

The health and wellbeing of older people on the Isle of Wight

Annual Public Health Report of
the Director of Public Health,
Isle of Wight Council

2018-19





Contents

- 3** Foreword
- 4** Introduction
- 6** Healthy behaviours and lifestyles
- 8** Age-friendly environments
- 12** Encouraging social inclusion
- 16** Immunisation as a key preventative intervention
- 18** Conclusions
- 19** Recommendations

Foreword

I am delighted to introduce this report 'The health and wellbeing of older people on the Isle of Wight' as Interim Director of Public Health for the Isle of Wight Council.

The Director of Public Health's annual report is one of the ways in which I can highlight specific issues for the health and wellbeing of the people of the Isle of Wight and make recommendations for improvement, to a wide range of organisations.

This report focuses on the health of the older population of the Isle of Wight and aims to highlight the specific issues of health and wellbeing and make recommendations for improvement within the local health and care economy.

People are living longer, and our older population is increasing in number. This is a real success we should celebrate with many people remaining healthy and independent as they age and most older people reporting that their health is good. However, older people are not a homogenous group and a significant minority spend too many years in poor health. Also, health inequalities persist into old age.

In this report we will look at some of the public health issues affecting our older population and at a wide range of interventions and ways in which we can further prevent disease and keep people as healthy as possible for as long as possible. This means that our residents will be healthier as they age and more likely to remain active and independent in their own homes.

For the purpose of this report, older people are defined as those who are over 65 years of age.

Acknowledgements

I hope that you find this report helpful and that it stimulates your interest. I would like to thank everyone in the public health team who has contributed to the report. Special thanks go to Danika Barber, Gilles Bergeron, Bryan Hurley, Sharon Kingsman, Kate Lees and the council's adult social care team. Additional thanks go to colleagues at Age UK.

I would also like to thank Dr Sallie Bacon, Director of Public Health for the Isle of Wight Council until June 2019, both for her valuable contribution to this report, and for her years of leadership, advice and support.



Simon Bryant

Interim Director of Public Health, Isle of Wight Council

Introduction

People are living longer, and our older population is increasing in number. These are things to celebrate as real successes for public health and health and social care. However, we too often use language that suggests as people age they ‘inevitably’ become a burden, rather than an asset to our communities.

This is of course far from the truth and fails to recognise the huge contribution to our society that older people make. Many people remain healthy and independent as they age with the majority of older people reporting that their health is good. A negative view ignores the huge variety of ways in which older people continue to make valuable contributions to society through supporting the younger generation – practically, financially and through their knowledge and wisdom, volunteering and engaging with their community.

Nationally older people contribute significantly to the economy (estimated at £61 billion by Age UK) through work, by providing care to younger generations, therefore enabling younger family members to pursue their careers, caring for older family members who need support, and by volunteering.

We also need to be mindful that older people are not a homogenous group and a significant minority spend too many years in poor health. As we grow older we tend to develop more health problems, live with

multiple long-term health conditions (LTCs), develop dementia or poor mobility and become frail, but this isn’t inevitable.

Frailty is a distinctive health state related to the ageing process where the body loses its reserves. It defines the group of older people who are at highest risk of adverse outcomes such as falls, disability, admission to hospital, or the need for long-term care and impacts on the ability to live independently and on quality of life.

Around one in ten people aged over 65 years have frailty, with as many as half of those aged over 85 years being affected.

Older people on the Isle of Wight

There are now half a million people in their 90s in the UK according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS). This is more than two and a half times the number in 1985. By 2041 the ONS estimates that there will be 3.2 million people aged 85 years and older in the UK.

The Isle of Wight is home to almost 141,000 people, and more than one in four of those are aged over 65 (the England average is less than one in five). This is the 17th highest rate of older people in any local authority in England and Wales and higher than all our most similar local authorities (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy comparator group).

Over the next ten years on the Isle of Wight, the number of 65 to 84 year



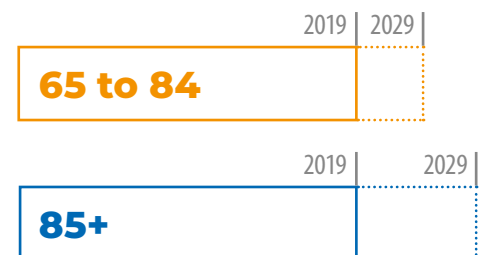
Around one in ten people aged over 65 years has frailty, with as many as half of those aged over 85 years being affected.

ISLE OF WIGHT

PERCENTAGE OF OVER 65s

ENGLAND

More than one in four of those living on the Isle of Wight is aged over 65 (the England average is less than one in five).



Over the next ten years on the Isle of Wight, the number of 65 to 84 year olds is expected to increase by a fifth, with the over 85 age group increasing by a quarter.



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As the number of older people locally increases their positive contribution to the Island can also grow, which provides benefits both for older people and our Island as a whole. To make the most of these opportunities we need to enable people to maintain good health as they age.

What should we do?

Complex planning is required to ensure that the economic, social and health needs of older people can be met. We know that our health and care system is struggling to deliver the care that older people need. Therefore, it is important that we enter older age as healthy as we can possibly be. How long we stay healthy depends on our social, economic and physical environment as well as our individual characteristics and behaviours. Some factors we can't change, such as our age, sex, genes and family history. However, we can influence many factors, such as whether we smoke, what we eat, how much alcohol we drink and how much physical activity we do. It's never too late to take action to promote health in later life.

