



Victoria, these, because that's for the metrolink? is that why? yeah, they've got bus times on the side of the board, ah, it looks like there's an 11 and a 101, what's that one there? it's alright, it's moving off now, ah, yeah, I couldn't see it right, it might be coming round here, if it's 101 to Manchester, then it'll be good, yeah, it's the 101, is that the 101? Altrincham, oh no, that won't do, there's an 11 to Altrincham here, yeah, that'll do, I don't know, where he's going to stop, or if he already has, might've picked up round the other side, so, it'll be the 101 next, should be, yeah, I can't see that, oh, there's a rubbish bin, I'm just going to go and put this in the bin, okay, so there should be an 11, that should be the next one.



# Collaborative Research for Ageing in Place

## Stories of Co-Production in Practice

by the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG) and collaborators.

*Edited by Tine Buffel and Jack Greeney*



Suggested citation: Buffel, T. and Greeney, J. (eds)  
(2026) *Collaborative Research for Ageing in Place:  
Stories of Co-Production in Practice*. Manchester: The  
Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG).

ISBN: 978-1-0369-7355-1

# **Collaborative Research for Ageing in Place**

## **Stories of Co-Production in Practice**

by the Manchester Urban Ageing Research  
Group (MUARG) and collaborators

Edited by Tine Buffel and Jack Greeney

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Older People Leading Research to Improve Neighbourhoods – Elaine Unegbu</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Putting Communities at the Heart of an Age-Friendly Greater Manchester – Andy Burnham</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Foreword – Paul McGarry</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>ABOUT THIS BOOK</b> .....	<b>14</b>
Why This Book .....	14
Aims and Audience.....	17
About the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG).....	18
Age-Friendly Environments, (WHO) – Dr Thiago Hérick de Sá .....	21
How This Book Is Organised .....	22
<b>PART I: WORKING TOGETHER FOR AGE-FRIENDLY PLACES: CONTEXT AND RATIONALE</b> .....	<b>25</b>
What is Co-Production? .....	26
Why Does Co-Production Matter? .....	28
Ageing Well in the Right Place: Rethinking Ageing in Place .....	30
Age-Friendly Cities and Communities (AFCC): A Global Movement .....	31
Building an Age-Friendly Ecosystem in Greater Manchester (GM).....	32

**PART II: CENTRING LIVED EXPERTISE: FIRST-PERSON REFLECTIONS, CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS, AND COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES .....37**

**The Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG) Older People’s Forum: Co-Producing Knowledge for Action** – Patty Doran et al. .... 38

**Elaine Unegbu:** Reflections from a Co-Researcher ..... 42

**Nakib Narat:** Speaking Up for Change..... 44

**Freddi Greenmantle:** Reflections on Ageing, Disability, and Belonging..... 48

**Tina Cribbin:** ‘The Meeting’ – A Creative Reflection by Tina Cribbin and Niamh Kavanagh ..... 50

**PART III: CO-PRODUCTION IN PRACTICE: STORIES OF COLLABORATION, CREATIVITY, AND CHANGE .....53**

**Overview of Case Studies** ..... 54

**Old Moat: Co-Designing an Age-Friendly Neighbourhood with Older Residents** – Stefan White, Mark Hammond, and Chris Phillipson ..... 56

**Co-Researching Age-Friendly Communities with Older People** – Tine Buffel .....64

**The Urban Villages Project: Co-Producing Community Initiatives to Support Ageing in Place** – Mhorag Goff and Patty Doran..... 72

**Faith Spaces as Social Infrastructure: Co-Producing Age-Friendly Communities for Healthy Ageing** – Luciana Lang et al. .... 78

**Echoes of Displacement: Co-Producing a Comic Book with Older Refugees** – Tess Hartland and Lindsay Pollock ..... 86

**Co-Creating a Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) in Social Housing** – Niamh Kavanagh et al. .... 92

<b>Resisting Gentrification: Co-Producing Documentary Films with Older People</b> – Joana Salles.....	100
<b>COVID-19, Inequality, and Older People: A Community-Centred, Co-Produced Response</b> – Chris Phillipson et al. ....	106
<b>Co-Producing Research on the Cost-of-Living Crisis with Older Ethnic Minority Communities</b> – Camilla Lewis, Sophie Yarker, and Chris Phillipson .....	112
<b>Uncertain Futures: Co-Producing Art and Research with Older Women on Work and Inequality</b> – Elaine Dewhurst et al. ....	118
<b>Applied Film: Co-Producing Films Post-Retirement</b> – MaoHui Deng and Sophie Everest.....	126
<b>Let’s Get Botanical Together: Co-designing the Derek Jarman Pocket Park with Older LGBT+ people</b> – Luciana Lang.....	130
<b>IN-CITU: Cognitive Impairment, Urban Transport, and Creative Methods</b> – James Rupert Fletcher .....	138
<b>Participatory Photography: Exploring Ageing in Age-related Housing with Older People</b> – Luise Stoisser .....	146
<b>Co-Researching Loneliness with Minoritised People</b> – Natalie Cotterell and Tine Buffel.....	152
<b>Picture This Stockport: Embedding Age-Friendly Design in Mainstream Housing</b> – Shannon Conway and Picture This.....	160
<b>PART IV: REFLECTIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS: SHARED PRINCIPLES AND THE FUTURE OF CO-PRODUCED RESEARCH</b> .....	<b>167</b>
<b>The TRUST Framework: Shared Principles for Collaborative Research With Communities</b> – Tine Buffel and Camilla Lewis.....	168

**T** – Trusting Relationships and Ethics of Care..... 169

**R** – Redressing Histories of Exclusion and Discrimination..... 171

**U** – Undoing Barriers through Flexible and Care-full Practices ..... 173

**S** – Sharing Power from the Start, by Listening and Learning Together ..... 175

**T** – Time, Reflexivity, and Joy in the Process ..... 176

**LOOKING AHEAD: FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR CO-PRODUCED RESEARCH.....178**

**CONNECT WITH THE MANCHESTER URBAN AGEING RESEARCH GROUP (MUARG).....179**

**GLOSSARY.....180**

Organisations and Programmes..... 180

Methods, Approaches, and Practices..... 181

Concepts ..... 182

Practical and Technical Terms ..... 182

Abbreviations and acronyms ..... 183

Co-Production Toolkits ..... 183

**NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS .....206**

---

•••••

## **OLDER PEOPLE LEADING RESEARCH TO IMPROVE NEIGHBOURHOODS**



*"Working as a co-researcher helped me see that our experiences can make a difference. We listened, learned together, and used what we found to improve things in our community."*

**Elaine Unegbu, Chair of the Age-Friendly Manchester Older People's Board, and Greater Manchester Older People's Network.**

---

•••••

---

●●●●

## PUTTING COMMUNITIES AT THE HEART OF AN AGE-FRIENDLY GREATER MANCHESTER



*In Greater Manchester, we put communities, including older people, at the heart of our vision for a thriving, age-friendly region. By 2041, over 900,000 of our residents will be aged 55 and over, and we're proud to lead the way as the UK's first World Health Organization (WHO) Age-Friendly City-Region. Through our Age-Friendly Strategy, we're tackling isolation, promoting healthy ageing, and strengthening neighbourhood connections so older people can stay active, connected, and valued.*

**Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham**

---

●●●●

# FOREWORD

## PAUL MCGARRY

*Head of the Greater Manchester Ageing Hub and Assistant Director, Public Service Reform, Greater Manchester Combined Authority*



Supporting what we now call ‘ageing in place’ has been a feature of three waves — and soon to be four — of intentional ‘strategic doing’ in Greater Manchester aimed at improving the lives of older people since the late 1990s. Over nearly 30 years, co-production has been a guiding principle. It is easier to hold a principle than to apply it in everyday programmes and projects, and along the way, we have learnt to do things better and differently, to listen, and to act more effectively.

The case studies collected in this book showcase the best of our combined efforts. They emerge from shared conceptual approaches and commitments operating across agencies and communities over time.

Researchers have spent time with policy teams, community leaders, students, volunteers, and hard-pressed public officials to build an uncommon and unrivalled capacity that has placed Greater Manchester (GM) at the forefront of creating new forms of ecosystems charged with responding to the ageing paradox — the gap between the current and future impacts of our ageing populations and the (lack of) strategic attention given to today’s inequalities and challenges in later life.

The Greater Manchester Ageing Hub was founded to encourage organisations to do more, and to do it alongside older people. We champion the Greater Manchester Older

People's Network, support the Mayor's Advisory Panel for Older People, and act to bring resources to the region, always with research partners, as this collection demonstrates.

Although not ready in time for this publication, at the time of writing, we are reviewing the impact of the Greater Manchester Ageing in Place Pathfinder, a programme of ten neighbourhood projects that overlap with many of the case studies included here in both concept and personnel. A future phase of this work under the 'Live in Later Life' banner has been agreed and will commence soon. Reflecting on the Pathfinder's results, what stands out are the special skills that community workers and local citizens deploy to turn often modest resources into transformational outcomes.

Finally, I pay tribute to the many colleagues, community partners, and older people who contributed to this important publication, and I encourage others to work alongside our institutions or to take the lead in developing their own co-produced approaches that respond to the specific contexts, needs, and aspirations of their communities.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This collection grew from the conversations, partnerships, and joint projects among members of the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG), a research group dedicated to understanding and improving the experience of ageing in urban environments. It reflects a shared commitment to working with people and communities to co-produce knowledge and action that support more inclusive and age-friendly places.

We are grateful to all those who contributed to the projects featured in this collection – the community partners, older people, artists, and collaborators who shared their time, insights, and expertise with such openness and generosity.

We are also thankful to our partner organisations and funders, whose continued collaboration and support have made this collection possible:

Age Platform Europe

Age UK

Age-Friendly Manchester (AFM),  
Manchester City Council

Alliance Manchester Business School  
(AMBS), the University of Manchester

Art Fund

Arts and Humanities Research  
Council (AHRC)

Arts Council England

Brunswick Church

Centre for Ageing Better (CfAB)

Community-Led Action Savings  
and Support (CLASS)

Creative Manchester, the  
University of Manchester

Economic and Social Research  
Council (ESRC)

Emancipatory Sciences Lab,  
University of California

ESRC Festival of Social Science

Ethnic Health Forum

Evan Cornish Foundation

Faculty of Humanities  
Strategic Investment Fund, the  
University of Manchester

Faculty of Humanities, the  
University of Manchester

Greater Manchester Ageing Hub, Greater  
Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)

Greater Manchester BAME Network

Greater Manchester Centre for  
Voluntary Organisation (GMCVO)

Greater Manchester Combined  
Authority (GMCA)

Greater Manchester Faith and  
Belief Advisory Panel

Greater Manchester Older People's Equality Panel	Medical Research Council (MRC)
Greater Manchester Older People's Network (GMOPN)	National Lottery Community Fund
Global Network for Ageing Research on China	Office for Social Responsibility, the University of Manchester
Healthier Futures Platform, the University of Manchester	One Manchester Housing Association
Healthy Ageing Research Group (HARG), the University of Manchester	PAAR NET, Training School on Participatory Co-creation
HOMeAGE, Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Doctoral Training Network	Policy@Manchester, the University of Manchester
Hopton Court	Refugee and Asylum Participatory Action Research (RAPAR)
Housing Learning and Improvement Network (LIN)	Research England Participatory Research Fund, The University of Manchester
Kashmir Youth Project	Royal Exchange Theatre
Leverhulme Trust	School of Environment, Education and Development (SEED), the University of Manchester, Impact Fund
Levenshulme Inspire	School of Social Sciences (SoSS) Community Partnership Fund, the University of Manchester
LGBT Foundation	School of Social Sciences (SoSS), the University of Manchester
Lincoln Theological Institute	Society and Ageing Research Lab (SARLab), Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB)
Manchester Art Gallery	Southway Housing Trust
Manchester Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Network	Stockport Homes
Manchester City Council	The University of Manchester
Manchester City of Sanctuary	The University of Manchester Research Institute
Manchester Community Central (MACC)	Union des Locataires du Logement Social Molenbeekoïis (ULS 1080)
Manchester Health and Social Care Commissioning	University of Southern California (USC)
Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU)	Vivensa Foundation
Manchester School of Architecture (MSA)	Wellcome Trust
Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG) Older People's Forum	Whalley Range Community Forum
Manchester Urban Institute, the University of Manchester	World Health Organization (WHO)
Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA), European Commission, European Union	

# ABOUT THIS BOOK

## WHY THIS BOOK

Co-production can be defined broadly as an approach to research, policy, or practice that involves working *with* people and communities rather than *for* or *about* them. In the past decade, it has gained significant ground within ageing research, reflected in initiatives such as the EU-funded *Participatory Action Ageing Research network* (PAAR-net), the *Routledge International Handbook of Participatory Approaches in Ageing Research*, and a growing body of related publications, many of which are cited in the bibliography of this collection. This expanding body of work signals a growing recognition of the value of more inclusive, collaborative, and participatory forms of knowledge creation.

Yet, despite important progress, there remains a lack of accessible and critically reflective examples that show how co-production works in practice. There is still much to be learnt from the different ways in which co-production is done, undone, negotiated, and reimagined and about how co-production approaches are shaped by different contexts. This means taking the time to pause and notice the moments of learning, creativity, and tension that shape collaborative research and seeing them as integral to the process of co-production itself.

We also have much to learn from approaches that centre the voices of older people and communities who have been historically underrepresented in research and decision-making. Although examples of such work are growing, the research processes themselves are still rarely discussed explicitly or reflected on critically. When approached as a process of trust-building, reciprocity, and shared learning, co-production has the potential to strengthen agency

among those most excluded and lead to policies and practices that better reflect lesser understood experiences. Yet, co-production is still too often viewed through rose-tinted glasses and celebrated for its empowering potential. In reality, it is a dynamic, often messy, and negotiated process shaped by uncertainty, power relations, and the constraints of institutional and research funding systems that can limit the flexibility such work requires.

In response to these tensions, this book makes visible some of the dynamics of co-production, showing both its potential and challenges. We invited older people who have worked with us as community researchers and members of the *Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG) Older People's Forum* — a diverse group of residents who advise, collaborate on, and guide our research — to share what co-production means to them: how it feels to be involved, the challenges it brings, and the difference it can make to their communities (see Part II). The collection also brings together a range of projects developed by MUARG members, illustrating the diverse ways co-production takes shape in different settings (see Part III). Each project tells a story about partnership: of building trust, experimenting with new ways of working, navigating challenges, adapting to context, and realising the potential of collaboration.

On the one hand, this book is a celebration of what can be achieved through co-production, marking the tenth anniversary of MUARG's work — a celebration of the relationships, creativity, and shared purpose that have shaped our work and the collaborative impact this has had on policy, practice, and communities. On the other, it is an invitation to collectively push the boundaries of co-production — towards

a more radical and reflective space where researchers, policymakers, practitioners, community partners, institutions, and funders work together to co-create research that challenges injustices, and strengthens communities.

This work is more urgent than ever. As cities face widening inequalities, demographic change, and the pressures of austerity, we need to rethink *how* research is done, *with whom* it is created, and *to what end*. Co-production is not just a method; it is a commitment to addressing power inequalities and to challenging the structural conditions that sustain exclusion and oppression. Our hope is that this collection will spark new ways of working and thinking – expanding who participates in knowledge creation and how it can be used to build more inclusive, equitable, and age-friendly futures.



## AIMS AND AUDIENCE

This book is intended as both a source of inspiration and a practical resource for those interested in co-production, ageing, and community research. It aims to make the process of co-production transparent and accessible, showing what it looks and feels like in practice. By sharing experiences from a range of projects and partners, it provides insights into the opportunities, dilemmas, and lessons that emerge when research is done *with* rather than *on* people and communities.

The book aims to:

- **Offer inspiration and guidance** for those seeking to embed co-production in their own work, with attention to diversity and inclusion, particularly of minoritised and marginalised communities.
- **Illustrate diverse approaches** to co-producing research and practice, highlighting a range of creative, participatory, and context-specific methods.
- **Encourage critical reflection** on trust, ethical considerations, and power dynamics that shape co-production in practice.
- **Celebrate the varied roles older people play**, as co-creators of knowledge, co-designers of interventions, and co-leaders in building more inclusive, just, and age-friendly environments.

The book speaks to a wide and diverse readership. It will appeal to students and scholars across the social sciences, humanities, arts, architecture, urban planning, public health, and related fields, as well as anyone interested in participatory, creative, and community-based methodologies. It is equally relevant to practitioners, policymakers, and community organisations seeking to collaborate meaningfully with older people and communities often left out of shaping research, policy, and practice.



## **ABOUT THE MANCHESTER URBAN AGEING RESEARCH GROUP** *(MUARG)*

The projects and stories featured in this book are drawn from the work of the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG), a collaborative research group dedicated to understanding and improving how people experience ageing in urban environments. MUARG brings together researchers from diverse disciplinary backgrounds to study how population ageing and urban change interact. We work in partnership with older people, community organisations, and local, regional, and national bodies to promote age-friendly urban environments, driven by a commitment to social justice.

Our aims are to:

- **Lead interdisciplinary, place-based research** that transforms how ageing in cities is understood, experienced, and addressed.
- **Pioneer creative, participatory, and co-produced methods** by working directly with older people, minoritised and marginalised communities, practitioners, and policymakers.

- **Turn evidence into action**, informing policy and practice at local, regional, national, European Union (EU), and global levels.

Our research themes:

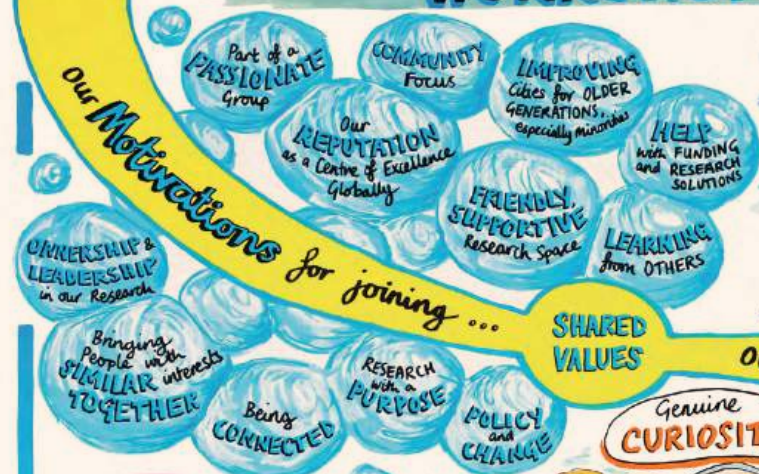
- **Ageing in place**: how homes, neighbourhoods, and urban change shape everyday life for older people and how to enhance social connection, participation, and belonging.
- **Tackling inequalities**: how structural disadvantage accumulates across the life course to produce unequal outcomes in later life and how community-led responses can reduce harm.
- **Innovative methods**: partnering with minoritised groups and cultural organisations to co-produce knowledge using creative, arts-based, and action research approaches.

MUARG's work covers ageing in cities, social exclusion and poverty, housing and social infrastructure, neighbourhood gentrification and regeneration, and the experiences of minoritised groups. Our work combines co-production and interdisciplinary scholarship to develop practical interventions and inform policy. This research contributes to the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goal 11 on inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities, and to the growing international movement for age-friendly cities and communities.

# MANCHESTER URBAN AGEING RESEARCH GROUP

## VISION WORKSHOP

*Our Motivations for joining ...*

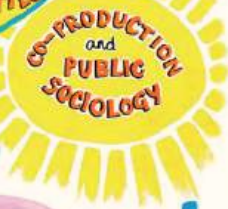


### SHARED VALUES



*Our Core Values ...*

- RESPECT**
- RESPONSIBILITY**
- Understanding **PERSPECTIVES**
- Challenging **INEQUALITIES**



*Our Practices as a Group*



**BE CONFIDENT** and **COURAGEOUS** IN WHAT WE DO ...



*“The work of the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG) is a model for how research can drive meaningful change towards healthy ageing. By co-producing knowledge with older people, practitioners, and policymakers — including long-standing partners like the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) — MUARG turns evidence into action. Their commitment to tackling urban inequalities and advancing social justice aligns closely with the vision of the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities (AFCC). This kind of collaboration is essential if we are to create environments where people can continue to do what they value and everyone can live long, healthy, fulfilling lives”*

**Dr Thiago Hérick de Sá, Age-Friendly Environments,  
World Health Organization (WHO)**

---

# HOW THIS BOOK IS ORGANISED

This book is divided into four parts. Readers may approach the book as a whole or use individual sections as stand-alone sources of inspiration for research, teaching, or community practice.

## PART I

### **Working Together for Age-Friendly Places:** *Context and Rationale*

Part I sets out the context for this collection. It explores why co-production matters, what 'ageing in place' means, and how global and local initiatives — including the World Health Organization's (WHO) Age-Friendly Cities and Communities (AFCC) programme and Greater Manchester's (GM) Age-Friendly Strategy — have encouraged place-based, collaborative ways of working. Readers will gain an understanding of the conceptual and policy frameworks guiding this collection.

## PART II

### **Centring Lived Expertise:** *First-Person Reflections, Creative Expressions, and Community Perspectives*

Part II focuses on the voices and experiences of older people who have collaborated with us as community researchers, activists, and members of the MUARG Older People's Forum — a diverse group of residents who guide our research. Their contributions offer personal insights into co-production: what it means to participate, the challenges it brings, and the difference it can make within communities. This section can be used as a resource for those wanting to understand participatory engagement from the perspective of older residents involved in research, community action, and advocacy.

## **PART III**

### **Co-Production in Practice: *Stories of Collaboration, Creativity, and Change***

Part III presents a range of projects that illustrate how co-production works in practice. Each chapter illustrates a different approach: from co-designing neighbourhoods and co-creating arts-based interventions — such as films, comics, exhibitions, zines, and photography — to developing community responses to the cost-of-living crisis and co-producing research with older refugees and social housing tenants. These examples reveal the creativity, collaboration, and learning that take place through co-produced research. Readers can draw practical insights and methods from these examples to inform their own projects and partnerships.

## **PART IV**

### **Reflections and Future Directions: *Shared Principles and the Future of Co-Produced Research***

Part IV highlights lessons from across the projects and introduces the TRUST framework, a set of principles for collaborative research with communities. It reflects on the possibilities of co-production and provides guidance for sustaining equitable partnerships between researchers, practitioners, and communities. It also outlines the potential challenges and limitations of this approach. This section can be used as a resource for anyone seeking to embed co-production in their research, policy, or practice.

In order to enhance accessibility and readability, all references are listed in the bibliography at the end of the book, along with broader references and suggested readings. In Part III, each case study includes a brief 'Project Publications' section, pointing readers to key outputs arising from that specific project and its approach to co-production.





# PART I

## **WORKING TOGETHER FOR AGE-FRIENDLY PLACES: *CONTEXT AND RATIONALE***



## WHAT IS CO-PRODUCTION?

Co-production has been defined in many ways. In this book, the term refers to working collaboratively with older people, community organisations, practitioners, and policymakers to co-create knowledge, services, or community-led initiatives. The term originates from economist Elinor Ostrom in the 1970s, who argued that public services are most effective when citizens are seen as active partners in producing them. Since then, many related terms have emerged, including co-design, co-creation, participatory, collaborative, inclusive, or emancipatory research. These terms point to the same core principle of working with communities and people rather than *for or on behalf of* them (see the bibliography for key sources).

Co-production processes always begin with relationships. These approaches require time, trust, care, resources, and a commitment to working collaboratively in how decisions are made. Building these relationships also means recognising different forms of knowledge and experience — creating conditions where people feel respected, valued, heard, and able to contribute — right from the start.

Co-production also involves asking critical questions about who is included and how power operates within collaborative processes, such as:

- ‘Who is not in the room, and why?’
- ‘What barriers limit the participation of particular groups, and how will we overcome them?’
- ‘Whose voices are heard, and whose are silenced?’
- ‘Whose knowledge is acted upon, and whose is ignored?’
- ‘Who has the power to influence decisions?’

Co-production is therefore not only a method but also a commitment to doing research differently, giving participants and communities greater control and power in the production of knowledge and in decisions that shape their everyday lives.

As one community researcher put it:

*“Older people can speak for themselves and it [co-produced research] shows respect for their views and acknowledges their contribution to the community.”*

**Raj Kaur, 59-year-old co-researcher**

Co-production can take many different forms, as illustrated throughout this book. It covers a wide range of methodological approaches, varying levels of participation, and diverse and flexible ways of working with communities, organisations, and those involved in policy and practice. The examples in this collection range from co-producing tenant-led responses to the entrenched inequalities experienced by older people living in social housing to collaborative work that combines art, research, and activism to tackle inequalities affecting older women in paid and unpaid work.

It also includes initiatives that train older residents to become co-researchers in their own communities, working with local organisations to understand and improve the age-friendliness of their neighbourhoods. Older people take on varied roles, as co-researchers, co-designers, co-creators, advisors, leaders, activists, and collaborators in developing questions, interpreting findings, and co-producing creative outputs such as films, comics, zines, exhibitions, and community plans.

What connects these diverse approaches is a shared commitment to certain **values**: valuing older people’s perspectives and lived expertise, recognising diversity,

and promoting collective efforts aimed at critically examining and challenging the structural forces that lead to exclusion and marginalisation in later life.

## WHY DOES CO-PRODUCTION MATTER?

Co-production matters for older people, communities, and cities, as well as for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers. More specifically, it matters for:

- **Older people:** Co-production offers a way to address power inequities and make visible perspectives that are often overlooked. It has the potential to empower people to speak out against discrimination, influence decisions, and advocate for change in the systems that affect their lives.
- **Communities and cities:** Co-production creates opportunities for collaboration between residents, service providers, and local organisations. Bringing different perspectives together, it supports the design of places, services, and systems that reflect the needs and strengths of all who live there.
- **Policy makers and practitioners:** Co-production offers a way to design policies and practices that are grounded in lived experience rather than assumptions. By working alongside communities, it helps challenge deficit-based views of ageing, recognise the skills and contributions of older people, and create interventions that are more relevant, equitable, and sustainable.
- **Researchers:** Co-production helps us ask questions that are meaningful to the people with whom we work. It encourages reflection on power and positionality, improves the relevance of our work, strengthens mutual learning between researchers and communities, and increases the likelihood that research will contribute to improvements in policy, practice, and people's lives.

It should be stressed that, although potentially powerful and important, co-production is rarely straightforward. Developing relationships, building trust, and working with multiple partners requires time, resources, ongoing communication, negotiation, and shared decision-making. It also involves recognising difference, being attentive to power dynamics and emotional labour, and navigating tensions between what communities see as important and what universities and funders expect in terms of deadlines, budgets, and outcomes.

Part IV of this book sets out five key principles for meaningful, ethical, and sustained collaborative research with communities, summarised through the acronym **TRUST**:

- T** Trusting relationships and ethics of care.
- R** Redressing histories of exclusion and discrimination.
- U** Undoing barriers through flexible and care-full practices.
- S** Sharing power from the start, by listening and learning together.
- T** Time, reflexivity, and joy in the process.

These principles highlight the importance of an ethics of care, reflexivity, and fair remuneration. They also emphasise the importance of building trust as a long-term process, which is earned through sustained empathy, responsiveness, and transparency.

## **AGEING *WELL* IN THE *RIGHT PLACE*: RETHINKING AGEING IN PLACE**

'Ageing in place' has emerged as a dominant theme in public policy, reflecting the shift towards community-based care and renewed emphasis on the role of neighbourhoods in contributing to wellbeing in later life. The term 'ageing in place' refers to the idea of supporting people to remain in their own homes and communities as they age, maintaining a sense of independence, continuity, and familiarity in their lives. It reflects both a personal aspiration for many older people and a societal goal supported by various policy and community development initiatives, driven in part by policymakers' recognition of its financial advantages over residential care.

The different approaches to co-production highlighted in this book share a common commitment to understanding and improving experiences of 'ageing in place', with a particular focus on those neighbourhoods where ageing well is increasingly difficult. These include neighbourhoods affected by long-term disinvestment, poor housing, cuts to local services, pressures arising from gentrification, and limited opportunities for social connection. In such contexts, co-production offers a way to work collaboratively with older residents and local partners to think creatively about ways to support 'ageing in place'.

Yet ageing in place is not always desirable or possible. People's needs, resources, and aspirations change over the life course. Remaining in the same home or neighbourhood may not always support wellbeing. In many urban areas, pressures such as housing costs, austerity-driven cuts to services, widening inequalities, and the erosion of social infrastructure can make it difficult for older people to stay connected and supported. Equally, some may prefer or require new forms of housing, care, or community in later life.

For these reasons, we prefer to use the term '*ageing well in the right place*': an approach that recognises the importance of choice, flexibility, and the fit between people and their environments, rather than assuming that staying put is always the best or only option.

## **AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES AND COMMUNITIES (AFCC): A GLOBAL MOVEMENT**

The policy focus on 'ageing in place' has run parallel with attempts to create what the World Health Organization (WHO) has termed 'Age-Friendly Cities and Communities' (AFCC). These are defined as supportive social and physical environments for people of all ages. AFCC initiatives focus on creating places and communities where older people are actively involved, valued, and provided with the infrastructure and services that meet their needs.

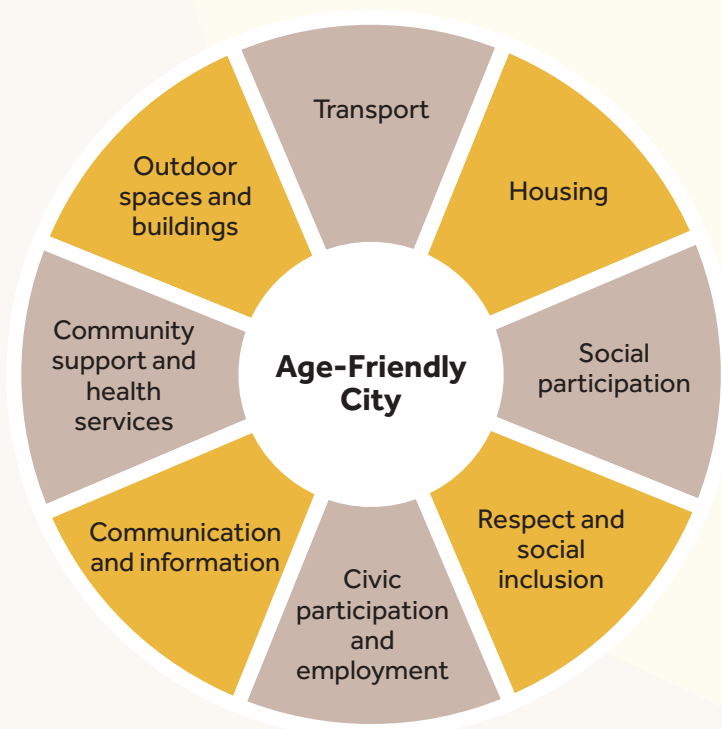


Figure 1: The eight domains of an age-friendly city.

