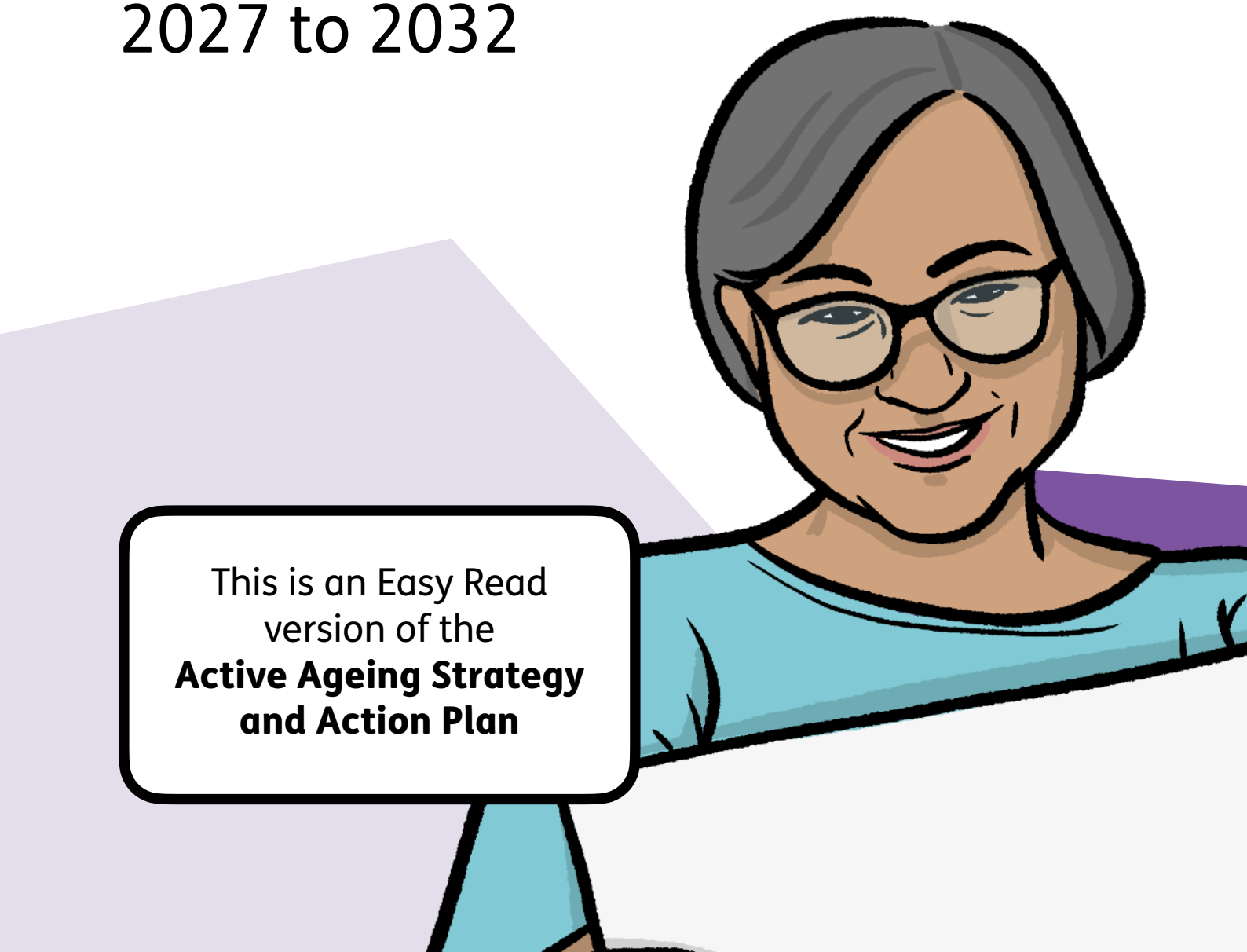
Department for Communities
An Roinn Pobal
Depairtment fur Commonities
www.communities-ni.gov.uk

Easy Read

Active Ageing Plan

2027 to 2032



This is an Easy Read version of the **Active Ageing Strategy and Action Plan**

Easy Read



This is an Easy Read version of some information.

