

The Musselburgh Local Area Partnership's Senior Citizens' Network

Supported by
Community Learning and Development Services, East Lothian Council

WHAT MATTERS TO YOU?

A SURVEY TO FIND OUT WHAT MATTERS TO THE SENIOR CITIZENS IN THE MUSSELBURGH AREA



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Community Action Research

Community Action Research (CAR) is research defined, undertaken, analysed and evidenced by members of the community to highlight issues of importance.

This approach is valuable because it is the local community who knows and understands their needs. Therefore the issues raised are more meaningful and give insight into how the community works and where there are areas for action and improvement. This approach is endorsed by the Scottish Government in the Community Empowerment Act 2015 and the Government Programme for Scotland 2017 -18.

‘Our ambition is to place much greater control in the hands of the people who know best what a community needs: those who live or work in the community itself.’

East Lothian Community Care Forum (ELCCF) is the independent voice of service users that, among other duties, acts to provide the local authority with an independent service users’ point of view of the services provided.

Context and Methodology

In November 2017 East Lothian Community Care Forum teamed up with Musselburgh Local Area Partnership's Senior Citizens' network to carry out independent research to find out what matters to the senior citizens in the Musselburgh area, with a focus on health and social care. The research was carried out between January 2018 and August 2018.

ELCCF worked with the Area Partnership's sub group, the Senior Citizens' Network. This group of community volunteers set the questions for the questionnaire, analysed and wrote this report on the findings.

This was a 'talking points' survey (an approved Scottish Government research approach), using a questionnaire. Although this approach attracts fewer respondents its validity is underpinned by increased qualitative information. The questionnaire was distributed amongst several community volunteers who interviewed and collected the views from 60 senior citizens across the Musselburgh Area.

The Senior Citizens' Network is a small group of community volunteers who embraced this task with passion and enthusiasm. However, there were limitations on finding additional volunteers to carry out this piece of work especially to canvas outlying areas e.g. Wallyford and Whitecraig, and to reach those people who were housebound.

Acknowledgements

The aim of this research was to engage in conversation with some of Musselburgh's senior citizens. Throughout our discussions with interviewees, and within the Senior Citizens' Network itself, it became evident that there is no shortage of creative ideas for initiatives to make a positive difference.

Thanks to all who participated in this work, who spoke with heart and shared their experiences and views. Grateful thanks also to the volunteer researchers from the Senior Citizens' Network who set the questions, gathered and analysed the data for this report.

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Report Summary

Key findings

The findings below reflect key themes. All the issues were raised by participants in response to the question....'What Matters to You' in the context of health and wellbeing.

Access

- Access to local health centres was widely reported as difficult.
- Access to activities. Knowing what's on and someone to take you could make the difference between someone participating or not.
- Access to information was easier for those who were more mobile and connected to their communities.
- Access to public transport was on the whole reported as very positive, however there were pockets where bus services and/or stops were infrequent or too far away.

Company and social isolation

- Family and friends support networks were central to the wellbeing of this sample.
- Companionship with family and friends, good weather and access to community groups and activities were the top factors that made for 'a good day'.

Safety

- Musselburgh by day was seen as relatively welcoming and safe.
- Musselburgh by night however was perceived as unsafe; in some cases this was based on personal experience. This has obvious implications for social isolation during the winter months.

Physical fitness & mobility

- The majority of respondents recognised the value of physical exercise to maintain both physical and mental wellbeing.
- There was a positive social element to participating in activities.
- For those less mobile however keeping fit becomes more of a struggle and in many cases is also socially confining. There is also a knock-on effect regarding transport and cost.

Personal means/affordability

- It is clear from the evidence that this generation strives to live within their means. Most respondents said they were able to afford the main day-to-day expenses such as food, rent and utilities.
- Home owners were more likely to struggle with one-off expenses such as house repairs and garden maintenance.
- For those with mobility issues, affording specialised transport was a concern.
- The bus pass was hailed throughout this sample as a godsend.

Supporting independent living at home

For the 86+ age group aids and adaptations supported independent living at home, particularly the community alarm service. However for the younger age groups, knowing what's available and how to access aids and adaptations was raised as a difficulty.

Appropriate housing and accommodation

Consistently throughout this survey there were comments about the need for suitable housing as one grows older.

Family Carers

There is overwhelming evidence from that family and friends play a significant caring and supporting role for most respondents.

Reflections and Recommendations

Social Isolation

Social Isolation is well recognised as a growing concern across the country. Studies show that loneliness is particularly prevalent for older age groups and can affect health and lifespan. Self-perceived loneliness doubles the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease. **It is therefore not surprising to find from this survey that company with friends and family rated top of the wish list.**

Future trends predict that between 2008 and 2033 there will be a 44 per cent increase in the number of 65-74 year olds living alone, a 38% increase in those aged 75-84 and a 145% increase in those aged 85+. These figures may indicate that there might be an increase of people feeling lonely in the future. (Age UK Loneliness Evidence Review)

Studies have shown that being engaged in community activities and programmes, such as libraries, civic participation and volunteering reduced social isolation and feelings of loneliness. **Our research shows that people who are more connected to their community are more likely to know what is going on and therefore more likely to participate.**

For those who are housebound or for whom group participation is not an option, befriending/buddying programmes have been successful in reducing social isolation. **Our study shows that nearly a third of respondents said they would like someone to check on them.**

Most respondents who gave comments to the question 'how safe do you feel in your community?' said that they do not venture out after dark. **It is safe to assume then that the winter months are a time when people are more likely to experience loneliness or social isolation.**

Our recommendation: The Musselburgh Area Partnership to co-ordinate a community approach with agencies, organisations and individuals to improve support and access for people experiencing chronic loneliness. An initial step may be to take stock of what programmes are currently in existence in the area that reduce the impact of social isolation for older people.

Transport

Recommendation: To investigate areas which respondents identified as difficult to access public transport.

Independent living

In response to survey participants' comments about:

- help accessing 'trusted' tradesmen who are affordable, to help with small repairs around the house
- accessing aids and equipment to help support independent living in the home
- reporting uneven pavements - a fall waiting to happen for older people
- how to maximise benefits

Recommendation: the Musselburgh Area Partnership should look at ways of making organisations such as Care and Repair and Welfare Rights, the sites for Trusted Traders, the Report and Issue or Change and HILDA on the East Lothian Council's website more accessible to older people.

Access to local health Centres

This area is being addressed by the East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership.

Recommendation: To establish links with the Riverside Participation Group.

