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Comparative Study of Age-Friendly City Initiatives in Taipei and
Manchester

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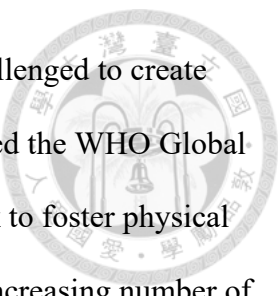
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摘要：隨著全球人口持續老化，城市在創造有利於健康老化的環境方面面臨越來越大的挑戰。全球許多城市已加入「世界衛生組織全球高齡友善城市和社區網絡」(The WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities, GNAFCC)，致力於營造有利於老年人福祉的物質和社會環境。儘管「高齡友善城市」(Age-friendly Cities, AFC)的數量不斷增加，但跨城市比較研究仍然有限。此外，目前仍缺乏統一的評估工具來檢視高齡友善城市和社區倡議的制定和實施階段。現有框架通常缺乏能建構全面、靈活、能考慮到不同城市文化和環境差異的結構，這限制了它們有效地進行比較分析和制定實際政策的能力。本論文旨在透過開發一個改進的比較框架來彌補這一不足，該框架旨在評估不同城市地區的高齡友善倡議。該框架借鑒了現有框架，並整合了世界衛生組織高齡友善城市和社區框架、加拿大公共衛生署《高齡友善社區評估指南》和英國城市老齡化聯盟模型的關鍵要素。它圍繞著三個核心領域：公平性、物質環境的可及性和社會環境的包容性，並進一步細分為 32 個子指標。本研究運用修改後的框架於兩個世界領先的高齡友善城市：曼徹斯特和台北的比較案例研究。曼徹斯特長期以來因其早期的高齡友善介入措施、強大的學術基礎和自下而上的模式而受到認可。相較之下，台北的快速人口老化促使該市實施高齡友善計劃，並成為其他自上而下的城市計劃的典範。資料收集自政策文件、灰色文獻、高齡友善計畫評估和學術來源，並按三個核心領域進行主題分析。研究結果顯示，這兩個城市與世界衛生組織的高齡友善計畫原則高度契合，但在重點和實施方面有所不同。主要的結構性差異包括曼徹斯特依賴跨部門夥伴關係和社區網絡，而台北則依賴集中規劃和政府主導的計劃。分析顯示，如果曼徹斯特更全面地整合醫療服務和就業保障，將受益匪淺；而台北則面臨社區層級參與不足以及老年人參與決策和回饋不足的問題。曼徹斯特和台北

的發展經驗可以為其他尋求改善高齡友善城市提供借鑒，並凸顯了高齡友善框架在不同環境下的適應性。總而言之，本論文不僅為分析高齡友善城市提供了一個實用的評估工具，也為高齡友善城市研究提供了理論進展。本研究為未來的比較研究奠定了基礎，可用於衡量和改善世界各地城市的高齡友善程度。

關鍵字：高齡友善城市、健康老化、都市高齡政策、比較政策分析、台北、曼徹斯特、社區參與、社會共融、高齡福祉、政策執行、全球高齡友善城市網絡、可近性與公平、跨世代共融



Abstract: As global populations continue to age, cities are increasingly challenged to create environments that promote healthy aging. Many cities worldwide have joined the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC), which work to foster physical and social environments that support older adults' well-being. Despite the increasing number of age-friendly cities (AFC), comparative research across cities remain limited. Moreover, there remains a lack of consistent evaluative tools that look at the developmental and implementation stages of AFC initiatives. Existing frameworks often lack features that enable a comprehensive, adaptable structure that accounts for cultural and contextual differences across cities, limiting their ability to effectively conduct comparative analysis and practical policymaking. This thesis addresses this gap by developing a modified comparative framework designed to evaluate and assess age-friendly initiatives across different urban areas. The framework draws on existing frameworks and integrates key elements of the WHO AFC framework, the Public Health Agency of Canada's Age-Friendly Communities Evaluation Guide, and the UK Urban Ageing Consortium model. It centers on three core domains: equity, accessibility of the physical environment, and inclusion of the social environment, and is further broken down into 32 refined sub-indicators. This modified framework was then applied to a comparative case study of two of the world's leading age-friendly cities: Manchester and Taipei. Manchester has long been recognised for its early AFC interventions, strong academic foundation, and bottom-up model. In contrast, rapid demographic aging in Taipei has spurred the city to implement AFC initiatives and serves as a model for other top-down city initiatives. Data was collected from policy documents, grey literature, AFC evaluations, and academic sources, and was analyzed thematically across the three core domains. The findings reveal that both cities demonstrate a high degree of alignment with WHO AFC principles, but differ in emphasis and implementation.

Key structural differences include Manchester's reliance on cross-sectoral partnerships and community networks, whereas Taipei depends on centralised planning and government-led initiatives. The analysis showed that Manchester would benefit from more comprehensive integration of their health services and employment protections, while Taipei struggles with lack of community-level engagement and the participation of older adults in decision-making and feedback. The experiences of Manchester and Taipei's AFC developments can serve as a model for other cities looking to improve their age-friendliness, and highlights the adaptability of the age-friendly of the age-friendly framework in diverse settings. In conclusion, this thesis contributes both a practical assessment tool for analysing AFCs, as well as a theoretical advancement to age-friendly city research. This study provides a foundation for future comparative research which can be used in the future to measure and improve the age-friendliness of cities around the world.

Keywords: Age-Friendly Cities, Healthy Aging, Urban Aging Policy, Comparative Policy Analysis, Taipei, Manchester, Community Participation, Social Inclusion, Elderly Well-being, Policy Implementation, Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities, Accessibility and Equity, Intergenerational Inclusion

Table of Contents

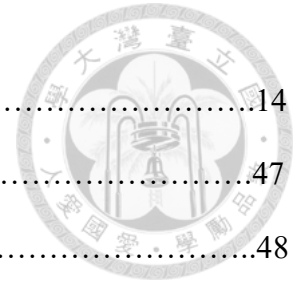


ABSTRACT (CHINESE)	i.
ABSTRACT (ENGLISH).....	iv.
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	v.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	3
2.1 The Development of AFCs & Communities Related Concepts/Policies.....	3
2.2 Characteristics of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities.....	4
2.3 Context of Evaluating AFC Progress.....	10
2.4 Evaluation Frameworks for AFCs.....	13
2.4.1 <i>WHO Framework</i>	13
2.4.2 <i>PHA of Canada's Age-Friendly Communities Evaluation Guide</i>	17
2.4.3 <i>UK Urban Ageing Consortium's Research and Evaluation Framework</i>	18
2.5 Rationale for Selecting Taipei and Manchester for Comparative Study.....	19
2.6 Taipei as an Age-Friendly City.....	22
2.7 Manchester as an Age-Friendly City.....	23
2.8 Study Aim.....	25
2.9 Significance of Study.....	26
CHAPTER 3: METHODS.....	27
3.1 Modified Comparative Framework for AFCs.....	27
3.2 Data Collection Methods.....	33
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS.....	40
4.1 Demographic and Social Contexts of Manchester and Taipei.....	40

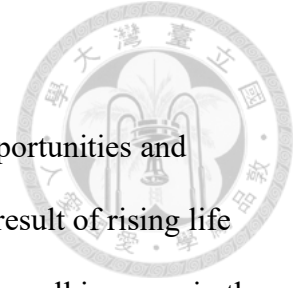
4.2 Development of Taipei & Manchester as Age-Friendly Cities.....	42
4.3 Challenges & Objectives of Implementing AFCs in Manchester and Taipei.....	51
4.4 Assessment.....	54
4.4.1 <i>Accessibility of the Physical Environment</i>	54
4.4.2 <i>Inclusion of the Social Environment</i>	62
4.4.3 <i>Equity</i>	76
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION.....	88
5.1 Comparative Approaches to AFC Development in Manchester and Taipei.....	88
5.2 Drivers for Age-Friendly City Commitment in Taipei and Manchester.....	94
5.3 Accessibility of the Physical Environment.....	97
5.4 Inclusion of the Social Environment	100
5.5 Equity.....	103
5.6 Policy Recommendations.....	104
5.7 Limitations of Study.....	106
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION.....	108
6.1 Recommendations for Future Research, Practice, and Policy Making	109
REFERENCES.....	112

