Update on the Age Friendly Leeds Smart City Projects

1. About the project: The objective of the Age Friendly Smart City project is to develop robust technology solutions that can *empower* older residents and make Leeds the best city to grow old in. During this six-month project, Leeds City Council will co-produce solutions with older residents, key stakeholders and a cohort of independent technical experts. These experts work in fields such as wearables technology, Internet of Things and open data. The focus is on improving the lives of older people as well as enabling better health and wellbeing outcomes.

2. Progress to date:

Usability workshop with sheltered homes to test MESH boxes
The outcome of our first project was the MESH communication boxes to provide one button access to digital communications. This allowed isolated residents within a sheltered housing complex to easily connect and communicate with each other and thus reduce isolation. In August we ran a usability workshop with residents during which we introduced prototype boxes and asked for feedback. Our oldest participant was 97! From this workshop we have 4 use cases to deploy the boxes. We also have buy-in from the manager and residents of the sheltered homes. The prototypes are now being converted into fully operational models. These will be deployed in the sheltered homes with the help of the libraries team. Early indications are that these have been a significant success with high satisfaction from testers. If the results of the pilot is successful, these boxes can be rolled out to other Sheltered homes.

Successful Transport Innovation Lab in partnership with WYCA
We held our second Innovation Lab on the theme of Transport in August. In this lab older citizens and technologists have co-produced an idea, which is being developed into a fully working proof of concept. The solution is a portable beacon that uses real-time data transmitted from the GPS (Global Positioning System) in a bus to let the user know the amount of time remaining for his or her bus to arrive at the stop. Currently the arrival information is only available at the bus stop. Giving older people access to this information in their homes and in public buildings can have an impact

on their confidence and ability to use public transport. We partnered with West Yorkshire Transport Authority to run this lab and they are offering us support to trial this beacon in a community centre, doctor's surgery. supermarket and community bus stop. The proof of concept is being developed and will first undergo usability testing before the trial. This second lab is an example of how we are engaging with the community and working in collaboration with key agencies to produce solutions that can have a positive impact on the quality of life and independence of older residents in the city.

Community workshops in Leeds
As the scope of the Age Friendly programme grows, we want to engage the wider community on important subjects that may be considered taboo. With this in mind, we held two workshops in August. These were attended by 50 participants. Participants included older people, council staff and other service providers, voluntary sector organisations and a small group of residents. The first session was to understand what an age friendly city means to this mixed group participants. It was a fact-finding exercise that will help us develop additional programmes. In the second session we uncovered barriers as well as solutions to help older residents and their family and friends plan for death. This second session compliments the work that is already taking place in the city via events such as the Death Cafe. We received some coverage of these sessions in Yorkshire Post. For example: http://www.yorkshireeveningpost.co.uk/news/latest-news/top-stories/building-blocks-to-beat-isolation-in-leeds-1-7426835

Working with a Neighbourhood Network
Our Third Innovation lab will run on October 2, the day after the International Day of Older Persons. The theme of this lab is community safety and for the first time it will be run outside of the city centre in partnership with the MAECare Neighbourhood Network.

November Workshops and Serious Games
In addition to the Innovation Labs and pilot projects, we are planning a series of community workshops that will be run across the city in November. We have already received proposals for sessions from a range of experts. The goal of these workshops is to engage in positive and constructive dialogue with older people. These workshops are inclusive events and we will continue to encourage participation from a wide range of organisations and backgrounds to join the Age Friendly agenda.

Secondly, we are in the process of organising a Serious Games project. Through this project, we want to transform the stories about older people that have been captured by organisations such as Black Health Initiative into interactive games for young people. This is based on a successful approach developed by a grassroots organisation in Alaska. Serious Games is also a growing genre of computer games.

This is a cross-generational project where the older residents have a level footing with technologists and make a genuine contribution to a digital project. The end result as well will have

We will work with technologists to create minimum viable product for serious game, which is a growing genre. In Yorkshire we have GAMAYO (which is a community of 200+ game makers, so we have talent).

The point is to increase the shelf life of ongoing storytelling projects and get these stories and issues to a wider community – i.e. Those playing the game. At the

moment, there is very little visibility of these projects outside of the bubble of participants.

Introducing cutting edge technology to the city
With co-operation with the Neighbourhood Networks and other agencies, we are working on bringing in cutting edge and innovative projects to the city to run pilot projects. Potential projects in the pipeline are RITA (Responsive Interactive Advocate, University of Kent) which is an Avatar project for older people suffering with the early parts of dementia.

The Yecco Pilot
The Yecco project designed to provide elderly residents with new skills and bridge the digital divide tested in Crossgates and District Good Neighbours Scheme as well as allowing clients to self monitor around health conditions is still in the measurement phase. The residents meet once a week, to catch up on how the apps and devices are working and their effectiveness. The pilot phase where results can be measures, by the University of Leeds, will be complete by the end of November.

Future and Challenges
If these proof of concepts turn out to be a success they will inform business cases for scaling to wider cohorts. However, the challenge of scaling and sustaining these as potential commercial products by our innovators and as solutions for our constituents still needs to be addressed. We are talking to partners around how we might do this including business incubators.