Investing in the health of people from across the life course supports people to stay well in older age and continue contributing to the

local economy. The purpose of this document is to highlight the key issues for an ageing population and set out recommendations to improve the health of this group of people. If we are successful in this then this will mean more opportunities to develop resilient, happier communities and ultimately, a better environment for all of us to thrive and lead happy lives.

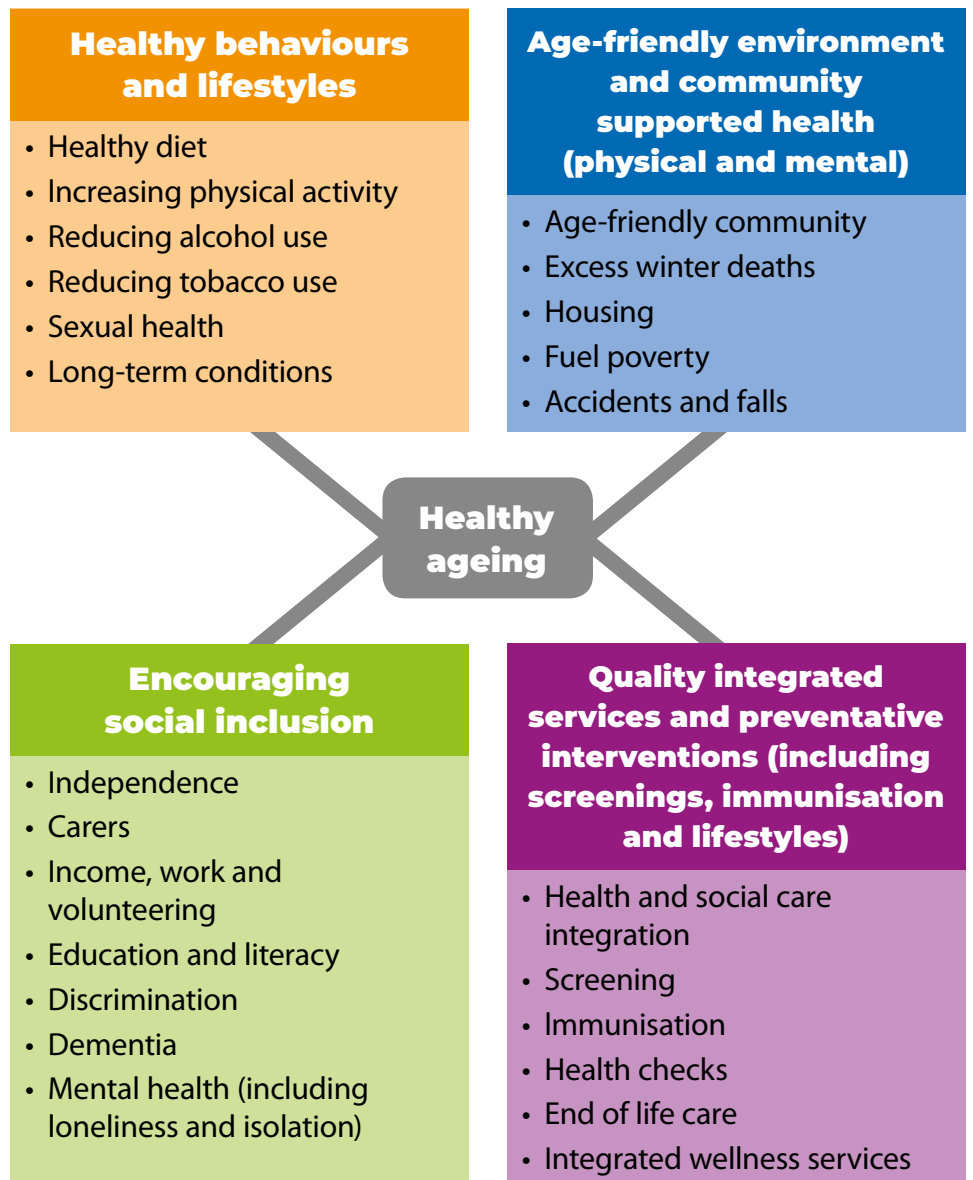
Town and parish councils across the Island are realising the asset they have in older people with seven councils signing up to the Age Friendly Island Charter. This shows a commitment to supporting older people and building an Island that values and respects older people, encouraging them to take a more

active role in their communities and enabling their voices to be heard by services and organisations across the Island.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) developed a policy framework for 'healthy ageing' to focus their work up to 2030 (below). We have used this model as a framework for this report and chosen topics from each area to focus on. Each chapter includes:

- 1 a short introduction of the situation on the Island;
- 2 what is currently in place on the Island to address the issues highlighted;
- 3 what more could be done by individuals, professionals and organisations.

Healthy ageing framework



Healthy behaviours and lifestyles

The lifestyle choices we make throughout our lives have a big impact on how we experience ageing and how long we live without experiencing serious health conditions. Even if someone does not have the healthiest lifestyle choices earlier in life it is still possible to slow down the effects of ageing by taking action to promote health. It's never too late to start.

Increasing physical activity

This section focuses on increasing physical activity levels as this is one of the most important interventions which improves health in people of all ages.

