



### **Oversight and Governance**

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Published 04 October 2024

## **CABINET**

Monday 14 October 2024  
2.00 pm  
Council House, Plymouth

### **Members:**

Councillor Evans OBE, Chair

Councillor Laing, Vice Chair

Councillors Aspinall, Briars-Delve, Coker, Dann, Haydon, Lowry, Penberthy and Cresswell.

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf.

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### **Tracey Lee**

Chief Executive

# Cabinet

## Agenda

### Part I (Public Meeting)

#### 1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence submitted by Cabinet Members.

#### 2. Declarations of Interest

Cabinet Members will be asked to make any declarations of interest in respect of items on this agenda.

#### 3. Minutes

(Pages 1 - 26)

To sign and confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2024.

#### 4. Questions from the Public

To receive questions from the public in accordance with the Constitution.

Questions, of no longer than 50 words, can be submitted to the Democratic Support Unit, Plymouth City Council, Ballard House, Plymouth, PL1 3BJ, or email to [democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:democraticsupport@plymouth.gov.uk). Any questions must be received at least five clear working days before the date of the meeting.

#### 5. Chair's Urgent Business

To receive reports on business which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

### Items for decision

#### 6. Ageing Well: State of Ageing:

(Pages 27 - 72)

#### 7. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy:

(To Follow)

### Items for discussion

#### 8. Completion of the North Prospect Regeneration Project:

(Verbal Report)

#### 9. Children's Service Update:

(Pages 73 - 78)

## Items for noting

10. **Leader's Announcements:** (Verbal Report)
11. **Cabinet Member Updates:** (Verbal Report)
12. **LGA Update:** (Verbal Report)

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## Cabinet

**Monday 9 September 2024**

### **PRESENT:**

Councillor Evans OBE, in the Chair.

Councillor Laing, Vice Chair.

Councillors Aspinnall, Briars-Delve, Coker, Haydon, Lowry, Penberthy and Cresswell.

Apologies for absence: Councillor Dann.

Also in Attendance: Councillor Sarah Allen, Councillor John Stephens, Paul Barnard (Strategic Director for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure), Jonathan Bell (Head of Spatial Planning and Sustainable Development), Liz Bryant (Head of Legal Services), Emma Crowther (Service Director for Integrated Commissioning), Matthew Fulton (Lead Accountancy Manager), Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health (via Microsoft Teams)), David Haley (Director of Children's Services), Karime Hassan (Interim Strategic Director for Growth), Pete Honeywell (Transformation Architecture Manager), Martin Ivatt (Regeneration and Placemaking Manager), Laura Juett (Public Health Specialist), Tracey Lee (Chief Executive), Lisa Linscott (Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills), David Northey (Service Director for Finance), Amanda Paddison (Head of Access to Learning), Temilola Salimon (Service Director for Children, Young People and Families), Jonathan Selman (Net Zero Delivery Officer), Nick Shaw (Public Health Registrar), Jamie Sheldon (Senior Governance Advisor), Stuart Elford (CEO of Devon and Plymouth Chamber of Commerce), Nigel Godefroy (Chair of City Centre Company) and Steve Hughes (Chief Executive of City Centre Company).

The meeting started at 2.02 pm and finished at 5.00 pm.

*Note: The full discussion can be viewed on the webcast of the City Council meeting at [www.plymouth.gov.uk](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk). At a future meeting, the Council will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.*

28. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

29. **Minutes**

The minutes from the meeting held 12 August 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

30. **Questions from the Public**

There were no questions from members of the public.

31. **Chair's Urgent Business**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

32. **The Transformation of Armada Way**

Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) welcomed Paul Barnard (Service Director of Strategic Planning and Infrastructure) and Martin Ivatt (Regeneration and Placemaking Manager).

Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) introduced the item and provided the following update:

- a) Plymouth had been cited in the national press as a great place to live and work;
- b) The city centre was being reimagined as a modern, vibrant and mixed-use destination with new community living at its heart;
- c) It was important to remember the city centre was not just for visitors, but also for the residents who would use the city centre as their backyard;
- d) A visit by Sir Oliver Letwin, who was on the Homes England Board, was hosted on 21 August 2024. The visit included the railway station, Armada Way, the Hoe;
- e) The Homes England Board would be hosted in Plymouth in November;
- f) There were ambitious targets for house building within Plymouth and the city centre would be fundamental to achieving that target;
- g) The average city had 8500 people living in the city centre, whereas Plymouth only had 850 due to a post-war policy which moved people out of the city and into the suburbs;
- h) Plymouth was developing plans with a hope Partners would buy into the vision and make further investments;

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) provided the following update:

- i) On 19 February 2024 the design of the Armada Way project was approved, and the Strategic Director for Place was instructed to take all necessary steps to confirm the final construction cost;
- j) Cabinet instructed the Strategic Director for Place to establish a City Centre Public Realm Board, which would coordinate and monitor all existing public realm revenue maintenance and oversee new incoming regeneration initiatives;
- k) Since February 2024, Officers and Specialist Independent Consultants had analysed the details in the documentation from the contractor and the bill of quantities;

- l) Trial pits and surveys had been undertaken to verify the costs and assess the risk to delivery;
- m) Total construction costs for the scheme had been verified at £29.8 million, two thirds of which was funded by external sources. The total cost to the tax payer was £11.2 million;
- n) Further grant funding would be applied for when it was available in an attempt to reduce the £11.2 million cost to the tax payer;
- o) Future projects for the city centre included Royal Parade and the District Heat Network Pilot;
- p) In order to aid operation and support existing businesses during ongoing development of Armada Way, there were five specific actions:
  - 1. Subject to Cabinet agreement, a letter would be written to city centre businesses setting out the details of the programme;
  - 2. A dedicated Armada Way Liaison Officer had been appointed who would be the single point of contact for all city centre businesses during the construction works and will be based in the Knowledge Hub on Armada Way;
  - 3. Regular question and answer sessions would commence in September to address concerns and issues that businesses might have;
  - 4. The website would continue to be updated with new information about the progress of the scheme;
  - 5. Plymouth City Council (PCC) would continue to liaise with the City Centre Company on all aspects of the Armada Way scheme until it's completion;
- q) Existing businesses in the city centre did not want to invest in the city centre because of the state of the public realm, however new businesses coming into Armada Way had seen the work undertaken in Old Town Street and New George Street;
- r) It was made certain that costs were robust through trial pits, surveys, and by employing consultants;
- s) The new play village was the size of five tennis courts and the seating would accommodate approximately 500 people;
- t) There would be an entirely new CCTV system and there would be 5,159 square metres of accessible green space, similar to the size of the park on West Hoe. There would also be also new granite walkways of six metres either side and a new cycle path of 500 metres;
- u) There would be 22,000 square metres of accessible public realm which was the size of three football pitches;

- v) There would be a new sustainable drainage system which would provide up to a 78% reduction in surface water runoff which went into the combined sewage system;
- w) Although it was a lot of money to invest, it was being invested wisely to the benefit of existing businesses with the hope to attract new businesses and provide much needed housing in the city.

Nigel Godefroy (Chair of the City Centre Company) added:

- x) Congratulated the Council on behalf of the City Centre Company on the commitment to the scheme and to the city centre;
- y) Armada Way no longer served its purpose as the confident gateway to the city centre and gave visitors a poor first impression of a city centre in decline with many empty buildings;
- z) The plans were fully supported by the City Centre Company as they presented the city with a once in a generation opportunity to create a safe, welcoming and vibrant city centre;
- aa) Quality public realm drove quality investment which drove value for everyone;
- bb) The high quality of the Armada Way scheme would set the quality template for further regeneration projects;
- cc) Recent investments into The Box, The Barcode, Civic Square, New George Street and Old Town Street meant new businesses were taking over empty properties;
- dd) The investments in the city centre, together with the proposed Armada Way scheme, would unlock millions of pounds of further investment for housing, leisure and other uses.

Steve Hughes (Chief Executive of the City Centre Company) added:

- ee) The new public spaces in Old Town Street, New George Street and Armada Way gave the City Centre Company more ability to host events and activities that would create community;
- ff) New lighting and new CCTV would encourage new businesses into a 'café culture' with more outdoor seating.

Stuart Elford (CEO of Devon and Plymouth Chamber of Commerce) added:

- gg) The investment was a clear signal of ambition, confidence and leadership and would get Plymouth talked about for the right reasons;
- hh) This investment would appeal to businesses and employers, would attract and retain investors, would attract talent for highly skilled and higher paid jobs, and university students;



- ii) The evening and night time visitor economy would improve;
- jj) The regeneration of the city centre would encourage new uses for empty buildings, including hotels, meeting rooms and much needed conference facilities.

Councillor Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children’s Social Care, Culture and Communications) added:

- kk) The ‘Lets Talk Armada Way’ consultation was set out in detail in meetings held 5 February 2024 and 19 February 2024, which responded to recommendations from the Growth and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding revising the plans for Armada Way;
- ll) The design agreed at the meetings in February would be funded mainly from external sources;
- mm) The Armada Way Scheme demonstrated PCC’s aspirations for enhancing the quality of the public realm in Plymouth and also the wider vision for creating a transformed, modern, thriving city centre which would meet the needs of the people of Plymouth.

Councillor Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change) added:

- nn) The Armada Way Scheme would have a total of 202 mature trees, which was more than existed there before;
- oo) Provision for wildlife would be enhanced through shrubs, wild flowers, reed beds, bee hotels and bird boxes;
- pp) The design was improved following the ‘Let’s Talk Armada Way’ consultation by increasing the diversity of tree species, allowing additional under-planting as well as ‘greening the grey’, all of which were specific changes raised by residents and community groups;
- qq) The proposed sustainable urban drainage system which formed an integral part of the scheme design was essential for the city centre’s adaption to climate change. The existing peak surface water runoff had been modelled at 311 litres per second, and the implementation of the sustainable urban drainage system would reduce this to 68.5 litres per second, equating to a 78% of surface water being diverted away from the combined sewage system in heavy rainfall events.

Councillor Cresswell (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Apprenticeships) added:

- rr) The new play village would attract increased numbers of children and young people to use the city centre;
- ss) The Scheme had been critically reviewed by Make Space for Girls who recognised many positives for girls;

- tt) Changes were being made to small elements of the design to make it more welcoming and accommodating for the under-represented demographic of young girls in the public realm and play spaces;
- uu) The approved scheme was an inclusive design which provided opportunities for young people and supported their mental and physical development and health, as well as their intellectual development;
- vv) The Scheme would provide places for young people to socialise and the proposed pop-up spaces would provide opportunities for outdoor music, art and informal recreation.

Councillor Haydon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Events, Cemeteries and Crematoria) added:

- ww) The Armada Way Scheme would improve safety by introducing new enhanced lighting which would support the night time economy and make the public feel less vulnerable;
- xx) The Scheme would provide a new CCTV system which would have significant enhancements and help address antisocial behaviour.
- yy) The Scheme directly addressed the recommendations from Violence Against Women and Girls reports, showing PCC's commitment to taking practical steps to address that important issue;
- zz) The Armada Way Scheme was not just a landscaping project, but an integrated set of proposals that would help address a much wider set of challenges the city centre faced.

Councillor Coker (Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport) added:

- aaa) The Armada Way Scheme would make much needed improvements to cycling and walking infrastructure within the city centre and would meet the guidelines set for Government cycling and walking infrastructure;
- bbb) The Transforming Cities Fund was investing over £4.5 million towards the delivery of the Scheme;
- ccc) The cycling and walking scheme had widespread support and would help to achieve the existing commitments in the Joint Local Plan, to deliver sustainable transport measures for the growing city;
- ddd) The new infrastructure would enable the foundations to be laid for an expansion of city centre living with more people living and working in the city centre. Footfall for businesses would increase, vacant and historic buildings would be repurposed and this would support the commitments in the Joint Local Plan.

Councillor Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) added:

eee) Armada Way was inaccessible to those with various visual and physical impairments and in need modernisation;

fff) The inclusion of inclusive and sensory play was an integral part of the Scheme;

ggg) Work would continue with Plymouth Area Disability Action Network (PADAN) throughout the construction phases of the Scheme to ensure that consideration continued to be given to those whose needs were based on visual and physical impairments.

Councillor Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) also provided additional comments on behalf of Councillor Dann (Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Sport, Leisure and HR & OD):

hhh) The Armada Way Scheme would give the city centre a new dimension with the redesign encouraging a wider range of interesting active, social and cultural activities that would give local people more reason to visit the city centre;

iii) Visitors would stay longer in the city centre as there would be more to do, which would benefit existing shops;

jjj) The investments PCC were making would attract new private sector investments which would improve the retail offer further;

kkk) New shops would give local people and visitors more reason to visit the city centre and the investment would enable an upward spiral, making the city centre a vibrant and interesting place to visit.

Councillor Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) added:

lll) In February 2024 it was highlighted that housing was a top priority for Plymouth and since then the Administration set out their own ambitions for accelerating housing delivery. Plan for Homes 4 was approved in March 2024;

mmm) It was PCC's ambition to deliver a minimum of 5000 homes in five years;

nnn) The need to unlock the city centres future potential as a place people choose to live was highlighted and the focus was on the delivery of a wide range of homes which would meet housing needs as well as place making;

ooo) The Government were addressing the housing crisis as a central part of their primary mission to deliver economic growth;

ppp) Armada Way was vital to the housing ambition due to the scheme unlocking amenity space, drainage and utilities;

qqq) The play village would create local play and green space for the residents of Bretonside who didn't have that available;

rrr) The report highlighted that over 23,000 people would be within a kilometre of the new play facilities.

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) added:

sss) This was the one of the largest public realm projects in the UK and if approved, Phase 1 work would commence on 01 October 2024 which would see work begin from the Copthorne hotel to the Mayflower. Phase 2 would start on 02 February 2025 and Phase 3 would start in July 2025 with work undertaken on parts of Cornwall Street and the Sundial;

ttt) The Piazza works were delayed due to extensive works along Royal Parade.

Cabinet agreed to:

1. Approve the final construction cost for the approved Armada Way design as £29,892,665;
2. Recommend the Leader approves additions to the Capital Programme as set out in the report giving a maximum spend allocation of £29,892,665 to finance the construction of the approved Armada Way scheme;
3. Note that to support the on-going maintenance of projects within the city centre for a period of five years starting in 2025/2026 that hard and soft landscaping maintenance be funded from previously identified capital approved resources already forming part of the Capital Programme;
4. Grant authority to the Service Director for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure to take all such action as necessary to implement the project including all subsequent design amendments (excluding amendments which impact on the retention of any existing trees or the approved translocation of trees), scheme approval submissions, procurement and contract awards associated with developing and delivering the Armada Way scheme through to construction and completion, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Members;
5. Delegate to the Cabinet Member for Finance authority to make any decisions which impact on the retention of any existing trees, or the approved translocation of trees associated with developing and delivering the Armada Way scheme through to construction and completion.