This includes interventions in the eight domains of an age-friendly city (see Figure 1): in the *physical environment*, improving the accessibility of housing, public spaces, and transportation; in *health and community services*, by improving provision, quality, and access; and in the *social environment*, through initiatives such as community engagement programmes and opportunities for volunteering.

In 2010, the WHO launched the 'Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities'. The Network, established initially with 11 members, grew at a modest pace for the first 5 years of its existence but expanded rapidly after 2015, reaching a membership of over 1,700 cities and communities across nearly 60 countries by 2025. Age-friendly work is now widely recognised as a global movement. The city of Manchester was among the first cities to join the Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities and has since been regarded a pioneer in advancing the age-friendly agenda.

## **BUILDING AN AGE-FRIENDLY ECOSYSTEM IN GREATER MANCHESTER (GM)**

Manchester provides an important context for understanding the development of age-friendly work. The city-region has long faced challenges of poverty, health inequalities, and social exclusion in later life. Yet, despite the added pressures of austerity and reductions in public spending, Manchester has sustained its commitment to age-friendly policies through strong strategic partnerships between Manchester City Council, its universities (The University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University), the voluntary sector, and older people's groups. These collaborations led to the establishment of *Age-Friendly Manchester* and, at a regional level, the *Greater Manchester Ageing Hub*.

Age-Friendly Manchester was launched in the mid-2000s as one of the first citywide programmes of its kind. Its aim is to reduce inequalities in later life by embedding ageing into the city's broader strategies for growth and neighbourhood renewal. Central to its work has been a focus on strengthening communities, addressing disadvantage, and supporting older residents to participate fully in civic life. These priorities were carried forward and expanded through the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), which created the Greater Manchester Ageing Hub in 2016 to coordinate ageing policy across the city-region.

The Greater Manchester Ageing Hub has three core priorities: promoting employment and economic participation among older people; tackling health inequalities and supporting healthy ageing; and developing housing and neighbourhoods that enable ageing in place.

A commitment to co-design and co-production is central to the work of Age-Friendly Manchester and the Greater Manchester Ageing Hub. Older people play an active role through local advisory boards and the Greater Manchester Older People's Network (GMOPN), providing ongoing spaces for dialogue, engaging in collaboration, and influencing decision-making on age-friendly policy and practice. In 2022, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority also established the Older People's Equality Panel (alongside six other such equality panels) to advise the mayor on key issues and concerns in later life.

Priorities for age-friendly work in Manchester included the cost-of-living crisis, access to health services, and digital exclusion. Other notable initiatives included: the *Age-Friendly Employers Toolkit*, the development of new employment services for older workers in low-income neighbourhoods,



support for the LGBT Pride in Ageing project; and a campaign called Pension Top Up, which aimed to encourage people of state pensionable age to claim a range of entitlements and benefits that had high levels of underclaiming.

Despite these achievements, age-friendly work in Greater Manchester (GM) has faced significant challenges, particularly in the context of austerity, the loss of social infrastructure such as libraries and community centres, and widening health inequalities. Partnership working and joined-up approaches have been crucial in responding to these pressures, with ageing seen as a cross-cutting theme across housing, health, transport, regeneration, and economic development.

Collaboration between local government, universities, voluntary organisations, and older people's groups has been central in sustaining momentum for the age-friendly agenda and creating innovative solutions. This collaborative infrastructure — also referred to as '*Manchester's age-friendly ecosystem*' — explains why many of the projects featured in this book have been supported, directly or indirectly, by the work of Age-Friendly Manchester and the Greater Manchester Ageing Hub.

As Jason Bergen, Age-Friendly Manchester Project Manager, Manchester City Council, explained:

*“Age-Friendly Manchester (AFM) and the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG) have a long-standing collaborative partnership. Members of the AFM team, including our AFM Older People’s Board, as well as other Manchester City Council officers, have been involved in many of the case studies featured in this collection in one way or another, supporting research projects including the ‘Urban Villages Project’, ‘Old Moat’, ‘Uncertain Futures’, and more.*”

*This research has taken place in neighbourhoods and communities across the City of Manchester, and our involvement has depended on the individual project: from advisory roles on steering groups and linking older people with lived experience, often as co-producers, to sometimes providing funding and frequently combining several of these roles.”*

Sustained collaboration between research, policy, and communities has been key to creating the foundations of Manchester’s age-friendly ecosystem. The next section, Part II — Centring Lived Expertise, focuses on the voices and experiences of older people who have collaborated with us as community researchers, activists, and members of the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG) Older People’s Forum, offering personal insights into co-production in practice.





## **PART II**

### **CENTRING LIVED EXPERTISE: FIRST-PERSON REFLECTIONS, CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS, AND COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES**





## **THE MANCHESTER URBAN AGEING RESEARCH GROUP (MUARG) OLDER PEOPLE'S FORUM: CO-PRODUCING KNOWLEDGE FOR ACTION**

by Patty Doran, Tendayi Madzunu, Fran Devine, Jamil Abdulkader, and the MUARG Older People's Forum

### **How the Forum Works**

The Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG) Older People's Forum is a group of experts by experience who work with MUARG members to critically reflect on the activities of the research group and ensure that the research it conducts is relevant when developing new knowledge in the field of urban ageing.

Formed in October 2023, the MUARG Older People's Forum is represented by a diverse membership from across Greater Manchester. Members identify with a wide range of ethnic, cultural, and social backgrounds and are a mix of both those who have been involved in research projects previously and those who are new to the research environment. Both MUARG and the Older People's Forum members are committed to collectively ensuring that the diversity of its membership is maintained.

The role of the Older People's Forum members is to share their lived experiences and to represent the perspectives of their communities, whether this involves representing an organisation they are part of, a community of identity, or their local neighbourhood. Representation and the sharing of experiences are achieved through informal communication with MUARG members as well as through active participation in regular workshops.

The role of MUARG members is to work with the Older People's Forum members to understand their lived experiences and the perspectives of the communities they represent. These experiences are used to build knowledge about urban ageing, which in turn is used to inform and shape research: for example, by helping to identify gaps in current research activity. MUARG members are committed to transparency and sharing research processes and findings with the Older People's Forum members.

## **Why the Forum Is Important: Reflections from Forum Members**

*"Research by nature has always been shaped by people and places from a top-down model. The research recommendations are often made in a remote or passive manner. However, as knowledge increases and with people questioning, research has evolved to allow involvement of people as they are the ones whose lives have been impacted. With this in mind, it is important that research is shaped by people and places involved.*

*The reason being that people by default are experts through their lived experiences, they know the places very well, what needs to be done from their perspective. Therefore, their participation in shaping research is invaluable. Also, the changes that are a result of the*

*research will have a meaningful impact when people have been involved in shaping the research. Involving people in shaping research has a sense of ownership that comes with it. Above all, the impact is real and genuine.*

*“Co-production, for me is the coming together of professionals and people involved in discussing and influencing the decisions and delivery of services that concern them. It is also recognising the people as experts by experience. This means, people have the solutions to the problems because they are the ones experiencing them. It also means taking along people involved in the production of knowledge; researchers get the information from the people and re-package it.”*

**Tendayi Madzunzu, MUARG Older People’s Forum Member**

*“It is absolutely crucial that, in any research, the people and communities involved are partners. They are the ones with direct experience of what it is like to be ageing, or anything else, and will have a very different take than researchers who will be theoretically knowledgeable but not viscerally knowledgeable.*

*“I am aware that as a white, well-educated, home owning person with a lovely partner and a work pension, my experience will be different from so many older people who may be having problems with money, poor housing, failing health, loneliness, and in some cases racism. But some or all of those problems may come to everyone, and what’s inspiring to me is to meet the other members of the MUARG Older People’s Forum and see how such a diverse group of people cope with the issues that life throws at them as they have aged.”*

**Fran Devine, MUARG Older People’s Forum Member**

*“Why is it important that research is shaped by the people and places involved? For me, the answer is centred on lived experience. Having lived in Manchester for over 50 years, I have seen neighbourhoods change, services come and go, and older people’s voices sidelined. That history matters: lived experience gives research its relevance, depth, and truth. We know what works and what doesn’t in practice.*”

*We understand the barriers facing our communities, as well as our strengths and nuances. When our voices shape studies, the outcomes and interventions stand a far better chance of supporting our communities. That’s why older people’s involvement is essential.*

*“What does co-production mean to you? To me, it is partnership in practice. It is not token consultation or simply ticking a box; it is sharing power, shaping decisions, and valuing each other’s contributions. In my experience, co-production means researchers and community members working side by side to design resources that older people can actually use and to plan events that reflect the real needs of our community.*”

*Co-production also requires conscious attention to those who are not in the room. We must represent under-heard voices so that outcomes reflect the whole community. When co-production is done properly, the work belongs to the people it serves, and the changes it brings are practical, equitable, and lasting.”*

**Jamil Abdulkader, MUARG Older People’s Forum Member**

## ELAINE UNEGBU: REFLECTIONS FROM A CO-RESEARCHER



A Manchester Older People's Board was established in 2003 as part of Manchester City Council's (MCC) Valuing Older People programme and later became the Age-Friendly Manchester (AFM) Older People's Board after Manchester joined the World Health Organization (WHO)

Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities (AFCC) in 2010. I have been involved since the start, serving as Chair of the AFM Older People's Board since 2009.

The Board gives older people a platform to have our voices heard and feed our knowledge, hopes, and lived experience into strategies, policy, and practice, initiating and supporting change that improves older people's lives. We value cross-sector partnerships, working together with communities and organisations to build trust and find solutions for the diverse challenges older people face.

I was also the first Chair of the Greater Manchester Older People's Network (GMOPN), which challenges ageism and promotes a positive view of ageing that recognises everyone's contributions, experiences, and expertise. Greater Manchester (GM) became the UK's first city-region to join the WHO Network in 2018, a significant step in the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's (GMCA) efforts to ensure older people's everyday needs are heard and acted on.

When invited to contribute to a Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG) collection on co-production, I reflected on my experience as a co-researcher on an exciting MUARG project: *Co-Researching Age-Friendly Communities with Older People*. As co-researchers, we received training in planning research, designing questions, recruiting participants, collecting data, and reaching consensus through

thematic coding. We then worked as peers, interviewing and supporting older residents who shared their stories.

Being co-researchers gave us ownership of the process, helped develop relationships and trust, and supported inclusion and broader opportunities in the community. We engaged with local venues and informed local practice and policy with the evidence we co-produced. Concrete outcomes included benches installed around the neighbourhood, supporting social interactions and strengthening community cohesion. The research even reached regional and national audiences!

At the end of the project, we shared our findings with the wider community and celebrated together. People were delighted to have their voices heard! I have continued to work with MUARG as an older people's representative and joined the MUARG Older People's Forum. The experience also increased my confidence to share my experiences in other settings.

I have since supported the Centre for Ageing Better (CfAB) as a member of the Expert by Experience Advisory Group and contributed to the UKRI Healthy Ageing Challenge (HAC), Housing Learning and Improvement Network (HousingLIN), and other initiatives that build evidence to improve older people's lives. This has included local, national, and European fora, where I have felt more confident to ask questions, challenge assumptions and dominant practices, and present to various audiences.

The experience of being a co-researcher and learning about co-design and co-production has also helped me be a better chair of older people's fora, enabling me to listen, question, learn, and share better with other older people, policymakers, and the public, and to use my lived experience to influence positive change.

## NAKIB NARAT: SPEAKING UP FOR CHANGE



As a member of the MUARG Older People's Forum, I was asked to reflect on why older people's voices must be part of the ageing agenda, what is being done in Greater Manchester (GM), and what I have learned from my experience.

Well, the sobering truth that I have learnt is that in Greater Manchester (GM), especially the city of Manchester, disparities in public services and life chances between older people who are better off and those on low incomes are as great as I witnessed decades ago growing up in post-industrial Blackburn, Lancashire. Much of this is due to ingrained societal norms entrenching ageism. Age UK Charity Director Caroline Abrahams concluded that ageism is "widespread and culturally embedded in the UK... often fuelled by harmful stereotypes and media narratives of older people as either 'wealthy boomers' or else extremely frail and vulnerable".

Over seven years working on age-related issues, I have found that the marginalisation of older people seems to be boundless: gaps in equality laws, the exclusion of older people from policy decisions (especially in digital services), and the lack of a cross-government strategy to address the needs of our diverse and growing older population.

That is why the Mayor's Greater Manchester Older People's Panel (GMOPN), which I Co-Chair, is so important. We are active in the national debate about an Older People's Commissioner for England, and

we are considering whether a Greater Manchester commissioner could add local value. We will soon present our recommendations to Mayor Andy Burnham.

Despite the challenges, I have found reason for optimism. Greater Manchester has deep reserves of kindness, compassion, and a strong sense that unfairness should be challenged. Our region is rightly renowned for its down-to-earth commitment to social justice. Practical and committed local leadership has helped: the Mayor established the Greater Manchester Older People's Equality Panel in March 2022 to advise and challenge political leaders on discrimination and inequality, which I am privileged to also Co-Chair.

Greater Manchester's age-friendly ecosystem – the Greater Manchester's Older People's Network, Steering Group, and Equalities Panel, the City of Manchester's Age-Friendly Older People's Board and Assembly, and MUARG's research — has real, sustained ambition and a commitment to prevail.. The city's age-friendly work goes back to 2003, and Manchester joined the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities (AFCC) in 2010.

My route into this work has been through the arts. As ageing became increasingly daunting, I challenged my fears and assumptions in the best way I know: as a theatre-maker and actor. Seven years ago, I founded the Chorlton Good Neighbours Drama Workshops, using community theatre to imagine a joyful Third Age.

Here, we draw on radical Brazilian playwright and activist Augusto Boal's (1931–2009) 'Theatre of the Oppressed' to enable democratic participation and social change,

creating plays that challenge injustice — theatre as a kind of language to help us negotiate society's problems and find solutions. Theatre has brought laughter, connection, and purpose too. We've staged two full-length plays at HOME Theatre, Manchester, and taken our performances into care homes and the Festival of Manchester.

The arts are vital for inclusion. Research by the Baring Foundation highlights the tremendous potential of participatory art to improve quality of life for older people, including those with dementia. My review work for the University of Oxford's Centre for Evidence-Based Medicine (CEBM) reinforced how class and poverty shape access to the arts: when life is consumed by meeting basic needs, creativity can feel like an unaffordable luxury. Democratising the arts so everyone can benefit is essential for wellbeing and social integration.

My practice and advocacy are rooted in those lived experiences. I volunteer with charities and push for fairness because I remember how limited choices felt growing up. Democratising the arts is central to that mission: this too was at the heart of Augusto Boal's philosophy when, despite imprisonment and torture by the oppressive military dictatorship in Brazil in 1971, he created life-affirming drama-based tools which I find hugely inspiring. We can use the arts to offer culturally appropriate support and create genuine intergenerational dialogue.

Ageism remains a major challenge. It has been described as 'the last form of discrimination that's widely accepted'. It affects jobs, services, and everyday respect.



Addressing it will deliver social justice and economic benefits; the Centre for Ageing Better (CfAB) estimates that removing workplace age barriers could boost the economy by £9 billion annually, just by giving older workers an equal opportunity in the labour market, with an additional £1.6 billion a year raised in income tax and national insurance contributions. For change to stick, older people's voices must be heard, resourced, and trusted. Working together — across community groups, arts organisations, researchers, and local government — we can shape kinder, fairer neighbourhoods where people of all ages can thrive.

My current project, 'Mancunianity Flows', is a promenade theatre event designed for Summer 2026 that will bring grandparents and grandchildren together to celebrate local histories and connections to place. The aim is to foster mutual understanding, environmental awareness, and shared joy across generations.

## FREDDI GREENMANTLE: REFLECTIONS ON AGEING, DISABILITY, AND BELONGING



I speak as an ageing Mancunian. Although I wasn't born here, I returned to my roots — my mother's birthplace — in the 1980s. And I am watching this city change rapidly before my eyes. Places and services are disappearing: GP surgeries are becoming more and more difficult to access, and I am reliant on my limited knowledge of digital inclusion, having not learnt this 'language' earlier in life. My local city bus stop disappeared, and my local shopping precinct disappeared.

I feel very lucky to live now in leafy Whalley Range, in a part of Manchester that has an excellent community feel and many wonderful people, of all ages and ethnicities. The community centres are run by hard-working, dedicated people who support us all. We are blessed with three such centres in the area. Whalley Range, in particular, is notable for its many achievements — not least the placement of some of the earliest all-age-friendly benches to be seen in the city, with more expected soon. And I do stress the all here: age-friendly for all ages — it is not just older people who need a place to rest.

I became disabled after a fall in 2009, which opened my eyes to difficulties with pavements, kerbs, steps, stairs, public seating, and the placement of bus and tram stops. I now find even relying on a car too difficult in the city and have to rely on expensive taxi services. I would add that disability is much more than just relying on a wheelchair (which I don't). I see the deterioration of our pavements and kerbs, and that bike lanes have taken over the roads, making driving hazardous and exhausting.

The transport system of getting from A to B now somewhat overwhelms me. To make things worse, there is also a lack of public toilets available.

But worst of all is the stigma of ageism — hidden but in plain sight. The idea that, once retired, one is useful no more, acting as if it would be good if we just disappeared. I strongly challenge these ideas wherever they appear, especially through being a member of Manchester City Council's Age-Friendly Manchester (AFM) Board, the Greater Manchester Mental Health (GMMH) Service Users' Council, and the Greater Manchester (GM) Mature Minds Matter group. The latter hopes to positively support older people with mental health conditions, who have now started to be noticed and given more support, although there is still a long way to go.

I was excited to be part of the co-production training and interviewing process with the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG), and I am very happy to see researchers acknowledging that older people, through their lived experience, do have valid, important, and often challenging ideas to bring to the table. I would put an older (over-70) voice and a person with a disability on every relevant planning committee, ensuring concepts of inclusion are not lost.

Older people who care for someone else, and wonderful volunteers, do a marvellous job of saving the government's public purse. Local community centres seem to spend vast amounts of time chasing small funding pots to pay for vital local support. Our voices are absolutely vital: our opinions are important and must be sought out and listened to. Mature minds do indeed matter. Bodies may grow weak, but good ideas still come from ageing brains.

## TINA CRIBBIN: 'THE MEETING' – A CREATIVE REFLECTION



by Tina Cribbin (*tinacribbin@gmail.com*) and Niamh Kavanagh.

Tina Cribbin is a community activist, poet, and tenant leader from Hulme, Manchester, known for tenant-led research and creative community organising, including the Ageing Well in Place partnership and a naturally occurring retirement community (NORC) pilot at Hopton Court, Manchester (see further details in Part III). This excerpt from her poem, 'The Meeting', was written based on her lived experience of long-term tenant campaigning amid displacement, gentrification, and cuts to local services.

The poem responds to tensions that emerge when institutional partners and researchers meet community members, naming exclusionary power dynamics and the emotional labour of residents who are too often made "visibly invisible". Reproduced here with the author's permission, the poem frames the essay's exploration of conflict, trust-building, and genuinely equitable co-production in community research.

Tina's poem is a powerful and emotive critique of the unequal power dynamics that often saturate research processes, felt particularly by older communities facing distinct urban pressures, highlighting the irony and injustice of their exclusion from discussions about the very issues that directly impact their lives.

Excerpt from 'The Meeting' by Tina Cribbin, reproduced with the permission of the author. Source: Kavanagh, N. et al. (2025) 'Working with conflict in community research', British Science Association [Preprint].

---

Sat round corporate tables,  
with corporate players,  
who get to decide how to help the very people  
who are excluded from the meeting

The power plays out between partners and organisations  
each showing the other the emperor's new clothes.  
Caught in this enormous din of ego,  
I just wanted to fight for our homes.

Property developers scratch at our front doors  
Prime land for those that chew  
and spit out our communities.  
Tenants huddle closer  
making plans and opportunities.

There's no equality.  
Projects that try to help  
revert back to middle class structures  
and decision making  
all the while framing co production  
in academic books.  
Our voices unheard we have no such luck

I have faced a lifetime of stress and trauma,  
of being decanted,  
of yet another displacement  
it seems the new order.

If real change is what you need  
change the thinking  
that academic knowledge is the miracle

Remember us in textbooks,  
academic articles on housing.  
We are in the spaces between words,  
the catalyst for their work.  
We are visibly invisible  
We don't get a chance to be critical.

---





**PART III**  
**CO-PRODUCTION IN PRACTICE:**  
*STORIES OF COLLABORATION,  
CREATIVITY, AND CHANGE*



## **OVERVIEW OF CASE STUDIES**

This collection brings together co-produced research projects led by the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG). They span a wide range of settings: from housing and faith spaces to creative storytelling and neighbourhood planning. What unites them is a shared commitment to working with older people in ways that value lived expertise, local knowledge, and community leadership.

The projects featured are:

**Old Moat: Co-Designing an Age-Friendly Neighbourhood with Older Residents**

**Co-Researching Age-Friendly Communities with Older People**

**The Urban Villages Project: Co-Producing Community Interventions to Support Ageing in Place**

**Faith Spaces as Social Infrastructure: Co-Producing Age-Friendly Communities for Healthy Ageing**

**Echoes of Displacement: Co-Producing a Comic Book with Older Refugees**

**Co-Creating a Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) in Social Housing**

**Resisting Gentrification: Co-Producing Documentaries with Older People**

**COVID-19, Inequality, and Older People: A Community-Centred, Co-Produced Response**

## **Co-Producing Research on the Cost-of-Living Crisis with Older Ethnic Minority Communities**

**Uncertain Futures: Co-Producing Art and Research with Older Women on Work and Inequality**

**Applied Film: Co-Producing Films Post-Retirement**

**Let's Get Botanical Together: Co-Designing the Derek Jarman Pocket Park with Older LGBT+ people**

**IN-CITU: Cognitive Impairment, Urban Transport, and Creative Methods**

**Participatory Photography: Exploring Ageing in Age-related Housing with Older People**

**Co-Researching Loneliness with Minoritised Older People**

**Picture This Stockport: Embedding Age-Friendly Design in Mainstream Housing**

Each project demonstrates a different approach to co-production, whether in participatory design, creative methods, or grassroots organising. They demonstrate that co-production is not a fixed model, but a dynamic, context-specific process shaped by the people and places involved. Together, they offer insights into how co-production can be adapted to diverse contexts and used to challenge exclusion, amplify lived experience, and shape more just and inclusive urban futures.



## **OLD MOAT: CO-DESIGNING AN AGE-FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOOD WITH OLDER RESIDENTS**

by Stefan White, Mark Hammond, and Chris Phillipson

### **Introduction**

*The Old Moat: Co-Designing an Age-Friendly Neighbourhood with Older Residents* project was a collaboration between the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG), Southway Housing Trust, and Manchester City Council's Age-Friendly Manchester (AFM) team. It aimed to assess and enhance the age-friendliness of the Old Moat neighbourhood in South Manchester, using the World Health Organization's (WHO) Age-Friendly Cities and Communities (AFCC) Framework as a foundation.

Old Moat is a socially and economically diverse area with a high proportion of older residents, many of whom live on low incomes and experience health inequalities. Southway Housing Trust, which owns and lets over half the properties in Old Moat, wanted to develop a long-term improvement programme in response to this



context. Influenced by the AFCC model, they wanted to do more than simply provide age-friendly houses to older tenants, using their role in the community to help reshape the wider physical and social environment in order to better support active and healthy ageing.

To achieve this, MUARG researchers developed methods through which the AFCC model could be applied at a neighbourhood scale using a co-design methodology which placed older people at the heart of the research and planning process. The result was a co-produced action plan grounded in the lived experiences of older residents and shaped through a participatory research process that combined architectural analysis, spatial data, and community engagement.

## **Approach to Co-Production**

The project integrated participatory design, community-led research, and interdisciplinary collaboration to actively involve older people throughout as co-researchers, co-auditors, and co-planners, shaping both the process and outcomes.

Key elements of the co-production process:

- The formation of three volunteer groups: community auditors, project champions, and focus group participants.
- Older residents received training to become community auditors, conducting interviews and gathering data about older people's experiences and ideas for how to better support ageing in place. Their work played a central role in shaping the research findings.
- Project champions worked alongside the team to interpret findings and co-develop the action plan.

- Focus groups brought together older residents, carers, young people, service providers, and housing staff, ensuring a wide range of perspectives on the neighbourhood were represented in the community action plan.
- Walking interviews and mobility diaries captured the lived and embodied experiences of navigating the neighbourhood.

This approach went beyond consultation by embedding older people throughout the process, who were involved in defining research questions, interpreting the findings, and shaping the recommendations. The project also drew on architectural and urban design expertise to translate community insights into practical spatial interventions.

## **Methods and Impact**

The project used a mixed-methods approach involving:

- Urban design analysis of the physical environment.
- Spatial data mapping (e.g., health, crime, deprivation).
- 11 focus groups with over 70 participants.
- A postal questionnaire sent to 700 households.
- 99 one-to-one interviews conducted by older volunteers and students.

Key impacts of the co-production methodologies included:

- A detailed, spatially-grounded action plan with over 100 recommendations, which supported the Southway Housing Trust's long-term age-friendly strategy for the area.



- Tangible improvements to the local area, including the development of 62 new age-friendly homes, dementia-friendly signage, changes to pathways and public realm areas, and contributions to Manchester City Council's Withington District Centre Improvement Plan.
- The strengthening of community networks and the formation of an Age-Friendly Working Group to carry the work forward.
- The development of a model for neighbourhood-scale age-friendly planning that has informed similar initiatives across Manchester and beyond, including the Manchester Age-Friendly Neighbourhood programme (2016–2020), which rolled out the Old Moat model in four other neighbourhoods across Manchester.

The project highlighted several important lessons: the importance of informal networks, the need for better communication, and the value of intergenerational spaces. It showed how older people's knowledge, when properly supported, can drive meaningful, place-based change.

## Reflections

This case study demonstrates how co-production can be used to transform not only neighbourhoods, but also the processes of urban planning and research. By embedding older people in the design and delivery of the project, the Old Moat initiative challenged traditional hierarchies and created a more democratic, inclusive model of neighbourhood development.

The co-production approach was distinctive in its:

- Depth of engagement, in which older people were not just consulted, but trained, supported, and empowered to lead.
- Interdisciplinary integration, bringing together urban design, sociology, and public health within a shared framework.
- Spatial sensitivity, with the action plan being mapped out in detail, linking findings to specific streets, routes, and facilities.

*"We feel involved in the process."*

**Southway Housing Trust tenant on housing improvements**

*"I want to get involved and want support to do this."*

**Older resident on community participation**

## Key Learnings and Contributions

- Neighbourhood-level co-production is feasible and impactful when supported by strong partnerships and clear frameworks.



- Older people are experts by experience in their own environments and can meaningfully shape urban policy and design.
- Participatory design and community auditing are powerful tools for embedding lived experience into urban planning.

## **Related Project Publications**

Hammond, M., Crompton, E., and White, S. (2024) 'Redesigning the age-friendly city: the role of architecture in addressing spatial ageism', in *Reimagining Age-Friendly Communities: Urban Ageing and Spatial Justice*, p. 135. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.56687/9781447368571-012>.

Hammond, M. and Phillipson, C. (2024) 'Aging and architecture: From the patient to the citizen', in *The Routledge Handbook of Architecture, Urban Space and Politics, Volume II*. Routledge, pp. 377–392. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003112471-29>.



Hammond, M., Walsh, R., and White, S. (2018) *Rightsizing: Reframing the housing offer for older people*. Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)/PHASE @ Manchester School of Architecture. Available at: [https://e-space.mmu.ac.uk/621554/1/Rightsizing\\_MSA\\_Final2.pdf](https://e-space.mmu.ac.uk/621554/1/Rightsizing_MSA_Final2.pdf) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Hammond, M., White, S., and Phillipson, C. (2020) 'From precarity to interdependence: The role of age-friendly communities in promoting wellbeing in excluded communities', in *Designing Future Cities for Wellbeing*. Routledge, pp. 122–138. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429470684-9>.

Phillipson, C., White, S., and Hammond, M. (2014) *Old Moat: Age-friendly Neighbourhood Report*. Manchester: Southway Housing Trust. Available at: <https://hummedia.manchester.ac.uk/institutes/micra/OLDMOATREPORT110413.pdf> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

White, S. and Foale, K. (2023) 'Making a place for technology in communities: PlaceCal and the capabilities approach', *Information, Communication & Society*, 26(6), pp. 1067–1086. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2020.1767173>.

White, S. and Hammond, M. (2018) 'From representation to active ageing in a Manchester neighbourhood: designing the age-friendly city', in *Age-Friendly Cities and Communities: A Global Perspective*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press (Ageing in a Global Context), pp. 193–210. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447331322.ch010>.



## **CO-RESEARCHING AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES WITH OLDER PEOPLE**

by Tine Buffel

### **Introduction**

This project examined how older people can be involved not just as participants, but as co-investigators in age-friendly research. The study focused on three neighbourhoods in Manchester — Whalley Range, Chorlton, and Chorlton Park — and aimed to explore how older residents experience their communities and how local environments can be made more age-friendly.

The project was guided by a participatory ethos: 18 older residents were trained and supported to become co-researchers. These co-researchers were involved in every stage of the research process: from initial research planning and design to data collection, analysis, and the dissemination of findings (see Figure 2).



They also conducted 68 in-depth interviews with older residents, taking particular care to include those who are often excluded from traditional research due to isolation, poverty, or health issues.

The project was developed in partnership with Manchester City Council's Age-Friendly Manchester (AFM) programme, and local community organisations. It aimed to generate actionable insights to inform local policy and practice while also empowering older people to shape the future of their neighbourhoods.

## **Approach to Co-Production**

The project started from the principle that older people, as experts in their own lives, should be central to research on ageing. Co-researchers were trained and supported to take a key role throughout the project. The training sessions covered research ethics, interview techniques, data analysis, and dissemination, but were designed to be interactive and flexible, enabling co-researchers to draw on their own experiences and shape the learning process. Equally important were the reflection meetings, where challenges and dilemmas were discussed openly, and decisions about next steps were made collectively.