List of Figures/Tables

Figure 1. A framework for selecting an age-friendly city indicator set.....	14
Figure 2: Progression of Manchester’s AFC Policies & Development.....	47
Figure 3: Progression of Taipei’s AFC Policies & Development.....	48
Table 1. Modified framework used for this study	30
Table 2. Characteristics & Documents of the Age-Friendly Cities.....	34
Table 3. Timeline.....	48
Table 4. Manchester & Taipei AFC Initiatives.....	78
Table 5. Main Findings.....	84



Chapter 1: Introduction

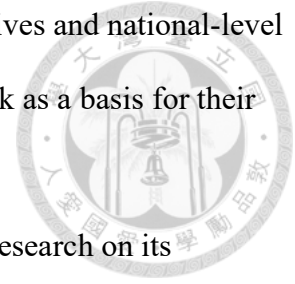


The general global trend of population aging has presented both opportunities and challenges for communities around the world. This demographic shift is a result of rising life expectancies coupled with declining fertility rates, which is leading to an overall increase in the proportion of older adults (Steels, 2015). In response to this shift, governments and organisations have begun to implement policies targeted at ensuring the health and well-being of older populations, with a focus on promoting healthy aging. The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines healthy aging as “the process of maintaining functional ability to support well-being in later years, emphasizing physical, mental, and social health as integral components of overall well-being (World Health Organisation, 2020).”

A key strategy for ensuring healthy aging amongst older populations is the creation of age-friendly cities (AFCs). These urban environments are designed to accommodate the needs of older individuals through approaches such as improving active participation, social inclusion, and physical health (Buffel & Phillipson, 2016). AFCs align closely with the WHO’s concept of healthy aging by working to improve core features of healthy aging, such as healthcare services, social engagement opportunities, and opportunities to maintain physical health (Greenfield, 2015). In essence, these cities aim to provide access and availability of opportunities to enhance the quality of life as people age (World Health Organisation, n.d.). In practice, AFCs incorporate policies and services that are responsive to the unique needs of older citizens (Kano et. al, 2017).

The concept of AFCs was first introduced in the 2007 Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide, and today, the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities encompasses 1,606 cities across 53 countries, covering over 330 million people worldwide. This network represents about 20% of WHO member states and is continuously expanding. The Global Age-

Friendly Cities guide has worked as a model for many city planning initiatives and national-level programs. A large proportion of these cities have used the WHO framework as a basis for their own action plans (World Health Organisation, n.d.).



Despite the expansion of the AFC movement, there is still limited research on its effectiveness, especially in terms of comparative studies across different countries. A comprehensive understanding of the challenges and successes of AFC policies is critical when implementing new policies and programs. Research that compares AFC policies in different cities and regions can provide valuable insights into the various ways these places perceive age-friendliness and enforce new policies. These studies can also identify the best approaches and solutions of creating an AFC, which can then be adapted and expanded to specific local contexts. This is an important step to fostering international collaboration and sharing relevant findings (van Hoof & Marston, 2021).

In the following section, a literature review will examine the various frameworks for identifying AFCs, as well as the key features, challenges, and enablers of adopting age-friendly policies. The research will address the key components and challenges in developing AFC policies for cities, as well as what the existing evaluative frameworks are that cover AFCs. The research will attempt to find a framework that effectively captures the policy development process and outcomes of AFC cities like Taipei and Manchester. Moreover, the research will also look at how different actors and factors influence the enactment of age-friendly initiatives in cities.

Through this examination, the study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the complexities involved in implementing age-friendly policies and the potential for improving the lives of older adults in cities around the world.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 The Development of Age-Friendly Cities & Communities Related Concepts/Policies

Age-friendly cities first emerged into the global health rhetoric after the World Health Organisation (WHO) launched a series of initiatives in the early 2000s (van Hoof & Marston, 2021). These initiatives were first connected to the idea of “active aging,” which was first coined as a term in 1999. This concept emphasised the belief that older adults should be able to participate fully in all facets of life. These policies aimed to improve the social and physical environments of older individuals (van Hoof & Marston, 2021). This goal was further reinforced in 2006, when the WHO launched the “Global Age-friendly Cities” project, which comprised 33 cities across 22 countries. Later, this project was expanded into the “Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities” (GNACC), which experienced a rapid increase in member cities. In an effort to increase inclusion of age-friendly environments, the network’s name was changed from age-friendly cities (AFC) to age-friendly cities and communities (AFCC) to also target smaller communities and more rural areas. The growth of this network continued throughout the 2010s, and by the end of 2020, approximately 114 cities and communities in 44 countries were members (Sharlach, 2015). The GNFAACC aims to support member cities in creating age-friendly environments by fostering knowledge sharing and helping to develop solutions that are tailored to the needs of each city’s older population. In these AFCs, local governments and various stakeholders are encouraged to collaborate in this effort (World Health Organisation, n.d.).

Membership into the GNACC means that the city makes a formal commitment to improve its age-friendly services. It does not signify a particular level of age-friendliness but rather a pledge to improve age-friendliness (Steels, 2015). In order to be admitted to the

Network, participating cities must: “(1) agree to share and promote the values and principles of the GNAFCC; (2) commit to developing their work following a 4-step process (i.e., engage and understand, plan, act, measure); and (3) actively participate in the GNAFCC (Steels, 2015).”

When seeking to compare policies across age-friendly cities, it will be useful to use member cities of the GNAFCC as reference, as these cities are already places that have committed to making their environments age-friendly.

2.2 Characteristics of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities

The term "age-friendly" has become increasingly prominent in discussions about population health. In order to identify the main characteristics of AFCs, it is important to look at the motivations behind why a city would want to become age-friendly, and what are the explanations and reasons behind why cities seek to adopt age-friendly initiatives. One motivating factor is for economic benefit, where cities will take measures to become age-friendly when the costs of not implementing such initiatives will exceed the perceived cost of doing so (van Hoof & Marston, 2021). For example, implementing age-friendly initiatives can lead to healthier older populations, which can further reduce the demand for healthcare and social support systems. Promoting initiatives encouraging older adults to remain economically active can lead to economic growth, stimulating the economy and offsetting social care costs (van Hoof & Marston, 2021). Therefore, cities with higher proportions of older adults or those that are rapidly aging are more likely to agree to commitments to become age-friendly. Gaining deeper insights into the expected economic values that come from being an AFC may be useful in encouraging more communities to engage in age-friendly work. There are a number of important stakeholders, including the local and national government, civil society, the private sector,

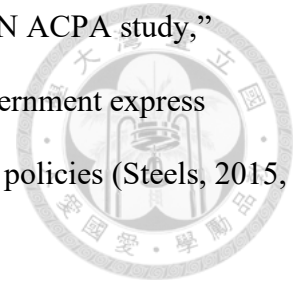
academia, and older adults themselves that must engage in AFC work for a city to successfully be considered age-friendly, and the government in particular has an important role to play (Steels, 2015; Scharlach, 2015). These stakeholders can provide models, standards, and fiscal incentives which can encourage communities to become more age-friendly. Cities may also become more age-friendly if they are doing well economically, and are able to fund for more resources within the community. Moreover, having a greater amount of community members that are willing to spend their time and resources helping older adults will also make a city more likely to adopt age-friendly initiatives (Scharlach, 2015).

Successful age-friendly initiatives are multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional, often involving collaborations between national and local governments, research bodies, and grassroots organizations (van Hoof & Marston, 2021). Research suggests that increased collaboration between the public, private, and civil sectors are needed to better address age-friendliness in a community (Black & Oh, 2022). For example, the central or national government can help to provide direction to AFC efforts by providing planning, leadership, and incentives (Black & Oh, 2022). They can help with creating frameworks and coming up with national-level goals and plans to direct local communities in becoming age-friendly. Local or municipal level governments can take these frameworks and plans and adapt them according to their local conditions. Factors that they may consider in their age-friendly implementation includes geography, city infrastructure, and specific population demographics. Factors that they may consider in their adjusted age-friendly implementation includes geography, city infrastructure, and specific population demographics (Black & Oh, 2022). For example, cities with old and outdated infrastructure such as transportation and housing, might prioritise affordable age-friendly housing. This is the case in Manchester, England, which has the oldest

housing stock in Europe (Piddington et. al, 2020). Cities that are more rural or with less road infrastructure may prioritise improving public transportation, which is the case in Taitung, Taiwan whose elderly population remains geographically isolated from medical facilities and socio-cultural activities. In Taitung, the region's high percentage of aboriginal people may also influence policies that adapt to these people's individual needs (Liu et. al, 2018).

