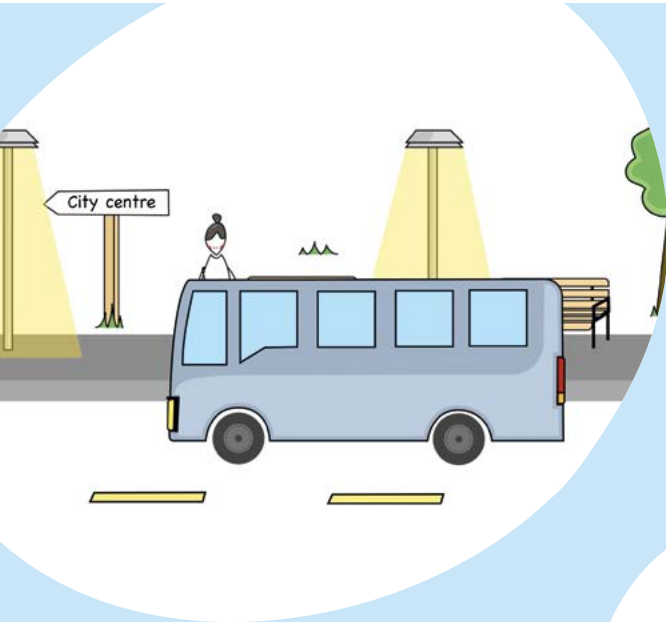




From global
to local



Universal design



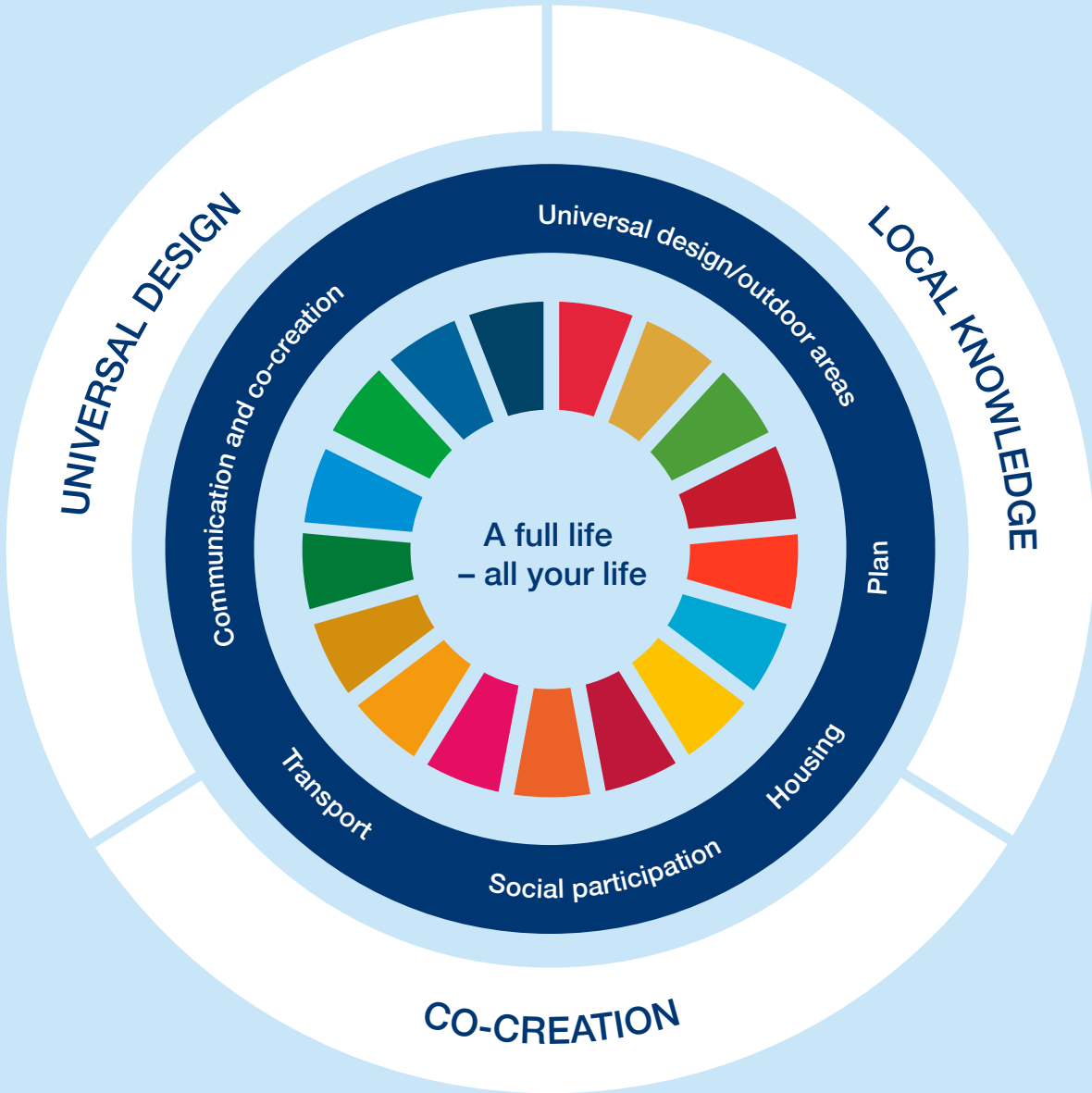
Cross-sectoral
collaboration

Demography



Handbook for
Age-Friendly
Communities

Age-Friendly Communities



Universal design + Local knowledge + Co-creation = Age-friendly communities



KOMMUNSEKTORENS ORGANISASJON

The Norwegian Association of Local and
Regional Authorities

Editors:

Anne Gamme and Anne Berit Rafoss – The Norwegian
Association of Local and Regional Authorities

We thank all contributing writers:

Elin Wetås Jara – The Norwegian Association of Local and
Regional Authorities – Regional office – West
Kent Geirmund Dagsland Håkull – Municipality of Haugesund
Marianne Aas – City of Oslo
Solveig Dale – Municipality of Trondheim
Sigbjørn Spurkeland – The Norwegian State Housing Bank
Aina Tjosås – ABO plan og arkitektur
Heidi Karsrud Nordal – City of Oslo
Line Spikkeland – The Norwegian Association of Local and
Regional Authorities
Christian Hellevang – The Norwegian Association of Local and
Regional Authorities
Anne Johanne Enger – The Norwegian Association of Local and
Regional Authorities

Graphic Design:

Ståle Hevrøy, Bly.

Printing:

Byråservice.

Publication date: 1. edition, 2020

ISBN 978-82-93100-75-1

This booklet was published by KS.

The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities
(KS) is the organisation for all local governments in Norway. KS is
Norway's largest public employer organisation. All of the country's
356 municipalities and 11 county councils are members, in
addition to 500 municipal, intermunicipal and county council
enterprises.

Content

05	Introduction
06	How to get started
08	Planning for an age-friendly community
12	Communication and co-creation – prerequisites for age-friendly development
26	How to design age-friendly communities
36	Transport in age-friendly communities
46	Social participation
56	Housing and an ageing society

IMPORTANT NOTICE! Links to relevant sites can be found in
the digital version on KS' home page. (Norwegian only)

Preface

If I am typical of the hard-pressed, time-poor, but ambitious reader of this report, then you will be keen to discover new knowledge, check-in on what is state-of-the-art in our discipline and be prompted to form new thoughts about what you might do better, differently, or if you are lucky, just the same. In my experience very few of us fall into this last category, and I can say with some certainty that this group will total zero (or fewer) when it comes to this wonderful publication.

I am a bit of a veteran of the ageing scene and I like to think

that I can spot a winner, by which I mean it's not that often that one is hugely impressed by the creativity, drive and commitment that are features of the Norwegian age-friendly programme. So you will be thrilled with this handbook.

Over the last two years I have planned to join you in Oslo on more than two occasions, but circumstances have meant that I have only been able to speak with you via the internet. There is nothing more that will cheer me than for us to meet up, in the flesh, to marvel at your achievements and make plans to create better places for us to live.

Paul McGarry

Assistant Director

*Greater Manchester Combined Authority,
Greater Manchester Ageing Hub*



Photo: Adobe Stock

“I have no desire to become younger, but I very much want to get older!”

Odd Grann, 87, age-friendly ambassador, Oslo

Introduction

The proportion of older people in the population is increasing all over the world, presenting challenges as well as opportunities. In Norway, the number of people over the age of 70 will increase from today's 670 000 to about 1.7 million by 2060. That means that every fifth citizen will be over the age of 70 by 2060. Today, the proportion is one out of eight.

The fact that we live longer, and that older people constitute a larger part of the population, is a positive development, forcing us to rethink and be innovative. Developing age-friendly communities is all about facilitating environments, so as to enable older people to be able to live at home as long as they wish, participate in activities of their choice, be mobile, and experience their surroundings as accessible and safe. In order to make this happen, we need to work across sectors and levels.

Developing age-friendly communities is closely linked to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, with a focus on cross-sectoral collaboration, inclusion and involvement. The World Health Organization (WHO) has established a global network for cities and communities that want to become more age-friendly.

WHO defines age-friendly communities as cities and municipalities that:

- Recognise diversity among older people
- Promote inclusion of older people
- Value the contribution older people make to society
- Respect the decisions older people make
- Expect and respond to age-related needs and preferences

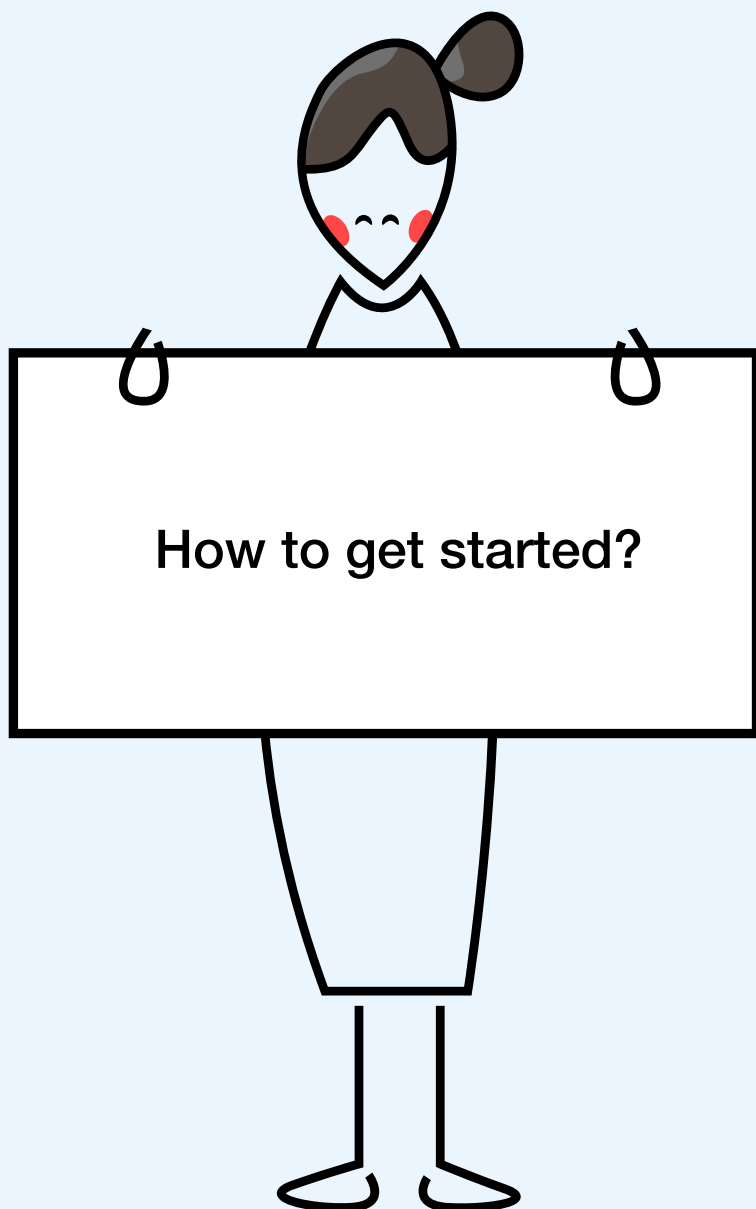
The national strategy for an age-friendly society: "More years – More Opportunities" was launched in 2016. It was followed up in 2018 with a quality reform for older people "A full life – all your life". The programme for an age-friendly Norway is part of the reform and as part of this initiative KS is developing a model for age-friendly development and a network for age-friendly communities.

Through strategic planning, cross-sectoral efforts and involving older people, municipalities will strengthen existing initiatives and services, and develop new age-friendly initiatives that contribute to postponing the need for services

"The fact that we live longer, and that older people constitute a larger part of the population, is a positive development forcing us to rethink and be innovative."

and institutions. Age-friendly and intergenerational activities may also combat ageism and contribute to more positive attitudes towards ageing and older people.

Municipalities are already working on the topics covered in this handbook in many different ways. Our objective has been to provide good examples and new suggestions that may be useful for age-friendly development in the municipalities. The handbook and the focus areas have been developed in collaboration with municipalities participating in the network for age-friendly communities, as well as experts in KS, municipalities and national organisations. The network is financed by the Government.



At an overall level, when developing age-friendly communities, the process described in “Roadmap for age-friendly development” by KS can be useful. It divides the process into stages:

1. **Secure commitment** from the municipality, the politicians, the senior citizen council/civic organisation and create a cross-sectoral project team
2. **Insight into** where we are, what others do, our preferences and dreams and what is possible and most important to our municipality
3. **Develop solutions**, refine good ideas and secure a mandate to move forward
4. **Pilots** to test solutions
5. **Transition to operation**, implement new ways of planning and initiating measures, in line with lessons learned throughout the process
6. **New practices** where age-friendly initiatives are developed through involvement and integrated in our regular day-to-day business



The Roadmap and dialogue tools are available in full in the digital version of this handbook, on www.ks.no. (Norwegian only)

In the preliminary stages, “Tools for Dialogue in Strategic Public Health Work” (KS) can help uncover challenges and opportunities by following these four steps:

1. **Current situation** – create a common understanding of the challenges
2. **Challenges** – overview of the obstacles
3. **Opportunities** – identify potential opportunities
4. **Action Plan** – activities and priorities

When you begin developing initiatives, the WHO main stages can be useful:

Mapping – planning – implementing – evaluating

It is important to start by mapping already implemented and planned initiatives, which can be considered part of age-friendly development. You can, for instance, send out a form to municipal sectors and departments, requesting feedback on which measures they have implemented targeting older people. The mapping might provide information on priorities and possible stakeholders when developing an age-friendly community.

A good starting point can be to ask the question: What sort of local community would I like to grow old in?

A local community:

- Where I can engage and participate fully in everything that is going on in the community
- Where I can easily get to where I want to go, when I want to go
- Where I can access great quality healthcare and other services without difficulty
- Where I can have a say in what happens in my county or city if I wish to
- Where I feel safe and secure
- Where I can live a healthy and active life
- Where young and old interact and get along

(SOURCE: AGE- FRIENDLY CITIES AND COUNTIES PROGRAMME HANDBOOK, IRELAND 2014)

Planning for age-friendly communities

Through strategic planning, we facilitate age-friendly development in the short-and long term. Smaller initiatives can be developed and implemented quickly, through collaboration across sectors.