### 33. **Heat Networks Delivery Approach**

Councillor Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change) introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- a) Delivering a new Strategic Heat Network for Plymouth was a milestone in the mission to make Plymouth a Net Zero City;

- b) Heat was the largest user of energy in Plymouth and accounted for around 28% of the total city emissions. Plymouth could not become Net Zero without action to decarbonise heat;
- c) The development of heat networks was something that the council had recognised and was an objective incorporated into every climate emergency and Net Zero action plans since the Climate Emergency Declaration in 2019;
- d) Plymouth had been recognised nationally by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero as one of the 17 cities in its Advanced Zoning Programme;
- e) By using an at scale approach to the work, two separate zones were identified which offered the greatest potential for deliverable heat networks. The largest was for a Strategic Heat Main in the southern zonal area which would be around two large waste heat sources, the Southwest Water Plant and the Devonport Energy from Waste Plant;
- f) Rollout for the Strategic Heat Main would be in phases from 2026 to 2050. Phase one would include the university area, the civic quarter and Millbay. Phase two would include Derriford, the Hospital and Marjon University;
- g) Annual carbon savings with full buildout for both zones had been estimated to be 31,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>;
- h) Recent market engagement showed strong interest from private sector heat network developers who had significant investment to deploy;
- i) PCC had met with independent legal and commercial advisors who helped identify and evaluate the different options for delivering the Strategic Heat Network;
- j) On the basis of the evaluation, which included an assessment of risk and reward, it was proposed that the best route for delivering the project was through a City Council led procurement. This option did not require any capital investment from the Council as the project could be supported in other ways, including bidding for grants from the Government's Green Heat Networking Fund;
- k) It was crucial to make sure that benefits were secured for the people of Plymouth, for example incorporating measures in the contract to ensure local employment and training opportunities for residents;
- l) The initiative would delivery ten wider benefits:
  - 1. Deliver over £350 million of investment in green infrastructure over a period of 20 years with the first phase commencing in 2025, involving approximately £60 million of investment;
  - 2. Kick-start Plymouth's most significant opportunity to decarbonise heat;
  - 3. Create around 400 direct green jobs and develop local capacity and green skills;

4. Provide businesses and residents with the lowest cost decarbonised heat;
  5. Enhance the city centre as a location for investment;
  6. Improve air quality by reducing harmful nitrogen oxide emissions;
  7. Improve water quality in Plymouth Sound by capturing heat from the warm waste water before it is discharged from Southwest Water Works;
  8. Improve the city's energy security by reducing the dependence on fossil fuels for meeting heat demands;
  9. Improve resilience to the adverse impacts of climate change by providing decarbonised cooling options and;
  10. Deliver long term energy cost savings for buildings, including on PCC estate;
- m) In 2023, the Labour Administration was elected under a manifesto which put green investment as one of its five key pledges. This £350 million plan was the clearest example of the environmental step change that the Administration was starting to deliver.

In response to questions, it was explained:

- n) Various cities across the UK had been operating and running heat networks successfully;
- o) The Council had gone down the procurement route to ensure their values were at the heart of the project;
- p) The Council did not have the capacity or skills to run a £100 million energy company so the opportunity was to get private companies involved to provide the capital whilst maintaining PCC's core values;
- q) The 2021 Energy Act highlighted and detailed zonal opportunities which were would be part of the future of heating in large sections of the city;
- r) There were ten main industry players working in the UK, and there was a positive response from the market engagement;
- s) There were various funding streams including pension funding, which would be a 40 year plus long-term model which suited this type of infrastructure.

Cabinet agreed to:

- I. Support the zonal approach to heat network roll out in Plymouth, as set out in the report, and the procurement of a development partner to take forward these proposals to delivery;

2. Grant delegated authority to the Service Director for Strategic Planning & Infrastructure, in consultation with Cabinet Member for Environment & Climate Change, to determine the following matters in respect to the heat network delivery project:

- (a) Approval of revenue business case;
- (b) Procurement of development partner;
- (c) Submission of an application to the Green Heat Network Fund to support the delivery of the first phase of the project; and
- (d) Any other matter to secure delivery of the project, subject to such being within approved budget.

34. **Building Bridges to Opportunity Position Paper**

Councillor Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- a) In 1997 the Council approved an anti-poverty strategy and although this report was not an anti-poverty strategy, poverty had remained an important focus of the Council's activity;
- b) The position paper was focussed on developing a framework to strengthen the work that the city as a whole was doing to tackle poverty;
- c) The framework focussed on three areas:
  - 1. How would the Council stop people falling into poverty;
  - 2. If people were in poverty, how would the Council help them;
  - 3. If people were in poverty, what could the Council do to mitigate;
- d) The response to the cost of living crisis included short term 'sticking plasters' that could be used to help people at the point of crisis;
- e) Despite efforts, over 20% of children in Plymouth continued to grow up in poverty;
- f) More work was being done to help people lift themselves out of poverty and be able to earn better money, to understand health systems and how to use them, to get better jobs through better skills, to live in better housing, to enjoy culture and to have their horizons widened by the cultural offerings of the city;
- g) The position paper would help map what was already being done and identify where learning could be done. It would celebrate successes as well as identify gaps and build the framework that would bring the work into a cohesive hold across all of the

different strategies;

- h) One of the first actions of the new Prime Minister was to set up a cross departmental task force, jointly chaired by two Secretaries of State, hosted by the Cabinet Office, to look at what national Government could do to tackle child poverty;
- i) The Joseph Rowntree Foundation were also focussing on poverty;
- j) Dependant on the agreed recommendations from Cabinet, the Child Poverty Action Group would discover their full range of activity for 2025.

Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health) added:

- k) The work on the Position Paper was in the engagement phase which meant consulting with partners and collaborators across the city;
- l) There was more residents living in deprivation in Plymouth than the English average;
- m) Nearly a quarter of Plymouth residents were economically inactive due to various reasons including long-term sickness and people relying on lower skilled and low paid work;
- n) The goal was the build on the assets and rich cultural history that Plymouth already had, as well as pull together the economic output;
- o) Public sector organisations had been running initiatives such as Plymouth Sound National Marine Park which offered lots of opportunities not just for jobs and resources but also for green and blue spaces;
- p) Plymouth's economy was driven through marine, defence manufacturing, medical and digital industries;
- q) Building Bridges to Opportunity wanted to help set an environment where people didn't fall into poverty in the first place, where they can lift themselves out of poverty and if they were in poverty, how could PCC ensure they experience the least harm possible.

Nick Shaw (Public Health Registrar) added:

- r) Due to the complexity of it, there were no quick answers in addressing the people who lived in poverty;
- s) All poverty was multi and trans generational;
- t) The work on poverty addressed policies at a local level, including work in the Plymouth Plan around economic inactivity and poverty in the city.



Cabinet agreed to:

1. Support the launch of the Building Bridges to Opportunity programme and requested that 6 monthly updates come to Cabinet;
2. Request the Leader of the Council to formally appoint a champion for this programme.

35. **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Sufficiency Plan 2024-2030**

Councillor Sally Cresswell (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Apprenticeships) introduced the item and highlighted:

- a) Welcomed parents and carers from Mill Ford School and thanked them for their presence, understanding and the way they had worked with the Council;
- b) The plan was about every individual child and was something she was very passionate about;
- c) Her 30 year teaching background meant she was well placed to understand both the importance and the urgency for this work;
- d) There had been an increase in the city of children who had an education and health care plan (EHCP) and forecasts were expected to be on the lower side of actual numbers;
- e) Analysis indicated that Plymouth would be short of at least 105 special school places by 2030;
- f) Due to capacity pressures within the Plymouth special school estate, students had had to be placed into Independent Special Schools (ISP's);
  - i. There were 376 children and young people in ISP's with an additional estimated cost of £43,422 per year per student when compared to children placed in a school within the Plymouth school estate;
  - ii. The total cost of placing students in ISP's for financial year 2023/24 was £8.6 million;
- g) Expansion within Plymouth would ensure that more children were able to attend school closer to home which would reduce the pressure on the home to school transport service budget. Children travelling outside of the city, the costed the council £1.177 million;
- h) Plymouth City Council received funding from the High Needs Capital Allocation Grant (HMPCA) which could be used to increase the number of special educational places available in the city;
- i) There was no additional funding available, but the Council would continue to lobby Central Government and the Department for Education to request additional funds

for SEND and provision for children in Plymouth;

- j) The plan outlined a range of options to expand the special educational provision which would be delivered and funded from the available £13 million HMPCA;
- k) With no indication that provision for school age children needed to be increased at Woodlands School, available space could be turned into special provision nursery, supporting early intervention which would benefit children and their families, as well as having a cost saving;
- l) Resource provision for students within mainstream schools was integrated creating a more inclusive setting and more children would be able to stay within the schools that were within their own communities;
- m) Mill Ford School was in need of total refurbishment and full structure and condition surveys were underway to identify any underlying issues that would prevent refurbishment;
  - i. Funding to rebuild the school had been explored was not possible with existing funding;
- n) A building had become available next to Longcause School and the option to purchase was being explored, and if successful would offer up to 100 additional places subject to refurbishment;
- o) Any refurbishment works would be carefully planned to minimise disruption to students and staff;
- p) Children were the future, and it was important that they had an environment in which they could thrive;
- q) Councillor Cresswell thanked parents, school staff, and Council officers who worked so hard to deliver the best for the city's most vulnerable children.

In response to questions, supported by Lisa Linscott (Service Director for Education, Participation and Skills) and Amanda Paddison (Head of Access to Learning), the following was discussed:

- r) Great inclusive practices across all schools in Plymouth would require a very strong ordinarily available approach, and graduated approach, in all schools, and the SEND sufficiency plan sat alongside this;
- s) A governance framework had been established to support the delivery of the project;
- t) A region-wide demonstration by parents and carers of SEND children had led to helpful discussions and SEND provision was a priority for the administration.

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) proposed an additional recommendation which was seconded by the Councillor Tudor Evans OBE (Leader) to:

- u) Report back to Cabinet with a plan for implementation of the SEND provision.

Cabinet agreed:

1. The SEND Sufficiency Plan 2024-2030, which set out the proposed options for expansion of special educational provision within Plymouth to meet increasing demand;
2. That a report was prepared for Cabinet with included a plan for implementation of the SEND provision.

36. **Recommissioning of Adult Care Homes**

Councillor Mary Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) introduced the item and highlighted the following:

- a) Good quality residential care allowed people to be well looked after in a warm and safe home, with the opportunity to socialise and stay in touch with their families;
- b) There were 89 care homes within Plymouth supporting people of a range of ages and needs;
- c) The annual spend on residential and nursing care for adults was £50 million;
- d) It was important to have a good range of high quality providers and homes to work with to give vulnerable adults, and their families, a choice of residential care;
- e) With an ageing population, demands for residential care, particularly dementia care, were likely to rise, so it was important to plan for the homes that would be needed in the future;
- f) The existing contract for residential care homes was due to expire at the end of December 2023, and the commissioning team had been working with providers to understand what was needed and how this could be achieved, and they wanted to get it right, and so were asking for an extension.

Emma Crowther (Service Director for Integrated Commissioning) and Caroline Paterson (Strategic Commissioning Manager) added:

- g) A lot had changed for residential care providers in recent years with the COVID19 pandemic, rising cost of living, and having to adapt to care for more complex needs;

- h) The existing contracts did not reflect the needs of residential care for both the present and future;
- i) The extension had been requested so that all of the learning from engagement work could be used to inform future contracts, and procurement was planned for 2025;
- j) Care home providers had been very supportive and engaging with the aim of developing a model that would support adults with complex care needs and this included:
  - i. The varying size of care homes from one bed, up to 64 beds;
  - ii. Some buildings were old and no longer fit for purpose;
  - iii. The funding model for meeting the care requirements of people with complex needs required improvement;
  - iv. Need for more staff training;
- k) Over the next 12 months, the team would work with partners to develop the work further and build stronger relationships;
- l) An X-ray car would launch in September 2024 which would be able to provide X-rays and scans within care homes, reducing the need to get residents to the hospital;
- m) The HIVE training programme would be launched to improve training and resources for providers;
- n) The team wanted to get feedback from service users;
- o) It was important to get the procurement process done well.

Councillor Tudor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) proposed an amendment to recommendation two of the report so that it read:

- p) Give permission for the procurement of new contracts to proceed during 2025, with the award of contracts delegated to the Strategic Director for Adults, Health and Communities in consultation with Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, where they would not already have authority to award within the scheme of delegation.

This amendment was agreed by Cabinet.

- q) It was discussed that the findings of the survey could be suggested to the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel or Health and Wellbeing Board as a future agenda item.

Cabinet agreed to:

1. Approve the Business Case to extend the current care home contract over a period of 1 year from 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025;
2. Give permission for the procurement of new contracts to proceed during 2025, with the award of contracts delegated to the Strategic Director for Adults, Health and Communities in consultation with Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, where they would not already have authority to award within the scheme of delegation.

37. **Recommendations from Scrutiny Management Board on Delt Contract**

Councillor John Stephens (Chair of Scrutiny Management Board) introduced the recommendations and said:

- a) There had been a comprehensive report and presentation from Councillor Sue Dann (Cabinet Member for Customer Service, Sport, Leisure, HR&OD) and Pete Honeywell (Transformation Architecture Manager) and members of the Committee had the opportunity to ask plenty of questions on a wide range of subjects;
  - i. Governance;
  - ii. Shareholders;
  - iii. Cost comparisons to the private sector;
  - iv. Apprenticeships and generation of local skilled employment opportunities;
  - v. Innovative practice to reduce carbon footprint;
  - vi. Cyber governance and security.

Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) responded to the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Management Board and highlighted:

- b) The need to look at this item had been highlighted 12 months ago and elections had made it more difficult to look at;
- c) Encouraged Councillors to look at the forward plan, and to engage with Cabinet Members, over what work was coming up;
- d) Proposed an amendment to recommendation 1b as follows:
  - i. Further to reviews of the performance of the service being delivered in advance of the break clause that the Council could exercise in years 3, 5, 7

and 9 would provide greater oversight;

- ii. This was welcomed by Councillor John Stephens.

Cabinet agreed:

- I. The responses to the Scrutiny Management Board's recommendations.

38. **Delt Contract**

Cabinet agreed:

- 1. To delegate authority to renew contracts with Delt for 10 years to the Council's Section 151 Officer;
- 2. To note there are three contracts being renewed; ICT, printing and document handling, and payroll provision.

Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) added the following regarding Delt's corporate social responsibility:

- a) DELT had been a real living wage employer since 2015;
- b) They were well recognised for high staff engagement and were certified as a best place to work by best companies and received a ninth place in the top 100 most loved places to work by Newsweek Magazine;
- c) Commitment to recruitment of students and apprentices, as well as upskilling existing employees through their apprenticeship programme;
- d) Strong engagement in schools, colleagues and universities and were involved in mentoring, internships and career workshops;
  - i. They had worked in depth with 23 students over the past nine years, 11 of which had returned on permanent contracts, three of which had progressed to Team Leader;
- e) They had been an Armed Forces Defence recognition scheme award winner for five years, currently silver, and on track to get gold by 2025;
  - i. 40% of their work force were ex-armed forces;
- f) They were signatories to the Care Leavers Covenant, providing employment opportunities, career mentoring and sponsorship, and one care leaver had been hired as an apprentice;
- g) They had recognition through the workplace wellbeing charter;

- h) There was an ongoing programme within the company to fundraise for local charities;
- i) They had a partnership with the Council's LGBTQ+ Staff Network;
- j) Their print and document service was carbon negative.

39. **Chair of Audit and Governance Update**

Councillor Sarah Allen (Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee) introduced the report:

- a) The report provided an overview of the Audit and Governance Committees work as defined in the Council's Constitution;
- b) Throughout 2023/24 they had focused on key areas such as internal and external audits, risk management, updates to the constitution, annual statement of accounts, annual governance statement, impact of voter identification and the Council's capitalisation directive (ensuring that the right accounting treatment was given to a transaction that saved taxpayers millions of pounds);
- c) The Committee's efforts were crucial to maintain high standards of transparency, accountability and financial integrity within the Council;
- d) The Committee remained committed to providing an independent and high level focus on audit assurance and reporting arrangements.

In response to questions the following was explained:

- e) Councillor Tudor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) and Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) highlighted the importance of the Committee and gave their thanks to members of the Committee for their continued hard work;
- f) Polling Station reviews was a standing item;
- g) Over time, polling stations had been moved out of primary schools and into other venues to avoid closing schools;
- h) The work programme could be adjusted throughout the year to look at items of importance;
- i) The Committee would look at the legislative changes expected for local government.

40. **Ageing Well**

Councillor Mary Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care) introduced the report:

- a) Everyone was ageing, and so had a vested interest in ensuring that Plymouth provided the best environments and opportunities in which people could thrive as they moved into their later years;
- b) The Ageing Well programme was committed to changing the focus from the perceived difficulties of getting older, and instead approach with the mind-set that ageing was an opportunity, and older people were valued assets who made endless contributions to their families, neighbours and the city;
- c) Plymouth had a wonderful natural environment that enabled people to stay active, as well as a great cultural and heritage offer across diverse communities, opportunities for lifelong learning and volunteering, and a responsive service that supported people to stay well;
- d) More could be done to reduce the amount of time people spent in poor health in later life, but also to help people in poor health to lead healthy, connected and fulfilling lives;
- e) The Ageing Well programme had been based on the Centre for Ageing Better Framework for Ageing Friendly Communities, ensuring a focus on creating age friendly places and spaces and ensuring relevant and good quality work and training opportunities;
- f) The themes of the programme were distinct but were part of an integrated approach to creating conditions to age well;
- g) Residents, communities, businesses, employers and partners were invited to join Plymouth City Council in collective action.

Laura Juett (Public Health Specialist) added:

- h) Plymouth City Council had a commitment towards Age Friendly Communities, recognised the ageing population and the opportunities and challenges that it presented;
- i) In Plymouth in 2022 100,300 people were aged 50+ (37.6% of population), by 2043 110,800 people were expected to be aged 50+ (40.6% of population);
- j) Plymouth's vision was to be "One of Europe's most vibrant waterfront cities, where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone: *and where age is no barrier*";
- k) The State of Ageing report would provide a picture of what it was like to age and be an older person in Plymouth, and would be presented to Cabinet in October 2024;
- l) Key themes for the programme, learned from research were:



- i. Healthy Ageing - People had said it was important to stay active and strong, but they were most concerned about poor access to health services and e-consults/digital exclusion, so work would focus on maximising potential for revamped Thrive Plymouth programme, broadening offer of falls prevention programmes and advising & influencing NHS e.g., digital first approaches and access to primary care;
- ii. Age Friendly Spaces and Places – People had said it was important to have more places to sit in public places, more accessible toilets, ‘chatty’ tables, and bus shelters with seats, so work would focus on supporting adoption of Age-Friendly Businesses framework, embed Healthy Streets framework into our planning/design, promotion of the Climate Ambassador Programme to 50+;
- iii. Transport - People described struggling to use the bus as the bus stops are far away/on a hill, community transport options were expensive and unreliable, so work would focus on supporting the delivery of the Plymouth Bus Service Improvement Plan and ensuring that the views of older people were central to developments, promoted active travel for over 50s, and supported conversations towards improvements in community transport for older people;
- iv. Participation and Inclusion - people talked about *‘having company is the most important thing’* and they wanted more opportunities *‘for people to talk to us face to face’*, so work would focus on supporting the Centre for Ageing Better Age Without Limits campaign that challenged ageism and supported a more age-inclusive society, working with the Community Empowerment Team to ensure that the experiences and strengths of older people were amplified and used to inform collective action;
- v. Skills, Employment and Volunteering - People had said that employers need recruit based on skills/experience not age and they wanted more flexible retirement options and more diverse volunteering opportunities, and so work would focus on promotion of the Age Friendly Employer Pledge, On Course South West and other training providers to promote and developing learning opportunities for people aged 50+, as well as promoting volunteering opportunities for people aged 50+;
- vi. Housing – People had said that they needed more accessible and innovative housing options such as house shares, co-ops and intergeneration living, and so work in this area would focus on existing housing partnerships making the case for an adequate range of housing options and adaptations for people as they age, work with energy delivery partners to promote and improve the uptake of Home Upgrade Grants to insulate homes and improve energy self-sufficiency among those aged 50+;
- vii. Communication - People had stressed the importance of recognising and giving value to older people’s histories and experiences. They said that language was really important and needed to convey respect. Work would focus on ensuring all consultation and engagement processes were

accessible to older people, challenged negative stereotypes of ageing and older people, actively recognised and celebrated the diversity of ageing and older people in communications.

- m) International Day of Older People would be on 1 October 2024;
- i. Launch of PCC Ageing Well Hub – bringing together information and resources organised around specific themes;
  - ii. Memory Matters Hub - Information and Advice Fair for over 50s (includes legal advice, benefits and pension credit advice, health improvement advice);
  - iii. Volunteering Fair focused on promoting/recruiting to over 50's at The Box;
  - iv. Theatre Royal - Elder Tree and Theatre Royal drama and seated dance workshop;
  - v. Red Velvet Cinema showing at Devonport Guildhall;
  - vi. Silver Swans Free Dance Workshops;
  - vii. Plymouth Active Leisure – 19 free sessions – gentle swims, 'try bowls', netball, climbing;
  - viii. Promoting wide range of existing groups/sessions opportunities across the week including activities in libraries, On Course South West, Home Upgrade Grants, Connect Plymouth – Electric Car Club and Beryl E-bikes, Plymotion – led walks and bikes rides and adult cycle training;
- n) Communications about the programme would begin within the next week.

41. **Children's Services Update**

Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications) introduced the item:

- a) The report laid out the challenges that the Council faced in relation to Children's Services, particularly placements, also being faced by many other local authorities across the country;
- b) It captured the financial context, challenges and strategic efforts to address the needs of children in Plymouth;
- c) The budget for young people and families was £60.334 million, with £36.725 million allocated for placement costs, but as of June 2024, the forecast expenditure for placements was £41.417 million, largely due to the higher than expected number of children in care;

- d) There were 521 children in care, 33 more than had been budgeted for, and there were more children in external residential placements and unregistered placements than anticipated;
- e) The average cost of a residential placement was £6,182 per week, but for children with complex needs, this could rise to £16,000 per week, and some placements were costing over £40,000 per week;
- f) Finding suitable foster placements for children remained a challenge;
- g) The Council had prevented 55 children from entering care in recent months, and had supported nine more to return home;
- h) The Family Homes for Children programme was focusing on recruiting more in-house foster carers to reduce reliance on expensive external placements, and had identified £1.53 million of potential savings for the 2024/25 financial year, with just over £500,000 already achieved through positive placement moves;
- i) Children's Services continued to strengthen in-house fostering, exploring options for directly providing children's residential care, as well as supporting the reunification of children with their birth families where safe and possible;
- j) The Council had little to no bargaining power in relation to the cost of a lot of placements;
- k) She would be speaking to government to lobby for much needed changes to the sector;
- l) People should be shocked at the stark reality of how the market had developed in the past ten years, when remembering this was in relation to looking after the most vulnerable people in society.

Temilola Salimon (Service Director for Children, Young People and Families) added:

- m) Residential arrangements were being reviewed weekly;
- n) Locally and residentially foster carer numbers were low, and this was trying to be understood.

In response to questions, supported by David Haley (Director of Children's Services), it was added:

- o) Foster carers coming forward didn't have the experience or confidence to home children with challenging emotional needs and/or trauma;
- p) A good financial package was offered to foster carers;

- q) Phase two of the outcomes of the fostering summit would include looking at how to do fostering differently;
- r) Work on increasing foster carers was beginning to show increases in people going through the process of becoming foster carers;
- s) There were realistic challenges, but the Council was in the right places trying to improve the situation;
- t) Evidence that work within early intervention and prevention, as well as alignment of resources in family hubs was starting to have an impact on reducing the level of care families required.

Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) added:

- u) Intervention from government on cost of care was required and he would take these issues to the LGA and other forums;
- v) Every time Children's Services budget was allowed to grow, it deprived other areas of the Council from being able to do their work;

Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications) added:

- w) The service was relentlessly looking at ways to tackle financial pressure and reports would continue to come to Cabinet to be open and transparent about the issue.

Cabinet agreed to note the report.

#### 42. **Leader's Announcements**

Councillor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) made the following announcements:

- a) The Daily Telegraph had named Plymouth the best city to live and work in;
- b) Councillor Tom Briars-Delve (Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change) would be giving the civic welcome speak at a conference on floating offshore wind;

He then invited Councillor Lowry (Cabinet Member for Finance) to repeat information on the Armada Way Project dates following a misleading headline from BBC Spotlight on the item:

- c) Zone One, from the Copthorne Hotel to Mayflower Street, work would take place from 1 October 2024 to July 2025;
- d) Zone Two construction would take place between February 2025 and November 2025;

- e) Zone Three construction would take place between July 2025 and April 2026;
- f) Zone Four timeframe was to be confirmed due to works planned on Royal Parade, but would be within the timeframe of the other Zones.

43. **Cabinet Member Updates**

Councillor Haydon (Cabinet Member for Community Safety, Libraries, Events, Cemeteries and Crematoria) made the following announcement:

- a) Seafest would be taking place on the Barbican Waterfront on 14 and 15 September 2024 with free shuttle buses and lots of free activities.

44. **LGA Update**

Councillor Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications) introduced the item and highlighted:

- a) Expressed congratulations to Councillor Shaun Davies, who stepped down as LGA Chair after being elected as the new MP for Telford;
- b) Elected officers of the LGA Labour Group had unanimously nominated Councillor Louise Gittins as the new LGA Chair;
- c) The LGA Labour Group had five regional member peers who led support directly to councils and co-ordinated support from a wide pool of Labour member peers with expertise in different areas;
  - i. Councillor Tudor Evans OBE (Leader of the Council) had been appointed as member peer for the South West region having previously served as a member peer for the East Midlands;
- d) Councillor Chris Penberthy (Cabinet Member for Housing, Cooperative Development and Communities) had been elected as a Labour Group regional representative for the South West;
- e) Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications) was reappointed as a member of the Culture, Tourism and Sport Board;
- f) The annual LGA conference would be held at the Harrogate Convention Centre 22-24 October 2024.

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# Cabinet



Date of meeting:	14 October 2024
Title of Report:	<b>Ageing Well: State of Ageing in Plymouth 2024 Report</b>
Lead Member:	Councillor Mrs Mary Aspinall
Lead Strategic Director:	Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health)
Author:	Laura Juett, Public Health Specialist
Contact Email:	Laura.Juett@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	<a href="#">Click here to enter text.</a>
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

## Purpose of Report

The Ageing Well programme was agreed at Cabinet in December 2023. It is Plymouth's commitment to ensuring that the city provides the best environments and opportunities for people to thrive as they move into their later years. The programme is based on the Centre for Ageing Better Framework for Age Friendly Communities. This means we are giving focus to healthy ageing, creating age friendly places and spaces, ensuring relevant and good quality work and training opportunities and making sure that people feel included and connected as they age.

The State of Ageing in Plymouth 2024 report provides a picture of what it is like to age and live life as an older person in Plymouth. It brings together some key statistics, the voices and insights of organisations and people in the city, and case studies of initiatives and services that are in place to support people as they age. The report defines the initial priorities for the Ageing Well programme.

## Recommendations and Reasons

That Cabinet:

1. Notes the State of Ageing in Plymouth 2024 report;
2. Approves the priorities outlined in the report.

## Alternative options considered and rejected

The population in Plymouth is ageing with the number of people aged 50 and over predicted to rise to 40.6% of the local population by 2043 and the number of people aged 80 and over predicted to increase from 13,200 to 22,600 by 2043.

There are risks in not responding to this demographic change and in not ensuring the best environments and opportunities to support people to age well and live healthy, connected and fulfilling lives. The key risks are that people spend more time in poorer health in later life leading to an

increased demand for health and social care services and that there is a decline in employment in people over 50 that will have a negative impact on economic activity and prosperity.

### Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

The Programme responds directly to the Corporate Plan – in particular ‘making Plymouth a great place to grow up and grow old’ and in addressing inequality and inequity in the city.

It supports a number of policies in the Plymouth Plan including those concerned with reducing health inequalities, playing an active role in the community, delivering skills and talent development and celebrating diverse communities.

### Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

There are no current implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan. The Ageing Well Programme currently uses existing staff resources and budgets. Opportunities for external funding will be sought for specific projects within the programme.

### Financial Risks

None

### Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

The initial priorities for the Ageing Well programme include engaging people over 50 in the Climate Ambassador Programme, promoting active travel for over 50s and improving the uptake of home energy efficiency measures for those aged 50 and over.

### Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

*\* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

Age is a protected characteristic the Ageing Well programme responds directly to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity.

### Appendices

*\*Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
		<i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	State of Ageing Report							
B	Priorities for Ageing Well Programme (from State of Ageing Report)							
C	EIA							

### Background papers:

*\*Add rows as required to box below*



Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable)						
	If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
N/A							

**Sign off:**

Fin	DJN. 24.25. 096	Leg	LS/00 0013 12/2/ AC/1/ 10/24	Mon Off	N/A	HR	N/A	Asset s	N/A	Strat Proc	N/A
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: Ruth Harrell (Director of Public Health)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 02/10/2024											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Mary Aspinall (Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care)											
Date approved: 02/10/2024											

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## State of Ageing Overview

### Foreword – Cllr Mary Aspinall

I am delighted that we are prioritising Ageing Well in Plymouth. We are all ageing, so all have a vested interest in ensuring that our city provides the best environments and opportunities for us to thrive as we move into our later years.

