



greater
manchester
older
people's
network

AGE PROUD: EXPLORING POSITIVE AGEING



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Greater Manchester Older People's Network (GMOPN) aims to make sure that older people have an influence in key decision-making and that their voices are championed in the areas that most affect their lives. Recent research suggests that a quarter of people over 50 have felt discriminated against in the course of their everyday lives. In this report, we bring together the thoughts and ideas of participants attending our Age Proud Event on 2 October 2019, held as part of the national #AgeProud campaign.



In a pledge to support the campaign, Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham emphasised the need for, “a modern and positive narrative on ageing that emphasises the contribution older people make”. He stated, “Ageism affects us all - now is the time to change the way we think and talk about ageing”.



Findings

Our report finds that the current narratives on ageing are overwhelmingly negative. Ageing is perceived as a negative in itself and this is reflected in both language and imagery. Stereotypes and assumptions about older generations include the idea of a privileged 'golden generation', the 'little old man/woman', characterised by weakness and a lack of capacity, and a sense of older people as 'past it', their attitudes and insights out of touch and irrelevant. Although these strands are often mutually contradictory, together they combine to characterise older people overwhelmingly in terms of societal burden.

The negative impact of this on older people is wide-ranging. Against a backdrop of this negative narrative, stereotyping and lack of value, it is difficult to avoid internalised ageism and to retain a sense of self-esteem. This in turn can feed into experiences of loneliness and social isolation. The more pervasive these narratives, the harder it is for older people to experience the more positive aspects of ageing and retain a sense of identity. Instead, individuals can perceive themselves becoming someone with a sense of 'older' negative characteristics.

Positive aspects of ageing were nevertheless found to be diverse and varied. These offer more than enough perspectives to provide a positive alternative narrative that emphasises older people's assets and contributions.



Our report emphasises the freedom potentially offered by ageing; an opportunity to focus on interests, try new things and to define yourself in terms of your intrinsic values. It also highlights an increased sense of community and the value of a sense of giving back, making a contribution and having an impact. It also suggests that there is potentially a change in perspective accompanying ageing that can result in greater confidence and a more philosophical approach.

Our report finds that older people value opportunities to share their knowledge and experience as well as to continue to have an impact and express their views. It is up to organisations and agencies that work with older people to ensure that they engage with a more positive narrative around older people and provide opportunities that value and empower, rather than reduce older people to a set of assumptions that do not acknowledge their individual assets and diversity.

Recommendations

1

CREATE A STRENGTHS-BASED NARRATIVE

Negative ideas about ageing are ingrained in our society and media narratives often reinforce these attitudes. A commitment is needed across organisations that work with older people to create a strengths-based narrative, that represents older people in a positive and realistic way and acknowledges their contributions. This needs to include a stock of positive words and phrases, that can be reinforced through repetition.

2

FOCUS ON WORDS AND IMAGERY

We need to focus equally on words and images and ensure that visual representations of older people are positive and realistic. The GMOPN will hold an Age Proud photography competition to take action on this recommendation.

3

COMMIT TO PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR OLDER PEOPLE TO CONTRIBUTE

The narrative of burden is particularly damaging to older people – we need to focus on the opportunities afforded by our ageing population and to commit to ensuring that older people have the opportunity to contribute their skills, experience and knowledge.

4

CREATE A REALISTIC AND INCLUSIVE NARRATIVE

We need to ensure that our narrative on ageing is realistic and inclusive and includes challenges and difficulties connected to the ageing process and an ageing society. However, we need to avoid generalisations about ageing and avoid presenting older people as passive victims. We need to present challenges within the context of the overall opportunities afforded by an ageing society.

Recommendations

5

ACKNOWLEDGE AND CELEBRATE DIVERSITY

A new narrative needs to recognise diversity and celebrate a population with a huge array of interests and different contributions to make. It needs to be acknowledged that every older person's situation is different and making generalisations about the positive aspects of ageing is potentially as damaging as focusing on more negative experiences.

6

CREATE AN AGE PROUD MOVEMENT

Older people need to lead in developing an Age Proud Movement that encourages others to see older age as a time of opportunity, where they can be valued for their unique and diverse perspectives and develop their skills and abilities.