The UK Chief Medical Officers' guidelines¹ recommend the following for older people:

- At least 150 minutes of moderate intensity or 75 minutes per week of vigorous exercise or activity each week, such as walking, cycling, swimming or a sport. Moderate activity raises the heart rate and makes you warmer and slightly out of breath, however you'll still be able to talk. Vigorous activity makes you breathe hard and fast so that you're not able to say more than a few words at a time.
- Strength building activity at least twice a week such as heavy gardening, carrying heavy loads

such as shopping, yoga, pilates or exercises that use weights or your body weight for resistance. These activities help reduce the decline in muscle mass and bone strength as we age.

- People with poor balance or certain medical conditions that make them at risk of falls should also do balance and co-ordination activities at least twice a week, such as dancing, tai-chi or yoga.
- Reduce sedentary activity by breaking up the amount of time you spend sitting. Take an active break from sitting activities such as watching TV, reading or using a computer, every 30 minutes.

There are lots of ways to be active including walking, gardening, climbing the stairs, swimming, dancing or recreational sport.

What is the situation on the Island?

One third of adults on the Isle of Wight are physically inactive (that is they take less than 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity per week) compared to under a quarter of people in the rest of the country (22.7 per cent). While there is no local data to show the activity levels of older people on the Island, national statistics from a survey of around 92,000 people in England showed that exercise participation



One third of adults on the Isle of Wight are physically inactive.



Only around half of all adults and just a quarter of people aged over 65 years meet the minimum recommended activity levels needed to maintain health³.



¹ assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/213741/dh_128146.pdf

² Department for Culture MaS (2011) Adult participation in sport: analysis of the taking part survey.

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/137986/tp-adult-participation-sport-analysis.pdf.

³ Department of Health UK (2011) Start active, stay active: UK Physical Activity Guidelines.

declines progressively throughout adult life and so does the desire to participate². Indeed, only around half of all adults and just a quarter of people aged over 65 years meet the minimum recommended activity levels needed to maintain health³.

What are we doing about it?

The Island has more than half of its land mass declared as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which is accessible by almost 500

miles of footpaths. There is a vibrant physical activity offer utilising this local asset including a 'health walks' network run by volunteers offering regular guided walks in various locations across the Island.

There are also many council and community run activities such as dancing, seated exercise, walking netball, aqua therapy and many more. For more details on activities on the Island visit: islefindit.org.uk/events-pro/older-people



RECOMMENDATIONS

What can individuals do?

Consider starting regular exercise, including strength and balance exercise, if you have not been doing so. It is never too late to start and building some physical activity into your daily life is often the best way. Exercise can be started small such as ten minutes and gradually increased. It can take anything from 28 days to three months of doing something regularly to build a habit. Joining an organised group can be a great way to stay motivated and make new friends too.

What can organisations do?

Acknowledge and adopt a life course approach when developing commissioning plans, strategies and care protocols to promote, support and encourage people of all ages to be more physically active.

Work in partnership with colleagues across the council and the wider system (eg NHS, primary care, voluntary sector and communities) to ensure older people are encouraged to be more physically active. There should be a specific focus on strength and balance exercises to prevent the risk of falling.

Age-friendly environments



Age-friendly environments are an important issue. Physical and social environments play an important role in determining our physical and mental capacity throughout our lives. Age-friendly environments include places and settings that are key to ageing well. This includes housing, transport, workplaces and the community as a whole.

We know that the built environment can reduce issues associated with ageing and mobility by enabling social interaction and connecting people with places and other people. The provision of accessible open spaces and walkable neighbourhoods can also encourage and facilitate increased physical activity among the elderly. It is crucial that these spaces and routes are safe and well-maintained.





An estimated 30 per cent of excess winter deaths are attributable to cold housing, which is approximately 30 deaths each year on the Isle of Wight.

Housing

This section of the report will focus on housing and the associated issue of fuel poverty. These are two issues that impact the number of cold weather deaths.

An estimated 30 per cent of excess winter deaths are attributable to cold housing, which is approximately 30 deaths each year on the Isle of Wight. The majority of excess winter deaths occur in those aged over 75.

Nationally the majority of people aged 65 years and over live independently in the community in mainstream housing, either as a homeowner, as a social tenant, or renting privately with only a small proportion of older people living in supported or specialist accommodation.

A national study (Age UK, 2014) has identified that while older people want comfortable and attractive housing alternatives that promote healthy and active lifestyles, too often vulnerable older people find themselves in poor or inaccessible housing, in the wrong places, especially in rural areas.

What is the situation on the Island?

At the time of the 2011 Census the Isle of Wight had 16.5 per cent of households occupied by a single person aged 65 or over – the second highest rate of any local authority (Dorset had 16.7 per cent, England average is 12.4 per cent).

The Island has high levels of home ownership among pensioners (83.7 per cent on the Island compared with 74.6 per cent for England) and low levels living in social housing (8.6 per cent locally compared with 19 per cent in England). Younger people are spending three times more of their income on housing than their grandparents.

What are we doing about it?

The strategic Island Plan is currently being refreshed – this is a strategy which sets out the vision for how the built environment can develop

over the next 15 years to ensure that we have communities that work for all ages.

The plan identifies the need to facilitate Independent Living, supporting the delivery of a range of accommodation types and tenures that enable people to live as independently as possible.

Proposals for major residential development will be expected to provide at least 20 per cent of the total dwellings as being suitable for older people and/or those with mobility problems.