We have tended to concentrate on the perceived difficulties of getting older with discussions often focussing on the cost to health and social care services. We can often think that ageing is a problem to be solved. In Plymouth the Ageing Well programme is committed to changing this and starts with the mindset of ageing as an opportunity and older people as valued assets that make endless contributions to their families, neighbourhoods and to the city.

We are fortunate that there are already so many great opportunities for people to age well in our city. We have a wonderful natural environment that invites people to stay active, we have a great cultural and heritage offer across our diverse communities, varied opportunities for lifelong learning and volunteering and responsive services supporting people to stay well. In Plymouth we know there is lots more we can do to support people to age well. We believe that the amount of time people spend in poor health towards later life is largely preventable and that people in poorer health can continue to lead healthy, connected and fulfilling lives.

We have based our Ageing Well programme on the Centre for Ageing Better Framework for Age Friendly Communities. This means we are giving focus to creating age friendly places and spaces, ensuring relevant and good quality work and training opportunities and making sure that people feel included and connected as they age. The themes of our programme are distinct, but in reality they interact and align and should be seen as an integrated approach to creating the conditions for Ageing Well.

This report and the initial priorities we have identified are the start of our work towards more Age Friendly Communities. We recognise that the programme will grow over time and invite our residents, communities, businesses, employers and other partners to join us in this collective action.

## 1. Introduction

This report gives a brief overview of what it is like to age and live life as an older person in Plymouth. It is a summary version of the full State of Ageing in Plymouth report and presents some key statistics, a snapshot of the voices and insights of people in the city, and brief case studies of things that are in place to support people as they age. The report outlines some initial priorities for the Ageing Well programme.

People are living longer. In the UK someone 65 years old today can expect to live to 85, nearly 10 years longer than their parents' generation. One in five babies born today will live to see their 100<sup>th</sup> birthday.<sup>1</sup> Improved working conditions, reduced smoking rates, and improved healthcare have all contributed to increasing life expectancy from generation to generation. However, these gains in overall life expectancy are not shared across the population. Inequalities in education, employment and living conditions and variations in health, social care and other services over the life course mean that people in more deprived communities do not benefit equally from these additional years and quality of life. This can be seen in the inequalities in life expectancy in Plymouth where men living in the most deprived areas of the city live nine years less than those living in the most affluent areas and women living in the most deprived areas live five years less than those in the most affluent areas.

People's experiences of ageing and living life as an older person are diverse. They are influenced by our gender, our ethnicity, our sexuality, our education and financial security. Our approach to Ageing Well in Plymouth recognises this diversity and works to ensure that we support people to age well in an inclusive and equitable way whilst giving focus to where there is the greatest need.

The Ageing Well programme in Plymouth has an overall vision for Plymouth to be *One of Europe's most vibrant waterfront cities, where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone: and where age is no barrier*. It is based on the Centre for Ageing Better Framework for Age Friendly Communities that focuses on the areas of the built and social environment that contribute to our experiences of ageing.<sup>2</sup> The programme in Plymouth recognises the importance of health and social care responses in supporting people to age well. As such it sits alongside and seeks to influence existing integrated care systems and partnerships. Similarly, it recognises the fundamental importance of safe, affordable, well-maintained homes that support independence and wellbeing as people age. The programme will work with established housing structures and partnerships to ensure that ageing and the needs of older people are integrated into all developments.

Ageing Well Plymouth does not use a clear definition of older age but takes the broad approach of 50 years and above. Whilst the programme is focused on the later part of our lives it recognises that people's health, wellbeing, and life experiences in

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<sup>1</sup> Life expectancy calculator, ONS. [Life expectancy calculator - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/life-expectancy-calculator)

<sup>2</sup> Centre for Ageing Better, Age Friendly Community. [What's an Age-friendly Community? | Centre for Ageing Better \(ageing-better.org.uk\)](https://www.ageing-better.org.uk)

later life are also shaped by the social, economic, and environmental conditions and opportunities during earlier life. In doing so it aims to align with other local plans and programmes including the Plymouth Plan for Economic Growth, the Plymouth Plan for Nature and the forward plans for Thrive Plymouth – the city’s approach to improving health and wellbeing and reducing inequalities.

This report and our work going forward values and prioritises the experiences and insights of people, including older people in the city. It recognises the positive aspects to ageing and the huge contributions older people make across our communities. During the drafting of this report, we have had conversations with residents and organisations across the city to understand what matters to them as they age. A snapshot of their voices and insights are shown throughout the report. As the Plymouth Ageing Well programme develops, we will continue these conversations and learning to ensure that developments are rooted in people’s real-life experience.

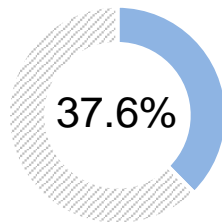
## 2. Plymouth population

### Plymouth in 2022



**100,300**

people aged 50+ <sup>3</sup>



proportion of people aged 50+ in the population



**3.4 : 1**

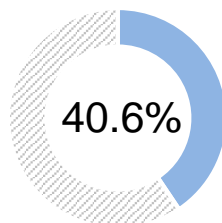
Ratio of working age (16-64) to older population (65+)

### Plymouth by 2043



**110,800**

people aged 50+



proportion of people aged 50+ in the population



**2.5 : 1**

Ratio of working age (16-64) to older population (65+)

<sup>3</sup> In this document the use of the “+” symbol used after an age refers to those of that age and older e.g., 50+ refers to those aged 50 years and over.

The 2022 mid-year population estimate reports that around 100,300 people out of the population of almost 266,900 in Plymouth were aged 50 and over (37.6%), 50,000 were aged 65 and over (18.7%), and just over 13,200 were 80 and over (4.9%).<sup>4</sup> 95% of Plymouth residents aged 50 and over identify as White British.<sup>5</sup>

**37.6%**  
Over one third of the Plymouth population are aged 50 and over

Population predictions suggest that the number of individuals aged 50 years and over will rise from 37.6% of the population in 2022 to 40.6% of the population in 2043. The number of people aged 80 and over will increase from 13,200 people to 22,600 people by 2043.

## 2.2 Life expectancy and inequalities

On average, a male born in Plymouth would be expected to live to 78 years, with 64 years in ‘very good’ or ‘good’ health (healthy life expectancy) and 61 years free from day-to-day activity restriction due to a long-lasting physical or mental health condition (disability-free life expectancy).<sup>6</sup>

On average, a female born in Plymouth would be expected to live to 82 years, with 59 years in ‘very good’ or ‘good’ health, and 57 years free from day-to-day activity restriction due to a long-lasting physical or mental health condition.<sup>6</sup>

Male and female life expectancy in Plymouth



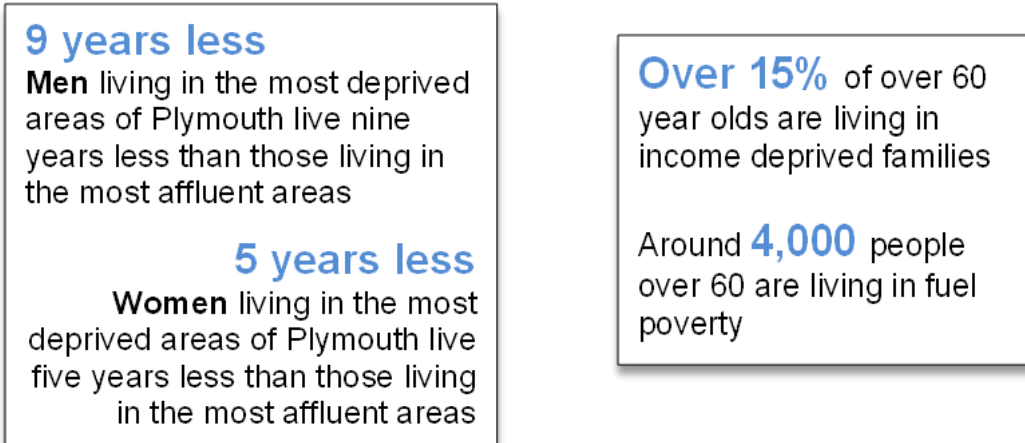
Women in Plymouth live on **average four years longer** than men but spend more of their life in poorer health

<sup>4</sup> Mid-2022 population estimates, ONS. Rounded to nearest 100.

<sup>5</sup> Census 2021: Ethnic group by age and sex (RM032), ONS via NOMIS

<sup>6</sup> Healthy life expectancy at birth 2018-20 (A01a); Life expectancy at birth 2020-22 (A01b); and Disability-free life expectancy 2018-20 (A01c) indicators, Public Health Outcomes Framework, OHID

Deprivation and poverty make a big difference to life expectancy and healthy ageing. Men in the most deprived areas of Plymouth have an average life expectancy nearly nine years less than those in the least deprived areas, whilst for women the difference is just over five years. These inequalities are strongly associated with the social and economic circumstances that we experience and accumulate throughout life.



### 3. Healthy ageing

As we age, we experience an increased risk of long-term conditions including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, dementia and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. However, increasing ill health and disability are not an inevitable feature of ageing. Many of these conditions are preventable and the risk and impact of such conditions can be delayed through environmental changes, the things we do and the access we have to health promotion and screening and vaccination programmes

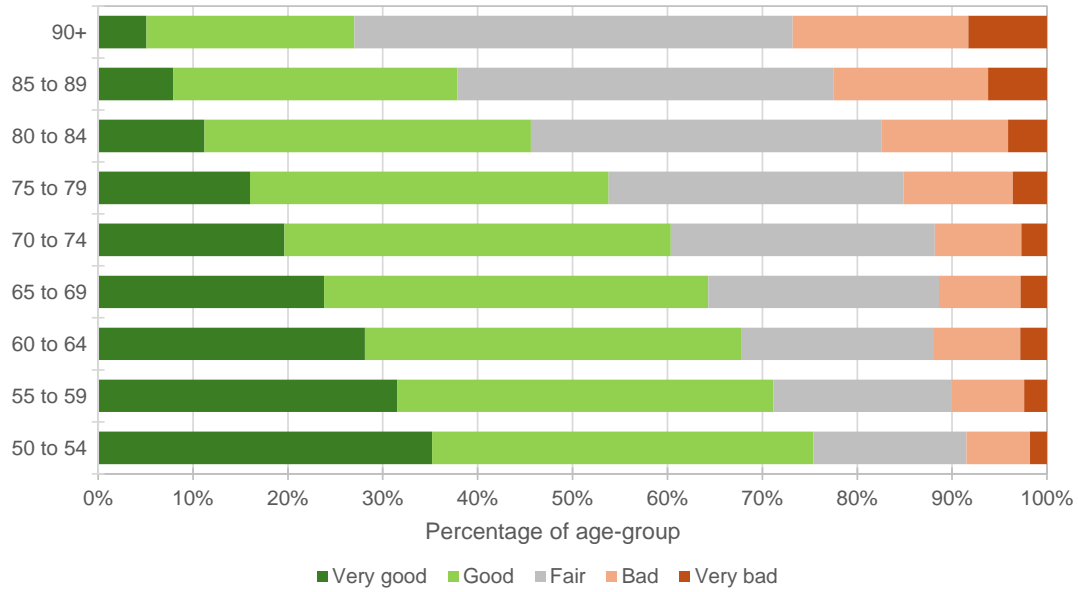
*Wellbeing* is generally accepted to refer to the way that people feel about themselves and their lives. Those aged 45 to 59 report the lowest average ratings of happiness and life satisfaction. As people age into the 60 to 74 generation their wellbeing generally increases dramatically. Applying national positive wellbeing scores to the population in Plymouth for those aged 50 and over there may be around:<sup>7</sup>

- **79,750** individuals (79.5%) with high life satisfaction,
- **83,446** individuals (83.2%) who rate the things they do in life as worthwhile
- **77,179** individuals (76.9%) with high happiness ratings, and
- **64,626** individuals (64.4%) with low feelings of anxiety.

*General health* in 2021 nearly 80% of Plymouth residents described their health as 'very good' or 'good'. The percentage of people who reported being in very good or good health reduced with age; 63.2% of those aged 50+ compared with 54.6% of those aged 65+ and 39.8% of those aged 80+ (**Error! Reference source not found.1**). For each age group the values are lower for females in the city compared to males.

<sup>7</sup> Public Health Plymouth City Council applying national wellbeing estimates to 2022 mid-year population estimate for Plymouth

Figure 1: General health status of Plymouth residents aged 50 and over, 2021





*Long-term conditions* - increases in life expectancy and advances in healthcare have led to increasing numbers of people living with long-term health conditions.

Predicting patterns of disease in our populations supports better planning of health services and also helps direct prevention and health improvement initiatives. In Plymouth by 2040 there is predicted to be a

15% increase in number of 65-74 year olds and a 35% increase in number of those aged 75 and over with diabetes

15% increase in number of 65-74 year olds and a 36% increase in number of those aged 75 and over with cardiovascular disease

15% increase in number of 65-74 year olds and a 36% increase in the number of 75-84 year olds with bronchitis or emphysema

*Support needs* - as more people live with long term conditions the demand for community-based support will increase. In Plymouth by 2040 there is predicted to be a

41% increase in number of 75-79 year olds and a 47% increase in those aged 80 and over who need help with at least one domestic task

17% increase in number of 75-79 year olds and a 48% increase in those aged 80 and over who need help with at least one self-care activity

17% increase in number of 75-79 year olds and a 29% increase in those aged 80 and over who are unable to manage at least one mobility activity on their own

*Hospital admissions* - of the 29,069 emergency hospital admissions of Plymouth residents in 2022/23, 15,733 (54.1%) were in adults aged 50 and over.<sup>8</sup> Falls and fractures are the largest cause of emergency admissions for older people. Of the 75,290 A&E attendances of Plymouth residents in 2022/23, 27,402 (36.4%) were in adults aged 50 and over.

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<sup>8</sup> Public Health Plymouth City Council, Hospital Episode Statistics, Emergency Admissions, 2024

*Behaviours* - as age increases the prevalence of smoking reduces. 10.7% of adults 50 and over in Plymouth smoke

Regular physical activity is associated with a reduced risk of diabetes, obesity, osteoporosis, and colon/breast cancer and with improved mental health. Sport England data suggests that 72.1% of 55-74 year olds are physical active in Plymouth.

Disability and age have separate and compounding effects on activity levels. 32.9% of adults with a limiting disability are inactive.

Obesity is associated with reduced life expectancy and is a risk factor for a range of diseases including cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes. It is estimated that there are around 71,200 over 55 year olds who are overweight or obese.

*Screening and vaccinations* – good uptake of screening and vaccination programmes in older adults can improve overall health and improve the likelihood of successful treatment and recovery.