Stakeholders in the private sector can add to the age-friendly efforts by presenting new technologies and other business innovations that can improve the lifestyles of older adults. Non-profit organisations are important in order to provide a mutual environment where stakeholders can collaborate and work towards similar goals (Black & Oh, 2022). In addition, they can help to provide and coordinate services, while individuals and community members can provide feedback and advocacy for age-friendly interventions (Scharlach, 2015). In order to create successful AFCs, several studies have sought to underscore what factors serve as enablers and determinants that define an age-friendly environment. In one study, Steels identified the key characteristics of age-friendly cities as those that incorporated multi-stakeholder collaborations, government commitment, and the inclusion of older adults into decision-making processes (Steels, 2015). This concept was further explored in another study, which highlighted the importance of community-based partnerships, and collaboration among academics, communities, organisations, policymakers, and practitioners (Plouffe & Kalache, 2010). The establishment of these diverse partnerships is essential for the implementation of a successful AFC program. It was found that political commitment at the national level to become age-friendly is critical, and that good leadership is required to sustain policies and momentum to enable the implementation of AFCs (Scharach, 2015, Steels, 2015). This is because governments can provide funding, help allocate resources, and develop long-term strategies that can help to better organise AFC projects

(“How to become an age-friendly city? Practical outcomes from the ESPON ACPA study,” 2020). Community leaders are easier to motivate when upper levels of government express determination and commitment, particularly when it comes to age-friendly policies (Steels, 2015, Lui, 2009).



Unfortunately, cities implementing age-friendly initiatives may face challenges and barriers when it comes to garnering enough political support and public resources to induce change (Neville et al., 2021). Common problems in implementing age-friendly programs are when proposed initiatives are too small/short-term, too dependent on voluntary labour, lacking in efficient leadership, underfunded, inequitably distributed in cities, or only targeting sub-groups of older adults as opposed to the entire relevant population (Joy, 2021). This can be particularly difficult during rough economic periods and public health crises. For example, when Covid-19 was a significant barrier for many cities when it came to the funding and efficacy of proposed AFC strategies, as policies during this time coincided with budget cuts and fiscal pressures. In recent years, there has been a reduction in funding associated with the welfare state and forms of public investment (Buffel & Phillipson, 2016). This has also run parallel with reductions in services such as libraries, leisure facilities, and senior centers, which has negatively impacted senior citizens (Buffel & Phillipson, 2016). Changes in local leadership and political dynamics can lead to a worry of losing support, momentum, and credibility.

In addition, it is important to note the multi-level nature of AFC development. A lack of cohesive integration amongst different governmental levels can delay, stall, or even prevent the implementation of age-friendly initiatives. Age-friendly city goals are often ambitious, and encompass a wide set of domains that cannot be achieved at just one governmental level, organisation, or sector (Greenfield, 2022). Leadership at the central and regional governmental

level is essential to sustain momentum for AFC initiatives. This momentum can be reflected in long-term goals and strategies that cities come up with. The progress of AFC initiatives may be negatively impacted when there is a change in governmental roles and policy directions (Menec & Brown, 2022). This issue can be countered by having a steering committee and staff members assigned to AFC initiatives (Menec & Brown, 2022).

While the importance of governmental levels has been identified, the presence of diverse partnerships should not be devalued. The private sector can contribute to AFC initiatives by demonstrating new technologies and other market solutions. NGOs can help coordinate services and provide volunteer/manpower (Khaddam et. al, 2020). These partnerships, while essential, can also lead to conflicts dealing with ownership issues, allocation of funding, and conflicts of competing interests. As a result of these challenges, securing long-term commitment and consistent support from both the government and other sectors is critical for the longevity of these AFC policies (Neville et. al, 2021). It is important to address the specific developmental challenges that each city has faced in order to gain insight into how to move forward in the future with improved policies. This study will seek to identify the barriers of the cities being compared by looking at the political, historical, and social context of the cities being compared.

Cities that aim to become age-friendly should focus not only on the well-being of older adults, but also that of other demographics within the community. An ideal AFC should not be fragmented, but rather age-inclusive and multigenerational (Plouffe & Kalache, 2010). Many cities aiming to be age-friendly may face challenges such as being underfunded or having limited resources. Consequently, some researchers have criticised the age-friendly city concept as incorporating a “one-size-fits-all approach,” and have stressed the importance of the ‘person-environment fit.’ This can be defined as the “degree to which a particular environment supports

or limits the daily functioning of older people.” For economists, this is a useful concept that can help to gain a deeper insight into the relationship between the individual and their local environment (Thissen, 2020). Some interventions which are made to improve the person-environment fit for older adults may actually adversely impact younger adults, and some cities have faced difficulties with having their initiatives be age-inclusive as opposed to just targeting one specific population (Scharlach, 2015).

While these studies have proven important, there are still a limited number of studies that have focused and compared the types of programs developed by members of the GNAFCC. Doing evaluative research on the cities in this network is valuable as we can better understand the processes of different cities around the world that have committed to age-friendliness. Studies that have been released so far have mainly focused on single case studies within one region (Fatmah et. al, 2019, Joy, 2021, Menec et. al, 2011, van Hoof, Marston, & Dikken, 2019, Monachesi, 2023) or broad comparisons of multiple countries from an international comparison (Rémillard-Boilard et. al, 2020, Kano et. al, 2017, Green, 2012, Tiraphat et. al, 2020, Moulaert & Garon, n.d., van Hoof et al., 2021). An in-depth case comparison study between two member cities is lacking, which would be useful to gain a deeper insight into how contextual and developmental differences have led to different policies in different cities. In order to address some of the limitations of this existing work, this paper explores a cross-city policy comparison of two members of the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, and seeks to identify the different developmental processes of the two cities, including the achievements and challenges faced by these members.

In summary, age-friendly cities and communities work to create environments that are inclusive and encompass the needs of older adults. Aspects of AFCs include accessible public

areas and transportation, affordable and age-friendly housing, and comprehensive healthcare services. Moreover, AFCs aim to fight ageism and promote intergenerational interactions. In order to successfully implement AFCs, multi-stakeholder collaboration is essential, and requires interactions between local governments, healthcare providers, community organisations, and older adults themselves. However, challenges such as limited resources, lack of political support, and the need for long-term commitment can hinder the development of AFCs.

2.3 Context of Evaluating AFC Progress

Evaluation of AFC initiatives is a required component to be an active member in the GNFAACC. Cities must commit to a 5-year cycle of continuous improvement, and must come up with a progress report at the end of each cycle (World Health Organization, 2015). Despite this, there is not a set framework that has been used in evaluating AFC progress, and there is much flexibility of evaluation measures across different cities. The WHO has established a guided checklist which includes eight core domains, also known as “domains of livability,” which are used to assess and improve the local environment. These domains have been consolidated, expanded, and modified by different studies to suit local needs and contexts. They encompass the physical environment and social environment. For example, they include the accessibility of outdoor spaces, such as “streets, sidewalks, parks, and buildings” (World Health Organization, 2015), which are critical in maintaining the independence and physical wellness of elderly individuals. Other key domains that impact the physical environment include access to safe, affordable housing options for older adults, offering an alternative to care homes. This can significantly enhance their independence and overall quality of life. The domains also prioritize public transportation, ensuring that older adults can safely navigate their community. On the

social health front, the domains seek to strengthen older adults' sense of belonging by encouraging active social, civic, and employment participation. They also focus on addressing ageism and promoting greater social inclusion. Additionally, these domains emphasize the importance of targeted health services and the widespread dissemination of information to empower older adults with knowledge about their health, rights, and the various services and opportunities available to them (World Health Organization, 2015).

The eight domains are identified below (World Health Organization, 2015). The first three domains relate to the physical environment, while the last five domains relate to the social environment.