Housing and Supported Accommodation

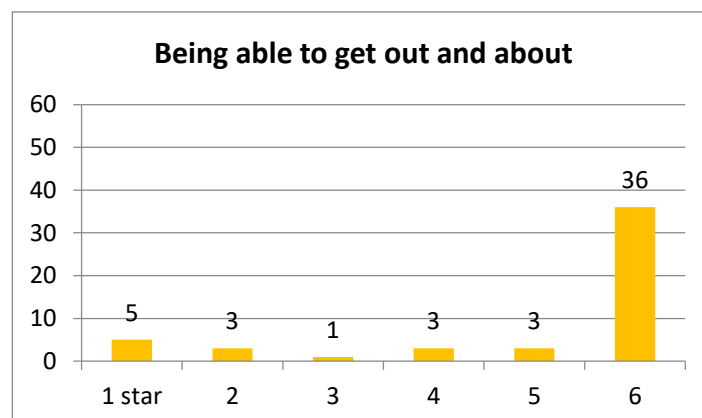
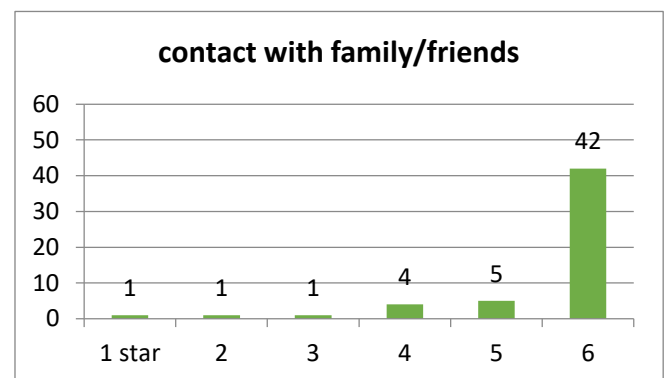
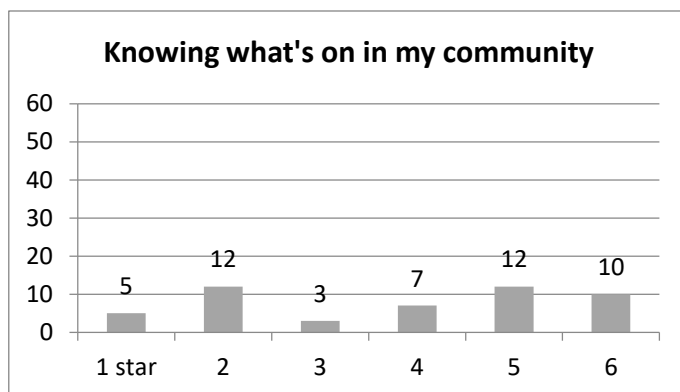
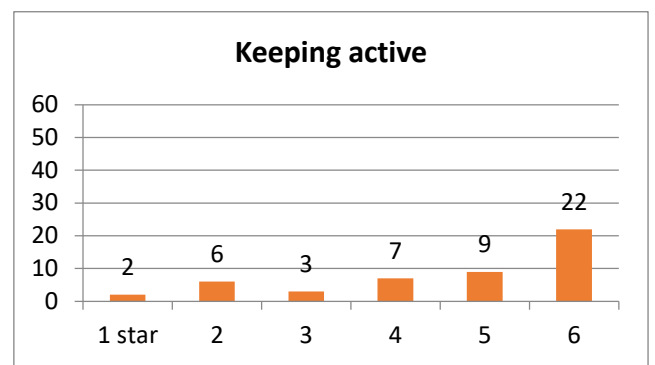
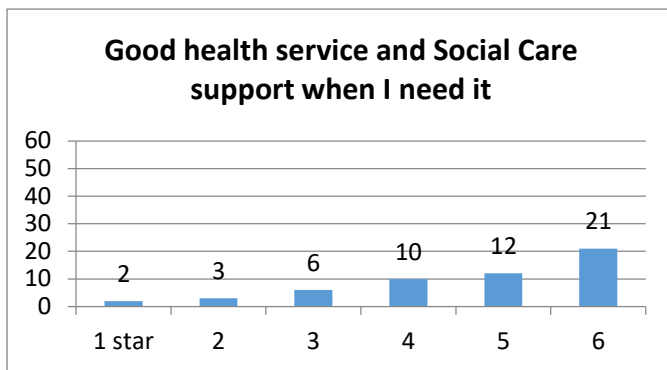
Recommendation: To ensure that concerns raised throughout the document about appropriate, fit-for-purpose housing, such as sheltered and amenity housing and care home accommodation as one grows older, inform future housing plans.

Family caring

Recommendation: As the evidence suggests, many family carers play a crucial role in caring for the elderly members of the family. We hope the Area Partnership will establish links with Carers of East Lothian in any future community initiatives that support the elderly.

What people said

Question 1: How well are the following areas of your life being met?



‘Contact with family and friends’ was the most positively answered part of this question. The comments show that family, friends and neighbours are the most important elements of most of the respondents’ lives that is being met. The support from family and friends is referenced throughout the survey as a key pillar to living independently.

‘My family is a big help.’ ‘I’ve got family around me’.

‘My family and friends are all local which is really handy’

‘Keeping active’ and **‘Being able to get out and about’** also scored highly as areas of life that are being met.

‘I love to get out and about meeting folk.’

‘I enjoy dancing and walking’

‘I am active because I am able to walk a lot.’

‘I do gentle exercise but I’m always on the lookout for something to do.’

However, comments show that when people’s health deteriorates and they lose their mobility being able to get out and about or be active becomes much more limited and in some cases very confining. If folk are able to venture out then transport costs for taxis is expensive.

‘Due to ill health leaving the house unaided is now a problem.’

‘I’m not able to keep active now and so not able to go to community events unless someone takes me.’

‘I used to walk everywhere, now I’m never over the door due to my health condition.’

‘Transport is a nuisance, I can no longer walk to the nearest bus stop to get into Musselburgh, doctor, dentist etc. I have to take a taxi.’

‘I am waiting for a hip replacement. There is no transport from my area to the bus/shops. A lot of elderly people live here and rely on taxis or family to get out even onto the High Street.’

‘Good health service and social care support when I need it’ accumulated the most comments. Although most people were very appreciative of local health services:

‘I have good social care for my husband.’

‘My wife is my carer, but if I need a doctor I have no problem getting the surgery.’

‘I’ve been lucky getting appointments. Eskside surgery is good.’

There were many comments about poor access to local health centres:

‘Difficulty in getting appointments.’

‘On the health side we do have issues, no complaints about individuals but the system does not always make it easy.’

‘Surgery appointments are getting worse. My family has been waiting weeks.’

‘It’s a real job getting an appointment. I don’t know what would happen in an emergency.’

‘No home visits from GPs. I cannot access a doctor because I am immobile and housebound.’

‘Ideally I would like to see a doctor quicker.’

‘Health service is important but difficult to get GP home visit when needed.’

‘It’s a carry on at the GP and the wait means you give up. It’s not joined up.’

‘Pretty poor local health service. I like to see the GP without stress, so going through the stress of accessing my GP puts me off altogether. I just end up treating myself.’

‘Knowing what’s on in my community’ had the lowest scores. Comments ranged from knowing how to access health services to what’s on socially in the community. For those respondents who were in good health and active, finding out what’s on was much easier than for those living with ill health and limited mobility.

‘Being out and about helps, I get to know what’s on.’

‘I get to hear what is happening locally when I’m out.’

‘Keeping up with events is really important to me. I love to get out and about talking to people, meeting folk.’

'I'm not sure how to access help but would accept if it was offered. Help with housework would help.'
'I don't always know what's on or available.'
'I rely on my mobility scooter. Knowing more about what is going on would be good.'
'It's not easy to find information. Somewhere to easily see everything in one place would be good.'

Reflections

It was striking to see how contact with friends and family gave very high scores; the crucial role of support from family and friends is evident throughout the document. Heartening though this is, it is important to consider related factors e.g. the pressures on family carers. Conversely, how are people who do *not* have these networks coping?

'Due to death of friends I feel very isolated'. (respondent age 76-85)

Comments from being active encompass a wide spectrum, from physical fitness:

'I'm very active; I swim, curl, and walk.' (respondent age 65-75)

to getting over the door:

'I'm lucky I can get out and about, it can be an effort though.' (respondent age 76-85)

As this sample shows, over half of respondents said they were easily able to get out and about, but from the older age groups this becomes more of a challenge.

'I used to walk everywhere, now I'm never over the door due to my health condition.' (respondent age 86+)

The evidence shows that the more active one is, the more likely one will find out what is going on in the community. Comments show that public spaces such as libraries, community centres, churches, Brunton Hall and The Hollies are essential information hubs. These are the most likely places for this generation to source information.

Most responses to 'health and social care needs being met' reflect the challenges of the recent merge of two large practices serving the Musselburgh area. This report acknowledges work currently underway to address this issue by the Health and Social Care Partnership.

Question 2: When you are having a good day, what makes it a good day?

Having company, and being with family and friends were the top three things that made for a good day across all the age groups in this survey.

'Family.'
'Family meals.'
'Being out and about in the fresh air. Meeting people.'
'Getting out and about, meeting people and companionship.'
'Able to meet friends.' *'Visitors, company.'*
'When I have company.'
'I live alone so interaction with other people, having a laugh.'
'Spending time with my family.'
'I enjoy company, like watching films with other people around. Film club in a complex once a week.' *'Would welcome help from a volunteer to take me out'*
'Seeing my family. They are a godsend. I don't know what I would do without them.'
'When I have company and a blether.'
'Family, friends and getting out.'
'Sometimes I get anxious because other than my niece I don't have anyone. On other days I think of happier times and then it's a good day. That I why I go to the Hollies - I am mixing with lots of people and I don't get sad.'

