alongside other international gerontologists. The course included two workshops in Sweden.



Housing & Environment

Designing Homes for Healthy Cognitive Ageing (DesHCA)

DesHCA's findings have been disseminated to a wide range of audiences to spread knowledge of the issues and the potential real world solutions. This has included presentations to, and interactions with audiences ranging from a local level Independent Living Centre, local authority staff groups, to national audiences reached through HousingLIN and SCIE (Social Care Institute for Excellence) webinars and practitioner conferences such as the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOP) housing conference, the Care Show and BE-ST Fest (Built Environment – Smarter Transformation, Scotland's construction innovation centre). DesHCA have reached Government through hosting the Scottish Parliament Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee and contributing to several national consultations on housing for an ageing population in both Scotland and England. International dissemination has consolidated DesHCA's links with SilviaHemmet, the charitable foundation of HM Queen Silvia of Sweden. Throughout, the findings have received positive feedback.



Curious about
age-inclusive design
but not sure where
to start?

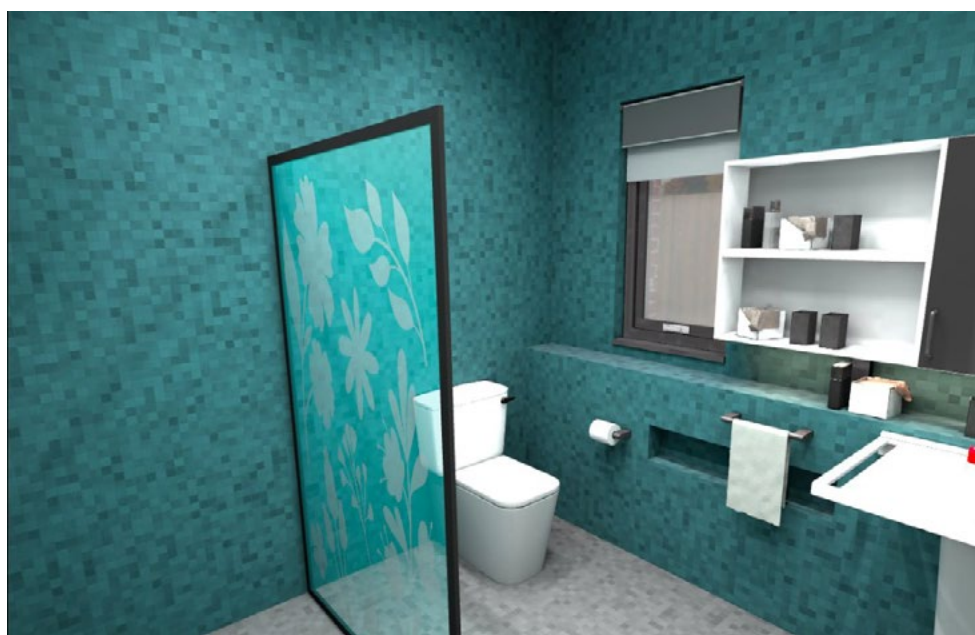


The findings have been used to generate legacy tools which the project has started to use in various contexts. DesHCA's book for people thinking about ensuring their home can support them as they age ("Designing for Lifetime: Tips and Tricks for Creating a Home that Supports You") has reached hundreds of people who have attended events, has been used by the University of Stirling Dementia Services Development Centre's (DSDC) professional clients to use in their practice, and has been circulated by the Royal College of Occupational Therapists (RCOP) to 36,000 Occupational Therapists across the UK, following feedback that it was 'just what we need' to advise OT clients. DesHCA have developed teaching materials for use in professional postgraduate training and these have been used in courses including Occupational Therapy, Dementia Studies and Housing Studies.



DesHCA worked with people experiencing ageing and cognitive change and those who design and develop housing. The project identified housing innovations that can support living better for longer with cognitive change. DesHCA's emphasis on healthy cognitive ageing goes beyond narrow conceptions of 'dementia-friendly design' into a more expansive and inclusive approach to housing innovation.

The project aimed to design and build virtual and real designs that act as demonstrators and test-beds for innovations to support healthy cognitive ageing. These designs were evaluated from stakeholder points of view, then considered at a larger scale to examine their real-world feasibility. DesHCA had a unique opportunity to feed directly into the UK and Scottish Government City Region Deal for Central Scotland (Stirling and Clackmannanshire), providing groundwork for local housing developments. The focus of this is sustainable, lifetime health, community and economic development, addressing deprivation and inequality.