7

FOCUS ON REAL PEOPLE AND RELATABLE SITUATIONS

The Age Proud Movement should focus on storytelling, and developing role models. It should depict real people in relatable situations rather than exceptional examples. We need to create a narrative that allows people to link being older with the more positive aspects of their identity, as opposed to achieving 'in spite of their age'.

8

CHALLENGE AGEISM IN A POSITIVE WAY THAT AVOIDS DIVISIONS

Ageism should be challenged in a context where ageing is seen as part of the life-course and as applying to all, not a group of 'other' older people, separate from the rest of the population. Talking about ageing in the context of different generations is likely to cause further divisions. Although ageism needs to be challenged, this should be in a positive way that presents a balanced alternative perspective rather than reinforces the negative view.



SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

The Greater Manchester Older People's Network (GMOPN) has nearly 400 members from across Greater Manchester. It aims to make sure that older people have a say in the decision-making that affects them and that their voices are championed in as many relevant areas as possible.

On 2 October 2019 the GMOPN held our Age Proud Event in Manchester. The event was held the day after International Day of the Older Person, which this year had a focus on challenging ageism. As part of a campaign led by the Centre for Ageing Better, mayors and council leaders across the country, including Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham, and Councillor Brenda Warrington (Leader of Tameside Council) pledged to work to tackle ageism through an open letter.

They called on the population to, “re-think our own prejudices, think more carefully about the impact our words can have on others, and be part of a movement to end ageism once and for all”.

Mayor Andy Burnham commented, “As the UK's first age-friendly city-region, Greater Manchester is committed to becoming one of the best places in the world to grow old. We know this includes having a modern and positive narrative on ageing that emphasises the contribution older people make. Ageism affects us all - now is the time to change the way we think and talk about ageing.”

Recent research suggests that a quarter of people over 50 have felt discriminated against in the course of their everyday life.

One of the network's commitments, from our Campaigning and Development Recommendations, was to, "prioritise challenging negative portrayals and the use of ageist language or stereotyped images" (February 2019). Our Age Proud Event was planned by our Action Group and an event planning group comprising our wider membership, to take action on this commitment, as part of the national #AgeProud Campaign.

At the event, a workshop was held involving approximately 60 participants, with the aim of gathering insight from older people about how ageing is currently portrayed in the media and how older people are thought of in society.

Participants discussed contemporary narratives and assumptions and how these can affect people as individuals and as part of a group within society.

Participants also discussed positive associations with ageing and came up with ideas and insights that could challenge some of the more negative stereotypes and help create a more representative approach. Through the findings of the workshop, the GMOPN hopes to be able to contribute to a more balanced, realistic and positive view of ageing that can be promoted across Greater Manchester.



SECTION II: ABOUT THE EVENT

The Greater Manchester Older People’s Network’s Age Proud Event was developed in consultation with network members through an event planning group, which met regularly before the event to determine the themes, scope and shape of the event. On the day itself we heard from various groups, organisations and individuals about their commitment to challenging negative ideas of ageing and celebrating the positive contributions of older people. The speakers and links to their presentations are listed below:



Elizabeth Lynskey
(GMOPN Action Group member)



Liz Jones
(GMOPN, Macc)



Joyce Williams
(Age Proud Campaigner)



Paul McGarry
(Greater Manchester Combined Authority)



Mike Dodd
(Talking about my Generation)