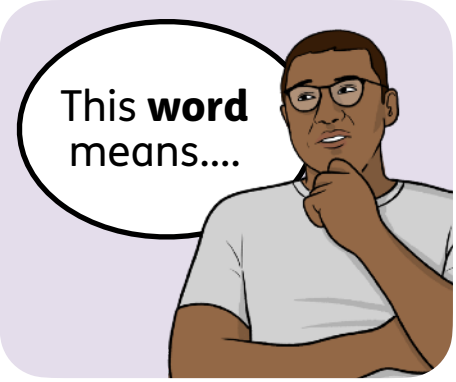
It uses easier words and pictures.



Some people may still want help to read it.



Some words are **bold** to show they are important.



We explain bold words if they are hard to understand.

What is in this booklet

About this booklet 4

Why we need a plan 5

Our vision 6

Signature projects 7

What we will do 11

How we will check the plan is working 25

Find out more 26

About this booklet

The Department for Communities is part of the government in Northern Ireland.



We want to support older people to make the most of their lives.



We have written a new plan to do this between 2027 and 2032.

It is called the **Active Ageing Strategy and Action Plan**.



This booklet will tell you about the plan and what we are going to do.

Why we need a plan



More people in Northern Ireland are living longer.



Older people do many important things at work, at home and in their local communities.



But some older people find it hard to get the support they need.



We need to work together with other organisations, older people and groups that support them.

Our vision



Our vision is what we want things to be like in the future.



We want Northern Ireland to be a place that is fair to people of all ages.



We want older people to feel supported and respected.



We want everyone over 50 to stay active and make the most of their lives.

Signature projects



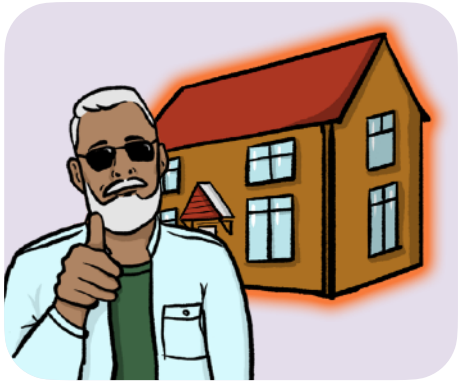
There are some projects we want to focus on to create a more age-friendly Northern Ireland.

We call these **signature projects**.

The projects include:



- Setting up a **Regional Age Friendly Forum** - this will be a group that helps older people have a say about government plans and services.



- Carrying out the **Warm Healthy Homes Strategy** - this is a plan to help people have warmer homes and lower energy costs.

Other projects include:



- Running the **Age-friendly Housing and Independent Living Programme** - this is a project to help older people live safely and healthily in their own homes for longer.



- Running the **Ageing Well Initiative** - these are projects in local areas that support older people to be healthy and active and stay in touch with other people.



- Improving **Community Transport** and **Active Travel Infrastructure** - this is about providing better transport options so that older people with different needs can get around easily.

Together, these projects will mean older people can:



- Have more say in plans and decisions that affect them.

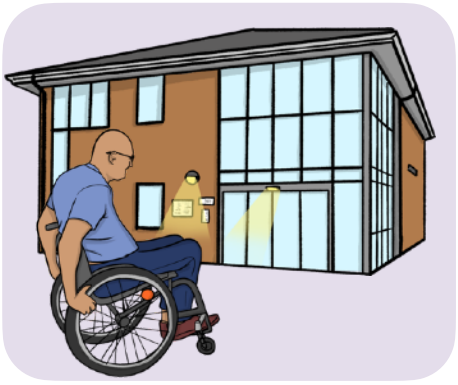


- Live safely and independently.



- Stay happy and healthy as they grow older.

These projects will also mean older people can:



- Find and use care and support services easily.



- Take part in their local community.