SPACE

SPACE explored how where we live affects how we live and age. Their research involved: exploring existing research to understand the relationships between biology, lifestyles and the environment, how different environmental factors relate to brain health, and how the environment influences brain health.

The SPACE project has been awarded two Impact Acceleration Account awards to produce an innovative, open urban environment data portal to progress impact-driven research, policy and practice, known as the SPACE geoportal. The geoportal is a platform for exploring and downloading Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data relating to environmental variables which include health and healthy ageing in our environment including light pollution, noise pollution, air pollution, soil pollution as well as built infrastructure and availability of 'green space' and 'blue space'. From the geoportal you can search the catalogue of available data, visualise it and download it. <https://space-geoportal-queensub.hub.arcgis.com/>

There is no Planet B: The importance of protecting where we live to develop a book, comic and 2 videos.



SPACE also received funding from the National Institute of Aging, USA for their contribution to the 'Expanding the Gateway Research Infrastructure on Exposome Studies for the Health and Retirement Study and the Harmonized Cognitive Assessment Protocol International Network of Studies' project. This work has the potential to inform how environmental factors are measured in global studies of ageing.

Watch the video
SPACE





Healthy Ageing in a Changing Climate: Creating Inclusive, Age Friendly, and Climate Resilient Cities and Communities in the UK

This research identified the need to develop ‘actionable’ interventions across six interconnected healthy ageing challenge areas to support the delivery of inclusive, climate resilient age-friendly cities and communities. Some key recommendations are below. For full details please see their report: [Healthy Ageing in Place | Healthy Ageing in a Changing Climate - SBD RP \(ageing-sbdrp.co.uk\)](#)


Healthy Ageing in a Changing Climate
 Creating Inclusive, Age-Friendly, and Climate Resilient Cities and Communities in the UK
 HERIOT WATT SEI YORK

Read the report
Healthy Ageing in a Changing Climate



1. Empowering Older People Towards Climate Action
2. Mobilising Community and Social Infrastructure
3. Enhancing Mobility and Transport for Healthy Ageing
4. Climate Resilient Housing for Ageing-in-place
5. Healthcare and Wellbeing for Older Adults in Extreme Weather
6. Intergenerational Communities and Climate Resilience

OPTIC

Co-creating the Climate Comic Intergenerational Activity Pack to advance climate action in South Wales.

OPTIC’s work continues to build a more climate-resilient, aware, and proactive society in South Wales. To do this, they will co-create The Climate Comic Intergenerational Activity Pack to provide disarming and playful ways to discuss and learn about actionable behaviours from older and younger generations, fostering intergenerational solidarity and learning, and giving voice and agency to older and younger people in positive climate action. The pack will build on The Climate Comic (Thomas et al., 2023), a bi-lingual graphic book co-created with South Wales communities as part of the OPTIC project, to share climate perceptions and imaginaries of intergenerational groups and inspire climate action. OPTIC will collaborate with schools, care homes and other stakeholders including museums and local government. The project will evaluate the impact of the Climate Comic and activity pack to build foundations for a large research bid to create a Global Climate Comic to further expand the impact of this work.





Read The Climate Comic



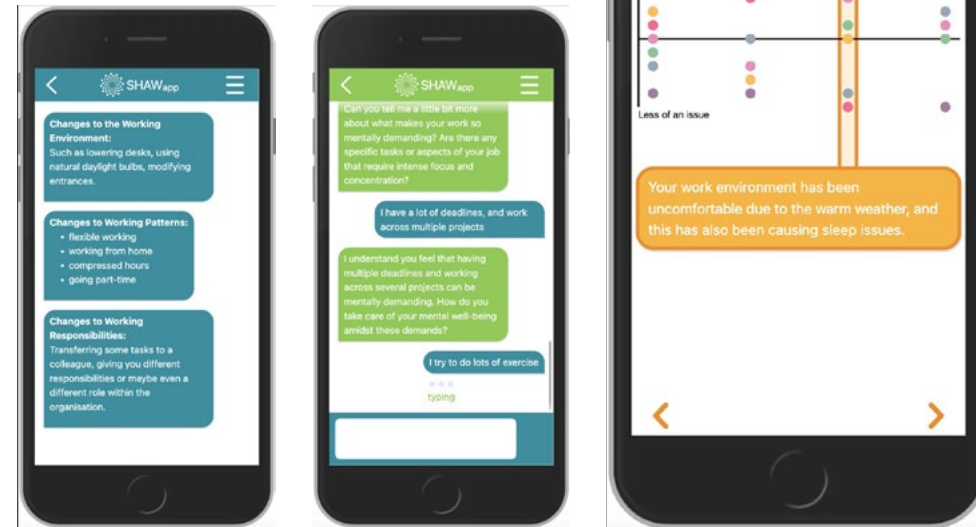
Supporting Health at Work (SHAW)