Fuel poverty

Closely allied to the issue of housing is the issue of fuel poverty. Older people are particularly at risk of dying during winter months compared to the rest of the population. Excess Winter Deaths (EWD) is the measure used to describe how many more people die during winter months than at other times of the year.

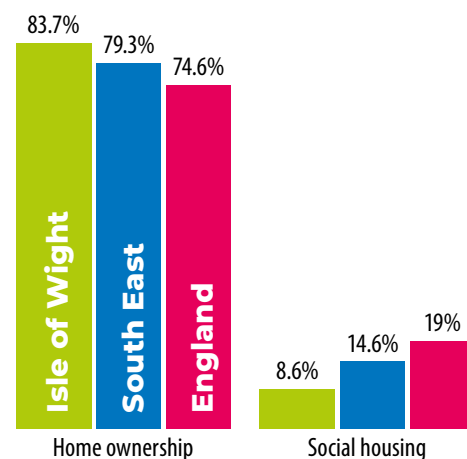
The UK has one of the highest Excess Winter Death (EWD) rates in Europe despite having relatively milder winters. This is because we tend to take fewer precautions in cold weather (such as wearing warmer protective clothing) compared to people living in countries with cold winters. Countries with milder winters also tend to have fewer homes with cavity wall insulation and double glazing, which makes them harder to

keep warm during the winter.

There are various physiological effects of cold weather, which may lead to death in vulnerable people. In older people a one degree lowering of living room temperature is associated with a rise of blood pressure; which increases the risk of strokes and heart attacks. Those with long term conditions are particularly vulnerable to cold weather.

It is estimated that 30 per cent of excess winter deaths are attributable to cold housing, equating to more than 30 deaths locally. Fuel poverty (ie the ability of households to heat their homes) also disproportionately affects older households, and those living in rural districts.

At a local level many of these issues



Home ownership among 65+ on the Island is high at 83.7 per cent. Conversely the Island has low levels of pensioners in social housing at 8.6 per cent.

identified nationally are also present on the Isle of Wight. The increase in the local 65+ and 85+ populations will mean a change to the type of housing required in the future.

High levels of home ownership and low social housing in older people may mean that people will wish to stay in their own home for longer and access care and support in their local area. This has implications for the best way to provide social and community care services. It also affects how people finance their future care needs, as assets such as houses are taken into account when assessing eligibility for care services. Many older people will want to hold onto their house as an asset for their children, but that can result in single older people living in large family homes, which can exacerbate issues such as fuel poverty.

Eleven per cent of households on the Island (7,155) are in fuel poverty (2017). The recent prepayment price cap introduced in April 2017 has had a positive impact locally and has helped to reduce fuel poverty in the more rural areas where housing stock and residents tend to be older. On the Island 11.8 per cent of households



are reliant on electricity for heating (higher than the national average), and 5.1 per cent have no central heating (almost double the national average). 97.1 per cent of residents over 65 on the Island receive winter fuel payments (compared with 96.5 per cent in England) – this has increased year on year since 2010 when it was well below the England figure.

There is wide variation across the Island, with more than 15 per cent of households in fuel poverty in Newport Pan, Cowes Medina and Ryde South East. In these areas there are likely to be many vulnerable households

where elderly people live without sufficient warmth in their homes.

What are we doing about it?

The draft Island Planning Strategy Development Plan identifies the need for greater fuel efficiency in new builds especially for the more vulnerable in our community. This does not however address the issue of the present housing stock and the higher fuel costs associated with less fuel-efficient homes. The following case study identifies an Island initiative addressing fuel poverty in existing properties.

CASE STUDY

The Footprint Trust

The Island charity Footprint Trust has been awarded a grant from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation (HIWCF). The grant has been approved to support people living in Shanklin, Sandown and Lake, where the trust has offered free energy-saving home visits, to help cut utility bills and keep people warm. This area was selected as it was identified that there were very high levels of fuel poverty, with many households making difficult choices between heating and eating. The local charity is now holding events in the Bay area, showing ways to reduce energy and water wastage and associated costs.



This project between February 2018 and January 2019 achieved the following:

- 962 people were seen by the outreach service.
- 125 people received 'Monenergy' energy efficiency savings.
- £108,963 of energy savings have been identified.

RECOMMENDATIONS

What can individuals do?

Start to plan early and think about their future housing needs for their old age in the same way that they plan for their pensions and retirement. Ensure they have taken up all available housing related benefits such as winter fuel payments. Contact the Footprint Trust for further advice.

What can organisations do?

Engage with the strategic Island plan to create environments that are age friendly. Consider ways to support and incentivise people to plan better for future housing needs. Educate and encourage people to explore a range of housing options as they age.

Encouraging social inclusion

Social isolation and loneliness can affect people of any age and younger age groups are frequently neglected in discussions around social isolation and loneliness. However, many of the risk factors such as bereavement and poor physical health are more common in the elderly, making this group particularly vulnerable.

It is beneficial for people of all ages to participate in their local communities to enrich their lives, make them feel valued and to benefit their health and wellbeing.

Despite previous work in this area, there are still individuals living on the Island who are socially isolated. Experiencing feelings of loneliness and isolation is associated with poor mental, physical and emotional health, including increased rates of cardiovascular disease, hypertension, cognitive decline and dementia.