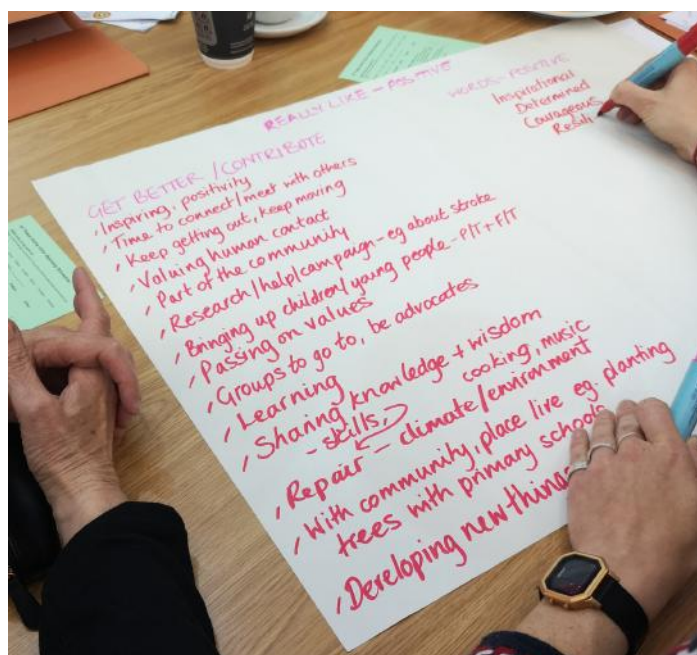


Performance by David Morris
(World Champion Whistler)



SECTION III: THE WORKSHOP AND FINDINGS

Our Age Proud workshop was designed to allow participants to explore current narratives around ageing and to develop an approach to challenging the negative assumptions and stereotypes around ageing. The workshop was facilitated by Liz Jones (GMOPN) and Joyce Williams (Age Proud Campaigner).



Part One – The negative aspects: A drain and a burden or a little old irrelevance

Participants were first asked to consider the more negative aspects of the current narratives about older people and ageing. They were asked to identify words, phrases, concepts or ideas that portray older people in a negative or inaccurate way and to examine the stereotypes about older people as a group and the myths about ageing. They were then asked to consider how these narratives affected them. Discussion was wide ranging but some clear themes emerged, as well as various strands within existing narratives that contribute to the current negative picture.

What do we mean by 'older people'?

Participants in the workshop discussed the difficulties in the phrase 'older people' and the idea of talking about a population within society that is so vast and so varied. If we use the term to potentially apply to anyone over the age of 50, then it can often become difficult to say anything of value across such a wide group of potentially three generations. Participants noted that older generations were often grouped together using terms such as 'the elderly' and 'old people'. These terms were often used to make stereotypical and negative assertions and had therefore come to take on negative associations. Many participants expressed that although they acknowledged being older, they did not particularly identify with being an 'older person'.

The idea of services, groups and activities for 'older people' was discussed. In some cases 'older people' were grouped together as a stereotype, with incorrect assumptions about the kinds of things that would interest them such as bingo, knitting, luncheon clubs. This one size fits all model was unlikely to be inspiring to older people and helped to reinforce the idea that as an older person you could lose the identity of your previous life and become someone with a set of 'older characteristics'.

It was agreed that advertisers reinforced these stereotypes and participants noted that adverts on television featuring and aimed at older people were frequently focused on making a will, life plans and funeral plans and reinforced negative associations and a sense that older people were a group with very narrow and limited interests. It was felt that older people did not tend to feature much in marketing for products and services that were aimed at the general population.

Ageing is perceived as a negative in itself

Participants noted that there was a general negativity toward ageing. They pointed to the terms, "old man" and, "old woman", that were often used as insults in themselves.

How the narrative extends to imagery

They also noted the word “old” used as part of various insulting terms such as “old fogey”, “old codger” “old biddy” and “old bag” suggesting a negativity towards ageing that was deep in our social consciousness. Many of these terms characterised older people as miserable and as prone to moaning and complaining – they also had the potential to allow people to dismiss legitimate concerns as being just a result of an assumed negative attitude associated with ageing.

The word “young”, on the other hand, tended to have much more positive connotations, and was not felt to be attached to insulting phrases in the same way. Participants noted phrases like, “young at heart” and how people would attempt to make compliments like, “you look young for your age” and, “you don’t sound that old”, showing how youth is valued over maturity in our society.

They also discussed the jokes associated with ageing such as birthday cards with comic phrases such as “You’re how old?!”, reinforcing negative messages about ageing as something to be mocked and derided.



Participants noted that it was not just words and narratives that reinforced negative views of ageing. Negative imagery was also abundant in media representations of ageing, ranging from stereotyped images of wrinkly hands to pictures of older people wrapped up in blankets, looking lonely and needy. These images were often used to accompany articles that were totally unrelated to the images used. The road sign, “Frail pedestrians”, was also cited as an example of negative imagery of older people.