Supporting Healthy Ageing at Work (SHAW) was a 3-year, large scale interdisciplinary project funded by UKRI Social, Behavioural and Design Research Programme. The project aims and outcomes addressed an increasingly urgent need to find ways to support work in mid-to-later life in response to significant demographic shifts in the UK and globally.

One of the key outcomes of the project is SHAW App, a bespoke web-based service which uses a combination of self-assessed questions drawn from validated scales and AI (LLM) technology to help individuals:

- Reflect on and
- Review their health and work, and then
- take Action to get the support they need.

The App is designed to be applicable for a range of use contexts such as intense work periods, preventative health management, annual reviews and career reviews. The Reflect and Review aspects of the App have been developed in a proof-of-concept prototype, and tested during the project. The development of the App will continue



beyond the project SHAW, with more user testing with employees and employers, and the development of the Action aspect. The App is also central to Caring for Carers: Innovating for Workplace Health and Wellbeing Support project supported by the Healthy Ageing Catalyst Award (Sept 2023-Aug 2024). The aim of this sister project to SHAW is to expand the understanding of how health impacts workers in the social care sector, and to further innovate in the area of generic pattern analysis of data gathered within SHAW App to inform employers on key health trends reported by their workforce without infringing on individual privacy.

SHAW is feeding into policy around work and ageing in two key ways:

1. The learning from the SHAW App will be shared with the Department of Work & Pensions who are looking for ways to enhance their current Mid-Life MoT provision.
2. Findings around the importance of supporting health in mid-later life working have been shared with the UK Parliament's Women and Equalities Committee Enquiry into Work and Ageing.

Age Innovators:
Supporting Healthy
Ageing At Work



Healthier Working Lives

The Healthier Working Lives (HWL) journey started with a question: how can we improve the working lives of the adult social care workforce? The project was centred around the strong belief that care workers themselves should help to inform, shape and guide development in the sector, and share their ideas to improve their industry. HWL aimed to tackle the big challenges facing the care sector including employee retention, workplace effectiveness, staff wellbeing and workforce recruitment.

HWL identified three Problem Statement areas:

- **How to apply data for better care?** – this is about applying technology to improve the collection of Care Home residents' information to both improve efficiency within the Care Home setting and improve the personalisation of residents' care.
- **How to recruit to retain?** – this is about understanding and applying the learnings from a successful Care Home group to significantly improve both the recruitment and retention of residential care home staff.
- **How to ensure consistent professional practice?** This focuses on developing a more consistent, sector-wide approach to training, learning and development (possibly using a QR code system) to give the sector a more professional, transferable set of skills.

Hospitality & Retail

Hospitality Connect

The aim of the Hospitality Connect project was to explore the role of local hospitality businesses in supporting social connections among older people aged 65+, and to co-develop solutions that mutually benefit those who may be more isolated and/or lonely in their local community, and the cafés and pubs that serve them.

Using the findings from the project, Hospitality Connect have co-created the “Welcome ALL” toolkit with older people and other stakeholders to help small to medium sized hospitality businesses become more age-inclusive. Specifically, the toolkit provides a range of simple and practical solutions in a menu-style format that businesses can easily adopt over different periods of time and with varying levels of financial and/or other resource requirements.

Watch the video
Project case study:
Hospitality Connect



Hearing Loss and Place (HeLP)

The HeLP project increased understanding of the difficulties people with hearing loss experience in a variety of noisy and distracting places, such as, shops, cafes and other hospitality venues. HeLP explored how noise affects not only hearing, but also attention, cognition, wellbeing and social interaction.