Income, work and volunteering

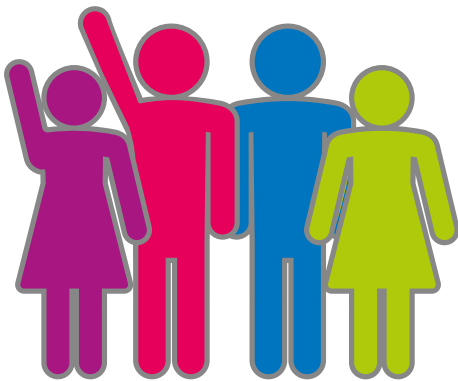
In addition to the many who continue to work, older adults across the Isle of Wight make an important contribution to the life of their local areas and the broader economy through providing formal and informal volunteering including unpaid care, volunteering and involvement in civic organisations. A national study by the Royal Volunteer Service estimated that almost half of 55 to 74 year olds volunteer each year, which would mean that on the Isle of Wight there are almost 20,000 people between the ages of 55 and 74 giving back to their community each year.

While the Island has a large number of over 50s many still work either full or part time and not all retirees are cash rich. A lack of disposable income

can have a negative impact on their mental and physical health, and levels of social interaction, which has been proven to be key in avoiding social isolation and loneliness. As the state pension age increases there could be a reduction in the number of people volunteering later in life.

The Island has fewer job opportunities than the mainland and employers are slow in recognising the benefits of employing older people and therefore this age group is doubly disadvantaged when looking for work. There is a large number of people who retire here and not all of these will have local connections so find it harder to find opportunities to make use of their skills as volunteers.





Almost half of 55 to 74 year olds volunteer each year, which would mean that on the Isle of Wight there are almost 20,000 people between the ages of 55 and 74 giving back to their community each year.

What are we doing about it?

To combat this the Ageing Better programme has run two projects which have directly tackled the barriers to income generation (employment or self-employment). Paid work is not the answer for everyone and for those who don't

want or need to work in paid employment volunteering can be beneficial not only to them but also the Island community. During the first four years of the Ageing Better programme 500 volunteers engaged in a variety of activities contributing 26,000 hours to the Island community.

Volunteering can have a hugely beneficial impact on the volunteer's health and wellbeing as well as preventing social isolation by integrating people into their local community networks. There is a huge opportunity on the Island to utilise the skills and experience of our older population to improve health and wellbeing for everyone on the Island.

There are a number of projects that make up the Age Friendly Island Programme, each of them is designed to support local older people to age better and reduce social isolation. The programme evaluation has shown that when people are engaged in paid or unpaid activity, they are less likely to be lonely therefore less likely to use health services.

What can individuals do?

Volunteering can be a great way to stay involved in your community and meet new people – there are numerous opportunities to volunteer on the Island so you can choose the charity or not-for-profit organisation which best fits with your interests and skills.

What can organisations do?

Work across organisations and with others in the public and private sector to reduce age-related barriers to employment and volunteering.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Digital inclusion

The world around us is changing profoundly. We are living in an interdependent and interconnected world that is driven by technological progress. Information and communication technology (ICT) has had a transformative impact on the way that people work, live and play. It has tremendous potential to improve the quality of later life: creating social networks to tackle isolation and loneliness, transforming services to help people live independently at home for longer and giving people tools to manage their health conditions better, but can also create barriers for those who have not had the opportunity to engage with new technology or who are fearful of it.

The Good Things Foundation suggests that approximately one in five people is part of the 'offline nation' – more than half of these are over 75 years of age. As more and more services and information are provided with digital as the primary method of communication these people could become isolated and marginalised⁵.

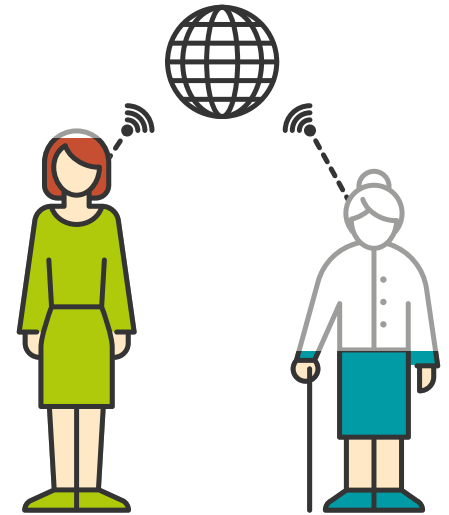
In the UK the Office for National Statistics estimates that 99 per cent of 16 to 44 year olds are recent internet

users in 2019, compared with less than half (47 per cent) of adults aged 75 and over (this has increased from 20 per cent in the same age group in 2011). In this older age group men are more likely than women to use the internet (54 per cent of men compared with 41 per cent of women)⁶.

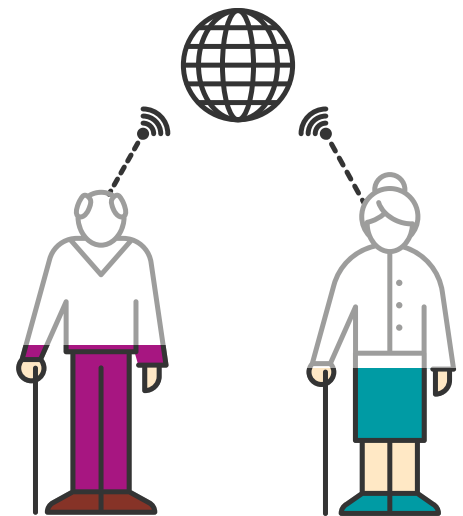
Digital inclusion plays a crucial role in building a fair and equitable society. Technology is no longer an optional extra and we need to ensure that everyone in later life on the Isle of Wight can realise the benefits of the digital age.