1. Domain 1: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
2. Domain 2: Transportation
3. Domain 3: Housing
4. Domain 4: Social Participation
5. Domain 5: Respect and Social Inclusion
6. Domain 6: Civic Participation and Employment
7. Domain 7: Communication and Information
8. Domain 8: Community Support and Health Services”

To assess age-friendly interventions, several frameworks are used to evaluate how well a city supports its aging population. The World Health Organization (WHO) outlines five key milestones that form a continuous cycle aimed at enhancing age-friendliness in urban areas (World Health Organization, 2015.). These milestones are:



1. An advisory committee that also takes into account the engagement of older adults
2. A local municipal council resolution that seeks to promote age-friendly initiatives
3. An established plan of action
4. A demonstrated commitment to action which can be done by publicly posting the plan of action
5. A commitment to measuring age-friendly initiatives

Once an advisory committee is formed, it works to create a local resolution or commitment, providing important information that will be used for an assessment of the community's unique needs. This leads to the creation of a detailed action plan, which is then shared publicly to raise awareness and reinforce the city's dedication to becoming more age-friendly. After the interventions are implemented, evaluations are conducted to assess the effectiveness of the plan. These evaluations answer questions like, "Did we achieve what we set out to do, and if not, why?" and assess outcomes through both qualitative and quantitative methods. These results are then fed back into this cyclical loop, which allows the city to make adjustments to better meet community needs. This ensures that progress is sustained and that the city's age-friendly initiatives are being constantly refined and improved over time (World Health Organization, 2015).

Evaluation research is necessary to analyse how effective specific age-friendly policies and initiatives were based on the original goals and action plans put into place, as well as to assess the "secondary costs and benefits for stakeholders (Orpana et. al, 2016)". Frameworkers are critical in helping to establish mutual goals and understanding regarding the domains of age-

friendliness in a city. Frameworks that assess AFCs include indicators which can be “used to measure baseline level of age-friendliness of the city and monitor how this changes over time” with the onset of each age-friendly initiative. Using indicators is also useful as a tool to leverage political and social commitment within a city and country, which can further lead to actions to promote and sustain AFCs (Buckner et. al, 2019). In the following section, key evaluation frameworks will be discussed.

2.4 Evaluation Frameworks for AFCs

2.4.1 WHO Framework

The first major framework used to assess Age-Friendly Cities (AFCs) is the one proposed by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2015. This framework emphasizes how the surrounding physical and social environment can contribute as determinants of healthy aging. The framework provides a set of indicators that can be used to assess the effectiveness of age-friendly interventions. These indicators are useful for providing a picture of a city’s age-friendliness, and can help guide the decision-making process when working to improve AFC initiatives (World Health Organization, 2015).

Figure 1. A framework for selecting an age-friendly indicator set

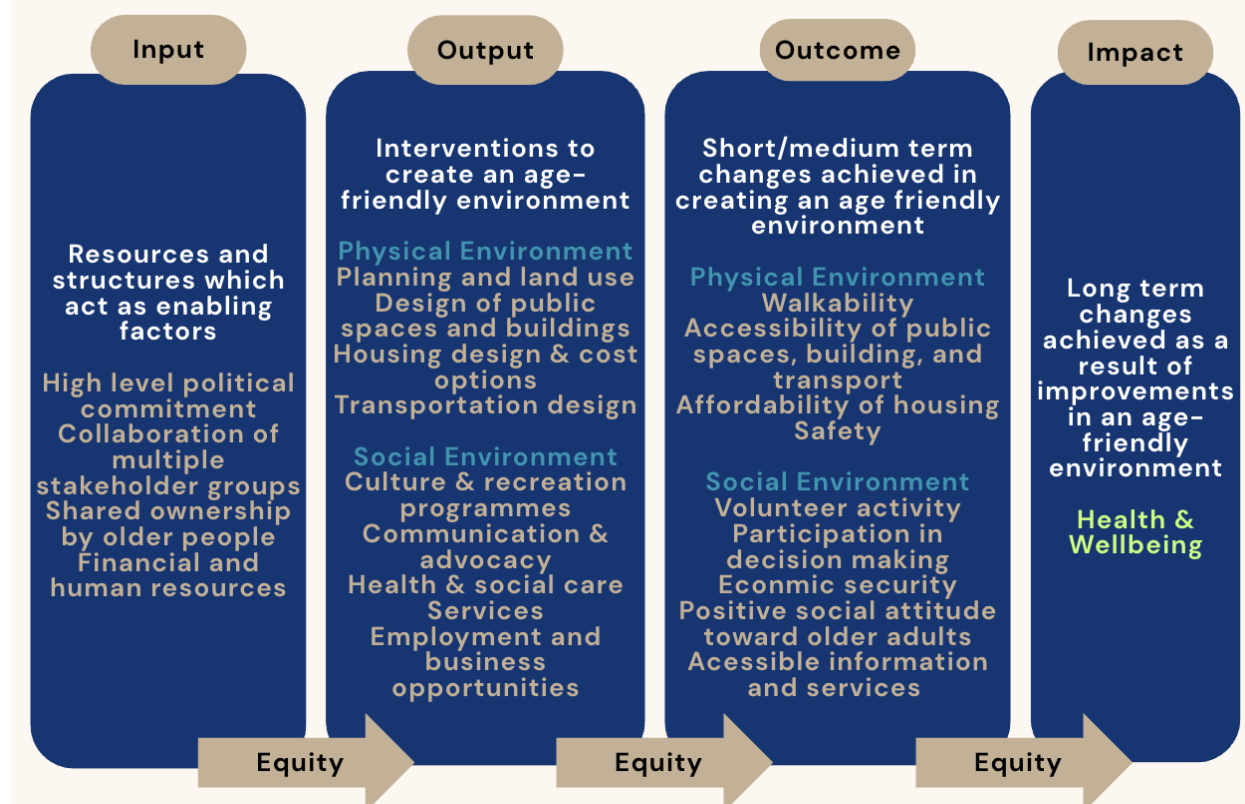


Figure 1. A framework for selecting an age-friendly city indicator set. Adapted from World Health Organization (2015), page 15.

https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/203830/9789241509695_eng.pdf

As can be seen in Figure 1, equity indicators are presented throughout the framework and work as a fundamental guiding principle across the other indicators. They are defined as “the absence of systematic disparities in health between social groups with different levels of underlying social advantages or disadvantages.” The framework recommends that this indicator should be measured across an indicator set in order to ensure equity across the various stages of policy implementation. These measures can be measured either by comparing two population

subgroups (e.g., comparing the most and least advantaged groups), or by looking at all existing data among populations and conducting complex analyses.



Figure 1 also identifies other aspects of an age-friendly indicator set. Input indicators work to assess the necessary resources to implement and sustain age-friendly initiatives. Resources that must be taken into consideration are a financial budget, stakeholders and necessary staff, and institutional structures. For example, the involvement of key stakeholders like local governments, universities, NGOs, and businesses can be critical for spearheading AFC projects (Xiang et. al, 2020). Input indicators can either be measured by looking at whether the resources exist (e.g., if there is available physical space for an initiative), or by their level of availability, ranging from low to high. Output indicators focus on the specific interventions that are implemented after the initial assessment of available and needed resources. This can manifest in the form of policies, services, and programs, and the indicators work to evaluate the scope, scale, and reach of these initiatives. The output indicators are measured by looking at how accessible, affordable, and widespread they are in the context of enhancing age-friendliness. Outcome indicators work to evaluate the short and medium-term results of the interventions, and assess the tangible physical and social changes in the urban environment. For example, improvements might include greater accessibility to public spaces or increased social participation among older adults. It's important to understand that interventions can have both intended and unintended consequences, as many domains of livability are often intertwined. Lastly, impact indicators measure the overall and long-term effects of these interventions, with a focus on the actual health outcomes of the elderly population. These might include improvements in physical health, cognitive function, and overall emotional well-being. Impact indicators look at the broader success of the AFC initiatives.

The framework provided by the WHO outlines core indicators that should be measured in AFC assessments, including “equity, accessibility of the physical environment, and inclusivity of the social environment.” Equity indicators refer to the difference between two demographic subgroups, and can be measured in two ways (by comparing the best subgroup to the worst subgroup or a sub-group with the total population). For the physical environment, the sub indicators focused on accessibility of public areas, such as pedestrian paths, public transportation, and housing. Sub indicators in the social environment encompassed overall attitudes towards older adults, engagement in volunteer and socio-cultural activities, employment opportunities, and the availability of services to improve the quality of life and economic situation of older adults.