All municipal sectors are governed by a strategic planning framework – such as planning strategies, municipal master plans, municipal sub-plans and thematic plans. Elected representatives set the course for the development of a community in the short- and long term. The municipal administration develops the content of the plans and implements measures when the plans have been adopted.

The planning cycle

Based on the Sustainable Development Goals and overall municipal plans, various municipal departments can identify and take responsibility for measures promoting an age-friendly community. Community planners, zoning planners, building application case managers, those responsible for roads, parks, operations, construction and real estate, as well as those providing services – they may all contribute to creating a more age-friendly and sustainable municipality.

Age-friendly development is integrated in overall strategic plans, follows the municipal planning cycle, and culminates in concrete initiatives and evaluation.

Prioritise simple initiatives that may be of great value to many

Age-friendliness in future projects can for instance be incorporated in zoning plans, building applications and construction projects. Those responsible for planning for age-friendly communities can also integrate age-friendly qualities into existing projects and developments.

In terms of regular operations and maintenance in municipalities, a number of projects may benefit of an age-



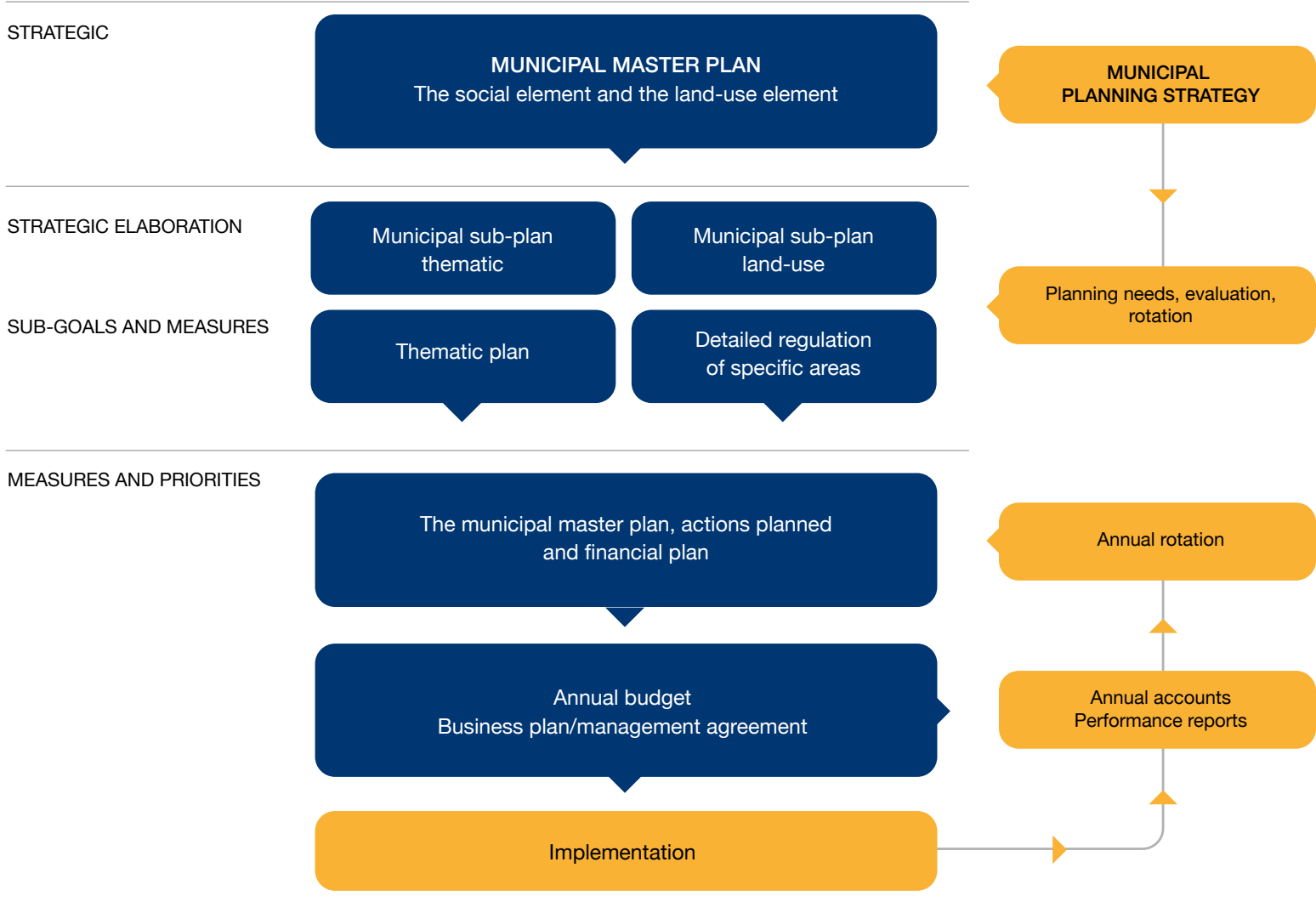
Photo: Fredrik Naumann/Felix Features

friendly approach. It may be projects with immediate effect, minor maintenance and upgrades that are implemented outside the planning cycle, in areas that have already been developed. It is important that those responsible for technical services, parks, real estate and maintenance play a central role in the development.

Outdoor areas, such as parks, meeting points, toilet facilities, roads, bicycle lanes, walking tracks and parking spaces all offer opportunities for concrete, quality-enhancing measures.

Other sectors may also develop short term initiatives, while thematic plans and business plans facilitate age-friendly development in the long run. Through dialogue and co-creation in the development of municipal plans, municipalities can engage businesses, contractors and citizens to identify opportunities in the short- and long term that will contribute to the development of an age-friendly community.

The Planning Cycle



Source: Asplan Viak

Stages in the development of age-friendly communities



Photo: OsloMet

“Senior Track” is a mapping method using questionnaires, dialogue, and sometimes a mapping app and dialogue workshops, to identify senior citizens preferences and needs in their local communities.
(The Municipality of Tysvær)



Photo: Adobe Stock

Sort the feedback into technical issues and human issues. Allocate the responsibilities for the different tasks and get started with the low-hanging fruits first.

Mapping



Planning



Photo: Ann-Cathrin Holm, City of Oslo

Municipalities often start with a town hall meeting: Ask simple questions, find out what is important to people.



Photo: Bølgeblikk arkitekt

Plan the location of new nursing homes in areas with other facilities. For example, in Mortensrud in Oslo, the library and the nursing home will share the same square.



Photo: Municipality of Trondheim

There can never be too many benches: More people might go for walks if they can rest along the way. In steep terrain, handrails are useful to everyone.

It is important to provide updates throughout the development process and explain how input and suggestions are being taken into consideration.

Implementing

Evaluating



Photo: Rune Hagen

The local supermarket as a meeting place: The local supermarket can be made into a meeting place with coffee, a place to sit and toilets.



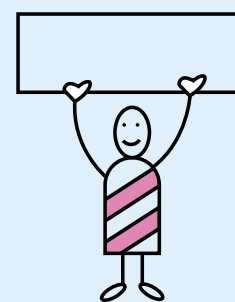
Photo: Fredrik Naumann/Felix Features

Invite a group of older people to inspect the changes that have taken place. Discuss what has improved, what still needs to improve and discuss priorities.

Communication and co-creation

– prerequisites for age-friendly development

Communication and co-creation are crucial premises for developing age-friendly communities. By facilitating effective communication and co-creation with older people, their needs, feedback and involvement play a major part in the development of the community and municipal services.



Communication in age-friendly communities

Effective communication and dialogue is crucial to both municipalities and their residents. It ensures that understanding and measures are not only based on assumptions or existing knowledge. Communication and dialogue improves, renews and strengthens measures and knowledge.

Older residents have varied backgrounds and functional abilities, a varied understanding of communication tools and municipal services. Communication is a two-way process. It is important that residents understand the information provided, as well as experience that they are heard and understood in their interaction with the municipality. Insight and adaptation enable constructive dialogue and social development.

Duty of information and guidance

Municipalities have a duty to communicate with their residents, and to make sure everyone can access information, as described in the Local Government Act, Section 4:

“All municipalities and county authorities shall promote the active provision of information concerning their activity. The best possible provisions shall be made for public access to information in municipal and county authority management.”

According to the Public Administration Act, Section 11, municipalities have a duty to provide guidance to residents:

“The administrative agencies have, within their sphere of competence, a general duty to provide guidance. The purpose of such guidance shall be to enable the parties and other interested persons to safeguard their interests in specific cases in the best possible way.”

The municipality also have a non-legal obligation to ensure good management practices. The municipality is expected to act politely and respectfully, and to involve residents beyond the statutory participation when relevant. The terms

polite and respectful can entail comprehensible language, consideration and discretion.

It is important to adapt the information to the receiver. We can facilitate effective communication through clear messages, good platforms for communication and by way of our choice of channels.

What are the obstacles to effective communication?

Residents have different needs for facilitation and communication. However, for older people some challenges may be more prevalent. Functional decline or different skills can be barriers, preventing access to or use of municipal information. The gradual functional decline that comes with age, such as vision or hearing loss, may result in physical barriers. The ability to orientate oneself, understanding of public administration and fear of attitudes towards older people can also complicate the communication with the municipality.

Technical barriers

Some of the solutions that make municipal administration more efficient, can create obstacles for those who, due to physical or cognitive functional decline, require a little more

“Functional decline or different skills can be barriers, preventing access to or use of municipal information.”

time or contact than they used to. For instance, automated phone systems with multiple choices can be challenging, in terms of the technical aspect as well as the need for concentration and memory.

Many municipalities have made great efforts in order to improve and clarify the language used when communicating with residents. An age-friendly tip is to systematically invite older citizens to user panels/focus groups, to test how the language used in letters and written information can be better adapted to this target group.

Completing online forms is another example of efficiency measures that can be challenging, both in terms of jargon and interfaces. Often, it requires digital competence and experience from the use of municipal websites. In this case, user panels/focus groups, testing and development in collaboration with the target group can enhance the understanding of the needs and facilitation for older people.

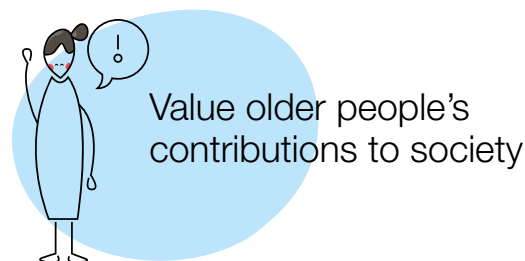
Physical barriers

Universal design of public buildings improves accessibility for older people. Additional measures can be taken in order to improve communication, addressing the functional decline that we know may be age-related and may affect many people.

Altered or impaired vision can affect the ability to detect contours, and increase sensitivity to light and light reflexes. By ensuring adequate light, dimming backlight and avoiding shiny surfaces causing light reflexes, public areas can accommodate older people who need to use communication solutions such as ticket machines or computers in public service areas.

Magnifying glasses at the counter, visible signs, and large and matte screens increase access. Seating areas for waiting that are close enough to enable visual and audio access to the counter, preferably with access to toilets and drinking water, contributes to a safe experience and effective communication.

Hearing loss can be age-related, and may create challenges and anxiety in social interactions. We can design



physical surroundings that limit reverberation and ensure the transfer of audio to hearing aids. However, the most important thing is to allocate enough time to establish an atmosphere of calm and trust when communicating, based on individual needs.

The municipality may facilitate the information to the public so as to create more accessibility by way of gaining sufficient insight into the needs of citizens on a regular basis. Public websites are required to have a ReadSpeaker function, coded in a way that works for the visually impaired. For people with slight visual impairment, navigating public websites may prove challenging. Through testing, in collaboration with older citizens, we gain insight and can improve the design and content of websites.

Digital barriers

Society is becoming increasingly digitized, but there are still groups in the population with below average digital competence. Although many older people have embraced digital tools and channels, there are still many older people that do not use these tools. The reason may be lack of access to digital platforms, due to social, financial or other reasons. Over the past decades, many residents have acquired digital competence through their work. The nature of work and workplace older people have experienced may have an impact on their digital skills. The older the age, the more challenges they might face.

Simplified communication via digital platforms, training and computer assistance are tools that municipalities use to meet the needs of older people. Developing infrastructure that ensures access for all to broadband and mobile networks is also important to even out the differences.

EXAMPLE



Facsimile from the guide “Plain Language for Everyone”.

Stavanger: Plain language for everyone

The Municipality of Stavanger has made guidelines for “Plain Language for Everyone – How to Write for Municipal Websites to Help More People Understand”. The object is to create texts that work well for everyone, regardless of reading challenges. One of the focus groups consisted of people above the age of 70.

As part of the project, the municipality conducted user tests with three older citizens; two women aged 88 and 89, and one man aged 71. The municipality wanted to test texts on older people with good reading skills, but with some cognitive impairment. The tests were based on the assumption that plain language texts are considerably easier to decode and understand than original texts. The testing of older people formed part of a larger project where texts were also tested on immigrants, people with cognitive or visual impairment, as well as other challenges.



Magnifying glasses at the counter, visible signs, and large and matte screens increase access.



Photo: Adobe Stock

Internet use in older age groups

Nine out of ten older people have access to the Internet, the majority through smartphones, according to the 2018 report “The digital everyday life of seniors. A national survey on access, skills and challenges in the information society” from Consumption Research Norway (SIFO).

News, searching for information, e-mail/chat and social media dominate daily Internet use. Many also use Internet banking services on a weekly basis. In older age groups, seven out of ten have used public Internet services in the past year. Most older Internet users have acquired computer skills through work, followed by self-learning, tutoring by others and courses.

The main reasons for using digital equipment and the Internet, according to the survey, are staying informed and

updated, accessing services from home and keeping in touch with family and friends.

In 2018, 95 % of the seniors surveyed (61-100 years old) owned a mobile phone, of which 67 % were smartphones. In 2018, about one in ten of the seniors surveyed did not use the Internet at all, half as many as in 2014.

These surveys were conducted prior to 2020, when the coronavirus situation changed user patterns for digital communication tools in many age groups, including older people.