Good weather and the ability to get out and about also made for a good day for most of the respondents.

'Nice weather, meeting friends.'
'Getting out of doors on my scooter to do a little shopping.'
'If I feel well enough I will potter about and if the weather is nice I sit in the garden.'
When I am able to get out and not stuck at home. Until recently I have been very active playing bowls, running a tea dance and volunteer work. I miss all these hobbies.'
'Good weather'
'Pain free walking and company.'
'Feeling well, going out and good weather.'
'Being able to get outside. In the summer I love my garden.'
'When the sun is out. A brisk walk, contact with family and friends. Pottering in the garden. General socialising.'

Activities and being part of the community was the third thing that made a good day 'good'.

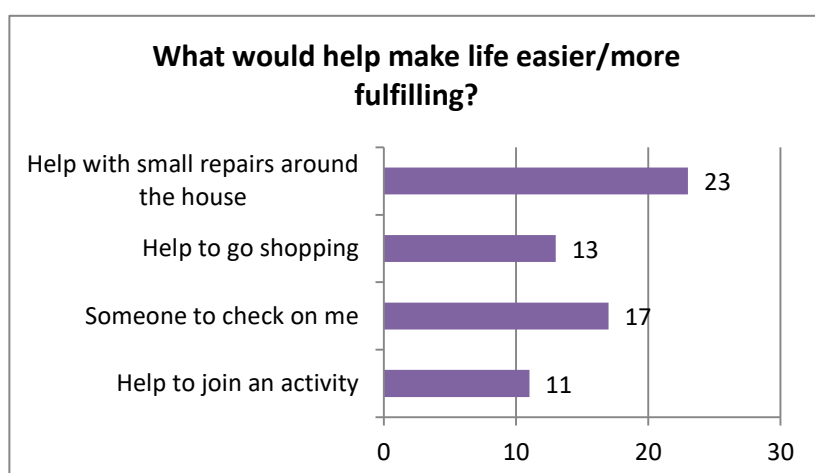
'Groups and facilities at Fisherrow.'
'Going to church, feeling ok and having friends.'
'Knowing we are blessed with relatively good health. Perhaps a meal out or a trip by bus to North Berwick or Dunbar. Forgetting about household chores!'
'Being able to get outside, to go to the shops, kindness to the elderly.'
'Being involved in so many things – everyone is so friendly.'
'Meeting friends and having a coffee. My charity work in Africa. It's a feel-good thing. Walking is good - I used to like dancing but can't anymore.'
'A nice long bus run. My bus pass is a godsend.'
'Being with good friends. Being of use to someone less fortunate. Participating in activities in my church.'
'Being out. Especially a night out. Going to bingo twice a week.'

Reflections

Given that companionship with friends and family, good weather and access to community groups and activities were the top three factors that make for a good day, this report needs to take cognisance of the factors that underpin 'a good day'. Family carer support, easier access to health and social care support, promoting inclusive activities that combat social isolation such as befriending and buddy networks were amongst the things mentioned that make up a 'good day'. Expectations were very modest.

Question 3: What would make life easier/more interesting/fulfilling?

Participants chose from the following options in the graph below and could suggest another option by commenting in an 'other' box.



Interestingly, nearly half of respondents did not fill in this question; this was the case equally across the three age groups. It is a heartening picture because comments suggest that many respondents are independent and have good family and friends support networks. Some also stated that they live in sheltered accommodation, where these needs are catered for.

'I'm pretty independent...not at that stage yet. My family helps me.'

'I'm happy with things, my family help me with any tasks I can't manage.'

'I manage all these things at the moment.'

'I'm fortunate. I don't require the above.'

'I live with my family and I don't have to worry about these things. I am happy with my life.'

'I manage so far without homecare support. My daughters visit regularly and see to tasks around the house that I find difficult to do.'

For the half of respondents who ticked these options, **'Help with small repairs around the house'** was the most popular option.

'Although my family help me with these things I really don't like to ask. I would prefer to call in someone... if they are not too expensive so as not to be a burden.'

'Something like Care and Repair is so helpful.'

'I'm housebound and so is my wife. Good to have someone to regularly check up on us and talk to outside the family. Access to an odd-job man would also be helpful.'

'I live on my own but this could be a good idea – help with small tasks and repairs around the house.'

'Finding the right tradesman you can trust is really important.'

'It would be helpful to have someone reliable and reasonably priced to call on for repairs.'

Just under a third of respondents ticked the option, **'Someone to check on me'**.

'My family are all working, so seeing someone everyday would be lovely.'

'Company, losing my wife has been a big miss in my life.'

'I have a neighbour next door but someone more regular would be good.'

'A friendly person popping in to see if I'm OK would be great.'

'Help to go shopping'

'Nobody to help with shopping. I have to load my scooter.'

'My husband is my sole carer. I would love to get to the shops. I'm not able to use public transport. I also need help with personal care.'

'Help to join an activity.'

'Support to get involved with more would be good. A buddy perhaps.'

'I would benefit socially and health-wise to get into sheltered accommodation.'

'I would be keen to join a group and meet other people, but I'm not always sure what's available. A good example would be a night out at the movies but I have no-one to go with.'

Reflections

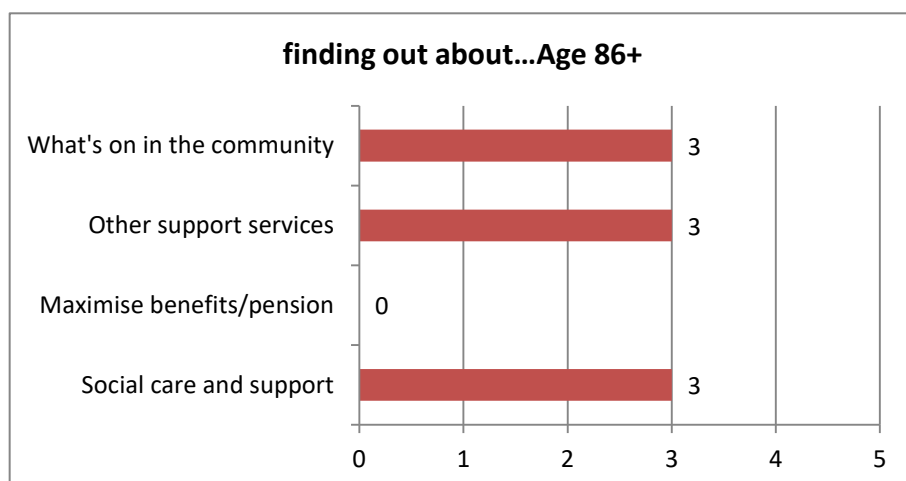
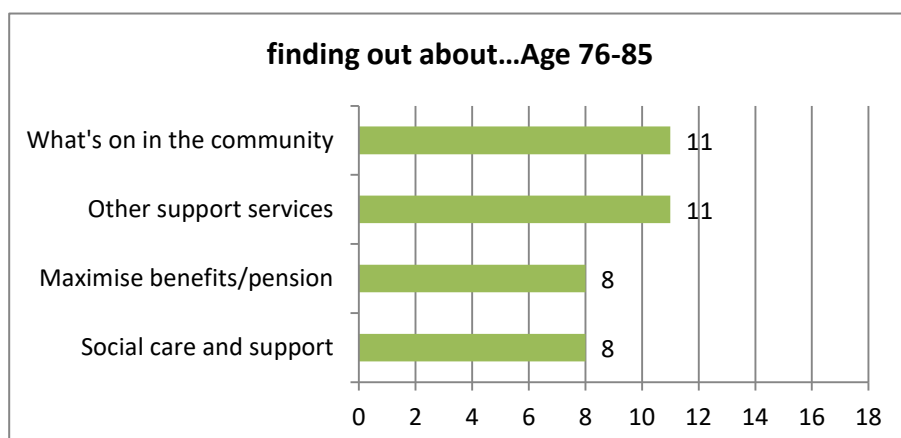
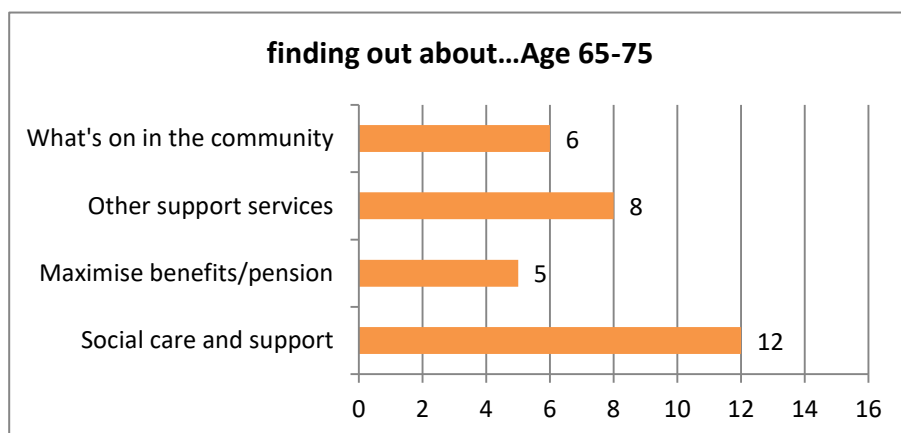
Help with small repairs around the house proved to be the most pressing need. Comments show that respondents want access to tradesmen who are reliable, trustworthy and affordable and that are prepared to do small jobs. Are Care & Repair and the Council's Trusted Traders site well enough known?