The Help project has raised the profile of the need for hearing research in Wales and in the UK, and has provided a platform to springboard other research around hearing loss in older adults. The principal investigator sits on the Welsh Government Disability Rights Taskforce (gov.wales/disability-rights-taskforce).



Welcome ALL Toolkit

Starter: Welcome ALL with a smile, instant impact with no costs

Main: Welcome ALL with your commitment to serve ALL

Dessert: Welcome ALL and be connected for the benefit of ALL

Sides: Benefit ALL through additional resources for building an age-friendly community



The toolkit provides links to external resources designed to provide more specific solutions, including links to three short films co-produced with older peer researchers and project supporters to highlight the benefits of our research approach and toolkit implementation.

The toolkit is available at Hospitality Connect:

Welcome ALL | A Toolkit for Age-inclusive Hospitality Venues - SBDRP (ageing-sbdrp.co.uk)

Policy considerations

- Extend local authority food voucher schemes to include meals at hospitality venues.
- Utilise hospitality venues to supplement the role of the traditional community centre, or replace those in areas where centres no longer exist, in supporting local communities to be socially connected.
- Recognise the social value of hospitality businesses for community wellbeing by offering tax relief for age-inclusive venues.



Watch the
Retail Impact
Project case study



Retail Impact

The Retail Impact project supported retailers in better understanding the evidence about what healthy ageing means and inspiring action in relation to their healthy ageing role. It stimulated action by retailers working alongside Government, academics and policymakers, playing their part in tackling inequalities helping revitalise our high streets and local economies.

The project encouraged decision-makers in having conversations to change legislation, policy, culture and practice, facilitating a healthier ageing society and supporting healthy choices, healthy places and fostering a healthy retail workforce.

Key achievements include a suite of published information guides for the retail sector, webinar presentations to organisations such as the Institute of Hospitality, webinar curation, a retail podcast and press releases demonstrating successful coverage.

Retail Guides:

Five comprehensive guides were developed to assist retailers in transforming their spaces into more inclusive environments:

Accessibility:

Providing basic steps towards making shops more accessible.

Healthy Workforce:

Encouraging practices that support the health of retail employees.

Healthy Customer Service:

Improving customer service to meet the diverse needs of all ages.

Healthy Retail Environment:

Creating shopping environments that promote health and accessibility.

Healthier Choices:

Encouraging retailers to offer products and services that support healthy ageing.

Each guide combines research insights with practical advice, offering retailers actionable steps to cater to an ageing consumer base and contribute to a healthier, more inclusive shopping experience.



Five guides to help transform
the way the retail sector sees
and serves older customers



Staying Active

ENLIVEN

The ENLIVEN project partnered with businesses to help them develop and implement innovations in their businesses. This work was implemented during the term of the research award and will have ongoing impact on the services they provide to older people and carers. The businesses they supported include:

Beamish Museum

This project involved a 10-week photography course celebrating the connection between nature and art, culminating in an exhibition of participants' work which is now permanently on display at the museum.

Kew Gardens

The project used reminiscence as a tool to engage people with dementia from diverse backgrounds with plants and nature, connecting people with experiences from their past through the international plant collections. The project was co-developed with an African-Caribbean community group of people with dementia through an initial series of consultations and art workshops.



National Coal Mining Museum

A series of co-production sessions provided fruitful ideas about developing the museum's nature trail and making it more accessible. An artist and the local Wakefield dementia group planted trees to form an accessible woodland area within the museum grounds and developed a banner in the 'Unfurlings' series of banners for hope and change (theunfurlings.org.uk) portraying the importance and value of nature for people with dementia

Seaton Tramway

Seaton Tramway provided a series of nature-themed events in partnership with the East Devon Wetlands Rangers team. Events included watercolour painting, bird watching, photography and well-being activities.

Watch the video
**ENLIVEN working with
Seaton Tramway**



Strawberry Hill House and Garden

The work at Strawberry Hill House and Garden focused on making the 'Feel Good Garden' more inclusive and co-creating a sensory trail through the gardens. As part of the project the Strawberry Hill team co-created a map of the trail, redeveloped their website, and made a film to serve as an access guide.