The co-researchers played a central role in shaping the research process. Working collaboratively with the academic team, they co-designed the interview schedules, to include issues such as community change and safety in public spaces — topics that reflected local priorities and lived experiences. Co-researchers also recruited participants and conducted 68 interviews with older residents in homes and community spaces. Their shared experiences as peers helped to build trust with interviewees, especially those who had not engaged with academic researchers previously.

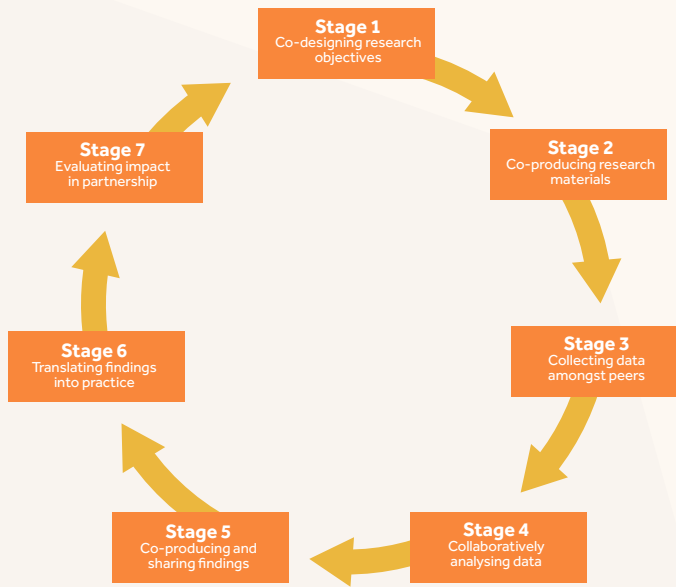


Figure 2. The different phases of the research

Dorothy, a 69-year-old co-researcher, explained:

*"I think it's easier to be interviewed by a person of a similar age. I am the average age of all my interviewees — some were older, some younger — but I imagine I'm the sort of ordinary person that they are used to talking to. It enables them to be more relaxed and open with their views".*

Similarly, Margaret, a 71-year-old co-researcher, commented:

*"I don't think the very elderly people would have disclosed as much to students or young academics as they were often ashamed of their problems such as fear of computers, severe deafness, using a commode..."*

Other co-researchers stressed the advantage of living locally and sharing local knowledge with their interviewees, enabling them to ask more pertinent questions, resulting in a deeper understanding and richer data about the age-friendly issues in the neighbourhood:

*"I think the one big advantage is that those being interviewed live in the same neighbourhood as the co-researchers. It creates a good rapport, and you've got a better understanding of the local issues."*

**Roy, 59 years-old**

*"Also, like myself, when you live in an area, you get a feel for it, you have an intuitive knowledge about the place: you read local papers and get local magazines, see notices, recognise faces, and know the places where staff are kind and willing to help... All this helps when interviewing another person and trying to understand their perspective."*

**Brenda, 70 years-old**

Despite these advantages, the study also faced a number of challenges. Developing collaborative partnerships between academics, older co-researchers, and community stakeholders was often complex and, above all, required time: time to discuss, agree, and, importantly, remain flexible about roles, responsibilities, and expectations. Power dynamics were not always easy to navigate; different perspectives sometimes clashed, and making sure all voices were heard required careful listening and ongoing attention.

It was important to work within a flexible framework that allowed the co-researchers to determine the extent and nature of their own involvement. Providing a range of adaptable roles and responsibilities helped to reflect the different and often changing ways that older people wanted to be involved over the course of the project. For some co-researchers, health problems, changes in mobility, or caring responsibilities meant they needed flexibility and additional support in order to continue their co-researcher role.

## Methods and Impact

The study used a mix of ethnographic and participatory methods, including:

- Participant observation in neighbourhood spaces.
- Participatory mapping at community events.
- Focus groups with 123 older residents and stakeholders.
- 68 in-depth interviews conducted by co-researchers.
- Collaborative data analysis sessions.
- Workshops with co-researchers and community stakeholders to turn findings into practical recommendations.

The co-researchers developed new skills, confidence, and social connections. The interviewees, many of whom were isolated, felt heard and valued.

The findings highlighted key issues such as:

- The importance of accessible transport and public toilets.
- The need for safe, sociable public spaces.
- The desire to age in place, supported by local networks.
- The impact of gentrification and service cuts on older residents.

One example that came through strongly was the loss of the 85A bus route in one of the study areas, which had been cut the year prior to the research due to funding pressures. For many older people, this was more than an inconvenience: it cut off a vital connection to shops, health services, and opportunities to meet friends. Some described how the change left them feeling trapped in their homes.

The co-researchers played an important role in campaigning to bring the bus service back. They raised the issue in community forums, spoke directly with local councillors, and helped ensure the voices of those most affected were heard. Their efforts contributed to a wider campaign that eventually led to the service being reinstated. When it returned, the co-researchers proudly referred to the former 85A as the “85 Age-Friendly Bus”. The project also influenced local policy and practice, feeding into Manchester’s Age-Friendly Strategy and inspiring similar initiatives elsewhere.

## Reflections

The project demonstrated both the potential and the challenges of co-production with older people. Taking a participatory approach can disrupt ageist assumptions, strengthen community capacity, and produce richer, more grounded research. However, it also requires time, support, and flexibility to deal with the complexities of partnership working and the presence of power imbalances. The co-researchers themselves reflected on the emotional depth of the interviews, the challenges of navigating power dynamics, and the joy of learning new skills. They also highlighted the importance of being seen and heard, not just as service users, but as contributors to knowledge and change.

*“Older people are like an encyclopaedia of information if you approach them positively.”*

**Bill Williams, Co-Researcher**

*“This project gave older people a voice. I enjoyed the experience and felt that I have improved my interviewing skills and, in doing so, have gained in confidence.”*

**Elaine Unegbu, Co-Researcher**

*"We have a right to be treated with respect and compassion in our later life, and we have a wealth of skills, knowledge, and experience we can share that would continue to improve this city."*

**Freddi Greenmantle, Co-Researcher**

## **Key Learnings and Contributions**

- Working collaboratively with older residents as co-researchers helped to uncover hidden experiences of exclusion, as their involvement made it possible to include people who would not normally take part in research.
- A diverse group of co-researchers strengthened the research. Bringing together older people from different social, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds enriched the process and helped ensure that a wider range of voices and experiences was represented among interviewees.
- Training and reflection meetings played a vital role in supporting co-researchers. Beyond developing technical research skills, these safe spaces enabled open discussion of ethical dilemmas and emotional challenges, while promoting mutual support and collective learning within the group.
- Co-research can become a powerful form of advocacy. Involving older people in generating evidence strengthens their capacity to speak for change and engage more directly with those shaping policy and practice.

## **Related Project Publications**

Buffel, T. (ed.) (2015) *Researching Age-Friendly Communities: Stories from older people as co-investigators*. The University of Manchester Library. Available at: <https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Researching-Age-Friendly-Communities.pdf> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Buffel, T. (2018) 'Social research and co-production with older people: Developing age-friendly communities', *Journal of Aging Studies*, 44, pp. 52–60. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2018.01.012>.

Buffel, T. (2019) 'Older Co-researchers Exploring Age-Friendly Communities: An "Insider" Perspective on the Benefits and Challenges of Peer-Research', *The Gerontologist*, 59(3), pp. 538–548. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnx216>.

Buffel, T. and Phillipson, C. (2019) 'Ageing in a Gentrifying Neighbourhood: Experiences of Community Change in Later Life', *Sociology*, 53(6), pp. 987–1004. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038519836848>.

Buffel, T. and Phillipson, C. (2020) 'Researching older people in gentrifying neighbourhoods', *Sociology Review*, 30(1), pp. 6–10. Available at: [https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/178107850/Sociology\\_Review\\_Volume\\_30\\_issue\\_1\\_FINAL\\_1\\_.pdf](https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/178107850/Sociology_Review_Volume_30_issue_1_FINAL_1_.pdf) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Doran, P. and Buffel, T. (2018) 'Translating Research into Action: involving older people in co-producing knowledge about age-friendly neighbourhood interventions', *Working with Older People*, 22(1), pp. 39–47. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/WWOP-11-2017-0033>.

James, H. and Buffel, T. (2023) 'Co-research with older people: a systematic literature review', *Ageing and Society*. 2022/02/10 edn, 43(12), pp. 2930–2956. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0144686X21002014>.



## **THE URBAN VILLAGES PROJECT: CO-PRODUCING COMMUNITY INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT AGEING IN PLACE**

by Mhorag Goff and Patty Doran

### **Introduction**

The Urban Villages Project explored how the US-originated Village Model could be adapted to support people to age well in place in low-income neighbourhoods in Manchester, UK. The Village Model is an approach to facilitating grassroots collective support by and for older residents at the neighbourhood level. It is a resident-led approach that enables older people to organise services and social activities that support independent living collectively, helping them remain in their homes and communities as they age.

Examples include arranging transport services, coordinating home repairs, and creating opportunities for social engagement and support.



While the Village Model had previously been developed in mainly affluent communities, its application in more disadvantaged areas with fewer assets remained largely untested. This project aimed to address this gap by working in two contrasting urban neighbourhoods in Manchester, Brunswick and Levenshulme, both of which are marked by economic deprivation but with differing social and physical infrastructures. The project was grounded in the age-friendly city framework and received financial support from Manchester City Council.

The central aim of the Urban Villages Project was to test whether co-production could be used to adapt and implement the Village Model in communities where formal volunteering and resources were limited. The project's ambition was to foster intergenerational collaboration, reduce isolation amongst older people, and stimulate new forms of community-led support.

## **Approach to Co-Production**

Co-production was embedded at every stage of the Urban Villages Project. Rather than importing a ready-made model, the researchers worked with residents to define what 'villages' could mean in their own communities. The following co-produced definition became the foundation for the project: *"a resident-led movement to improve life for people over 50 by identifying and organising the services they needed most"*.

What made this co-production approach notable was its adaptive and negotiated nature. While the original intention was to hand over full control to residents, it became clear that many older people were willing to participate in discussions and planning but were reluctant to take on leadership roles. In response, the project shifted to a co-produced model with shared leadership, where researchers acted as facilitators and mentors.

This flexibility allowed the project to accommodate varying levels of trust, health, and availability among participants. The project also recognised the importance of building capacity over time, rather than expecting immediate ownership from the older people involved. Furthermore, the co-production process was grounded in active listening and a deep understanding of the social histories and dynamics of each neighbourhood.

## **Methods and Impact**

The project began with a scoping phase involving workshops, focus groups, and informal conversations with residents and community organisations. These engagements led to the development of seven local initiatives, tailored to the needs and capacities of residents and their neighbourhoods:

- **Meal Buddies:** Social eating and befriending for isolated older people.
- **Inspire the Choir:** A community singing group promoting creativity and connection.
- **The Neighbourly Gardening Project:** Reintroducing green space and wildlife into residents' gardens.
- **The Brunswick Collective:** A supper club and wellbeing group.
- **Women's Footprints:** A multi-ethnic women's support network.
- **Men's Arts Project:** Cultural outings for socially isolated older men.
- **Travelling Storybook:** An intergenerational storytelling film project.

Each project was led by local residents and/or community workers, with the MUARG researchers providing support and seedcorn funding to initiate activities. Some were



embedded in existing community infrastructure, while others had to build networks from scratch. The projects led to a number of benefits, including improved wellbeing, stronger social networks, increased visibility for older residents, and new forms of intergenerational engagement.

## **Reflections**

The Urban Villages project demonstrated that co-production in low-income neighbourhoods is both possible and powerful, but it requires time, trust, and adaptability. One of the most important lessons was the need to recognise and work with fluctuating capacities. Health, caring responsibilities, and past experiences with institutions all shaped how and when residents could participate.

Projects that were embedded in existing organisations or led by experienced facilitators were more sustainable. Access to social infrastructure, such as community centres, churches, and cafés, was a key enabler of ongoing collaboration. Where such infrastructure was lacking, the researchers helped broker access to alternative spaces, including university facilities.

The co-production approach used in the Urban Villages Project aimed to move beyond rigid models of participation to embrace a more fluid and context-sensitive practice. This allowed the older people involved to actively contribute in ways that felt meaningful and manageable to them, enabling a growth in confidence over time.

*“The success of projects such as Urban Villages is dependent upon co-operation from a network of stakeholders, with community work skills associated with managing issues of power and conflict an important part of the repertoire of organisers.”*

*“We think there is now a need for a new age-friendly model, one which has a more organisational dimension, where the focus is on community change in a broad sense but where groups of older people run associations which have sufficient power and resources to negotiate with local services, housing providers, anchor institutions, and related bodies.”*

**Co-production findings from the final report ‘Community Interventions to Promote Ageing in Place’**

## **Key Learnings and Contributions**

- Co-production must be flexible and responsive, adapting to the pace, fluctuating capacities, and priorities of residents.
- In contexts of deprivation and regeneration, in particular, it requires ongoing negotiation, trust-building, and attentiveness to changing personal and community circumstances.
- Shared leadership models can help bridge the gap between participation and ownership, enabling residents to take meaningful roles without being overburdened.

- Embedding projects in existing social infrastructure significantly enhances sustainability and reach. Access to trusted local spaces and networks helps sustain continuity, widens participation, and supports collaboration beyond the life of the project.

## Related Project Publications

Doran, P., Goff, M., and Phillipson, C. (2023)

'Interventions to promote ageing in place: developing the Village model in Manchester', *Quality in Ageing and Older Adults*, 25(1), pp. 56–67. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/QAOA-03-2023-0022>.

Goff, M. et al. (2020) *Community Interventions to Promote 'Ageing in Place': Developing the 'Village' Model in Manchester*. Manchester Institute for Collaborative Research on Ageing (MICRA), University of Manchester. Available at: <https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=48721> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Goff, M. and Doran, P. (2024) 'Co-producing age-friendly community interventions: the Village model', in Buffel, T., Doran, P., and Yarker S. (eds) *Reimagining Age-Friendly Communities: Urban Ageing and Spatial Justice*, pp. 118–134, Bristol, UK: Policy Press. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447368571.ch007>.



## **FAITH SPACES AS SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE: CO-PRODUCING AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES FOR HEALTHY AGEING**

by Luciana Lang, Sophie Yarker, Jason Bergen, Patty Doran, Chris Phillipson, and Tine Buffel

### **Introduction**

This project explored how faith spaces across Greater Manchester (GM) contribute to the development of age-friendly communities. The study focused on the role of churches, mosques, temples, and other faith-based venues as vital forms of social infrastructure that support older people's wellbeing, inclusion, and participation.

Faith spaces are often overlooked in age-friendly policy and planning, despite their deep roots in communities and their capacity to reach diverse and underserved populations. Consequently, this 18-month study aimed to address that gap by mapping the contributions of faith spaces to the World Health Organization's (WHO) Age-Friendly Cities and Communities (AFCC) framework.



The research was co-produced with a wide range of partners, including Age-Friendly Manchester (AFM), local authorities, interfaith networks, faith leaders, and older people themselves. Using surveys, interviews, focus groups, and ethnographic fieldwork in four case study sites in Manchester — Gita Bhavan Hindu Temple, Qadria Mosque, St. Paul's Church, and the Church of God (Seventh Day) — the study examined how faith spaces contribute to age-friendly priorities and what lessons can be drawn from and for policy and practice.

The co-production component was also strengthened through a secondment arrangement, with the lead researcher based part-time within the Age-Friendly Manchester team. This embedded role facilitated close collaboration between researchers, policy officers, and community partners throughout the project.

As Jason Bergen, Age-Friendly Manchester Project Manager, noted:

*"The primary researcher, Dr Luciana Lang, was based part-time with us in the Age-Friendly Manchester (AFM) team. AFM was particularly interested in the project because it recognised the social infrastructure role of faith organisations in neighbourhoods and communities. The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent cost-of-living challenges reminded us of the importance of faith spaces in engaging diverse communities, especially their older members, and of the need to learn more to better support those communities."*

## **Approach to Co-Production**

Co-production was central to this project's design and delivery. From the outset, the research team worked closely with representatives from diverse faith communities to ensure their insights and knowledge shaped the study. This early engagement influenced not only the research questions, but also the choice of methods. For example, the project began with focus groups with faith leaders, who helped select the case study sites for the ethnographic work and refine the questions most relevant to their communities.

The research team also worked closely with older volunteers and community members throughout the process. Advisory groups, including the Age-Friendly Manchester Older People's Board, Greater Manchester Faith & Belief Panel, and the project's advisory group of faith community members, guided the work at key stages of the project.

Knowledge exchange events were held in faith spaces and co-designed with community members, who also collaborated with the organisation of these interfaith gatherings. These events brought together people from different faiths to reflect on the WHO's age-friendly domains and share practices that support older people's wellbeing: for example, providing culturally-specific meals, and offering informal advice and translation services.

A range of participatory tools were used to support dialogue and creativity. Ketso workshops, for example, involved groups working with a tactile kit of felt 'branches' and 'leaves' to map ideas, ensuring everyone had a voice and could contribute equally. Zine-making activities gave participants the chance to create collage works using handmade drawings, images, and short texts to express personal experiences



of ageing and community life. An exhibition of faith-related objects further showcased participants' cultural and spiritual heritage embedded within their communities.

What made this co-production approach distinctive was its deep engagement with culturally diverse communities and its recognition of faith spaces as trusted, community-led environments. The project, through its co-production approach, also highlighted the importance of spiritual participation, a dimension often missing from mainstream age-friendly frameworks, and highlighted a wider range of perspectives on what healthy ageing means.

## **Methods and Impact**

The study used a multi-method approach, including:

- A survey of 300 faith spaces (with 51 responses).
- 20 interviews with older people.
- 5 focus groups with 25 faith leaders.
- 9 in-depth interviews with faith leaders.



- 300 hours of ethnographic observation in 4 case study sites.
- 3 interfaith knowledge exchange events.

#### Key findings:

- Faith spaces support all eight WHO age-friendly domains, especially social participation, respect, and inclusion.
- They provide spiritual and emotional support, practical help, and opportunities for volunteering and civic engagement.
- Faith spaces are often the first point of contact for isolated or, in migrant communities, newly arrived older people.
- Many older people described their faith space as a “second family” or a “safe space” that offered continuity, purpose, and belonging.

Despite their contributions, many faith spaces face challenges: declining attendance, limited funding, reliance on ageing volunteers, and practical barriers such as building accessibility and digital exclusion. A lack of recognition in public health and ageing strategies means

their role is often overlooked. The study calls for greater collaboration between faith spaces, local authorities, and health providers, to better integrate them into age-friendly planning and unlock their full potential. Recognising faith spaces as part of the social infrastructure of cities — alongside libraries, community centres, and parks — would not only sustain their contributions but also ensure they can continue to reach older people who may not engage with other forms of support.

As Jason Bergen, Age-Friendly Manchester Project Manager, reflected:

*“The research reinforced the important role of faith spaces as social infrastructure and as routes to engage diverse communities. It prompted us, council officers and researchers, to recommend being more intentional about recognising the F for ‘Faith’ within the VCFSE (voluntary, community, faith, and social enterprise) acronym. As a direct result of this co-research and collaboration, we are now engaging with and funding more faith organisations, creating more inclusive ways to support older residents and to understand each other better.”*



## Reflections

This project demonstrates that faith spaces are critical yet under-recognised partners in the age-friendly movement. They offer culturally grounded, community-led support that reaches people who may not engage with formal services. The co-production approach revealed how older people shape and sustain these spaces through volunteering, mentoring, and transmitting cultural knowledge. It also showed that while faith spaces can offer meaningful social connection and support, including for some people of no faith, they can also reflect boundaries of belonging and exclusion that need to be recognised and carefully navigated in co-production work.

*"Here, I'm not a minority; I'm amongst my own...  
I come here because of the culture."*

**Janet, African-Caribbean woman, 60s**

*"I'm involved, I've got a commitment, I've  
something to do... This is my family."*

**Toby, White British man, 60s**

*"Older people carry a lot of religion in them...  
[they are the] carriers of heritage."*

**Young mother, Gita Bhavan Temple**

## Key Learnings and Contributions

- Faith spaces are vital forms of social infrastructure that support ageing in place, especially for marginalised and ethnically minoritised communities.
- Spiritual participation should be recognised as a key domain in age-friendly frameworks, alongside physical and social wellbeing.

- Co-production with faith communities can unlock new pathways for inclusive, culturally sensitive age-friendly practice.
- Embedding researchers within policy teams and vice versa can facilitate co-production. The secondment between the University of Manchester and Age-Friendly Manchester enabled ongoing dialogue, mutual learning, and the translation of research insights directly into local policy and practice.

## **Related Project Publications**

Lang, L. et al. (2024) *Developing Age-Friendly Communities to Support Healthy Ageing: The Role of Faith Spaces as Social Infrastructure*. Manchester: The University of Manchester. Available at: <https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=72395> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Lang, L, Yarker, S., Phillipson, C., and Buffel, T. (2025) 'Exploring the role of faith spaces as social infrastructure in creating age-friendly communities', *Journal of Religion, Spirituality & Aging*, pp. 1–22. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15528030.2025.2559227>.

# Echoes of Displacement

A collective story of growing older  
& seeking sanctuary in Manchester



Researched by Tess Hartland  
Illustrated by Lindsay Pollock

Written collaboratively alongside people  
with lived experience of seeking sanctuary.

## **ECHOES OF DISPLACEMENT: CO-PRODUCING A COMIC BOOK WITH OLDER REFUGEES**

by Tess Hartland and Lindsay Pollock

### **Introduction**

This project explored the lived experiences of older refugees and asylum seekers in Greater Manchester through the co-production of a comic book. The aim was to understand how older people seeking sanctuary navigate ageing in a context of precarity, marked by housing insecurity, limited access to services, and the emotional toll of displacement.



The project was grounded in a commitment to participatory and creative research methods that centre the voices of marginalised older people. It involved life story interviews with 26 people aged 50 and over originating from 12 countries across Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East, followed by a series of co-production workshops to develop the comic book.

The final output, titled *Echoes of Displacement: A Collective Story of Growing Older and Seeking Sanctuary in Manchester*, presents a narrative based on participants' experiences, which was illustrated by artist Lindsay Pollock. It is both a research product and a tool for advocacy, designed to raise awareness among policymakers, service providers, and the wider public.

## **Approach to Co-Production**

What makes the co-production approach in this project unique is its use of visual storytelling to bridge linguistic, cultural, and emotional barriers. The comic book format was chosen together with participants and local refugee organisations as an accessible, engaging, and empowering medium.

The co-production process included:

- Life story interviews that foregrounded participants as 'knowledge holders' of their own experiences.
- Two participatory workshops where participants worked alongside the researcher and a comic artist to shape the narrative, imagery, and tone of the comic.
- Collaborative development of characters, scenes, and dialogue based on real-life experiences, with a focus on accuracy, dignity, and emotional truth.

This approach allowed participants to move beyond the role of research subjects and become co-authors of the story. It also created a safe and supportive space for sharing difficult experiences, building solidarity, and reclaiming agency in the face of systemic disempowerment.

## **Methods and Impact**

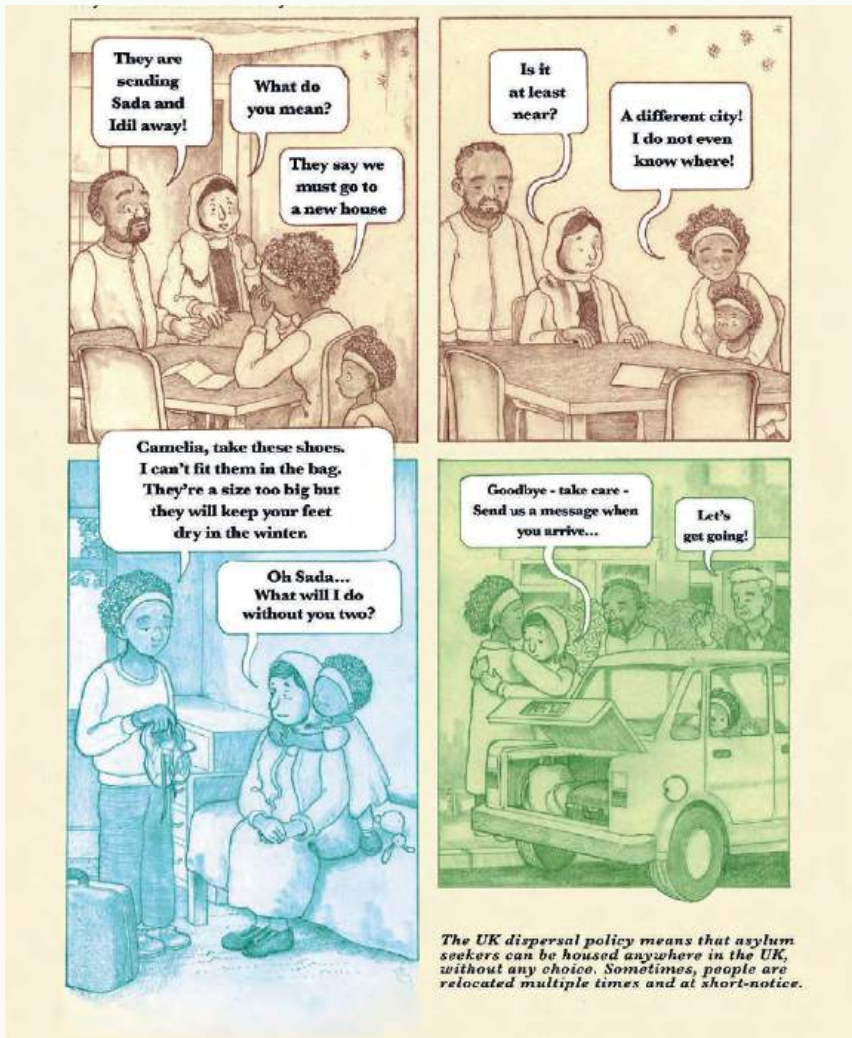
The project combined qualitative and creative methods:

- 26 life story interviews with older refugees and asylum seekers.
- 2 co-production workshops with 13 participants.
- Ongoing collaboration with a comic artist and local refugee support organisations.

Key impacts of the co-production approach:

- Participants shaped the visual and narrative content of the comic, ensuring it reflected their realities and priorities.
- The comic humanises the refugee experience, fostering empathy and understanding among readers.
- The process itself was empowering: participants felt heard, respected, and part of something meaningful.
- The comic has been used in community events, training sessions, and policy discussions to highlight the challenges and resilience of older refugees.

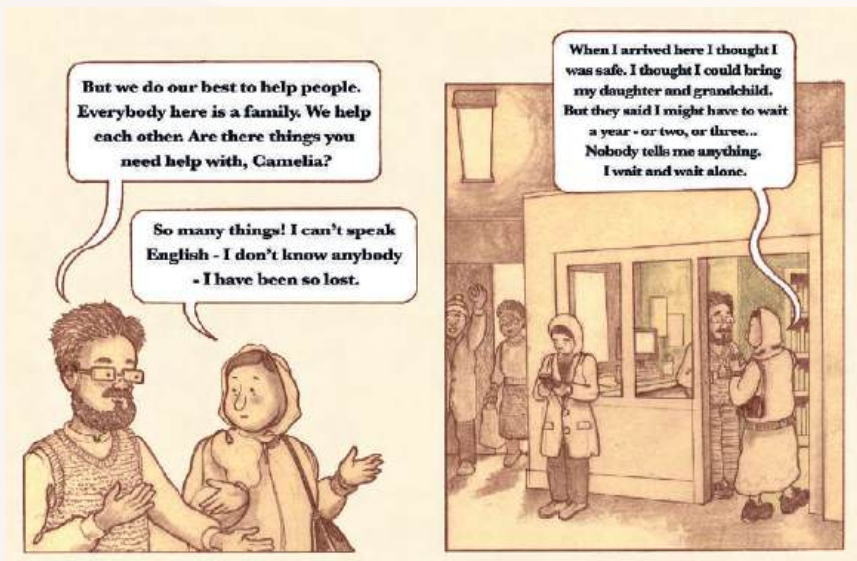
The project revealed the structural barriers that shape participants' lives: the uncertainty of asylum decisions, the trauma of forced migration, and the daily struggles of ageing without secure housing, income, or family support. But it also highlighted the resilience of participants, and the vital role of community organisations, which often provide a lifeline of support, friendship, and solidarity.



## Reflections

The comic book demonstrates how co-production can be used to challenge invisibility and amplify the voices of those often excluded from ageing research and policy. By combining creative methods with a trauma-informed, participatory ethos, the project demonstrated a way of doing research that is inclusive and culturally sensitive.

The co-production process was not without challenges. Language barriers, cultural differences in communication, and the emotional weight of participants' stories required



careful facilitation. Some participants were initially hesitant, shaped by experiences of surveillance and control in the asylum system. But with time, trust, and encouragement, they embraced the opportunity to shape the narrative.

Responses to the comic showed its impact. Readers described how it 'communicates emotion in a way a research paper can't', and that 'this makes people see others', highlighting the potential of creative methods to convey emotions, challenge stereotypes, and make research more accessible.

## Key Learnings and Contributions

- Co-producing creative outputs requires ongoing negotiation of representation. Translating lived experiences into a visual comic book involved collective decisions about how to portray trauma, hope, and resilience. This process revealed the ethical importance of ensuring participants retained a sense of agency over how their stories were told.
- Visual storytelling can foster empathy and advocacy, translating complex and often marginalised

experiences into forms that engage both emotion and understanding across diverse audiences.

- Trust-building, cultural sensitivity, and trauma-informed facilitation are essential in co-production processes with displaced and precarious populations. The emotional intensity of participants' experiences required flexible timelines, care-oriented spaces, and sensitivity to withdrawal or silence. Recognising the emotional labour of both the participants and researchers was key to sustaining ethical and inclusive engagement.

## **Related Project Publications**

Hartland, T. (2023) "'Powerful and humanising": bringing research on ageing and displacement to life', *Global Development Institute Blog*, 25 July. Available at: <http://blog.gdi.manchester.ac.uk/powerful-and-humanising-bringing-research-on-ageing-and-displacement-to-life/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Hartland, T. and Pollock, L. (2023) *Echoes of Displacement*. Available at: <https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=68550> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Hartland, T.G. (2025) *Navigating Precarity: Narratives of Ageing from Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Greater Manchester*. The University of Manchester. Available at: [https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/1632215296/FULL\\_TEXT.PDF](https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/1632215296/FULL_TEXT.PDF) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Tenquist, M., Hartland, T., and Salles, J. (2024) 'Ageing in the margins: exploring experiences of precarity in urban environments', in *Reimagining Age-Friendly Communities: Urban Ageing and Spatial Justice*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press, pp. 177–203. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447368571.ch010>.