#### Cancer screening coverage 2023



breast cancer (women 53 to 70 years) **72.2%**



cervical cancer (women 50 to 64 years) **74.4%**



bowel cancer (60 to 74 years) **74.8%**

#### Vaccination coverage 2022/23



Flu aged 65 and over **81.1%** (target  $\geq 75\%$ )

Shingles age 71 years **54.9%** (target  $\geq 60\%$ )

Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine aged 65 and over **68.6%**  
(target  $\geq 75\%$ )

**11.1%** of the population aged 65 and over are estimated to have a common mental health disorder (anxiety or depression) (2017)



**1,929** people aged 65 and over in Plymouth have a diagnosis of dementia (2020)



### Ageing Well through Staying Active

Plymouth Active Leisure has a clear vision to encourage people to become and stay healthy and active throughout life. They have a comprehensive programme of activities that offers swimming, climbing, gym and exercise classes, bowls and more. They also partner with local and national organisations to deliver a range of activities and initiatives that are specifically designed for people who are looking to get active again or for people with low-level health conditions, such as free wellbeing walks and organised cycle rides. They also deliver a range of activities specifically aimed at helping people stay active in later life including gentle swims, easy spin, walking netball, table tennis, aquafit and GoodBoost.

Michael (70 years) – Michael joined the gym after being medically retired with arthritis. He attends every weekday morning and focuses on strength-based exercises as recommended by his GP. As a result of his improved fitness he was able to recover from a recent hip and knee replacement much quicker and return to his daily routine. *“I enjoy going to the gym every morning, it sets me up for the day”.*



Maureen (79 years) – Maureen is a regular at Aquafit and attends several classes a week. She enjoys Aquafit as being in the water makes her feel comfortable. Over the years she has made several friends and after the class they can always be found in the café chatting over a coffee.

*“Everyone is so friendly and I look forward to getting out of the house”*



### A Focus on Falls Starts with Prevention

The Livewell South West Falls Management Exercise (FaME) classes guide small groups through a six-month personalised programme. Classes focus on improving an older person's strength, balance, flexibility, endurance and ability to cope following a fall. FaME is also about rebuilding confidence.

People completing the programme report less falls, less fear of falling and improved confidence. Other achievements of the programme include increased physical activity outside of the classes and improvements in self-rated health.

*"I'm a lot more confident and you feel that you can go out and walk again. It's improved my stability on my feet."*

Staying strong and active is key to ageing well. This includes staying physically mobile through walking and other activities...including running around with grandchildren and doing DIY.

Activities that help with strength and balance are really important and should be promoted from when people are in their 40s.

It's really important to feel in control of any medical conditions

*"Living longer – is that a problem?"*

*"I'm alright, I'm 91 – I carry on as I always have done, cooking and hanging out the washing. Keeping active - "Being as careful as I can not to cause any problems".*

### 3.5 Priorities for an Age Friendly Community

- We will maximise opportunities for ageing well within the relaunched Thrive Plymouth programme
- Falls and fractures in older people are preventable. We will work with partners to develop a broader offer of strength and balance and primary falls prevention programmes for people over 50.

- We will work with healthcare providers to improve the accessibility and uptake of screening and vaccination programmes for people over 50.
- We will work with NHS Devon and other healthcare partnerships and providers to ensure that the needs and views of older people are being considered. Initially we will initiate discussion around the impact of digital first services and access to primary care.

#### **4. Age friendly places and spaces**

As we age and live life as an older person we need environments and infrastructures that are safe and accessible and that support us to remain active and maintain positive connections. Older people tend to spend more time in their own local neighbourhoods so access to local facilities and opportunities become more important as people age. The way we plan, design and build our environments is key to achieving Age Friendly Communities.

*Streets* - our streets and town centres are crucial in supporting healthy ageing. Research suggests that our local high streets can positively impact on older people's social well-being, sense of place and sense of purpose. There are many opportunities for ensuring these areas more age friendly including making areas more pedestrian friendly, integrating public transport, encouraging attractive shop fronts to support a welcoming and safe atmosphere and adding opportunities to sit outside.

The Plymouth Plan and associated planning guidance provides the framework for the ongoing development of the city. The Plan aspires to enable older people to continue to participate in and contribute to the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the city. It includes policies to create safe and accessible neighbourhoods through thoughtful design including use of street lighting, dropped kerbs and removal of street clutter to improve mobility and accessibility.

*Green and blue spaces* - Plymouth has a high proportion of green and blue space and most residents have relatively good levels of access to these areas.<sup>9</sup> Over 40% of the city is designated as green space, there are 30 miles of waterfront and Plymouth is home to the UK's first National Marine Park that aims to increase community connection with the natural environment

The majority of respondents to the 2022 Plymouth City Survey aged 55 and over agreed that there is good access to parks and woodlands in, or from, their local area.

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<sup>9</sup> Blue spaces: 'outdoor environments, either natural or manmade, that prominently feature water and are accessible to people' – or the collective term for rivers, lakes or the sea.

*Perceptions of safety* - older people need to feel safe to participate and be active in their local communities. Most respondents to the Plymouth City Survey (2022)<sup>10</sup> aged 55 years and over felt safe during the day, and over half of those aged 55-64 years and 75 years and over felt safe after dark in their local area.

**Most people** in Plymouth aged 55 and over feel safe outside in their local area during the day

*Culture, heritage and arts* - the culture and heritage offer in a local area can play a significant role in supporting people to enjoy older age and can enhance physical, mental and cognitive health in later life. Cultural engagement has been reported to make the highest contribution to wellbeing in later life. There are 380 creative and cultural enterprises in Plymouth including the Theatre Royal, the Barbican Theatre, Plymouth Arts Cinema, Mayflower Museum, and The Box.<sup>11</sup> 51% of respondents to the Plymouth City Survey (2022) agreed that culturally Plymouth has a lot to offer. Respondents aged 55 and older were most likely to agree with the statement than younger age groups.

**84%** of 55-64 year olds say they are proud of Plymouth's place in history.

*Air quality* – air pollution is associated with a number of adverse health impacts and is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer. Air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society including the elderly and those with existing heart and lung conditions. There is often a strong correlation with deprivation with less affluent areas experiencing poorer air quality. In 2022 air quality monitoring in Plymouth showed that all national Air Quality Objectives were met.

*Climate change* – due to physiological changes as we age older people are more likely to be affected by the health impacts of extreme weather (heat or cold). These impacts are compounded by socio-economic factors such as poverty and lack of family and social connections<sup>12</sup>. Plymouth City Council declared a climate emergency in March 2019, pledging the city to become carbon neutral by 2030. As well as reducing carbon emissions Plymouth must adapt to climate change. The UK's Climate Impacts Programme has predicted more extreme weather conditions with more frequent wetter winters and hotter summers. Plymouth must also prepare for sea level rise with increased incidence of flooding anticipated.

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<sup>10</sup> Plymouth City Survey 2022, Plymouth City Council.

<sup>11</sup> Plymouth Report, 2023. Plymouth City Council [Plymouth Report 2023](#)

<sup>12</sup> Effects of climate change in the elderly's health: a scoping review protocol. 2022. BMJ Open Volume 12, Issue 4. [Effects of climate change in the elderly's health: a scoping review protocol | BMJ Open](#)

**Plymouth City Council Net Zero Action Plan**



In 2019 Plymouth City Council declared a Climate Emergency and pledged to make Plymouth carbon neutral by 2030. This pledge exceeded the climate objectives of the UK and recognised the need for the 2020s to be a decade of urgent and accelerated actions. In March 2024 an updated Net Zero Action Plan was published and includes priorities around cutting emissions from travel, construction and buildings, consuming responsibly and reducing waste and engaging the whole city in the net zero mission. The environmental benefits of these actions will also generate additional benefits for people as they age in Plymouth. For example, improvements in air quality will have a positive impact on the health of older people including those with long term conditions. Similarly, the focus on active travel, including walking and cycling, supports people to stay physically mobile as they age.

**The Box – An Age Friendly Social Space**

The Box is part museum, gallery and archive, a social space for art, people and objects. It is a purpose-built venue that brings together a blend of historic collections and contemporary exhibitions. The Box provides an inclusive welcome for people of all ages supporting people to age well in Plymouth.



The state-of-the-art building in a convenient city-centre location is fully accessible. The spaces have good access for people with a range of mobility needs; 86% of people surveyed agreed the building is ‘very easy’ or ‘quite easy’ to access. Accessibility is considered across the offer - from wheelchairs and mobility scooters available to borrow free of charge to British Sign Language signed tours and large print guides.

From talks and tours to special events and activities, there are a number of ways people can grow their creativity at The Box. In addition special projects, such as the Women’s Craft Collective, support people to age well by providing social opportunities for people to connect and ‘give back’; this group attracts around 30 regular participants who practise knitting and crochet and undertake regular projects for a variety of charities.





Photographer credit: Dom Moore

*“We need more accessible toilets in public spaces and more places to sit like benches”*

*“Chatty tables outside cafes”*

Support mobility with increased pavement access for wheelchairs, bicycles and trolleys.

Importance of bus shelters with seats for people to sit down and rest.

#### 4.5 Priorities for an Age Friendly Community

- We will support customer facing settings to adopt the Age-Friendly Businesses framework<sup>13</sup> that ensures that respect for and inclusion of older people is central to business practices
- Plymouth City Council will lead work to embed the Healthy Streets human centred framework and principles into how we design and manage our streets<sup>14</sup>. This framework is evidenced to improve social, economic and environmental sustainability and is a key to Age Friendly Communities and Ageing Well.
- We will support the development of the Plymouth Plan for Nature and People (2025-20) ensuring that the views of older people are heard and that the value of nature is maximised for people as they age.
- We will promote the Plymouth City Council Climate Ambassador Programme<sup>15</sup> to people over 50 inviting them to act as advocates in their communities to raise awareness of issues and encourage people to act.

<sup>13</sup> How to be an Age-friendly Business. 2024. Centre for Ageing Better [Age-Friendly-Business-Summary.pdf \(ageing-better.org.uk\)](#)

<sup>14</sup> Healthy Streets. 2024. [Healthy Streets | Making streets healthy places for everyone](#)

<sup>15</sup> Plymouth City Council Climate Ambassador Programme [Climate Ambassador Programme | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](#)



## 5. Transport

Transport, including accessible and affordable public and community transport, is a key feature of an Age Friendly Community. Walking and cycling for short journeys supports people to access community and health services and encourages social and civic connections and participation. As people age accessible and affordable transport services provide support towards maintaining mobility, wellbeing and independence.

*Public transport* - each day over 150 buses operate on Plymouth’s roads along 90 different routes. The COVID-19 pandemic led to significant reductions in the number of people taking bus trips and in taking advantage of concessionary bus travel.

*Accessibility* - as we age, ease of access to essential services such as health services and groceries, becomes increasingly important. In Plymouth in 2019, the average travel time by public transport or foot to a food store was 6 minutes, and to the nearest GP surgery was 11 minutes. Access to GP surgeries varies across different parts of the city and those who do not have access to a car are more disadvantaged in some areas.

**97 in every 100**  
eligible older people in Plymouth have a concessionary bus pass.

*Car ownership* - cars remain the most common form of transport used in Plymouth. The proportion of residents who live in households with at least one car or van decreases amongst those aged 75+. This has implications for people accessing local services and maintaining social connections as they age.

*Active travel* - keeping physically active in mid-life helps to delay the onset and progression of many age-related health conditions. People in mid and later life are less likely to participate in active travel than younger age groups.

Of the 2,554 people who travelled to work by bicycle in Plymouth (2021), 28.1% were aged 50-64 years and 2.1% were 65 and over.<sup>16</sup>



Of the 12,200 who travelled to work on foot in Plymouth (2021), 23.3% were aged 50-64 years and 2.9% were 65 and over.<sup>16</sup>



<sup>16</sup> Method used to travel to work by age, Table RM075, 2021. Census via NOMIS

## Plymotion



Plymotion is part of the city's approach to promoting sustainable and active travel. It aims to make it easier for people to get around the city by bike, on foot and by bus. It recognises the physical benefits of walking and cycling as we age and the opportunities for meeting and connecting with others in our local neighbourhoods.

Working with Livewell South West and the Ramblers there are weekly free health walks for all abilities in various areas across Plymouth. Plymouth Trails offers free audio guided historic walks across Plymouth encouraging people to take new walking routes and learn about the fascinating history of the city.

Plymotion provides free adult cycle training for people of all ages and abilities and includes bespoke sessions for those not so confident in groups. They have a series of free led and guided rides for complete beginners, through to steady and challenging rides for people wanting to cycle further and faster. Additionally Breeze rides offer women only groups in Plymouth and the surrounding areas.

Free bike maintenance workshops are available for people to give their old bikes some care and attention. Experienced mechanics also provide an opportunity to learn new skills.

*"I would like to still use the bus but I can't get down the hill with my walker so have to pay for a taxi"*

*"It can be hard to go out in the evening" – some areas are not served well by buses and taxis are expensive*

People value a community transport system that is reliable and responsive

Cash free parking is a barrier to going out and about especially if you don't have a smart phone

## 5.5 Priorities for an Age Friendly Community

- We will work with partners to support the delivery of the Plymouth Bus Service Improvement Plan and ensure that the views of older people are central to developments.
- We will work with partners to promote active travel for over 50s
- We will support conversations towards improvements in community transport for older people.

## 6. Participation and inclusion

Social connections and participation are strongly associated with positive health and wellbeing throughout life. Older adults are at more risk of loneliness and social isolation as they are more likely to face issues such as living alone, loss of family and friends, long term health conditions and sensory loss. Being involved in leisure, social and cultural activities as we age helps us to maintain or establish supportive and caring relationships, supports us to stay informed and gives opportunities to share and exchange skills and experiences. These connections also protect older people from the harmful effects of isolation and provide the additional benefits of staying physically active.

Ageism refers to the stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination towards people based on their age. It is sometimes referred to as the last socially acceptable prejudice and can be seen at all levels of life. Ageism can limit our confidence and abilities as we age and fuel negative perceptions of ageing that have an adverse impact on physical and mental health. Beyond the personal impacts ageism exacerbates social divisions and inequalities and damages the economy.<sup>17</sup>

*Social Connections* - loneliness and social isolation are linked to poor mental and physical health. Feeling lonely is correlated with early deaths and its health impact is thought to be similar to other public health challenges such as obesity and smoking. In 2022 15.4% Plymouth adults aged 55 and over responding to the Plymouth City Survey agreed or strongly agreed that they often feel lonely.

**46 out of 100** social care users aged 65 and over (2022/23) and **32 out of 100** adult carers aged 65 and over (2021/22) have as much social contact as they would like <sup>Error!</sup>  
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<sup>17</sup> Ageism: What's the harm? 2023. Centre for Ageing Better [Ageism: What's the harm? | Centre for Ageing Better \(ageing-better.org.uk\)](https://ageing-better.org.uk)

*Digital connectivity* and confidence have become increasingly important in staying connected to our friends and family, in accessing essential services and engaging with employment. Digital exclusion increases with age and disability and is affected by lack of access to digital resources and services, the cost of internet access and digital technologies, concern over digital security and low confidence in learning new skills. 14.5% of Plymouth adults aged 55 and over responding to the 2022 Plymouth City Survey had not used the internet for over three months or had never used it at all in 2022.<sup>18</sup> The two main reasons why were “I am not interested in accessing the internet” and “I do not know how to use the internet”.

