

Age-friendly communities: What can we learn for our region?

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NORTHSTOWE

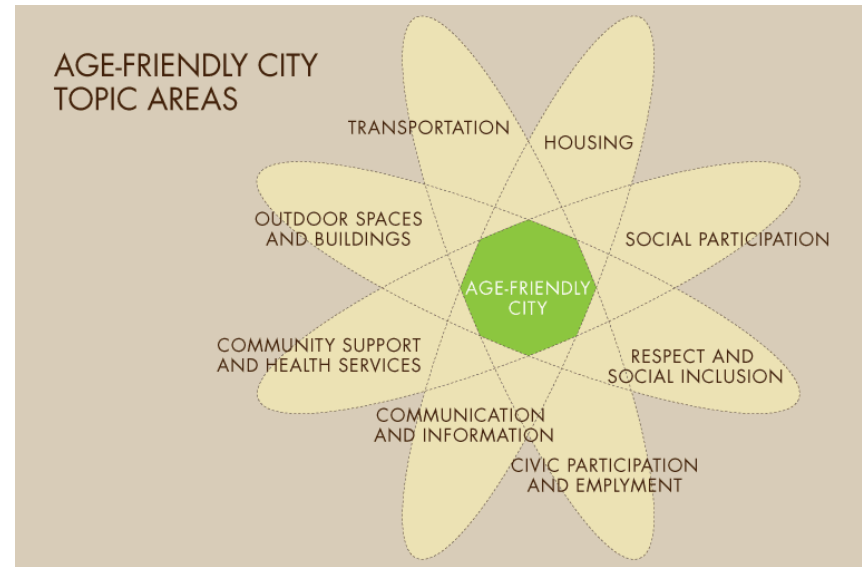
What is age-friendly?

- World Health Organisation (WHO) launched Age-friendly Cities (AFC) initiative (2007)
- An AFC is one which:
 - Recognises the great diversity among older people
 - Promotes inclusion and contribution in all areas of community life
 - Respects decisions and lifestyle choices
 - Anticipates and respond flexibly to ageing-related needs and preferences



The WHO domains of an AFC

- WHO has described 8 “domains” of an AFC
- All aspects contribute to an AFC
- Complementary models examine the governance and policies that shape AFCs



What it takes to be age-friendly

- WHO principles and guidelines
 - Housing, transport, social inclusion etc.
- Additionally, what support is there for physical and social domains to flourish?



Support for age-friendly communities

- AFCs also need the right environment to flourish
- Complementary evaluation tools are available
 - Political support
 - Financial and human resources
 - Leadership and governance
 - Involvement of older people
 - Evaluation strategy
 - Co-ordination, collaboration & interlinkages
 - Priorities based on needs assessment
 - Application of existing frameworks for assessing age friendliness
 - Provision of services
 - Interventions rooted in evidence base



Developing Northstowe as an AFC

- Northstowe HNT Steering Group keen to apply AFC principles to Northstowe
- Researchers from CIPH examined the Design Code draft for Phase 2
- Several recommendations made around aspects of built environment



AFC Recommendations

- Original Phase 2 Design Code draft met many AFC principles
- Recommendations were made regarding
 - Seating
 - Lighting
 - Walking surfaces and routes
 - Public toilets



Changes to the Street Furniture Specification for Phase 1

- Changes to number and distribution of benches over the Greenways and Waterpark
- Additional 8 benches in the Greenways
- Further benches at intervals along the pathways of the Waterpark, doubling the proposed provision