A Connected Scotland sets out the Scottish Government's vision where everyone has the opportunity to develop meaningful relationships regardless of age, status, circumstance or identity; it also recognises social isolation as a major issue in this country. The findings from our survey reflect this, as just over half of respondents (particularly those with limited mobility) said they would like someone to check on them regularly.

'I'm housebound and so is my wife. Good to have someone to regularly check up on us and talk to outside the family.' (respondent 76-85)

Similarly, help to participate e.g. to join an activity, or to be able to go shopping are related to the issue of social isolation.

Question 4. Please tick which of the following you would like to know more about.



The results from this question across all ages were unsurprising. We know from comments from previous questions that the more mobile people are - both physically and socially – the more people tap into what is happening in their communities. Only half respondents from the whole sample answered this question. Below is what they said:

Ages 65-75

Knowing what's on

'I do find out what is going on but it needs to be easier to find'

'Voluntary work in the library gives me a lot of information about what is going on. Also the sports centre and from friends.'

'Musselburgh News/Fisherrow notice boards keep me up to date with what is going on.'

Social care and support & other support services

'I would like to know more about this as I am getting older.'

'Not just yet but in the future if I need help.'

'Not now but a good thing to know just in case.'

'Again no immediate needs but knowing more about what help one can get from social services and what support is available in the community could well help us in the future.'

Maximize benefits/pension

'I go to the Brunton – they have been really helpful in the past. The CAB has also been really good in giving advice.'

'Balance wages vs not working at all. Could do with help to work out what's best for me.'

'Financially I think I'm ok but advice might be useful.'

Ages 76-85

Knowing what's on

'The local library is a fabulous resource and I use it often to find out what is on in the community and advice services.'

'It's always useful to know more. The main thing for me is to be on the move, doing things. I'm lucky I have my health.'

'Not getting out makes me isolated. We don't have a computer so it's difficult to find things out.'

'Could do with more things to do.'

'I have some local knowledge but a list of events would be helpful.'

'I often feel it's the same people in the know that get involved.'

Social care and support & other support services

'Help with my condition. Help to get out and not rely on my partner to treat my condition. Don't know what's available.'

'I would benefit from an occupational therapist visit to look at aids for my home such as a supported chair, I have difficulty getting in and out of my armchair.'

'Years ago there used to be home helps. I would love something like this.'

Maximise benefits/pension

'More for how to maximize benefits.'

'I get attendance allowance. I don't know if I should get anything else.'

'Information from Carers of East Lothian has been good.'

'Advice is always helpful. Right now we're fine but that could change.'

Ages 86+

This group gave the fewest responses.

'When my husband died 5 years ago I didn't go out and lost touch with people.'

'Again my family take care of me and I am all right for money and have no concerns.'

'My family help me with information. Also it's a good community and word gets around.'

'No problems with daily living. Activities in the complex are well advertised on the board.'

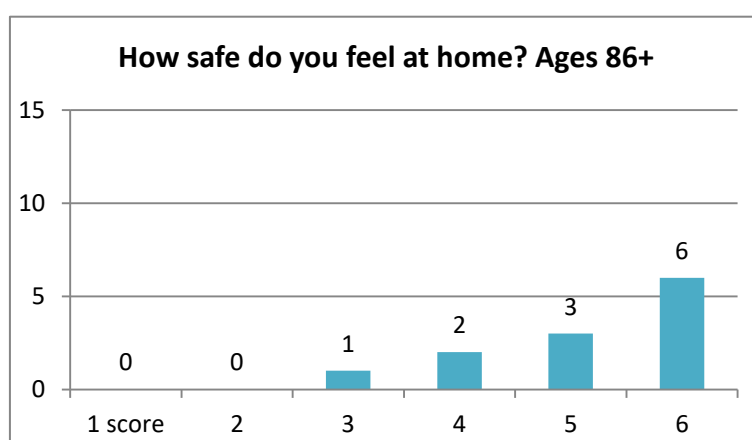
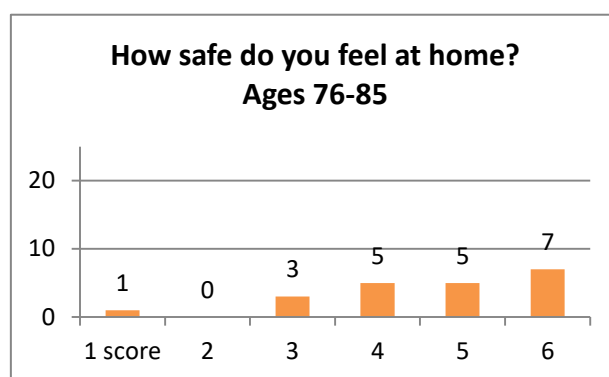
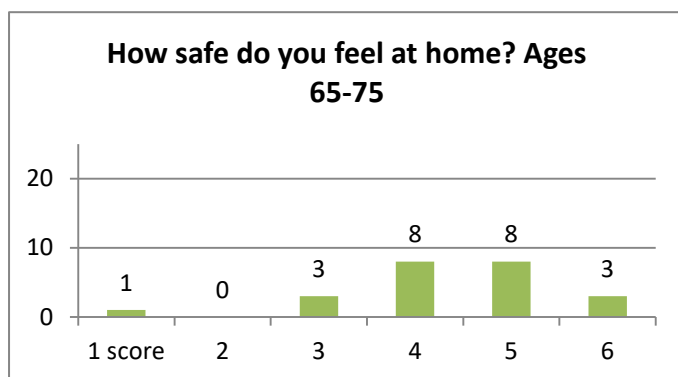
Reflections

Only half of both the age groupings 65-75 and 76-85 responded to this question. Comments show that people in the 65-75 age group did not yet require information about health and social care; there was however an awareness that this was likely to change for them in the future. In the age group 76-85 however, the picture changes as the need for support becomes more evident/relevant where comments show that people are asking for specific services.

Across all age groups, respondents sourced general information from public facilities such as libraries. There were no comments to show that people sourced information online. For this generation public facilities remain crucial as ever as a source of information and contact. It is a reasonable assumption that as we get older (86+) families, neighbours, care workers are the main source of information.

For all respondents maximising benefits/pension did not appear an immediate priority but something they would need to attend to in the future as their needs changed.

Question 5a: How safe do you feel at home?