The framework has been applied in several cities worldwide, including Palo Alto, California, La Plata, Argentina, Hong Kong (Yu et al., 2018), and Nairobi, Kenya (Aboderin et al., 2017). Its flexibility makes it adaptable to diverse urban contexts, offering guidance without imposing a rigid set of rules for cities to follow. The framework does not prescribe a one-size-fits-all approach but provides direction for policy and practice, ensuring that each city can tailor its initiatives to local needs. However, the framework is not without its limitations. Relying solely on a core set of indicators can offer a simplified view of the complex determinants of aging and health in urban environments. It may fail to account for the unique cultural, social, and economic contexts of different cities. For instance, the framework overlooks the role of informal family and interpersonal relationships, which are often crucial to older adults' well-being. Guillemot and Warner (2023) state that in some cities, the support provided to older adults comes from family unity as opposed to social welfare or other forms of care. It also does not explicitly address the impact of environmental factors, such as the availability of green spaces,

which can significantly affect quality of life (Guillemot & Warner, 2023). Moreover, the framework is designed with urban contexts in mind, which may limit its relevance in suburban or rural settings, or at higher levels of government. Finally, because it is based on research from high-income countries, some of the indicators may not be as applicable or relevant in lower-resourced or low-income communities (World Health Organization, 2015).

2.4.2 Public Health Agency of Canada's Age-Friendly Communities Evaluation Guide

This evaluation guide was created by the Public Health Agency of Canada in order to support cities in measuring the progress of their age-friendly initiatives. The guide aims to provide practical and flexible indicators which can support community evaluations. This guide is based on the WHO domains of age-friendly cities, and while it initially had over 200 potential indicators, the guide now offers 43 evaluation indicators along with suggested ways in which to measure these (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2015). Some indicators which are not included in the other researched frameworks are injuries in public areas, crime prevention strategies, and older adults' sense of belonging and loneliness. In the framework, it is important to note that some indicators may be relevant in multiple domains.

This evaluation guide outlines different measurement methods to use, which include “assessment tools, accessibility tools, existing data, program inventories, and surveys” (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2015). The guide provides measurement methods for each domain. This evaluation guide is useful because it provides detail on the measurement methods and ways to measure each indicator. The advantages of this framework are that it provides detailed measurement tools and a comprehensive framework for evaluating age-friendly initiatives. It emphasizes stakeholder engagement in the evaluation process, ensuring that their perspectives

and needs are considered. However, it would be more useful for program development as there is more emphasis on the developmental aspect of age-friendly programs, which would not be very relevant to the purpose of my study. Moreover, the studies that incorporate this framework are mainly focused in Canada and may not be completely applicable to other cities abroad (Jeste et. al, 2016, Plouffe & Kalache, 2011, Orpana et. al, 2016). The framework also includes an expansive 43 indicators, which can be complex and hard to evaluate.

2.4.3 UK Urban Ageing Consortium's Research and Evaluation Framework

The Research and Evaluation Framework for Age-friendly Cities was created by the UK Urban Ageing Consortium as a guide to support cities across the country in their implementation of successful age-friendly programmes and initiatives (“A Research & Evaluation Framework for age-friendly cities,” n.d.). This framework provides useful tools to help communities develop AFC initiatives, and is structured around the eight domains of age-friendly cities as outlined by WHO. The domains are as follows: “outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, and communication and information”. The framework provides a guide for evaluation of these domains, which includes the strategy, programme, and delivery as core features of their age-friendly action plans. This framework is useful as it focuses on the process of creating age-friendly initiatives, as opposed to just focusing on the outcomes of a particular initiative. It provides a review of recent research of each domain. Moreover, it provides a more holistic and comprehensive outline of each domain, which is evidence-based and useful for developing initiatives. It emphasises meanings, values, and perceptions amongst the elderly population and general population for each initiative. The framework takes into account cultural and social

factors. Its main limitation is that it does not focus on an evaluative framework but rather a developmental one, and offers limited information on how to measure specific indicators. Indicators in this framework are very broad and not clearly defined. Furthermore, there is a very limited number of studies that have used or referenced this framework (Rémillard-Boilard, 2018).

These existing frameworks lack a full comprehensive framework that captures the complexity and contextual specificity of age-friendly city development, and there is no current framework which successfully integrates both developmental and evaluative aspects, which would be useful for a city looking to develop into an AFC and assess their progress (“A Research & Evaluation Framework for age-friendly cities,” n.d.; Public Health Agency of Canada, 2015; World Health Organization, 2015).

2.5 Rationale for Selecting Taipei and Manchester for Comparative Study

Currently, the Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC) includes hundreds of cities around the world across diverse regions and stages of development (Steels, 2015). Due to the breadth of the network, it is not feasible to conduct an in-depth analysis of all member cities, which brings to attention the need for a comparative case study approach to provide insights into the different paths of development and implementation of cities that have joined the AFC movement. Comparing two cities allows for a nuanced and context-sensitive analysis behind AFC implementation, which can help to provide insight into how cities address similar challenges such as health equity, mobility, housing, and social participation while being shaped by differing governance systems, cultural norms, and socio-economic contexts (Plouffe & Kalache, 2010). Moreover, comparing citizen engagement strategies as well as successful initiatives in each city can ensure better decision-making across cities, as well as

understand how cultural attitudes and context can help cities create more tailored age-friendly environments (Warth, 2015).

There were a number of different facets that were taken into consideration when choosing the cities to analyse. One of the primary factors was the geography of aging populations. Europe and Asia are home to the world's most rapidly aging populations. In Europe, nearly 21% of the population is aged 65 or older (Eurostat, 2025), while East Asia is experiencing a more large-scale demographic aging transition. In particular, Taiwan is now considered a super-aged society, where over 20% of the population is over 65 years old (Everington, 2024). Comparing a city from each of these high-aging populations will offer important context into how different socio-political regions are responding to the global challenge of population aging (Plouffe & Kalache, 2010).

Additional criteria were developed to ensure the selection of two cities for comparison. Both Taipei and Manchester have adopted the WHO's eight-domain framework of age-friendly cities and communities as guiding structure for their AFC development, which allows for a comparable foundation in regards to aims and terminology. The two cities were among the earlier adopters of the WHO framework, with Manchester joining 2010 as the UK's first member and serving as a general model city for community-driven AFC strategies (Buffel et. al, 2012). Taipei became one of the first Taiwanese cities to formalise its AFC approach in 2012, and was part of the country's national push to implement age-friendly policies (Ng, Lim, & Hsu, 2022). The two cities' longstanding commitment to AFC development allows for increased opportunity to analyse AFC initiatives over time. Moreover, both cities have been key members in AFC research and policy discourse, with a strong presence in academia relating to aging populations. Manchester is widely cited in global AFC research for its participatory governance model

(Buffel & Phillipson, 2016; Britteon et al., 2022; Buffel, 2015; McGarry & Morris, 2011; Moulaert & Garon, 2016). Taipei has been less frequently studied in the global literature on AFCs, but its rapidly aging demographic, national commitment to age-friendliness, and its integrated health systems make it a good candidate for further research (Lin & Huang, 2015).

The two cities are among the most densely populated cities in their countries and serve as hubs for culture, economy, and innovation (McGarry, 2024; Hsein-Lin et al., 2010). Despite the fact that Manchester's population is less aged than Taipei's, it would still be beneficial to compare the two cities as their status as innovative urban hubs for AFC policies in their respective countries can have broader implications for the national aging policy agenda and help other municipalities that are also interesting in committing to AFCs (van Hoof & Marston, 2021).

In addition to the structural comparability between the two cities, the contrast between Manchester and Taipei's cultural and political settings also provide a valuable lens to explore how age-friendly principles can be adapted to local contexts. Manchester represents a Western, decentralised governance model, while Taipei reflects an East Asian, national-led policy environment with dominant top-down approaches (McGarry, 2024; Chao & Huang, 2016). Choosing Manchester and Taipei as cities for comparison will provide meaningful insight into East-West comparison within a shared global framework, and will allow exploration into the similarities and differences in age-friendly development, as well as possible recommendations for the future.

2.6 Taipei as an Age-Friendly City

Taipei is located in Taiwan, a small island located in East Asia at the western edge of the Pacific Ocean (Lin & Huang, 2015). The country has one of the fastest aging populations in the world, with the percentage of elderly people above age 65 reaching 23.27% of the total city population in its capital, Taipei (Taipei City Department of Social Welfare, 2025). Taiwan's government has adopted the age-friendly cities framework proposed by WHO in 2012, and is currently the only country in the world where every city has signed the agreement to become an age-friendly city (Age-friendly cities, n.d).