**31.1%**  
of those aged 75 and over had not used the internet in the last 3 months or had never used the internet

*Community activities and groups* – over two fifths (45.4%) of respondents to the Plymouth City Survey (2022)<sup>19</sup> aged 55 years and over were aware of community activities and/or groups in their local area. Awareness of activities and groups increased with age in the 55 years and over groups. One fifth (21.0%) of respondents to the Plymouth

City Survey (2022)<sup>19</sup> aged 55 years and over participated to some extent in community activities and/or groups in their local area.

*Local decisions* - Community empowerment and participation are key to influencing local decisions and shaping our local communities as we age. An Age Friendly Community is one that is informed by participatory approaches to civic life, and which facilitates the active involvement of people as they age. Nearly one third (31.5%) of respondents to the Plymouth City Survey (2022) aged 55 and over know how to get involved in decisions that affect their local area.

**31.5%**  
of 55 and overs know how to get involved with local decision-making

**Community Digital Volunteers**

If we are offline as we age we can miss out on the benefits the internet provides, from keeping in touch with family and friends, to managing finances and looking for work and leisure opportunities. One of the best ways to reach digitally excluded people is through digital volunteers. Plymouth City Council Community Digital Volunteers are people with some digital skills who inspire others and help them to get online. They play a crucial role offering informal advice, information and support to adults in their local community who either want to get online and learn how to use a computer for the first time or improve their confidence with the basics. They support people in a range of settings, such as a community organisation, library, Wi-Fi enabled café, or in people’s own homes.

<sup>18</sup> Plymouth City Survey 2022, Plymouth City Council.  
<sup>19</sup> Plymouth City Survey 2022, Plymouth City Council.



### Memory Matters

Memory Matters CIC provides a diverse range of initiatives, programmes and support to individuals and families living with memory loss and dementia. Dementia can be a very isolating condition and people with dementia can find it difficult to socialise and get involved in things that they used to enjoy. One of the most popular spaces is the Memory Matters Moments Café and Hub. This is based in the city centre and provides an accessible place for people to meet, eat and socialise as well as raising awareness of dementia and the challenges faced by those living with the condition. From July 2022 – June 2023 the Café had 54,036 visitors generating valuable profit to help Memory Matters continue their important work. In the Hub upstairs from the café over 50 different organisations provide a range of information, support and activities to help people with dementia and their carers to live well. This includes seated exercise sessions, free legal advice, a singing group and a model building club.

*'The hub at Moments Café is a valuable asset to the people of Plymouth. It is a place where people with dementia and their carers can find support, advice and friendship. It is also a place where people can learn more about dementia and how to live well with the condition.'*

### The Age Positive Project

The Age Positive Project is a collaboration between Wolseley Trust Social Prescribing, Timebank South West, and Improving Lives Plymouth (ILP). It is a key initiative within Plymouth's Integrated Care of Older People (ICOPE) strategy. This pilot project aims to reduce social isolation and frailty among residents aged 65 and older by promoting the growth of activities, advice services, and social groups throughout the city.

The project organises a range of social and exercise-based activities. These sessions are further supported by information and advice from local healthcare services, along with referrals to ILP's internal projects including the Wellbeing Hub, Caring for Carers, Sensory Solutions, and the Veterans Hub.

The regular sessions include Tai Chi, Seated Yoga, Silver Swans Ballet, walking and creative groups. The project also collaborates with VCSE partners to provide monthly Tech Support sessions aimed at reducing digital exclusion among older adults in Plymouth.



With the support of Wellbeing Advisors and the Age Positive Project Worker, the project can provide short-term one-to-one support to help build rapport and reduce anxiety among participants. This personalised approach helps individuals find the right activities, groups, or services that they may not have had access to previously.

*“I felt so lost. The support I received came just at the right time when I felt I was losing my way and didn’t know where to go. I now have so many different opportunities, have made new friends, and feel so much more positive to do more things on my own.”*

*‘Improving Lives has been invaluable, and I believe, has supported me in finding a new direction and network of friends and connections within my community. It is so friendly and welcoming and if I hit a critical time, I firmly believe that I could find someone to help me’.*

*“Allow more opportunities for people to talk to us face to face”*

*“Having company is the most important thing”*

Shared community spaces for cross generational activities could help foster respect and understanding between young and old and help address unhelpful stereotypes

Digital exclusion seems to be getting worse –  
*“we need to bridge this gap”*

Remove the barriers of engagement such as online form submissions that  
*‘cause frustrations’*

## Priorities for an Age Friendly Community

- We will support the Centre for Ageing Better Age *Without Limits*<sup>20</sup> campaign that challenges ageism and supports a more age-inclusive society
- Working with the Community Empowerment Team and Community Builders we will continue to ensure that the experiences and strengths of older people are amplified and used to inform collective action

## 7. Skills and employment and volunteering

Engagement in meaningful activities and interests both through paid employment and voluntary pursuits have a positive impact on our physical and mental wellbeing as we age. They also support us to stay connected to others and promote social cohesion across communities.

Learning and skills development are an important aspect of ageing well and have benefits for individuals and employers. Learning for pleasure and leisure have wide ranging benefits as we age. Learning and skills development as we age support people to return to work, support career progression, and are beneficial for employers and the economy.

As the population lives longer there is an imperative to ensure that the options for paid employment, volunteering and lifelong learning are enhanced for the over 50s. Beyond the benefits for health, wellbeing and social connectedness this has the potential to enhance the economic contribution and spending power of people as they age.

### *Employment*

Nationally employment rates for 50 to 64 year olds have declined since the COVID-19 pandemic and employment rates vary between different genders and ethnic groups. Employers in Plymouth are facing difficulties in recruiting and retaining suitable qualified staff. This is in part due to the ageing population and workforce, an increasing number of people seeking welfare support and a higher number of job vacancies.

65% of people aged 50-64 years in Plymouth were in employment in the twelve months to March 2024.

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<sup>20</sup> Age Without Limits. 2024. Centre for Ageing Better. [Age Without Limits | Centre for Ageing Better \(ageing-better.org.uk\)](https://ageing-better.org.uk)



**65%**

of 50-64-year-olds were in employment in the 12 months to March 2024

Women aged 50 to 64 years are much less likely to be in employment than men; 59% compared with 70%. The long-term trend is a decline in the proportion of people aged 50 to 64 years being in employment and this is consistent with other age groups.

*Economic inactivity* since the COVID-19 pandemic economic inactivity (not in work nor actively seeking work) has increased across the UK. This has been driven by early retirement among 50–64-year-olds, increasing ill health among the whole population, changes in the structure of migration and the overall impact of an ageing population<sup>21</sup>.

Overall economic inactivity in Plymouth is higher than the national average and Plymouth has a higher proportion of economic inactivity due to long-term sickness. The latest data for April 2023 to March 2024 shows that 34.9% of people aged 50 to 64 years in Plymouth were economically inactive, significantly higher than their counterparts across England (26.4%). Women aged 50 to 64 years are much more likely to be economically inactive than their male counterparts.

**Nearly 35%** of people in Plymouth aged 50-64 are economically inactive (not in work or seeking work)

*The Employment and Support Allowance* offers financial support to those who are unable to work as a result of a health condition or disability. In Plymouth, over 7,800 people had a live claim for ESA as of November 2023, approximately 60% of which are aged over 50.

**Approximately 60%** of people claiming Employment and Support Allowance in Plymouth are aged over 50

*Universal Credit (UC)* is a single payment for each household to help with living costs for those on a low income or out of work. As at

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<sup>21</sup> Where have all the workers gone? 2022. House of Lords Library. [Where have all the workers gone?: Economic Affairs Committee report - House of Lords Library \(parliament.uk\)](https://www.parliament.uk/economic-affairs-committee-reports/where-have-all-the-workers-gone/)



**31%** of all claimants of Universal Credit aged 50 and over are in employment – the majority of these are female

May 2024 approximately 22% of claimants are aged 50 and over with a broadly even split in gender. Over half of all claimants aged 50 and older have been on Universal Credit for over three years, a similar proportion of younger claimants aged between 25 and 49.

*Pension Credit* - provides extra money to help with living costs for people over state pension age who are on a low income. As of February 2024, almost 5,900 people in Plymouth were in receipt of Pension Credit, the majority aged between 70 and 79 (52.1%). Women are more likely to be in receipt of Pension Credit, 67.1% of recipients in February 2024 were female. This proportion increases with age; 84.5% of recipients aged 90 and over are female. As of May 2024 data provided by the Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT) shows 398 households are eligible for pension credit and have not claimed, with a total value per month of £104k.<sup>22</sup>

**Nearly 400 households** are eligible for pension credit that has not been claimed

**An estimated 16.6%** of people aged 50-64 years in Plymouth have some level of unpaid caring duties

*Caring responsibilities* - it is estimated that a total of 9.5% of residents in Plymouth have some level of unpaid caring duties. This rises to 16.6% in those aged 50-64 years.

*Volunteering* can contribute to personal wellbeing, an enhanced sense of purpose and self-esteem and create stronger social connections. People aged 50 and over are more likely than younger people to be involved in volunteering. Two thirds of respondents to the Plymouth City Survey (2022) aged 55 and over do some kind of voluntary work.<sup>23</sup>

**65.9%** of people aged 55 and over in Plymouth say they are involved in some kind of voluntary work

*Lifelong learning* - throughout life can bring a range of benefits to people as they age. Education and training improve mental capital, which in turn can increase resilience in later life. There are a number of organisations and institutions offering learning opportunities to adults as they age in Plymouth. This includes flexible study options at City College Plymouth and a range of inspiring learning opportunities through On Course South West. On Course South West

<sup>22</sup> [Unclaimed Pension Credit: value by local authority - Policy in Practice](#)

<sup>23</sup> Plymouth City Survey 2022, Plymouth City Council.

reports that 20% of their learners are over the age of 55 and are studying digital skills, arts and crafts, maths and learning for life and work.

### On Course South West



On Course South West provides lifelong learning opportunities with over 140 free courses for adults that aim to transform lives and meet the demands of employers. This diverse offer supports people to learn something new, explore a new hobby and boost career opportunities. They work with partners across the city including Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Shekinah Mission and Odils Learning Foundation to provide a comprehensive in class, blended and online suite of programmes.

#### Case Study – Michael, aged 75

*Since starting with On Course South West I have achieved my level 1 certificate in maths functional skills and have now commenced my level 2 course. I am a senior citizen, 75 to be exact, and I have found my learning experience extremely satisfying. I have enjoyed getting to grips with maths and the experience of being in a classroom environment again after so many years. The social aspect of learning with On Course South West has also been a very positive one. I have been able to meet new people again and brush up on my interactive skills which suffered a great deal after the loss of my wife.*

### Elder Tree One to One Befriending Service



The Elder Tree Befriending service supports some of the most socially isolated older people who are housebound in neighbourhoods across the city.

*Hazel* - is 90 and housebound due to a number of medical conditions. She was feeling lonely due to losing her husband and her dog in recent years. In August 2023, Hazel was introduced to an Elder Tree volunteer befriender called Elizabeth who is in her early twenties. They hit it off immediately and Elizabeth started visiting each week. She taught Hazel how to do her online shopping and encouraged her to get help to repair her stair lift. Using her walker, Hazel and Elizabeth started enjoying short walks in the garden.

Hazel feels that Elizabeth is a great support to her. She said she has a wonderful personality, and they have interesting and fun conversations. She really looks forward to her visiting.

*Elizabeth*

Elizabeth is 22 years old. She found that the COVID-19 pandemic had a huge impact on her life due to social isolation and she left her university course because of this. In January 2023, Elizabeth decided that she wanted to volunteer to help other people struggling with isolation. Her volunteering journey started with supporting various Elder Tree groups and this helped her gain confidence before visiting Hazel as a 1-1 volunteer befriender.

She feels that she is making a real difference to Hazel's life by providing a listening ear and hearing her life stories, whilst supporting her with any issues that arise. Elizabeth feels that volunteering with the Elder Tree has helped so much with her confidence that she is now ready to start a diploma course in September. She hopes to continue her volunteering alongside this as it makes her feel happy and fulfilled.

Need to move towards recruitment processes that are really based on skills and experience – not age.

Employers could provide more focus on retiring planning and support for people retiring to get involved in '*better types of volunteering*'

Can we create more opportunities for skills exchange between generations, e.g., digital skills and DIY skills

Better support for people not working due to long term health conditions who want to get back to employment

**Priorities for an Age Friendly Community**

- We will lead work to promote the uptake of the Age Friendly Employer Pledge<sup>24</sup> that provides employers with a framework for improving work for people in their 50s and 60s and supports a multigenerational workforce
- We will work with On Course South West and other training providers to promote and develop learning opportunities for people aged 50 and over
- We will promote volunteering opportunities for people aged 50 and over

<sup>24</sup> Age Friendly Employer Pledge. 2024. Centre for Ageing Better [Age-friendly Employer Pledge | Centre for Ageing Better \(ageing-better.org.uk\)](https://ageing-better.org.uk)

## 8. Housing

Our homes and neighbourhoods are key to our wellbeing, health and quality of life as we age. Safe, warm homes that are in good repair help us to live independently for longer and stay actively involved with family, friends and our communities. Most people want to remain in their own homes as they age. An adequate supply of decent, well-designed homes, as well as specialist and supported housing, will support more older people to age well in their own homes for longer. Affordable improvements and adaptations can support people to live well in their homes as they age.

The Plymouth Report (2023)<sup>25</sup> highlights the projected increase in the number of people aged 65 and over living with long term illnesses and mobility issues and the need for planning and housing delivery to respond to this through a range of housing provision including extra care housing and wheelchair accessible homes as well as larger family homes.

*Housing tenure* - data from the 2021 Census shows that 76% of people aged 55 years and over in Plymouth owned their own home, while under a fifth (16%) were in the social rented sector. This indicates that 8% were in private rented accommodation. These figures vary widely across different wards. 92% of residents aged 55 years and over own their own homes in Plympton St Mary, whilst 34% lived in social rented accommodation in St Peter and the Waterfront.

Predictions for living status for people aged 65 and over shows that the number of people in Plymouth living alone and the number living in a care home will increase significantly by 2040.

Plymouth population predicted to *live alone* aged<sup>26</sup>

		In 2023	By 2040	
	65 to 74 years	25,800	29,600	Increase of 15%
	... 75 to 84 years	18,600	23,700	Increase of 27%
	85 and over	7,100	11,000	Increase of 55%

Plymouth population predicted to *live in a care home with or without nursing* aged<sup>27</sup>

		In 2023	By 2040	
	65 to 74 years	212	244	Increase of 15%
	75 to 84 years	555	708	Increase of 28%
	85 and over	1,055	1,634	Increase of 55%

<sup>25</sup> Plymouth Report. 2023. Plymouth City Council. [Plymouth Report 2023](#)

<sup>26</sup> Living Status: Living alone. Projecting Older People Population Information System.