Proportion of older people who use the Internet daily and weekly

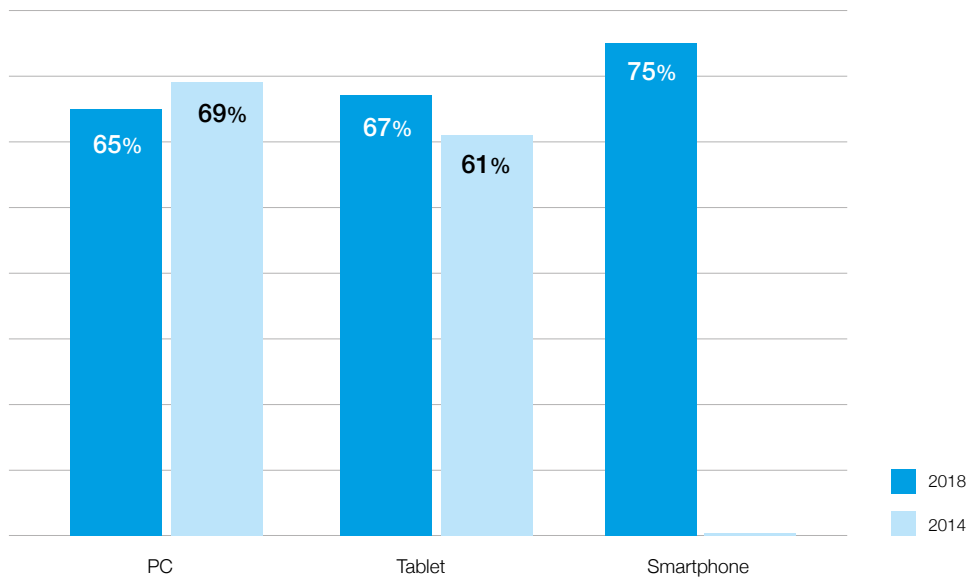


Figure 3.4: Proportion of older people with access to the Internet via a computer, tablet and/or smartphone, who use the Internet daily on the respective platforms.

Source: Dag Slettemås, Henry Mainsah and Lisbeth Berge: *The digital everyday life of seniors. A national survey on access, skills and challenges in the information society*



“More Digital”

EXAMPLE



“More Digital” is a training concept developed by Telia AB, where young people teach seniors how to become more digital. During the autumn of 2019, Grue, Eidskog and Kongsvinger were the first municipalities to implement the concept.

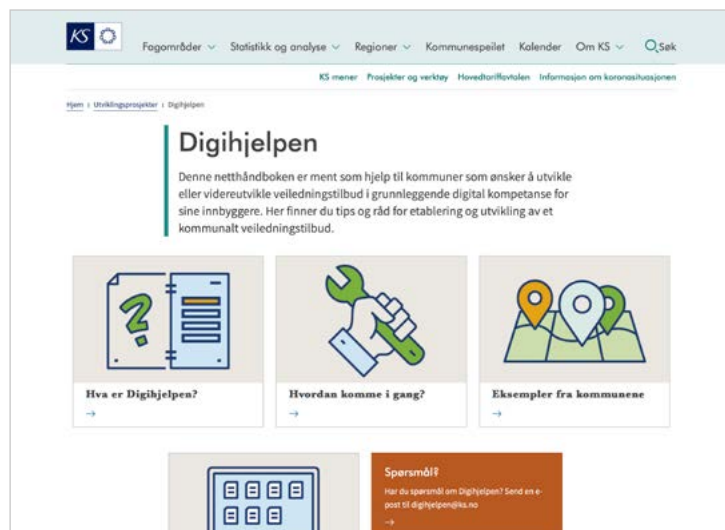
The objective of “More Digital” is to:

- Reduce digital exclusion
- Spread knowledge to residents who are not familiar with digital tools and services
- Inspire digital positivity and curiosity
- Increase knowledge and understanding of the

(digital) society of today and the future

- Facilitate the use of municipal welfare e-services for older people
- Lower the threshold for testing new digital solutions, and increase the understanding of, for instance, fiber infrastructure development.

“More Digital” has been implemented in more than 100 Swedish municipalities. The concept won the “European Broadband Awards 2018” for best infrastructure project in Europe.



“Digihjelpen” is an online handbook with tips and advice on how to establish and develop a municipal guidance service.

KS has developed “Digihjelpen”, an online guide helping municipalities develop a low-threshold guidance service for people with low digital skills. Libraries and service centres are central to the development of this service.

The volunteer organisation “Seniornett” also offers computer assistance and training.

Functional challenges

Most people do not familiarise themselves with the services offered by municipalities until they require them, or get involved in issues concerning them. It can be challenging to find out who to address and be confident that you are welcome. Sharing personal information with unknown officials can be difficult for many. Understanding, trust and respect is necessary to establish good communication and cooperation.

Society is becoming increasingly diverse. “Older people” has thus become a more diverse social, linguistic, cultural and religious group than before. Even when you consider

yourself a senior can be culturally determined. Municipal communication will be perceived and understood differently based on people’s background and references. This challenges our understanding of older citizens, and how we provide services that make them feel treated with respect. Perhaps we need new knowledge in order to develop communication tools and platforms that better meet these challenges.

Dissemination of information

Information aimed at seniors can be about the services on offer and the opportunities for co-creation in municipal planning and development. It can be equally important for participation and good health that information about social arenas, cultural offers and local activities is disseminated through channels that reach as many seniors as possible. Local newspapers and leaflets are important sources of information to many seniors, as information increasingly is only available digitally. Message boards in libraries and local shops are also useful information channels, as well as meetings in local senior citizen social clubs and other venues where older people meet and municipalities may invite themselves in.



Co-creation in age-friendly communities

Age-friendly co-creation is all about listening to the people and involving them in issues that concern them, and ensuring democratic participation on equal terms for all. That people are seen and heard helps strengthen local democracy and improves decisions-making.

In some contexts, co-creation is required by law. For instance, municipalities are required to have a senior citizen council. Municipalities have a large degree of freedom to decide whether and how they want to involve residents in policy and service development.

Co-creation means that a person can influence how matters concerning him or her are planned, designed and implemented. It includes opinions about a project in the neighbourhood, input on developments in the local community or the design of new guidelines and laws. It is important to differentiate between co-creation and co-decision making. Co-creation entails a contribution, participation or playing a role in a decision making process. Co-decision making means that you are directly involved in deciding if, how and when measures are to be undertaken.

Framework for co-creation

When it comes to the degree of co-creation, certain limitations should be taken into account. For instance, residents cannot decide that someone is entitled to something or how money should be allocated. In a representative democracy, only the municipal council, city district council or other elected bodies can make decisions in political matters. This authority cannot be delegated to others. This limitation to the degree of co-creation is important to communicate to those who are invited to participate.

In some areas, co-creation is statutory; In the Local Government Act, the Planning and Building Act and some special laws.

The Local Government Act requires, for example, that municipalities and county councils establish councils for senior citizens and people with disabilities, as well as councils or other arenas for co-creation for youth. The councils are elected by the municipal council for a specified period.

According to the Local Government Act, residents' proposals is another statutory channel for co-creation. Residents can submit proposals that concern municipal

“Co-creation means that a person can influence how matters concerning him or her are planned, designed and implemented.”

activities. If a specified number of residents are behind the proposal, the municipal council is required to consider the proposal.

The Planning and Building Act emphasises participation and contains several requirements for co-creation. In addition, several special laws invite citizens to provide input, one example is the Patient and User Rights Act.

The involvement of older people is crucial

In order to succeed in developing age-friendly communities, co-creation is key. Like other age groups, older people are concerned with important societal issues, not only those concerning themselves.

Involving older people entails more than simply “informing” them. It involves listening to them and getting to know their needs and preferences. This way, solutions will have a stronger foundation, be more targeted and easier to implement.

When working systematically with co-creation, we get access to more voices than simply the senior citizen council or the loudest voices. We may even enable otherwise silent groups to be heard. Being listened to is associated with feeling valuable and important. It creates confidence in municipalities and politicians; that they are concerned with the well-being of the residents.

In order to map what older people think and involve them in decisions, they need to be recruited and mobilised. The target group is diverse, and we should explore thoroughly which meeting places and channels are most effective when inviting them to participate.

Senior citizen councils – an important partner

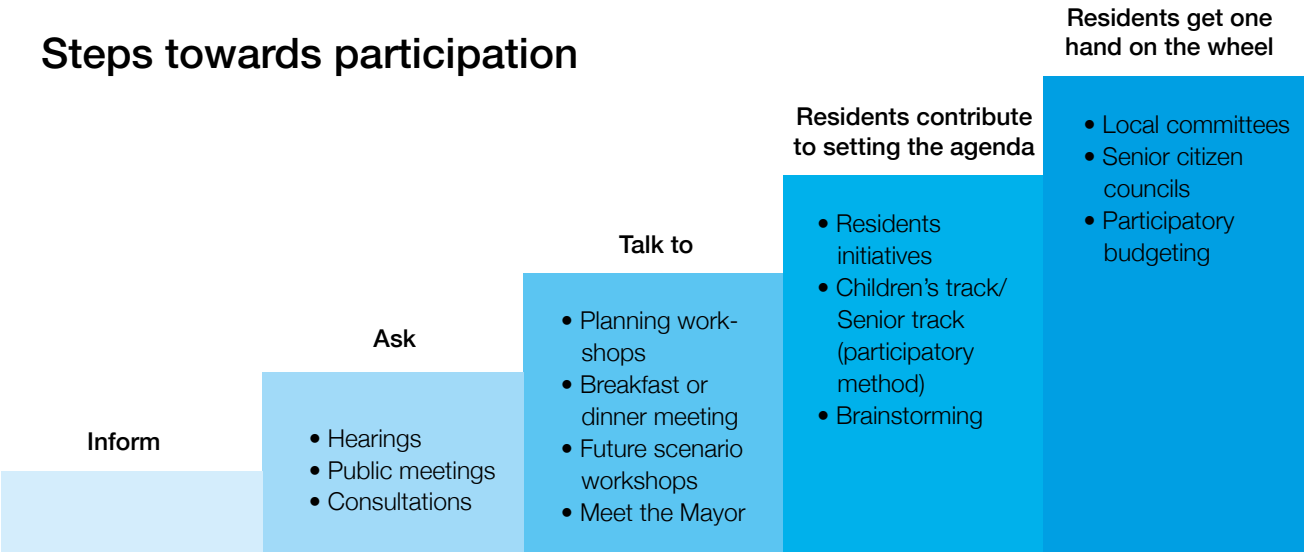
Senior citizen councils are important partners in age-friendly communities, and should be involved early. The council is elected for a four-year period by the municipal council, and the majority of its members must be above the age of 60.

All issues concerning older people should be presented to the council. The goal is to ensure a broad, open and accessible co-creation process. Examples of relevant issues are planning and construction projects, transport, accessibility and healthcare. The council can also raise issues on its own initiative.

Meetings in senior citizen councils are public and information about the time and location for meetings must be accessible. The same applies to the agenda and other documents related to the meeting, which are required to be accessible to everyone. This way, non-members can become familiar with their work. The council is entitled to sufficient secretarial assistance. Good communication and contact points between the senior citizen council and the municipality is important. It may be conducive for the administration to be well represented at the council’s meetings. There are regulations as well as special guidelines for senior citizen councils, with formal provisions and useful tips on how to succeed.

To ensure age-friendly co-creation and open up to more voices, a broad approach is required as well as collaboration with the senior citizen council.

Steps towards participation



EXAMPLE



“Senior Track”

“Senior Track” is a collective term for different methods of senior co-creation, which can be used individually or in combination. They contain a simple questionnaire, an individual or group interview, site visits where concerns are registered, followed by a senior citizen workshop for dissemination, supplementation, correction and discussion of proposals and measures. The methods have been tested, resulting in a report with experiences, advice and recommendations to municipalities.

Senior citizens can contribute to a knowledge base about three key qualities of a location:

- Physical surroundings and outdoor areas: such as buildings, outdoor spaces, squares, roads and footpaths, hiking trails, harbour areas, parks, natural and green spaces
- Social meeting places and cultural activities: such as senior citizen centres, volunteer centres, libraries, churches, senior dances, physical fitness programmes, cafés, organisations, walking clubs, cultural activities, events and experiences.
- Services: such as doctors, dentists, physiotherapy, massage therapy, assistive technology centres, shops, public information, public and private services.

Key qualities of a location should be mapped and evaluated:

- Positive qualities: what needs to be taken care of, so that it does not disappear or diminish?



Photo: OsloMet

- Negative qualities: what reduces the quality of older people’s everyday life and needs to be improved or removed?
- Missing: what are the needs and preferences for things that do not exist today?

“After the covid crisis, involving senior citizens and making a conscious effort to develop age-friendly communities will be even more important! Now, we recognise the importance of key qualities in our immediate surroundings: from social meeting places and cultural activities, to walking paths, green spaces, physical shops and services. Digital options cannot fully substitute social gatherings, practical chores or the sensory experience of city life and outdoor recreation.”

RESPONSIBLE RESEARCHER OSLOMET:
GURI METTE VESTBY

Useful tips for co-creation with older people

Formal co-creation includes using councils and committees, such as senior citizen councils, to promote preferences, interests and input to city district politicians, municipalities or counties. In addition, municipalities can facilitate informal co-creation to ensure that more older people are involved.

Efficient and systematic co-creation requires a high level of awareness and a holistic approach. Some questions you may want to ask:

- *Why* do we want to involve this particular group of citizens?
- *Who* do we want to establish a dialogue with? Senior citizens are not a uniform group, in terms of views, age or functional ability.
- *At what point* in a case or a process do we want feedback? The earlier, the greater the opportunity to influence.

The answers to the questions why, who and when provide a good starting point for choosing how to proceed in order to achieve age-friendly co-creation. It is rare for one initiative to cover everyone we want to reach. In addition, we need to be aware of the barriers older people face, related to for example mobility and digitalisation.

There are several possible arenas for co-creation, such as:

Town hall meetings

Municipalities can invite older residents to town hall meetings, where they give feedback on a specific issue, such as how to develop an age-friendly community. The target group can be invited through regular channels, such as social media, post, local papers, church magazines, housing association information letters, bulletin boards or the Internet. Choose a venue familiar to the target group, to create a sense of safety and belonging. The meetings are most useful if the number of attendees is limited and everyone gets to speak. You can organise several meetings on the same topic.

Co-creation conferences

Co-creation conferences are similar to town hall meetings in terms of planning and implementation. We use the word conference for a one-off event or a larger meeting with a comprehensive topic. Individual topics can be discussed in smaller groups, with moderators and referees facilitating documentation and follow-up.

Breakfast meetings/community meals

Older people can be invited to social events such as a traditional breakfast or community meal, where they can present their views and get to know others in the same situation.

Workshops

In a workshop, you can cooperate to find new approaches and possible solutions to current issues. It is also an opportunity to get in touch with others who live in the same area. Good process management is necessary for participants to feel that their input is valuable. Ensure that everybody is heard, make a summary of the feedback and inform the participants how their input will be followed up.

Video

Participation in town hall meetings or public conferences may be challenging for some. One method of participation/co-creation is to document by video/film the positive aspects of the local environment and the challenges. By providing smartphones and tablets, and offering training, filming can be made easy. Senior citizen centres, volunteer centres and other meeting places can offer training and practical assistance to help seniors film and thus visualize their message.

Photo: Adobe Stock



Think tanks

A think tank for senior citizens may be the result of town hall meetings or co-creation conferences, participants wanting to continue contributing. You can arrange regular think tanks, where groups of engaged seniors exchange ideas and experiences. The group will also be an arena for social contact whereby participants may be of assistance to each other with everyday challenges. By basing discussions on the WHO domains checklists, think tanks can also contribute to the development of age-friendly communities. Volunteer centres or senior citizen centres are potential locations for think tank meetings.