Tower of London (Historic Royal Palaces)

The Tower team co-developed a nature, storytelling and memory box event focused on the recently rewilded moat area and ran this for three dementia groups. This was very well-received, with the visits managed successfully in this most challenging of sites.

GOALD

GOALD has provided evidence of the commercial and wider societal benefits to be gained from partnership working between businesses and academia. Businesses without the skills and resources to do so themselves have been able to leverage academic expertise and experience in accessing groups of older people, working with diverse populations, and analysing data from user-engaged co-production to improve their digital products. All these factors contribute to enhance the chances of sustained commercial success. Policymakers need to create and maintain the funding environment in which successful partnerships such as those established during GOALD can thrive.

GOALD has illuminated some of the wider challenges to successful development of digital resources to support older people's health and well-being, including lack of access and opportunities for digital education. Policymakers must continue to work towards reducing digital inequality and increasing digital literacy across all of society.

Examples drawn from sports-based reminiscence highlight the need for suitable community-based venues and support in using digital resources. Policymakers must recognise the importance of people and place in fully delivering digital benefits and invest in the community locations and organisations that facilitate the use of digital resources.

GOALD has used the findings from co-production activities based around specific digital resources to produce 'toolkits' that can guide the designers and developers of future generations of digital products and services targeting ageing populations. These toolkits highlight potential issues to be addressed, but also provide valuable insight into the diversity of these populations in terms of their ability and desire to engage with new digital resources. They help to bridge the potential generational gap between designers and end-users and to break down ageist stereotypes of later life.

Watch the video
Project case study:
GOALD



Connecting Through Culture as we Age

Tabletop Travel: immersive dining experiences to improve wellbeing and nutrition for older adults

Connecting through Culture as we Age explored how and why people take part in arts and culture as they get older. The project was interested in how participation in all forms of arts and culture, particularly those accessed digitally, can influence wellbeing and feelings of social connection as we age.

Tabletop Travel emerged from the Connecting Through Culture as We Age project through a process of co-design with older adults. A prototype has been built which pairs a meal kit with food stories from India through a technology-enhanced meal box containing visual, audio, and tactile interactions. With funding from the Catalyst Award they will further develop the concept, iterate the prototype, and develop a scalable framework for delivery within existing care services.

Tabletop Travels aims to improve both the wellbeing and nutrition for older adults who are housebound or living in care settings. Tabletop Travels is an immersive dining experience focusing on diverse food cultures and places. It aims to both stimulate storytelling and widen the experiential possibilities for those with limited access to other cultures.



Future Impact

Academic Impact

Healthy Ageing: Opportunities and Innovation

Professor Judith Phillips and Dr Elaine Douglas are editors of Bristol University Press book entitled 'Healthy Ageing: Opportunities and Innovation'. The book aims to disseminate new thinking on ageing and the leading contribution of social sciences and arts to grand challenges; to highlight key aspects of the Healthy Ageing Challenge programme of research; to demonstrate the relevance, applicability, and utility of ageing research to wider societal issues; and to introduce the role of business in ageing research. The Healthy Ageing Challenge Director, George MacGinnis, and ESRC Research Investment Lead, Lucy Gresley will contribute to the book. Additionally, each of the Social Behavioural and Design Research Programme projects will contribute to chapters about their work and what they have achieved. The book will bring together the research themes across the Challenge and will look ahead to future directions in healthy ageing.

Rising to the Healthy Ageing Challenge: Co-production with Older People and Business

Dr Elaine Douglas and Professor Catherine Hennessy are Guest Editors of a special issue of the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health (ISSN 1660-4601) entitled Rising to the Healthy Ageing Challenge: Co-production with Older People and Business, as part of the journals Global Health section. The goal of the Special Issue is to identify examples of the meaningful co-design and co-production of solutions to address the issues that are important to people as they age. These include how and where we live our lives across a range of domains encompassing housing, changing work patterns, physical activity, retail, hospitality, and culture. (mdpi.com/journal/ijerph/special_issues/40W6L60IEL)

Conferences

While our projects have already published academic publications further publications are expected. SBDRP projects will also present their work in future academic conferences, including the Nordic Congress of Gerontology (**27th Nordic Congress of Gerontology nkg2024.se**), British Society of Gerontology Annual Conference (**BSG Annual Conference: British Society of Gerontology britishgerontology.org**) and the Gerontological Society of America (**GSA 2024 Annual Scientific Meeting : GSA geron.org**).



