



# Rural Wisdom Evaluation Briefing Document 2: Influencing policy in Wales

January 2020



Rural Wisdom is influencing a range of policy issues to support older people to continue to live in rural communities. This document describes how this is happening in Wales.

***“Policies in Scotland and Wales support older people to continue to live in the rural communities they know and encourage older people’s contribution to their communities”.***

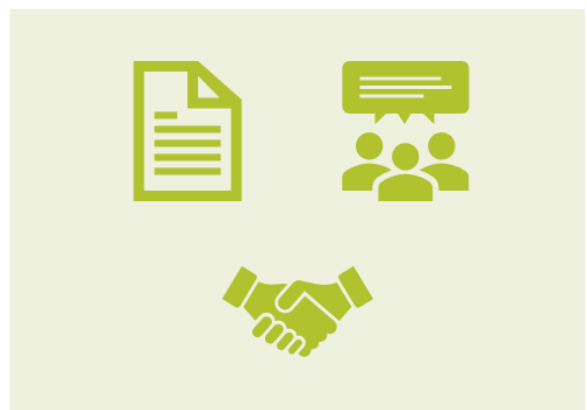
### **(Rural Wisdom Outcome 3)**

The main connection for Rural Wisdom to national policy and strategy in Wales is through the Age Friendly Communities initiative. Making communities in Wales more age-friendly and empowering older people to effect change are two priorities under the Older People’s Commissioner for Wales, Ageing Well plan for 2019 -2020. These are priorities which closely align to the outcomes of Rural Wisdom.

Volunteering Matters (the lead partner in Wales) have been working with the Older People’s Commissioner for Wales’ Office to share what’s happening in rural communities through Rural Wisdom ([www.olderpeoplewales.com/Libraries/Uploads/Impact\\_and\\_Reach\\_Report\\_2017-18.sflb.ashx](http://www.olderpeoplewales.com/Libraries/Uploads/Impact_and_Reach_Report_2017-18.sflb.ashx)).

They have also provided opportunities for engagement with older people, to talk about how they can have a voice in shaping policy and practice to improve their lives.

Wales currently doesn’t have any World Health Organisation (WHO) recognised Age Friendly Communities but, the Ageing Well Programme is supporting a number of local authorities to achieve this status. There have been early discussions about the possibility of Leeswood and Pontblyddyn becoming part of this movement and there is a commitment from Volunteering Matters to help.



# Older people contributing to national strategies

In the meantime, the learning from Rural Wisdom is being shared with the Age Friendly Community Network and Ageing Well Wales network, who are keen to understand how the project is working and what they can learn from it.

Development Workers from both communities are often invited to speak at Ageing Well Wales network events and other external organisations eg Wales Audit Office, about the work they are doing and how they are doing it. These practical examples help people understand what Age Friendly Communities look like in practice.

In addition to informing Age Friendly Communities work, Volunteering Matters through Rural Wisdom, has encouraged older people to have a voice and contribute to consultations on new policies or strategies that may affect them. An example of this is the Loneliness and Isolation strategy consultation 'Connected Communities: Tackling Loneliness and Social Isolation', which was launched last January.

## Resources

Find out more about how Rural Wisdom is influencing policy in Scotland:  
[www.ndti.org.uk/news/rural-wisdom-evaluation](http://www.ndti.org.uk/news/rural-wisdom-evaluation)

The Rural Wisdom website provides regular blogs from the communities and publications, including soon to be released 'Tips on Multigenerational Communities' and 'Having a Voice and Being Heard'.

[www.ruralwisdom.org](http://www.ruralwisdom.org)

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