<sup>27</sup> Living Status: Living in a care home. Projecting Older People Population Information System

*Disabled Facilities Grants* - are available to help residents who are struggling to get around their homes due to a disability or long-term illness, visual impairment, or old age. During 2022/23 47% of the 304 grants completed were where the occupant was aged 66 years and over.

*New homes* – between April 2021 and March 2024, a total of 89 new homes were constructed on affordable housing developments that were category M4(2) and M4(3), 25% of the total number of new homes constructed on these developments. 77 new homes were constructed to be accessible and adaptable dwellings (M4(2) category) and 12 constructed to be wheelchair user dwellings (M4(3) category).

*Fuel poverty* - In 2022 sub-regional fuel poverty statistics show that an estimated 14.5% of households in Plymouth were in fuel poverty, equating to approximately 17,000 households. Over 10,000 low-income households (in receipt of Housing Benefit or Council Tax Support) are assessed as being in fuel poverty. One fifth of such households are of pension age. There is considerable variation across the city. 39% of low-income households in fuel poverty in Plymstock Dunstone ward are of pension age, compared with only 12% in Devonport.

### 8.3 A snapshot into what are we already doing

#### The Plymouth Digital Living Lab<sup>28</sup>

Organisations in Plymouth are collaborating to pilot new technologies for older Plymouth Community Homes residents with mild to moderate frailty. The Plymouth Digital Living Lab research project will give residents opportunities to help co-design and pilot technology such as sensors in the home and wearable devices with the aim of helping them remain independent in their own homes. This housing and health partnership also supports wider efforts towards providing care and support in community and homes settings thus avoiding hospital admissions.

#### Home Upgrade Grants



Plymouth City Council have partnered with Plymouth Energy Community to administer grant funding opportunities to upgrade homes – helping people to stay warm and save money.

<sup>28</sup> Digital Living Lab, 2024. Plymouth Community Homes.

In 2023 the Sustainable Warmth Fund was used to provide a number of energy saving measures for an elderly woman living on her own. 'Kathy' had mobility issues, was socially isolated and had a hoarding disorder that meant her property was inaccessible and unsafe.

Following a retrofit assessment and with support from a decluttering specialist a number of energy efficiency measures were installed including external wall installation, roof repairs and several remedial measures. These measures typically lead to lower bills, greater comfort and a reduction in carbon footprint. 'Kathy' talked about '*getting her home back*' and following a referral to Adult Social Care received ongoing support to maintain her independence at home.

We need a Housing Strategy for ageing that includes more options for communal living, intergenerational living and adapting other housing like student accommodation

*'More house shares and housing co-ops'*

*'More accessible housing and innovative options for people to remain at home'*

Opportunities for using existing housing stock differently should be explored

## Priorities for an Age Friendly Community

- We will work with existing planning and housing partnerships and providers to make the case for an adequate range of housing options and adaptations for people as they age.
- We will work with energy delivery partners to promote and improve the uptake of Home Upgrade Grants to insulate homes and improve energy self-sufficiency among those aged 50 and over.

## 9. Communication

As we age it is easy to focus on the negative aspects of ageing and this is reflected in the language and images we see used in the press, popular culture, and even policies and services directed towards ageing and older people. Ageing is often shown as an inevitable process of physical and mental decline and linked to vulnerability, dependency, and a burden to society. This negative view clouds the positive experiences of ageing and older people and the huge value that our older populations bring to society.

Language and imagery that stereotypes people in later life as weak, not fit for work, lonely and incapable, or not deserving of health treatment ignores the huge diversity

of backgrounds, experience, and ambition of the millions of people who are older. There are many positive aspects to ageing. People describe a greater sense of wellbeing, greater independence, and feeling more connected to family, friends and neighbours.

As described earlier in this report ageism operates at many levels of society and the language and imagery that we use in our communications around ageing and older people can drive and exacerbate this.

Importance of recognising and giving value to older people's histories and experiences

*'Language is really important – we need to think about how we talk about older people'*

We can change negative perceptions of ageing through our communications and celebrating older people

Digital and online communications are not always relevant to people as they age and may exacerbate isolation

Our language and imagery should reflect the diverse lives of older people in the city

### **Priorities for an Age Friendly Community**

- We will ensure that all our consultation and engagement processes are accessible to older people.
- We will challenge negative stereotypes of ageing and older people.
- We will actively recognise and celebrate the diversity of ageing and older people in our communications.

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# AGEING WELL PROGRAMME PRIORITIES



## Healthy Ageing

- We will maximise opportunities for ageing well within the relaunched Thrive Plymouth programme
- Falls and fractures in older people are preventable. We will work with partners to develop a broader offer of strength and balance and primary falls prevention programmes for people over 50.
- We will work with healthcare providers to improve the accessibility and uptake of screening and vaccination programmes for people over 50.
- We will work with NHS Devon and other healthcare partnerships and providers to ensure that the needs and views of older people are being considered. Initially we will initiate discussion around the impact of digital first services and access to primary care.

## Age Friendly Places and Spaces

- We will support customer facing settings to adopt the Age-Friendly Businesses framework<sup>1</sup> that ensures that respect for and inclusion of older people is central to business practices.
- Plymouth City Council will lead work to embed the Healthy Streets human centred framework and principles into how we design and manage our streets<sup>2</sup>. This framework is evidenced to improve social, economic and environmental sustainability and is a key to Age Friendly Communities and Ageing Well.
- We will support the development of the Plymouth Plan for Nature and People (2025-20) ensuring that the views of older people are heard and that the value of nature is maximised for people as they age.
- We will promote the Plymouth City Council Climate Ambassador Programme<sup>3</sup> to people over 50 inviting them to act as advocates in their communities to raise awareness of issues and encourage people to act.

## Transport

- We will work with partners to support the delivery of the Plymouth Bus Service Improvement Plan and ensure that the views of older people are central to developments.
- We will work with partners to promote active travel for over 50s.

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<sup>1</sup> How to be an Age-friendly Business. 2024. Centre for Ageing Better [Age-Friendly-Business-Summary.pdf \(ageing-better.org.uk\)](https://ageing-better.org.uk)

<sup>2</sup> Healthy Streets. 2024. [Healthy Streets | Making streets healthy places for everyone](#)

<sup>3</sup> Plymouth City Council Climate Ambassador Programme [Climate Ambassador Programme | PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK](https://plymouth.gov.uk)

- We will support conversations towards improvements in community transport for older people.

### **Participation and Inclusion**

- We will support the Centre for Ageing Better *Age Without Limits*<sup>4</sup> campaign that challenges ageism and support a more age-inclusive society.
- Working with the Community Empowerment Team and Community Builders we will continue to ensure that the experiences and strengths of older people are amplified and used to inform collective action.

### **Skills and Employment**

- We will lead work to promote the uptake of the Age Friendly Employer Pledge<sup>5</sup> that provides employers with a framework for improving work for people in their 50s and 60s and support a multigenerational workforce.
- We will work with On Course South West and other training providers to promote and develop learning opportunities for people aged 50 and over.
- We will promote volunteering opportunities for people aged 50 and over

### **Housing**

- We will work with existing planning and housing partnerships and providers to make the case for an adequate range of housing options and adaptations for people as they age.
- We will work with energy delivery partners to promote and improve the uptake of Home Upgrade Grants to insulate homes and improve energy self-sufficiency among those aged 50 and over.

### **Communication**

- We will ensure that all our consultation and engagement processes are accessible to older people
- We will challenge negative stereotypes of ageing and older people
- We will actively recognise and celebrate the diversity of ageing and older people in our communications

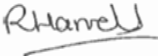
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<sup>4</sup> Age Without Limits. 2024. Centre for Ageing Better. [Age Without Limits | Centre for Ageing Better \(ageing-better.org.uk\)](https://ageing-better.org.uk)

<sup>5</sup> Age Friendly Employer Pledge. 2024. Centre for Ageing Better [Age-friendly Employer Pledge | Centre for Ageing Better \(ageing-better.org.uk\)](https://ageing-better.org.uk)

# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – AGEING WELL PROGRAMME – STATE OF AGEING IN PLYMOUTH 2024 REPORT

## SECTION ONE: INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROPOSAL

<p><b>Author(s):</b> This is the person completing the EIA template.</p>	<p>Laura Juett</p>	<p><b>Department and service:</b></p>	<p>Public Health, ODPH</p>	<p><b>Date of assessment:</b></p>	<p>October 2024</p>
<p><b>Lead Officer:</b> Please note that a Head of Service, Service Director, or Strategic Director must approve the EIA.</p>	<p>Ruth Harrell, Director of Public Health, ODPH.</p>	<p><b>Signature:</b></p>		<p><b>Approval date:</b></p>	<p>03 October 2024</p>
<p><b>Overview:</b></p>	<p>The Ageing Well programme was agreed at Cabinet in December 2023. It is Plymouth’s commitment to ensuring that the city provides the best environments and opportunities for people to thrive as they move into their later years. The programme is based on the Centre for Ageing Better Framework for Age Friendly Communities.</p> <p>The State of Ageing in Plymouth 2024 report provides a picture of what it is like to age and live life as an older person in Plymouth. It brings together some key statistics, the voices and insights people in the city, and case studies of initiatives and services that are in place to support people as they age. The report defines the initial priorities for the Ageing Well programme that include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Ageing</li> <li>• Age Friendly Places and Spaces</li> <li>• Transport</li> <li>• Participation and Inclusion</li> <li>• Skills, Employment and Volunteering</li> <li>• Housing and</li> <li>• Communications</li> </ul>				

<b>Decision required:</b>	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <p>Notes the State of Ageing in Plymouth 2024 report;</p> <p>Approves the priorities outlined in the report.</p>
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**SECTION TWO: EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT SCREENING TOOL**

<b>Potential external impacts:</b> Does the proposal have the potential to negatively impact service users, communities or residents with protected characteristics?	<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	X
<b>Potential internal impacts:</b> Does the proposal have the potential to negatively impact Plymouth City Council employees?	<b>Yes</b>		<b>No</b>	X
Is a full Equality Impact Assessment required? (if you have answered yes to either of the questions above then a full impact assessment is required and you must complete section three)	<b>Yes</b>	X	<b>No</b>	
If you do not agree that a full equality impact assessment is required, please set out your justification for why not.				

**SECTION THREE: FULL EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

Protected characteristics (Equality Act, 2010)	Evidence and information (e.g. data and consultation feedback)	Adverse impact	Mitigation activities	Timescale and responsible department

<p><b>Age</b></p>	<p>The State of Ageing in Plymouth 2024 report provides an overview of the population in Plymouth and recognises that the population is ageing. The 2022 mid-year population estimate reports that around 100,300 people out of the population of almost 266,900 in Plymouth were aged 50 and over (37.6%), 50,000 were aged 65 and over (18.7%), and just over 13,200 were 80 and over (4.9%). Population predictions suggest that the number of individuals aged 50 years and over will rise from 37.6% of the population in 2022 to 40.6% of the population in 2043. The number of people aged 80 and over will increase from 13,200 people to 22,600 people by 2043.</p> <p>Deprivation and poverty make a significant difference to life expectancy and healthy ageing. Men in the most deprived areas of Plymouth have an average life expectancy nearly nine years less than those in the least deprived areas, whilst for woman the difference is just over five years. These inequalities are strongly associated with the social and economic circumstances that we experience and accumulate throughout life</p> <p>The Ageing Well programme values and prioritises the experiences and insights of older people in the city. It recognises the positive aspects of ageing, and the huge contributions older people make across our communities. The programme priorities have</p>	<p>The Ageing Well programme is specifically focused on improving environments and opportunities for people as they age and live life as an older person.</p>		
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	<p>been informed by conversations with residents and organisations across the city to understand what matters to them as they age. These conversations will continue to ensure that the work of the programme is rooted in people’s real-life experience.</p>			
<p><b>Care experienced individuals</b>  (Note that as per the Independent Review of Children’s Social Care recommendations, Plymouth City Council is treating care experience as though it is a protected characteristic).</p>	<p>We recognise that care experienced people may face a number of challenges and barriers as they grow older.</p> <p>The Ageing Well programme recognises that ageing and living life as an older person is influenced by early life experiences and the programme is focussed supporting people to age well in an inclusive and equitable way whilst giving focus to where there is the greatest need.</p>	<p>Overall, we do not anticipate that the Ageing Well programme will disadvantage care experienced people.</p>		
<p><b>Disability</b></p>	<p>The Ageing Well programme recognises an increased risk of long-term conditions and disability as people age. However it also identifies that this is not an inevitable feature of ageing.</p> <p>In 2021, 9.7% of Plymouth residents were identified as being disabled and limited a lot, whilst just under one in eight people (12.3%) were identified as being disabled and limited a little. The percentage of people who reported being disabled with day-to-day</p>	<p>Overall, we do not anticipate that the Ageing Well Programme will disadvantage people with disabilities.</p> <p>The priorities identified in the Ageing Well programme are specifically directed to improving environments and opportunities for people,</p>		

	activities limited a lot or a little increased with age; 32.4% of those aged 50+ compared with 38.9% of those aged 65+ and 52.9% of those aged 80+.	including those with disabilities, as they age.		
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	0.5 per cent of residents in Plymouth have a gender identity that is different from their sex registered at birth. 0.1 per cent of residents identify as a trans man, 0.1 per cent identify as non-binary and, 0.1 per cent identify as a trans women (2021 Census).	Overall, we do not anticipate that the Ageing Well Programme will disadvantage people who have a gender identity that is different from their sex registered at birth.  However we recognise that our understanding of ageing and transgender and non-binary identities is not well developed.	We will ensure that ongoing communications and conversations specifically consider the experiences and insights of people who have a gender identity that is different from their sex registered at birth.	ODPH – across the life of the Ageing Well Programme
<b>Marriage and civil partnership</b>	40.1 per cent of residents have never married and never registered a civil partnership. 10 per cent are divorced, 6 percent are widowed, with 2.5 per cent are separated but still married.  0.49 per cent of residents are, or were, married or in a civil partnerships of the same sex. 0.06 per cent of residents are in a civil partnerships with the opposite sex (2021 Census).	We do not anticipate that the Ageing Well programme will disadvantage people due to their marriage or civil partnership status.		
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	The total fertility rate (TFR) for England was 1.62 children per woman in 2021. The total fertility rate (TFR) for Plymouth in 2021 was 1.5.	We do not anticipate that the Ageing Well Programme will disadvantage pregnant women.		