Business Impact

Many of the SBDRP projects have attracted additional funding to deliver business impact. This work is ongoing and updates will be available via the SBDRP website ([Home - SBDRP | Stirling University ageing-sbdrp.co.uk](http://Home-SBDRP|StirlingUniversityageing-sbdrp.co.uk)) and/or the project websites (see earlier in this report for website information, and via social media).

Connecting through Culture as we Age received Catalyst Award funding to further work with the TableTop travel commercialisation. In addition, funding has been awarded to support the work of four researchers from the project; two researchers will work on the project: 'Exploring and sharing voices of older residents of Bristol

through the co-production of short films', another two researchers will work on the project: 'Evaluating Arts and Culture Experience, Together'. Connecting through Culture as we Age also received internal funding via the Participatory research fund.

DesHCA received ESRC Impact Accelerator Award funding to continue work with the City Region Deal.

Healthier Working Lives for the Care Workforce have received internal funds via the Faculty of Social Science and Public Policy Research, Kings College London and Impact Fund to further work on the project 'Retaining Care Workers: Case Studies to Support Organisational Policies and Practices (RetainCare).

HeLP were awarded Fellowship funding from Health and Care Research Wales as part of the Research Capacity Building

Collaboration (RCBD) Wales for a research audiologist to continue work related to HeLP.

OPTIC have received ESRC Impact Accelerator Award funding to co-create the Climate Comic Intergenerational Activity Pack to advance climate action in South Wales.

SHAW successfully received ZINC Catalyst Funding to develop the SHAW app which will provide analysis of employee health data at the generic level for employers.

SPACE have received two ESRC Impact Accelerator Awards to support their fieldwork: 'Innovative, open urban environment data portal to progress impact-driven research, policy and practice', and 'There is no Planet B: The importance of protecting where we live'. In addition, SPACE have received NIH funding for 'Expanding the Gateway Research Infrastructure on Exposome Studies for the Health and Retirement Study and the Harmonized Cognitive Assessment Protocol International Network of Studies'.

Policy Impact

Copies of this report will be made available in hard copy and digital format. Hard copies will be available for future policy events to be held at the House of Lords and to networks across the UK Government, Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Northern Ireland Executive. Hard copies will be distributed to our projects, their partners, and co-researchers.

SBDRP have also produced policy impact leaflets based on the four key areas within this report on Housing and Environment, Work, Hospitality & Retail and Staying Active. These leaflets will enable targeted policy impact to policymakers.

Impacts over the Short-, Medium- and Longer-Term

Short-term

Over the next 3-5 years, we expect to see a vibrant community of researchers, older people and business engaged in cutting edge ageing research and development of products and services.

Medium-term

In the next 6-10 years, we anticipate attitudinal, cultural and behavioural change amongst business, public, third sectors and academia. We hope our work will encourage ageing to be viewed as an opportunity and ageism challenged, with better understanding and awareness of each others' contribution to healthy ageing.

We envision healthy ageing research in the UK to achieve globally recognised impact in social science, design and technology related.

Long-term

In 10 years or more we envision the quality of Life and well being of older people to increase as more older people have better environments, services and products to support them.

Being Part of a Research Programme

What's it like to be part of a Research Programme?

The Social Behavioural and Design Research Programme ran from March 2021 until February 2024. During that time we held a number of in-person and virtual events to bring our projects together in ways that would enrich the research for all. In this section please read some of the feedback from the projects about what it was like to be part of our Research Programme. Overall, their feedback fell into 4 broad themes: Support, Opportunity, Impact and the Covid-19 pandemic.