Comments:

Ages: 65-75

- *'I feel ok but I'm super cautious. I take my key out the door because I've heard of thieves reaching through letter boxes.'*
- *'I'm worried about my partner being left in the kitchen or upstairs - he might have an accident.'*
- *'When I'm at home and the door is locked I feel secure.'*
- *'In my house I feel safe. I have good locks and an alarm. I don't go out at night alone. I am also afraid of being knocked down by one of the many mobility scooters driving really fast on the pavements. Do these people have to sit a test before driving them?'*
- *'I'm up a stair so I'm fine; the woman on the ground floor was broken into.'*
- *'I'm v independent however I'm thinking about sheltered housing.'*
- *'At home once the doors are locked I'm fine. Daytime is fine. At night you just don't go out, nobody's safe.'*

Ages 76-85

- *'I'm really worried about rips [in carpet], or falling on the stairs. We can't afford a stair lift.'*
- *'I feel safe but the stairs are my concern.'*
- *'I feel safe because my son lives with me. The street I live in is also safe.'*
- *'Now that I am in sheltered housing I feel more secure.'*

- *'I fall a lot.'*
- *'I feel pretty safe at home.'*

Ages 86+

- *'My intercom helps me feel safe. A few years ago I got assaulted. The street light was out and it was dark. I got a lot of support but now I never go out alone at night.'*
- *'I have had the same neighbours for years and have no worry about them. If I go anywhere I am with my family'*
- *'I know my house is safe. I have all I need. It's just at night when it's dark my imagination runs wild. I am never really out and about on the streets now. And I would not go out in the dark alone.'*
- *'I have a community alarm. I have had a nose bleed at times during the night. I raised the alarm and received the help I required.'*
- *'I have a community alarm.'*
- *'I have all I need to keep us safe at home such as grab rails, bath chair etc.'*

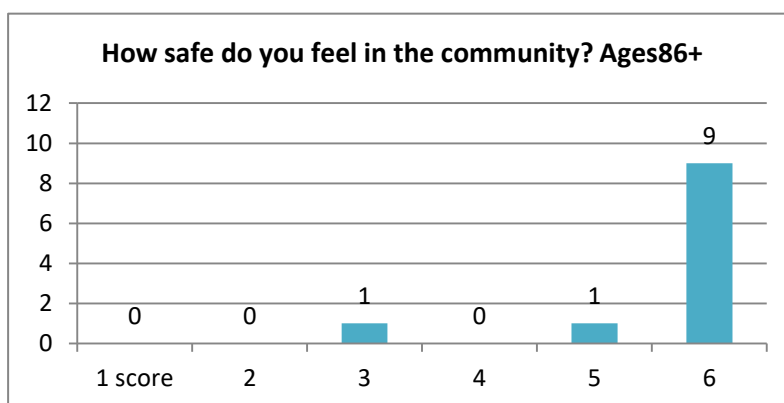
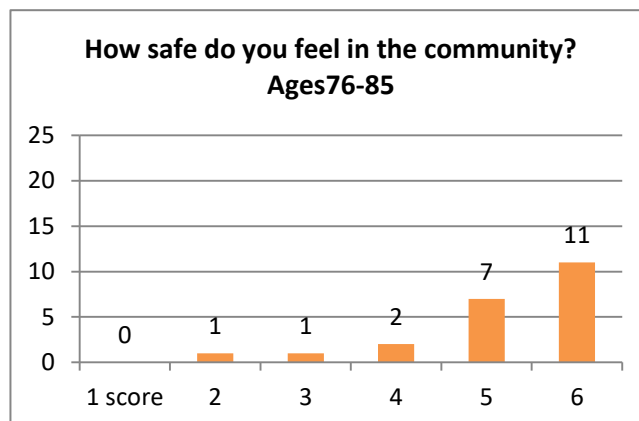
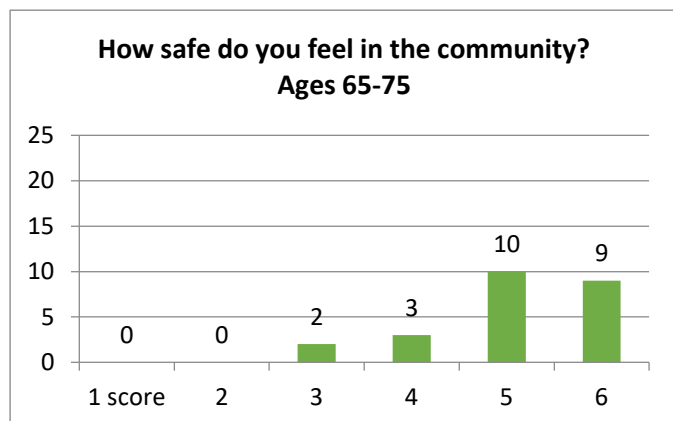
Reflections

Interestingly, from the younger age group 65-75 only 3 respondents felt truly safe in their home. Comments show that this was largely to do with security as opposed to mobility issues. There could also be contributory factors at play for example recognising a vulnerability as one grows older or living alone.

Ages 76+ we begin to see a shift in the perception of safety from the concern about home security to the home to having more aids and adaptations/community alarms to support mobility issues.

The 86+ group in this sample are well supported by family, friends, neighbours and Health and Social Care services.

Question 5a: How safe do you feel in the community?



Comments:

Ages 65-75

- 'No worries during the day in the community. Overall Musselburgh is a very friendly place. I'm never out at night unless I go by car.'
- 'People get intimidated by young people in hoodies. I just treat them as people and they're fine with me. I don't feel vulnerable.'
- 'In the community I feel pretty safe. I'm careful about crossing busy roads.'
- 'There are times when I am out at night that I have to pass groups of young people who are being very loud.'
- 'I would be a little wary at night time.'
- 'Seldom policemen on patrol. Not regular hours at police station.'
- 'My street isn't too safe as the lighting has been changed...not for the better.'
- 'Musselburgh has always been home to me. You become aware of bad things happening through newspapers. You end up feeling less safe and vulnerable.'
- 'I'm up a stair so I'm fine; the woman on the ground floor was broken into.'
- 'I'm only out at night by care - there are a lot of dodgy characters about.'

Ages 76-85

- 'I would[n't] know about feeling safe in the community as I never get over the door.'

- *'I keep my wits about me and always go inside to the bank to get money.'*
- *'I haven't gone out at night for a long time. I definitely feel more vulnerable. Daytime is no problem.'*
- *'I don't go out at night when it is dark.'*
- *'Fine during the day, but I'm very wary at night.'*
- *'I don't really go out anymore.'*
- *'I feel really safe. I enjoy walking out at the Lagoons.'*
- *'I feel very safe at home and moving around our town in daylight. I am however a bit nervous to go out on the dark evenings.'*

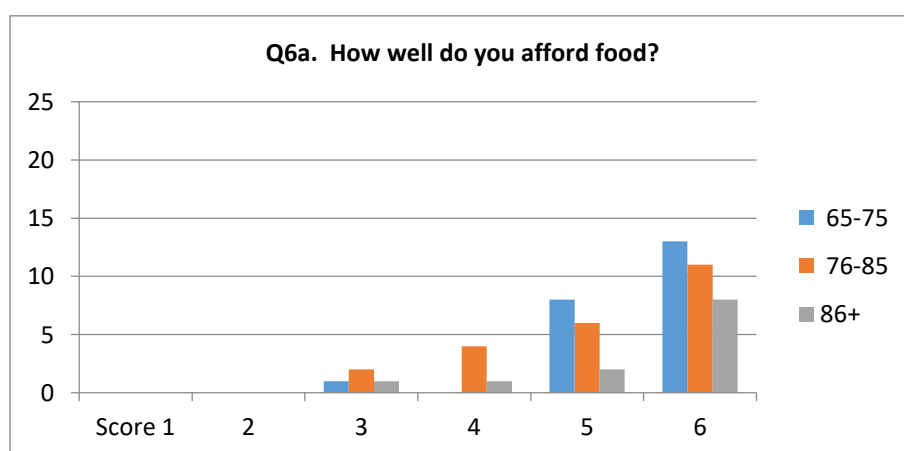
Age 86+

- *'I feel safe in the community when I'm with someone.'*
- *'I have had the same neighbours for years and have no worry about them. If I go anywhere I am with my family'*
- *'I know my house is safe. I have all I need. It's just at night when it's dark my imagination runs wild. I am never really out and about on the streets now. And I would not go out in the dark alone.'*
- *'I feel safe outside in the daytime but would not go out alone after dark.'*