“Hey Boomer!”

It was noted that stereotypes around older people were often about assumed attitudes. Participants felt that it was presumed that older people’s views would be, “out of touch”, “irrelevant” and lacking imagination and how this could be used as justification for dismissing their ideas. The phrases, “baby boomer” and “boomer” had recently taken on a lot of negative associations. It is common for the phrase, “Hey Boomer!” to be used, particularly on social media, to dismiss a person’s opinions without consideration, just because they come from a different generation. This was seen as symptomatic of a viewpoint that older people’s opinions did not matter and should be ignored. Participants discussed the problems of dividing people by generations and how this could be done cynically by the media and politicians to pit one generation against another, rather than working together through the difficulties of austerity that were experienced by all generations.

Discussions around Brexit extended this theme where elements of the media have blamed older people for Brexit, and assumed that the 'older generation' was one voice.

The golden generation

Participants also talked about one strand of the current narrative that portrayed the current population of older people as, 'the golden generation'. Inherent in this concept is the idea that older people do not have to struggle or negotiate a comparable set of challenges to those faced by younger people. There is also the implication that life was much easier for this generation throughout the life course. Participants discussed how this narrative suggested entitlement and privilege which is by no means the case for most of the older population. In fact, there are huge socioeconomic inequalities in wellbeing and health outcomes in later life, just as there are for all ages. The continuation of this myth can allow the older generation to be scapegoated, with a feeling that there are too many benefits for older people which should instead be afforded to the younger generation, such as the winter fuel allowance, free TV licence and free bus travel, which many older people in fact rely on.

The 'little old man/woman'

Much of the discussion centred around generalised ideas about failing health and diminished capacity. These included discussions around hearing impairments, incontinence, dementia or bad memory

and assumptions being made about older people not being healthy or fit, and being slower both in physical and mental terms.

Participants recognised the reality of some aspects of this narrative for certain older people, particularly in the latter years of life. However, it was felt that a general stereotype had developed of an 'older person' that emphasised these elements of weakness and lack of abilities. This could result in assumptions around older people being less capable of making decisions and easily confused and their being talked down to and patronised. This stereotype sometimes negatively affected specific interactions for individual older people but was also projected on to the older population at large.

Campaigning by some charities has also relied on characterising older people as weak and needy in order to elicit sympathy and donations which has further fed into this stereotype.

Participants also noted that decision-making in health scenarios was often based upon age – some health checks finished at a specified age, and doctors could be less inclined to provide certain treatments for older people. It was also felt that the focus seemed to move from a prevention-based model for younger people to a more reactive one for older people. It was felt that there was a societal expectation that older people would not be healthy or fit and that therefore it was easy to move from these assumptions to the idea that older people are a 'burden' in our society. This left some with the impression that some older people were deemed, "not worth fixing" or, "ready for the scrapheap".

The words 'frail' and 'frailty' also provoked a lot of discussion. Participants emphasised how this term implied weakness both of mind and body and some found the use of it as a medical term insulting. Others noted that this was often used out of the context of specific clinical frailty and that it contributed to a generally negative narrative about older people that emphasised their weakness and lack of capacity.

A "drain on society"

Participants discussed how the emphasis on older people's weakness and lack of capacity fed into one current narrative where older people are seen as a social burden, a drain on society and resources. The term "bed-blockers", which has been applied to older people remaining in hospital beds for long periods, was discussed as an example of how older people as individuals or as a group can be blamed for systemic problems. Some participants felt that a strong strand of the current narrative on ageing was to see older people as a problem, both economically and socially. They felt that they were seen as "costing the taxpayers too much" and taking up housing that should be for younger people. Participants perceived that there was a sense that they were 'selfish' by wanting to remain in their own homes and not making way for the younger generation.

Other stereotypes and generalisations

Technology was another area where it was felt that many incorrect assumptions about older people contributed to a generally negative attitude and

contributed to the narrative of blame and burden. Participants noted that the idea that older people can't or won't use technology is a generalisation. On the other hand, there is still a real need to provide information in non-digital forms for some people, although this is not always related to age. The responsibility to meet this need is too often shifted onto individuals who are then blamed for not adapting to a generic digital approach.