## **CO-CREATING A NATURALLY OCCURRING RETIREMENT COMMUNITY (NORC) IN SOCIAL HOUSING**

by Niamh Kavanagh, Mark Hammond, Tine Buffel, Alan Lewis, Paul McGarry, Chris Phillipson, Stefan White, and Sophie Yarker

### **Introduction**

This project explored the co-production of a naturally occurring retirement community (NORC) in a social housing tower block in inner-city Manchester. Originating in North America, NORCs are areas that contain a large concentration of older adults, and NORC programmes respond to this by providing a range of integrated health and social support clustered within and around the existing accommodation.

The focus of this project is Hopton Court, a nine-storey social housing tower block in Hulme, Manchester. Located on the fringe of Manchester's city centre, Hulme has undergone successive waves of urban change



over several decades and now faces distinct pressures from university expansion, with gentrification spilling over from the city centre, and persistent disadvantage among many of its long-standing communities.

Although not originally designed for older people, around 75% of tenants living in Hopton Court are aged 50+. Most live alone and face a range of structural inequalities, such as poverty and social exclusion, alongside poor health and the physical challenges associated with living in high-rise accommodation.

The project responds to the challenges of ageing in place in a context marked by long-standing health and social inequalities. The NORC initiative has emerged from over a decade of grassroots community-led action and mutual aid, resulting in the culmination of the *Ageing Well in Place in Hulme* partnership, involving older tenants, One Manchester housing association, local community organisations including Community Led Action and Savings Support (CLASS), and researchers from the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG). The aim was to create a tenant-led model of integrated support, combining health, social care, and community building within the existing housing infrastructure.

## **Approach to Co-Production**

What makes the Hopton Court NORC distinctive is its grounding in tenant-led activism and a deeply embedded co-production process. Rather than being imposed from above, the NORC was catalysed through grassroots tenant action, and has been co-developed through years of community organising, creative engagement, and participatory research.



Throughout this time, tenants co-authored reports, conducted surveys, and collaborated with their housing association and academics to define the priorities of the NORC. These included age-banding the block as an over-50s building, creating a tenant-managed community space, and recruiting dedicated support workers: an Independent Living Worker to offer one-to-one support for older tenants, and a NORC Development Worker to co-produce the NORC initiative on the ground with tenants, focused on bringing the community together.

The co-production process used to develop the NORC initiative was iterative and relational. It involved:

- Weekly drop-ins and social events co-organised by tenants and a NORC Development Worker.
- Participatory design workshops to co-create a new community space.
- Collaborative planning with health providers, local charities, and housing staff.

This approach was shaped by the lived realities of tenants, many of whom had experienced exclusion, mistrust, and precarity. As one tenant put it, the NORC was about “keeping ageing people in their own properties... at a time when they need the community more than ever”.

## **Methods and Impact**

The NORC initiative was supported by a two-year participatory action research project, using mixed methods including:

- 200 hours of community engagement, co-design meetings, and consultations.
- Fieldnotes, interviews, and observations.
- Tenant-led surveys.
- Co-produced events, gardening groups, and cooking classes.

Key impacts included:

- Increased social capital and reduced isolation through regular social activities.
- Improved access to health and care services, facilitated by an Independent Living Worker.
- Greater tenant confidence and participation, including among those with limited English.
- A shift from reactive to proactive support, helping prevent crises and hospital admissions.
- Learning from Hopton Court used as the basis of further NORC initiatives in neighbouring tower blocks.

Despite these successes, the project faced significant challenges. Precarious funding, high staff turnover, and inconsistent communication from institutional partners undermined trust and continuity of the project.

The loss of the Independent Living Worker role was described by tenants as “a bitter blow,” highlighting the fragility of progress without sustained investment.

## Reflections

The Hopton Court NORC is one of the first of its kind in the UK and offers a powerful example of how co-production can be used to address spatial injustice and support ageing in place in high-rise social housing. At the same time, it also reveals the emotional labour, persistence, and creativity required on behalf of tenants to sustain such work in the face of systemic precarity.

Tenants described the process as a “rollercoaster”, marked by cycles of hope and frustration, yet their activism — through research, storytelling, and collective organising — has been the driving force behind the NORC’s development.

*“No one gives you power, you have to take it.”*

**Hopton Tenant**

*“She [the Independent Living Worker] changed the building beyond recognition.”*

**Hopton Tenant**

*“These really small moments [of connecting] can actually make a huge impact on people.”*

**NORC Development Worker**

*“As well as helping to support tenants and change on the ground, our role as researchers was to also generate learning about developing a NORC in a novel context, reflecting on the process to understand what the opportunities and barriers are”*

**Mark Hammond, Researcher**



The work at Hopton Court shows that NORCs grounded in an activist ethic can foster trust, build community, and create space for older people to become local agents of change. But it also underscores the need for long-term, properly resourced partnerships that support — not exhaust — those leading the work.

## **Key Learnings and Contributions**

- Hyper-local co-production, via support workers, can transform high-rise housing into supportive environments for ageing in place.
- Tenant-led activism is a powerful driver of change but must be matched by institutional commitment and sustained funding.
- Co-production in marginalised communities requires time, trust, and flexibility, with attention to power dynamics, precarity, and emotional labour.



## Related Project Publications

Cribbin, T. et al. (2021) 'Ageing well in place in Hulme, Manchester'. Available at: <https://communitysavers.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/AgeingWellInPlaceInHulme-March2021.pdf> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Cribbin, T. (2021) *Classphemy*. Empire Publications.

Cribbin, T. and Finnegan, A. (2019) *Thirsty Scholars: A Celebration of Hulme People*. Empire Publications.

Darren (2023) 'Ageing Well in Place at Hopton Court: Achievements and challenges', *Community Savers*, 20 August. Available at: <https://communitysavers.net/ageing-well-in-place-at-hopton-court-achievements-and-challenges/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Hammond, M., Kavanagh, N., Lewis, A., Buffel, T., McGarry, P., Phillipson, C., White, S., Yarker, S. (2025) *Co-creating age-friendly social housing: Improving the experience of ageing in place through community collaboration*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.23634/MMU.00642693>.

Hopton Hopefuls and King, S. (2021) *Ageing Well in Place at Hopton Court*. Available at: <https://communitysaversonet/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/AgeingWellinPlace-HoptonCourt.pdf> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Kavanagh, N. et al. (2025) 'Working with conflict in community research', *British Science Association* [Preprint]. Available at: <https://www.britishecienceassociation.org/essay-13-dunhill-mancs-working-with-conflict> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Kavanagh, N. and Hammond, M. (Forthcoming) 'Ageing, Activism and Social Infrastructure: Advancing spatial justice within the Age-Friendly agenda', *Quality in Ageing and Older Adults* [Preprint].

Kavanagh, N., Hammond, M., and Lewis, A. (2025) 'Co-Creating Spatial Justice in High-Rise Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs) in Manchester, UK', in *Architectures of Ageing*. Routledge. Available at: [https://www.routledge.com/Architectures-of-Ageing-in-Place/Chatterjee/p/book/9781032571188?srsId=AfmBOoqJdAlreL5GxFkZQLut\\_AjIshPI24xBdssDr4FD7b-yVh\\_MrJ9](https://www.routledge.com/Architectures-of-Ageing-in-Place/Chatterjee/p/book/9781032571188?srsId=AfmBOoqJdAlreL5GxFkZQLut_AjIshPI24xBdssDr4FD7b-yVh_MrJ9) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Royal Exchange Theatre (2019) '*Can You Hear Me From Up Here*'. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6tw3ioH1UuM> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Salles, J. (2020) '*Power From The Tower*'. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QYVg33U57vI> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

User, A. (2024) 'Hulme tenants lead the way on Ageing Well in Place', *Community Savers*, 2 October. Available at: <https://communitysaversonet/hulme-tenants-lead-the-way-on-ageing-well-in-place/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).



## **RESISTING GENTRIFICATION: CO-PRODUCING DOCUMENTARY FILMS WITH OLDER PEOPLE**

by Joana Salles

### **Introduction**

This project explored how older people living on low incomes in gentrifying neighbourhoods experience and resist displacement from their community. The study focused on the municipality of Molenbeek in Brussels, Belgium, an ethnically diverse, working-class area west of the city centre where older residents have witnessed rapid urban change, rising housing costs, and the deterioration of social housing and public services.

Gentrification is often framed as urban improvement, but for many older residents, it brings precarity with the erosion of place attachment, the displacement of social networks, and exclusion from new amenities. This project sought to document these experiences and amplify the voices of those most affected.



The research was conducted in collaboration with the Molenbeek Tenants Union, a grassroots group working to improve the area for older and low-income residents. Together, the team co-produced a short documentary film that captured the lived realities of gentrification and the everyday forms of resistance practised by older people.

## **Approach to Co-Production**

This project used community-based documentary filmmaking as a tool for both research and resistance. Rather than simply documenting the changes, the project invited older residents of Molenbeek to shape the narrative, select the themes, and guide the filming process.

The co-production process included:

- Long-term relationship-building through regular participation in community meetings and events.
- Collaborative identification of key themes and stories through semi-structured interviews and group discussions.
- Shared decision-making about what to film, how to represent the neighbourhood, and what messages to convey.
- Ongoing feedback loops, where participants reviewed footage and contributed to editing decisions.

This approach allowed older residents to reclaim control over how their neighbourhood and lives are represented. It also created a space for collective reflection and solidarity, where participants could share memories, express frustrations, and imagine alternative futures.

## Methods and Impact

The project combined ethnographic fieldwork with participatory video methods. Over 12 months, the researcher attended weekly coffee mornings, community breakfasts, and local events, gradually building trust and familiarity with older residents of Molenbeek.

Key impacts of the co-production approach:

- Older residents shaped the film's narrative, ensuring it reflected their lived experiences and priorities.
- The process fostered a sense of ownership and pride, and the film became a tool for advocacy, used to engage local policymakers and raise awareness about the effects of gentrification on older people.
- The project deepened understanding of how older people resist displacement — not only through protest, but through everyday acts of care, storytelling, and community-building.



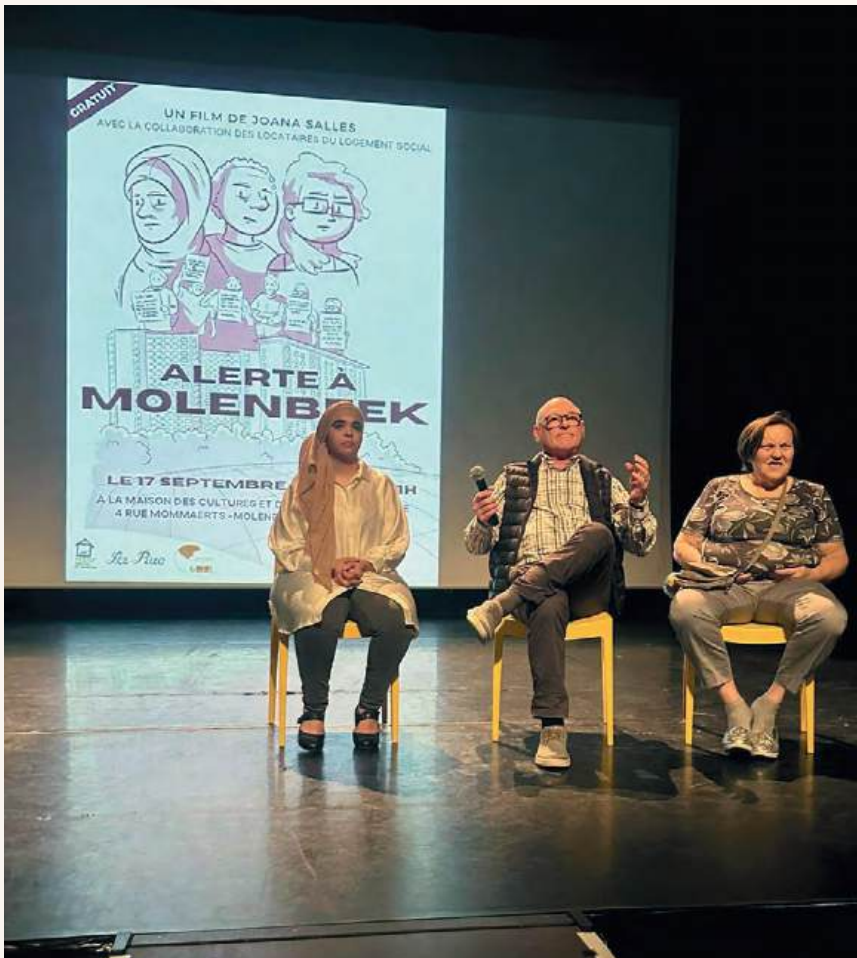


## Reflections

This project demonstrates how creative co-production methodologies can be used to challenge dominant narratives and support older people as active agents of change. By combining these creative methods with long-term community engagement, the films became a tool for activism and a way of ensuring that older people's voices carried weight in local discussions.

The filmmaking process gave residents a sense of ownership over how their experiences of gentrification were represented. Film screenings created spaces for dialogue between residents, housing providers, local authorities, and the wider public. In this way, the films worked both to build solidarity within the community and to project older people's perspectives into wider debates about neighbourhood change.

The co-production process was not without its challenges. Some research participants were uncomfortable being filmed, raising questions about visibility and consent. Others were initially hesitant to speak out, reflecting the broader



dynamics of marginalisation and mistrust. However, by creating multiple entry points for participation, including scriptwriting, editing feedback, and informal conversations, the project was able to include a wide range of voices.

*"I enjoyed doing this film; it's a great way to bring awareness to what is happening in the area."*

**Molenbeek resident**

*"I hope this film will be shown to different audiences; images are important to change people's outlook on things."*

**Molenbeek resident**

## Key Learnings and Contributions

- Co-producing a documentary with older people can challenge erasure by making visible the lived experiences of those often excluded from urban narratives.
- Creative co-production methods can foster agency and solidarity, enabling older people to resist gentrification through storytelling and collective memory.
- Long-term, embedded engagement is essential for building trust and ensuring that co-production is meaningful and not tokenistic.

## Related Project Publications

Salles, J. (2025) '*Molenbeek On Watch [Alerte à Molenbeek]*'. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oxpHy0yXfY> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Tenquist, M., Hartland, T., and Salles, J. (2024) 'Ageing in the margins: exploring experiences of precarity in urban environments', in *Reimagining Age-Friendly Communities: Urban Ageing and Spatial Justice*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press, pp. 177–203. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447368571.ch010>.



## **COVID-19, INEQUALITY, AND OLDER PEOPLE: A COMMUNITY-CENTRED, CO-PRODUCED RESPONSE**

by Chris Phillipson, Camilla Lewis, Luciana Lang, Sophie Yarker, Patty Doran, Mhorag Goff, and Tine Buffel

### **Introduction**

This project explored the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on older people living in areas of multiple deprivation across Greater Manchester (GM). It focused on how social exclusion, health inequalities, and neighbourhood disadvantage shaped older people's experiences during repeat periods of lockdown, and how co-produced research could help shed light on these lived experiences and inform more inclusive responses.

The study was developed in collaboration with a wide range of community partners, including the Manchester Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Network, Caribbean and African Health Network, Ethnic Health Forum, Kashmiri Youth Project, and the LGBT Foundation.



It was also supported by the Centre for Ageing Better (CfAB), Manchester City Council, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA), and the National Lottery Community Fund. Many of these collaborations were developed over years of partnership working. These organisations provided vital support to older people during the pandemic.

The project aimed to understand how older people — particularly those from marginalised communities — navigated the pandemic, and how their voices could shape future policy. It also sought to highlight the role of community organisations in supporting older people and to co-produce recommendations for more equitable recovery strategies.

## **Approach to Co-Production**

The research was carried out in close collaboration with 21 community organisations and 102 older people, many of whom were interviewed up to three times over a 12-month period in 2020–2021 in order to understand how their experiences changed over time. Community partners helped shape the research questions, interview some of the participants, and interpret the findings. The interviews were conducted in multiple languages, and community researchers played a key role in reaching groups often excluded from traditional research, including older people from South Asian, African Caribbean, and LGBTQ+ communities.

The project also co-produced a series of outputs, including reports, blogs, and policy briefings, that reflected the lived experiences of participants. These were shared with local authorities, health providers, and national ageing organisations.



What made the co-production approach especially powerful was its responsiveness. As the pandemic evolved, so did the research. The team adapted their approaches quickly, to track responses to the pandemic as they unfolded, creating opportunities for participants to reflect on their changing circumstances. This flexibility helped build trust and allowed for deeper, more meaningful engagement.

## Methods and Impact

The project used a longitudinal, qualitative design, combining:

- 300+ hours of telephone interviews with 102 older people (many interviewed three times).
- 21 telephone interviews with community organisations.
- Co-produced blogs, reports, and policy briefings.

Key impacts of the co-production approach included:

- **Amplifying marginalised voices:** The project highlighted how COVID-19 deepened existing inequalities, particularly for older people from ethnic minority backgrounds, those living alone, and those with limited digital access.

- **Influencing policy:** Findings informed local and national strategies on the impact of the pandemic on older people, health inequalities, and community resilience.
- **Building capacity:** Community organisations gained new tools and evidence to advocate for their members. Older participants reported feeling heard, valued, and more connected.
- **Shaping public discourse:** The project challenged dominant narratives of ageing and vulnerability, showing the resilience, creativity, and leadership of older people during the crisis.

## Reflections

This project demonstrates how co-production can be used to respond to crisis — not only by gathering data, but by building solidarity, trust, and shared knowledge. It also shows how co-production can draw attention to experiences that are often hidden: the loneliness of shielding, the emotional toll of being cut off from family, faith groups, and public life, as well as the strength of community networks.

By collaborating with community organisations, the project was able to reach a wide and diverse group of older people from across Greater Manchester — taxi drivers, LGBT+ activists, African Caribbean church members, and residents living in high-rise social housing — to document the very different experiences and responses to the pandemic.

*"It has been a big shock; I can no longer meet family and friends when I'd like to. I feel very restricted, and I'm not used to using technology. I'm forced to talk to people on FaceTime or telephone. I can't really move around; I'm worried about the future and about my family and friends."*

**Tajim, 55-year-old Bangladeshi taxi driver**

*“We are living as if we are temporary. We never can get out from fear.”*

**Yasmin, 64-year-old Pakistani woman**

*“This project gave us a voice. It showed that we are not just vulnerable — we are valuable.”*

**Community partner**

## **Key Learnings and Contributions**

- Co-production can be a powerful tool during periods of crisis, especially where relationships of trust with communities are already in place.
- Working with community partners is essential to reach marginalised older people and to tailor methodological approaches so they are culturally appropriate.
- Co-produced longitudinal research can surface deep insights into how inequality, place, and identity shape experiences of ageing over time — especially in times of crisis.

## **Related Project Publications**

Buffel, T., Doran, P., Goff, M., et al. (2020) ‘Covid-19 and inequality: developing an age-friendly strategy for recovery in low-income communities’, *Quality in Ageing and Older Adults*, 21(4), pp. 271–279. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/QAOA-09-2020-0044>.

Buffel, T., Yarker, S., Phillipson, C., Lang, L., Lewis, C., Doran, P., and Goff, M. (2023) ‘Locked down by inequality: Older people and the COVID-19 pandemic’, *Urban Studies*, 60(8), pp. 1465–1482. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/00420980211041018>.

Lewis, C., Phillipson, C., Yarker, S., and Lang, L. (2023) *COVID-19, Inequality and Older People: Everyday Life during the Pandemic*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.56687/9781447367468>.

Lewis, C., Phillipson, C., et al. (2023) 'Precarity and the Pandemic: The Impact of COVID-19 on Single Men Living Alone', *The Gerontologist*, 63(1), pp. 131–139. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnac129>.

Lewis, C. (2025) "'Stay at home": analysing the implications of COVID-19 for unpaid carers', *Families, Relationships and Societies*, pp. 1–17. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1332/20467435Y2025D000000071>.

Phillipson, C. et al. (2021) 'COVID-19 and social exclusion: Experiences of older people living in areas of multiple deprivation', in. University of Manchester, Manchester Institute of Collaborative Research on Ageing (MICRA). Available at: [https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/196683355/Report\\_final\\_Covid.pdf](https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/196683355/Report_final_Covid.pdf) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Phillipson, C., Lewis, C., and Grenier, A. (2025) 'The social organisation of COVID-19: experiences and consequences for older people', *Cogent Gerontology*, 4(1), p. 2554141. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/28324897.2025.2554141>.

Yarker, S., Lewis, C., and Lang, L. (2024) 'The role of community and voluntary organisations in creating spatially just age-friendly cities', in *Reimagining Age-Friendly Communities: Urban Ageing and Spatial Justice*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press (Ageing in a Global Context), pp. 156–174. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447368571.ch009>.



## **CO-PRODUCING RESEARCH ON THE COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS WITH OLDER ETHNIC MINORITY COMMUNITIES**

by Camilla Lewis, Sophie Yarker, and Chris Phillipson

### **Introduction**

This project explored how the cost-of-living crisis affected older people from ethnic minority backgrounds in Greater Manchester (GM). It was co-produced by researchers from The University of Manchester, the Manchester Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Network, and the Centre for Ageing Better (CfAB). The research focused on the lived experiences of older people from African, Caribbean, South Asian, and other ethnically minoritised communities.

The study built on earlier Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG) research into the impact of COVID-19, which found that the virus had the greatest impact on areas characterised by high levels of deprivation, on people living alone, and people from African Caribbean and South Asian Communities.



The project was guided by three research questions:

- What impact is the cost-of-living crisis having on the everyday lives of older ethnic minority people?
- What types of support are available to different groups of older people? What gaps in support are there?
- What new services and additional support for existing groups might be needed given the present crisis?

## **Approach to Co-Production**

The research was carried out using a co-research approach, working with the Manchester BME Network and Centre for Ageing Better (CfAB) to promote knowledge production within ethnically marginalised communities.

The project included:

- A collaborative workshop with older people and community organisations.
- Interviews with 12 older people and 5 community organisations.
- A co-analysis workshop with community researchers.
- A final policy-focused workshop with stakeholders.
- A co-written report (academic team, Manchester BME Network and CfAB) for policymakers and community groups.

Four community researchers from the Manchester BME Network conducted the interviews.



As one co-researcher explained:

*"I have known many of these people for more than 10 years but it's not every day that you can ask these questions. And it's not every day that their voices are heard... It's about trust, it shows that people trust us with their lives and explained about confidentiality. This trust has been built over the years, built on openness and trust and transparency."*

Another co-researcher reflected:

*"It was quite emotive to know the extent they [older people] are suffering."*

## **Methods and Impact**

The research revealed the severe and unequal impact of the cost-of-living crisis on older ethnic minority people. Participants described skipping meals, avoiding heating their homes, and struggling with debt.

*"I feed my family first and then eat what is left over."*

**53-year-old Black British woman**

*"We no longer have any luxuries like cakes. We just buy basic food, to keep us going. Our budget has been terribly affected... We are not managing at all."*

**73-year-old Black African man**

Fuel poverty was a major concern:

*"I live like a vampire; the lights are hardly on."*

**64-year-old South Asian woman**

*"My fuel bill has come to more than my mortgage. I can't afford to enjoy adult life, or afford a break or a holiday."*

**53-year-old Black British woman**

The research also highlighted the emotional toll of the crisis:

*"You sort of see their faces and you sort of, 'What's up,' and yeah, all they will say is that, 'You know what, I'm just fed up, I'm fed up with it all because I can't see, can't see an end to it.'"*

**Community support worker**

## Reflections

The findings highlight the resilience of participants and the importance of developing culturally sensitive support. One participant described how her church provided vital companionship:

*"My Pastor's wife is very concerned about me... and her and the Pastor pick me up to take me to church. They call me to make sure that I am not feeling down."*

**76-year-old Black African woman**



The research also identified gaps in services for older men and the need for more culturally appropriate food support.

One community worker explained:

*"We get our African food: maize meal, peanut butter. Ethnic food is very expensive because it's from Africa... We feel very supported because it will be difficult for us to pay to buy."*

**53-year-old Zimbabwean woman**

The findings informed a set of policy recommendations, including:

- Raising awareness of the specific impacts of the crisis on older ethnic minority people.
- Prioritising culturally appropriate food provision.
- Supporting older people with cultural sensitivity.
- Reinvesting in public services and addressing structural inequality.

## Key Learnings and Contributions

- Co-research with trusted community members enabled open conversations about sensitive topics.
- The project challenged stereotypes by highlighting the resilience and resourcefulness of older ethnic minority people.
- Co-production ensured that the research was grounded in lived experience and informed by those most affected.
- The findings have direct implications for policy and service design in Greater Manchester and beyond.

## Related Project Publications

Lewis, C. et al. (2023) *The Impact of the Cost of Living Crisis on Older Ethnic Minority People in Greater Manchester*. Manchester: The University of Manchester. Available at: <https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=71052> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Lewis, C., Yarker, S., and Phillipson, C. (2024) 'Living with financial insecurity: Analysing the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on older ethnic minority people', *Social Policy & Administration*, 59(2), pp. 265–279. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/spol.13074>.



## **UNCERTAIN FUTURES: CO-PRODUCING ART AND RESEARCH WITH OLDER WOMEN ON WORK AND INEQUALITY**

by Elaine Dewhurst, Sarah Campbell, Suzanne Lacy, Ruth Edson, and the Uncertain Futures Advisory Group

### **Introduction**

Uncertain Futures is a collaborative art and research project that explores the experiences of work and worklessness for women over 50 in Manchester. It was co-produced by artist Suzanne Lacy, Manchester Art Gallery, an Uncertain Futures Advisory Group of 14 Community leaders, Manchester City Council's Work and Skills team, and researchers from The University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU). The project investigates how gender, age, race, migration status, disability, and socio-economic status intersect to shape women's working lives.

The project began with a city-wide consultation in 2019, which identified work and pensions as key concerns for older women. A diverse Uncertain Futures Advisory Group of 14 women over 50 was formed to co-design and



lead the project. Together, they shaped a participatory research process that included 100 in-depth interviews with women from across Manchester, conducted inside a purpose-built installation at Manchester Art Gallery.

Through three distinct art exhibitions at Manchester Art Gallery during 2021–2025, the team worked together using participatory research principles to co-design, co-develop, and co-produce research outputs (including a research report), an impact toolkit on participatory research within communities, a Manifesto of Rights for Older Women, and a Connectivity Map, in addition to a research documentary, a 3-channel installation film, and a number of other short films.

The project also co-produced numerous community events, 'Chai and Chat' afternoons, policy showcases, and practical workshops. The project was recently showcased at the NBK Museum in Berlin, Germany, alongside a lively workshop, and it will be part of the Wellcome Collection's new exhibition on 'The Coming of Age' in 2026. The project has succeeded in giving voice to women across Manchester and in highlighting the voices of marginalised and minoritised populations through a fusion of art and research.

## **Approach to Co-Production**

During the Uncertain Futures project, the Uncertain Futures Advisory Group was integral to the work: they collaborated on devising the research questions, research ethics application, and interview schedules. They also supported the recruitment of a diverse range of 100 Manchester-based women to participate in the interviews and advised on all aesthetic decisions for the artistic productions.



The group continued their engagement throughout the project, forming small working groups to focus on particular elements of the project, such as civic engagement and activism. They facilitated 'Chai and Chat' sessions, developed public events, and co-analysed the interview data alongside the academic researchers.

The interviews were conducted in a soundproof booth within the gallery. When an interview was in progress, a red-light box was lit stating 'interview in progress'. White noise was played to protect the anonymity of the woman speaking inside. **This booth was more than a structure — it became a sanctuary for stories. Its quiet, enclosed space invited reflection and honesty, enabling participants to share experiences and perspectives that are often unheard.** The process was designed with an ethics of care at its core, ensuring a safe and respectful environment for participants.

## **Methods and Impact**

The research centred on 100 semi-structured interviews with women aged 50–90, representing a wide range of ethnicities, migration histories, employment statuses, and life experiences. Interviews were conducted in a soundproof booth within the gallery, transforming the act of listening into a public performance of care and recognition.

Thematic analysis was co-led by the research team and Advisory Group members, using an intersectional framework. Key themes included:

- The enduring contribution of older women through paid and unpaid work.
- The impact of fragmented life courses on pensions, health, and wellbeing.
- Structural inequalities in access to work, including age, race, and disability discrimination.
- Aspirations for retirement and the reality of pension poverty.

The project produced a major research report, a short documentary, and a public manifesto calling for policy change. It also influenced local employment support services, contributed to national debates on ageing and inequality, and was featured in the UN's Decade of Healthy Ageing progress report.

One Advisory Group member, Tendayi Madzunu, reflected:

*"We have also some of the findings [that] included a woman who has spent about 25 years... doing caring responsibilities. But when it comes to pension that caring is not counted in... if the government was paying for the voluntary work. If we can cost it, that we have saved the government billions and out of those billions, why not just give this woman — deserving woman — a little bit of appreciation?"*

Another participant, Victoria, described her aspiration for retirement:

*"Having a roof over my head, being able to pay the rent for that... gas and electricity and food... to go on holiday once a year... that's what's comfortable."*



The project has been recognised nationally and internationally as both *facilitative* — amplifying the voices of marginalised groups, fostering dialogue, generating ripple effects in local communities, enhancing knowledge, and promoting wellbeing — and *transformative*, by showing how socially engaged, interdisciplinary approaches can inform practice, drive meaningful change, and shape policy.

Its transformative impact has also been acknowledged locally (Winner of the Manchester Culture Award for promoting equality and social justice, 2022) and internationally (selected by WHO as a case study in its Progress Report on the Decade of Healthy Ageing 2021–2023, contributing to the Decade’s success). The project has informed Manchester City Council’s development of a youth participatory initiative (the Lived Experience Group) and supported community organisations in securing funding for follow-on projects and embedding co-creative practices.



## Reflections

The project revealed the emotional and material realities of ageing in a society marked by inequality. As Advisory Group member Atiha Chaudry stated:

*“As a society, we shouldn’t tolerate this level of unfairness and inequality and discrimination.”*

The interviews highlighted the gap between aspiration and reality. One participant, Gemma, said:

*“I’m expecting I’ll be cleaning toilets till I’m 85... I might be living in a treetop in a park.”*

Another, Löis, reflected on her future after a life of caring:

*“There is a lot of uncertainty ahead. I don’t know who might be looking after me in the future after I’ve looked after other people.”*

The project’s exhibitions, films, and manifesto created a platform for these voices to be heard — not just in the gallery, but in policy spaces and public discourse too.