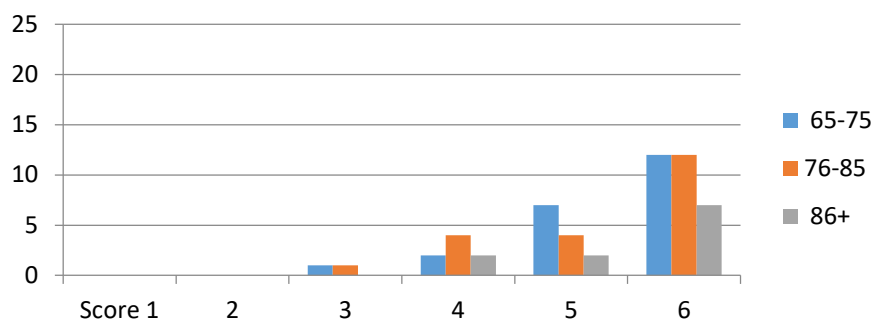
Reflections

The data gave positive comments about Musselburgh being a safe place during the daytime. Across all age groups however people were wary of venturing out unaccompanied at night. It is therefore a reasonable assumption that during winter time, reduced daylight hours could be a lonely time for many older people.

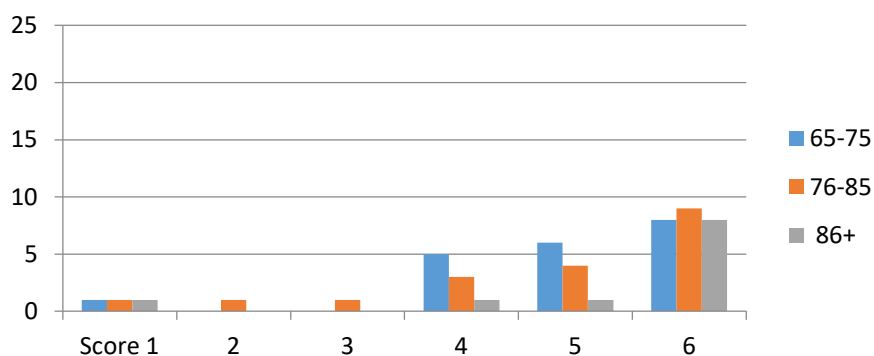
Question 6. Finances – Please score how well you afford the following:



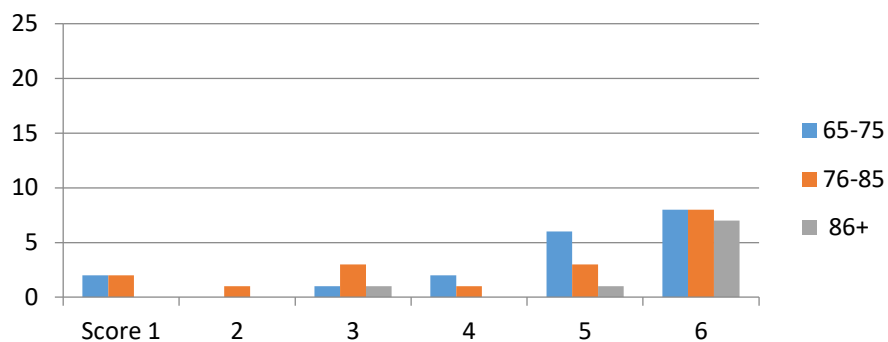
Q6b. How well do you afford heat and light?



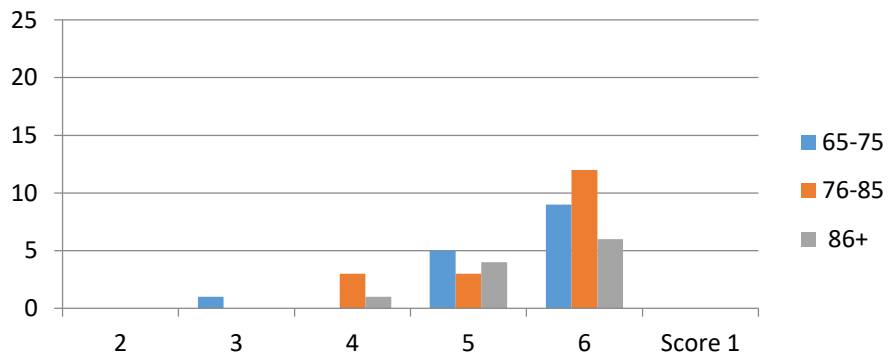
Q6c. How well do you afford household repairs?

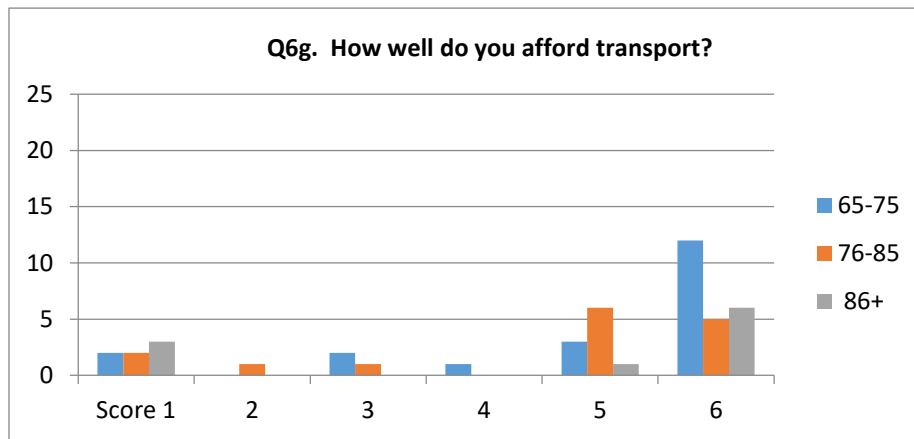


Q6d. How well do you afford garden maintenance?



Q6e. How well do you afford rent/motgage?





Comments

Ages 65-75

- *'I have a good pension and have no money worries'*
- *'Things are tight by the time I have paid my bills, but I manage. Transportation costs can be expensive.'*
- *'We sometimes have to use taxis but that's fine. Overall less expensive than running a car.'*
- *'My pension covers me mostly. You just have to cut your cloth to suit. I can't overdo it so I keep an eye on costs.'*
- *'Leave the car behind saves me money, walking keeps me fit.'*
- *'My bus pass is absolutely fab.'*
- *'Repairs need a wee bit of budgeting for, but I manage.'*
- *'We are ok with finances.'*
- *'I'm ok because I watch what I spend.'*
- *'The Council do my repairs.'*
- *'My bus pass means transport costs is not a problem.'*
- *'I manage money well. I save where I can but not on food and heating. Family do wee jobs around the house and garden. This past year I have had to use more taxis because of the poor 40 bus service.'*
- *'I have to get a taxi to/from home to the health centre. When it used to be across from my home that is: 1 if I could get an answer from them and 2. If I can get an appointment that is not 3 weeks away.'*
- *'I manage overall fine however...repairs to boiler, electrical repairs are really expensive now. I need to budget in advance.'*
- *'Bus service to GP surgeries is very poor where I live.'*
- *'Family support removes a lot of worry if anything might become a problem.'*
- *'It is vastly important that we keep our bus passes!'*
- *'I employ a gardener.'*
- *'I'm in and East Lothian Housing Association house fitted with solar panels.'*
- *'I rarely use transport because I need a taxi and it's far too expensive.'*
- *'I manage fairly well. My family helps and that makes a big difference.'*
- *'I've got a state pension so I'm well covered.'*

Ages 76-85

- *'Garden is hard to keep up and transport is always a problem.'*
- *'We live off the state pension so we are just getting by. Rely on family for some bigger purchases, sofa, fridge etc.'*
- *'Life in sheltered housing is great!'*
- *'I watch what I use. I manage because I am careful.'*
- *'We are better off than most.'*
- *'House maintained by the Council.'*