<p><b>Race</b></p>	<p>Of the 99,194 Plymouth residents (2021) aged 50 and over, 95.0% identify as White British (a decrease in the proportion from 96.7% in 2011). The White Other ethnic group (White Irish, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma, and Other White) is the next most common ethnicity in the city (2.6%).</p> <p>A total of 4,933 residents over 50 identify as non-White British. The Black and Asian ethnic groups having doubled (increase of 94%, from 195 to 379 individuals; and 105%, from 492 to 1,010 individuals respectively) in the last ten years, whilst the “Other” ethnic group has tripled in size (increase of 279%, from 103 to 390 individuals) over the same period.</p>	<p>Overall, we do not anticipate that the Ageing Well programme is likely to disadvantage people due to their race.</p> <p>However we recognise people’s experiences of ageing and living life as an older person are diverse and are influenced by a number of factors including race.</p>	<p>We will ensure that ongoing communications and conversations specifically consider the experiences and insights of people from all ethnic groups.</p>	<p>ODPH – across the life of the Ageing Well Programme.</p>
<p><b>Religion or belief</b></p>	<p>48.9 per cent of the Plymouth population stated they had no religion. 42.5 per cent of the population identified as Christian (2021 Census).</p> <p>Those who identified as Muslim account for 1.3 per cent of Plymouth’s population while Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish or Sikh combined totalled less than 1 per cent (2021 Census).</p>	<p>Overall, we do not anticipate that the Ageing Well Programme is likely to disadvantage people from specific religion or belief groups.</p> <p>However we recognise people’s experiences of ageing and living life as an older person are diverse and are influenced by a number of factors including religion or belief.</p>	<p>We will ensure that ongoing communications and conversations specifically consider the experiences and insights of people from diverse religions and beliefs.</p>	<p>ODPH – across the life of the Ageing Well Programme.</p>



<p><b>Sex</b></p>	<p>51 per cent of our population are women and 49 per cent are men (2021 Census).                  The State of Ageing in Plymouth 2024 report highlights the age disparities in life expectancy that shows that women in Plymouth live on average four years longer than men but spend more of their life in poorer health.                  On average, a male born in Plymouth would be expected to live to 78 years, 64 years of which would be expected to be in ‘very good’ or ‘good’ health (healthy life expectancy) and 61 years of which would be expected to be free from day-to-day activity restriction due to a long-lasting physical or mental health condition (disability-free life expectancy).<sup>1</sup>                  On average, a female born in Plymouth would be expected to live to 82 years, 59 years of which would be expected to be in ‘very good’ or ‘good’ health, and 57 years of which would be expected to be free from day-to-day activity restriction due to a long-lasting physical or mental health condition.</p>	<p>Overall, we do not anticipate that the Ageing Well programme is likely to disadvantage people due to their sex.</p>		
<p><b>Sexual orientation</b></p>	<p>88.95 per cent of residents aged 16 years and over in Plymouth describe their sexual orientation as straight or heterosexual. 2.06 per cent describe their sexuality as bisexual, 1.97 per cent of people describe their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian. 0.42 per cent of</p>	<p>Overall, we do not anticipate that the Ageing Well programme is likely to disadvantage people due to their sexual orientation.</p>	<p>We will ensure that ongoing communications and conversations specifically consider the experiences and insights</p>	<p>ODPH – across the life of the Ageing Well Programme.</p>

<sup>1</sup> Healthy life expectancy at birth 2018-20 (A01a); Life expectancy at birth 2020-22 (A01b); and Disability-free life expectancy 2018-20 (A01c) indicators, Public Health Outcomes Framework, OHID

Healthy life expectancy estimates number of years spent in ‘very good’ or ‘good’ health and is based upon how individuals perceive their general health.

Disability-free life expectancy estimates number of years free from a long-lasting illness or disability (physical or mental health) and is based upon a self-rated assessment of how health limits an individual’s ability to carry out day-to-day activities.

	<p>residents describe their sexual orientation using a different term (2021 Census).</p>	<p>However we recognise people’s experiences of ageing and living life as an older person are diverse and are influenced by a number of factors including sexual orientation.</p>	<p>of people with diverse sexual orientations.</p>	
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**SECTION FOUR: HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS**

Human Rights	Implications	Mitigation Actions	Timescale and responsible department
	<p>No adverse impacts are anticipated. The developments initiated through the Ageing Well programme are intended to contribute to efforts directed to improving human rights.</p>		

**SECTION FIVE: OUR EQUALITY OBJECTIVES**

Equality objectives	Implications	Mitigation Actions	Timescale and responsible department
<p><b>Work together in partnership to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ promote equality, diversity and inclusion</li> <li>▪ facilitate community cohesion</li> </ul> <p>support people with different backgrounds and lived experiences to get on well together</p>	<p>No adverse implications identified. The Ageing Well programme will contribute to wider efforts towards supporting people with different backgrounds and lived experiences to get on well together. The programme includes further work to understand the experience of the city’s diverse older population and work to address ageism. It also has a focus on cross</p>		

	<p>generational opportunities to help foster respect and understanding between young and old people. The Ageing Well programme recognises the negative impacts of ageism and will lead specific work to challenge this.</p>		
<p><b>Give specific consideration to care experienced people to improve their life outcomes, including access to training, employment and housing.</b></p>	<p>No adverse implications anticipated through the work of the Ageing Well programme.</p>		
<p><b>Build and develop a diverse workforce that represents the community and citizens it serves.</b></p>	<p>No anticipated adverse implications. The Ageing Well Programme. The programme includes a focus on Age Friendly Employers Pledge that provides a framework for improving work for people in their 50s and 60s – including women and disabled people.</p>		
<p><b>Support diverse communities to feel confident to report crime and anti-social behaviour, including hate crime and hate incidents, and work with partners to ensure Plymouth is a city where everybody feels safe and welcome.</b></p>	<p>The Ageing Well programme specifically includes working with our Community Empowerment Team and Community Builders to ensure that older people in the city have a voice and that their experiences and insights are key to the programme going forward. This work should contribute to wider efforts towards ensuring that everyone feels safe and welcomed.</p>		

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# Cabinet



Date of meeting:	14 October 2024
Title of Report:	<b>Children's Services Update</b>
Lead Member:	Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for Children's Social Care, Culture and Communications)
Lead Strategic Director:	David Haley (Director for Childrens Services)
Author:	Temilola Salimon, Service Director: Children, Young People and Families
Contact Email:	Temilola.salimon@plymouth.gov.uk
Your Reference:	
Key Decision:	No
Confidentiality:	Part I - Official

## Purpose of Report

This report provides an update on and response to the Quarter 1 Financial Monitoring Cabinet Report presented in August 2024. The Quarter 1 Monitoring Report identified a budget variation of £4.692m forecast overspend related to placement costs of children in Plymouth's care. A first children's services update was provided to September Cabinet as recommended in the Quarter 1 monitoring report and this report provides a further update and response to that position.

## Recommendations

To note the report.

## Relevance to the Corporate Plan and/or the Plymouth Plan

Keeping children, adults and communities in Plymouth safe.

## Implications for the Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:

The report relates to MTFP commitments for the cost of care for children in our care.

## Financial Risks

There are significant financial risks to the Council from pressures in this area as set out in the paper.

## Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:

None

## Other Implications: e.g. Health and Safety, Risk Management, Child Poverty:

*\* When considering these proposals members have a responsibility to ensure they give due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not.*

The paper addresses risks to the organisation.

## Appendices

*\*Add rows as required to box below*

Ref.	Title of Appendix	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A	Briefing report title							

**Background papers:**

\*Add rows as required to box below

Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below. Background papers are unpublished works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based.

Title of any background paper(s)	Exemption Paragraph Number (if applicable) <i>If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</i>						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**Sign off:**

Fin	DJN. 24.2 5.09 9			Mon Off	LS/0 0003 197/ 17/L B/4/1 0/24	HR	CS.2 4.25. 024	Asset s		Strat Proc	
Originating Senior Leadership Team member: David Haley (Director for Children’s Services)											
Please confirm the Strategic Director(s) has agreed the report? Yes											
Date agreed: 03/10/2024											
Cabinet Member approval: Councillor Jemima Laing (Deputy Leader, and Cabinet Member for Children’s Social Care, Culture and Communications)											
03/10/2024											

## I. Background and context

- I.1 The approved Council budget for Children, Young People and Families in 2024/25 is £59.975m of which £36.725m is allocated to the placement costs for Children in the Care of Plymouth Local Authority. At the end of September 2024, the predicted forecast budget spend is £63.838m (a variance of £3.863m).
- I.2 At the end of August 2024, children's social care presented to Cabinet an identified £1.53m as potential savings from this programme of work this year against the overall financial pressure of £3.863m. Positively this was achieved through dedicated work from the social work teams which resulted in 3 children being successfully moved from high-cost residential placements. These children were successfully moved into more appropriate accommodation at a significant price reduction. £1.3m was expected from these placement moves, however £1.5m was delivered. We overachieved this as two children were successfully reunified home from Residential and In-House Fostering. One child in an unregistered residential setting moved into Supported Living.
- I.3 Two of these moves ensured that we now have no placements in a 'bespoke' unregistered arrangement, where we are utilising agency staff from external organisations to care for our children in accommodation we are renting. This had been two of our most expensive placements, both over £20k p/week.
- I.4 During September an experienced carer who currently fosters five looked after children experienced an unforeseen emergency, requiring immediate care planning for the children in her care. The fostering team identified creative, safe solutions and emergency alternate foster care arrangements were identified and have been maintained for all the children.
- I.5 Without this work, children's social care spend would have increased by a total of £35,220.15 per week. This work during September has resulted in a cost avoidance of £140,880.06 and had an immediate measurable impact for the children through the avoidance of residential care.
- I.6 As of the end of September 2024 we have maintained the reduction in the number of children in unregistered provision and all children are now in provision, some of which is registered with CQC, but not registered with Ofsted.
- I.7 521 children were in the care of the Local Authority. The places where children live, and their costs, are set out in the chart below.

Type of Placement	Estimated Numbers	Existing Budget £m	Month 5 Forecast £m	Actual Numbers Month 5	Month 5 Forecast £m	Variance to Month 3 £m	Variance to Budget £m
External Residential	50	15.248	18.052	57	17.943	(0.109)	2.695
Unregistered	6	3.387	5.808	5	5.166	(0.642)	1.779
External Fostering	158	9.251	9.052	150	8.922	(0.130)	(0.329)
In-House Foster Care	126	2.855	2.855	144	2.855	0.000	0.000
In-House Connected Carers	42	0.952	0.952	51	0.952	0.000	0.000
External Supported Living	41	3.758	3.424	41	3.475	0.051	(0.283)
Other Placement Settings - Children in Care	65	1.274	1.274	73	1.274	0.000	0.000
<b>TOTAL CHILDREN IN CARE</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>36.725</b>	<b>41.417</b>	<b>521</b>	<b>40.588</b>	<b>(0.829)</b>	<b>3.863</b>

- I.8 The key reason for the forecast budget overspends at the end of September is that we continue to experience challenges finding fostering placements for children in residential settings who are ready to move onto a family setting. 55.6% of children in care are currently placed in foster care and we expect to see this improve because of actions in place.
- I.9 10.9% of children in care are currently placed in residential settings – this is stubbornly high and includes one 6 year old one 8 year old, two 9 year olds and four 10 year olds. We are currently

searching actively for 14 children who are ready to progress to a family setting, but the market is very challenging. Work is also progressing to agree timescales for when a further 14 children can move on to a family setting. 18 are 15/16 with plans to move on to independence or semi-independence.

- 1.10 Changes in circumstances and an increase in the needs of a number of children in care in September 2023 resulted in children experiencing unexpected placement moves, leading to increased care costs. Some of these children moved from already expensive placements (£5,800 per week) to even more expensive ones (£11,000 per week), significantly raising the overall placement spend.

## **2. The Family Homes for Plymouth Children Transformation Programme Update**

2.1 Theresa Leavy, DCS from Dorset, and the Chair of our Childrens Services Improvement Board, visited on the 26/9/24 and conducted a review of the programme. This identified strengths about the work in place in Plymouth, reflecting that Plymouth council are paying less than many neighbouring councils on children in care. Evidence of creativity and innovation featured throughout her observations of the day. She also feedback that the oversight and governance of our in house fostering service is clear and structured.

2.2 A programme of conversations with off-framework providers remains in place, and we have had some interest in our children from IFAs with vacancies in our children. However, the market remains highly challenging. There are several children where moves were scheduled to be achieved shortly to achieve savings, and foster placements have not yet been identified.

## **3. Foster for Plymouth Growth**

3.1 Focused work continues around both recruitment and retention/carer development, we are seeing an uplift in in-house fostering activity. Foster for Plymouth are currently progressing 21 fostering assessments, including 5 carers transferring from IFAs.

3.2 Focused work is taking place to refocus our recruitment and promote the offer to Foster Carers from Foster for Plymouth. Key milestones have been achieved on time in implementing our first constellation, including the appointment of the Mockingbird Liaison Worker and the secondment to backfill that position. Additionally, Hub Home Carers for the first Constellation have been appointed, and there has been a positive response to the request for Expressions of Interest for Satellite Carers, with five received to date.

## **4. Transitioning children from residential care to family homes**

4.1 We continue to actively search for family placements for 15 children within residential placements whom we have identified £1.407m as potential savings from these moves. It is a significant challenge to identify and progress fostering placements and despite extensive searches, none of these children currently has a foster family identified. Children transitioning from residential care are likely to need experienced, specialist foster carers and there is a limited number of this calibre of carers available in Plymouth and across the country.

4.2 Currently we have 6 cared for young people cared for in unregistered arrangements. This is a significant reduction from 9 in August 2024. One young person is in rented accommodation with a staff team Two are in CQC registered provisions which are meeting their needs well. One is in a Children's Home which is meeting their needs well and is in the final stage of OFSTED registration. Two are in 28 day activity placements which are not OFSTED registered. One young person will cease to be in an unregistered setting when their current Children's Home achieves registration. For the two young people in the 28 day activity placements there are expressions of interest from potential Residential Children's Homes being explored.

## **5. Market development and brokerage:**

5.1 Improving our brokerage capacity so that we maximise available placements local to Plymouth continues. The Family Homes Board has agreed priorities on how we can strengthen the work we



do with fostering and residential providers in the region and elsewhere. These are short breaks, 'Edge of care' and residential provision for complex needs. This business case and costings is in completion.

## **6. Reunifying children with their birth families and wider networks**

6.1 The Head of Service has begun the development of a focused offer to support an increase reunification utilizing capacity in the Targeted Help Service and working closely with Permanence and Children's Social Work to identify appropriate children. 16 children are identified for potential reunifications from across the service.

## **7. Conclusions**

The evolving nature of children's needs and predicting the specific timing and requirements for their placement in our care remains a challenge. Additionally, the scarcity of family homes for children and young people adds uncertainty to our ability to transition a child from a residential setting to a family when we would like this to be achieved for the child.

At the end of month 5 Quarter our financial position is overall financial pressure of £3.863m.

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