Changes to the Waterpark



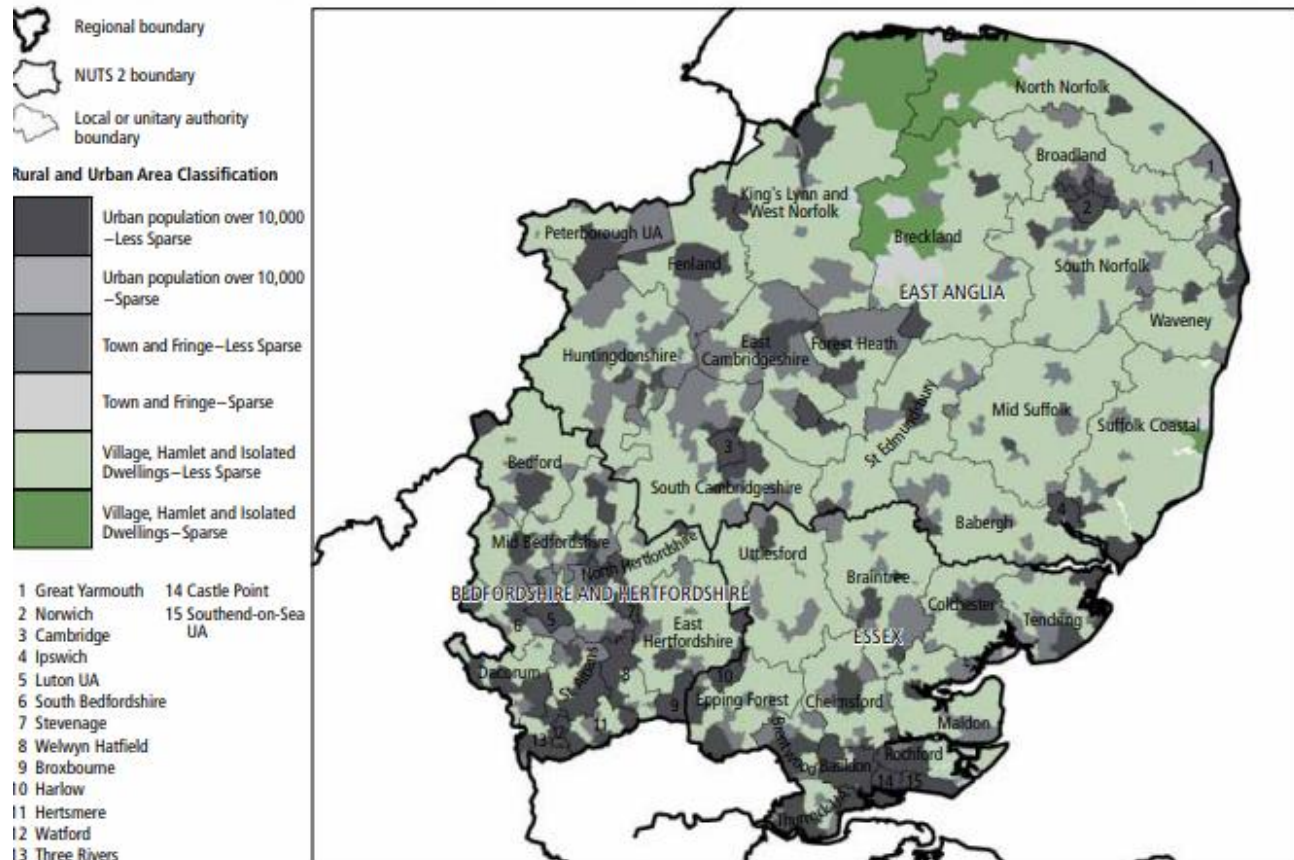
What lessons have been learned from Northstowe?

- Small changes can make a difference to older people
- Developers do listen and are willing to be flexible
- Early communication and collaboration with stakeholders is key
- NS steering group very open to ideas!



A varied region

- East of England is a mix of urban, rural, inland, coastal, remote communities



1 Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics, level 2.
 2 By Lower Layer Super Output Area.



Age-friendliness in rural areas

- In 2016, 9.4 million people, or 17% of the population, lived in rural areas
- The rural population has a higher proportion of older people.
- People <45 years in a) rural areas: just over 45%; b) urban areas: almost 60%
- The average age in rural areas is higher & has increased faster than in urban areas
 - 2016 average age a) rural areas: 44.4 years; b) urban areas: 38.9 years
 - From 2002 to 2016, the gap in average ages widened from 3.4 to 5.5 years



Developing Age-Friendly Rural Communities – the role of Neighbourhood Planning

- What is the potential of Neighbourhood Planning (NP) to contribute to age-friendly rural communities?
- How can NP support processes and outcomes that foster healthy ageing?
- The study is a feasibility study
- It will prepare a larger study – with the aim to develop a resource that will help rural communities to develop strategies that support healthy ageing



Neighbourhood Planning

- *Neighbourhood planning is a right for communities introduced through the Localism Act 2011. Communities can shape development in their areas through the production of Neighbourhood Development Plans (often referred to simply as Neighbourhood Plans), Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders. Neighbourhood Plans become part of the Local Plan ... (RTPI 2018)*
- Build on previous work on Age-Friendly Cities/evaluation tool
- Focus on rural settings – through lens of NP in England
- Why focus on NP?
- As a participatory and community-driven mechanism, NP can generate processes and outcomes that support healthy ageing



Conclusions

- WHO and others have set out the requirements of an AFC
- AFCs contain elements of the built, social and political environments
- Working with designers, planners and developers can have positive results
- The communities that older people live in vary greatly
- Work is underway to examine the potential for rural communities to plan for their ageing populations



Thank you!

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