Older People’s Charter In Aberdeenshire

October 2018

“Your Voice”
Older People’s Forums In Aberdeenshire
Statement of aspirations

Older people want:

• To be involved in and valued for what we contribute to our community
• To be able to live as independently as possible
• To continue to influence decisions on transport provision across Aberdeenshire to enable us to remain involved in our communities and minimise loneliness and isolation
• To have access to the kind of housing and accommodation that is appropriate to our needs and lifestyle
• To be able to easily access the information we need in a range of ways to enable us to make informed choices
• To feel safe and secure at home and in the community
• To be listened to and respected by professionals
• To be supported and valued for our contribution as carers of others, including our family and friends
• To have a range of support and activities available to promote health and wellbeing
• To have care and support provided when needed by knowledgeable staff who can support us to choose what is best for us
Introduction

This charter is an expression of the importance that we all attach to being listened to. For many older people judgements and assumptions are made on the basis of age. As one participant said:

“What’s on the outside isn’t what’s on the inside”

This charter is based on the recognition of the importance of truly listening to and valuing the contribution of older people and taking the risk of stepping outside our own boxes.

We believe that this charter should be understood within the human rights framework in Scotland based on values of respect, fairness, dignity, equality and independence.

Older people’s forums

The development of the revised charter has been led by members of the Aberdeenshire older people’s forums. There are 6 active forums across Aberdeenshire. They aim to work alongside other organisations to raise awareness of issues for older people and influence decision making with a variety of organisations and at a range of levels.
Purpose

There are many stages to being older and it would be difficult for any charter to cover them all. There was much debate amongst the people who contributed to this charter, both about what it meant to be older and also how the term applied to themselves. Nevertheless, it was agreed that being older does point to at least two significant shifts:

- The move away from work and everything that this entails in terms of esteem, involvement and finances, and
- The move towards having greater health and social care needs.

People are living longer and this is a great thing. The forums acknowledge, however, that this change does require a rethinking of how people can support themselves and be supported as they get older.

This charter attempts to capture what is important to older people in this process of change. It is intended to be very much the voice of older people in Aberdeenshire, particularly the older people’s forums.

It is hoped that organisations and services working with older people will support and use this charter. With this support in place it can form a powerful basis for older people being more involved in the development of services and activities that affect them.

A register of support

If your organisation or group recognises the importance of making the aspirations of this charter a reality and would like to register its support please get in touch with contact details on back page.

“We need younger people to shout about what is important to Granny”

(Review Participant)
This revised charter is the result of a review of the previous older people’s charter which was launched in 2014. We have attempted to be as inclusive as possible in this review recognising that people can contribute to it in a range of ways. All the forums have been involved in this review as well as consultation more widely with older people via existing groups, for example, a residents’ meeting at a very sheltered housing establishment.

The key aspirations remain similar to the original version with a central focus on ‘maintaining independence’. On a practical level there is still plenty to be done to achieve the aims of the previous charter. However, some successes since the launch of the previous charter are:

- There has been improved communication and it’s easier to access information with the local health and social care teams which have come about since the integration of health and social care Aberdeenshire
- Responders through Care at Home (ARCH) service rolled out across Aberdeenshire providing an emergency care service for those with urgent needs
- The Mearns and Coastal Healthy Living Network received 5 years funding from the Lottery to expand its support for older people living in the community
Monitoring and review

It is intended that local action plans will be developed through local older people’s forums working with other organisations to ensure that action is taken on what matters most to local communities in relation to the themes of the charter. These action plans will be monitored as appropriate.

The charter as a whole will be monitored by a group consisting of representatives from the older people’s forums, the Health and Social Care Partnership and Aberdeenshire Voluntary Action.

The charter will be reviewed after 3 years.

Feedback

We would love feedback on this charter. Have you found it useful? How have you used it? What could be improved? What else could go in it? Please send any thoughts to contact details on back page

Where to find the charter

This charter has been distributed widely in printed form.

It is also available online at mchlnoffice.wixsite.com/home

For further copies or availability in other formats please use contact details on back page
Older people’s forums

If you would like to know more about the charter or get involved in making it’s aspirations a reality please get in touch with your local older people’s forum using the contact details below. There are forums in Fraserburgh, Alford, Banchory, Mearns, Inverbervie and Portlethen

Contact Details

Email: enquiries@avashire.org.uk
Tel: 03718 110008