What is the situation on the Island?

The Isle of Wight Council has been leading the Isle of Wight Rural Broadband project since 2012. The Island's vision was "to reduce the digital divide between the Island and the mainland and to enable economic growth and digital inclusion for all residents and businesses, through access to faster broadband by 2015". As a result, superfast broadband is now available Island-wide, two digital events have been held and there is now a digital focus group



It is estimated that 99% of 16 to 44-year olds are recent internet users, compared with less than half (47 per cent) of adults aged 75 and over.



In this older age group men are more likely than women to use the internet (54 per cent of men compared with 41 per cent of women).

- 5 www.goodthingsfoundation.org/sites/default/files/research-publications/digital_nation_18.pdf
- 6 www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/itandinternetindustry/bulletins/internetusers/2019#toc
- 7 iwightinvest.com/the-isle-of-wight-digital-island-strategy-2019

to support the development and implementation of the Island's Digital Strategy which was recently published⁷.

What are we doing about it?

The Isle of Wight Council library service offers access to the internet and help for older people to get online and the learning and development service provides adult education in digital literacy to help people make the best use of new technologies.

Age UK Isle of Wight has been running a digital inclusion project for four years. This is for people aged

over 50 and provides one-to-one tuition, supporting people to learn at their pace, in their own home and choose the digital platform areas they would like to learn about including online shopping and keeping in touch with family and friends. Digital workshops are also offered in local community venues and cover a range of digital topics. Due to the success of this support and outcomes in terms of helping people to feel less socially isolated regular drop in sessions have been created in various venues across the Island. During the period from September 2015 to June 2019, 1,583 people have been supported through this project.

IW Age UK Digital Inclusion Support

Mabel (not her real name) is 94 and lives in a supported living home. She visited the digital drop-in at the community 'Our Place' Café. At the time of her first interaction, she had no digital device and was seeking advice on what may best suit her needs, her main aim being to speak to her family who live in Australia. The project worker spent time helping her to understand what broadband means, what devices are available, what a tablet can do, how to interact with it, and what shops she could potentially visit to buy one.



With support of the project Mabel then approached her House Manager to ask for wi-fi to be installed. She was also supported by one of the café organisers to purchase a tablet.

The result of the support was that on her 95th birthday she independently contacted her family for the first time and was able to have a video conversation with them which to her was invaluable.

CASE STUDY

What can individuals do?

If you are not confident using digital technology, consider attending a digital workshop or asking for individual support. You can call (01983) 525282 to talk to someone about the type of advice or support that would suit you best.

If you are confident using digital technology, you might like to consider helping any family or friends who do not find this so easy.

What can organisations do?

Ensure frontline staff are aware of the digital inclusion project and other support available and are able to signpost people or support them to access it. Think about how to ensure information provided on the web is accessible to older people (for example the option to create a larger font view). Promote the use of digital technology that benefits older people.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Immunisation as a key preventative intervention

While some factors that affect our health are outside of our control there are opportunities available to each of us as we age that will be make a positive contribution to our health. One way in which we invest in the health of people is by the prevention of illness through targeted preventative interventions such as immunisation programmes.

Age alone increases risk for a number of vaccine-preventable diseases, therefore it is important to increase vaccination rates among older people.

Three vaccines are recommended by the Department of Health for older people, the shingles vaccine is a relatively new vaccination programme for older people and so trend data is not available yet.

Immunisation against:	Description of infection	Immunisation offered
Influenza (flu)	A sudden onset of fever, chills, headache, muscle pain, and fatigue, plus a cough, sore throat and/or a stuffy nose. May lead to secondary infections such as bronchitis, pneumonia (lung infections), or meningitis (brain and spinal cord infection) especially in the elderly.	Annually every September from age 65
Pneumococcal (poly-saccharide vaccine against 23 serotypes, or PPV23)	Sinus and ear infections, pneumonia, sepsis (blood infection), and meningitis.	Once at age 65
Shingles	A reactivation of the chicken pox virus which manifests as a very painful rash on one side of the body.	Once at age 70 or 78*

* Anyone eligible in previous years but who has not yet had the vaccine remains eligible until they turn 80 (this includes anyone in their 70s who was born on or after 2 September 1942, and anyone who is 79 years old).

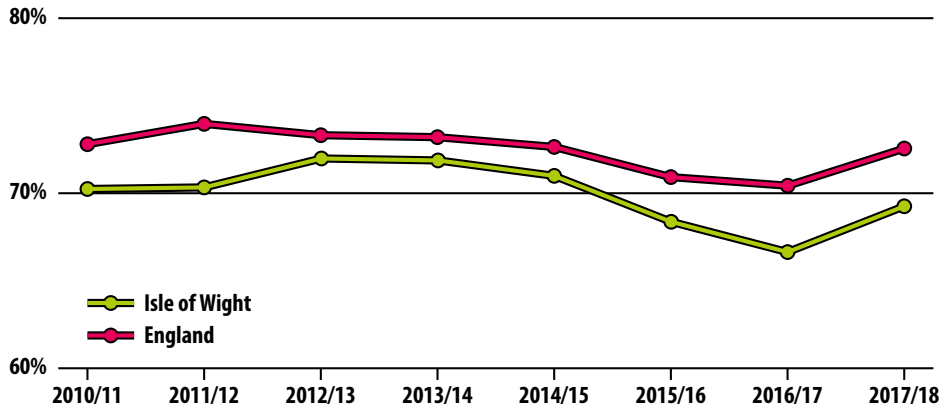


What is the situation on the Island?