## Key Learnings and Contributions

- Co-production can transform both research and public institutions, turning galleries into spaces of listening, learning, and change.
- Intersectional co-production reveals complex inequalities that are often missed by traditional research methods.
- Older women's voices must be central to policy on work, ageing, and care — not as a matter of inclusion, but of justice.

## Related Project Publications

Campbell, S. et al. (2023) 'Gerontology, Art, and Activism: Can the Intersection of Art, Social Research, and Community Power Lead to Lasting Change?', *The Gerontologist*, 63(10), pp. 1654–1662. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnad090>.

Dewhurst, E. and Campbell, S. (2023) *COVID heroes left behind: the 'invisible' women struggling to make ends meet*, *The Conversation*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.64628/AB.eta97edgq>.

Dewhurst, E. and Campbell, S. (2023) *Uncertain Futures: 100 Women*. University of Manchester. Available at: [https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/281224925/Uncertain\\_Futures\\_Report\\_2023.pdf](https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/281224925/Uncertain_Futures_Report_2023.pdf) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Gogarty, L.A. (2024) 'Working Together: Suzanne Lacy interviewed by Larne Abse Gogarty', *Art Monthly* [Preprint]. Available at: <https://uncertainfuturesproject>.

co.uk/Art%20Monthly%20Working%20Together%20  
Suzanne%20Lacy%20Larne%20Abse%20  
Gogarty.pdf (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

*Opening up Participatory Research: Collective Power of Co-  
Production* (2025). Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/  
watch?v=aMEGMRCckR4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMEGMRCckR4) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Uncertain Futures Advisory Group et al. (2025) *Uncertain  
Futures Connectivity Map, Uncertain Futures + 100 Women*.  
Available at: [https://uncertainfuturesproject.co.uk/  
research/resources](https://uncertainfuturesproject.co.uk/research/resources) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

*Uncertain Futures: Research Findings* (2023). Manchester  
Art Gallery. Available at: [https://www.youtube.com/  
watch?v=lm95sT7fyhQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lm95sT7fyhQ) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).



## **APPLIED FILM: CO-PRODUCING FILMS POST-RETIREMENT**

by MaoHui Deng and Sophie Everest

### **Introduction**

Applied Film: Making Films Post-Retirement is a digital storytelling research project exploring creativity and ageing through the medium of filmmaking. Led by the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group's (MUARG) MaoHui Deng and Sophie Everest, with support from Andy Hardman and filmmaker Kieran Hanson, the project was co-produced with older participants in collaboration with the Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester.

The project unfolded in two phases. The first phase was co-produced with 11 members of the Elders Leaders group at the Royal Exchange Theatre, who were equipped with digital storytelling and filmmaking skills and supported to create short films on subjects of their choosing. These films were then released to the public on the Royal Exchange website.



The second phase took place in Rochdale, where six Elders Leaders from the first phase worked as peer mentors alongside four new filmmakers. Together, they co-created new short films, again supported by the research team.

## **Approach to Co-Production**

Co-production was central to the design and delivery of the project. In both phases, older participants were not only the subjects of the research, but also co-creators. They were trained in digital storytelling and filmmaking and given the tools and support to express their own perspectives and feelings through the medium of film.

In the second phase, the co-production model evolved further as the Elders Leaders group from the first phase took on mentoring roles, working collaboratively with new participants from Rochdale. This peer-led approach deepened the project's commitment to shared learning and mutual support. As the researchers noted: "in this way, we will get to understand the point of view of the participants".

## **Methods and Impact**

The project used filmmaking as both method and output. Participants created short films using phones or camera equipment, exploring themes such as retirement, identity, memory, and resilience.

The films produced included:

- "Doorways" by Gill Bassam, exploring her relationship with retirement, and how the doorway to the Royal Exchange Theatre led to a new, exciting life.
- "The Day I Was Put In Charge of the Number 112 Bus" by Jackie Corr, a heart-warming reflection on community spirit in Manchester.



- “Polio Comes with Surgical Boots” by Bernard Leach, a light-hearted look at disability and self-acceptance.
- “Rainbow Journey” by Ann Sarge and Paul Green, exploring a lifetime of racism and personal insight.
- “Still Reaching for the Moon” by Glyn Treharne and Tony Cocker, a film that travels to the past and finds hope for the future.

The films offer powerful insights into the lives and experiences of older people, challenging stereotypes and showcasing the creativity and agency of the co-creators.

## Reflections

The project is currently in the writing-up stage. A feedback session was recently held with participants to share observations and discuss the findings. As the researchers continue to analyse the material, they aim to publish a paper on the project’s insights into creative ageing.

The films from the second phase will be uploaded to the Royal Exchange website in due course, further extending the reach and impact of the project.



## Key Learnings and Contributions

- Co-production through digital storytelling empowers older people to share their own narratives.
- Peer mentoring between older participants fosters intergenerational learning and collaboration.
- Creative methods such as filmmaking can reveal nuanced understandings of ageing, identity, and community.

## Related Project Publications

Royal Exchange Theatre (2024) 'Rochdale Elders Films', Royal Exchange Theatre Website. Available at: <https://www.royalexchange.co.uk/project/rochdale-elders-films/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Royal Exchange Theatre. 'A Digital Research Project with The University of Manchester', Royal Exchange Theatre Website. Available at: <https://www.royalexchange.co.uk/create-participate/elders/elders-research/a-digital-research-project-with-the-university-of-manchester/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).



## **LET'S GET BOTANICAL TOGETHER: CO-DESIGNING THE DEREK JARMAN POCKET PARK WITH OLDER LGBT+ PEOPLE**

by Luciana Lang

### **Introduction**

The Derek Jarman Pocket Park is a public garden created in collaboration with older LGBT+ volunteers from the Pride in Ageing advisory group, LGBT Foundation, and Manchester Art Gallery which reimagines a marginal urban space as a site of beauty, protest, and belonging.

The project was inspired by the work of radical queer artist and activist Derek Jarman (1942–1993) and his iconic Prospect Cottage garden in Dungeness, Kent. Sculpted from found materials and wild coastal plants, his garden became a symbol of resilience, creativity, and queer memory. The Manchester pocket park channels this spirit, offering a multi-



sensory journey through colour, scent, sound, and texture that celebrates difference, resilience, and lived experience.

Located at the front of Manchester Art Gallery, the Pocket Park transforms a previously overlooked strip of flagstones into a vibrant, accessible space. Developed during the COVID-19 pandemic through Zoom meetings and creative workshops, older volunteers shaped every aspect of the garden's design: from planting schemes and colour palettes to activist messaging and sensory features.

Launched alongside the gallery's *Derek Jarman: Protest!* exhibition in 2021, the garden continues to be tended by a community of older gardeners. It is not only a tribute to Jarman's legacy, but a living space for connection, creativity, and radical care.

## **Approach to Co-Production**

The Pocket Park was co-produced through creative workshops, remote meetings, and collaborative design sessions with older LGBT+ volunteers. Co-creators shaped the garden's purpose, layout, and message, sharing personal reflections on queer history, ageing, and activism.

Together, they developed six guiding principles: creating a space for reflection and revelation; celebrating difference and resilience; ensuring accessibility through multi-sensory design; combining nature with art and text; inspiring climate action; and connecting visitors to wider histories through QR-linked stories and events.

These principles informed every element of the garden. Volunteers selected plants for year-round interest and visibility, chose symbolic colour schemes, and incorporated



found materials, mirrors, and textures to evoke Jarman's sculptural style. Poetry and collage contributed by participants helped define the emotional and political tone of the space. A trip to visit Prospect Cottage in Dungeness, Kent, further deepened the group's connection to Jarman's legacy and strengthened their shared vision for the project.

Co-production here was not just consultation: it was a process in which older LGBT+ volunteers shaped every aspect of the garden, from its emotional tone to its physical form — a creative collaboration rooted in care, memory, and radical imagination.

## **Methods and Impact**

The Pocket Park was co-produced using the following creative and participatory methodologies:

- The collective created a set of key principles that guided the work in the pocket park from its onset.
- Collaborating with architects and gallery staff who agreed on core priorities, including attention to environmental sustainability, wellbeing, and intergenerational connection.

- Members grew plants from seed, held regular gardening sessions once COVID-19 restrictions were lifted, and made collective decisions about features such as rainwater collection and container design through monthly meetings and an online forum.
- Additional sessions with an ethnographer supported the creation of a zine documenting the project's development.
- Regular blogs captured reflections on the process and were shared publicly.

A visit to Prospect Cottage in Dungeness offered a moment of deep connection, influencing the textures, materials, and emotional tone of the garden.

The impact of the project has been both personal and public:

- Volunteers described renewed creativity, emotional healing, and a stronger sense of belonging.
- The garden transformed a previously disregarded space into a vibrant site for reflection, activism, and community.
- Passersby have praised its beauty and message, and it has hosted intergenerational events, workshops, and quiet moments of contemplation.
- Through its zine, blog, and QR-linked stories, the project continues to reach audiences beyond the garden itself.

## **Reflections**

The Pocket Park project demonstrated how co-production can transform not only a physical space, but also the relationships people have with their city and each other.



*Image courtesy of Andrew Brooks*

For many participants, the process rekindled creativity, strengthened community ties, and offered a sense of ownership and pride. The collaborative design of the garden, from planting and layout to messaging and materials, created a space that reflects the lived experiences of the older LGBT+ people involved and honours their contributions. In the process, the garden activated a small area at the heart of Manchester, turning it into a place for connection and reflection.

Co-production here meant working slowly and reflectively, allowing time for trust, dialogue, and experimentation. It enabled participants to shape a public space that speaks to their identities, memories, and hopes, while also challenging exclusion and invisibility. The garden continues to grow as a living archive of queer experience, a site of protest and care, and a model for inclusive urban design.

*"We applied creativity to making connections between the harsh, marginal environment of Dungeness and the narrow strip of flagstones between the towering cliff of the gallery wall and the tram tracks... Walking into Manchester Art Gallery and feeling 'I belong here' is tremendous... I am looking forward to making more art, doing more gardening, being more Derek I suppose."*

**Mindy**

*"The IGNITION Living Lab with its innovative ideas and design, got us thinking about how urban gardens not only benefit mental wellbeing but also support environmental sustainability in a time of climate emergency. As a result of this visit, and with the support of IGNITION and RHS Bridgewater, the planters for our garden will be sustainable as well as stylish!"*

**Paul**

*"The space can be used to educate and inform, and encourage those who don't know about Jarman and his campaigns and the fight for equality. It's a space to bring people together to tell this story. It can be fully intergenerational."*

**A visitor to the pocket park**

*"Before it was weeds, with flowers trying to grow out of the weeds. It's very well maintained, very well done, and tasteful for a city centre. I remember when they were greening empty spaces outside of the city centre, but this is a new green space in the city centre."*

**A visitor to the pocket park**

*I walk into this gallery and I belong here, which, given that I'm not from here, there's just me and my wife, no family, we don't have family so the feeling of belonging really matters especially as a childless person ... having an ethnographer document my life really matters, I have no children or grandchildren none of those people to tell it to but by telling you I get a voice on this planet and that feels amazing.*

**Mindy**

*“The pandemic made us all realise how important our green space is, and provoked conversations on how it is used. There was nothing here before, just benches — and this feels like a real starting point, that this project will build on what’s been started with more plants, educational resources, and that this space has a link with Prospect Cottage. It’s lovely how this project has come from the ending point of his life, but also a renewal because it’s gardening, it’s life giving, it’s nurturing and there’s a theme of sustainability to it — which gives a lovely poetic touch to it.”*

**A visitor to the pocket park**

## **Key Learnings and Contributions**

- Co-production with older LGBT+ people can create spaces that honour lived experience, foster belonging, and challenge exclusion.
- Creative methods — including poetry, collage, and planting — can deepen engagement and support emotional connection.
- Pocket parks offer a powerful model for inclusive, community-led transformation of marginal urban spaces.



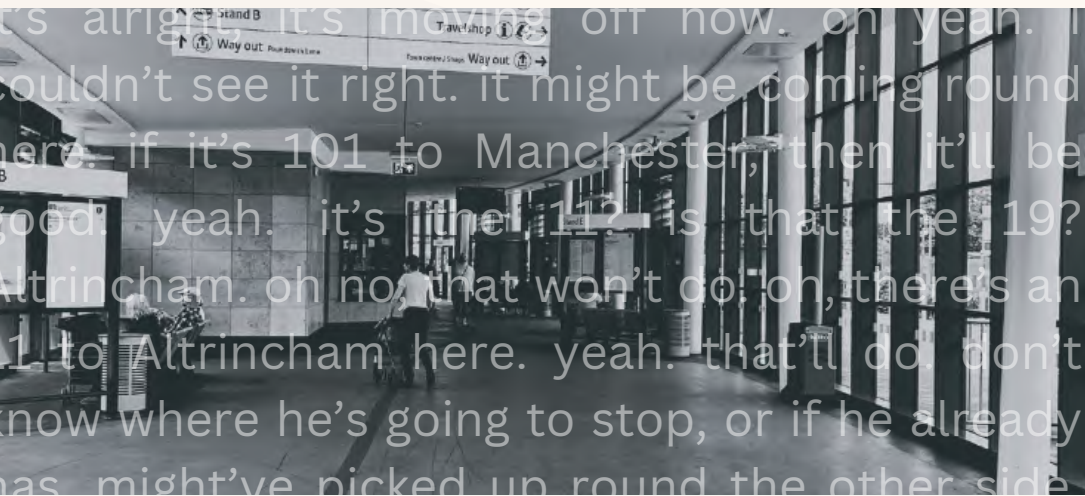
## Related Project Publications

BBC News (2022) 'Derek Jarman-inspired "pocket park" opens in Manchester', *BBC News*, 24 June. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-61917539> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Bruce, A. (ed.) (2023) *Pocket Park Design*. Available at: <https://repository.museumsiam.org/items/d054e302-8c45-4921-897e-509b9ac99930> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Lang, L. and Yarker, S. (2024) 'Involving marginalised groups of older people in age-friendly programmes: lessons from the Ambition for Ageing programme', in. Bristol, UK: Policy Press, pp. 85–99. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447368571.ch005>.

Wilkinson, S., Lang, L., and Yarker, S. (2022) 'Dispersed communities in age-friendly work: an intersectional approach to place-based working', *Working with Older People*, 27(2), pp. 110–119. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/WWOP-07-2022-0025>.



## **IN-CITU: COGNITIVE IMPAIRMENT, URBAN TRANSPORT, AND CREATIVE METHODS**

by James Rupert Fletcher

### **Introduction**

IN-CITU (*INteractions between Cognitive Impairment and Transport in Urban ecologies*) was a Wellcome Trust-funded project researching the experiences of passengers with dementia as they used public transport to travel around Greater Manchester (GM). Transportation is consistently identified as one of the leading challenges faced by older people living with dementia, who often came of age during the mid-20th century golden era of British automobility and can hence experience the revocation of their driving licences as a profound existential loss. This can exacerbate the mobility, wayfinding, and isolation difficulties associated with dementia.

In the UK, older people and those with disabilities are entitled to free local bus use via a travel pass scheme. However, while pass take-up is high, at roughly 80%, actual usage is far lower, hovering around 35%.



On top of this, regional data from Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) reveals a protracted reduction in use following the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite restrictions having been eased, in late 2023, pass use in Greater Manchester was still only around 55% of pre-pandemic levels. Clearly, while a much-lauded policy platform already exists that seems well placed to address later-life mobility challenges, its real-world effectiveness is underwhelming.

Late 2023 was also a time of profound change for Greater Manchester's public transport network. The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) was the first local government to use new powers enabling it to re-municipalise local bus operations that had been largely managed by private transportation conglomerates since the 1980s. Transport for Greater Manchester's self-styled "Bee Network" began to adopt existing bus routes in September 2023, in the middle of the IN-CITU project.

The IN-CITU project sought to explore the everyday transit experiences of the passengers with dementia who were successfully using this changing transport network to make their way around a changing city-region. By working with these passengers, the research hoped to identify shared challenges, but also to gain some insight into how they were managing to remain actively engaged across the region at a time when so many others like them were experiencing immobility and isolation.

## **Approach to Co-Production**

Rather than wholesale design, IN-CITU co-produced two research stages: data generation and output creation. This is not to say that older people with dementia were not heavily involved in the creation of the project itself, but these people acted in more conventional consultation roles befitting patient and public involvement (PPI).

As a result, IN-CITU is not simply “co-produced” in its entirety. Such instances raise questions about the extent to which discrete components of a research project can be said to be co-produced, or whether authentic co-production demands democratised input right across a project, from design to write-up.

Regarding data generation, traditional interview and survey studies can pose difficulties for people with cognitive impairments because they rely on abilities for recall and articulation, and these abilities can be impaired by dementias. Rather than relying on traditional methods, IN-CITU was designed to open up a flexible approach to data generation, with the aim of making dementia research more cognitively accessible. The intention was that handing over the methodological decision-making to passengers with dementia would free them to pursue strategies best suited to their strengths and preferences. To facilitate this, IN-CITU was broadly designed as a creative ethnography wherein the passengers selected and enacted the data generation methods themselves.

Turning to output creation, IN-CITU’s range of creative data generation methods, creating masses of multimedia content, meant that it was well suited to producing corresponding creative outputs. In practice, a short film and a photography exhibition were produced featuring the work created and curated by passengers. Focusing on outputs directly created by passengers allowed for a far more co-produced process of findings dissemination than is often the case for research. That said, IN-CITU also produced various single-authored academic papers, so once again, the sharedness of some activities and resources should not be misinterpreted as exemplifying a thoroughbred co-production approach (if that does indeed exist).

## Methods and Impact

The ideal of opening up data generation to cognitively impaired passengers was put into practice by accompanying passengers during their usual journeys. I went along with a bag of data generation toys for the journeys: discreet lapel microphones, pens and paper, and a cinema-quality mobile camera. Passengers were offered different ways of documenting the journey: an interview during the journey, simply recording the soundscape, taking photographs, recording videos, writing notes, or drawing. Most opted for various combinations of these methods, though some went further. One participant knitted project blankets, and another gathered all the transport leaflets he encountered during his journeys. Most importantly, we had a good time. Travelling around the city and recording different bits of it in different ways was generally a fun shared experience.

The co-production of outputs initially seemed straightforward given that the multimedia content generated during IN-CITU would, by its very nature, be created by the passengers. However, there is a significant amount of work between capturing photographs and video clips and delivering a polished exhibition and film. The curation and editing processes involved a lot of running back and forth between passengers' homes and an editing suite at the university. I would visit people for decision-making purposes — “Which photos?” “Which clips?” “Edited how?” “Placed where?” — and revisit them with drafts for approval (or, on a few occasions, rejection).

The co-production of data generation was relatively straightforward because it was quite hands-off. It simply relied on giving people a range of tools, letting them choose their preferences, and then supporting them to generate data when necessary. Output generation was an

altogether trickier affair. Various hardware and software requirements prevented passengers from undertaking much of the editorial minutiae, leaving their roles as something akin to iterative editorial direction. Again, the question of whether this is genuinely co-productive is an important one, speaking to the nature of co-production as much more of a dynamic matrix of various possibilities rather than a fixed thing that is either done or not.

## **Reflections**

As several authors have noted throughout this book, flexibility is a key condition of effective co-production. Researchers schooled in the strictures of methodology and protocol must relax their grasp on project design and hand over the reins to people who have not been indoctrinated into the same value systems. Co-production with people living with dementia can run into serious difficulties here, because the significant legal and ethical requirements for conducting such research typically demand the pre-specification of relatively rigid protocols. The first 26 months of IN-CITU were dedicated to persuading committees to formally approve a study that would ask people who might lack capacity to consent to document public settings in unspecified ways. Navigating such proposals through the regulatory system for dementia research is a major challenge.

Assuming you do make it through that system, the opening up of data generation in this manner inevitably leads to the creation of messy multimodal datasets, for which it is unlikely that conventional data management and analysis procedures will be sufficient. IN-CITU data analysis was not co-produced. I did it all. Nonetheless, the idiosyncrasies already baked into the dataset by co-produced generation made that analysis work daunting. It included everything from GPS logs to soundscape audio recordings to a folder of paper tickets.

Processing all that into something meaningful demanded a lot of storage and the development of a new analysis strategy based around multimedia mapping (see further reading). Hence, if we co-produce generation methods, we must be prepared for dealing with unwieldy datasets.

Finally, returning to the co-production of outputs, if those outputs are going to demand a lot of technical editing work over a protracted timeframe, then projects need to build in the time and resources necessary to meaningfully involve people in the editorial process. I did not, leading to a stressful couple of months. Again, if we are to meaningfully co-produce multimedia from an editorial standpoint, then we must be prepared to be told “no” and to go back to the drawing board, possibly several times over. There is even the possibility that you do not like the resulting output direction, but maybe that tension is a sign that co-production is working.

## **Key Learnings and Contributions**

- The flexibility of mixed creative methods can be helpful for both co-production and for lowering the cognitive barriers to inclusion that can be present in more traditional methods.
- Flexibility requires real time and resources beyond that demanded by research based on more fixed protocols and may also be difficult to square with established academic procedures.
- Co-production places real demands on people, so fun can be an invaluable fuel to keep the wheels turning (people are more motivated to do enjoyable and engaging things).
- Co-production is never a fixed entity, so it can be more or less pronounced, and realised in different ways, throughout various parts of a research project.



## Related Project Publications

Fletcher, J.R. (2024) '*IN CITU*'. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UoXmIU2BjFQ> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Fletcher, J.R. (2024) 'Re-municipalising sociospatial infrastructure: A journeying ethnography of Greater Manchester's dementia (un)friendly buses', *Social Science & Medicine*, 360, p. 117300. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2024.117300>.

Fletcher, J.R. (2024) 'Transport digitalisation: Navigating futures of hypercognitive disablement', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 75(4), pp. 650–655.

Fletcher, J.R. (2025) 'Beyond Local Domains: Connective Ontology in (Post-) Cognitive Sociology', *Sociological Research Online*, 30(3), pp. 829–838. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/13607804241237768>.

Fletcher, J.R. (2025) 'Connecting to Cognition: A Methodological Journey With Urban Dementia', *Sociological Research Online*, p. 13607804241287683. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/13607804241287683>.

Fletcher, J.R. (2025) 'Navigating Dementia: Political Materialities of Public Transport in the All-Ageing Metropolis', *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 47(3), p. e70017. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9566.70017>.

Fletcher, J.R. (2025) *Sharing people with dementia's experiences of public transport*. Available at: <https://www.bath.ac.uk/case-studies/sharing-people-with-dementias-experiences-of-public-transport/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Fletcher, J.R. (2026) 'Cognitive co-ageing with inequitable political ecologies: Deconditioning & urban public transport', *Social Science & Medicine*, 388, p. 118727. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2025.118727>.



## **PARTICIPATORY PHOTOGRAPHY: EXPLORING AGEING IN AGE-RELATED HOUSING WITH OLDER PEOPLE**

by Luise Stoisser

### **Introduction**

Across Europe, ageing at home is often promoted as the most desirable way to age in place. However, not everyone can afford to do so, for example, due to the high costs of home care and dispersed social networks. Others may simply prefer to relocate to housing better suited to their preferences. Therefore, some older people either have to or want to move to age-related housing developments in later life.

This project explores the lived experiences of older people in two affordable housing schemes in Vienna:

1. Long-standing institutionalised pensioners' houses (translated from the German 'Pensionistenwohnhäuser') funded by a city-affiliated organisation.
2. Recently developed co-housing groups for older adults subsidised by social housing.



To understand how residents experience belonging in these settings, the project used participatory photography to co-create images with residents. The research was carried out in collaboration with photographer Lisa Achammer and conducted as part of HOMeAGE, a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Doctoral Network. Together, the residents, photographer, and researcher conceptualised and executed photographic representations of life and belonging in age-related housing. For example, Maria (pictured) chose to depict herself reading in the housing development's library.

## **Approach to Co-Production**

This project started from the principle that understanding the lived experiences of older people requires centring what matters most to them. Participatory photography gave residents the opportunity to decide what aspects of their lives in the housing developments should be documented and how. Working alongside a trained photographer, they were supported to bring their ideas to life.

The collaborative process enabled older people to express their perspectives visually rather than solely through words. What makes this approach distinctive is its creative, arts-based methodology, which complemented initial qualitative interviews and allowed for deeper engagement with complex themes such as ageing, identity, and belonging. The visual medium also captured emotion, intuition, and atmosphere: ways of knowing often overlooked in traditional research.

## **Methods and Impact**

The project involved qualitative interviews and participatory photography with 12 older residents: 6 from each housing scheme. Each session lasted 90–120 minutes and followed three stages:



*Eva wanted to foreground activity and movement in her photograph. The four exposures show her activity in her apartment.*

- **Conceptualisation:** Participants were asked: “Where should the photographs be taken?” and “What should be in them?” Prompt cards introduced basic photography concepts (e.g., angles, focus, composition), supporting their ideas while reducing pressure to come up with concepts independently.
- **Execution:** Most of the time was spent executing the participants’ ideas. Two settings were typically captured, such as part of a resident’s apartment and a shared space. Professional equipment was used to realise the ideas.
- **Discussion:** Photos were reviewed together, allowing for reflection on the images, discussion of what they conveyed, and identification of any missing elements. Some chose to revisit the execution stage to adjust the framing or focus.

The impact was both personal and practical. Participants described the experience as enjoyable and empowering: being the centre of attention in a photoshoot was a novel and fun activity.

Others reflected deeply on ageing and identity, expressing that they had felt seen and heard through the process. An exhibition and photo booklet showcasing the co-produced photographs is currently being planned. It will present portraits of life in age-related housing shaped by residents' choices, offering an accessible and creative way to share their experiences with wider audiences while challenging dominant narratives of ageing.

## Reflections

This project invited older people to shape how ageing and place are represented: visually, creatively, and on their own terms. The process was often joyful and meaningful, with some participants using the resulting photos for gifts and personal websites. The project also highlighted the value of flexibility: while some participants led with clear ideas, others preferred a guided approach. Adapting to these preferences was key to inclusive co-production.

Looking at photos of oneself can be emotionally complex, especially in later life; the team adopted trauma-informed practices to navigate these moments with care. However, compared to traditional interviews, photography introduced a sense of lightness and creativity into an otherwise sensitive topic.



*"The photoshoot had a lasting impression on me. [...] Otherwise, you wouldn't get noticed at all. If you study it, you'll see: People are left alone. Me too. In this project, you are asked for your own opinion, and that is very important — especially in this institution."*

**Carol, resident in pensioners' house**

*"It's very nice to have these photos. I received these 10 photographs from you. When I can show them around, that makes me happy."*

**Alfred, resident in a pensioners' house**

*"I think that in every person there is this desire for expression."*

**Eva, resident in a co-housing group**

*"The task was not to provide empowerment as an assumed 'service', but to create space where participants could decide the level of visibility, authorship, and engagement they desired."*

**Lisa Achammer, photographer**

## **Key Learnings and Contributions**

- Co-producing images with older people can be a deeply engaging and enjoyable process. Participants felt seen, heard, and valued, and could express themselves creatively.
- Flexibility is essential: some participants led the sessions with strong ideas, while others preferred a more guided approach. Making space for different levels of co-production ensures inclusive participation.

- Arts-based methods such as participatory photography are powerful tools for exploring and communicating complex topics like belonging, ageing, and identity in accessible and emotionally resonant ways.

All names used are pseudonyms

## Related Project Publications

Stoisser, L. (2025) *Luise Stoisser: DR 1 - Needs & Systems (Belgium)*, HOMeAGE. Available at: <https://homeage-dn.eu/dr1-luise-lu-stoisser/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Stoisser, L., Buffel, T., Petermans, A., and Smetcoren, A-S. (2025) 'Rethinking community-based housing for older adults: a research agenda for spatial justice', *International Journal of Housing Policy*, pp. 1–19. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/19491247.2025.2515641>.

Stoisser, L., Buffel, T., Petermans, A., and Smetcoren, A-S. (2025) 'Community-based housing alternatives for older adults: towards a conceptual framework for resident involvement', *European Journal of Ageing*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10433-025-00895-5>.

Stoisser, L. Buffel, T., Petermans, A., and Smetcoren, A-S. (Under Review, *Social & Cultural Geography*) 'Embodied spatial belonging: Theorising the Body in Place through Ageing'.

Stoisser, L., Lampaert, L., and Smetcoren, A.-S. (2025) *Making community-based housing inclusive for diverse older adults*. 1. HOMeAGE. Available at: <https://homeage-dn.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/UTF-8ENGMaking-Community-based-housing-inclusive-for-diverse-older-adults-HOMeAGE-Policy-Brief-Series-No.-1.pdf> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).



## **CO-RESEARCHING LONELINESS WITH MINORITISED OLDER PEOPLE**

by Natalie Cotterell and Tine Buffel

### **Introduction**

Loneliness in later life has become a prominent focus of research and policy. However, the experiences of older people from minoritised communities remain largely absent from this work. We know little about how loneliness affects ethnically and sexually minoritised older people. This gap risks reinforcing exclusion and leaves important shortcomings in the design of responses intended to support older people.

This project, undertaken as part of Natalie Cotterell's PhD research, set out to address that gap through a co-research approach that placed minoritised older people at the centre of the work. Eighteen older people completed research training, and ten co-researchers from different ethnically and sexually minoritised backgrounds went on to conduct interviews with older participants from South and East Asian communities and with older gay men. Between January and June 2019, the co-researchers completed 31 interviews



in a range of languages using translated materials, which enhanced informed consent and helped to build trust.

The findings revealed that minoritised older people experience loneliness in distinctive ways, shaped by inequality, stigma, and access to community support. Coping strategies ranged from highly individual to strongly collective approaches, with resilience often linked to a strong sense of social identity. The findings pointed to the need for involving diverse groups of older people in co-producing community-based interventions that promote belonging and prevent loneliness in later life.

## **Approach to Co-Production**

This project used a co-research approach involving minoritised older people as co-researchers at every stage of a study on loneliness in later life. Co-researchers shaped the study objectives and research questions, co-designed the interview guide, and went on to recruit and interview 31 older people from minoritised communities. By drawing on shared languages, experiences, and identities, co-researchers were able to connect with the interviewees, build trust, and amplify voices that often remain excluded from research.

Co-researchers were recruited through a wide range of networks, including community groups serving Chinese elders, South Asian women, and older gay men, as well as local GP surgeries, and sheltered housing schemes. Eighteen older co-researchers completed three interactive training sessions covering the background to loneliness, ethics and safeguarding, and qualitative interviewing skills. These sessions were held in familiar community centres, with translation provided where needed. Co-researchers received travel reimbursements and modest vouchers for each

training session attended and each interview conducted, while community partners were paid for their translation support (e.g. Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi, Cantonese, Mandarin).

