

Expression of Interest in becoming Ageing Better's rural locality partner

Our vision is a society where everyone enjoys their later life. By 2040, we want more people in later life to be in good health, financially secure, to have social connections and feel their lives are meaningful and purposeful. We know we cannot do this alone and that we need to influence nationally and act locally to achieve lasting change.

Having entered into successful long-term partnerships with Greater Manchester and Leeds, the Centre for Ageing Better is now ready to establish a third strategic localities partnership, this time with a rural area.

The partnership will be with a rural locality which shares our vision and principles and is committed to working differently across our four priority goals - healthy ageing, fulfilling work, safe and accessible housing, and connected communities- with people approaching later life and those at risk of missing out. They should also have a track record of delivering change and impact working across departments and sectors, at different levels of governance, and with people in later life.

For more information contact localities@ageing-better.org.uk

Q&As/Criteria

Why a rural partnership?

We are all living longer, and our society is ageing. However, a combination of out-migration of younger age groups and inward migration in older age groups into many of England's rural and coastal areas means that they are often ageing more rapidly and have a greater proportion of older people than urban areas. Combined with differences in infrastructure, inequalities, demographics and economies this makes for a different range of challenges and opportunities that we believe we need to better understand and address if we are to achieve our vision across England. The opportunities and challenges of an ageing population in a rural area - for example, access to and availability of health and care services, longer working lives, transport and social isolation, contributions to communities - can also differ from urban and suburban areas. This offers a unique opportunity for us to apply evidence and share learning about what works to achieve our better later lives in a rural setting.

What do you mean by a rural locality?

We are guided largely by [DEFRA's Rural Urban Classifications](#) on what constitutes a mainly or largely rural local authority. However, we know there are exceptions to every rule and would be open to talking to places where there is a substantial part of the population and service infrastructure in rural areas, especially if much of the urban population is based in coastal towns.

Who should lead the partnership?

Our rural partnership must be led by a local authority (e.g. a non-metropolitan county council) with a largely or mainly rural population. However, we are also open to partnering with other collaborative local structures/groups, such as an Integrated Care System, where there is track record of joint working and a governance structure which offers genuine opportunities to [deliver change across our four priority goals](#). We would anticipate the partnership to be with an authority with a population of upwards of 300,000 and where there is sufficient capacity to manage this kind of partnership. However, we are open to informal conversations with smaller authorities to discuss their particular context.

What kind of experience are you looking for?

Our priority goals are all interconnected in the real world of people's experience – we know that progress on one issue will lead to improvement in the others. We therefore believe more places need to take a holistic, multi-sector and multi-level approach to an ageing population. Interest is particularly welcome from localities which have already taken steps to establish this kind of approach to create better later lives or have had success with this approach for other age or target groups.

What benefits could a partnership with the Centre for Ageing Better bring?

Some of the ways Ageing Better work with our strategic locality partners:

- generating and sharing evidence of 'what works' and providing support to translate this evidence into practice
- sharing local good or innovative practice with regional and national networks, including central government
- facilitating connections with third parties that are of mutual benefit
- providing strategic advice and acting as a critical friend on ageing issues
- providing resources – including funding, expertise, facilitation or convening meetings / events

As a [What Works](#) centre we are interested in how partners can better spend existing resources differently, using local evidence jointly generated through the partnership or national insights through our wider work. **We do not fund delivery.**

Examples of how we can support partners with direct resource includes posts to coordinate the partnership activity, supporting pilots and evaluations.

What is the process for the partnership development?

The process of developing a strategic partnership is one of mutual exploration and co-design. After responding to the Expression of Interest, further discussions in person and remotely will help us to build shared understanding and test for strategic alignment against criteria, including those below.

Once selection identifies joint commitment and fit, and we have agreement, we would develop the partnership aims and heads of agreement for approval before starting the detailed negotiation to finalise a Memorandum of Understanding and agree an initial activity plan, governance, and resource/commitment from each party. Final approval sits with our board.

Questions which will guide partnership selection:

- Is there senior commitment and political will to deliver the partnership?
- Is there an existing (or plausible route to develop) a system-wide and integrated approach to ageing, including the relationships and structures to be able to work across Ageing Better's priority goals?
- Are you willing to learn, share, experiment, be open and collaborative?
- Are you committed to / already engaging people in later life and those approaching later life, in understanding what matters and in creating change?
- Do you have sufficient size or scale to manage the partnership and have significant impact across a range of different geographies and people?

Supporting Evidence:

- A track record in innovation and investment in new approaches
- Experience of working across sectors and services and at different levels (e.g. combined/county /district council) to create change

- Efforts already made to understand the location, numbers and issues facing people in later life – particularly those at risk of missing out
- Supportive local/regional policy context and structure

Apply now

To submit your expression of interest please complete our short SurveyMonkey questionnaire:
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/53MHFKH>

If you have any further questions, please contact localities@ageing-better.org.uk

Annex 1

More about our current strategic partnerships (links to pages on website)

Our Greater Manchester partnership

In March 2016, the Centre for Ageing Better signed a Memorandum of Understanding with [Greater Manchester Combined Authority \(GMCA\)](#) to establish a five-year, strategic partnership to collaborate on a number of joint priorities and to support its ambition as the UK's first Age-friendly City Region. The partnership has initially focused on economy and work, housing and planning, and transport. The partnership is governed through the Greater Manchester Ageing Hub through which we are helping to deliver its [strategy](#). Examples of current work include:

- **Worklessness and employment:** People over the age of 50 are more likely to be out of work than younger age groups and, once unemployed, they struggle more than younger jobseekers to get back into employment. Together we are working to shape current approaches as well as develop and test new ways of working to address worklessness and job insecurity in this age group in the city region.
- **Housing:** We funded the recent Manchester School of Architecture (MSA) and Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) report, '[Rightsizing: Reframing the housing offer for older people](#)', which found that a lack of suitable homes in the places people want to live means people stay in homes not suitable for them as they get older. We're now working with the above partners, local authorities and older residents to develop neighbourhood-based housing and ageing strategies that will underpin the delivery of new homes as part of the new Greater Manchester spatial framework.

Our Leeds partnership

In December 2017, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Leeds City Council and Leeds Older People's Forum to establish a five-year, strategic partnership and to support its strategic ambition to be the 'best city to grow old in'.

The partnership is governed through the Leeds Age-friendly board. Examples of current work include:

- **Transport:** Older people in Leeds told us they find shorter journeys challenging, since most public transport comes in and out of the city centre but doesn't always connect the areas around the city. We have been working with partners in Leeds and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to develop a prototype of a collaborative community transport business model, which could provide a solution to these and other unmet travel needs of older people in Leeds.
- **Leeds Neighbourhood Networks:** We are commissioning an in-depth evaluation of the Leeds Neighbourhood Networks. The activities offered by paid staff and volunteers aim to support older people to live independently in their homes and communities for as long as possible by creating stronger neighbourhood-level networks and connections between residents. Learning will be shared locally, regionally and nationally.