What we will do



There are 6 things we want to make happen.

We call them **outcomes.**



Next, we will tell you about each outcome and what we will do to make them happen.

Outcomes 1 and 3



We have put outcomes 1 and 3 together because the things we will do are going to help both outcomes happen.



Outcome 1 is that we want older people to live safely in their own homes for as long as they can.



Outcome 3 is that we want people to stay healthy as they grow older.

To make these things happen, we will:



- Carry out the **Warm Healthy Homes Strategy**.

  Remember, this is a plan to help people have warmer homes and lower energy costs.

We will also:



- Build houses where older people can live more safely.



- Give money towards changes that make homes safer and easier to use.

  This will help older people and disabled people stay in their homes for longer.



- Work with services that help people stay healthy and get support in their local community.

Outcome 2



We want older people to stay in touch with their friends, families and local communities.

To make this happen we will:



- Set up a **Regional Age Forum** - remember, this is a group to help older people have a say in our plans and services.

  The group will also check how well this plan is working and make sure your ideas are heard.



- Use the **Community Infrastructure Fund** to improve local places where people meet and do activities.

  This Fund gives money to make these places easier for everyone to use.

We will also:



- Help libraries become places that support older people to learn new skills, meet other people and use computers to access services.



- Help older people from different backgrounds to take part in art, history and other creative activities.



- Help older people find ways to **volunteer** in their local communities.

  A **volunteer** is someone who gives their time to help without being paid.

Outcome 4

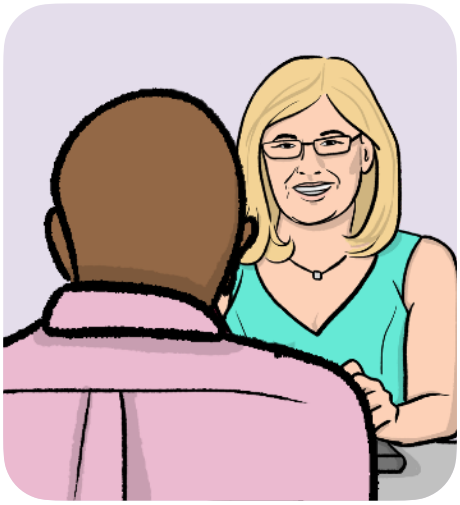


We want to help older people to keep working for as long as they want or need to.



We also want to help them to keep learning and have a say about things that affect them.

To make this happen we will:



- Run the **Condition Management Programme**.

  This helps people manage health problems so they can start, go back or stay in work.

We will also:



- Support older people to get help from services such as **Access to Work NI**, **Employment Support** and **Workable NI**.

  These services help older people and disabled people get the support they need at work.



- Run **JobStart** and the **JobStart Work Experience Programme**.

  These services help people learn skills and get work.



- Work with local groups that help people get training, support and jobs.



We will also:

- Teach basic computer and internet skills in libraries.

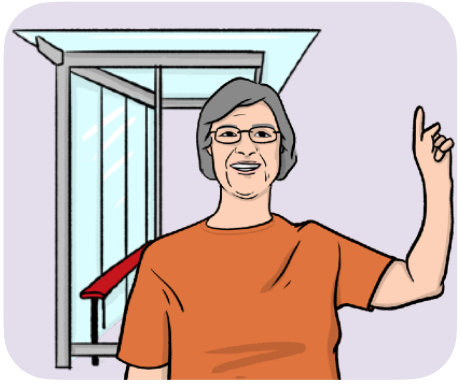


- Make sure older people in the countryside have more say about government plans and services.

Outcome 5



We want to improve transport, travel support and services that help older people get to shops, appointments and local activities.



This includes things like lower fares on buses, trains and ferries, for people over 60.

To make this happen we will:



- Provide community transport in local areas, such as **Dial-a-Lift**.

  This includes transport services in countryside areas.



- Help older people take part in sport, exercise and other activities.



- Make sure **social housing** is safe and suitable for older people and disabled people.