Flu vaccine – over 65s

Data from 2010/11 to 2017/18 shows that the Isle of Wight has not achieved an uptake rate of 75 per cent (national benchmark) and has had consistently lower uptake rates than other areas in the country.

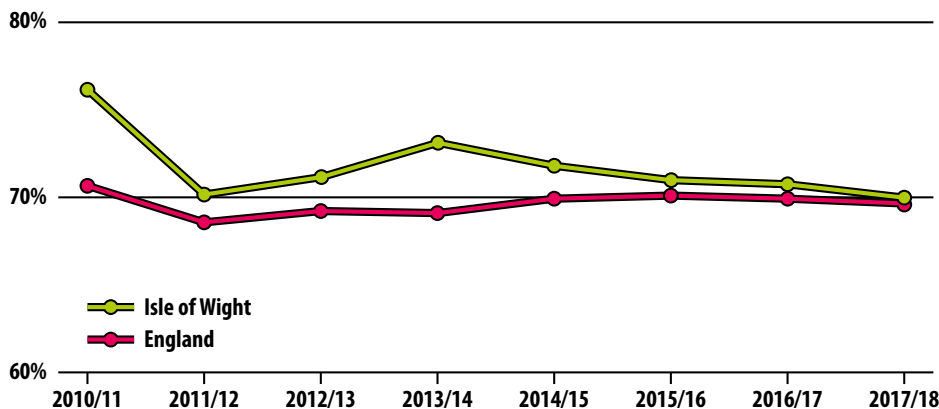
Population vaccination coverage – Flu (aged 65+) for the Isle of Wight



PPV vaccine

Over the past five years, there has been a reduction in the uptake of PPV on the Isle of Wight to 69.8 per cent, although it remains better than the South East (69.7 per cent) and England (69.5 per cent).

Population vaccination coverage – PPV for the Isle of Wight



Shingles vaccination coverage (70 years old)

National benchmarks suggest achieving at least 60 per cent uptake of shingles vaccine, although nationally this hasn't been reached yet (the programme was newly introduced in 2013). Uptake on the Island (47.1 per cent) is slightly higher than the England average (44.4 per cent) but there is still work to do to increase uptake.

What can individuals do?

Ensure your vaccinations are up-to-date and take advantage of the free vaccinations offered for people your age, including the annual flu vaccination. Flu and pneumococcal vaccines are particularly important for anyone living in a residential home or caring for elderly people.

What can organisations do?

Ensure that vaccinations are promoted at every opportunity and all staff working directly with elderly people (such as carers and nurses) are vaccinated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions



This report has highlighted that while we have an increasing number of older people on the Isle of Wight, this group should be seen as a resource that makes a positive contribution to our society as well as a cohort which requires support and assistance. There are both challenges and opportunities that present themselves as we age.

There are many actions that we can take at an individual level that will improve quality of life as we get older. By increasing our physical activity people can reduce the risk of many long-term health conditions. The use of preventative interventions including recommended vaccines for this age group is also a significant factor in promoting health.

Regarding age friendly environments, the need for good quality housing

is essential for all vulnerable groups including the elderly and the issue of fuel poverty is a significant concern for many in our community.

The importance of social inclusion has also been highlighted. Access to income and meaningful work has long been linked to having a positive effect on people's health. To aid this, digitalisation and connectivity are now important factors in functioning in our modern society.

The report also provides recommendations for professionals and organisations to include as part of their professional practice.

To achieve the largest improvements in quality of life for older people, we need to work in partnership with a range of stakeholders across the health and care system.

Recommendations

Healthy behaviours – increasing physical activity

What can individuals do? Consider starting regular exercise, including strength and balance exercise, if you have not been doing so. It is never too late to start and building some physical activity into your daily life is often the best way. Exercise can be started small such as ten minutes and gradually increased. It can take anything from 28 days to three months of doing something regularly to build a habit. Joining an organised group can be a great way to stay motivated and make new friends too.

What can organisations do?

Acknowledge and adopt a life course approach when developing commissioning plans, strategies and care protocols to promote, support and encourage people of all ages to be more physically active.

Work in partnership with colleagues across the council and the wider system (eg NHS, primary care, voluntary sector and communities) to ensure older people are encouraged to be more physically active. There should be a specific focus on strength and balance exercises to prevent the risk of falling.

Age-friendly environments – housing and fuel poverty

What can individuals do? Start to plan early and think about your

future housing needs for your old age in the same way that you plan for your pensions and retirement. Ensure you have taken up all available housing related benefits such as winter fuel payments. Contact the Footprint Trust for further advice.

What organisations can do? Engage with the strategic Island plan to create environments that are age friendly. Consider ways to support and incentivise people to plan better for future housing needs. Educate and encourage people to explore a range of housing options as they age, such as extra care housing.

