

Building a national Age Friendly Communities movement in Ireland



**Hugh O'Connor, Age
Friendly Ireland**



More people living longer, living better

Population structure is changing: more older people; fewer younger people. (Eurostat 2011)

65+ population will increase

250%

By 2036 (CSO 2007)

80+ population will increase

400%

By 2041 (CSO 2007)

1 in 4

Newborns will live to 100

7 OUT OF 8

Newborns will live to over 60



Ageing is an Opportunity

Net financial contributors to family: 24% gave large financial gifts to their children

65+ have 6.6bn income – but attract <10% of marketing spend

50+ account for more than half of all household spending in the EU

1 in 5 of 65-74 year olds do voluntary work once a week or more

Participate more in elections: 86% of 65+ voted in general election

37% participate in sport and physical activity regularly



What is an Age Friendly City or County?

Local collaboration

A place where leaders and decision makers from the local authorities, health and social services, Gardaí, transport, service providers, NGOs, business and academics . . .

Local consultation

- Form an alliance
- Consult extensively with service providers and older adults, forming an Older People's Council
- Make a plan and –
- Implement real change in imaginative and cost-effective ways

Joined up, real change

In areas like supports to stay at home, better public spaces and parks, transport that meets needs, safer places, more opportunities to participate, better health services and new opportunities to volunteer to make neighbourhoods better places for all



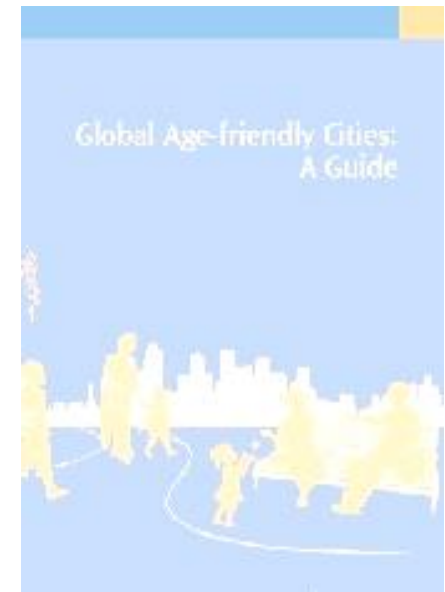
World Health Organisation (WHO)

a global effort to make a real difference



World Health
Organization

- Initiated by World Health Organisation 2007
- Framework for developing age friendly communities
- 200 hundred cities and communities in WHO global network
- Ireland's national programme started in 2009 in County Louth
- Dublin Declaration – all LA signed Nov 2014



What is that prize....

...aiming to make sure that as we age, we can continue to:

- Have a real say in what happens in our own lives and what happens in the areas in which we live
- Enjoy good health, access to high quality services, and a secure and enabling environment
- Be engaged and have opportunities to participate fully in everything that is going on in our cities and counties