In the area of work, participants discussed that there was an assumption that older people are not in paid work or seeking work and that there was therefore a bias towards younger people.

In relation to sex, participants discussed how there was a taboo around older people having sex and that the current narratives in society did not acknowledge sex as an important element in the lives of older people just as it is for younger generations.

The potential impact of the negative narratives

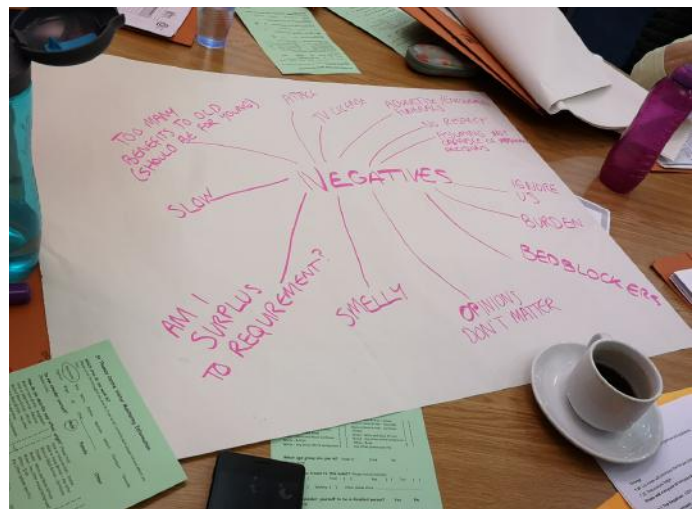
Participants reported various reactions to negative stereotypes and narratives. They ranged from frustration, anger and resentment, to hurt, sadness and dejection. It was also suggested that this negative stereotyping of older people could result in older people retaining internalised ageism as they grew older and therefore being less able to experience the more positive aspects of life.

Participants also reported feeling misrepresented and misunderstood.

Some people questioned how they were valued in society and felt that in many cases they were in a no-win situation. For example, when considering retirement, people felt that they would potentially be judged negatively either because they continued working (in a job that could be for a younger person) or because they retired (thereby ceasing their contribution and becoming a burden to society). Participants also mentioned how loneliness and social isolation were potentially the result of how they thought they were perceived in society. They suggested that negative narratives around ageing might also contribute to specific mental health difficulties, such as depression and even suicidal thoughts.



Many participants expressed that they did not feel valued as older people and that society did not recognise their contributions. It could potentially prove difficult to retain a sense of self-esteem. Some participants also explained that they could feel very defensive. When their expectation was that they would not be taken seriously or would be treated as inferior, due to their age, it could make them more likely to perceive ageist attitudes and to try to assert themselves more. There is the potential for this to reinforce stereotypes, where anxiety around not being taken seriously is misinterpreted as a negative personal characteristic associated with older age.



Part Two - Finding the Balance

In the second part of the workshop, participants were asked to focus on the positive aspects of ageing. They were asked to consider what aspects of life improved with maturity and how the older population contributed to society at large. They were asked to talk about a more realistic idea of ageing that encompassed these more positive aspects. Discussions were extremely varied but some specific themes emerged that might help us develop strands in a new more balanced and positive narrative.

It's just a number

Many participants emphasised the idea that growing older isn't a feeling and that in yourself you are still the same person that you were. For this reason it was felt that the positive aspects of ageing were often connected with the ways in which older age allowed a person to express elements of their personality and interests and develop their individual identity.

Don't forget our diversity

The variety of different aspects and different views expressed by workshop participants emphasises the diversity of our older population. It is important that we celebrate a population with a huge array of interests and different contributions to make.



It also needs to be acknowledged that every older person's situation is different and that socioeconomic factors were often more influential than age in contributing to an individual's ability to experience life in a positive way. Participants acknowledged that making generalisations about the positive aspects of ageing were potentially as damaging as focusing on more negative experiences. We need to create a narrative that acknowledges individuals' experiences, both positive and negative and creates a more realistic picture of ageing.

