

Your thoughts about climate change and healthy ageing in Leith

June 2023

On 1st April 2023, the [Healthy Ageing in a Changing Climate](#) project team brought together an intergenerational community group at the Citadel in Leith to discuss:

- what climate change means to you
- what impact extreme weather events have on you and your community
- what exists & what is needed in your community to respond to extreme weather

We have summarised the discussions below. On behalf of the project team, we would like to thank everybody for their participation in this event.

Next steps: This event is part of a larger project looking at the implications of climate change on healthy ageing. Over the summer we will host a follow-up event with the local community and key organisations responsible for supporting climate change interventions. This will feed into a set of recommendations and resources to support the design of climate resilient Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. On behalf of the project team, we would like to thank everybody for their participation in this event.



Climate change attitudes and awareness

There was a lot of uncertainty about what climate will mean and how it will impact everyday lives, and varying levels of knowledge and awareness. Many were concerned about how climate change is being portrayed in the media rather than working proactively to address the issues and speaking to local communities. More awareness raising is needed around climate change and the role we can play in supporting climate change interventions at a 'local' level.

Health and wellbeing as a key priority

Many were concerned about the health and wellbeing impacts of climate change. These were broad ranging. E.g. impact of severe weather events on people's ability to get out of the home, leading to social exclusion and isolation. Accessing support at home can be problematic during adverse weather, particularly for the most vulnerable older people. Many were concerned about getting around their communities during extreme weather and accessing basic services. There are broader implications of climate change too, e.g. rising energy bills, financial security/wellbeing.

Valued intergenerational support and connections

Many felt that there is a critical role for intergenerational supports in responding to climate change. Bringing together people across all ages, and having the community space to facilitate this interaction, is important. In responding to climate change and extreme weather, those informal intergenerational activities and supports will be a critical lifeline locally, and key to developing inclusive communities to age well.

Building an integrated place-based approach

There were discussions about the importance of local responses to climate change and ensuring that climate change interventions are embedded into where we 'work, live and play', e.g. local employment opportunities, outdoor environments and green spaces, and transport and mobility. There is a strong pride of place in Leith and it is important to build and utilise local resources/assets in developing climate responses.

Involve us as a community

People want to take an active role within climate change. A lot is already happening at an individual and local level in terms of positive climate change behaviours. In ensuring that we are all together in moving this forward, there is a real need to build strong partnerships with organisations responsible for bringing about change to ensure any actions are taken 'with' and 'alongside' the community. 'Nothing about us without us'.

The aim of the UKRI-funded Healthy Ageing in a Changing Climate project is to gain a better understanding of the factors that contribute to the resilience of older people to climate change in the UK. It explores how we can build on existing dimensions of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities (AFCCs) to deliver inclusive and climate resilient communities and cities.

For more information visit:
www.ageandclimate.com

Project Team

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