Support

“I think that the ethos and the way then that the Programme has been run... it's been incredibly, incredibly helpful”

“Opportunities around impact linking us in with other projects within the Challenge other capacity building opportunities that our team have been able to be a part of... have been really positive and I've always found them very supportive of the work that we're doing”



Impact

“We have every intention of keeping going with what we've started... a lot of these organisations want to carry on. We know we want to go back to these businesses and look at what's happening and tracking that impact in a year or beyond that”

“We will definitely be carrying on with this project work... to make the most of all the information we've got and all the data we've got that's going to come”

Opportunity

“The inclusion of codesign and coproduction was the type of research that I wanted to do. I like the industry partnerships as well. The requirements of the overall bid and what we worked in really fitted what we wanted to do really well”

“This programme has really kind of led and encouraged me into a whole new territory for me that I wouldn't have touched... I wouldn't have touched previously anything to do with business... that really was not something that I felt comfortable with. I'm now kind of comfortably going to follow on activities that I wouldn't have ventured to get involved in before because they would have been really outside of my comfort zone”



Covid-19 Pandemic

“Covid had a substantial impact on projects in terms of timelines”.

“The impact of COVID has been bigger than we understood at the time, and we've had certainly mental health issues in the team not to do with the project, but to do with the aftermath of COVID and the general huge pressure that there's been on people and of course that makes it difficult to schedule work things like that”.

“One thing that we all would have hoped for is perhaps more time together... I understand why that's been difficult”.

Thanks & Acknowledgements

The Social Behavioural and Design Research Programme was funded by the UKRI Healthy Ageing Challenge. We would like to thank the Healthy Ageing Challenge team: George MacGinnis, Cynthia Bullock, Huw Vasey, Natasha Richardson, and Lucy Gresley, for their guidance and support throughout the Programme. We would also like to extend our thanks to the wider UKRI team and Innovate UK for their support: Mel Knetsch, Jane Guest, Sophie Hardwick, Alexandra Knox, Chris Ward, Heidi Hinder, Helen Crampin, Julia Glenn, David Calder and Karen Wilkinson. We would also like to thank staff at the Centre for Ageing Better.

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Merryn Thomas and the OPTIC team, and Ryan Woolrych and the Healthy Ageing in Place: Co-Designing Inclusive Climate Resilient Age-friendly Cities and Communities team. A special thanks to Ailsa Forbes for leading the Retail Project: Thrive not just Survive with the International Longevity Centre (ILC-UK).

A big thanks to all of the Community Peer Researchers and Co-Researchers who volunteered their time and provided unequivocal knowledge and guidance to our project teams.

The SBDRP would like to thank all of the project partners; people, business, and industry. Their enthusiasm and engagement with our projects have helped guide the research and developed innovative approaches to healthy ageing.

A thank you to all of our early career and mid-career researchers who actively engaged and sought opportunities to support their careers in the healthy ageing arena.



We thank the RIBE and Finance teams at the University of Stirling for sharing their knowledge and guidance with the Programme over the last three years. We would like to specially acknowledge their help in establishing the APPROACH projects.

Finally, we would like to extend our thanks our expert review group whose support and advice have successfully guided the Social Behavioural and Design Research Programme: Roger O'Sullivan, Institute of Public Health; Lynsey Brydson, BE-ST Built Environment; Cat Drew, Design Council; Madeleine Starr, Carers UK; Sally Taylor-Ridgway, Housing LIN; James Lowman, Association of Convenience Stores; Thomas Scharf, British Society of Gerontology/Newcastle University; Jeremy Porteus, Housing LIN; Lucy Gresley, UKRI.

Legacy Resources

Connecting through Culture as we Age: The Co-Researcher Film Series.

Connecting through Culture: The co-researcher film series - SBDRP (ageing-sbdrp.co.uk)

Connecting through Culture as we Age: Digital Innovation for Healthy Ageing.

policy-briefing.pdf (connectingthroughcultureasweage.info)

Connecting through Culture as we Age: Research Digest Older People – Culture, Community, Connection.

Research-digest-older-people-v1.pdf (connectingthroughcultureasweage.info)

DesHCA: Age Inclusive Home Checklist.

Age Inclusive Home Checklist - SBDRP (ageing-sbdrp.co.uk)

DesHCA: DesHCA's Designing for a Lifetime Booklet.

<https://www.deshca.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/DesHCAs-Hints-and-Tips-Booklet.pdf>

DesHCA: Measuring Adaptations (Toolkit).

Measuring-Adaptations-Short-Write-Up-April-22.pdf (deshca.co.uk)

DesHCA: Adaption Installation Regression (Toolkit).

Adaptation-Installation-Regression-Short-Write-Up-February-22.pdf (deshca.co.uk)

DesHCA: Measuring Cognitive Impairment (Toolkit).