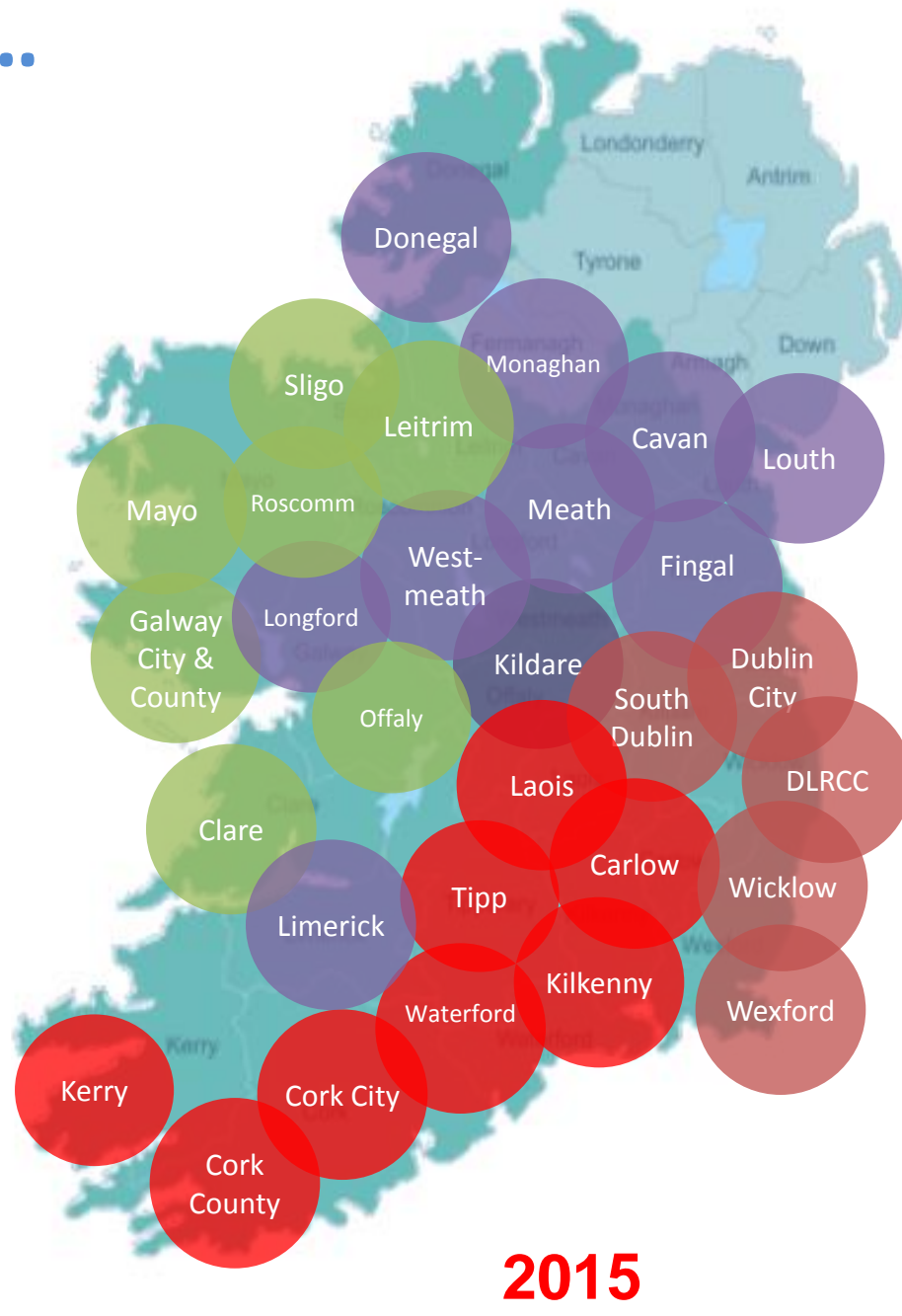
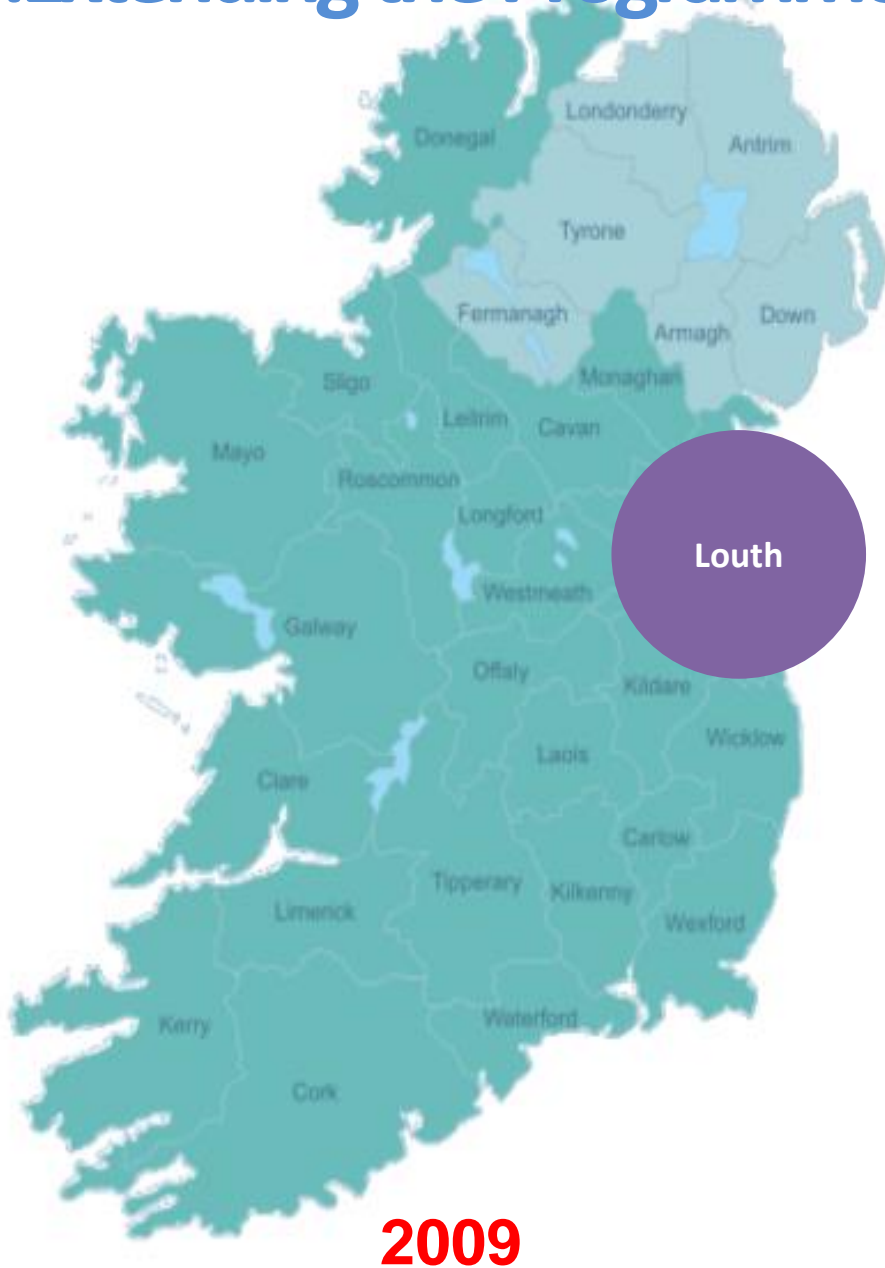
What does Age Friendly Mean?