Optional workshops on thematic analysis and dissemination involved co-researchers in both interpreting the data and planning dissemination. Alongside these workshops, co-researchers were offered flexible one-to-one and group support. These sessions also provided space to discuss challenges that arose during interviews and to reflect on issues such as power, boundaries, and emotional labour. They also became a place where co-researchers shared personal difficulties, including health concerns and competing demands. These personal challenges led eight co-researchers to step back from the project, with ten continuing in the study.

## **Methods and Impact**

Co-researchers shaped the study at every stage. Their involvement included:

- **Designing the research:** Co-researchers helped define the study objectives, frame the research questions, and codesign the semistructured interview guide.
- **Conducting interviews:** Ten co-researchers carried out 31 interviews, in six languages (English, Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi, Cantonese, Mandarin). They recruited participants through their own networks, enhancing trust and informed consent. The interviews explored participants' personal backgrounds and life histories, their social relationships and community involvement, experiences of loneliness and isolation, coping strategies, and views on what kinds of support or services might make a difference.

- **Analysing data:** Seven co-researchers joined a thematic analysis workshop, and co-developed a shared coding schedule. Together they identified causes of loneliness (poor health, discrimination, digital exclusion, poverty, transport, neighbourhood change) and coping strategies (religion, identity affirmation, volunteering, mutual support, psychological techniques).
- **Disseminating findings:** Seven co-researchers took part in workshops to plan how the findings would be shared.

The project produced several practical outcomes:

- Co-researchers developed new skills, grew in confidence, and built wider networks. Interviewees described feeling listened to and valued.
- Co-researchers and the team produced a short, accessible pamphlet focused on how to facilitate co-research with minoritised older people.
- Findings were shared with local ageing networks, age-friendly programmes and community organisations, helping to shape calls for involving minoritised older people in co-producing community-centred responses to loneliness.
- The project demonstrated that co-research approaches rely on practical resources, including time, translation, fair reimbursement, and emotional support.

## Reflections

Co-researchers reflected on the benefits of their involvement, both personally and for the project. Many described gaining new skills, building social connections, and feeling they had made a meaningful contribution to their communities.

They also emphasised how their shared backgrounds and identities with interviewees enriched the research, enabling deeper insights into loneliness among minoritised older people.

Stuart, a 71-year-old gay man, explained how lived experience shaped his interviewing:

*“Being a gay man who was very lonely in the past made me a better interviewer... I could sense which questions I had to be a bit more careful about and move on if they didn’t want to talk about something that made them uncomfortable.”*

**Stuart, Male, 71, White British**

Language skills were another key benefit. Shakiba, a 50-year-old Pakistani woman fluent in four languages, highlighted how this allowed the project to reach women who might otherwise have been excluded:

*“These women would not be able to speak to you in English, so they would be missed if I couldn’t speak different languages... So we got to tell their stories, instead of just missing them out.”*

**Shakiba, Female, 50, Pakistani**

Trust and cultural connection also emerged as important. Ibrahim, a 68-year-old East African Asian man, described how speaking Urdu transformed an interview:

*“When I started speaking Urdu, his eyes lit up... This connected us, and I think that’s partly why the interview went so well.”*

**Ibrahim, Male, 68, East African Asian**

Finally, co-researchers noted their ability to share findings within their own networks, extending the project's reach. Noor, a 58-year-old British Pakistani woman, reflected on how her community roles enabled dissemination:

*"I discussed the findings of the project at the most recent board meeting, and we are in the process of organising an event around loneliness in Asian communities... me having those sorts of connections can also benefit research at the university."*

**Noor, Female, 58, British Pakistani**

Working with minoritised older people as co-researchers produced rich, grounded insights about loneliness, but it also brought up some practical and ethical challenges. At times, the structured demands of academic research (such as ethical approvals, data management requirements, and fixed PhD timelines) sat uneasily alongside the flexibility needed to collaborate at a pace that respected community priorities. Addressing this tension required transparency, flexible support, and regular conversations with co-researchers about roles and expectations. Being clear about how the data would be used, sharing early summaries with participants, and involving co-researchers in analysis and dissemination were all vital in maintaining trust and shared ownership of the project.

The research team took steps to reduce extractive dynamics — co-producing a pamphlet, paying for community translation work, and offering modest payments and travel reimbursement for co-researchers — but time and money were nevertheless limiting factors. Emotional labour and safeguarding were also highly important: the co-researchers sometimes heard painful and difficult stories and needed debriefing, and one-to-one support.

Working across multiple languages presented additional challenges. Interviews conducted in languages other than English were translated orally in real time by community partners and later transcribed in English.

This approach strengthened rapport and cultural understanding, but the use of non-professional translators means that some nuance and accuracy may have been lost.

Overall, the project showed that co-research can play a role in shifting who counts as a knowledge holder and producing community-relevant evidence, provided that power, payment, time, and emotional support are treated as key considerations. The project's practice underlined a central claim of the work:

*"Holders of knowledge are communities, not academic institutions."*

**Cotterell, N. and Buffel, T. (2023)**

## **Key Learnings and Contributions**

- Involving ethnically and sexually minoritised older people as co-researchers can uncover distinctive, often overlooked experiences of loneliness and produce richer, more trustworthy data because peer interviewers can build rapport and access networks that others cannot.
- Training, support, and translation are essential but resource-intensive: translated materials, community interpreters, hands-on training, feedback, and debriefing widen participation and protect data quality, but they require time, coordination, and funding.

- Ethical co-production requires close attention to power, payment, and emotional labour: offering fair payments and travel reimbursement, building in safeguarding and opportunities to debrief, and creating spaces to share analysis and outputs all support more caring and collaborative research relationships.

## Related Project Publications

Cotterell, N. (2022) *Loneliness among minoritised older people: A critical co-research approach exploring experiences, drivers, and ways of coping*. The University of Manchester. Available at: [https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/290852197/FULL\\_TEXT.PDF](https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/290852197/FULL_TEXT.PDF) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Cotterell, N. et al. (2025) 'Loneliness among older ethnic minority people: exploring the role of structural disadvantage and place using a co-research methodology', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 48(1), pp. 206–228. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2024.2311833>.

Cotterell, N. and Buffel, T. (2023) "'Holders of knowledge are communities, not academic institutions": lessons from involving minoritised older people as co-researchers in a study of loneliness in later life', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 20(3), pp. 441–470. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2023.2180463>.



## **PICTURE THIS STOCKPORT: EMBEDDING AGE-FRIENDLY DESIGN IN MAINSTREAM HOUSING**

by Shannon Conway and Picture This

### **Introduction**

*Picture This* is a purpose-led private developer and property manager working on large scale residential projects across the UK. The company ethos is tied to three core values which influence all their projects and activities: inclusive design, low carbon, and neighbourhood values.

Building on this mission, *Picture This Stockport* is a partnership-led housing development delivering 245 Passivhaus (a German standard for low-energy buildings) rental homes in the heart of Stockport. Designed to welcome residents of all ages, the scheme aims to demonstrate how age-friendly design can be embedded within mainstream housing from the outset, rather than added later as an afterthought.



The development draws on *Creating Age-Friendly Developments: A Practical Guide for Ensuring Homes and Communities Support Ageing in Place*, authored by Mark Hammond — of the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG) and Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) — and Kelly-Marie Rodgers, in collaboration with the Greater Manchester Housing, Planning and Ageing Group (GMHPA) and the Greater Manchester Ageing Hub.

The toolkit sets out key principles for designing homes and neighbourhoods that enable people to live independently, stay connected, and maintain a sense of belonging as they age. It addresses accessibility, thermal comfort, transport links, green spaces, and opportunities for social interaction.



By applying these principles from the concept stage, *Picture This Stockport* has ensured that age-friendly design has shaped every decision — from site layout and landscaping to communal spaces and materials — embedding inclusivity and sustainability at the core of the scheme.

Unlike specialist retirement housing, it integrates age-friendly design into mainstream provision, showing that ageing well in the town centre should be part of a wider strategy for inclusive urban regeneration.

## **Approach to Co-Production:** Embedding Age-Friendly Design from the Outset

From the outset, the project team adopted *Creating Age-Friendly Developments: A Practical Guide*, making age-friendly outcomes a fundamental design parameter rather than a late-stage accessibility check.

All homes meet M4(2) accessible standards — a national benchmark that requires homes to be adaptable for a wide range of residents, including those with limited mobility — and can be easily adapted as needs change over time. In addition, 10% of homes meet the M4(3) wheelchair user standards, providing either full accessibility for wheelchair users or layouts that can be readily adapted. This approach future-proofs the development for changing mobility needs and ensures inclusivity across the life course.

The Toolkit shaped priorities including:

- Future-proofed layouts that can accommodate changing mobility needs.
- Social spaces to encourage informal encounters and reduce isolation.
- Clear circulation and generous internal spaces.
- Visibility and passive surveillance to support safety.



## **Methods and Impact:** “Never Assume, Always Ask”: Learning from Older Residents

To ensure the principles of *Creating Age-Friendly Developments: A Practical Guide* were translated into meaningful, real-life outcomes, *Picture This* applied its “Never Assume, Always Ask” model of engagement.

Consultation methods were intentionally inclusive of older residents, with 3,000 postcards hand-delivered to overcome digital exclusion and invite wider participation. The design team also engaged directly with older people with specific lived experience — from wheelchair users to older women — exploring questions such as:

- Is living on a higher floor desirable?
- What makes a rooftop garden feel safe and sociable?
- What would you like to see the ground floor spaces being used for?

Insights from these conversations have already influenced design decisions. For example, feedback from residents of a neighbouring over-55s housing scheme prompted the early use of the ground-floor community space by their residents’ groups — a clear indication that *Picture This Stockport* is perceived as a welcoming and inclusive place for those already ageing in the area.

## **Tackling Isolation Through Supportive Design and Management**

*Creating Age-Friendly Developments: A Practical Guide* highlights the importance of everyday social connection as people age. *Picture This Stockport* responds to this by integrating thoughtfully designed spaces that encourage interaction and foster a sense of community, including features such as:



- A laundrette lounge that combines practicality with opportunities for conversation.
- Bright, welcoming stairwells that make movement through the building sociable as well as accessible.
- A community rooftop garden managed by Manchester Urban Diggers Community Interest Company, offering growing and gardening workshops, opportunities to participate on a regular basis, or just relax in the space.

These spaces invite informal connection without pressure or obligation, supporting spontaneous encounters that contribute to wellbeing and a stronger sense of belonging as people age.

## **Long-Term Stewardship**

Ageing well depends not only on good design but also on long-term stability and care. Secure rental arrangements and high-quality maintenance help residents feel at home.

The Passivhaus approach guarantees lower energy bills, helping to prevent fuel poverty as people age. Picture This will retain responsibility for managing all 245 homes after completion, ensuring that the principles of inclusive

and sustainable design are in everyday management and that residents receive continued support as their needs evolve. Ongoing community development will also be promoted, with residents supported to build connections through clubs, networks, and shared activities that foster belonging and mutual support.

## **Key Learnings and Contributions**

- Embedding age-friendly design from the outset creates housing that is [inclusive, adaptable, and sustainable across the life course and, crucially, does not impact the overall cost of development.
- Embedding age-friendly design into all new developments offers many benefits: it ensures all future housing stock is fit for ageing in place; it provides more housing options for older people; it embraces an intergenerational approach to development which is attractive to residents; and it widens the potential customer audience for private developers.
- Co-production through the “*Never Assume, Always Ask*” approach ensures design decisions reflect real experiences and priorities of older residents.
- Everyday social spaces — such as laundrette lounges and rooftop gardens — are powerful tools for reducing isolation and strengthening community life.
- Long-term stewardship and energy-efficient design (Passivhaus) show how inclusive design can align with environmental and economic sustainability.

## **Related Project Publications**

Hammond, M. and Rodgers, K.-M. (2023) *Creating Age-Friendly Developments. A Practical Guide for Ensuring Homes and Communities Support Ageing in Place*. Manchester: Greater Manchester Planning and Ageing Group





## PART IV

### **REFLECTIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS: *SHARED PRINCIPLES AND THE FUTURE OF CO-PRODUCED RESEARCH***

# THE TRUST FRAMEWORK: SHARED PRINCIPLES FOR COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH WITH COMMUNITIES

by Tine Buffel and Camilla Lewis

Using the acronym 'TRUST', this section presents some of the key learning from our co-production work across different projects, reflecting on some of the opportunities and tensions which emerged. Each point highlights a key principle or practice which aims to support meaningful, ethical, and sustained collaborations with older people and communities.

- T** Trusting relationships and ethics of care.
- R** Redressing histories of exclusion and discrimination.
- U** Undoing barriers through flexible and care-full practices.
- S** Sharing power from the start, by listening and learning together.
- T** Time, reflexivity, and joy in the process.



## T — TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS AND ETHICS OF CARE

Across all of the projects, building relationships and trust slowly and carefully was an essential part of the process. This was especially important in communities where older people had experienced a lifetime of discrimination and disadvantage or had been excluded from discussions that affected their lives. Building trust takes time and effort. It also requires open dialogue and a commitment to being open and flexible about what participation might look like and to co-create the project's aims and ways of working with those involved.

Trust can be built in different ways. But it mainly develops through everyday actions: showing up, listening, taking part in community life, understanding what matters to people and grassroots organisations, and creating opportunities for their knowledge and experience to shape the co-production process.

A common finding across the projects was that many community organisations supporting minoritised and marginalised groups are overstretched, with limited staff,

insecure funding, and growing demands on their time. This highlights the importance of properly supporting partner organisations (either through funding, exchanging skills, or offering volunteering time) and investing in creating community capacity so that co-production processes help strengthen existing groups, rather than exploiting or over-burdening those who are already under-resourced.

It is important to highlight that tensions and disagreements are often a key part of doing co-production. But rather than trying to avoid or smooth them over, they can be seen as important moments to reflect on and discuss. These more difficult moments often reveal where change might be needed. Conflict often points to differences in expectations, values, or priorities, calling for different ways of collaborating — ways that work for the different people and partners involved. In this sense, moments of tension and disagreement can be used as opportunities to build and re-build trust, by listening carefully, recognising differences, acknowledging that not all issues might be resolvable, and, where possible, finding ways forward together.

In many projects, shared 'ethics of care' were co-developed with partners. This involved developing principles for how people wanted to work together, how roles and responsibilities would be shared, and how challenges would be addressed. Examples of these principles included: working with empathy, mutual respect and support, valuing each other's contributions, promoting inclusivity, and recognising the emotional labour that co-production often entails. The aim, in each project, was to create an environment where people felt valued, listened to, and able to contribute in ways that were meaningful to them.



## **R** — REDRESSING HISTORIES OF EXCLUSION AND DISCRIMINATION

Co-production must begin with an acknowledgement of the histories, structures, and systems that have produced the inequalities many people and communities experience. The legacies of racism, colonialism, class inequalities, ableism, sexism, and heteronormativity continue to influence whose voices are heard, whose voices are marginalised, and whose are 'erased' or entirely absent from decision-making processes.

Many of the groups we have worked with — including older refugees and asylum seekers, social housing tenants, older LGBTQ+ people, and those ageing in low-income neighbourhoods — have experienced a lifetime of exclusion, discrimination, and insecurity. It is important to recognise these histories and acknowledge how they shape the co-production process.

Amplifying the voices of those often excluded from decision-making is an important first step. But co-production should go further and contribute towards a broader social justice agenda — one that works *with* communities and grassroots organisations to challenge and change the

systems that reproduce discrimination and harm. This is not straightforward and requires long-term partnerships that are committed to addressing the structural barriers that limit people's participation. Sustained efforts are therefore essential to ensure that co-production contributes to challenging, rather than reproducing, existing inequalities.

In this sense, co-production is as much about asking critical questions as it is about finding collective answers. These questions should be co-produced together with the groups and communities involved. But a starting point might be to ask:

- What assumptions does each individual/group bring to this work? How do these shape our ways of working?
- Who is involved in defining the goals, agenda and research questions? Whose voices remain absent?
- How can we support more inclusive forms participation, where partners and participants feel recognised, valued, and heard?
- How can we ensure that all partners have a genuine say in decisions that affect the process?
- Who benefits from the research? How can we strengthen the benefits for those most often excluded?

These questions are a starting point for a broader conversation. They serve as a reminder that co-production is an ongoing, reflexive process — one that is fundamentally political, shaped by power relations that influence who is heard, who is included, and who is left out.



## **U – UNDOING BARRIERS THROUGH FLEXIBLE AND CARE-FULL PRACTICES**

Co-production always requires 'thinking outside the box' and working relentlessly to 'undo' the barriers that often make this kind of work difficult. It involves *working differently* with universities, funders, and policymakers, and challenging the systems that often get in the way of doing co-production. This includes pushing for more flexible ethics procedures and reimbursement processes, nurturing a culture that values reflection and shared learning, and rethinking institutional processes so that they enable rather than constrain participatory work.

While still relatively rare, some projects showed what can happen when funders are willing to adapt their usual procedures to the priorities and needs identified by communities themselves. Flexibility from funders opened the door to more creative and collaborative ways of working between the research team and local residents. In one project, this included participatory budgeting, which gave residents a voice about how funds were used, allowing decisions to reflect what mattered locally. Such initiatives helped to rebuild trust in neighbourhoods characterised by long-term neglect and disinvestment, illustrating how flexible systems and structures can help strengthen relationships.

Valuing people's time and expertise is equally important. Whether through employment contracts, advisory fees, or vouchers, remuneration should be as fair as possible, co-developed with participants, and mindful of people's day-to-day lives. What stood out across all of the projects was the need for flexibility as well as the ability to respond to the opportunities and challenges of co-production as they emerged. In many of the examples, methods and outcomes were not fixed in advance but developed together, in conversation with partners and participants, with room for them to be adapted as relationships grew and new priorities emerged.

Flexibility also meant paying close attention to the rhythms and pressures of people's everyday lives. People's ability to participate can change for many reasons — caring responsibilities, changing health, fluctuating energy levels, and the pressures of daily life all influence what is possible at different times. *Care-full* working, in this sense, involves noticing these changes, responding with empathy, and creating opportunities for different kinds and degrees of involvement, so that participation happens on people's own terms and at a pace that feels right to them.

Finally, *undoing barriers* also means paying attention to the *spaces* where co-production happens. In community-based research, these are often everyday places that people already use: a meeting room in a housing block, a faith space, a local organisation, a green space, or a community garden. What matters is whether these spaces feel welcoming and safe to different groups of people. Practical considerations, such as physical access, transport, the timing and location of meetings, and the availability of interpreters, are important, but the social atmosphere of these places matters just as much.

Thinking about how to set up the room so that people can see and speak to one another, and creating moments that facilitate social connection — for example, through sharing food — can make the process feel more open and inviting. Covering the travel costs for people to get there, and building in sufficient time for training, reflection, and mutual support are equally important in supporting people's participation.



## **S — SHARING POWER FROM THE START, BY LISTENING AND LEARNING TOGETHER**

Co-production involves a deliberate choice to share power, ownership and influence over decision-making. It rests on the belief that knowledge and expertise are held in many places, and that research, policy, and practice are richer when those voices meet. This way of working grows through relationships, trust-building, and dialogue: listening closely, developing an understanding of one another, learning from difference, and welcoming new ideas and different ways of working. It is a slow process that recognises and values people's strengths, experiences, and contributions.

It is not always possible to involve community researchers and local organisations from the very start. Research grant applications often work to strict timelines that leave little room for meaningful participation in the process. However,

there is much to gain from working with communities to co-define the 'why' of a study: its purpose, priorities, and ways of working. Starting with shared decision-making sets the tone for collaboration and helps to build trust and support for the project. But it also requires time, careful listening, and a willingness to let go of predefined agendas.

The Manchester Urban Ageing Group's Older People's Forum plays an important role in this work. The Forum brings together a diverse group of older residents who meet regularly with researchers to guide our research agendas. It offers a space for exchange, reflection, and mutual learning, and provides insights into local concerns and experiences of inequality. Through these ongoing conversations, ideas can be co-developed, refined, and tested. This is important because it helps to centre diverse older people's lived experiences at every stage of the research process.



## **T – TIME, REFLEXIVITY, AND JOY IN THE PROCESS**

The final principle draws together key themes which run through all of the above: co-production takes time, flexibility, and a commitment to long-term thinking — something that stands in sharp contrast to the short funding cycles that

shape much research and community work. Co-production is never a neat, linear process; rather, it is important to embrace the messiness and unpredictability that comes with working with different groups and priorities. It is often in the unexpected moments where creativity or shared insights emerge and meaningful collaborations grow.

'Quick, visible wins' early in the process can help generate momentum and show that collaboration can lead to tangible benefits for everyone involved. Such small achievements are important because they show that people's contributions matter and their time and energy are making a difference. But equally important is ensuring that participation is enjoyable and rewarding for all involved. Moments of shared achievement — as seen in Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG) projects that co-produced creative or artistic outputs such as exhibitions, zines, or short films — can help foster a sense of connection, pride, and collective ownership over the work.

Sustaining co-production also requires reflexivity: a continuous process of reflection among all partners involved about roles, assumptions, and power dynamics. Key questions include: Who participates? Who is missing? Whose knowledge is centred? How are contributions recognised? But reflexivity alone is not enough. Long-term sustainability needs to be built into the design of projects, with strategies to support community researchers, continue relationships beyond funding cycles, and embed outcomes within lasting structures, such as partner organisations (e.g., housing providers), existing forums (e.g., the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group Older People's Forum), and local initiatives that offer ongoing platforms for dialogue and action (e.g., neighbourhood partnerships).



## LOOKING AHEAD: FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR CO-PRODUCED RESEARCH

The principles outlined in the TRUST framework underline the importance of developing ethical, engaged, reflexive, and context-sensitive practices in co-production work with older people and communities. The case studies in this collection show that co-production is not just a method or a way of working; it is a political act.

It offers a means to highlight power inequalities, challenge extractive research practices and structures, amplify lived expertise and marginalised voices, and reimagine knowledge production as a collaborative endeavour.

Indeed, it invites us to move beyond 'inclusion', towards co-production as a 'transformative practice', with the potential to reshape research cultures, disrupt unjust systems and structures, and collectively reimagine the futures we want to live and age in.




## CONNECT WITH THE MANCHESTER URBAN AGEING RESEARCH GROUP (MUARG)


How can we work together to create more inclusive, age-friendly cities? We warmly invite you to connect with the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG):


Read the MUARG newsletter: <https://tinyurl.com/5f8f6t8r>


 [www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/muarg](http://www.humanities.manchester.ac.uk/muarg)

 Email: [MUARG@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:MUARG@manchester.ac.uk)

 LinkedIn: Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group

 Bluesky: [@muarg.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/@muarg.bsky.social)

 Spotify: Conversations on Urban Ageing

 *Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG)*  
Room 2.13v, Humanities Bridgeford Street,  
The University of Manchester, M13 9PL

Whether you are a researcher, community member, practitioner, or policymaker, we welcome your interest and collaboration.



# GLOSSARY

## ORGANISATIONS AND PROGRAMMES

**Age-Friendly Manchester (AFM):** Manchester citywide programme working to embed ageing across city strategies and reduce inequalities in later life.

**Centre for Ageing Better (CfAB):** A UK charity that commissions and translates evidence to improve later life.

**Greater Manchester Ageing Hub:** Regional convening body for policy and practice on ageing across the Greater Manchester city-region.

**Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA):** The city-regional authority coordinating transport, housing, health, and other functions across Greater Manchester.

**LGBT Foundation:** UK charity supporting LGBT people's health and wellbeing.

**Manchester City Council:** Local authority for the city of Manchester.

**Manchester BME Network / Manchester BAME Network:** Community networks supporting Black, Asian, and minority ethnic communities in Manchester.

**Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG):** an interdisciplinary research group studying ageing in cities and working with older people and communities.

**MUARG Older People's Forum:** A MUARG advisory group of older people with lived experience who help shape research priorities and practice.

**National Lottery Community Fund:** Major UK funder of community projects

**One Manchester:** Social housing provider and housing association active in Manchester.

**Southway Housing Trust:** Housing association operating in South Manchester and partner in neighbourhood work.

**WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities:** World Health Organization (WHO) network that supports cities and communities to become more age-friendly.

## METHODS, APPROACHES, AND PRACTICES

**Co-production:** The collaborative practice of researchers, practitioners, and community members (including those with lived experience) sharing power and responsibility across research design, delivery, and dissemination.

**Co-research / Co-researcher:** Research conducted with trained community members or participants who act as peer-researchers, participating in the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data.

**Co-design:** A participatory design process where stakeholders (including the intended users) jointly create solutions, plans, or physical interventions.

**Community auditing:** Training local residents to collect data and assess local services, environments, or needs.

**Creative and arts-based methods:** The use of artistic practices (e.g., film, comics, theatre, photography, zines, exhibitions) to generate, represent, and share knowledge.

**Ethics of care:** A values-led approach to research relationships that prioritises empathy, reciprocity, emotional labour, wellbeing, and ongoing support.

**Ketso workshop:** A tactile, visual participatory workshop method that uses felt pieces and a framework to map ideas collectively.

**Participatory action research:** An approach combining research and action, with participants actively involved to create change and reflect on practice.

**Participatory mapping:** Mapping exercises conducted with community members to record local resources, barriers, and lived routes.

**Participatory methods:** Research techniques that actively involve participants (for example, photovoice, walking interviews, Ketso workshops, zine-making, participatory photography, life-story interviews).

**Seedcorn funding:** Small, early-stage grants used to test ideas and start community initiatives.

**Trauma-informed practice:** An approach that recognises and responds to the effects of trauma in people's lives and adapts methods to avoid harm.

## CONCEPTS

**Age-Friendly Cities and Communities (AFCC):** WHO concept for places that enable older people's participation, health, and inclusion across multiple domains.

**Ageing in place:** Supporting people to live in their own homes and communities for as long as they choose and are able.

**Ageing well in the right place:** A rights- and choice-focused framing that emphasises the fit between people and environment, rather than assuming that staying put is always best.

**Ageism:** Stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination based on age, shaping policy, practice, and everyday interactions.

**Gentrification:** The process of neighbourhood change driven by investment and new residents that can displace low-income residents and alter community networks.

**Intersectionality:** An analytical approach recognising how multiple social identities (e.g., age, gender, race, class, disability, sexuality, migration status) interact to produce different experiences of advantage and disadvantage.

**Lived experience / Experts by experience:** The knowledge and insight that people gain through their personal experiences of social life, services, or marginalisation.

**Naturally occurring retirement community (NORC):** An area or building with a high concentration of older people where services and supports are organised to meet their collective needs.

**Precarity:** Conditions of economic, social, and housing insecurity that make people vulnerable to sudden shocks and exclusion.

**Social infrastructure:** The network of public and community spaces, organisations, and relationships that support social life and wellbeing (e.g., libraries, faith spaces, community centres).

**Spatial justice:** Concern with how urban change, planning, and policy produce fair or unfair distributions of resources, services, and risks across places and groups.

## PRACTICAL AND TECHNICAL TERMS

**Seedcorn:** Small, early-stage grants used to test ideas and start community initiatives.

**Independent Living Worker:** A support role providing 1:1 practical and wellbeing assistance that enables tenants to remain independent.

**NORC Development Worker:** A staff role focused on building a NORC with tenants and partners.

**Knowledge exchange event:** An event designed to share findings, practices, and ideas between researchers, practitioners, and communities.

**Zine:** A small, often handmade booklet used as an accessible creative output for sharing stories and research insights.

**Pocket park:** A small urban green space, often created in marginal or underused sites.

**Manifesto:** A public declaration of principles, demands, or policy asks developed by a group (e.g., a Manifesto of Rights for Older Women).

## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

**AFCC:** Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.

**AFM:** Age-Friendly Manchester.

**CfAB:** Centre for Ageing Better.

**GM:** Greater Manchester.

**GMCA:** Greater Manchester Combined Authority.

**GMOPN:** Greater Manchester Older People's Network.

**NORC:** Naturally occurring retirement community.

**MUARG:** Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group.

**MSCA:** Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions.

**WHO:** World Health Organization.

**VCFSE:** Voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (sector acronym often used in policy and practice).

## CO-PRODUCTION TOOLKITS

A wide range of co-production toolkits and practical resources now exists to support collaborative research and practice. While by no means exhaustive, the selection below prioritises tools developed with older people or situated in urban environments, offering a useful starting point for interested in exploring hands-on approaches to co-production. More academic and conceptual sources are provided in the bibliography that follows.

Ageing Better Programme (2021) Stronger together: A co-production toolkit from Ageing Better. Available at: <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/Topics/type/Stronger-Together-A-Co-production-Toolkit-from-Ageing-Better/>

Amenyah S.D., Benzimra A., Murphy J.L., Fenge L-A., Jeff, and P., Devis-Rosental C. (2025) 'A practical toolkit for co-producing community-based food models with older adults'.

Bates, P. How To Guides. Available at: <https://peterbates.org.uk/home/linking-academics-and-communities/how-to-guides/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Brodie, E. et al. (2011) 'Pathways through participation', *London: NCVO, Involve, IVR* [Preprint]. Available at: <https://www.involve.org.uk/resource/pathways-through-participation> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Buffel, T. (ed.) (2015) *Researching Age-Friendly Communities: Stories from older people as co-investigators*. The University of Manchester Library. Available at: <https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Researching-Age-Friendly-Communities.pdf> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

City&Co Consortium (2025) 'Age-Friendly Cities and Communities' Manifesto'. CONNECTED Generations, CONNECTED Cities: The Age-Friendly Vision. The Hague University of Applied Sciences, The Hague, the Netherlands. Available at: <https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Manifesto-EN.pdf> (17 November 2025).

Co-Production Collective, UCL. Available at: <https://www.coproductioncollective.co.uk/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Fang, M.L. et al. (2025) *Co-researching with older adults: A practical toolkit*. Simon Fraser University. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.71935/ZKG7-MT02>.