Site visits

It can be useful to organise site visits in the local community, where seniors are invited to join representatives from the administration to map the current situation, identify challenges and possibilities. Organise daytime as well as evening site visits, to uncover all aspects of lighting, safety, accessibility, benches/seats, signage and access to necessary and preferred services. After a site visit, organise workshops where you consult maps of the area and document feedback, to be included in future development planning.

Home visits

Home visits can be important to hear “the silent voices”, those who do not show up to public meetings or get in touch to express their opinion. Several municipalities carry out systematic home visits for health promotion and prevention for older people still living at home.

Important to remember about co-creation

The administrative and political leadership in municipalities must be fully committed to the co-creation/participatory processes. This ensures the provision of competence and resources to follow up on the feedback received. Some municipalities have strategies, visions and overall objectives for co-creation.

There are many levels of co-creation, from consultation processes to participatory budgeting. The issue in question, how many that will be affected by the result may be criteria to consider when determining the level of co-creation. Why do we want to involve the population in a specific context? We also need to consider who the stakeholders are, who needs to be informed, who we need to have a dialogue with, at what time in the process do we require input and how do we manage and follow up the input provided.

The administrative and political leadership in the municipalities must be fully committed to the co-creation/participatory processes.

EXAMPLE



Waffles and info – Trondheim

The Department for Health and Welfare in the Municipality of Trondheim has an unorthodox approach to involving seniors. A caravan is set up in different local areas, inviting seniors in for a waffle and a coffee, accompanied by information. Needs and preferences are registered and information provided. Many seniors stop by. The method has for example been used to gather information about where there is a need for benches and feedback on the municipal master plan.



Photo: Municipality of Trondheim



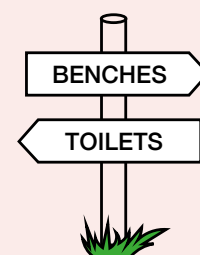
Checklist – communication and co-creation

- ☐ Buildings and services are signposted, making it easy to get information and find your way
- ☐ Older people are regularly consulted when services are developed
- ☐ Older people are visible and positively portrayed in municipal communication
- ☐ Municipalities facilitate and encourage older people to participate in local politics
- ☐ Language and communication channels are designed to reach residents of all ages
- ☐ Municipal information is easy to read and adapted to reduced functional ability
- ☐ Municipalities visit established meeting places for seniors to inform and ensure co-creation and feedback
- ☐ Telephone answering services provide instructions slowly and clearly, including how to repeat the message at any time
- ☐ Electronic equipment, such as ticket machines and tools for registration, have large buttons and big lettering and adapted instructions for use
- ☐ Computers and the Internet are accessible to all in public offices and libraries
- ☐ There are activities/courses for older people who want to learn how to use the Internet and social media
- ☐ Information about health services, cultural activities and leisure activities for older people is easily accessible for the target group
- ☐ Older people are a priority target group for participation in all areas of society and all municipal services

SOURCE: WHO

*The checklists in this handbook are intended as good advice.
It is not implied that everything is possible to implement.*

How to design age-friendly communities



An important goal for age-friendly communities is that older citizens perceive their local environment as safe, inclusive and accessible. Universal design is a prerequisite for developing good neighbourhoods for everyone. By focussing on age-friendliness, we can create an outdoor environment where it is easy to get around on foot, and where there is room for both activity and rest.

Age-friendly development is always local

Age-friendly development of cities and communities starts by asking “How do we make sure older people can be mobile?” and “How do we make sure older people have places they want to visit and where they feel welcome?”.

The place where you spend most of your time on a daily basis determines your opportunities for activity. Thus, age-friendly development starts in the neighbourhoods where people live, shop, walk and meet. A few simple adaptations, and the local shop can become a more age-friendly place to meet. Through planning, we can ensure that the services people use in their everyday lives are located next to each other. When the school, post office, pharmacy and library are located in the same area, it contributes to intergenerational contact.

Development starts with current spaces and facilities

The best way to start age-friendly development is to examine current spaces and facilities, and asking older people in the local community what they appreciate, what they miss and what could become more age-friendly. Perhaps the local supermarket could provide some chairs and let visitors use the toilet? Perhaps a couple of well-placed benches is what is required for for more people to use the walking paths? Is there a lack of informal meeting places where people can come and go as they please? Could disused areas, such as the stretch along the road to and from the supermarket, be developed into a new space for social interaction and activity, with room for families as well as older people?

Is the most popular venue in the area accessible to all, and does everyone feel welcome? Is it easy to get there, and can you meet other people by chance close to where activities take place? Are certain activities and offers lacking? Or are the activities on offer extensive, but located in inaccessible locations? In some cases, physical chan-

ges are required, whereas in other cases new activities are needed.

Use the age-friendly lens when planning new projects

The purpose of the Planning and Building Act is to promote sustainable development in the best interest of individuals, society and future generations. Combined with the demographic development in Norway, this speaks to the necessity for municipalities to facilitate age-friendly development. This is relevant for all municipal sectors and services, and requires a conscious approach and sense of responsibility in the entire organisation. Cross-sectoral collaboration and a coordinated age-friendly approach to building projects



An age-friendly community is based on the principles of a sustainable society as described in *National Expectations for Regional and Municipal Planning* (2019–2023), *Public Health Report – Good Lives in a Safe Society* (2018–2019) and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Local downtown areas and municipal centres should be developed to ensure that people can access necessary services on foot or by bike. Public transport, recreational areas and walking paths that connect the area and the municipality are also important.

and service development, will be very valuable to local communities in the decades to come.

Does the location of new housing, the new school or supermarket contribute to age-friendly development? Does it make it easier for people of different generations to meet in everyday life?

Through zoning regulations, municipalities can require that indoor areas in apartment buildings be set aside as informal meeting places. These are important measures, which can prevent social isolation among older people.

The needs of older people as a focus for design

Advanced age can present physical challenges and, for many, impaired endurance. A steep and long path can prevent older people from choosing the longer hike. If the distance to the supermarket is more than 500 metres, and uphill, it may be a challenge if there are not sufficient number of benches, or if the benches are too low, making it difficult to sit down and get up.

In order to facilitate participation and activity for all, it is important to understand the needs of residents and translate them into physical design. Understanding the needs can help develop innovative solutions and improved architectural quality, creating age-friendly surroundings that are functional for everyone.

Pleasant, age-friendly surroundings enable social interaction, but also offers the possibility of solitude. You can be independent, manage activities, be challenged and have social interactions. Where people of different ages meet, share knowledge and experiences, they can become mutual resources for each other.

Universal design

Universal design facilitates an inclusive society where everyone can participate and be active on equal terms, without the need for adaptation or special design. If a holistic approach is taken early in the planning process, it enables the development of one universally designed solution that includes everyone.

EXAMPLE

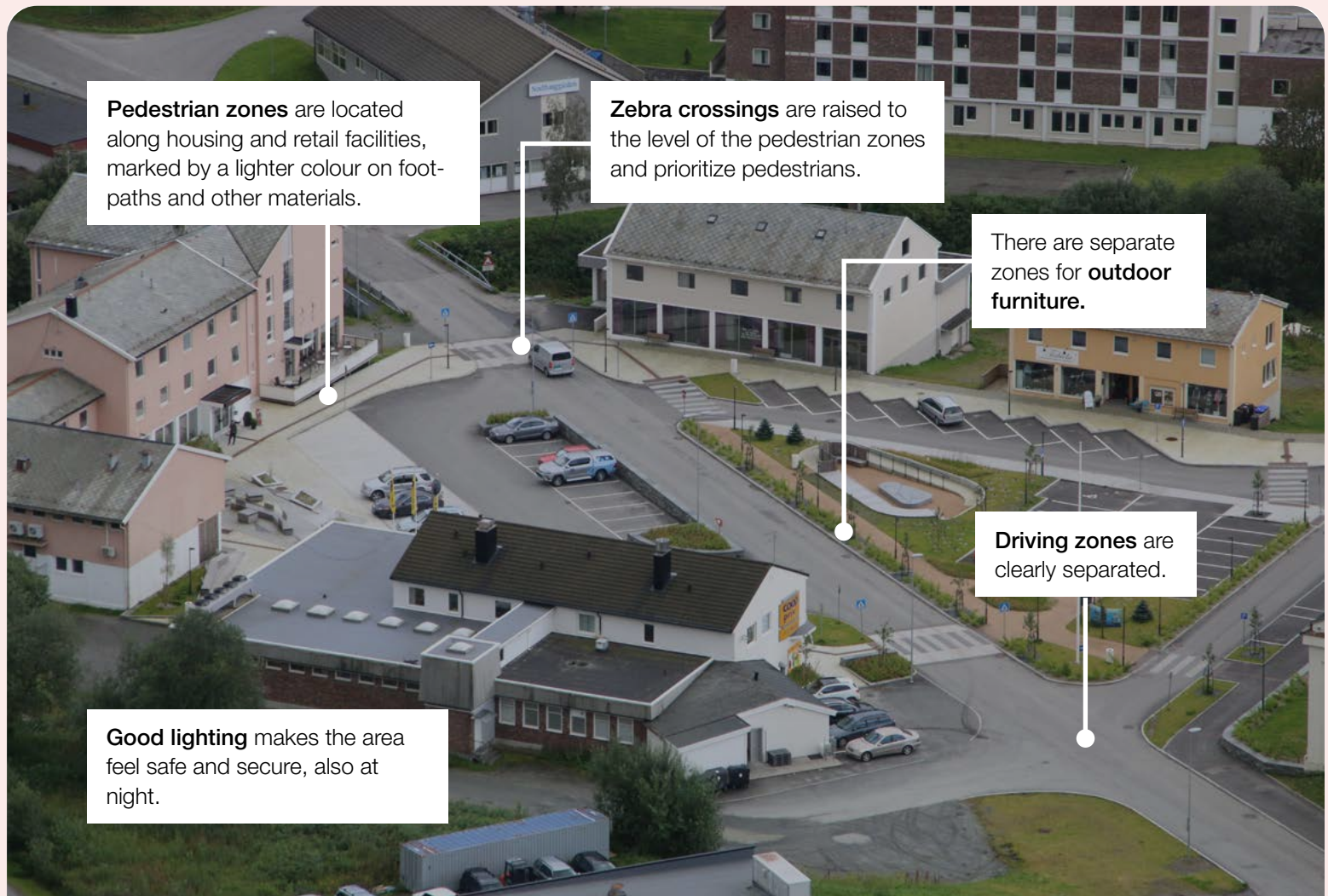


Hafrsfjord walking trail – Stavanger

The Municipality of Stavanger has designed a spectacular walking trail along the Hafrsfjord shores. The trail is universally designed. Hardpan gravel makes wheels roll easily. There are many benches along the way, good lighting and signage. The trail starts in Møllebukta, by Fritz Røed's monument "Swords in Rock" on historic ground, continues along the shore to Hafrsfjord Bridge, connecting the municipalities of Stavanger and Sola to the west. There are many opportunities for experiences along the shore, for example where the trail cuts through the rock by the fjord. In 2017, the trail received the DOGA Award for Design and Architecture.



Photo: Fredrik Naumann/Felix Features



Downtown Glomfjord

EXAMPLE



When the Municipality of Meløy upgraded downtown Glomfjord, the focus was on universal design and age-friendly elements. The result is an inclusive and accessible area for all. The area is also ice-free throughout the winter, encouraging more activity all year round.

Universal design in age-friendly communities

Planning age-friendly local communities should be centred around accessibility and be communities that are easy to navigate and intuitive to get around. Institutions such as schools, kindergartens and services like libraries, health and welfare centres, shops, cafés and restaurants can all benefit from being located in close proximity.

In order to facilitate orientation, areas can be designed so as to make sure the main entrance to public buildings, businesses and residential buildings all face the same square.

Green spaces

Green spaces are crucial to public health and wellbeing. Such spaces can be parks, green urban spaces or outdoor recreational areas. Footpaths to playgrounds and recreational areas invite us to seek them out and make use of them. Solid surfaces in the pedestrian zones enable easy access for people who use walkers, wheelchairs, bicycles or prams.

Sufficient number of benches in the outdoor spaces create informal meeting places. The best locations for benches are close to areas of activity. By facilitating for rest and recreation, even people with impaired functional ability may enjoy observing and taking part in activities. It is important to have enough space for a walker, a pram etc adjacent to the benches.



Accessibility

It is advantageous with short distances between important destinations in the local community. Benches that are located at regular intervals, for example every 200 metres constitute predictable seating options and may encourage older people to venture for longer walks. If the footpath or shortcut is steep, compensating measures, such as handrails and benches will facilitate access.

Public toilets

To many older people, when considering going out, it is important with easy access to public toilets in outdoor areas and that they can be found at regular intervals. When designing or revitalising public spaces, it would be beneficial to consider the construction of a public toilet.

Lighting

In order to create an atmosphere of safety in the use of outdoor areas all year, lighting is of the utmost importance. It is important to consider which lighting is the most effective, and to plan for how the lighting in an area can be organised hierarchically. This in turn provides a better overview of main streets and side streets, and improves orientation.

EXAMPLE



Photo: Municipality of Trondheim



Green spaces: A footpath along a trickling creek provides sensory stimulation and facilitates orientation in the terrain.

Photo: Synlig.no



Accessibility: Benches located at intervals of 200 metres provide predictable seating.

Photo: Municipality of Trondheim



Lighting: In order to create an atmosphere of safety in the use of outdoor areas all year, lighting is of the utmost importance

Photo: Øystein Stangeland



Toilets: To many older people, when considering going out, it is important with easy access to public toilets in outdoor areas and that they can be found at regular intervals.



Photo: Rune Hagen

Meeting places indoors – here in a shopping centre.

A good age-friendly meeting place

Meeting places can be public squares, parks, urban spaces, outdoor/indoor spaces in residential areas and in housing associations. Sometimes the local shop becomes a meeting place. Entrance areas will often be bustling with people coming and going, where one might be stopping for a chat.

Age-friendly communities are created by investing in the holistic development of local communities

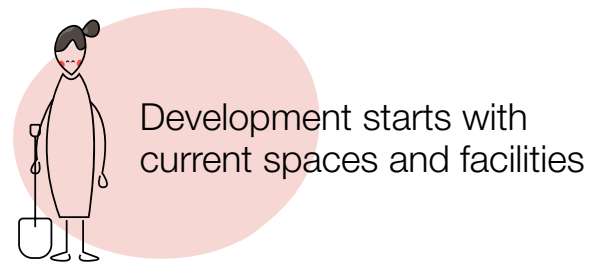
In order to make local communities attractive to older residents, it is important to have an age-friendly perspective when planning the overall structure of areas in the municipality or region. Furthermore, to consider the structure of

An age-friendly meeting place is an attractive space that is inclusive and invites to activity and recreation, stimulates the senses and provides a space for intergenerational contact.

