



Strategic Plan 2020-2023



Pictured above: "The Slipped Disco", Words Alive writing group, Falls Prevention Workshops, dancers Donal and Gloria, the Greater Belfast Seniors' Forum.

Introduction

The profile of older people in Belfast is growing every year. By the year 2050 it is estimated that 36% of the population of Belfast will be over the age of 60. Older people are increasingly engaged in civic life through volunteering, socialising, and political engagement. A study from the Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland estimates that older people make a net economic contribution of £500M per year in Northern Ireland.

Engage with Age's previous strategy, 2017-2020, built upon a strong foundation that has developed since the charity was established in 2000. Our health improvement programmes now offer 8,000 engagements per year. The new PAL Programme (People Addressing Loneliness) reached out to 350 new participants who have experienced loneliness. In addition to working with over 70 groups per year, skill development and capacity building reaches an additional 30 groups per year. The forums we support have strengthened. Engage with Age has put its energy behind the growing Dementia Friendly East Belfast campaign, and supports Dementia Friendly South Belfast. And we have published new research with Queen's University and Ulster University.

A number of factors are stimulating and inspiring the direction in which Engage with Age's new Strategic Plan takes the charity:

- Parts of Belfast still experience significant age-related health challenges, and life expectancy is considerably shorter in some of the most deprived areas.
- Increasing numbers of older people find themselves addressing the impact of loneliness, and this has been identified as a significant public health issue.
- A 2017 recent survey found one quarter of older people feel that they are not treated with respect or dignity, while 20% have been affected by financial abuse.

There is a lot of work that needs to be done to address these issues and there is a great deal that we can actually do. When we say "we", we mean Engage with Age, older people, and our partner organisations and agencies working together, striving for sustainable positive change within our communities.

Between 2020-2023, Engage with Age will harness older people's potential by enabling older people to live healthy, happy and connected lives, in pursuit of a society that respects, values, and listens to older people.

Engage with Age will strengthen and empower older people's groups and forums. We will grow our support for older people who experience loneliness, and introduce new services. Our health improvement work will prioritise physical and mental health and will target those that need it most. We will help amplify the voice of older people to influence matters that affect them. In this Strategic Plan, we will effectively measure the impact of our work so that we continue to learn, improve and share best practice with others who work with older people. Consequently we will produce an annual Operational Plan to implement this strategy.

The process of developing this new Strategic Plan was started before the Covid-19 Pandemic crisis occurred, and the plan has been completed while the crisis has occurred in the UK. While Engage with Age will need to adopt how it works to deliver this plan, the priorities and the desired outcomes remain the same.

We will strive to achieve the aims of this Strategic Plan with commitment, energy and fun.

Jonathan Hegan MBE

Chair, Engage with Age

Mission

To enable older people to live happier, healthier and more connected lives.

Vision

A society which respects, values and listens to older people.

Values

Older people-led

- Our work will be driven by the changing needs, rights and ambitions of older people

Empowerment

- Our work will support the right of older people to control decisions that affect their lives, contribute to society, and have their voices heard

Respect

- Everyone is of equal value and entitled to be included and treated with dignity and respect

Partnership

- We believe in working closely with other organisations and groups in the best interests of older people

Integrity

- Our work will be carried out to the highest standards and transparency. We will do what we say and be open to honest feedback

Fun

- Everyone has the right to take part in stimulating activities and have fun

Core Aims

Local groups and networks

Aim1: To strengthen communities by supporting and empowering older people's groups and forums.

Loneliness

Aim 2: To reduce social isolation and loneliness.

Physical and mental Health

Aim 3: To promote the physical and mental wellbeing of older people.

The voice of older people

Aim 4: To enable older people to influence matters that affect their lives.

Demonstrating impact

Aim 5: To ensure that Engage with Age robustly measures and demonstrates the outcomes of its work.

Supporting Aims

Communications

Aim 6: To promote awareness of Engage with Age more effectively in achieving its aims .

Human Resources

Aim 7: To ensure Engage with Age has the staff and volunteers it needs to achieve its plans and they are effectively managed and given the opportunity to develop.

Physical and Financial Resources

Aim 8: To ensure the sustainability of Engage with Age by bringing in the income it needs to achieve its plans , and these are effectively managed.

Governance

Aim 9: To ensure the governance of Engage with Age complies with the requirements of the law and best practice.

Priorities for 2020-2023

Core Aims

Local groups and networks

Aim1: To strengthen communities by supporting and empowering older people's groups and forums.

Priorities for 2020 – 2023:

- Increase the sustainability of older people's groups by building their confidence and skills to be progressively more in charge of their own affairs
- Enable the establishment of older people's groups
- Develop and implement programmes for older people's groups to increase their skills and knowledge
- Support succession in older people's groups
- Provide leadership training for group participants
- Identify opportunities for expansion to meet identified needs
- Support the development of the networks of older people's groups and forums
- Build the relationship with existing sector partners and stakeholders, such as the Greater Belfast Seniors' Forum, the Healthy Ageing Strategic Partnership, and Age Partnership Belfast, and develop new partnerships

How we will measure success:

- The number of older people's groups (existing and new groups)
- The number of members in older people's groups
- The number of electoral wards covered by EWA's work
- % Satisfaction of members of the East and South Forums
- % Satisfaction of members of other older people's groups that EWA support
- The number of training/development sessions organised and the average and total number of attendees
- The level of confidence that older people's groups have to manage their own affairs

Loneliness

Aim 2: To reduce social isolation and loneliness.