Francophone Network of Age-Friendly Cities (FNAFC) 'The "Participatory Approach" Kit'. Available at: <https://ancien-site.villesamiesdesaines-rf.fr/files/ressources/500/521-kit-d-animation-de-la-demarche-participative-du-rfvaa.pdf>

Greater Manchester VCFSE Leadership Group (2025) 'The GM Participation Playbook - Shaping how we Live Well together'. Available at: <https://www.vcfseleadershipgm.org.uk/news-and-events/the-gm-participation-playbook-launch-shaping-how-we-live-well-together> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Homeless Link. *Co-production toolkit: The importance of co-production in services*. Available at: <https://homeless.org.uk/knowledge-hub/co-production-toolkit/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

HOUSE-research (Forthcoming) 'Design Toolbox' and 'Self-Assessment Tool'. Available at: [www.house-research.be](http://www.house-research.be) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Housing LIN TAPPI Programme Resources. Available at: <https://www.housinglin.org.uk/tappi/how-you-can-do-it/co-production/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Inclusion4EU Resources. Available at: <https://ascnet.ie/inclusion4eu-website/resources/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

National Institute on Health Research (NIHR) (2024) *Guidance on co-producing a research project*. Available at: <https://www.learningforinvolvement.org.uk/content/resource/nihr-guidance-on-co-producing-a-research-project/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Ncube, N. (2006) 'The Tree of Life Project: Using narrative ideas in work with vulnerable children in Southern Africa', *International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work*, 2006(1), pp. 3–16. Available at: <https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/informit.197106237773394> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Pain, R., Whitman, G., and Milledge, D. (2022) 'Participatory action research toolkit: An introduction to using PAR as an approach to learning, research and action'. Available at: [https://localtrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/local\\_trust\\_par\\_toolkit.pdf](https://localtrust.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/local_trust_par_toolkit.pdf) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Perry, B., Durose, C. and Richardson, L. (2024) Getting our house in order: improving conditions for co-produced research in UK higher education. Introducing the Co-Production Futures Inquiry. Briefing Note 1. Universities of Liverpool, Manchester and Sheffield. Available at: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/heseltine-institute/documents/getting-our-house-in-order.pdf> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Planning for Real Resources, visual, participatory and interactive tools for community engagement. 'Building Design', 'Rainbow map', 'Evaluation tree and symbols', 'Stakeholders' map', 'Weather map', 'Ideas wall', 'Yellow Brick Road', 'Urban Planning for Real® Kit', 'Rural Planning for Real® Kit'. Available at: <https://www.planningforreal.org.uk/what-we-do/resources/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Smith, R. and Jackson, N. (2022) *Co-production Research Toolkit*. Leeds Social Sciences Institute (University of Leeds). Available at: <https://lssi.leeds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/65/2022/12/UoL-LSSI-Co-production-Toolkit-Accessible-1.pdf> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

The Centre for Loneliness Studies (2021) *Co-production: A time to shine toolkit*. Available at: [https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/6368e66262104737e8214df8/63d7cf0a78787456b9d7b462\\_Co-production-toolkit.pdf](https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/6368e66262104737e8214df8/63d7cf0a78787456b9d7b462_Co-production-toolkit.pdf)

ThemPra Social Pedagogy CIC. Available at: <https://www.thempra.org.uk/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030) 'Voice'. Available at: <https://www.decadeofhealthyageing.org/find-knowledge/voices> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Uncertain Futures Project Team (2025) *A guide to community activism and participatory research*. University of Manchester and Manchester Metropolitan University. Available at: <http://uncertainfuturesproject.co.uk> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Urbaniak, A. and Wanka, A. (2023) *Routledge International Handbook of Participatory Approaches in Ageing Research*. 1st edn. London: Routledge. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003254829>.

Woolrych, R., Marinov, A., Sixsmith, J., Hyde, A., Torak, P., Morteau, C., Greenfields, M., Cisneros, Rosa, et al. (2025) *Co-researching visual and mobile methods with Roma communities: a toolkit*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17861/vx4f-2w61>.

Woolrych, R., Marinov, A., Sixsmith, J., Hyde, A., Torak, P., Morteau, C., Greenfields, M., Cisneros, Rosamaria, et al. (2025) *Training Guide for Community Researchers: The Case of the RomaPlaceAge Project*. Available at: [https://researchportal.hw.ac.uk/files/145928382/Final\\_Training\\_Guide\\_for\\_Roma\\_Community\\_Researchers.pdf](https://researchportal.hw.ac.uk/files/145928382/Final_Training_Guide_for_Roma_Community_Researchers.pdf) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abd El Aziz, N. (2015) 'Potentials of creating pocket parks in high-density residential neighborhoods: The case of Rod El Farag, Cairo city', *International Journal of Development and Sustainability*, 4(7), pp. 805–824.

Achammer, L. (2025) *Exploring Self-Perception Through Participatory Photography in Later Life*. Master's Thesis. St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences.

Aguayo, A.J. (2019) *Documentary Resistance: Social Change and Participatory Media*. Oxford University Press. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780190676216.001.0001>.

Aita, V.A., Lydiatt, W.M., and Gilbert, M.A. (2010) 'Portraits of care: medical research through portraiture', *Medical Humanities*, 36(1), pp. 5–13. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1136/jmh.2009.003780>.

Alcaide Manthey, N. (2024) 'The role of community-led social infrastructure in disadvantaged areas', *Cities*, 147, p. 104831. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2024.104831>.

Amenyah S.D., Adjei, J. Benzimra A., Murphy J.L., Fenge L-A., Devis-Rosental C., Jeff, P., Parker A., Edmond R., Cooper T., and Pattenden R. (2025) 'BACK US AND WE'LL BACK YOU': The experiences of older adults of impact of a community-based food model on the health, wellbeing and social connectedness of older people. June 2025. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.31341.29922>.

Amenyah S.D., Craxton, S., Adjei, J. Benzimra A., Murphy J.L., Fenge L-A., Devis-Rosental C. (2025). 'LEMONADE Recipe Book - A community-based food model for over 60s'. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.28824.71680>.

Bambra, C., Lynch, J., and Smith, K.E. (2021) *The Unequal Pandemic: COVID-19 and Health Inequalities*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1qp9gnf>.

Barnes, M., Harrison, E., and Murray, L. (2012) 'Ageing activists: who gets involved in older people's forums?', *Ageing and Society*. 2011/04/08 edn, 32(2), pp. 261–280. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0144686X11000328>.

Barron, A. (2022) 'Beyond Older Age: Approaches to understand the diverse lives of older people'. Available at: [https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/227175769/Beyond\\_Older\\_Age\\_Low\\_resolution\\_09\\_VIS.pdf](https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/227175769/Beyond_Older_Age_Low_resolution_09_VIS.pdf) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

BBC News (2022) 'Derek Jarman-inspired "pocket park" opens in Manchester', *BBC News*, 24 June. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-61917539> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Bear, L. et al. (2021) *Social infrastructures for the post-Covid recovery in the UK*. Department of Anthropology, London School of Economics and Political Science: London, UK. Available at: [https://eprints.lse.ac.uk/111011/4/SocialInfrastructures\\_ReportFinal\\_180122.pdf](https://eprints.lse.ac.uk/111011/4/SocialInfrastructures_ReportFinal_180122.pdf) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Beebejaun, Y. et al. (2015) 'Public harm or public value? Towards coproduction in research with communities', *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, 33(3), pp. 552–565. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1068/c12116>.

Bengtson, V., Endacott, C., and Kang, S. (2018) 'Older adults in churches: Differences in perceptions of clergy and older members', *Journal of Religion, Spirituality & Aging*, 30(2), pp. 154–178. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15528030.2017.1414727>.

Bindels, J. et al. (2014) 'Older people as co-researchers: a collaborative journey', *Ageing and Society*. 2013/02/01 edn, 34(6), pp. 951–973. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0144686X12001298>.

Blair, T. and Minkler, M. (2009) 'Participatory Action Research With Older Adults: Key Principles in Practice', *The Gerontologist*, 49(5), pp. 651–662. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnp049>.

Bourdieu, P. (1986) 'The Forms of Capital', in J.G. Richardson (ed.) *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. New York: Greenwood Press, pp. 241–258.

Bruce, A. (ed.) (2023) *Pocket Park Design*. Available at: <https://repository.museumsiam.org/items/d054e302-8c45-4921-897e-509b9ac99930> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

*Buen Vivir - CCREATE-AGE - RGD 2024* (2025). Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZ1ttoV6lJg> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Buffel, T. (ed.) (2015) *Researching Age-Friendly Communities: Stories from older people as co-investigators*. The University of Manchester Library. Available at: <https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Researching-Age-Friendly-Communities.pdf> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Buffel, T. (2018) 'Social research and co-production with older people: Developing age-friendly communities', *Journal of Aging Studies*, 44, pp. 52–60. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2018.01.012>.

Buffel, T. (2019) 'Older Co-researchers Exploring Age-Friendly Communities: An "Insider" Perspective on the Benefits and Challenges of Peer-Research', *The Gerontologist*, 59(3), pp. 538–548. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnx216>.

Buffel, T., Doran, P., Goff, M., et al. (2020) 'Covid-19 and inequality: developing an age-friendly strategy for recovery in low income communities', *Quality in Ageing and Older Adults*, 21(4), pp. 271–279. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/QAOA-09-2020-0044>.

Buffel, T., Doran, P., Lewis, C., Phillipson, C., Yarker, S., et al. (2020) 'Covid-19: Bringing the social back in', *The Association for Anthropology, Gerontology and the Life Course*. Available at: <https://anthropologyandgerontology.com/covid-19-bringing-the-social-back-in/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Buffel, T., Doran, P., Lewis, C., Phillipson, C., and Yarker, S. (2020) *COVID-19: How social distancing will deepen inequalities among older people* | Centre for Ageing Better, Centre for Ageing Better. Available at: <https://ageing-better.org.uk/blogs/covid-19-how-social-distancing-will-deepen-inequalities-among-older-people> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Buffel, T., Doran, P., Lewis, C., Phillipson, C., and Yarker, S. (2020) *Examining the impact of social distancing on older adults*, *Policy@Manchester Articles: Health and Care*. Available at: <https://blog.policy>.

manchester.ac.uk/health-and-care/2020/04/examining-the-impact-of-social-distancing-on-older-adults/ (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Buffel, T., Yarker, S., Phillipson, C., Lang, L., Lewis, C., Doran, P., and Goff, M. (2023) 'Locked down by inequality: Older people and the COVID-19 pandemic', *Urban Studies*, 60(8), pp. 1465–1482. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/00420980211041018>.

Buffel, T. (2025) 'Co-creating age-friendly futures: Collaboration, leadership and co-production in action', *Generations* [Preprint]. Available at: <https://generations.asaging.org/co-creating-age-friendly-futures/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Buffel, T., Doran, P., and Yarker, S. (2024) *Reimagining Age-Friendly Communities: Urban Ageing and Spatial Justice*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447368571>.

Buffel, T. and Phillipson, C. (2019) 'Ageing in a Gentrifying Neighbourhood: Experiences of Community Change in Later Life', *Sociology*, 53(6), pp. 987–1004. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038519836848>.

Buffel, T. and Phillipson, C. (2020) 'Researching older people in gentrifying neighbourhoods', *Sociology Review*, 30(1), pp. 6–10.

Buffel, T. and Phillipson, C. (2024) *Ageing in Place in Urban Environments: Critical Perspectives*. Abingdon: Routledge. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003229322>.

Buffel, T. and Phillipson, C. (2025) 'Ageing in place in urban environments: building collaborative organisations for later life', *European Journal of Ageing*, 22(1), p. 47. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10433-025-00875-9>.

Bunker, N. (2019) 'Bridging the Gap: The Interface between NHS Care and Faith Communities', in *Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care in Mental Health Settings*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, pp. 57–67.

Campbell, M.K. et al. (2007) 'Church-Based Health Promotion Interventions: Evidence and Lessons Learned', *Annual review of public health*, 28(1), pp. 213–234. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.publhealth.28.021406.144016>.

Campbell, S. et al. (2023) 'Gerontology, Art, and Activism: Can the Intersection of Art, Social Research, and Community Power Lead to Lasting Change?', *The Gerontologist*, 63(10), pp. 1654–1662. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnad090>.

Carroll, S. (2020) *Co-designing Age-friendly Cities And Communities: Towards an Age-friendly Spatial Practice*. Institut for Arkitektur, By og Landskab. Available at: [https://adk.elsevierpure.com/files/63808051/Carroll\\_2020\\_Co\\_designing\\_Age\\_friendly\\_Cities\\_and\\_Communities.pdf](https://adk.elsevierpure.com/files/63808051/Carroll_2020_Co_designing_Age_friendly_Cities_and_Communities.pdf) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Carroll, S., and Nørtoft, K. (2022) 'Significance of age-friendly co-design from a multi-stakeholder collaboration in Greenland', in Lockton, D., Lenzi, S., Hekkert, P., Oak, A., Sádaba, J., Lloyd, P. (eds.), DRS2022: Bilbao, 25 June–3 July, Bilbao, Spain. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.21606/drs.2022.498>.

Carroll, Sidse and Nørtoft, K. (2022) 'Co-Designing Age-Friendly Neighborhood Spaces in Copenhagen: Starting with an Age-Friendly Co-Design Process', *Architecture*, 2(2), pp. 214–230.

Carroll, S and Nørtoft, K. (2022) 'Significance of age-friendly co-design from a multi-stakeholder collaboration in Greenland', in. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.21606/drs.2022.498>.

Centre for Research and Expertise in Social Gerontology (2025) 'Lived Experiences of Aging Immigrants: A narrative-photovoice study'. Available at: <https://creges.ca/en/immigrant-older-adults> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Chiarelli, T. (2025) 'gratiMÃE', 'gratiPAL', 'gratiVÓ', and 'gratiVÔ'. Available at: <https://www.tassiachiarelli.com/loja-virtual> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Chiarelli, T.M. and Sathler Tavares Batistoni, S. (2024) "'É tempo de criação?": Percepções de pessoas idosas em programas públicos de inclusão digital', *KAIRÓS-GERONTOLOGIA*, 27(3). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.61583/kairs.v27i3.71>.

Coleman, P.G. (2011) *Belief and Ageing: Spiritual pathways in later life*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press.

Conway, E. et al. (2025) "'If I Were in his Shoes": Photo-Prompted Storytelling in Interviews With People Living With Dementia', *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 24, p. 16094069251360308.

Cotterell, N. (2022) *Loneliness among minoritised older people: A critical co-research approach exploring experiences, drivers, and ways of coping*. The University of Manchester. Available at: [https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/290852197/FULL\\_TEXT.PDF](https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/290852197/FULL_TEXT.PDF) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Cotterell, N. et al. (2025) 'Loneliness among older ethnic minority people: exploring the role of structural disadvantage and place using a co-research methodology', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 48(1), pp. 206–228. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2024.2311833>.

Cotterell, N. (2022) *Loneliness among minoritised older people: A critical co-research approach exploring experiences, drivers, and ways of coping*. A thesis submitted to The University of Manchester for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Humanities.

Cotterell, N. and Buffel, T. (2023) "'Holders of knowledge are communities, not academic institutions": lessons from involving minoritised older people as co-researchers in a study of loneliness in later life', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 20(3), pp. 441–470. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/14780887.2023.2180463>.

Cribbin, T. et al. (2021) 'Ageing well in place in Hulme, Manchester'. Available at: <https://communitysavers.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/AgeingWellInPlaceInHulme-March2021.pdf> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Cribbin, T. (2021) *Classphemy*. Empire Publications.

Cribbin, T. and Finnegan, A. (2019) *Thirsty Scholars: A Celebration of Hulme People*. Empire Publications.

Darren (2023) 'Ageing Well in Place at Hopton Court: Achievements and challenges', *Community Savers*, 20 August. Available at: <https://communitysavers.net/ageing-well-in-place-at-hopton-court-achievements-and-challenges/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Dewhurst, E. and Campbell, S. (2023) *COVID heroes left behind: the 'invisible' women struggling to make ends meet*, *The Conversation*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.64628/AB.eta97edgq>.

Dewhurst, E. and Campbell, S. (2023) *Uncertain Futures: 100 Women*. University of Manchester. Available at: [https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/281224925/Uncertain\\_Futures\\_Report\\_2023.pdf](https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/281224925/Uncertain_Futures_Report_2023.pdf) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Di Gessa, G. and Price, D. (2022) 'The impact of shielding during the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health: evidence from the English Longitudinal Study of Ageing', *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 221(4), pp. 637–643. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1192/bjp.2022.44>.

Doran, P. and Buffel, T. (2018) 'Translating Research into Action: involving older people in co-producing knowledge about age-friendly neighbourhood interventions', *Working with Older People*, 22(1), pp. 39–47. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/WWOP-11-2017-0033>.

Doran, P., Goff, M., and Phillipson, C. (2023) 'Interventions to promote ageing in place: developing the Village model in Manchester', *Quality in Ageing and Older Adults*, 25(1), pp. 56–67. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/QAOA-03-2023-0022>.

Dunford, M. and Jenkins, T. (eds) (2017) *Digital Storytelling: Form and Content*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-59152-4>.

Durose, C. et al. (2012) 'Towards Co-production in Research with Communities', *Connected Communities. Arts and Humanities Research*

Council (AHRC) [Preprint]. Available at: [https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/33424282/FULL\\_TEXT.PDF](https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/33424282/FULL_TEXT.PDF) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Durose, C., Perry, B., and Richardson, L. (2022) 'Is co-production a "good" concept? Three responses', *Futures*, 142, p. 102999. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.futures.2022.102999>.

Durose, C. and Richardson, L. (2015) *Designing Public Policy For Co-Production: Theory, practice and change*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1332/policypress/9781447316695.001.0001>.

Ekoh, P.C. and Walsh, C.A. (2024) 'Valuable Beyond Vulnerable: A Scoping Review on the Contributions of Older Forced Migrants in Post-migration Recovery', *International Journal of Disaster Risk Science*, 15(2), pp. 186–197. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13753-024-00549-7>.

Ellor, J.W. (2004) 'Micro Practice and Faith-Based Initiatives: The Role of Religious Congregations in the Social Service System', *Journal of Religious Gerontology*, 16(1–2), pp. 15–35. Available at: [https://doi.org/10.1300/J078v16n01\\_02](https://doi.org/10.1300/J078v16n01_02).

Fang, M.L. et al. (2023) 'Co-creating inclusive spaces and places: Towards an intergenerational and age-friendly living ecosystem', *Frontiers in Public Health*, Volume 10-2022. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2022.996520>.

Fero, K. (2018) *Documentary practice as radical process in challenging dominant media and state narratives*. Sheffield Hallam University (United Kingdom). Available at: [https://shura.shu.ac.uk/23304/1/Fero\\_2018\\_PhD\\_ChallengingDominantMedia.pdf](https://shura.shu.ac.uk/23304/1/Fero_2018_PhD_ChallengingDominantMedia.pdf) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Fletcher, J.R. (2024) '*IN CITU*'. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UoXmIU2BjFQ> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Fletcher, J.R. (2024) 'Re-municipalising sociospatial infrastructure: A journeying ethnography of Greater Manchester's dementia (un)friendly buses', *Social Science & Medicine*, 360, p. 117300. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2024.117300>.

Fletcher, J.R. (2024) 'Transport digitalisation: Navigating futures of hypercognitive disablement', *The British Journal of Sociology*, 75(4), pp. 650–655.

Fletcher, J.R. (2025) 'Beyond Local Domains: Connective Ontology in (Post-)Cognitive Sociology', *Sociological Research Online*, 30(3), pp. 829–838. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/13607804241237768>.

Fletcher, J.R. (2025) 'Connecting to Cognition: A Methodological Journey With Urban Dementia', *Sociological Research Online*, p. 13607804241287683. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/13607804241287683>.

Fletcher, J.R. (2025) 'Navigating Dementia: Political Materialities of Public Transport in the All-Ageing Metropolis', *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 47(3), p. e70017. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9566.70017>.

Fletcher, J.R. (2025) *Sharing people with dementia's experiences of public transport*. Available at: <https://www.bath.ac.uk/case-studies/sharing-people-with-dementias-experiences-of-public-transport/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Fletcher, J.R. (2026) 'Cognitive co-ageing with inequitable political ecologies: Deconditioning & urban public transport', *Social Science & Medicine*, 388, p. 118727. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2025.118727>.

Fortune, D. et al. (2015) "'It was like reading a detective novel": Using PAR to work together for culture change', *Journal of Aging Studies*, 34, pp. 38–47. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jaging.2015.04.002>.

Fudge, N., Wolfe, C.D.A., and McKeivitt, C. (2007) 'Involving older people in health research', *Age and Ageing*, 36(5), pp. 492–500. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ageing/afm029>.

Goff, M. et al. (2020) *Community Interventions to Promote 'Ageing in Place': Developing the 'Village' Model in Manchester*. Manchester Institute for Collaborative Research on Ageing (MICRA), University of Manchester. Available at: <https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=48721> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Goff, M. and Doran, P. (2024) 'Co-producing age-friendly community interventions: the Village model', in *Co-producing age-friendly community interventions: the Village model*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press (Ageing in a Global Context), pp. 118–134. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447368571.ch007> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Gogarty, L.A. (2024) 'Working Together: Suzanne Lacy interviewed by Larne Abse Gogarty', *Art Monthly* [Preprint]. Available at: <https://uncertainfuturesproject.co.uk/Art%20Monthly%20Working%20Together%20Suzanne%20Lacy%20Larne%20Abse%20Gogarty.pdf> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Centre for Ageing Better (2022) 'Becoming an age-friendly employer in Greater Manchester: A toolkit'. Available at: <https://www.greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/what-we-do/work-and-skills/age-friendly-employer-toolkit/> (Accessed 18 November 2025).

Green, B. (2023) 'Understanding collaborative documentary filmmaking practice as a methodology for exploring participant perspectives of place in areas of low social mobility', *Brazilian Creative Industries Journal*, 3(2), pp. 6–20. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.25112/bcij.v3i2.3543>.

Greenfield, E.A. et al. (2019) 'Community Gerontology: A Framework for Research, Policy, and Practice on Communities and Aging', *The Gerontologist*, 59(5), pp. 803–810. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gny089>.

Grenier, A., Phillipson, C., and Settersten, R.A. (2020) *Precarity and Ageing: Understanding Insecurity and Risk in Later Life*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447340874>.

Grupo Social Unate (2025) 'Estudio de Prácticas Participadas'. Available at: <https://fundacionpem.org/documentos> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Hammond, M., Crompton, E., and White, S. (2024) 'Redesigning the age-friendly city: the role of architecture in addressing spatial ageism', in *Reimagining Age-Friendly Communities: Urban Ageing and Spatial Justice*, p. 135. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.56687/9781447368571-012>.

Hammond, M., Kavanagh, N., Lewis, A., Buffel, T., McGarry, P., Phillipson, C., White, S., Yarker, S. (2025) *Co-creating age-friendly social housing: Improving the experience of ageing in place through community collaboration*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.23634/MMU.00642693>.

Hammond, M. and Phillipson, C. (2024) 'Aging and architecture: From the patient to the citizen', in *The Routledge Handbook of Architecture, Urban Space and Politics, Volume II*. Routledge, pp. 377–392. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003112471-29>.

Hammond, M. and Rodgers, K.-M. (2023) *Creating Age-Friendly Developments. A Practical Guide for Ensuring Homes and Communities Support Ageing in Place*. Manchester: Greater Manchester Planning and Ageing Group

Hammond, M., Walsh, R., and White, S. (2018) *Rightsizing: Reframing the housing offer for older people*. Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA)/PHASE @ Manchester School of Architecture. Available at: [https://e-space.mmu.ac.uk/621554/1/Rightsizing\\_MSA\\_Final2.pdf](https://e-space.mmu.ac.uk/621554/1/Rightsizing_MSA_Final2.pdf) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Hammond, M., White, S., and Phillipson, C. (2020) 'From precarity to interdependence: The role of age-friendly communities in promoting wellbeing in excluded communities', in *Designing Future Cities for Wellbeing*. Routledge, pp. 122–138. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429470684-9>.

Hardy, L.J. et al. (2016) 'Hiring the experts: best practices for community-engaged research', *Qualitative Research*, 16(5), pp. 592–600. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468794115579474>.

Hartland, T. (2023) "'Powerful and humanising": bringing research on ageing and displacement to life', *Global Development Institute Blog*, 25

July. Available at: <http://blog.gdi.manchester.ac.uk/powerful-and-humanising-bringing-research-on-ageing-and-displacement-to-life/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Hartland, T. and Pollock, L. (2023) *Echoes of Displacement*. Available at: <https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=68550> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Hartland, T.G. (2025) *Navigating Precarity: Narratives of Ageing from Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Greater Manchester*. The University of Manchester. Available at: [https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/1632215296/FULL\\_TEXT.PDF](https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/1632215296/FULL_TEXT.PDF) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Hashim, N.I. et al. (2019) 'The Restorative Environment Offered by Pocket Park at Laman Standard Chartered Kuala Lumpur', *Journal of Hotel and Business Management*, 8(1). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.35248/2169-0286.19.8.194>.

Hayward, C., Simpson, L., and Wood, L. (2004) 'Still Left out in the Cold: Problematising Participatory Research and Development', *Sociologia Ruralis*, 44(1), pp. 95–108. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9523.2004.00264.x>.

Hopton Hopefuls and King, S. (2021) *Ageing Well in Place at Hopton Court*. Available at: <https://communitysavers.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/AgeingWellinPlace-HoptonCourt.pdf> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Horn, V. and Fokkema, T. (2025) 'Editors' introduction—older refugees: Who are they and how are they faring?', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 38(1), pp. 1–15. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/feaf017>.

Hughes, J. and Nicholson, H. (eds) (2016) *Critical Perspectives on Applied Theatre*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107587977>.

James, H. and Buffel, T. (2023) 'Co-research with older people: a systematic literature review', *Ageing and Society*. 2022/02/10 edn, 43(12), pp. 2930–2956. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0144686X21002014>.

Kavanagh, N. et al. (2025) 'Working with conflict in community research', *British Science Association* [Preprint]. Available at: <https://www.britishtscienceassociation.org/essay-13-dunhill-mancs-working-with-conflict> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Kavanagh, N. and Hammond, M. (Forthcoming) 'Ageing, Activism and Social Infrastructure: Advancing spatial justice within the Age-Friendly agenda', *Quality in Ageing and Older Adults* [Preprint].

- Kavanagh, N., Hammond, M., and Lewis, A. (2025) 'Co-Creating Spatial Justice in High-Rise Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs) in Manchester, UK', in *Architectures of Ageing*. Routledge. Available at: [https://www.routledge.com/Architectures-of-Ageing-in-Place/Chatterjee/p/book/9781032571188?srsId=AfmBOoqJdAlreL5GxFkZQLut\\_AjlShPI24xBdssDr4FD7b-yVh\\_MrJ9](https://www.routledge.com/Architectures-of-Ageing-in-Place/Chatterjee/p/book/9781032571188?srsId=AfmBOoqJdAlreL5GxFkZQLut_AjlShPI24xBdssDr4FD7b-yVh_MrJ9) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).
- Keating, N. et al. (2003) 'Understanding the caring capacity of informal networks of frail seniors: a case for care networks', *Ageing and Society*. 2004/12/14 edn, 23(1), pp. 115–127. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0144686x02008954>.
- Klinenberg, E. (2018) *Palaces for the people: How social infrastructure can help fight inequality, polarization, and the decline of civic life*. New York: Penguin Random House. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15575330.2022.2118937>.
- Lang, L., Yarker, S., Doran, P., Phillipson, C., and Buffel, T. (2024) *Developing Age-Friendly Communities to Support Healthy Ageing: The Role of Faith Spaces as Social Infrastructure*. Manchester: The University of Manchester. Available at: <https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=72395> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).
- Lang, L. and Yarker, S. (2024) 'Involving marginalised groups of older people in age-friendly programmes: lessons from the Ambition for Ageing programme', in. Bristol, UK: Policy Press, pp. 85–99. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447368571.ch005>.
- Lang, L., Yarker, S., Phillipson, C., and Buffel, T. (2025) 'Exploring the role of faith spaces as social infrastructure in creating age-friendly communities', *Journal of Religion, Spirituality & Aging*, pp. 1–22. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15528030.2025.2559227>.
- Lewis, C. et al. (2020) 'Prisoners of space: How the COVID-19 lockdown is deepening inequalities in later life', *Ageing Issues*, 13 May. Available at: <https://ageingissues.wordpress.com/2020/05/13/prisoners-of-space-how-the-covid-19-lockdown-is-deepening-inequalities-in-later-life/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).
- Lewis, C., Phillipson, C., Yarker, S., and Lang, L. (2023) *COVID-19, Inequality and Older People: Everyday Life during the Pandemic*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.56687/9781447367468>.
- Lewis, C., Phillipson, C., et al. (2023) 'Precarity and the Pandemic: The Impact of COVID-19 on Single Men Living Alone', *The Gerontologist*, 63(1), pp. 131–139. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnac129>.
- Lewis, C., Yarker, S., et al. (2023) *The Impact of the Cost of Living Crisis on Older Ethnic Minority People in Greater Manchester*. Manchester: The University of Manchester. Available at: <https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=71052> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Lewis, C. (2025) "'Stay at home": analysing the implications of COVID-19 for unpaid carers', *Families, Relationships and Societies*, pp. 1–17. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1332/20467435Y2025D000000071>.

Lewis, C., Yarker, S., and Phillipson, C. (2024) 'Living with financial insecurity: Analysing the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on older ethnic minority people', *Social Policy & Administration*, 59(2), pp. 265–279. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/spol.13074>.

Lin, P. et al. (2017) 'Effects of urban planning indicators on urban heat island: a case study of pocket parks in high-rise high-density environment', *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 168, pp. 48–60. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2017.09.024>.

Littlechild, R., Tanner, D., and Hall, K. (2015) 'Co-research with older people: Perspectives on impact', *Qualitative Social Work*, 14(1), pp. 18–35. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3109/09638237.2011.651658>.

Manchester, H. (2013) *Creative Approaches to Improving Participation: giving learners a say*. Routledge. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203818169>.

Manchester, H. et al. (Forthcoming) 'Taking care of ageing futures: Reflections on a situated, relational and care-full praxis of co-design with older adults', *Journal of Responsible Innovation* [Preprint]. Available at: <https://hdl.handle.net/1983/22b37cd9-d91e-4e0c-b2ba-5fcad5216f1b> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Marinov, A. et al. (2025) "'Nothing About Us without Us": Exploring The Rights of Older Roma to Age in Place'. *AMPS Conference 2025*, Lisbon, Portugal, July. Available at: <https://amps-research.com/conference/lisbon-livable-cities/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Marston, H.R., et al. (2023). Employing citizen science to understand the contemporary needs of older adults accessing and using technology in a pandemic. In: A. Urbaniak and A. Wanka (Eds.), *International Handbook of Participatory Approaches in Ageing Research* (1st Edition). Routledge. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003254829>.

Martinson, M. and Minkler, M. (2006) 'Civic Engagement and Older Adults: A Critical Perspective', *The Gerontologist*, 46(3), pp. 318–324. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/46.3.318>.