Taipei, the country's capital, has actively worked as an age-friendly city since 2012. The city has the highest population density in the country, with 9,215.36 people per square kilometer (Statista, n.d.). The elderly population was 557,276, accounting for 22.19% of the total city population as of 2024 (Statista, n.d.). In Taipei, the male to female ratio is 0.89 males for every female, meaning that there are more older women than men. Of these, 63,7845 identified as being disabled senior citizens, meaning they had been issued a disability identification (Taipei City Department of Social Welfare, 2025). In Taiwan, 97% of people aged 65 and older live at home, with nearly $\frac{2}{3}$ of them living with their children or other family members, which has contributed to close family ties. Moreover, Taiwan has the second-lowest labor force participation amongst older adults in the OECD, with 8.6% of these individuals participating in the labor force as of 2016. This rate is particularly low in women, with only 4.3% of women aged 65 and older working (AARP, 2018). Moreover, Taipei's dependency ratio reached 37.7% in 2024, the highest in Taiwan, meaning each working-age person supports an average of 1.65 dependents (Taipei City Government, 2023). In Taipei, the elderly population is quite homogeneous, with 9,111 or 1.6% of seniors living just below the poverty line in 2024.

Additionally, over half of older adults report having lower disposable incomes than their expenditures in recent years. In 2022, 50.36% of older adults in Taipei used the internet, and efforts to improve digital health literacy are increasing to help older residents navigate online information and effectively analyse information found (Central News Agency, 2024). The city has implemented various initiatives to improve transportation, social participation, and infrastructural changes that all have worked to improve health and well-being for the elderly population (Age-friendly cities, n.d.).

Taipei committed to being an AFC in 2012, and since then, the central government has helped local governments by providing them budgetary support, policy advocacy, and expert consultation. The Department of Social Welfare in particular aims to make Taipei an AFC through various elderly services and activities, such as having senior service centers in the city's 12 districts to provide educational and recreational programs. Intergenerational activities are emphasised through housing and meal sharing initiatives, and the city has worked to improve the accessibility and affordability of public transportation within the city for older adults (Ng et. al, 2021).

2.7 Manchester as an Age-Friendly City

The city of Manchester has around 9.4% of their total population aged 65 and over, with 22% of the population being 50 or over as of 2020. However, the older population is expected to increase by 19% by 2031, which compares with an increase of only 7% from 2011-2021. As a result, there is an increasing number of working-age residents who are reaching older age in the next few years. This accounted for around 780,000 residents. In 2023, 71.3% of people aged 50 to 64 in Manchester were employed (Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2024a).

Of these older adults, 48% are men and 52% are women, with 77% of these individuals being born in the United Kingdom (Manchester: A great place to grow older, 2017.). Among this demographic, the number of older adults living alone is also on the rise. In Greater Manchester, nearly half of adults aged 65 and older live in single-person households (Manchester City Council, 2023a). Moreover, the older population is becoming more diverse, with an increasing proportion identifying as LGBTQ+. The city's significant migrant population has influenced policies to better serve these communities, which has been a major focal point for this city's AFC policies (Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2024a). Over a third of older adults are considered income-deprived, and more than half lack access to or skills in using digital technology (Roberts, 2019).

Due to this demographic change, Manchester has been active in implementing initiatives to support their aging population. This city has been a pioneer in age-friendly city initiatives partly from its strong history of community involvement and activism from both the local university (Manchester University) and local residents. This has made it easier to engage residents in the planning and implementation of initiatives. The city has established strong partnerships with local organisations, health services, and universities, which have helped to facilitate the development of comprehensive age-friendly strategies (Roberts, 2019).

Manchester began developing their own aging strategy even before the WHO framework was established through their launch of the Valuing Older People's Programme in 2003, which aimed to promote quality of life through a partnership of public sector agencies, community groups, and individuals (Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2024a). Since their inception, the programme has launched a forum for older groups, a community development program, a representative people's board, as well as a grant scheme that aims to support these groups.

Manchester was the first city in the United Kingdom to become a member of the GNAFCC in 2010, and has been a pioneer within the region for their innovative approaches to age-friendliness within their city. As a result, Manchester is commonly used as the reference city when comparing the development of AFC initiatives.



2.8 Study Aim

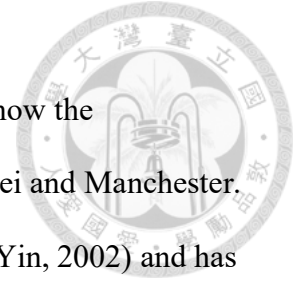
Based on this literature review, it was found that AFC evaluations are critical for the successful development of age-friendly cities. Each evaluation framework provided in the research had strengths and limitations. Many cities have evaluated their progress in implementing age-friendly initiatives. Among them, Manchester is one of the most commonly cited examples due to its long-standing efforts (Buffel et. al, 2014; “Manchester: A Great Place to Grow Older”, 2014). However, very few cities in Asia have been assessed for their level of age-friendly implementation. The knowledge gap within this research was a lack of clarity and understanding on how Taipei’s individual developmental process and context allowed them to produce policies to support their aging population, and how this compared with Manchester, a city renowned for its AFC efforts. In order to address this, the aim of this study will be to conduct a comparative study between Taipei and Manchester, which will seek to understand how the two cities’ varying contextual factors and developmental processes for AFCs allowed them to focus on the specific policies that they implemented. It will explore the key goals, achievements, and challenges faced by these cities and discuss the policy implications of these findings.

2.9 Significance of Study

This study is significant, as comparing age-friendly policies can help us to examine different cities' approaches and identify and share successful strategies and policies. Comparing policies and AFC development allows for a better understanding of which strategies work best under specific circumstances that are unique to each city (such as demographics, geography, and resources). Moreover, comparing cities can help in measuring progress in making more successful AFCs and it can also help in understanding long-term trends related to age-friendliness. In particular, comparing Taipei and Manchester will allow a deeper understanding of how two regions both struggling with rapidly aging populations are working to build AFCs, and how different contextual factors can influence the overall development of these age-friendly cities. Because this study is one of the few international comparisons on age-friendly cities, this research will provide insights into how different communities work to implement age-friendly initiatives in different ways, despite being members in the same global network for AFCs and taking reference from the age-friendly domains of the WHO model. This study will explore how age-friendliness has been implemented in different political, economic, and socio-cultural contexts for two different cities.



Chapter 3: Methods



This study will use a comparative case study approach to examine how the developmental processes of age-friendly cities (AFCs) differ between Taipei and Manchester. This method is particularly effective for analyzing programs and policies (Yin, 2002) and has proven useful in identifying age-friendly strategies across various cities. The advantage of this approach is that it increases understanding of the decision-making processes of the policies made by different cities, as well as the factors that contribute to the success or challenges of the initiatives and the overall policy development process (Joy Torge). By conducting this comparative study, I aim to gain insights into how age-friendly initiatives have evolved in these two distinct urban contexts.

3.1 Developing a Modified Comparative Framework for AFCs

Based on the literature review of existing AFC frameworks, there was a need to develop a clear and coherent model that incorporated a well-defined set of domains, core indicators, and sub-indicators, and took into account cultural and social factors, stakeholder engagement, and addressed both developmental and evaluative aspects of AFC initiatives. An ideal framework should be adaptable and easy to use, with indicators that cover a broad range of age-friendly facets. This study developed and applied a modified framework that served to respond to these needs. The frameworks reviewed lacked several key indicators and areas deemed important in the literature review. In order to address this gap, this study developed a modified framework, which could be successfully applied to the comparative analysis of Manchester and Taipei and could further be implemented for broader use by other cities seeking to evaluate their age-friendly policies (“A Research & Evaluation Framework for age-friendly cities,” n.d.; Public

Health Agency of Canada, 2015; World Health Organization, 2015). The modified framework integrated the strengths identified from the three already-established frameworks: the WHO AFC framework, the Public Health Agency of Canada's Age-Friendly Communities Evaluation Guide, and the UK Urban Ageing Consortium model. It also implemented new features not addressed by any of these frameworks.