- *'I have a bus pass. I manage fine. The best thing I did was move here.'*
- *'I was conned out of £900 by so called gardener and can't tell my family.'*
- *'A hopper bus even once an hour from my area to the High street, surgery and Tesco and the Harbour during the day would make life better.'*
- *'I cannot use transport.'*
- *'I don't have any financial difficulties. Everything is manageable for me. Although I would like to know how to maximise my finances.'*
- *'I'm very independent and self-sufficient and happy!'*

Ages 86+

- *'I have found a big difference in my money matters after losing my wife.'*
- *'I manage to get around Musselburgh with my mobile scooter. Family takes me to hospital appointments.'*
- *'I'm in a housing association home which helps. All bills get paid.'*
- *'I manage quite well on my pension and have attendance allowance.'*
- *'I don't live near a bus stop and struggle to get on and off a bus, so I rely on taxis or family to get out. One day a week I go to the Hollies for lunch and to get my hair done. I couldn't go without the Hollies bus.'*
- *'Because I live with my family I am lucky, they see to all these things. But of course I contribute my share.'*
- *'I have no money worries.'*
- *'We have good pensions and budget very well. We are lucky.'*

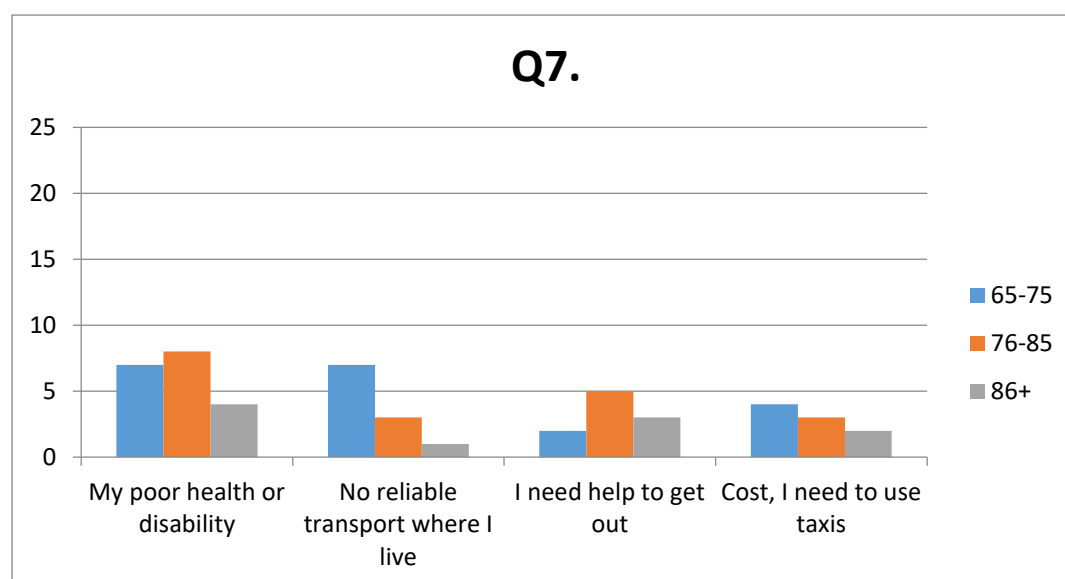
Reflections

It is quite a positive picture in that people have said they are able to afford the main day-to-day expenses such as food, rent and utilities.

The benefits are evident for people who live in Council or Housing Association, or sheltered housing where costs are inclusive and the worry of one-off expenses repairs or garden maintenance is removed. Home owners were more likely to struggle without family support and more likely to be vulnerable to scammers. This echoes our reflections in question 3.

There was a varied picture in terms of transport. For those who are mobile the bus pass is a godsend. For those less mobile, the cost of transport can be prohibitive if having to rely on taxis. Also this generation would more likely to perceive taxis as a luxury and be reluctant to use them.

Question 7. What are the barriers to you getting out and about?



Ages 65-76

- 'The bus service is amazing. A real abundance of buses available to me!'
- 'No bus service near my house for the doctor's surgery.'
- 'Health isn't a barrier now, however that might change.'
- 'Transport near me is good. There's a good service and I've got my bus pass.'
- 'None of the above applies to me.'
- 'Bus stops are reasonably close, a 5 minute walk. If I'm unwell it's a bit different.'
- 'I walk with a stick and find it impossible to get through the crowds at the bus stop opposite the police station. The stop going towards Prestonpans/Tranent, people are so rude and inconsiderate. Everybody stands to look at the information board and no-one can get passed.'
- 'N/A I tend to go by car.'
- 'Cost/availability?'
- 'For some years we had very few buses on Linkfield Road. Only half an hour compared with the 'top way' i.e. Pinkie Road. It was a problem. However things are better now.'
- 'No barriers.'
- 'Hospital appointments take a whole day for me.'
- 'A decent bus service. There are no buses at the top of my hill. I am very reliant on my buggy.'
- 'The bus doesn't come near where I live anymore. Heavy bags are a no-no.'
- 'Taxis are just too expensive.'
- 'I can't walk very far without my walking frame.'
- 'It's a bit of a walk to the bus stop but I manage at the moment. Once I'm there, there are loads of buses.'
- N/A
- 'Companionship, some-one to go with. I would like a group outing.'
- 'I don't have a problem getting the bus. I can get a bus anywhere.'
- 'Having a decent bus service the 40 service is terrible. I have to walk about half a mile to the bus stop which is difficult if the weather is bad and the bus late.'
- 'I've been driving for 50 years. If I lost my car I would be devastated. I rarely use the bus, however there are loads of buses that stop and the end of the road and there is always my bus pass.'

Ages 76-85

- *'I have no major problems getting out and about and am able to 'jump' on and off public transport.'*
- *'Poor mobility, lack of limb strength, no balance. I even struggle to move around the house.'*
- *'Public transport for the health centre is poor.'*
- *'Lack of friends. Transport.'*
- *'It's a long walk to local shops so I'm very reliant on public transport.'*
- *'I struggle a bit with walking distances...the next step is a stick.'*
- *'The bus stop is too far to walk to, so I drive my car to the bus stop and get the bus.'*
- *'Being able to hold someone's arm would be helpful at times.'*
- *'I am fortunate to be active hillwalking.'*
- *'My son takes me shopping and to doctor's appointments.'*
- *'Taxi card due to run out.'*
- *'Edenhall is a bit long for walking now, but the bus service is pretty good.'*
- *'I walk with pain and have a diagnosis of dementia.'*
- *'None at this point.'*
- *'At Mansfield Court we have been given a resurface of the carport. Unfortunately they didn't come back on a rainy day and at one part where there is a slope for a wheelchair the puddle is so big the water has nowhere to drain. Very hard to walk through this.'*
- *'A local bus service is needed.'*
- *'I definitely need help.'*

Ages 86+

- *'I have no problems, excellent bus service. I am still fit but slower and family help with shopping.'*
- *'I'm still driving my own car.'*
- *'I feel I have less energy due to age. I would like to see some kind of bus service like the Hollies taking me from door to door.'*
- *'Walking is not as good as before. I manage with my stick or mobile scooter. Family is always willing to help out for further visits.'*
- *'So far I am able to get out and about. If transport is not available I use a taxi.'*
- *'My health is not bad for my age. It's just I walk with 2 sticks and my confidence is not what it was.'*
- *'I don't want to be a bore, but I am very lucky. I live with my family. We have a good loving relationship and I want for nothing.'*
- *'Roads and pavements are bad. It's difficult for me in my buggy and my friend in her wheelchair.'*
- *'I'm lucky there are lots of buses, good transport links.'*

Reflections

Across all age groups for those who are mobile the bus pass is excellent in the Musselburgh area. There are however pockets where the bus service is poor or it is a long way to a bus stop. This generation seem reluctant to take taxis due to expense – either unaffordable or an excessive luxury. For the 76-85 age group, mobility is starting to be an issue and getting to a bus stop is more of a difficulty.