Freedom

Freedom was a strong theme in discussions. Some people reported having more leisure time and "me time", that they were able to focus on interests that they had not had time for previously. This included more time for hobbies or travel,

or to focus on particular interests or causes. Some people emphasised the freedom of retirement and not being defined by their work anymore – this afforded them more opportunity to define themselves in terms of their intrinsic values. For some it also meant a reduction in stress.

For some people, their financial situation had also improved as they grew older. Although it is acknowledged that this is by no means the case for all older people, for some, financial security, as well as more free time, afforded the opportunity to enjoy experiences that they could not in the earlier part of their life. This included a focus on travel and new experiences.

Seize the day

Participants also discussed how it was important to emphasise that older age was a time for having fun. For some people, it was an opportunity to get involved in new things that they had never done before. This might be taking up new activities and for some it gave them a ‘seize the day’ mentality that meant they were more likely to try new things, whether it was a sponsored firewalk or armchair yoga.

Greater confidence

Many participants discussed how they had become more confident as they grew older. They suggested that they were more understanding and appreciative of smaller pleasures. Some felt more confident in their approach and others reported being more resilient and better able to cope with difficulties: "I'm able to

tell myself off for having negative thoughts and move on". Participants also suggested that they were less worried about what others thought of them and less inclined to feel guilty about past actions, having developed a more philosophical attitude to life and an acknowledgement that there were lots of things beyond their control. For some people this meant that they were more likely to be outspoken and to speak their mind, for others it meant that they had become less reactive and more peaceful. Participants also reported that they had changed the way they viewed the world and how they thought about change.

Relationships

Family was a key theme and the grandparent role was discussed in particular. Participants expressed their joy in connecting with grandchildren and some relished the opportunity to contribute to childcare. Participants discussed relationships in a wider sense and suggested that in older age relationships could potentially develop and grow. These included friendships that had lasted for a long time and were therefore extremely solid and dependable, as well as new friendships, where participants suggested that with a greater sense of self-acceptance there was a potential for more honest and straightforward relationships. Intimate relationships were also discussed, where some participants suggested that they were now more comfortable with themselves and were therefore able to have better connections, greater intimacy and felt able to express themselves sexually.

Strong sense of community

Other participants emphasised how their sense of community and connection to their home and neighbourhood had increased with age. They discussed the value of getting out and about in the community and the positives of having the time to connect and meet with others. For some, this was particularly important in retirement when the social networks surrounding work were no longer available for social connection. Some participants emphasised the importance of volunteering and giving back to their community and felt that this was something that they were more able to do in older age. They also noted the importance of groups to go to and the particular value of intergenerational projects.

Passing on knowledge and experience

Participants also discussed the value of increased experience. They talked of the skills and knowledge that they had amassed in their lives and emphasised that they were still learning and keen to learn more.

One of the positives of ageing was the opportunity to share knowledge and experience and participants emphasised the importance of opportunities to pass on that knowledge and make a contribution. This might be through sharing stories, passing on tradition and history, or sharing skills such as cooking or music.

Opportunities to connect with younger people were considered to be particularly important and participants expressed the desire to support and mentor younger people to feel better about themselves by sharing the perspectives afforded by older age.

Some participants expressed that in some ways the situation for older people had improved in society and that they felt that in some areas they were able to contribute more and were valued more for their perspectives and experience.

Participants expressed the value of being part of the GM Older People's Network and the importance of taking part in research and campaigning and generally having opportunities to have an impact, express their views and advocate for others. A sense of empowerment was closely connected with a positive view of ageing for many participants.





As part of this section of the workshop, participants were asked to come up with words that expressed the positive aspects of ageing.

Part Three - Moving to an Alternative Narrative

The third part of the workshop took the form of a group discussion about how we might go about challenging the negative concept of ageing and creating a new narrative, at once realistic and positively focused.

Participants summarised the key points from the previous discussion and tried to identify ways in which they could challenge the current negative picture of older age.

Participants discussed the different forms that ageism could take, from explicit discrimination and nasty comments to unthinking ageism that was often meant positively but actually reflected the kinds of assumptions about age discussed earlier. Comments like, “you look good for your age”, reinforced negative ideas about ageing, even when meant as a compliment.