Mayor of London and London Assembly (2013) *Mayor launches community fund to help create his 100 'Pocket Parks'* | *London City Hall*. Available at: <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases-5639> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

McGarry, P. (2024) 'Developing age-friendly policies for cities and city-regions during austerity, COVID-19 and beyond: strategies, challenges and reflections', in *Reimagining Age-Friendly Communities: Urban Ageing*

and *Spatial Justice*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press (Ageing in a Global Context), pp. 44–60. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447368571.ch003>.

Miller, E., Hayter, C., and Manchester, H. (2025) 'Facilitating co-design in healthcare: a collaborative autoethnography of personalities, power, and competing priorities', *CoDesign*, pp. 1–15. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/15710882.2025.2460037>.

Nazroo, J. (2017) 'Class and Health Inequality in Later Life: Patterns, Mechanisms and Implications for Policy', *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 14(12). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph14121533>.

Nazroo, J. and Bécares, L. (2021) *Ethnic inequalities in COVID-19 mortality: A consequence of persistent racism*. Manchester: Runnymede Trust. Available at: [https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/200461103/Runnymede\\_CoDE\\_COVID\\_mortality\\_briefing\\_FINAL.pdf](https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/200461103/Runnymede_CoDE_COVID_mortality_briefing_FINAL.pdf) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Nguyen, A.W. (2020) 'Religion and Mental Health in Racial and Ethnic Minority Populations: A Review of the Literature', *Innovation in aging*, 4(5), p. igaa035. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/geroni/igaa035>.

Nordh, H. and Østby, K. (2013) 'Pocket parks for people — A study of park design and use', *Urban Forestry & Urban Greening*, 12(1), pp. 12–17. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ufug.2012.11.003>.

Perry, B., Durose, C. and Richardson, L. with the Action Research Collective (2019) *How can we govern cities differently? The promise and practices of co-production*. Project Report. Greater Manchester, Creative Concern. Available at: <https://jamandjustice-rjc.org/sites/default/files/Jam%20-%20Justice%20Final%20Report%20July%202019.pdf> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Perry, B., Durose, C., and Richardson, L. (2024) *Getting our house in order: improving conditions for co-produced research in UK higher education. Introducing the Co-Production Futures Inquiry*. Briefing Note 1. Universities of Liverpool, Manchester and Sheffield. Available at: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/heseltine-institute/documents/getting-our-house-in-order.pdf> (Accessed: 17 November 2025)

Peschardt, K.K., Stigsdotter, U.K., and Schipperrijn, J. (2016) 'Identifying Features of Pocket Parks that May Be Related to Health Promoting Use', *Landscape Research*, 41(1), pp. 79–94. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/01426397.2014.894006>.

Phillipson, C., Lang, L., Yarker, S., Lewis, C., Doran, P., Goff, M., and Buffel, T. (2021) 'COVID-19 and social exclusion: Experiences of older people living in areas of multiple deprivation', in: University of Manchester, Manchester Institute of Collaborative Research on Ageing

(MICRA). Available at: [https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/196683355/Report\\_final\\_Covid.pdf](https://pure.manchester.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/196683355/Report_final_Covid.pdf) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Phillipson, C., Lewis, C., and Grenier, A. (2025) 'The social organisation of COVID-19: experiences and consequences for older people', *Cogent Gerontology*, 4(1), p. 2554141. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/28324897.2025.2554141>.

Phillipson, C., White, S., and Hammond, M. (2014) *Old Moat: Age-friendly Neighbourhood Report*. Manchester: Southway Housing Trust. Available at: <https://hummedia.manchester.ac.uk/institutes/micra/OLDMOATREPORT110413.pdf> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Pink, S. (2006) *The Future of Visual Anthropology: Engaging the Senses*. London: Routledge. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203003596>.

Pink, S. (2007) *Visual Interventions: Applied Visual Anthropology*. Oxford: Berghahn Books (Studies in Public and Applied Anthropology). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1515/9780857455802>.

Portacolone, E. et al. (2021) 'The Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Lived Experience of Diverse Older Adults Living Alone With Cognitive Impairment', *The Gerontologist*, 61(2), pp. 251–261. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnaa201>.

Ray, M. (2007) 'Redressing the balance? The participation of older people in research', in M. Bernard and T. Scharf (eds) *Critical perspectives on ageing societies*. Policy Press, p. 0. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1332/policypress/9781861348906.003.0006>.

Rémillard-Boilard, S., Buffel, T., and Phillipson, C. (2017) 'Involving older residents in age-friendly developments: From information to co-production mechanisms', *Journal of Housing for the Elderly*, 31(2), pp. 146–159. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02763893.2017.1309932>.

Reyes, L., Shellae Versey, H., and Yeh, J. (2022) 'Emancipatory Visions: Using Visual Methods to Coconstruct Knowledge with Older Adults', *The Gerontologist*, 62(10), pp. 1402–1408. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnac046>.

Reyes, L., Shellae Versey, H., and Yeh, J. (2022) 'Emancipatory Visions: Using Visual Methods to Coconstruct Knowledge with Older Adults', *The Gerontologist*, 62(10), pp. 1402–1408. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnac046>.

Rossetti, B. and James, J. (2024) *The state of ageing in Greater Manchester 2024*. Manchester: Greater Manchester Ageing Hub. Available at: <https://greatermanchester-ca.gov.uk/media/9158/the-state-of-ageing-in-greater-manchester-january-2024.pdf> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Royal Exchange Theatre (2019) 'Can You Hear Me From Up Here'. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6tw3ioH1UuM> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Royal Exchange Theatre (2024) 'Rochdale Elders Films', *Royal Exchange Theatre Website*. Available at: <https://www.royalexchange.co.uk/project/rochdale-elders-films/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Royal Exchange Theatre. 'A Digital Research Project with the University of Manchester', *Royal Exchange Theatre Website*. Available at: <https://www.royalexchange.co.uk/create-participate/elders/elders-research/a-digital-research-project-with-the-university-of-manchester/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Salles, J. (2020) 'Power From The Tower'. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QYVg33U57vl> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Salles, J. (2025) 'Molenbeek On Watch [Alerte à Molenbeek]'. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9oxpHy0yXfY> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Scharlach, A.E. et al. (2016) 'Does the village model help to foster age-friendly communities?', in *International Perspectives on Age-Friendly Cities*. Routledge, pp. 212–226. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315866772-19> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Seifert, A., Cotten, S.R., and Xie, B. (2021) 'A Double Burden of Exclusion? Digital and Social Exclusion of Older Adults in Times of COVID-19', *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B*, 76(3), pp. e99–e103. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/geronb/gbaa098>.

Settersten, R.A. (2020) 'How life course dynamics matter for precarity in later life', in A. Grenier, C. Phillipson, and R.A. Settersten Jr. (eds) *Precarity and Ageing: Understanding Insecurity and Risk in Later Life*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press (Ageing in a Global Context), pp. 19–40. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447340874.ch002>.

Settersten, R.A. et al. (2020) 'Understanding the effects of Covid-19 through a life course lens', *Advances in Life Course Research*, 45. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.alcr.2020.100360>.

Shaw, R., Gullifer, J., and Wood, K. (2016) 'Religion and Spirituality: A Qualitative Study of Older Adults', *Ageing International*, 41(3), pp. 311–330. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12126-016-9245-7>.

Shura, R., Siders, R.A., and Dannefer, D. (2011) 'Culture Change in Long-term Care: Participatory Action Research and the Role of the Resident', *The Gerontologist*, 51(2), pp. 212–225. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnq099>.

Siegert, M. (2020) *Religious affiliation, religious practice and social integration of refugees*. Nürnberg: Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (BAMF) Forschungszentrum Migration, Integration und Asyl (FZ). Available at: <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-77914-9> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Sou, G. and Hall, S.M. (2021) 'Communicating crisis research with comics: representation, process, and pedagogy', in *Qualitative and Digital Research in Times of Crisis: Methods, Reflexivity, and Ethics*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press, pp. 93–110. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447363828.ch006>.

Stoisser, L. (2025) *Luise Stoisser: DR 1 - Needs & Systems (Belgium), HOMeAGE*. Available at: <https://homeage-dn.eu/dr1-luise-lu-stoisser/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Stoisser, L., Buffel, T., Petermans, A., and Smetcoren, A-S. (2025) 'Rethinking community-based housing for older adults: a research agenda for spatial justice', *International Journal of Housing Policy*, pp. 1–19. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/19491247.2025.2515641>.

Stoisser, L., Buffel, T., Petermans, A., and Smetcoren, A-S. (2025, In Press) 'Community-based housing alternatives for older adults: towards a conceptual framework for resident involvement', *European Journal of Ageing*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10433-025-00895-5>.

Stoisser, L. et al. (Forthcoming) 'Embodied spatial belonging: The body-place relationships of older adults living in age-related housing'.

Stoisser, L., Lampaert, L., and Smetcoren, A.-S. (2025) *Making community-based housing inclusive for diverse older adults*. 1. HOMeAGE. Available at: <https://homeage-dn.eu/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/UTF-8ENGMaking-Community-based-housing-inclusive-for-diverse-older-adults-HOMeAGE-Policy-Brief-Series-No.-1.pdf> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Tanner, D. (2012) 'Co-research with older people with dementia: Experience and reflections', *Journal of Mental Health*, 21(3), pp. 296–306. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3109/09638237.2011.651658>.

Tanner, D. (2013) 'Identity, selfhood and dementia: messages for social work', *European Journal of Social Work*, 16(2), pp. 155–170. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691457.2011.611795>.

Tenquist, M., Hartland, T., and Salles, J. (2024) 'Ageing in the margins: exploring experiences of precarity in urban environments', in *Reimagining Age-Friendly Communities: Urban Ageing and Spatial Justice*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press, pp. 177–203. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447368571.ch010>.

This Abled City (2024) 'This Abled City: Everyday Geographies of Being and Becoming Disabled'. Available at: <https://www.thisabledcity.com/output/public-output> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Thomas, S. (2012) 'Collaboration and ethics in documentary filmmaking — a case study', *New Review of Film and Television Studies*, 10(3), pp. 332–343. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17400309.2012.695979>.

Uncertain Futures (2025) '*Opening up Participatory Research: Collective Power of Co-Production*'. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aMEGMRCckR4> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Uncertain Futures Advisory Group et al. (2025) *Uncertain Futures Connectivity Map, Uncertain Futures + 100 Women*. Available at: <https://uncertainfuturesproject.co.uk/research/resources> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

*Uncertain Futures: Research Findings* (2023). Manchester Art Gallery. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lm95sT7fyhQ> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Understanding Older and younger people's Perspectives and Imaginaries of Climate change' (OPTIC) Team (2023) 'The Climate Comic: Tales between generations'. Available at: [www.climatecomic.co.uk](http://www.climatecomic.co.uk) (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Urbaniak, A. (2023) 'Role of reflexivity in challenging participation inequality in participatory approaches with Older Adults', in *Routledge International Handbook of Participatory Approaches in Ageing Research*. 1st edn. London: Routledge. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003254829-3>.

Urbaniak, A. and Wanka, A. (2023) *Routledge International Handbook of Participatory Approaches in Ageing Research*. 1st edn. London: Routledge. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003254829>.

User, A. (2024) 'Hulme tenants lead the way on Ageing Well in Place', *Community Savers*, 2 October. Available at: <https://communitysavers.net/hulme-tenants-lead-the-way-on-ageing-well-in-place/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Van Hoof, J., and Marston, H.R. (2021). Age-friendly cities and communities: State of the art and future perspectives. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(4), 1644. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18041644>.

Vlachantoni, A. et al. (2022) 'The Impact of Changing Social Support on Older Persons' Onset of Loneliness During the COVID-19 Pandemic in the United Kingdom', *The Gerontologist*, 62(8), pp. 1147–1159. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnac033>.

Walker, A. (2007) 'Why involve older people in research?', *Age and Ageing*, 36(5), pp. 481–483. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/ageing/afm100>.

Ward, L. and Barnes, M. (2016) 'Transforming Practice with Older People through an Ethic of Care', *The British Journal of Social Work*, 46(4), pp. 906–922. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcv029>.

White, P.J. et al. (2020) 'Learning from COVID-19: design, age-friendly technology, hacking and mental models', *Emerald Open Research*, 1(2). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/EOR-02-2023-0006>.

White, S. and Foale, K. (2023) 'Making a place for technology in communities: PlaceCal and the capabilities approach', *Information, Communication & Society*, 26(6), pp. 1067–1086. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2020.1767173>.

White, S. and Hammond, M. (2018) 'From representation to active ageing in a Manchester neighbourhood: designing the age-friendly city', in *Age-Friendly Cities and Communities: A Global Perspective*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press (Ageing in a Global Context), pp. 193–210. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447331322.ch010>.

White, S., Phillipson, C., and Hammond, M. (2012) *Old Moat in an Age-Friendly Manchester Research Report (AFOM)*. Available at: <https://hummedia.manchester.ac.uk/institutes/micra/OLDMOATREPORT110413.pdf> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Wilkinson, S., Lang, L., and Yarker, S. (2022) 'Dispersed communities in age-friendly work: an intersectional approach to place-based working', *Working with Older People*, 27(2), pp. 110–119. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/WWOP-07-2022-0025>.

Wilkinson, S., Lang, L., and Yarker, S. (2022) 'Dispersed communities in age-friendly work: an intersectional approach to place-based working', *Working with Older People*, 27(2), pp. 110–119. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/WWOP-07-2022-0025>.

Willatt, A. et al. (2024) 'An Intersectional Lifecourse Lens and Participatory Methods as the Foundations for Co-Designing with and for Minoritised Older Adults', *Proc. ACM Hum.-Comput. Interact.*, 8(CSCW1). Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1145/3637295>.

Wilson, M. et al. (2024) 'Designing technology to support greater participation of people living with dementia in daily and meaningful activities', *Digital Health*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1177/20552076231222427>.

Winship, P., Buffel, T., and May, V. (2025) 'Theorising Ageing in Place During Urban Regeneration: A Spatial Approach', *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/tesg.70030>.

Winton, A. (2016) 'Using photography as a creative, collaborative research tool', *The Qualitative Report*, 21(2), pp. 428–449.

World Health Organization (2023) *Progress report on the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing, 2021-2023*. Geneva: World Health Organization (WHO). Available at: <https://iris.who.int/server/api/core/bitstreams/623af080-e779-4941-bed7-e41bd7e6c105/content> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Yarker, S., Doran, P., and Buffel, T. (2023) 'Theorizing 'place' in aging in place: The need for territorial and relational perspectives', *The Gerontologist*. doi: 10.1093/geront/gnad002.

Yarker, S. et al. (2020) 'Support and exclusion for older adults during Covid-19: is the neighbourhood always best placed?', *Geography Directions*, 3 June. Available at: <https://blog.geographydirections.com/2020/06/03/support-and-exclusion-for-older-adults-during-covid-19-is-the-neighbourhood-always-best-placed/> (Accessed: 17 November 2025).

Yarker, S. (2021) *Creating Spaces for an Ageing Society: The Role of Critical Social Infrastructure*. Emerald Publishing Limited. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1108/9781839827389>.

Yarker, S. and Buffel, T. (2022) 'Involving Socially Excluded Groups in Age-Friendly Programs: The Role of a Spatial Lens and Co-Production Approaches', *Journal of Aging & Social Policy*, 34(2), pp. 254–274. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/08959420.2022.2049571>.

Yarker, S., Doran, P., and Buffel, T. (2024) 'Theorizing "Place" in Aging in Place: The Need for Territorial and Relational Perspectives', *The Gerontologist*, 64(2), p. gnad002. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnad002>.

Yarker, S., Lewis, C., and Lang, L. (2024) 'The role of community and voluntary organisations in creating spatially just age-friendly cities', in *Reimagining Age-Friendly Communities: Urban Ageing and Spatial Justice*. Bristol, UK: Policy Press (Ageing in a Global Context), pp. 156–174. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.51952/9781447368571.ch009>.

Ziegler, F. and Scharf, T. (2013) 'Community-based participatory action research: opportunities and challenges for critical gerontology', in J. Baars et al. (eds) *Ageing, Meaning and Social Structure: Connecting Critical and Humanistic Gerontology*. Bristol University Press, pp. 157–180. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.46692/9781447300915.009>.



# NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

## **Abdulkader Jamil**

Jamil is a long-standing and committed resident of Manchester for over 54 years, with a professional background in banking and a profound dedication to local community and neighbourhood projects. Drawing on his East African Asian heritage, he brings a unique and invaluable perspective to his work, particularly within older people's networks and local task forces, advocating for improved local services and community cohesion.

## **Bergen, Jason**

Jason Bergen is Project Manager for Age-Friendly Manchester (AFM) at Manchester City Council, experienced in project management, social policy, communication, and collaborative engagement, with a focus on equalities, ageing, migration, and poverty. He co-authored the report 'Pandemic Pressures: How Greater Manchester equalities organisations have responded to the needs of older people during the Covid-19 crisis' and is a trustee of Ageing Without Children UK.

## **Buffel, Tine**

Tine Buffel is Professor of Sociology and Social Gerontology at The University of Manchester, and the Founding Director of the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG). An expert member of the World Health Organization (WHO) Advisory Group on Healthy Ageing, she leads local, national, and international projects on later-life inequalities, examining the social and spatial dimensions of ageing and co-producing inclusive, equitable age-friendly environments with older people and communities.

## **Campbell, Sarah**

Sarah Campbell is Senior Lecturer in Integrated Health and Social Care at Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU). An interdisciplinary qualitative researcher

with over 20 years of experience, her work examines embodied, sensory, and relational dimensions of ageing and dementia, specialising in participatory, creative, and co-production methods. She sits on the ESRC White Rose Doctoral Training Programme Academic Quality Committee and the PAAR-Net management committee.

## **Conway, Shannon**

Shannon Conway is a Chartered Surveyor with 20 years' experience working on large scale residential and mixed-use city centre developments. Her expertise covers the delivery of different types of homes and communities for all ages and levels of affordability. She has been a member of the Greater Manchester Housing, Planning and Ageing Group since 2017, representing the private development sector. She speaks regularly at conferences and forums, lobbying for age-friendly design being embedded into all new housing developments.

## **Cotterell, Natalie**

Natalie Cotterell is Senior Research Associate on the Living and Dying in Care Homes During the COVID-19 Pandemic project at Lancaster University, having previously been a researcher at the University of Cumbria and The University of Manchester, completing her PhD in Sociology at the latter in 2022. She researches healthy ageing, reducing health inequalities, and co-research methodologies.

## **Cribbin, Tina**

Tina Cribbin is a community activist, poet, and tenant leader from Hulme, Manchester. She has led tenant-led research and community initiatives including the Ageing Well in Place in Hulme partnership and a naturally occurring retirement community (NORC) pilot at Hopton Court. Tina uses poetry, theatre, and community publishing to amplify residents' voices, and is author of *Classphemy* and co-author of the community oral-history book *Thirsty Scholars*.

## **Deng, MaoHui**

MaoHui Deng is Lecturer in Film Studies at The University of Manchester. His interdisciplinary work draws from film and performance studies, gerontology, and dementia studies to explore the intersections of cinema, ageing, and dementia through the examination of time. He is currently working on a project on dementia and modernity and has received awards including the Faculty of Humanities Outstanding Teaching Award.

## **Doran, Patty**

Patty Doran is Co-Deputy Director of the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG), and Research Fellow at The University of Manchester, and the organiser of the MUARG Older People's Forum. Her research focuses on healthy ageing, spatial justice, community support, and the life course, using mixed methods, with particular interest in co-production methods to amplify community voices. Originally from Aotearoa New Zealand, Patty has worked on MUARG projects including the Urban Villages Project, Faith Spaces as Social Infrastructure, and COVID-19, Inequality, and Older People.

## **Dewhurst, Elaine**

Elaine Dewhurst is a Professor in Employment Law at The University of Manchester and Senior Expert on Age for the European Equality Law Network (EELN). Her research focuses on age discrimination, the rights of irregular immigrants, and the intersection of employment and immigration law, and she is a co-lead researcher on the award-winning Uncertain Futures project addressing inequalities facing women over 50 in Manchester with respect to work.

## **Edson, Ruth**

Ruth Edson is Learning Manager: Communities at Manchester Art Gallery and Platt Hall. With over 20 years of experience in museums, local government, and freelance

practice, she specialises in co-producing exhibitions and programmes with diverse communities, including older people, refugees, and ESOL learners. Ruth led community engagement and curatorial development for the Uncertain Futures project, coordinating consultations, exhibitions, and advisory group partnerships.

## **Everest, Sophie**

Sophie Everest is Lecturer in Film Practice at The University of Manchester and Director of Belle Vue Productions. She researches and produces participatory, collections-based film work for museums and cultural partners, and combines teaching with applied filmmaking for heritage, archive, and co-production projects. Her practice spans documentary production, archival research, and socially engaged film for cultural organisations.

## **Goff, Mhorag**

Mhorag Goff is Research Associate in Health Services Research at The University of Manchester. Her research explores the implications of technology and information in organisations, focusing on the public sector, with expertise in critical management studies, information ethics, and qualitative research methods. She has a particular interest in actor–network theory, ethnographic methods, participatory research, and digital exclusion.

## **Greeney, Jack**

Jack Greeney focuses on research that addresses social and structural inequalities. Based at the University of Manchester's School of Social Sciences, he draws on a social sciences and policy analysis background to support the development of impactful interdisciplinary research. He manages key projects, lays the groundwork for strategic funding opportunities, and builds partnerships across academia, policy, and practice. Jack champions co-produced

research that amplifies lived experience and works to strengthen its impact through engagement with a wide range of audiences, from community members to policymakers.

## **Greenmantle, Freddi**

Freddi Greenmantle is a community activist living in Whalley Range, Manchester. She describes herself as a “retired primary school teacher, artist, poet, writer, singer, mother, and disabled woman of the world.” As a co-researcher in age-friendly projects, she has championed inclusion and participation, drawing on her lived experience as an older disabled woman. Through art, writing, and community work, she continues to pursue new challenges and amplify older people’s voices.

## **Hammond, Mark**

Mark Hammond is Senior Lecturer and Deputy Research Lead at the Manchester School of Architecture (MSA). His research focuses on architecture and urban ageing, with a specific interest in housing inequality and spatial justice. Mark employs participatory and design research methodologies, working with communities to develop age-friendly initiatives, and co-leads the Co-Creating a Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) in Social Housing project while collaborating with local government on policy-engaged research.

## **Hartland, Tess**

Tess Hartland is Postdoctoral Research Associate at The University of Manchester, having recently completed her PhD in Sociology. Her research explores experiences of older refugees and asylum seekers in Manchester through a precarity lens, using narrative methods to capture how uncertainty and insecurity shape life course trajectories and lead to opportunities for resistance. Tess also holds an MSc in Global Health and a BSc Hons in Biomedical Science, and her interests include ageing, migration, social justice, and health.

## **Kavanagh, Niamh**

Niamh Kavanagh is a Research Associate at the University of Manchester and an urban sociologist. Her research focuses on the interweaving of people's lives with housing, cities, gentrification, urban change, place, and materiality over time. Niamh draws on participatory, ethnographic and biographical methods, and has developed strong relationships with local communities affected by urban change in Manchester.

## **Lacy, Suzanne**

Suzanne Lacy is an American artist and pioneer of socially engaged public practice. Her long career combines community organising, large-scale participatory performance, and media interventions to address gender equity, ageing, labour, and social justice. Lacy led the Uncertain Futures project in partnership with Manchester collaborators, using live interviews, workshops, and public events to surface older women's experiences of work and advocate for policy change.

## **Lang, Luciana**

Luciana Lang is Research Associate at The University of Manchester and an urban anthropologist focusing on age-friendly cities, natural and cultural heritage, and the community use of shared spaces. She has led projects exploring how faith organisations support the Greater Manchester age-friendly agenda and older people's role in using, shaping, and participating in these spaces, has researched older people's experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic, and explores place-based experiences of older LGBTQ+ people.

## **Lewis, Alan**

Alan Lewis is Senior Lecturer in Architectural Studies and the Head of Architecture at The University of Manchester. His research focuses on the implications of an ageing population for housing design, aiming to enhance

older occupants' health, wellbeing, and independence. Alan has led projects on daylighting in older people's housing and extra-care housing for people with sight loss, investigating how architects incorporate user representations of older occupants into housing design.

## **Lewis, Camilla**

Camilla Lewis is Co-Deputy Director of the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG) and Senior Lecturer in Architectural Studies at The University of Manchester. Her research focuses on urban change, inequalities, ageing, housing, belonging, and community, using ethnographic, sensory, and longitudinal methods, and provides theoretical analyses of everyday experiences of inequality alongside practical suggestions for addressing marginalisation in socially excluded groups.

## **McGarry, Paul**

Paul McGarry is Head of the Greater Manchester Ageing Hub and Assistant Director in the Greater Manchester Combined Authority's (GMCA) Public Service Reform Directorate. He has worked on ageing projects since 1997, including establishing the Age-Friendly Manchester (AFM) Programme, is a founding member of the World Health Organization (WHO) Global Network and the UK Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities (AFCC), and is a research fellow at The University of Manchester. Paul has been recognised by the United Nations (UN) Decade of Healthy Ageing as one of 50 leaders in the field of Healthy Ageing.

## **MUARG Older People's Forum**

The Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG) Older People's Forum brings together a diverse group of older people from across Greater Manchester to work with MUARG researchers. Forum members co-create terms of reference, critically reflect on research activities,

and ensure projects remain relevant to lived experience, shaping MUARG's research priorities and supporting the translation of findings into practice and policy.

## **Narat, Nakib**

Nakib Narat is an actor, theatre-maker, and cultural practitioner active in Greater Manchester. He serves on the Age-Friendly Manchester Older People's Board and co-chairs the Greater Manchester Older People's Equality Panel. Nakib works with festivals and cultural organisations as an advisor and panel member, and uses theatre and community practice to advance older people's inclusion and civic engagement.

## **Pollock, Lindsay**

Lindsay Pollock is a cartoonist, illustrator, and filmmaker. He has produced human rights-focused visual stories for PositiveNegatives and co-created comics including Echoes of Displacement and graphic novels including Vanni: A Family's Struggle through the Sri Lankan Conflict. His documentary and illustration work has featured in national media and international exhibitions, including the Guardian, the BBC, and the Nobel Peace Centre.

## **Phillipson, Chris**

Chris Phillipson is Emeritus Professor of Sociology and Social Gerontology at The University of Manchester. His research addresses social, political, and economic issues related to ageing, including social exclusion and urban ageing. He is a Fellow and former President of the British Society of Gerontology (BSG), a Fellow of the Gerontological Society of America (GSA), and recipient of an Outstanding Achievement Award from the British Society of Gerontology.

## **Salles, Joana**

Joana Salles is a PhD researcher in Visual Anthropology at The University of Manchester. Her research uses audio-

visual methods to investigate how older people from marginalised communities organise to resist gentrification and reclaim urban commons in Manchester and Brussels, drawing on theories of spatial justice and the right to the city to inform community and policy initiatives.

## **Stoisser, Luise**

Luise Stoisser is a Doctoral Researcher with the HOMEAGE project — a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Doctoral Network funded by the European Union (EU) — and an interdisciplinary researcher at the Society and Ageing Research Lab (SARLab), Brussels. Originally from Vienna, Austria, Luise explores the sense of belonging of residents in community-based housing in Vienna; their work bridges urban geography and ageing studies, with a focus on minoritised groups and housing.

## **Unegbu, Elaine**

Elaine Unegbu is Chair of the Age-Friendly Manchester (AFM) Older People's Board and Chair of the Greater Manchester (GM) Older People's Network Steering Group. With a background in nursing, management, and education across Nigeria, the Netherlands, and England, she is a long-standing advocate for older people's participation in co-research, policy, and age-friendly practice, and a member of multiple regional and national advisory fora.

## **Uncertain Futures Advisory Group**

The Uncertain Futures Advisory Group, formed in November 2020, is a collective of Manchester women activists and community leaders who co-produced the Uncertain Futures project. The group is composed of Akhter Azabany, Erinma Bell, Sally Casey, Atiha Chaudry, Rohina Ghafoor, Marie Greenhalgh, Teodora Ilieva, Tendayi Madzunu, Jila Mozoun, Elayne Redford, Nadia Siddiqui, Circle Steele, Patricia Williams, and Louise Wong.

The group helped devise research questions, pilot interviews, recruit 100 participants, advise exhibition aesthetics, facilitate public engagement, and contribute to analysis, dissemination, and advocacy.

## **White, Stefan**

Stefan White is Professor of Architecture at Manchester School of Architecture and co-director of the Place-Health Architecture Space Environment research group. His research and practice, including European Union (EU) research projects and major housing and public-realm commissions, address the architecture and urbanism of social and environmental sustainability, with a focus on healthy ageing and urban resilience. He leads transdisciplinary, co-productive projects that link research-led teaching, professional practice, and policy engagement to improve urban environments for older people.

## **Yarker, Sophie**

Sophie Yarker is Lecturer in Health Geography in the School of Science, Engineering and Environment at The University of Salford, a former Research Fellow at The University of Manchester, and a former Deputy Director of the Manchester Urban Ageing Research Group (MUARG). Her research focuses on age-friendly communities, social infrastructure, community organisations, and local attachments, with interests in wellbeing, urban change, and the impacts of urban environments on healthy ageing.

*“As an organisation committed to the meaningful inclusion of older individuals with lived experience in the development of policy and practice, we warmly welcome the publication of this book. Through insightful case studies, it advances understanding of the critical role that co-production with marginalised communities plays in research that has a positive impact on the lives of older people.”*

**Jemma Mouland, Deputy Director Strategy and Insight, Centre for Ageing Better (CfAB)**

*“A brilliant insight into how to build and sustain collaborative research and co-production on ageing. This book will be a vital resource for researchers, practitioners and policy makers interested in including older adults in research and practice.”*

**Helen Manchester, Professor of Participatory Sociodigital Futures, University of Bristol.**

*“This collection offers a compelling and much-needed contribution to the field, demonstrating how co-produced research can meaningfully engage older adults as equal partners. It advances our understanding of participatory approaches in ageing by grounding theory in rich, practice-based insights. A vital resource for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers committed to equity and collaboration in later life research.”*

**Anna Urbaniak, PAAR-net Chair, Institute of Sociology, Jagiellonian University, Kraków, Poland.**

*“This powerful and accessible collection deepens our understanding of the practices, values and relationships of trust that underpin meaningful co-produced research and the positive creative outcomes it can generate.”*

**Catherine Durose, Professor of Public Policy, University of Liverpool.**