As mobility becomes an issue comments show that some respondents have become more reliant on family and friends to get around. An issue raised in the 86+ group is the impact that uneven pavements have on their confidence to get out, with the very real danger of trips and falls.

Question 8. If you could have 3 wishes to improve your life and/or that of your community what would they be?

Ages 65-75

Wish 1

Easier access to my GP. Return to the family doctor.
More information on services and benefits and form filling in.
Bus passes on trams in Edinburgh...why aren't they valid?
More information about services available and benefits.
An alternative to care in the community for the elderly.
Free access to swimming.
My life line is the Hollies and I'm worried it will close. What would I do then? I meet my friends and get my hair done.
The weather
Kindness to the elderly
More home help care.
Content at present with life in general.
Am generally content. In the home certain alterations could make it more manageable but then again I wouldn't wish for the upheaval.
I can't think of any. I think everything is fine.
A good bus service.
A good life, be happy and keep smiling.
More company.
Improved health service, more streamlined and efficient appointment scheme for medical appointments.
Being younger.
A local social club with transport there and back
Having a home that is all on one level.

Wish 2

More local shops selling local produce. Shops on the High Street with a sense of community.
Higher police profile in Musselburgh in general.
More community activities, i.e. dancing, line dancing.
An improvement in NHS services e.g. GP surgeries: reduction in waiting times for hospital examinations/surgery etc.
Free access to education/study
More police officers on the beat.
repair potholes in the road and repair the pavements
More money
More funding for volunteers for the Hollies day centre due to the good job that they do.
In the community can we wish for more Council support/recognition for projects by private individuals and bodies? Certain things in the town have now been lost - notably the Dolls museum and various annual musical/sporting charity events in the Brunton Hall

A better bus service

Wish 3

Roads and pavements need repaired.
Safer roads. Potholes repaired. Dog mess policed better.
Better road & traffic management
Safety support at night to get out and about.
Less cars and lorries coming through the town.
Dog poo is a nuisance.
Visitors
Also in the community I sometimes wish they wouldn't half do things - a lot of money was spent on the bus stop area around the CAB but the end result it fall short of being attractive.
Level pavements and lower kerbs.

Ages 76-85

Wish 1

More residential care for elderly people.
A visit from my doctor. Dr will only come in an emergency. What can I do if I'm not able to get to the surgery?
More information on benefits
Leaving the house more often. Good to have company.
More company
Something to do every day would be lovely.
Give me back my strong legs
I don't know how the roads are going to cope with the extra traffic due to house building. Improve roads and more buses
A wheelchair to get me out and about.
Good health
Meeting more people who like all the same things
Affordable, accessible housing
To join in
More visible information about what is on - I don't know where to find all this out
Can't think of anything. I'm probably quite content
To be with my peers in sheltered accommodation
More housing communities built for retired people. Private estates as well as supported housing
Nothing...other than perhaps better weather!
More to do daily
Getting through to the surgery and seeing the same doctor to follow the case through.
Hibs to win league and cup double! Scotland to win a game!

Wish 2

Musselburgh is growing so fast and needs more GP services.
More attentive health care
More police in Musselburgh
Money is always a factor.
Better access to transport
Help with the garden
Live nearer to my son.
A free community bus going around housing schemes.
Sort out my hearing aids or get new ones.
Keeping safe at all times
Good health and exercise
Help with bills
To be helped to be more independent.
Takes 20 mins for the bus to get through Musselburgh...too many cars!
Better health, pain free and less breathing difficulties
More care homes
For people to be aware that the elderly are people too!
Getting help with the garden maintenance free or affordable.
Being fit. A new heart.

Wish 3

More things in the town to interest young people.
Safer payments and road repairs
More to do locally.
More money
Housework being done for me.
Someone to address my dizziness problems - perhaps through medication?
Friendly atmosphere
Happiness
A subsidized tablet/computer for access to the web.
To go along to clubs/events. I don't know what is on.
I wish my family were more supportive
Transport that stops outside Mansfield Court.
Care packages put in place timely for hospital discharge. A central place to contact if care is needed at short notice.
Feel younger.

Ages 86+

Wish 1

I may be the odd one out but I am very happy and can think of nothing that would improve my life.
Good health
company
To be able to access doctors when I need to. Seven calls over three days before speaking to anyone.
Get out and about more.
To be able to walk more. My health is quite good. I am content with life.
To get out more.
Less litter
Other than bringing back my family and giving me two new legs I am happy enough.
I have everything I need.
Friends and family are the important things for me.

Wish 2

Enough money
better chance of cheaper transport
To be able to get out and walk along the beach.
A community free bus.
More to do in the sheltered housing scheme
More households keeping their front gardens tidier.

Wish 3

Continuing to drive
Help with day to day tasks
Someone to share problems with outside of family.
Good health

Reflections

The 'Three Wishes' question was included as a light-hearted informal conclusion to the discussion with respondents.

Many respondents were at a loss to offer answers to this question perhaps suggesting that this demographic were more receptive to targeted questions and, when pushed, gave answers that mirrored common themes throughout this document:

Access	Transport	Company	Participation/Activities
	Information	Safety – more policing	

Appropriate housing and accommodation

Roads & Pavements

The 65-75 age group primary wishes were modest. Many were content with their lives and specific comments were mostly about better access to the local GP surgery.

The 76-85 age group primary wishes were more targeted at having company and support to get out and about. This group were also wished for suitable housing to meet their needs as they grow older.

The 86+ age group primary wishes were mostly for increased support to get out more and access to local surgery without the complication of answer machines.

What matters to you about living in the Musselburgh Area



East Lothian Community Care Forum (ELCCF) is a service user-led organisation providing a voice for people who use health and social care services. The research work we do is **independent** and carried out by community members.

Musselburgh Area Partnership

The Musselburgh Senior Citizens' Network would like to find out **what matters to you** about living in your area. We would be very grateful if you would help us do this by answering this questionnaire.

To help us organise the information you give us please give us your full your postcode (see below). The information you provide is **confidential** and will not be disclosed other than for the purpose stated.

My postcode

Date completed:

Interviewer Initials:

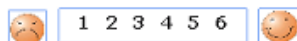
Equality information (please circle)

Male / Female

Age: 65 - 75, 76 - 85, 85+

Please tell us your ethnicity

Scoring: In some questions you will be asked to score out of 6. 1 represents least happy and 6 represents most happy.



The Questions

Example



1 2 3 4 5 6



About your wellbeing

1. **What things are most important to your wellbeing at the moment?**
Please tick all that apply and score out of 6 how well these are being met

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------------|
| a) Health services and social care support when I need it | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| b) Keeping active | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| c) Knowing what's on in my community and taking part | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| d) Contact with my friends and family | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| e) Being able to get out and about | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| f) Other | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |

Please comment:

2. **When you are having a good day what are the things that make it good?**

Please comment:

3. **What would help make life easier/more interesting/fulfilling?**

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| a) Help to join a group or activity | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Someone to check on me at home from time to time | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Help to go shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Help with small tasks around the house such as changing light bulbs, small repairs etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Other..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please tell us more...

Information

4. **Please tick which of the following you would like to know more about?**

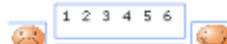
- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| a) Finding more about social care support | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) How to make the best of my finances/benefits/pension | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) How to find out about other services that could support me or my relative | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) How to find out what is going on in my community | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please say more....

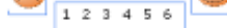
Feeling Safe

5 a. **How safe do you feel in your home?**

Please give a score out of 6



5 b. **How safe do you feel in your community?**



Please comment

Finances

6. **Please score out of 6 how well you manage the costs below:**

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| a) Food | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| b) Heat/light | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| c) Household repairs | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| d) Garden maintenance | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| e) Rent/Mortgage | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |
| f) Transport | 1 2 3 4 5 6 |

Please say more....

Getting out and about

7. **What are the barriers to you getting out and about?**

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| a) My poor health or disability | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) No public transport near where I live | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) I need help/support to get out and about | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Cost, e.g. I need to get a taxi to get me from door to door | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Please say more....

8. **If you could have three wishes to improve your life in your home and community what would they be?**

1.

2.

3.