The modified framework retains the WHO structural foundation, as it aligns closely with the domains of livability of an AFC established by the WHO. It incorporates the three key domains of equity, accessibility of the physical environment, and inclusion of the social environment, as seen in Table 1 (Ng, Lim, & Hsu, 2021; Roberts, 2019). However, the original WHO framework lacks detailed, qualitative indicators that would be useful for developing and assessing an AFC. To improve analytical depth, the new framework incorporates detailed descriptions and sub-indicators adapted from the Canadian framework. The original 43 sub-indicators were refined and reorganised into a more concise 32-sub-indicator set, after eliminating redundancies in the original framework. For example, the sub-indicator 31 in the Canadian framework, "municipal buildings/meetings are accessible," was removed because it was too similar to sub-indicator 5, "public buildings have adequate access and maneuverability around buildings". In addition, new sub-indicators were added to address gaps present in all three of the frameworks from the literature review, such as the inclusion of "accessible green space," "availability of prevention programs related to health issues of high relevance to seniors (e.g., sexual health)," and "availability of digital health resources" (Manchester City Council, 2023a, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2024a, Roberts, 2019) These can be seen in Table 1, and these gaps were identified in the literature review. The UK framework's developmental focus helped to inform the overall structure of the modified framework, particularly in its

qualitative data analysis, but the framework was not directly used as a result of its limited scope of indicators.

The analysis adopted an input-output framework to structure comparison, focusing on *inputs* (enabling structures, policies, and resources) and *outputs* (specific interventions implemented) (World Health Organization, 2015). This approach stemmed from the WHO framework, but did not include the *outcomes* and *impacts* due to the limited statistical outcome data available for recent AFC initiatives in both cities. Policies and programs were analysed across the three key domains, and referenced the sub-indicators to confirm a broad coverage of different indicators of an AFC. This modified framework allowed for a descriptive and comparative assessment of AFC strategies, and helped to bring the strengths of the strong structure and procedural orientation of the WHO framework and the detailed evaluative model of the Canadian framework.

For example, the WHO key indicator “Neighborhood Walkability” was categorised under the “Accessibility of the Physical Environment” domain, but the WHO framework lacked evaluative guidance as to what exactly encompassed this indicator. To address this, the Canadian framework's related sub-indicators, such as “accessible washrooms” and “safe crosswalks”, were incorporated underneath this key indicator. Additionally, based on literature review findings, a new sub-indicator, “accessible green space,” was added. This process was applied across all domains to ensure consistency, relevance, and comparability (“A Research & Evaluation Framework for age-friendly cities,” n.d.; Public Health Agency of Canada, 2015; World Health Organization, 2015).

Notably, the modified framework excludes the WHO's milestone-based developmental stages (World Health Organization, 2015), as these are more procedural than evaluative and do not offer direct measures of impact. Overall, the modified framework used in this study aims to serve as a comprehensive tool for both descriptive and analytical assessment, enabling identification of best practices and policy gaps across culturally distinct urban contexts like Manchester and Taipei, but with the intent to be used in other contexts and other age-friendly cities (citation).

The modified framework used for the analysis is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Modified framework used for this study ("Age-Friendly Communities Evaluation Guide: Using Indicators to Measure Progress," 2016 & World Health Organization, 2015)

<u>KEY DOMAINS</u>	<u>KEY INDICATORS</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION OF INDICATORS</u>
1. Accessibility of the Physical Environment		
	Neighborhood Walkability	1. Rest places and distance between rest places 2. Accessible washrooms 3. <i>Accessible green space</i> 4. Safe crosswalks
	Accessibility of Public Spaces and Buildings	5. Public buildings have adequate access and maneuverability around buildings 6. Limited number of falls/injuries in public places 7. Crime prevention strategies, courses, and programs
	Transportation Vehicles	8. Availability of affordable options for transportations
	Accessibility of Public Transportation Stops	9. Accessible/safe bus stops/shelters

<u>KEY DOMAINS</u>	<u>KEY INDICATORS</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION OF INDICATORS</u>
	Affordability of Housing	10. Availability of affordable housing that is appropriately located, well-built, well-designed, and secure 11. Availability of housing programs for increasing accessibility, safety, and adaptability of housing (i.e. handrails, ramps, smoke detectors) 12. Resources provided to help older adults age in place in their current residence
2. Inclusion of the Social Environment		
	Positive Social Attitudes Toward Older People	13. Availability of intergenerational family activities 14. Level of sense of belonging in community for older adults
	Engagement in Volunteer Activity	15. Availability of support for engagement for volunteers (training, transportation, reimbursement of expenses, method of appreciation)
	Paid Employment	16. Level of unemployment and employment among seniors 17. Availability of training opportunities related to the accommodation of seniors' needs in the workplace
	Engagement in Socio-Cultural Activity	18. Engagement of older adults in social activities at least once a week 19. Availability and affordability of recreation and learning programs specifically for seniors 20. Availability of intergenerational recreation and

<u>KEY DOMAINS</u>	<u>KEY INDICATORS</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION OF INDICATORS</u>
		social programs
	Participation in Local Decision-making	21. Proportion of eligible older voters who actually voted in the most recent local election or legislative initiative
	Availability of Information	22. Availability of local sources providing information about health concerns and service referrals, including by phone 23. Availability of assistance to seniors for filling out forms 24. Materials for the public are produced in large print and plain language 25. <i>Availability of resources to improve digital literacy for older adults</i>
	Availability of Social and Health Services	26. Proportion of seniors who have a primary care physician 27. <i>Availability of prevention programs related to health issues of high relevance to seniors (i.e. sexual health)</i> 28. Availability of low-cost food programs 29. Availability of assistance for activities of daily living
	Economic Security	30. Proportion of older people living in a household with a disposable income above the risk-of-poverty threshold

<u>KEY DOMAINS</u>	<u>KEY INDICATORS</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION OF INDICATORS</u>
	Quality of Life	31. Level of satisfaction with life in general 32. Level of loneliness and satisfaction in social relationships
3. Equity	No single indicator presented, should be measured across indicator set to ensure equity across various stages of policy implementation as per the WHO framework	33. Absence of systematic disparities in health between social groups with different levels of underlying social advantages or disadvantages

Notes: (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2015 & World Health Organization, 2015)

The modified framework uses the core domains/indicators of the WHO framework and description of indicators from the Public Health Agency of Canada's Age-Friendly Communities Evaluation Guide, with minor modifications.

In addition to this modified framework, a timeline was created for both Manchester and Taipei city to gain a better understanding of the policy developmental process and understand which indicators and domains were prioritised at what times.

3.2 Data Collection Methods

This study utilised exploratory investigation through document analysis, and derived its data through a number of different types of documents. Internal reports/letters, official policy documents, government website documents/pages, NGO programme documents, and stakeholder perspectives from NGOs and foundations (published statements, reports) were analysed to explore the extent to which policies have been initiated. The first step in the documentary analysis was to identify relevant documents and evaluate their relevance to the research

questions. The selection of the documents was based on two inclusion criteria: materials that addressed the city's ageing strategy in accordance to the three core indicators of the WHO framework (World Health Organization, 2015), and material that was developed in preparation for, or after the city's admission to the Global network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities (GNAFCC) membership. The documents that were excluded were those that were formed before 2010 which were deemed to not be relevant to the city's current age-friendly strategy, as well as scientific research papers. Keywords used in the document search included "aging, friendly, city, indicators" for Manchester, and "高齡(aging) 友善(friendly) 城市(city) 指標(indicators)" for Taipei. For Manchester, the data was collected from sources such as the City Council Age-Friendly Manchester Team, Greater Manchester Combined Authority, Centre for Ageing Better, and the Ambition for Ageing program. For Taipei, data was gathered from the Health Promotion Administration, Ministry of Health and Welfare, and Department of Health websites. The documents selected for analysis are presented in Table 2. To ensure comparability between the two cities' programs, the modified framework developed in this study was applied, focusing on the relevant indicators identified in the documents.