Participants agreed that although discussions about ageing were necessary, judging people based on their age was as potentially damaging as any other kind of prejudice. Participants discussed where ageism came from and looked at two particular strands in the media which reinforced negative ideas about ageism. Firstly, they discussed the cosmetic and fashion industry, which was felt to trade on the idea of people trying to stay as young as possible. They agreed that this

instilled a fear of ageing and encouraged the idea that the older you were, the less visible and relevant you became in society. Secondly, participants discussed how an increasingly ageing population has been linked to a narrative around cost and burden, which has, in turn, been directed at older people themselves.

Participants agreed that it was up to older people themselves as well as organisations that represented them to try to challenge this narrative. They needed to create a positive vocabulary and set of phrases that could be used in conversation and written communications to provide an alternative. As well as referring to the words that they came up with in the earlier part of the workshop, participants also came up with some positive phrases that they could use in conversation to challenge some of the negative assumptions about ageing. Some examples were:

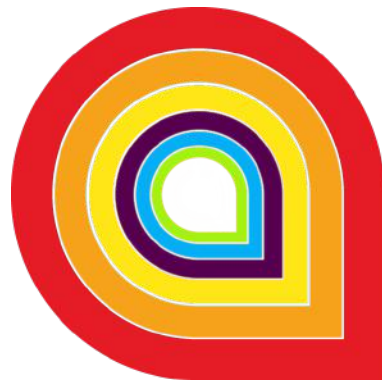
- **“I wouldn’t have it any other way.”**
- **“At my age, I can say anything.”**
- **“No-one ever told me it would feel this good”**
- **“One of the best things is ...”**
- **“You will be old one day – look forward to it!”**

Section IV: Creating an Age Proud Narrative - Recommendations for talking about ageing

On the basis of the themes identified in Section III of this report, the Greater Manchester Older People's Network makes the following recommendations:

- Negative ideas about ageing are ingrained in our society and media narratives often reinforce these attitudes. A commitment is needed across organisations that work with older people to create a strengths-based narrative, that represents older people in a positive and realistic way and acknowledges their contributions. This needs to include a stock of positive words and phrases, that can be reinforced through repetition.
- We need to focus equally on words and images and ensure that visual representations of older people are positive and realistic. The GMOPN will hold an Age Proud photography competition to take action on this recommendation.
- The narrative of burden is particularly damaging to older people – we need to focus on the opportunities afforded by our ageing population and to commit to ensuring that older people have the opportunity to contribute their skills, experience and knowledge.
- We need to ensure that our narrative on ageing is realistic and inclusive and includes challenges and difficulties connected to the ageing process and an ageing society. However, we need to avoid generalisations about ageing and avoid presenting older people as passive victims. We need to present challenges within the context of the overall opportunities afforded by an ageing society.

- A new narrative needs to recognise diversity and celebrate a population with a huge array of interests and different contribution to make. It needs to be acknowledged that every older person's situation is different and making generalisations about the positive aspects of ageing is potentially as damaging as focusing on more negative experiences.
- Older people need to lead in developing an Age Proud Movement that encourages others to see older age as a time of opportunity, where they can be valued for their unique and diverse perspectives and develop their skills and abilities.
- The Age Proud Movement should focus on storytelling, and developing role models. It should depict real people in relatable situations rather than exceptional examples. We need to create a narrative that allows people to link being older with the more positive aspects of their identity, as opposed to achieving 'in spite of their age'.
- Ageism should be challenged in a context where ageing is seen as part of the life-course and as applying to all, not a group of 'other' older people, separate from the rest of the population. Talking about ageing in the context of different generations is likely to cause further divisions. Although ageism needs to be called out, this needs to be in a positive way that presents a balanced alternative perspective rather than reinforces the negative view.



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Join our network!

The Greater Manchester Older People's Network is all about getting older people's voices heard from right across Greater Manchester. Membership is open to individuals aged 50 and over and to organisations that support older people.

Our members receive a monthly newsletter, invitations to our events and information about training and participation opportunities. It's up to you to get involved in the network as much or as little as you would like.

For further information or to become a member please contact Liz or Victoria on 0161 834 9823 or email GMOPN@macc.org.uk

Website: www.gmopn.org.uk

Twitter: [@GMOPN1](https://twitter.com/GMOPN1)