The World Health Organisation Themes

1. Outdoor Spaces & Buildings
2. Transportation
3. Housing
4. Social Participation
5. Respect & Social Inclusion
6. Civic Participation & Employment
7. Communication & Information
8. Community Support & Health Services



...Extending the Programme...



Fingal Health Pilot Route

- Assisting 600 people to attend regular health appointments
- Funded initially as a pilot
- Pre pilot consultancy appointments missed due to lack of transport
- Evaluation demonstrated significant cost savings and significant reduction in missed appointments
- Reduction in patient transport costs to HSE



OPRA↑

Older People Remaining At Home 

- Aimed at ‘enabling more older people stay living in their own homes and communities’
 - Avoid unnecessary hospitalisations and admissions to nursing homes
- Collaboration of HSE, Local Authority, Service Providers, NGOs, Community Groups – at national and local level
- Developing personal care plans using the Self Assessment Tool
- Coordinating wide range of supports to meet individual needs
- Dedicated support co-ordinators with clinical background



Positive Mental Health

- Men's Shed

- A physical space to go to
- Men of all ages and backgrounds welcome
- Activities from bike repairs to wood-turning to upholstery or whatever the men want to engage in



Parlours Initiative, Louth

Older people can drop in to the 'Parlour' at any time for a chat or to get advice and information on services or leisure and exercise opportunities



The learnings and challenges

Making it sustainable...

- Recognition of shared challenges...Need for shared responses... Forging alliances based on common interest
- Sharing learning and resources: better and faster
- Strengthening capacity for multi stakeholder engagement
- Broadening participation
- Building a strong evidence base



What has underpinned the programme to date?

- Holistic nature of 8 domain WHO framework
- Had few 'asks' at local level - Positioned and recognised as a Programme that does not come with or demand a ready-made budget
- Recognising the vital importance of decisions made at local authority level
- Commitment to principle of 'co-design'
- Dublin Declaration



Lessons learned

- Look for **passionate champions as early adopters**
- **Don't ask for permission** – find and work with leaders in the system who want to make change
- Important to **embed actions into plans of individual agencies for I-t political sustainability**
- **Doesn't take a big budget** but does need team to be the initial catalyst - **Good ideas then often attract funding**