Encouraging social inclusion – income, work and volunteering

What individuals can do?

Volunteering can be a great way to stay involved in your community and meet new people – there are numerous opportunities to volunteer on the Island so you can choose the charity or not-for-profit organisation which best fits with your interests and skills.

What can organisations do? Work across organisations and with others in the public and private sector to reduce age-related barriers to employment and volunteering.

Encouraging social inclusion – digital inclusion

What can individuals do? If you are not confident using digital

technology, consider attending a digital workshop or asking for individual support. You can call (01983) 525282 to talk to someone about the type of advice or support that would suit you best.

If you are confident using digital technology, you might like to consider helping any family or friends who do not find this so easy.

What can organisations do? Ensure frontline staff are aware of the digital inclusion project and other support available and are able to signpost people or support them to access it. Think about how to ensure information provided on the web is accessible to older people (for example the option to create a larger font view). Promote the use of digital technology that benefits older people.

Preventative interventions – immunisation

What can individuals do? Ensure your vaccinations are up-to-date and take advantage of the free vaccinations offered for people your age, including the annual flu vaccination. Flu and pneumococcal vaccines are particularly important for anyone living in a residential home or caring for elderly people.

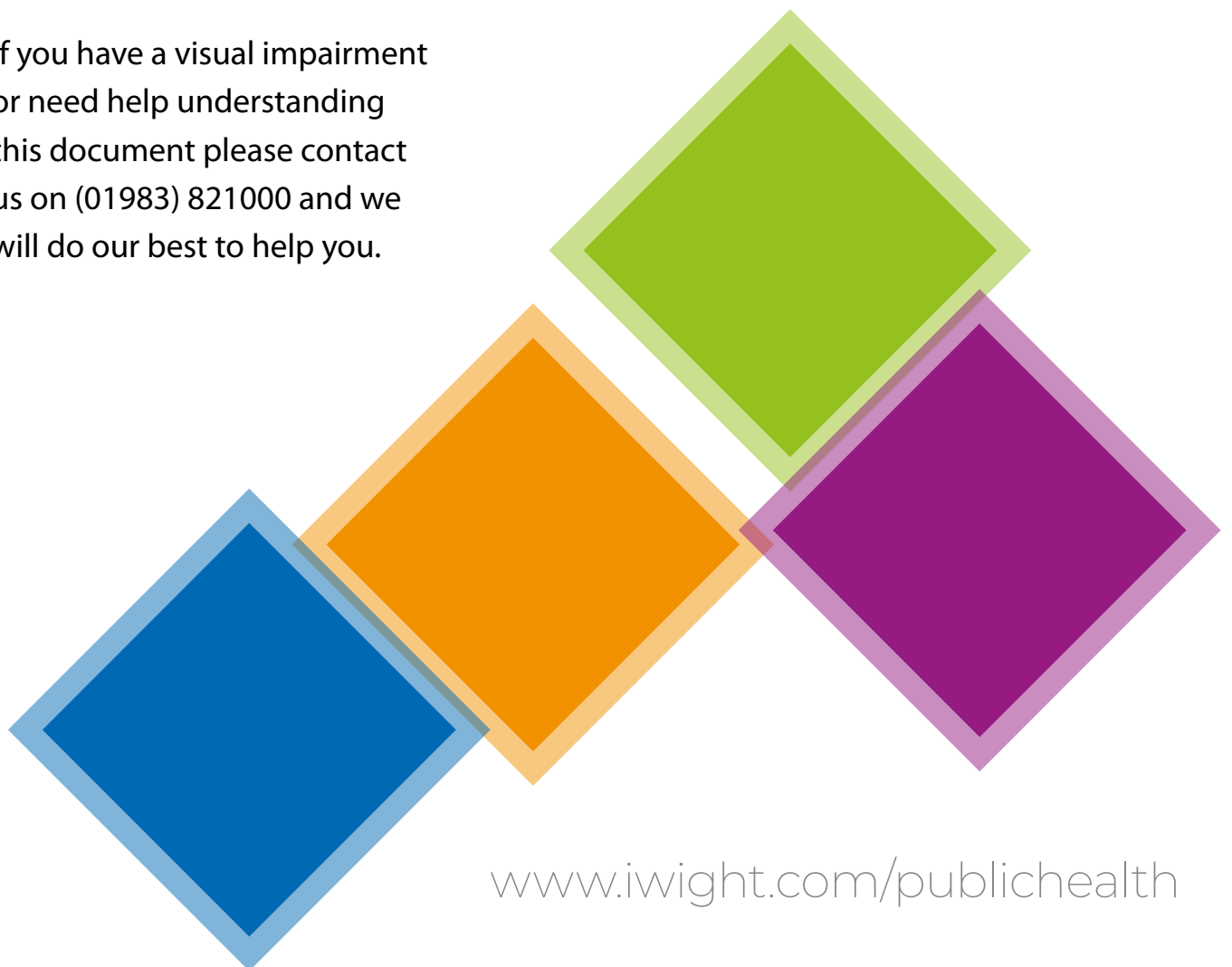
What can organisations do? Ensure that vaccinations are promoted at every opportunity and all staff working directly with elderly people (such as carers and nurses) are vaccinated.

The health and wellbeing of older people on the Isle of Wight

Annual Public Health Report of the Director
of Public Health, Isle of Wight Council

2018-19

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