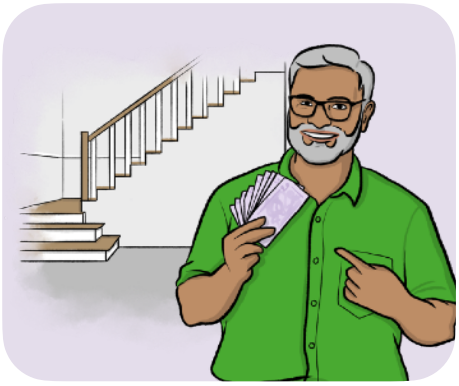


Social housing is homes that are owned by Housing Associations and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

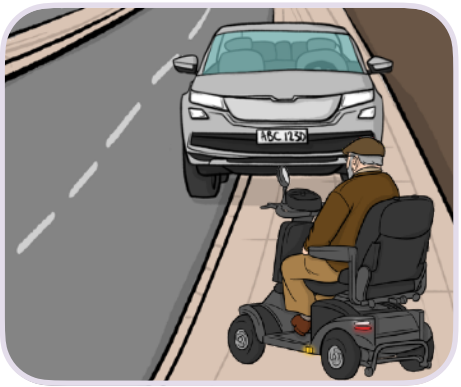
We will also:



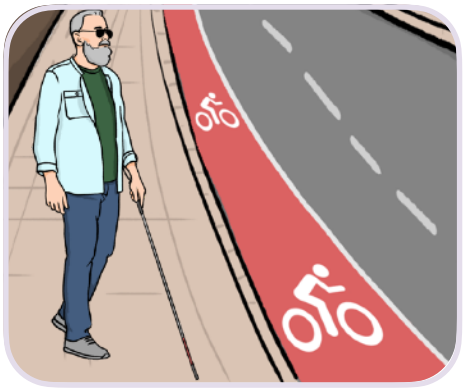
- Improve social housing and provide support so people can stay safely in their homes for longer.



- Help some people over 55 buy a more suitable home they can afford.



- Make pavements safer by stopping people from parking on them and blocking the way.



- Spend more money to improve paths for walking, using a wheelchair and cycling.

We will also:



- Improve local transport for people who cannot easily use buses or trains.



- Make canals, rivers, forests and fishing areas easier for older people to enjoy.

Outcome 6

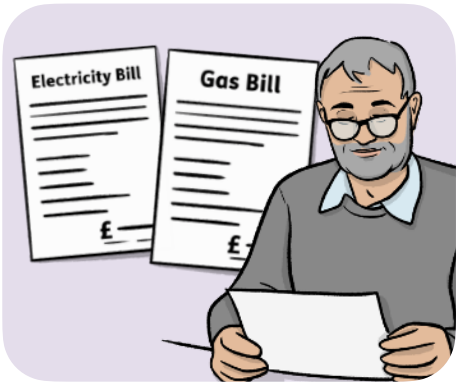


We want older people to be treated fairly and with respect.



We will make sure older people get their rights by law.

We want older people to get the money and support they need, including:



- Help to pay gas and electricity bills.



- Help with housing costs.

To make this happen we will:



- Support local community groups in the countryside.

  Groups can then help local people stay active and connected.

We will also:



- Make it easier for older people to get any **benefits** they can claim.

  Benefits is money from the government to help people with their living costs.



- Work with the **Money and Pensions Service**.

  This service helps older people manage their money and plan for later life.



- Support the **Make the Call service**.

  This service checks what benefits and other support people can get.

  It can also help people apply for this support.

We will also:



- Look at new laws to protect people from being treated unfairly, when they buy things or use services.

How we will check the plan is working



We will check this plan every year and write a report about how well it is working.



We will ask older people and groups that support them if they think the plan is working.



We will make changes to the plan if we need to.

Find out more



You can look at our website here:
www.communities-ni.gov.uk/



What do you think about this Easy Read booklet?

Please fill in this survey to tell us what you think:
www.easy-read-online.co.uk/easy-read-feedback-survey

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