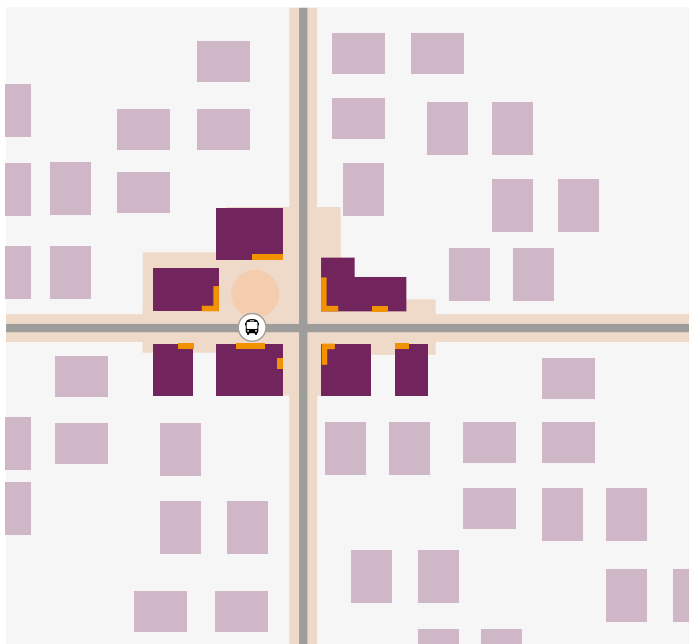
the city centre/municipal centre and the design of buildings and urban spaces.

The location and functionality of buildings should be centred around public outdoor spaces that enables easier, safer and more comfortable use for those who walk, cycle and use public transport, in contrast to the previous prioritisation of private cars.

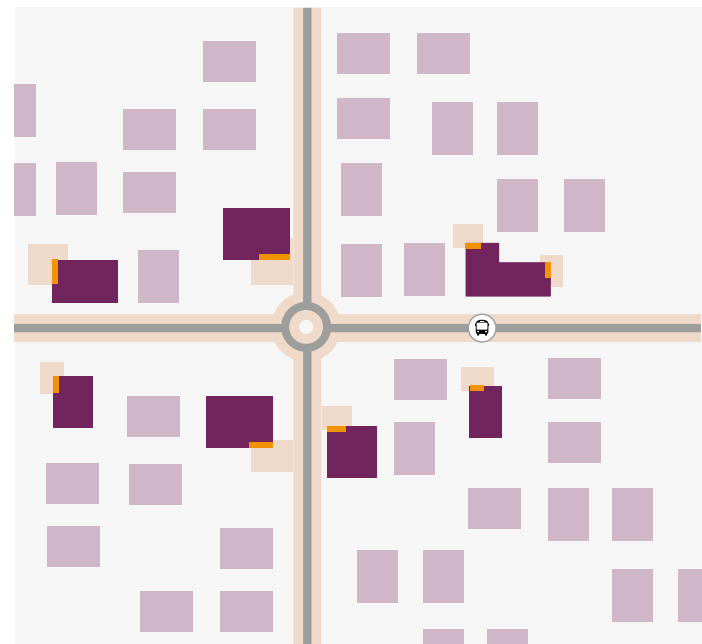
Planning for buildings and functionality across generations and across activities enables more intergenerational contact and activity. Municipal buildings can also be planned so as to enable increased use and thus become meeting places in an age-friendly community.



Overall model of a local environment adapted to pedestrians:



A pedestrian-friendly environment is well connected and it is preferable and easy **to walk** between the different destinations.



As opposed to a local environment where it is most preferable and easy to travel **by car**.

III. TMunicipality of Trondheim

and recreational spaces, natural orientation lines and solid surfaces. Requirements may also be included concerning placement of benches, easy and intuitive access from the main road to the main entrance, as well as accessibility and orientation in the outdoor plan.

34

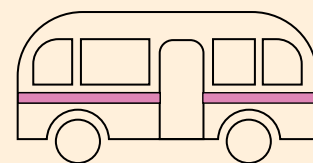


Checklist for age-friendly meeting places

- ☐ Centrally located
- ☐ Proximity to other activities: shops, cafe, library
- ☐ Entrances facing a common square
- ☐ Several ways to get there
- ☐ Universally designed
- ☐ Benches: well placed, with the correct height of the seat
- ☐ Opportunity for intergenerational meetings: older people, adults, children and adolescents
- ☐ Physical activity, especially encouraging blood circulation and balance
- ☐ Social activities: boccia, gardening, chess
- ☐ Toilets
- ☐ Good lighting for safety and orientation
- ☐ Vegetation for sensory experiences and shade
- ☐ Shelter
- ☐ Walking trails that start and stop in the same place

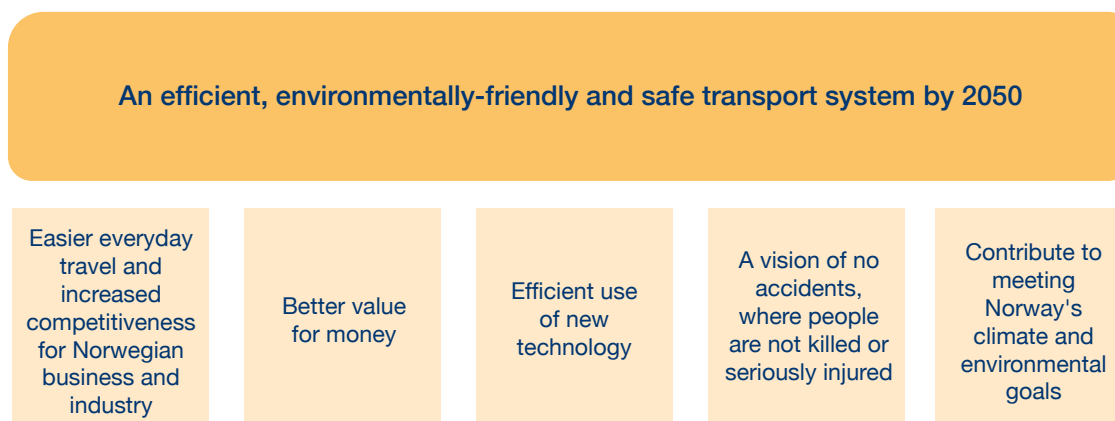
*The checklists in this handbook are intended as good advice.
It is not implied that everything is possible to implement.*

Transport in age-friendly communities



Many older people experience a sense of freedom when they retire. They have the time and resources to be active in new arenas. They can travel, learn new things, volunteer, or spend time with friends and grandchildren. Accessible transport is crucial for older people to be able to benefit from the municipal services and activities.

Age-friendly development of cities and communities can be based on the questions «How do we ensure that older people get out and about?» and «How do we make sure older people have places they want to visit and where they feel welcome?»



The Norwegian National Transport Plan (NTP) has an overall objective of developing an efficient, environmentally friendly and safe transport system by 2050. Easier everyday travel is the objective for all modes of transport. This is conducive to age-friendly development, planning that contributes to improved health and bicycle-friendly planning. Furthermore, it supports the development of more livable and environmentally friendly cities and high density housing at public transport hubs.

In order to be active community members, older people depend on good transport solutions. That is to say, public transport, senior transport services and walkable neighborhoods, not only private cars.

Efforts are constantly being made to ensure that public transport systems are universally designed. This can increase accessibility and make it easier for older people to travel by public transport.

For some older people, adapted transport services for people with disabilities – the so-called “TT” scheme – can contribute to a better everyday life. However, this is an expensive service. Although this is meant to be a scheme for disabled people who cannot travel by public transport, some TT users may benefit just as much from other types

of flexible transport services where bookings are made in advance.

Flexible transport services where bookings are made in advance can potentially replace both public transport and TT transport for parts of the population residing outside the most central areas and in sparsely populated areas. These services can be perceived as a better option for many people by way of reduced walking distance and assistance with carrying bags. For others having to book in advance, or the potential reduction in daily departures, can be considered a disadvantage.

It can be difficult for older people to adapt to major changes and new solutions in public transport. This can impact how much they travel and how social they can be. At the same time, self-driving cars and more automation could potentially constitute more accessible transport for senior citizens who are able to adapt to it.

There is great variation in public transport services in different parts of Norway, in terms of how it is organised, the reach of public transport lines, number of passengers and means of transport. Thus, measures and incentives that are suitable for creating age-friendly transport services will vary.

How to develop age-friendly transport services

The focus on affordable and accessible transport is central to creating age-friendly communities. Regardless of how many activities and services are on offer in the local community, it is fundamental to our independence and quality of life that transport is accessible and timely.

The national ambitions to reduce the use of cars in urban areas necessitate new transport solutions. Many older people do not drive a car and are completely dependent on walking, cycling or using public transport. Affordable and accessible transport is crucial for older people to be able to make use of services and be included in the local community. The design and organisation of the transport system is therefore essential for whether and how older people can participate in various activities.

A journey begins as you walk out the door and include all elements and means of transport before arriving at the destination. Thus, it is important to plan for accessibility, universal design and inclusive solutions when designing:

- Pedestrian and bicycle paths
- Pavements and pedestrian streets
- Bus stops and terminals
- Intersections
- Overpasses and underpasses including bridges
- Furnishing and service functions (toilets, information boards and more)
- Stairs, ramps and elevators, preferably in proximity
- Lighting
- Information (maps, digital screens / displays, speakers, signs and more)
- Means of transport (train, bus, railway, plane, ferry) and the transition between transport stop /terminal and vehicle.

“Affordable and accessible transport is crucial for older people to be able to benefit from the municipal services and activities”

When developing age-friendly transport, it is important to start mapping the needs and travel patterns of older people. The municipal administration, voluntary associations and organisations can be involved and contribute to this work. The current situation can be mapped by looking at the entire travel chain from door to door. Each individual element of the transport system combined determines whether the transport system is universally designed. By letting selected groups test the current travel options and applying their experiences, we will ascertain whether the relevant groups have sufficient and accessible information about destinations and timetables and if the transport is adapted to people with special needs.



Prioritise simple measures that provide great value for many



Ruter age-friendly transport (RAT)

EXAMPLE



RAT has been developed in collaboration between the public transport company Ruter and the City of Oslo. The service is so far available in the districts of Nordre Aker, Sagene, Vestre Aker and Ullern, Monday to Saturday, 10.00–18.00, for everyone aged 67 and older. The transport is booked one hour before the desired departure time at the latest and the price is the same as for a senior concessionary ticket. Passengers can book transport from door to door within a defined area, and there is sufficient time and assistance for embarkation and disembarkation. All vehicles are accessible for walkers and wheelchairs and the passenger may also bring a friend. The service can be booked via telephone or an app, and Ruter is continuously working on adapting the app according to the needs of older people and to offer other options for booking and information.

A next step may be to clarify the distribution of responsibilities and tasks between the municipality, county and state where improvements are possible. Can they do more in a joint effort rather than separately? Once the areas of responsibility have been clarified, priorities can be made and tailored solutions may be developed. It is worth considering the popular destinations of an ageing population when developing a strategy for facilitating transport and upgrading transport stops based on these destinations.

“If your travel requires a transfer, it is not sufficient that only one leg of the trip is accessible”, says universal design advisor Tomas Nesheim. Here he is about to disembark the ferry and continue by bus to the railway station in Stavanger.



Photo: Fredrik Naumann/Felix Features

EXAMPLE



Good examples

There is an increasing focus on environmentally-friendly urban development, which simultaneously facilitates age-friendly city and community development. Below you will find some good examples of municipalities that offer transport solutions for an older population. The common denominator is flexibility.



Trondheim: “AtB 67 plus”

“AtB 67pluss” is a two-year pilot project offering age-friendly transport in one area of Trondheim. The project is inspired by Ruter’s similar service in Oslo, as well as in-depth interviews with older people. A series of interviews established that older people were concerned with predictability and seamless transfers with public transport. Furthermore, they were positive to using apps and means of payment other than cash and payment cards. AtB utilizes electric vehicles that are adapted for walkers and wheelchairs. The service is available Monday to Friday, 09.30-17.30, and the price is the same as for an ordinary senior concessionary ticket. Passengers can travel between designated service points.

Sauda: Pick me up!

The service «Pick me up» is the first of its kind in the region of Rogaland. Passengers book transport online or by phone, wait outside their home at the agreed time and get on board a car or minibus. Once on board, there will in most cases be several other passengers already. Passengers pay the standard bus fare and are transported to where they have requested in the booking. En route, the car / minibus can pick up and drop off other passengers.



Photo: Kolombus



Photo: Adobe Stock

Folldal: aiming for smart coordination

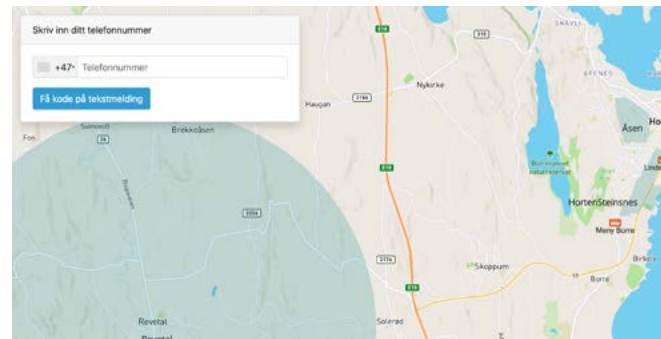
«Smart Transport in Rural Areas» aims to create a coordinated system for transport planning, where resources in passenger and goods transport are used more efficiently. The objective is to create smarter and accessible transport services where people live, enabling people to live in rural areas without a driver's licence and a car. The Municipality of Folldal, Innlandet County Council, «EnTur», national travel planner for public transport, and the Innlandet Hospital are collaborating on the three-year project that started in 2019. «Smart Transport in Rural Areas» considers transport in the broadest sense, such as school transport, patient travel, passenger transport, adapted transport services for people with special needs (TT), tourism, bicycle tourists, commuter transport, food delivery, transport of biological material, postal transport and other goods delivery. Logistics is a key

issue along with user-friendliness. Coordination of transport is considered environmentally friendly and important for sustainable development.

Finding practical, flexible and good solutions can be demanding in locations where few people use transport services on a daily basis. Services and solutions need to be adapted to local contexts and take into account local challenges and needs. In island municipalities, it may be more efficient to make a stop only when there actually are passengers, while in urban areas, expanding the route may be more relevant. In areas with low population density, different types of flexible transport that can be booked in advance may be more age-friendly, as well as reduce the need for transport solutions for people with special needs.

Vestfold and Telemark

Vestfold Public Transport Service (VKT) has launched the project VKT Booking. The project is a new approach to public transport in Vestfold and Telemark County. Transport by minibus is booked via an app, Internet or phone, and departs from outside the home at the agreed time. The minibus picks up other passengers who have booked a trip. The ticket price is similar to regular public transport, but with this service, passengers are transported to where they have requested in the booking. The trip can be booked up to ten minutes before the desired departure time. If the bus is already en route or there are no more seats available, passengers will be offered the next



available departure time. There are no restrictions on the number of booked trips per day. The service is currently available in the areas of Steinsnes and Åsen in the Municipality of Horten. In the Municipality of Tønsberg, the service is available within a radius of five kilometres from Revetal centre.

