

Age-Friendly Cities and Communities: Exploring Gaps, Challenges and Opportunities

Ryan Woolrych, Jenny Fisher, Judith Sixsmith, Michael Murray, Rebecca Lawthom, Harry Smith, Sole Garcia-Ferrari

Contact: r.d.woolrych@hw.ac.uk



The Research

Aims

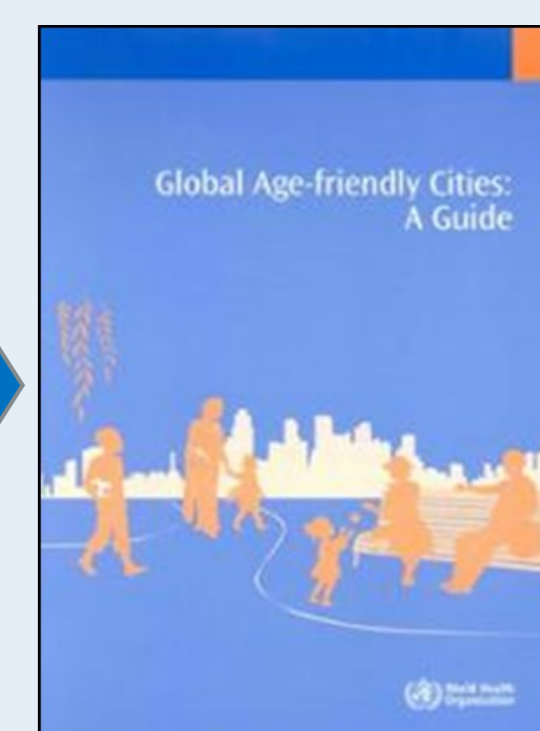
- Given the rapid growth of ageing populations in urban areas, the importance of developing appropriate design interventions to enable active and healthy lifestyles for older residents is more urgent than ever.
- Place-Making with Older Adults: Towards Age-Friendly Communities*, through a comparative study of cities in Brazil and the UK, explores the role of **sense of place** in promoting age friendly urban spaces.
- Drawing on a total of 18 neighbourhoods in 6 different Brazilian (Brasilia, Pelotas and Porto Alegre) and British cities (Edinburgh, Glasgow and Manchester), the three year project will undertake surveys, interviews and experiential methods including 'go along' walks and community mapping.
- The findings will provide a clearer picture of how sense of place is experienced by older residents and how this can be incorporated into improved design and service delivery.

- This project has three core aims:
- (i) to investigate how sense of place is experienced by older people from different social settings living in diverse neighbourhoods in Brazil and the UK;
 - (ii) to translate these experiences into designs for age friendly communities that support sense of place;
 - (iii) to better articulate the role of older adults as active placemakers in the design process by involving the community at all stages of the research.

Community-based Participatory Research

A community-based participatory research approach (CBPR) will be adopted. CBPR promotes: equality and empowerment, inclusive participation, power sharing and equity and knowledge exchange. CBPR recognises the importance of partnership-working, engaging older adults, service providers and local government in a process of co-operative inquiry and shared dialogue.

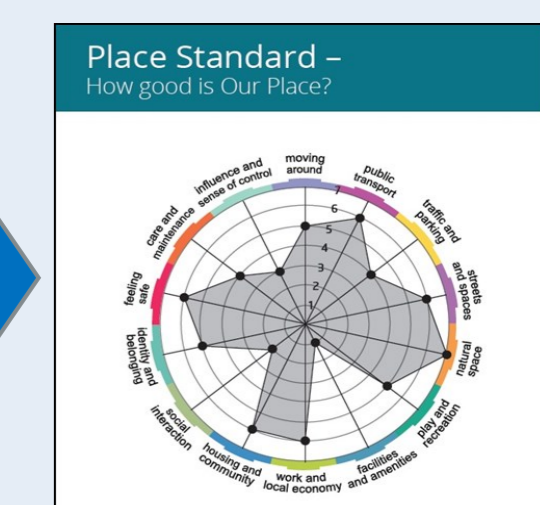
WORK PACKAGE 1:
Capturing Sense of Place
540 surveys, 180 semi-structured interviews, 120 go along interviews and 60 photo diaries with older adults living in 18 neighbourhoods.



WORK PACKAGE 2:
Mapping Sense of Place
30 participatory mapping workshops with older adults, planners and developers, community organisations, service providers and local government



WORK PACKAGE 3:
Designing for Sense of Place
3 national workshops focused on translating findings into policy and practice guidance to support age-friendly cities and communities



Conclusion: Towards Place-Making for Seniors

Age-friendly communities that meet the place-based needs of older adults are crucial to ensure older adults have a viable and supportive environment to age-in-place. Solutions and strategies must involve older adults in their design, maintenance and sustainability i.e. by engaging them as active 'place makers' in the planning process. The results will be integrated into a variety of tools and resources to support communities, policy makers and practitioners in the development of age friendly cities. The project outcomes will work towards the development of integrated and co-ordinated approaches to place management practices which create an enhanced role for seniors in the planning process.