



Sunderland Report

2023–24



Introduction

The Ageing Well delivery board and city partners are committed to supporting the wellbeing of people who are ageing well and taking steps to ensure they can continue to live happy, independent, and fulfilling lives. The Ageing Well Ambassadors Programme has grown from strength to strength starting with 20 and now having 211 recruits.

Ambassadors are acting as the voice of Sunderland's older residents, informing services and investment in the city to ensure residents of all ages lead fulfilling lives. They also promote Age-Friendly Sunderland within their workplace, sports team, place of worship, with family and friends or anywhere in their community.

Sunderland is recognised as being age-friendly and forms part of the UK network of age-friendly communities, which is made up of over 83 cities, towns, districts, and counties working together to share learning and promote age-friendly practices.

Our age-friendly plan for Sunderland is based on three themes



1. Developing

Age-friendly neighbourhoods supporting Sunderland residents to live healthier lives for longer



2. Creating

Age-friendly services and enabling residents to live in their homes for as long as they want to



3. Promoting

Age equality and empowering older residents to have their say on the things that matter to them

As part of this, we want to ensure people who are ageing well feel confident in having their say on issues affecting them, in their community.

Our vision

“Everyone in Sunderland will have healthy, happy lives, with no one left behind”

Our people make our city what it is, they are our best assets. It is particularly important to us that they feel valued and rewarded for their contribution. It is important, that local people feel connected to the organisations and the services they provide. We know that being connected and having a sense of belonging is an influencing factor to improving health and wellbeing. We want to be sure we are doing everything we can to enable our Ageing Well Ambassadors to know their knowledge, skills and strengths are valued.

Principles of Ageing Well Ambassadors programme

- Local people are recognised as having many strengths and the capacity to continue to learn, grow and change
- Ambassadors will be co-designers with partners across the city on developments and ideas to make our city age-friendly
- The focus of interventions is on the strengths and aspirations of the people we work with
- Communities and social environments are seen as being full of resources and assets.
- Service providers collaborate with the people they work with recognising that their work is driven by local people
- Interventions are based on self-determination
- There is a commitment to empowerment
- Problems are seen as the result of interaction between individuals, organisations, or structures rather than deficits within individuals, organisations, or structures.



What we said we would do in 2023–2024

NEWS

We agreed to develop a news team for Sunderland for people ageing well to tackle ageism stereotypes - We're shining the Light news team established January 2023.



Ensure services are informed by the views of ambassadors for example one of the consultations the ambassadors took part in was on the design of the 'Links for life' website.



Develop partnerships with the University, NHS, and other key partners to recruit more ambassadors across the city. - This includes Sunderland AgeUK, South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust and Anchor housing.



Continue to recruit more ambassadors from priority communities.



Set up a WhatsApp group for faster communication and for those not using digital platforms. - this has been set up for the reporters.



Look at designing age-friendly training with ambassadors for key services across the city NHS, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service, etc. The training will raise awareness of ageism and ensuring age friendly services and neighbourhoods - This is being delivered starting in January 2025.



Annually we plan with ambassadors an event for the International Day of Older People (IDOP) to recognise the contribution ambassadors are making and to thank them - this happened and ambassadors received certificate from the Mayor of Sunderland.



Work closely with SMART city team to promote digital inclusion - this partnership has led to securing funding for We're shining the light.



Held 10 face to face and online meetings with ambassadors.



Consulted on 36 activities surveys, research, and other key developments in the city.