Flexible transport in Østfold

Østfold Public Transport Service has developed the service «Flexx» where various transport services which may be booked in advance complement the regular public transport services. The service is promoted as «a mixture of taxi and bus», and the bus transports passengers from their home to their preferred destination. In 2018, the county council declared that Flexx would be free of charge until further notice.

Flexx is for everyone, but the driver assists those who need it with embarking and disembarking and with carrying shopping bags in and out of the bus (if needed). Flexx stops where passengers have requested pick-ups or drop-offs, thus the travel time



varies. For residents in the city centre, there are designated Flexx transport stops, and it is also possible to travel between transport stops in the city centre.

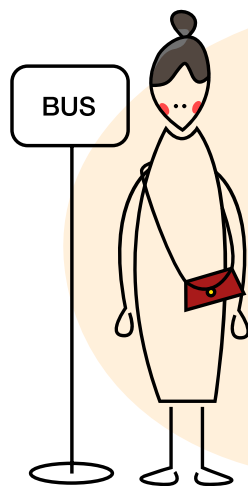
The service follows a predetermined route at regular times. The flexible stops are determined by the number of booked trips. The booking must be made no later than two hours before departure. The Flexx service is now also available in the counties of Møre and Romsdal and Finnmark.



Checklist for age-friendly transport

- ☐ Volunteers in the municipality can assist to increase mobility among older people.
- ☐ Adequate public transport services are available to places where older people need to go, alternatively there is access to flexible transport services, that may be booked in advance.
- ☐ Information about transportation is adjusted and tested on the target group.
- ☐ Private transport solutions that may be more widely informed about or that may be extended
- ☐ Complete and accessible information is provided to users about routes, timetables and special needs facilities
- ☐ Public transportation is reliable and frequent, including at night and on weekends and holidays.
- ☐ Vehicles are clean, well-maintained, accessible, not overcrowded and have priority seating that is respected.
- ☐ Drivers stop at designated stops and beside the curb to facilitate boarding and wait for passengers to be seated before starting to drive.
- ☐ Transport stops and stations are conveniently located, accessible, safe, clean, well lit, clear and sufficient signage and adequate seating and shelter.
- ☐ A voluntary transport service is available where public transportation is too limited.
- ☐ Priority parking and drop-off spots for people with special needs are available and respected.
- ☐ Public spaces, squares and urban spaces are inclusive.

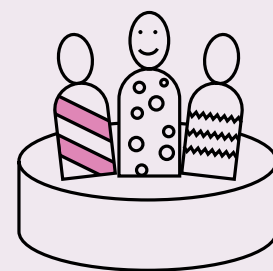
*The checklists in this handbook are intended as good advice.
It is not implied that everything is possible to implement.*



In order for older people to participate, be active and included in the community, accessible transport is crucial.



Social participation



There is no typical older person. Their interests and needs are as diverse as they are for other age groups. Co-creation can lead to many good solutions for how older people can participate in society. When life changes, older people can both contribute and benefit from being resources in their community.

Age-friendly cultural activities

To ensure that cultural activities in the municipality meet the diverse needs of an ageing population, co-creation is a good way to start mapping what is available and what is lacking. In cooperation with older people, established cultural institutions can find new opportunities for expanding their audience.

Daytime events appeal to many older people, who may feel safer than venturing out at night. Engaging and involving older people in the development of programmes and content will ensure more age-friendly activities. Many older people in Norway are affluent customers, part of the silver economy and cultural institutions can strengthen their business by targeting this group to a larger extent.

Many older people go through drastic changes in their life situation, such as the loss of a spouse or friends. As a result, they need to reorient themselves and find new activities and interests they can cultivate. For many, however, it is a barrier to seek out new arenas and activities that have not previously been a part of their life. Inspired by the age-friendly cultural programme in Manchester, the age-friendly Oslo programme established a network of cultural ambassadors. These age-friendly cultural ambassadors were a group of older people with a special interest in cultural activities, who invited and assisted other older people to participate more in cultural activities. The collaboration started with the Norwegian Opera and Ballet. Making their performances more accessible to everyone is part of their social outreach programme. The Philharmonic Orchestra and the Oslo Concert Hall organised performances during daytime and included older people in the planning of programmes and accessibility.

Venues such as libraries, youth centres, sports clubs and community centres can be used for a range of activities. As a starting point, use the services that already exist, and through co-creation, new activities can be developed, often through voluntary work and according to interest.

Many activities are organised for specific age groups. It is worth exploring whether some activities can be organised across generations so that both young and old can enjoy them together. New activities may emerge in the interaction between generations.

The most important thing is perhaps that cultural activities reflect the diversity and not the stereotypes of older people, which will also benefit older people of other cultural backgrounds.



In age-friendly communities, focus on the social environment is as important as accessibility and inclusion in the physical environment. Even if you have a home, accessible outdoor areas and transport, participating in activities, feeling valuable and welcome have great benefits for your health and well-being. A good life is, for most of us, a life spent in the company of other people. Ageing involves physical and functional changes, but also social transitions when a spouse or close friends pass away, and when activities enjoyed previously in life may not be possible anymore. Thus, participation in the community, both for one's own benefit and that of others is an important issue when developing age-friendly communities.



Photo: Municipality of Malvik

EXAMPLE



Festivals of Arts for Seniors

The idea of a festival of arts for older people was launched in the local newspaper in Malvik in 2011, by a volunteer who proposed a cultural event for senior citizens based on the model of the Norwegian Youth Festivals of Arts. Since then, a voluntary committee has organised the Festivals of Arts for Seniors every year with the Municipality of Malvik as a partner.

The festival is over the course of a week: Arts and crafts exhibition, literary visits/readings at the library, choir performances at health centres, quiz night to exercise the brain, and a grand finale with seniors' day and performance in the culture centre. In Malvik, the Hommelvik Health Centre is located next door to the culture centre, and the public can walk across the glass-covered street in slippers and indoor clothes.

Culture contributes to quality and joy of life and has a health-promoting effect: Research shows that participating in cultural activities, both as a performer or as part of the audience, helps us to live longer!



EXAMPLE



Intergenerational choir

As an age-friendly country, Ireland has many good examples of intergenerational projects. A great example is an intergenerational choir with members of all ages. The initiative started as a choir, bringing different generations together through song. It has since developed into several other activities and initiatives enjoyed by young and old. The choir organises trips, excursions and enjoy a number of different activities. We also have several intergenerational choirs throughout Norway.

EXAMPLE



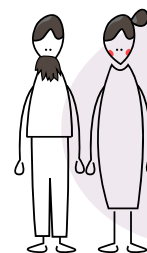
Strømmen library – home library service

Strømmen library has a staff member working in a 20 % position who runs a home library service for individuals and institutions. Individual borrowers are mainly older people who have difficulty accessing the library and using digital services. The employee communicates with the borrowers on the phone and delivers books and audiobooks to their home once a week. Some institutions are also visited by the home library service every three months. The librarian delivers books and does readings. In conjunction with the covid pandemic in 2020, the library participated at the volunteer centre in Lillestrøm and their delivery service for food and other products.



Voluntary work is social participation and a resource

Another important aspect of social participation is voluntary work; a prerequisite for a well functioning society providing all residents with necessary services. Voluntary work is an arena for inclusion, democracy, culture, sports, empowerment and play for children and adolescents, older people and everyone who wants to participate in the local community. The term voluntary work is used both for unpaid work and contributions of the non-profit sector. It is an important principle that voluntary work does not replace public services, but is a supplement.



Recognise the diversity of older people

EXAMPLE



Buddy intergenerational meetings – Samnanger

“Kompis” (“Buddy”) is an after-school activity for pupils in grades 5-7 every Wednesday of the school year. They are offered meals, extracurricular activities and games. Seven adults are present every time, including five pensioners, among them Ada Haugen who turns 91 this autumn (2020). Ada has been involved in the initiative for the last six years and enjoys being with children and other adults so much that Wednesday has become the best day of the week. «It's nice to be of use to others.» The children think it is great to have Ada as a friend and the adults are happy to have her on the team.



Photo: Kristi Mjelstad



“Grannehjelpa” walking club

EXAMPLE



“Grannehjelpa”, the volunteer centre and the walking club in Kvam, organise walks for seniors. The walks do not require participants in great physical condition. Ten tour guides plan and carry out weekly walks together with the three walking clubs “Fotalaget”, “Trakkatrimmen” and “Karatrakk”. The walks take place all year round and without registration, and they vary in length and degree of difficulty. Fotalaget and Karatrakk walk at a good pace in varied terrain, often on forest roads and trails. Trakkatrimmen has a more moderate pace, in areas with a more stable surface. All groups focus on social interaction, shared experiences and good conversations.

Packed lunches are enjoyed along the way. Some take part to discover new hiking destinations, others for exercise and activity. The participants come back week after week, year after year. Going for a walk in company meets many needs, and it is addictive.

The power of older people in voluntary work

Voluntary work can contribute to joy of life and public health, and is an important health-promoting and preventive measure. When we ask older people why they are not involved in voluntary work, the answer is often: «We have not been asked to participate.»

It is therefore important that voluntary organisations and associations actively inform and invite potential members.

Voluntary work is practised by all age groups, but older people are a very important voluntary resource. According to the Association of NGOs in Norway, 63% of the population were volunteers in 2019, and there is a larger proportion among those over 60 years of age who do voluntary work more often than in the rest of the population.

When aiming to recruit and retain older people as active members, it may be necessary to evaluate if there are barriers for participation. Lack of transport can be a barrier and for seniors on a minimum (state) pension, their financial situation can be a barrier to participation.

Volunteering and voluntary work are often associated with organised volunteering and organisations such as the Red Cross, the Church City Mission, Norwegian People's Aid, the Norwegian Trekking Association, the Norwegi-

an Women's Public Health Association, sports clubs and children's and youth organisations. Although associations and organisations are important in most communities, a large part of the voluntary contributions is unorganised – by someone who cares, or who sees the need and wants to contribute.

“According to the Association of NGOs in Norway, 63% of the population were volunteers in 2019 and there is a larger proportion among those over 60 years of age who do voluntary work more often than in the rest of the population.”

The senior house in Nordre Aker facilitates intergenerational contact.



Photo: Ann-Cathrin Holm, City of Oslo

Recruitment and follow-up of volunteers

Commitment and support are two main factors for successful volunteering. There needs to be a system in place for recruitment, connecting volunteers, follow up and ultimately discontinuing contracts or projects.

There are still a number of volunteers who require a physical meeting place, local affiliation and analogue solutions; this is especially true for volunteers aged 60+.

Prior to recruiting volunteers, it is important to map needs, clarify expectations and systemise tasks. Needs and preferences, who will participate, not least who will coordinate the work, must be clarified. It can be useful to have a team leader for the volunteers: a motivator, cultural communicator and bridge-builder. Once you have recruited volunteers, it is important to give them the necessary training and guidance. A declaration of confidentiality must be reviewed and signed and it must be clarified when, how often, and for how long, volunteers will commit. Age does not determine one's resources. More important is

background, experience, motivation, hobbies and interests, network and competence. An 87 year old volunteer can just as easily guide a 67 year old in the use of smartphones as the other way around.

There are many different ways to recruit volunteers, and many arenas you can recruit from. Some examples are housing associations, senior associations, congregations, sports clubs, senior centres, volunteer centres and schools. All groups in society may wish to contribute: unemployed, single people, older people, young people, refugees and others. It is important to advertise in a clear and specific language. When looking for a male activity friend, the advertisement should be directed towards specific tasks and preferably something that appeals to men such as «someone to go fishing with».

It is important that the individual volunteer receives the guidance he or she needs. This may entail meetings and conversations, courses, lectures or sharing of experiences with other volunteers on how everyone is progressing, questions and feedback. By having close contact with the volunteers, it will be easier to detect early if someone is not suitable for voluntary work and make sure that the commitment is discontinued.

Young and old volunteering together

Some associations and organisations have children and young people as their target group whereas others target older people. At the same time, many organisations and activities are open to all age groups. Part of the age-friendly approach can be to collaborate with local civil society to develop and market activities across generations.



There are many different types of tasks volunteers can undertake. Some examples are:

- accompanying assistant
- course instructor
- meal friend
- hiking buddy
- activity friend
- homework assistant
- training instructor
- tour guide
- backup grandmother/father
- cooking instructor
- janitor function
- host/hostess
- choral director or leader of other activities

Municipalities and the voluntary sector

KS has encouraged all municipalities and county municipalities to adopt a local voluntary-sector policy. Municipalities map the local voluntary resources, and develop a local voluntary-sector policy together with volunteers in the community, before the plan is approved politically and administratively.

The local voluntary-sector policy can be inspired by “Platform on interaction and cooperation between the voluntary and municipal sectors”.

Volunteer centres or other local organisations may have a responsibility to ensure that volunteers receive training in the tasks they are to perform, HSE and duty of confidentiality, obtaining a police certificate when relevant and assessing the need for insurance of volunteers. Municipalities can also establish agreements with these organisations and possibly commit to financial support for the follow-up of the volunteers.

Many municipalities have defined which of their departments is responsible for voluntary work and all municipalities provide funding to voluntary organisations and associations. Some municipalities have employed their own volunteer coordinators, while other municipalities delegate these tasks to volunteer centres.



Older people are a very important voluntary resource



The Ten Commandments for the Voluntary Sector

More than 300 organisations have endorsed these commandments that have been sent out to all municipalities:

1. Know the voluntary sector in your municipality
2. Adopt a cross-sectoral local voluntary-sector policy
3. Recognise the intrinsic value of volunteering
4. Simplification contributes to more volunteering
5. Facilitate self-development for volunteers
6. Create a dialogue with the voluntary sector
7. Recognise and support the added value of volunteering
8. Provide free funds
9. Do not compete with the voluntary sector
10. Create predictability for the voluntary sector

REFERENCE: THE ASSOCIATION OF NGOS IN NORWAY



Checklist for social participation

- ☐ Venues for events and activities are conveniently located, accessible, well-lit and easily reached by public transport.
- ☐ Events are intergenerational.
- ☐ Thorough information about activities and events is provided, including details about accessibility of facilities/buildings and transportation options for older people.
- ☐ A wide variety of activities is offered to appeal to a diverse population of older people.
- ☐ Gatherings including older people are held in various local community venues, such as recreation centres, schools, libraries, community centres and parks.
- ☐ There is consistent outreach to include people at risk of social isolation.
- ☐ Older people are recognised by the community for their past as well as their present contributions.

*The checklists in this handbook are intended as good advice.
It is not implied that everything is possible to implement.*

Housing in an ageing society



The demographic challenges we are facing cannot be met by building new independent living apartments or residential care homes. These are costly solutions in terms of investment and not least management, operation and maintenance. By way of strategic planning and regulation, municipalities can facilitate cohousing for older people on suitable locations.

