

Your thoughts about climate change and healthy ageing in Rochdale

June 2023

On 25th May 2023, the [Healthy Ageing in a Changing Climate](#) project team brought people aged 60+ together at the Strand Community Hub in Rochdale 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.



Healthy ageing implications of climate change are multifaceted

People felt that climate change is impacting in complex ways on their wellbeing, including through food insecurity and financial wellbeing, but also in terms of maintaining independence and accessing services and supports during extreme weather. People also spoke about the negative emotions that climate change in general prompted (pessimism, hopelessness, fear, cynicism, confusion). It was felt that housing, transport, health and social care are critical dimensions for building climate resilient responses for healthy ageing.

Connecting communities in response to extreme weather

People discussed how extreme weather can bring about challenges to maintaining community connections and supporting mobility. Getting out and about can be challenging, especially for medical appointments, food shopping and socialising. This can cause isolation and a feeling of loneliness. It was felt that solutions are needed that support people to feel 'connected' and 'enabled' during extreme weather to support healthy ageing.

Community adaptation is key to building climate resilience

Many told us of the importance of the community including the role of community assets (churches, mosques, libraries and community associations) in responding to previous flooding events. People felt that a real strength of this community is its ability to bring together different ethnicities and cultures to provide integrated responses to healthy ageing and climate change: "when we come together, we are powerful".

Developing joint action and integrated responses

Many identified that developing responses to climate interventions to support healthy ageing needed a coordinated response with local communities working alongside local authorities and government. At the moment, people felt more work is needed to develop a coherent pathway and associated plan for identifying what is needed at a local level in terms of climate resilience responses.

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

- Professor Ryan Woolrych (The Urban Institute, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh)
- Dr Gary Haq (Stockholm Environment Institute, University of York, York)
- Briony Latter (The Urban Institute, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh)