

## Faversham Town Council

### Suggested Guidelines to becoming an Age Friendly Town

#### 'Age Friendly Faversham'

Following key guidelines, based on the World Health Organization (WHO) Age-friendly Communities framework approach, promotes active aging by optimising health, participation, and safety, ensuring that the town is a great place to grow old. In Faversham there are nearly 9,000 residents over the age of 50 (2021 Census). Although our recent Residents' Survey asked about youth, it did not consider older people.

#### **How long does it take?**

Becoming an Age-friendly Community is an ongoing process, with most places starting with an initial five-year commitment, incorporating up to two years to deliver a baseline assessment and action plan. From there, progress is assessed, and the work continues.

#### **How do we get started?**

The leadership in your town, city or county must make a written commitment to actively work towards becoming a great place to grow old in, for all of its residents. This is done with the support and engagement of older people and relevant stakeholders.

Suggested outline of steps:

#### **1. Political Commitment and Leadership**

- **Faversham Town Council:** The council publicly commits to making Faversham age-friendly. This could include passing a motion or issuing a formal letter of support.

#### **2. Establish a Steering Group**

- **Create a Diverse Steering Group:** Work with members of the Faversham Community Networking Group, other relevant stakeholders and residents to oversee the implementation of the action plan.

#### **3. Engage Older Residents**

- **Consultation and Participation:** Actively involve older people in identifying needs and shaping the action plan. Hold community workshops, surveys, and focus groups to gather input. This ensures that the plan reflects real issues faced by older people in Faversham.

#### **4. Audit the Town's Age-Friendliness**

- **Conduct a Baseline Assessment:** Use walk audits and surveys to assess current services and environments. Areas to focus on include public spaces,

housing, transportation, social inclusion, and healthcare services. This will highlight strengths and areas for improvement. A lot of work has already been done in these areas, which could be linked together initially to find the gaps.

## 5. Key Focus Areas

- **Outdoor Spaces and Buildings:** Improve accessibility, such as adding more benches, ensuring safe footpaths, and providing better lighting. These changes promote mobility and safety for older residents.
- **Housing:** Ensure that homes are adaptable for older adults by supporting home improvement initiatives by encouraging age-friendly housing developments.
- **Transportation:** Enhance public transportation by ensuring buses are accessible, with clear timetables and safe, well-maintained stops. Further promotion and growth of the Faversham Hopper Bus.
- **Social Participation and Inclusion:** Facilitate and publicise opportunities for older people to stay socially connected through events, volunteer opportunities, and local clubs.
- **Health and Social Services:** Work with healthcare providers on exploring how to offer more accessible services for older adults and promote preventative healthcare initiatives.

## 6. Collaboration with Other Communities

- **Join the UK Network of Age-friendly Communities:** This will give Faversham access to resources, training, and best practices from other towns and cities working towards similar goals. Participation in the network will also provide valuable opportunities for collaboration and peer learning.

## 7. Action and Implementation

- **Create a Clear Action Plan:** Develop specific, measurable goals for each focus area. Include a timeline, assign responsibilities, and identify resources or partnerships required to implement the changes.
- **Pilot Projects:** Start with small, visible initiatives like Faversham's established chatty bench campaign or a 'tech and tea' group.

## 8. Monitor and Evaluate

- **Regular Review:** Set up mechanisms to monitor progress, gather feedback, and adapt the action plan as needed. Involve older residents in the evaluation process to ensure their voices continue to be heard.

This framework promotes a holistic approach, addressing both physical infrastructure and social well-being to ensure that Faversham becomes a community where people of all ages can thrive.

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