Measuring-Cognitive-Impairment-Short-Write-up-February-22.pdf (deshca.co.uk)

DesHCA: Designing Homes for Healthy Cognitive Ageing.

<https://www.deshca.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/DesHCAs-Hints-and-Tips-Booklet.pdf>

ENLIVEN: Making Outdoor Spaces and Activities Dementia Inclusive – Policy Brief.

2023BS026-ENLIVEN-Policy-Brief.pdf (enlivenproject.co.uk)

ENLIVEN: Practical Tips for Businesses when Designing and Delivering Dementia Inclusive Outdoor Visitor Experiences.

ENLIVEN_Top_Tips_v3.pdf (ashfordplace.org.uk)

ENLIVEN: Case Study – Bridging Nature and Wellbeing.

ENLIVEN Case Study: Bridging Nature and Wellbeing - SBDRP (ageing-sbdrp.co.uk)

ENLIVEN: Using Nature to make your Visitor Economy Business Dementia Inclusive.

ENLIVEN-PDF-for-printing.pdf (enlivenproject.co.uk)

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Healthier Working Lives for the Care Workforce: Care Sector Workforce Planning Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities.

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/global-affairs/assets/healthier-working-lives-workforce-care-sector-workforce-planning.pdf>

Healthy Ageing in Place: Co-Designing Inclusive Climate Resilient Age-friendly Cities and Communities: Healthy Ageing in a Changing Climate - Community Workshops Your thoughts about climate change and healthy ageing in Belfast.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/639cd497a20e9d6261e8b7db/t/64be7f8cc495bd50975c4304/1690206092681/Belfast+workshop+community+feedback.pdf>

Healthy Ageing in Place: Co-Designing Inclusive Climate Resilient Age-friendly Cities and Communities: Healthy Ageing in a Changing Climate - Community Workshops Your thoughts about climate change and healthy ageing in Rochdale.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/639cd497a20e9d6261e8b7db/t/64b1094ca18d61117257a48/1689323852569/Rochdale+workshop+feedback.pdf>

Healthy Ageing in Place: Co-Designing Inclusive Climate Resilient Age-friendly Cities and Communities: Healthy Ageing in a Changing Climate - Community Workshops Your thoughts about climate change and healthy ageing in Cardiff.

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Healthy Ageing in Place: Co-Designing Inclusive Climate Resilient Age-friendly Cities and Communities: Keeping Going.

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Hospitality Connect: End of Project Report.

end-of-project-report.pdf (surrey.ac.uk)

Hospitality Connect: Welcome ALL – A Toolkit for Age-Inclusive Hospitality Venues.

<https://www.surrey.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2023-11/toolkit-for-age-inclusive-hospitality-venues.pdf>

Hospitality Connect: Crafting Age-Inclusive Community Spaces.

Hospitality Connect Case Study: Crafting Age-Inclusive Community Spaces - SBDRP (ageing-sbdrp.co.uk)

Retail Impact Work: Case Study – Innovating for Age-Friendly Retail.

Retail Project Case Study: Innovating for Age-Friendly Retail - SBDRP (ageing-sbdrp.co.uk)

Retail Impact Work: Pioneering Accessibility – Retail Project Film Highlights Age-Friendly Design.

Pioneering Accessibility: Retail Project Film Highlights Age-Friendly Design - SBDRP (ageing-sbdrp.co.uk)

Retail Impact Work: Hints and Tips on Accessibility.

ILC-Healthy-retail-Guide-Accessibility-final.pdf (ilcuk.org.uk)

Retail Impact Work: Hints and Tips for a Healthy Workforce.

ILC-Healthy-Guide-Healthy-workforce-final.pdf (ilcuk.org.uk)

Retail Impact Work: Hints and Tips for Healthy Customer Service.

ILC-Healthy-Guide-Customer-Service-final.pdf (ilcuk.org.uk)

Retail Impact Work: Hints and Tips for a Healthy Retail Environment.

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Retail Impact Work: Hints and Tips on Healthier Choices.

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SPACE: Geoportal (Toolkit).

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SPACE: Leadership for Healthy People and Planet – An Invitation to Accelerate Integrated Policy and Action on Health and Environment.

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