Priorities for 2020 – 2023:

- Increase and improve ways of identifying isolated older people
- Engage isolated older people in group activities
- Develop new initiatives for older people
- Enable isolated older people to contribute to the development of services that affect them
- Develop a 1:1 befriending scheme for isolated older people
- Increase engagement with under-represented communities

How we will measure success:

- The number of older people referred/self-referred to EWA (and % increase)
- % of people involved in Engage with Age programmes who feel more connected
- % satisfaction of older people engaged with EWA about their opportunities for social interaction

Physical and Mental Health

Aim 3: To promote the physical and mental wellbeing of older people.

Priorities for 2020 – 2023:

- Enable older people to increase their level of physical activity
- Deliver programmes that promote improved nutrition
- Enable older people to have an awareness of how to increase positive mental health
- Promote programmes that improve home and personal safety and falls prevention
- Enable older people to develop creative skills
- Enable older people to develop their digital skills
- Enable older people to be involved in reminisce work and share stories
- Promote sustainable inter-generational work
- Keep older people informed of relevant health information
- Develop new programmes that promote physical and/or mental health

How we will measure success:

- The number of activity-based events and programmes (and attendance levels)
- % satisfaction of older people involved with EWA with the opportunities to take part in physical activities
- % satisfaction of older people engaged with EWA with the opportunities to increase their skills and knowledge
- The level of physical and emotional wellbeing of older people engaged with EWA

The Voice of Older People

Aim 4: To enable older people to influence matters that affect their lives.

Priorities for 2020 – 2023:

- Develop and support a consultative forum of older people
- Agree key issues in public policy and practice that older people seek to influence
- Contribute to influencing policy and services through partnership working
- Consult and get feedback from member groups
- Produce and utilise research based on the lived experience of older people
- Improve how Engage with Age consults and gets feedback from older people's groups
- Increase the involvement of older people in Engage with Age's work

How we will measure success:

- % satisfaction of older people that their voice is being heard
- The number of consultation meetings with older people (and the number of people involved)
- The number of responses to public consultations
- % satisfaction of older people involved with EWA and the extent that they feel they have had an opportunity to make a positive contribution
- The number of older people involved in EWA's work
- The increase in the knowledge of stakeholders about the needs of older people?

Demonstrating impact

Aim 5: To ensure that Engage with Age robustly measures and demonstrates the outcomes of its work.

Priorities for 2020-2023:

- Develop an organisational-wide framework for measuring impact
- Articulate the desired outcomes of Engage with Age's work
- Demonstrate how Engage with Age's outcomes link to government outcomes
- Measure and disseminate the outcomes of Engage with Age's work
- Measure satisfaction with Engage with Age's work
- Recruit students to collect stories regarding research and evaluation

How we will measure success:

- *To be determined following formulation of an Impact and Evaluation Framework.*

Supporting Aims

Communications

Aim 6: To promote awareness of Engage with Age more effectively in achieving its aims.

Priorities for 2020 – 2023:

- Increase public awareness of Engage with Age
- Communicate effectively with Engage with Age's stakeholders and partners
- Ensure Engage with Age has the appropriate up-to-date supporting materials
- Ensure Engage with Age has an effective up-to-date website
- Make effective use of social media
- Ensure the organisation has sufficient communications capacity

How we will measure success:

- The number of hits on the website (and % increase)
- The average length of time on the website (and % increase)
- % of people who open EWA email communications
- The number of social media posts and reach
- The number of printed materials distributed
- % satisfaction of older people involved with EWA with how the organisation communicates with them

Human Resources

Aim 7: To ensure Engage with Age has the staff and volunteers it needs to achieve its plans and they are effectively managed and given the opportunity to develop.

Priorities for 2020 – 2023:

- Ensure Engage with Age has the appropriately skilled staff, in the right roles, to achieve its aims and objectives
- Ensure staff are effectively inducted, supported, managed and have opportunities to develop
- Promote effective teamwork
- Develop and implement a volunteering policy
- Effectively recruit, induct, support, engage and develop volunteers
- Effectively recruit, induct, support, engage and develop students and placements

How we will measure success:

- % level of staff satisfaction
- % staff absenteeism
- % staff turnover
- The number of volunteers, students and placements

Physical and Financial Resources

Aim 8: To ensure the sustainability of Engage with Age by securing the resources it needs to achieve its plans and that these are effectively managed.

Priorities for 2020 – 2023: (need to remove the line space below)

- Develop and implement an income generation strategy
- Ensure Engage with Age generates the income from statutory sources it needs
- Ensure Engage with Age generates the income from charitable and other sources it needs
- Explore the development of social economy businesses
- Ensure organisational finances are effectively planned, managed and reported
- Ensure compliance with the reporting requirements of funders
- Ensure Engage with Age has appropriate accessible premises and physical resources and these are effectively managed
- Develop the organisation's use of IT

How we will measure success:

- Income to the organisation (£ and % increase)
- Level of reserves (£ and % of turnover)
- Annual surplus (or deficit)
- The % level of staff satisfaction with EWA premises, physical resources and IT arrangements and skills

Governance

Aim 9: To ensure the governance of Engage with Age complies with the requirements of the law and best practice.

Priorities for 2020 – 2023:

- Ensure the Board has the experience and skills to be effective
- Ensure the Board has the appropriate structure and office-bearers
- Effectively support and manage the Chief Officer
- Effectively manage risk
- Develop and implement a succession plan
- Ensure compliance with the law and best practice
- Bi-annually review the governance of Engage with Age and develop, implement and review a governance improvement plan
- Ensure Engage with Age has the appropriate strategic and annual operational plans and these are regularly monitored and reviewed

How we will measure success:

- % of operational objectives achieved each year
- % satisfaction of trustees
- % satisfaction of staff with governance performance



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