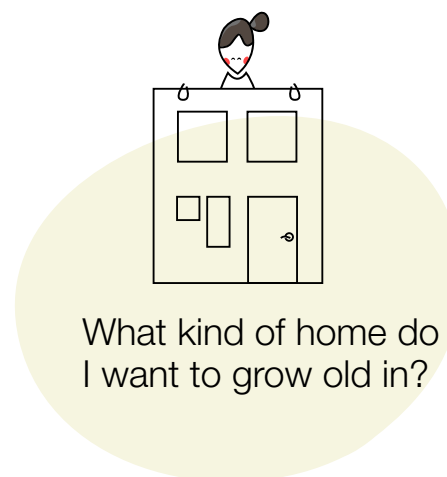
How to promote more sustainable housing solutions?

The municipal sector plays a pivotal role in terms of meeting the future need for more sustainable housing solutions. Through good urban planning, co-creation with residents and the voluntary sector, municipalities can mobilise resources and reduce the need for residential care and health services.

In this way, we can ensure that people who need these services in the future have access to them at the right time and with the necessary quality. More than ever, it is important that we mobilise resources outside the municipal budgets and agencies to promote public health and age-friendly communities.

Norwegians spend NOK 80 billion a year on renovations of private homes. However, these investments do little to adapt private homes to a (probable) future life situation with greater health challenges, less mobility and the need for care services in the home. Home improvement and maintenance is the responsibility of the individual homeowner. At the same time, there are high expectations of the contributions from the municipal and public sector in terms of adaptations of housing. This may entail municipalities expecting residents to make larger investments in order to be able to stay at home as long as possible. For many people in need of care services, assistance from the municipality or state to adapt their own home would greatly improve quality of life and create more independence.

This chapter provides some advice and tips on what municipalities can and should do to ensure a larger proportion of age-friendly housing and communities.



What can municipalities do?

The design of a home is crucial in ensuring independence and quality of life. Furthermore, the location is significant in enabling social connections, access to nature, services, shops, public transport etc.

Age-friendly housing in our context is not housing specifically adapted for older people, but housing that is user-friendly and accessible for all ages. Doors that are wide enough for a walker and a wheelchair are also wide enough to bring in furniture (and a new washing machine). Well planned bathrooms allow for a changing table or drying rack and has enough space to maneuver a wheelchair if necessary.

In order for more older people to be independent and be able to receive services in their own home, the home must be physically accessible. Access to important community services such as local shops, as well as health and cultural services must be ensured.

In areas with a well-functioning housing market, changing homes as requirements may change is easier. Residents will to a greater extent be able to choose housing according to their individual needs. In parts of the country with low turnover and little new construction, it can be a challenge both to find a suitable home and to sell one's current home at a price enabling the purchase of a new suitable home. The way municipalities meet these challenges will have a significant impact on the opportunities residents have to live independent lives. So what can municipalities do?

TIP 1

What is the demographic development in the municipality?

Reliable population projections provide a good knowledge base. Increasing number of older people means increasing demands for municipal health and welfare services. This, in turn will influence the level of expenditure. There are good tools in place for developing relevant forecasts.

TIP 2

Develop an overview of the types of housing that exist in the municipality

The majority of the current housing stock was constructed at a time with lower standards for accessibility and universal design. As a result, many homes in Norway are poorly adapted to people with decreased functional ability. National figures show that two thirds have difficult access related to stairs and / or steep terrain to the entrance, and approximately one third do not have all the necessary house functionalities on the ground floor. Only one percent of homes are fully wheelchair accessible.

When doing an assessment of the buildings, information can be found in Statistics Norway's overview of housing by building type and year of construction. The age and type of housing is most relevant for the design/structure and

may provide a simplified overview of the accessibility in the current housing stock. A large number of detached houses and limited new construction can, for example, indicate that there are few accessible homes in the municipality.

In order to obtain better analyses of future housing needs, municipal level data is required. Valuable resources for obtaining data include occupational therapists who are in contact with users, private individuals who are considering adapting their home, housing associations and housing enterprises that manage large numbers of privately owned homes in addition to information about homes managed by the municipality.

The analysis should contain information about:

- Type of housing (detached house, townhouse, four-person dwelling, low-rise apartment building, etc.) degree of accessibility (stepless access to the ground floor, thresholds, house functionalities on the ground level, accessibility of the various rooms). In this instance, the “Functionality certificate for housing” can be of great assistance.
- Distance to the nearest town centre and important municipal services
- Costs of adapting the home

Examples of municipalities that have carried out such analyses are the Municipality of Steinkjer, which surveyed accessibility in 332 homes, and the Municipality of Bergen, which assessed the accessibility of low-rise apartment buildings and the possibility of installing lifts.

TIP 3

Analyse the local property market

In order to assess the effects of the various housing policy instruments available to the municipality, it is important to analyse the local property market and variations between



different geographical areas. This is crucial for making qualified assessments of what standards a developer can accept in a cost-benefit perspective. Pursuant to the Planning and Building Act (PBL), municipalities that are expanding have greater opportunities to include guidelines through area zoning plans and detailed zoning plans with regard to functionality and quality standards. In smaller municipalities, with a declining population and no / little construction of new housing, zoning plans and new construction do not represent effective measures in order to increase the number of accessible homes. In this case, it is probably more conducive to cooperate with the property market in conjunction with upgrades of existing housing, purchase/sale of plots and potential construction of municipal housing to meet demand. Ensuring dialogue and collaboration with developers about the local housing requirements and what the municipality and developer mutually may offer enable the development of good solutions that meet the local needs.

The number of homes built in recent years and the expected demographic developments may point to the latitude within the policies concerning provision of housing. Furthermore, municipalities usually have a good overview of local variations and cost-benefit factors that may influence the housing market in the future.

TIP 4

Stimulate housing qualities that allow people to live longer in their own homes

The design of a home greatly affects how self-sufficient people with decreased functional ability can be in their own home. A well-designed home is functional in all phases of life, even if walking becomes difficult or you become dependent on a wheelchair or a walker. Key features include stepless access from the car park to a clearly visible entrance, all necessary house functionalities on the ground level and spacious and practical room solutions. In addition, the home should be prepared for or have installed assisted living technology.

Improvements to existing homes are limited by construction, base of the house, building plot and not least, the costs. When upgrading existing homes, it is thus often difficult to achieve the same qualities as for new buildings.

Consequently, improving accessibility in an existing home is often the art of compromises. Examples of minor measures that can be of great importance to people who rely on the use of a walking stick or a walker are:

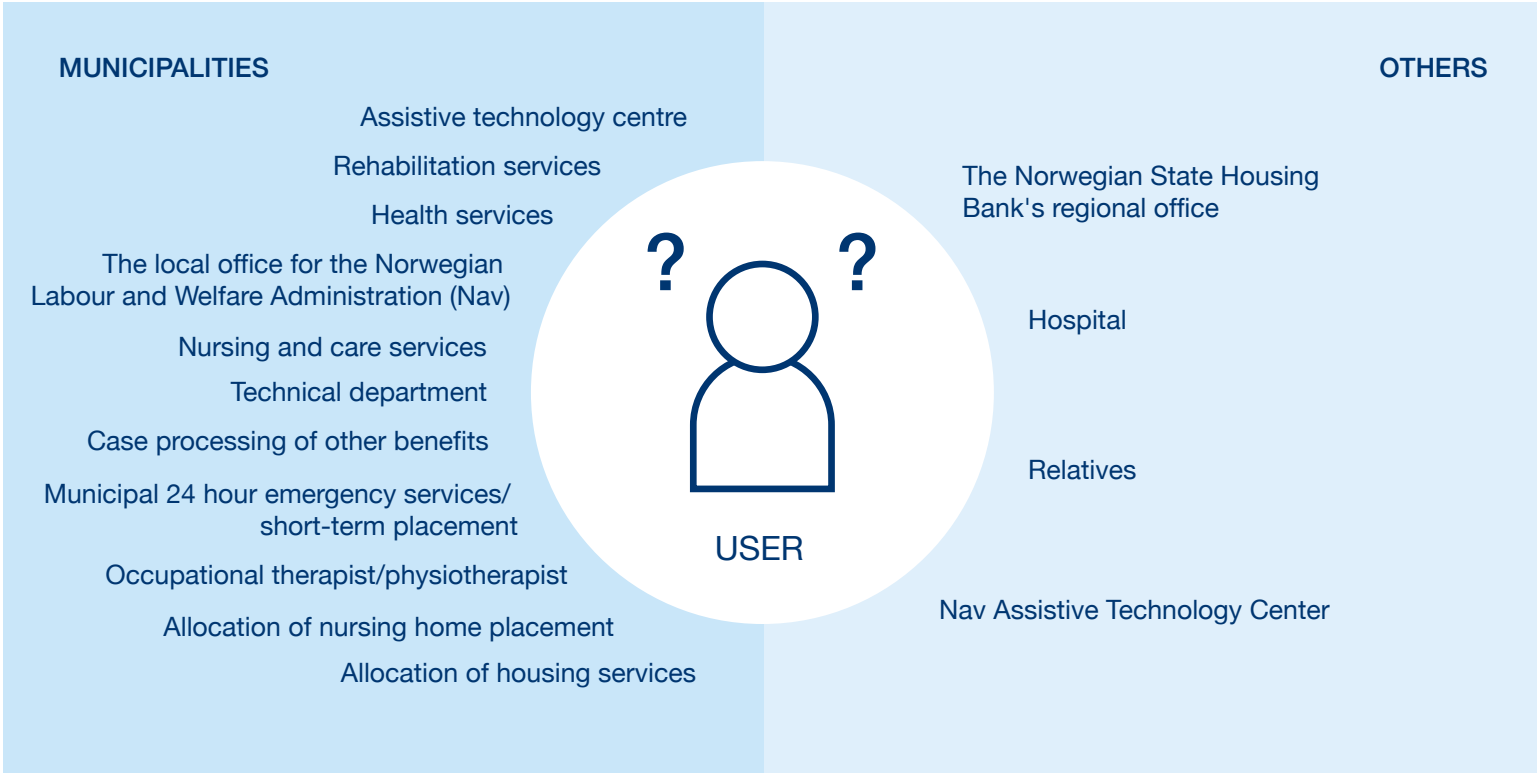
- removal of thresholds
- removal of shower zone
- expanding doorways
- reinforcement of walls for a seat and handles in the bathroom

Major measures may involve expansion of rooms, extensions and improved access. Even with regular renovation of the home, it is wise to choose solutions that improve access. This will reduce costs when the need arises. Increasing property prices mean that there is a need for new and innovative solutions. Assisted living technology contributes to new solutions that make it easier and safer for older people to remain at home as they age. A revolving

Photo: Fredrik Naumann, Felix Features.



A revolving toilet is an example of product development that can provide easier access for many, without the need for extra space in the bathroom. Especially for people with poor balance, such new products can improve everyday life. A minor issue on the face of it, however, for users, this is a major improvement that increases their independence.



A resident who contacts the municipal administration has to engage with many different departments, making it difficult to find answers.

ing toilet is an example of product development that can provide easier access for many, without the need for extra space in the bathroom. Especially for people with poor balance, such new products can improve everyday life. A minor issue on the face of it, however, for users, this is a major improvement that increases their independence.

Movements in the bathroom are often the cause of falls and often require assistance. It will constitute major changes of the working conditions for the healthcare workforce. This is a group of professionals in demanding positions with heavy lifting and occupational hazards – both in domiciliary and residential care as well as independent living facilities with care provision. There is a substantial need for product development that will meet the needs described above and that will eventually also be available for mainstream installation.

TIP 5

Establish a housing unit with interdisciplinary expertise

Improvement of existing homes is often dependent on opportunities in and around the home and the ability of the owner to finance any upgrades. There are various grant schemes available, but many private homeowners are not aware of these opportunities. A resident who contacts the municipal administration has to engage with many different departments, making it difficult to find answers.

All municipalities have employees with expertise in either construction, finances or user needs. Setting up a housing (advisory) unit can improve interaction between sectors, and the municipality can assist its residents more efficiently

when changes in housing needs occur. Such a unit will facilitate communication with the municipality at the time of need.

Cross sectoral collaboration will also provide the municipality with a good overview of the status and challenges in the municipality. This in turn will provide useful input to overall community planning.

TIP 6

Use the toolbox

The *Planning and Building Act* clearly outlines the municipal responsibility for social planning. Section 3-3 outlines the municipality's planning function and planning authority: The municipal council is responsible for municipal planning and is responsible for ensuring compliance with the *Planning and Building Act*.

The municipal council must ensure that the municipality has access to the necessary planning expertise.

Section 1 of the *Planning and Building Act* emphasises that the Act shall promote sustainable development for the benefit of the individual, society and future generations. Thus, the municipal council is not only responsible for approving or declining individual cases, but also for assessing

whether individual cases contribute to the objectives for social development in a long term perspective.

Provided local development does not compromise regional or national interests, municipalities are at liberty to make decisions regarding their development.

Below are some tips on how to work with housing issues in municipalities.

TIP 7

Take an active position on where housing can / should be developed

Social development is an important issue that to a large extent influence the delivery of services, financial planning and the opportunities for residents to take responsibility for their own lives. How should society be planned and organised in order to ensure quality of life, while maintaining a healthy municipal economy with sufficient funds? In this context it is important to consider where politicians allow for housing development in the municipality. For the individual home buyer, the financial situation is often the decisive factor. Residents with the lowest purchasing power will be forced to buy homes that are less centrally located, often with a

Photo: KS



Fogn in Ryfylke (now Municipality of Stavanger) – supermarket and apartment buildings are located close to each other, and provide a meeting place and proximity in an area that is otherwise characterised by dispersed settlement. At the local supermarket, young and old meet, due to coffee being served and available seating inside and outside the supermarket.

poor standard and with little prospect of an increase in value. This, in turn, also reduces the opportunity to obtain a new and more functional home. Further down the line, this may impact on the municipal economy with distribution of services, school transport, new infrastructure, etc.

By taking control over where housing development occurs, municipalities will indirectly be able to help its citizens live independent lives as well as ensure efficient municipal operations.

In municipalities with population growth and demand for property, it may be easier for politicians to plan ahead and set standards. Through the land-use element of the municipal master plan, municipalities can decide where to build, what to build and where not to build. To ensure sound implementation, municipalities can enter expansion agreements with the private sector or sell municipal property with conditions.

In municipalities with a declining population and job market, the situation is oftentimes different. It may be difficult to refuse development by the private sector even though the location is not ideal. Population growth and development will often be the governing factors. This may prove a sound strategy, however, it deprives the municipality of an overall municipal planning process whereby public services and infrastructure are also taken into account.

TIP 8

Plan from the centre and outwards

Throughout the post-war era, home ownership has been an endorsed policy and that the whole country should be populated. A great deal of space and favourable financing have enabled a large number of Norwegians living sparsely and in a home that they own. As long as we are mobile and self sufficient, there is nothing wrong with such a housing structure. The challenges often occur when we require domiciliary care and/or want to relocate to more appropriate housing.