Additional outcomes

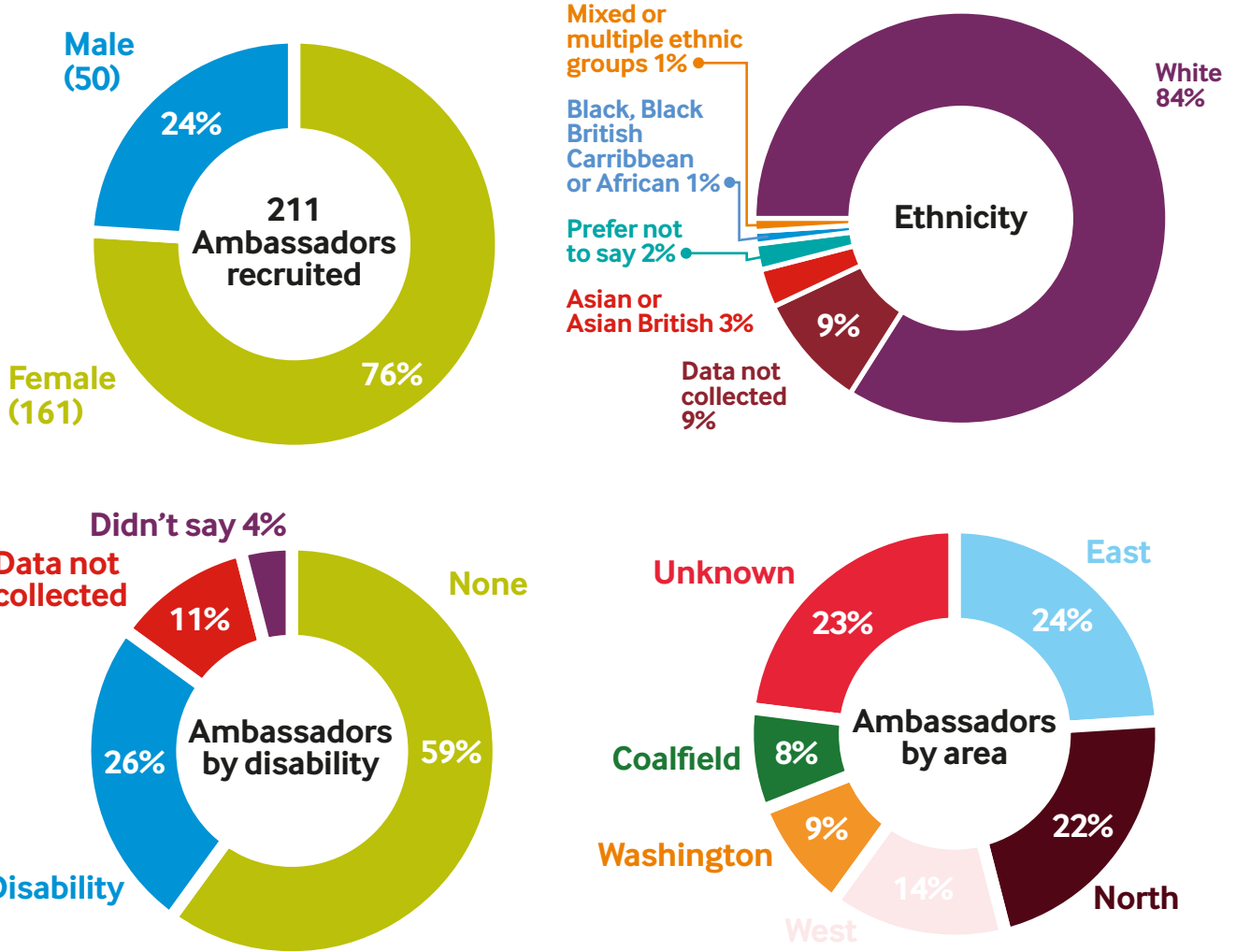


Worked collaboratively with the University of Sunderland and Sunderland City Council with ambassadors on a piece of research to find out what it is like to be ageing in Sunderland. It was called 'A vision of ageing in Sunderland'.



Facilitated an artwork shop on a vision of ageing; ambassador's produced artwork, which was exhibited in city hall.

What we know about our ambassador's



We’ar shining the light key achievements

A Sunderland-wide news platform was launched to shine the light on what it means to grow older in the city. Led by older people for older people, the We’ar Shining the Light news team - made up of community reporters aged 50 and above from across Sunderland - joined forces to capture stories that break ageing stereotypes and gather positive stories of later life. As well as reporting on arts and culture, sport and nostalgia stories, the team will also shine a light on the challenges faced by the ageing population. [We’ar Shining The Light](#)





Participated in training from 'talking about my generation' news team based in Manchester for a full year.



Recruited 17 community reporters. Six men and 11 women.



Written and produced 54 articles.



Completed three podcasts and four videos.



Produce a monthly newsletter for all the ambassadors.



Secured funding for equipment to continue videoing and podcasts.



Attended events and interviewed local people.



Participated in-depth training on videoing and podcasts.



Held one-year event and Executive Director of Health, Housing and communities awarded reporters with a gift and certificate for all their volunteering commitment.



Secured our first paid job to attend an event and took photos and produced a video.

The ambitions of the ageing well ambassadors programme will take time but for the next two years we plan to:



Identify priorities on a two yearly basis



Assess and evaluate the effects of our activities and how we are making a difference



Listen and respond to the ambitions and ideas generated by our ambassadors and our ageing well community

Ambitions for ambassadors programme 2025–26



Continue to recruit more ambassadors targeting more priority communities to get involved



Encourage partners and Sunderland City Council to sign up to the Centre for Better Agefriendly pledge for workplaces



Start working on intergenerational project



Target care homes and independent living to reach more local people



Work with provider to roll out the training on dementia awareness and ageism across the city



Hold our annual event to thank ambassadors for their contribution



Continue to hold six weekly meetings with ambassadors



Continue to share online surveys and consultations



We will work closely with Sunderland older people's council on campaigning on digital in retail, working closely with planning on environment and access to health services



We will fund five area based action days against ageism



We will develop a 'warm welcome' session for all new ambassadors



Want to get involved?

Find out more about how our ageing well programme or how to become an Ageing Well Ambassador visit:
www.sunderland.gov.uk/ageing-well