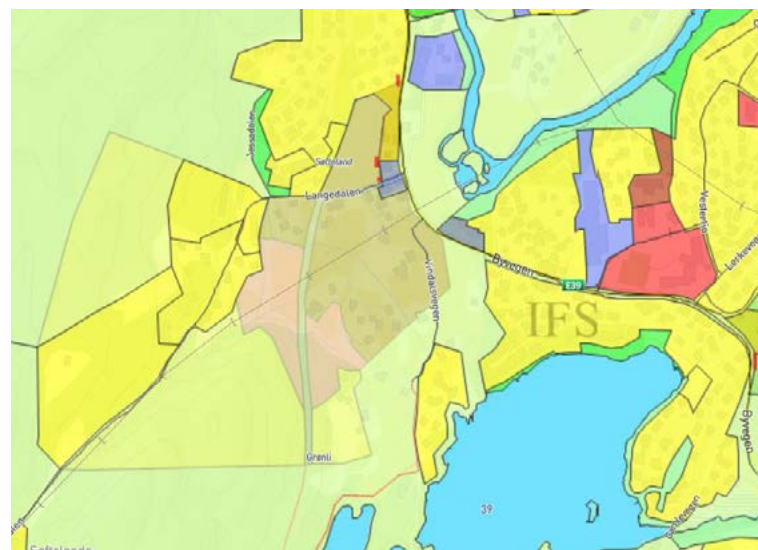


Illustration: Sjøfteland, Municipality of Bjørnafjorden

An example of adaptation of new residential areas close to the existing downtown area in Sjøfteland, Municipality of Bjørnafjorden. Light yellow marks existing residential areas, dark yellow are new residential areas. Red marks public properties and brown marks the downtown area.

TIP 9

Plan for a differentiated housing market

Outside of the largest cities, the tradition has been to build spacious detached houses with access to their own garden. Changes in society, with an increasing number of people living alone and in smaller households, are hardly reflected in what is being built in rural areas. Thus, rural areas in particular lack housing that is adapted to current and future needs, which is a challenge with an ageing population.

Urban areas and suburbs more often see the development of expensive apartments located along new infrastructure such as roads / railways and public transport hubs, or in downtown areas with views and good sun-filled conditions.

These projects are attractive and enable those with



Hardangerfjordvegen, Øystese in Kvam. Downtown apartment project at reasonable prices.

sufficient purchasing power to acquire a home with easy access to municipal services and adapted to a life with a changed health situation.

The challenge is to develop reasonable, centrally located housing that enable widows / widowers, single people, young people getting established, and others who have lower income and less equity to acquire a suitable home. For older people in rural municipalities, access to affordable housing is crucial as the sale of an old detached house is not enough to finance the purchase of central and accessible housing.

In order to have enough resources to help those that require help, the municipality must facilitate a well-functioning housing market that enables as many people as possible to acquire and remain living in their own homes. Since municipalities to a small extent take on building projects, close collaboration with developers is important in order to succeed. This applies to the development of projects, acquisitions and sales of properties and regulation.

TIP 10

Make reasonable demands

Through zoning plan provisions, municipalities can set standards for projects that are to be implemented. For example, functional and quality standards can be set for buildings, facilities and outdoor areas. Standards can also be set for the number of dwellings in an area, the size of the largest and smallest dwelling and for accessibility and design.

It is easy to understand that municipalities use zoning plans to ensure the required needs and qualities. The risk with rigid regulations is, however, that the development will be very expensive and difficult to implement and as a result the project may not meet the expected sales revenues. Municipalities need to reach a reasonable level of regulations ensuring sustainable projects. In this regard, the municipality has a special duty of care.

TIP 11

Work with the construction industry

The construction industry wants to sell as soon as possible. Therefore, the industry and the municipality have largely coinciding interests; attractive housing at a reasonable price.

If we look at the country as a whole, there is virtually no change in the development of the housing market. Although more and more people live alone for the majority of their lives, traditional family homes and apartments are being built that are too expensive for single people.

Great values are at stake when purchasing, developing and implementing new housing areas. This makes innovation difficult and risky.

Municipalities have a lot to gain from working closely with the construction industry. What are the specific demands according to the municipality? What are the plans for the area in the future? Can the municipality and the developer enter into cooperation / development agreements for the implementation of infrastructure, a combined water and sewerage system, a hiking trail, etc.? Can the municipality benefit from buying housing in the project to ensure that it is implemented?

TIP 12

Put housing policy on the agenda

Quality housing for everyone requires an active municipal housing policy. This does not mean that the municipality should take all the responsibility and work to plan and build homes, but municipalities must be proactive stakeholders with a clear vision of where and what to build.

Being aware of and utilizing various national and municipal measures will help some households to acquire a suitable home in which they will be able to remain over time. Many places in the country have a well-functioning housing market. Elsewhere, it is necessary for the municipality to

take a more active role, through planning, purchase and facilitation of properties and infrastructure.

TIP 13

Utilise all good forces

Welcome stakeholders who turn to the municipality for advice and support. Make sure the Department for Business Development is actively engaged in the co-creation with the construction industry and make use of municipal public health statistics to stay informed on needs. Be up-to-date on the Norwegian State Housing Bank's instruments and make active use of start-up loans, both for the purchase and upgrading of housing. There are also other types of national and county municipal funds that municipalities can make use of, such as traffic safety funds, funds for climate and environmental measures and for mapping the accessibility of public buildings and outdoor areas.

The development of the social element of the municipal master plan enables municipalities to take stock of the local community and create arenas for collaboration and the development of a common understanding of challenges and opportunities.

Engage the local enthusiasts and resource persons to engage residents and communities. Many good ideas are discussed in playgrounds and in local associations without ever reaching the municipal administration, hence useful information is lost.

Transparent processes and trust between the various stakeholders always provide the best outcomes.

Housing construction

Housing construction in Norway today largely consists of apartment buildings in central areas. It is an endorsed national political objective to populate the entire country. How are we going to achieve that when market prices vary so much and a new home in a rural area sees a real price drop the moment the key is put in the door?

We need to build differently in the future. We have to live closer together, also in rural areas.

This does not mean that everyone has to live in a block of flats, but we may have to manage with smaller areas and to a greater extent facilitate communal use and common solutions.

Photo: The Norwegian State Housing Bank



EXAMPLE



Helgetun (Bergen)

Helgetun is a housing project with rental homes for older people, focussing on interaction and community. Residents can participate in the activities of the kindergarten, which is located right next to the housing project, or work at Helgeseter, home and workplace for intellectually disabled people.

The 31 homes are designed to enable use by people with decreased functional ability (life cycle housing) and have common areas that are available to the residents and the kindergarten next door. The purpose is to create a community where everyone takes care of each other and where it feels safe to grow old, at the same time as you get to contribute and help others in the community.



EXAMPLE



Cluster housing

ABO Plan & Arkitektur has developed a project inspired by the qualities from old cluster housing concepts. Housing of various sizes are gathered around an open space where there are common storage units, workshops, a communal room and a rental unit.

In this way, people in different stages of life can interact and be part of a small community. The majority of housing units are located on the ground floor and all have private outdoor areas. Residents can share snow shovels, lawn mowers, ladders, etc. This reduces the need for living space. The communal room can be used for birthdays, assemblies and hobby activities. Overnight guests can use the rental unit etc.



EXAMPLE



Vålandstun in Stavanger

Here are two good examples that are innovative in several ways. The first, Vålandstun in Stavanger, is a very attractive senior housing project, with regards to architecture, quality of living, and attractive meeting places outside as well as inside. It also represents a new way of developing a good public / private partnership solution. The Municipality of Stavanger emphasizes the need to be a proactive stakeholder with the developers in order to meet the need for varied housing alternatives for older people and other priority groups in the years to come.

This project has been recognised as a national model project for senior housing by the Norwegian State Housing Bank and Enova, which finances new energy solutions.



Kirkeparken senior care centre in Hammerfest

EXAMPLE



The other example is Kirkeparken senior care centre in Hammerfest, which has a cafe and several other services open to the public. Being able to meet relatives in a different arena than at home is greatly appreciated. Housing projects that have special qualities are often characterised by a combination of private housing and municipal housing, meeting places that facilitate intergenerational contact, and designated outdoor areas for common use.

The home is crucial in terms of how older people and people with functional disabilities perceive their circumstances and need for help.

Being part of a community is important in order to feel safe. Facilitating for independence in the home, and the opportunity to socialise with others, can be solved in many different ways. As a planning authority, municipalities can facilitate and encourage older people to move together in housing solutions that are tailored to their needs. This will be important to ensure sustainable services in the future.

Photo: Municipality of Bergen, Anne Line Grimen



EXAMPLE



Example from Slettebakken in Bergen before and after the redevelopment of the area and upgrade of the entrance.

Photo: BATte housing co-operative

EXAMPLE



The example to the right shows the installation of a lift next to the stairs in the Storhagen housing association in the Municipality of Stavanger.

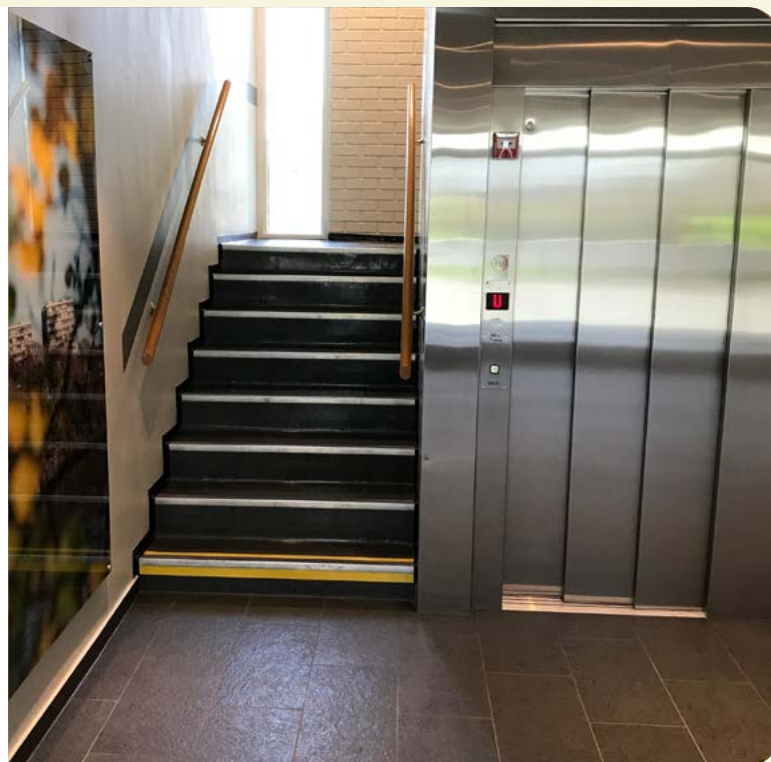


Photo: Aina Tjosås



EXAMPLE



The picture to the left shows a new detached house with stepless access.

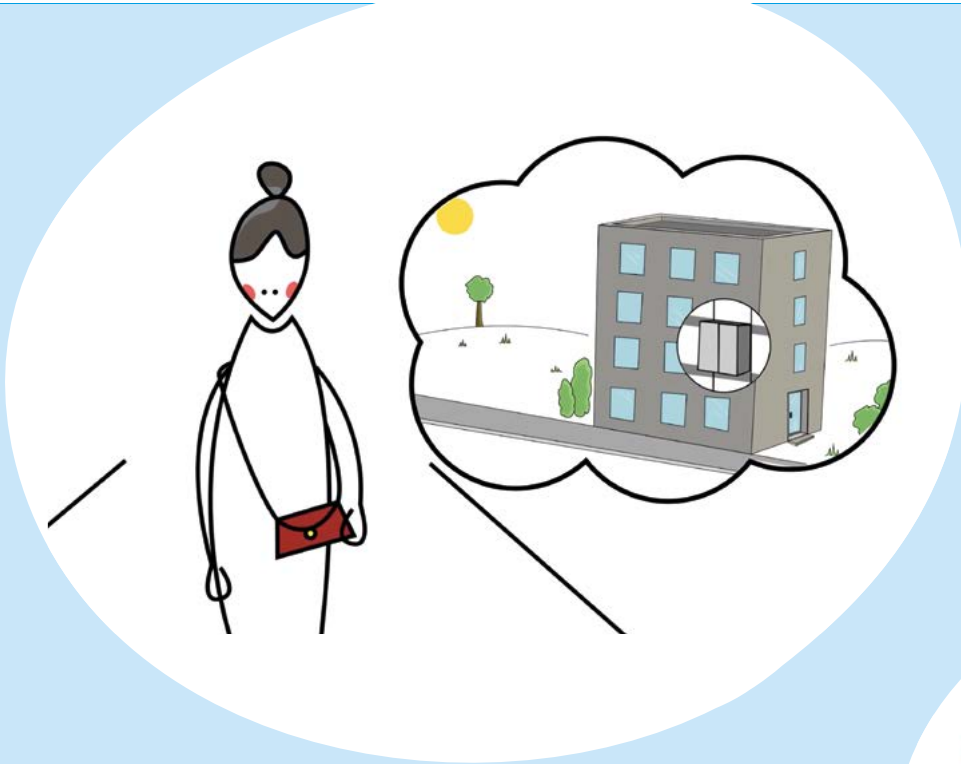
Photo: Larvik housing co-operative

EXAMPLE



Larvik housing co-operative upgraded the buildings with new lifts. Jegers housing association is located in downtown Larvik and consists of low-rise blocks on four floors completed in 1972. In 2015, the housing association installed four lifts, making all 40 apartments accessible to people in wheelchairs.

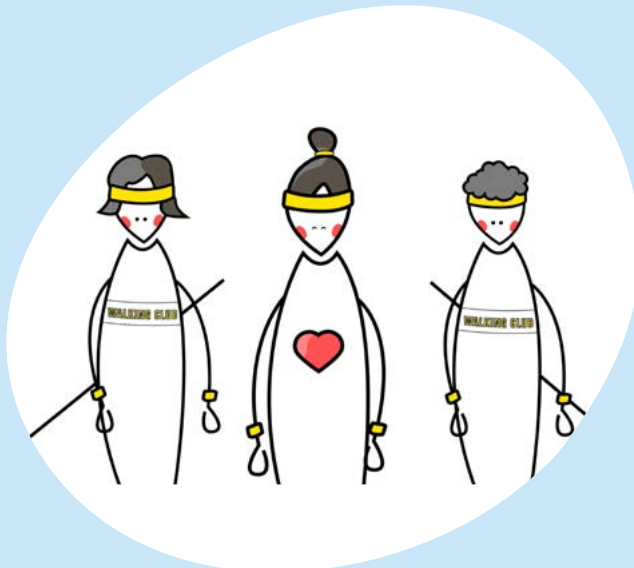




Participation



Co-creation



Ageism