Table 2. Characteristics & Documents of the Age-Friendly Cities

	City of Manchester	City of Taipei
Actor leading age-friendly work	City Council Age-Friendly Manchester Team, Public Health, Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Health Promotion Administration, Ministry of Health and Welfare
Year of GNAFCC membership	2010	2015

	City of Manchester	City of Taipei
Key documents identifying programmes/initiatives of age-friendly work	1. Manchester: A Great Place to Grow Older, 2010-2020 Manchester City Council. (2014). Manchester: A great place to grow older 2010-2020 (2nd ed.). https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Manchester-Strategy-for-Ageing-Web.pdf 2. Manchester: A Great Place to Grow Older, 2017-2021. Second Edition Manchester City Council. (2017). <i>Manchester: A great place to grow older 2017–2021</i> (2nd ed.). World Health Organization. https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Manchester-A-Great-Place-to-Grow-Older-2017-2021-WEB-VERSION.pdf 3. Age Friendly Manchester Refreshed Strategy 2023-2028 Manchester City Council. (2023). <i>Age friendly Manchester refreshed strategy 2023–2028</i>. https://www.manchester.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/29145/manchester_age_friendly_strategy_2023.pdf 4. MCC Equality Impact Assessment Guidance: Age Manchester City Council. (2020). <i>Age friendly Manchester: Equality impact</i>	1. Taiwan's Framework of Age-Friendly Health Care Chiou, S.-T. (2018). <i>Towards older people-centered health care in a global aging era: Taiwan's framework of age-friendly health care</i>. Health Promoting Hospitals and Health Services. https://www.hphconferences.org/fileadmin/user_upload/P2_Chiou.pdf 2. An Age-Friendly Multidisciplinary Public-Private Partnership in Taipei Chiu, Y. N., Yeh, Y. L., Tsai, W. L., & Turner, K. W. (n.d.). <i>An age-friendly multi-disciplinary public-private partnership in Taipei</i>. The University of Hong Kong. https://www.socsc.hku.hk/afccp/ppt/KUNG%20Hsiang%20Hsing%20&%20CHIU%20Yun%20Ning.pdf 3. What's the Progress of Health Cities in Taiwan? Health Promotion Administration. (2019, October 28). <i>What's the progress of health cities in Taiwan?</i>

	City of Manchester	City of Taipei
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Chapter 4: Results



4.1 Demographic and Social Contexts of Manchester and Taipei

Manchester

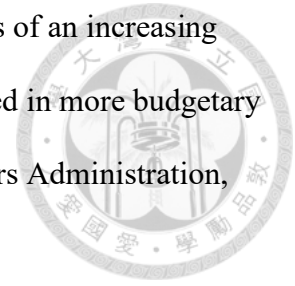
Around 9.4% of Manchester's total population is 65 and over, with 22% of the population being 50 or over as of 2020. This number is expected to increase to 19% by 2031 (Manchester: A great place to grow older, n.d.). Among this demographic, the number of older adults living alone is also on the rise. In Greater Manchester, nearly half of adults aged 65 and older live in single-person households, which can increase rates of social isolation within the city (Manchester City Council, 2023a). This is complemented by the city's recent strong growth in the city's young population as a result of its strong university culture, leading to increased social isolation of older adults (Buffel et. al, 2014). This issue has been further exacerbated with Manchester's diverse older population, with ethnic and sexual minorities identifying as more likely to experience social isolation and unequal access (Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2024c). The older population is becoming more diverse, with an increasing proportion identifying as LGBTQ+. The city's significant migrant population has influenced policies to better serve these communities, which has been a major focal point for this city's AFC policies (Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2024b). Over a third of older adults are considered income-deprived, and more than half lack access to or skills in using digital technology (Roberts, 2019). Manchester's life expectancy is shorter than the national average, at 75.24 years for males and 79.64 years for females (compared to 78.6 and 82.6 years nationally) (Bullen, 2016). Many factors have been noted to cause this, such as the city-region being one of the most economically deprived areas in the country, with those living in poverty more likely to live in inadequate housing, and face health inequities (Bullen, 2016). This has been linked to the city's history, in

which a once-booming industrial and manufacturing sector in the city collapsed, leading to economic crises that have yet to be completely restored (McGarry, 2024). Traditional age-friendly initiatives often emphasize services for the older populations, with the WHO officially labelling the term “older adult” as anyone above 60 and over (World Health Organisation, 2024). In Manchester, the age-friendly strategy has gone so far as to address their policies towards anyone over 50 to ensure more individuals reach older age healthily (Manchester City Council, 2023a).

Taipei

Taipei has a large proportion of elderly people, with 22.19% (557,276) of the city’s population being over 65 years old as of 2024. This statistic reflects the country’s broader aging rates, which are one of the fastest in the world. The city is the densest in the country, with 9,215.36 people per square kilometer (Taipei City Department of Social Welfare, 2025). In Taipei, 97% of people aged 65 and older live at home, with nearly $\frac{2}{3}$ of them living with their children or other family members, which has contributed to close family times. The city’s older population is quite ethnically homogenous, with 9,111 seniors living below the poverty line in 2024 (AARP, 2018). Additionally, over half of older adults report having lower disposable incomes than their expenditures in recent years. This is coupled with the fact that the country has the second-lowest labor force participation amongst older adults in the OECD, with 8.6% of people participating in the labor force as of 2016. This rate is particularly low in women, with only 4.3% of women working (AARP, 2018). In 2022, 50.36% of older adults in Taipei used the internet, citing the need for more digital health literacy initiatives (Health Promotion Administration, n.d.) The city’s denser population and higher dependency ratio has highlighted

the city's urgent problem of addressing the need to accommodate the needs of an increasing number of elderly people (Taipei City Government, 2023). This has resulted in more budgetary and policy support from the national government (Social and Family Affairs Administration, 2019).



4.2 Development of Taipei & Manchester as Age-Friendly Cities

Manchester

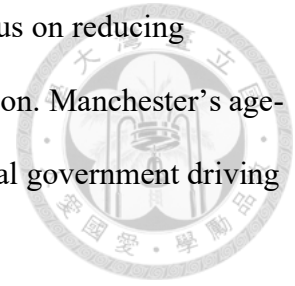
Manchester has been active in supporting their aging population for many years, and began developing their own aging strategy even before the WHO framework for AFCs was launched. The city has been a pioneer in age-friendly city initiatives, stemming from its strong history of community involvement and activism from both the local universities and residents. This has made it easier to engage residents in planning and implementation of initiatives. The city has established strong partnerships with local organisations, health services, and universities, which have helped to facilitate the development of comprehensive age-friendly strategies (Roberts, 2019). As seen in Figure 2, Manchester laid the foundations to its age friendly work in the 1990s, starting with the EU Year of Older People in 1993 (Buffel et. al, 2014; McInerney, 1993), a year in which the EU promoted supporting communities for all ages by encouraging participation of older people in society. During this time, the Older Age and Opportunity Working Party was established by the city government and worked to promote the opportunities and services available for older people. It focused on changing the narrative of older adults and engaging against anti-ageism. The city launched the Better Government for Older People Group, a programme that aimed to see older adults as more than just individuals who required an increased amount of health services (McGarry, 2024). As seen in Figure 3, the city further



developed its AFC policies in the 2000s, with the establishment of the Valuing Older People's Programme in 2003, which aimed to promote quality of life through a partnership of public sector agencies, community groups, and individuals. From 2003 to the city's admission into the GNAFCC in 2010, the programme has launched a forum for older groups, a community development program, a representative people's board, as well as a grant scheme that aims to support these groups. In 2004, the city created the Age Friendly Older People's Board, providing a platform for older adults to share their concerns and have influence over the city's policies. Moreover, the city promoted positive themes of aging around the city. The city was one of the first 11 cities to join the GNAFCC in 2010, and was the first city in the UK. This marked a new stage in the city's age-friendly city development, as seen in Figure 2. Manchester's early entrance into this network may have been spearheaded by high-level political involvement of the municipal government and strong partnerships that work under a framework in which different agencies can seek to achieve common objectives. In 2014, the city relaunched its Valuing Older People's Programme under the name "Age-Friendly Manchester", and has since created strategy documents in 2017 and 2023 to outline the initiatives and goals it has sought to address (McGarry, 2024). In addition, the city's strong foundation of research and academia as well as the willingness of older adults to participate in the policymaking process may also provide context into the city's commitment to AFC development (McGarry, 2024).

This commitment made it easier to engage the community in planning and decision-making processes (Buffel et. al, 2014). In recent years, England has grasped dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic, leaving the European Union (Brexit), undergoing a living crisis, and focusing on the devolution of funding with the region (Mitchell, 2021.). Covid-19 has put social isolation at the forefront of the city's age-friendly strategy. The devolution of funding across the

UK in 2015 has given Manchester greater flexibility to pass policies to focus on reducing inequalities, improve public transportation, and increase funding in education. Manchester's age-friendly strategy has taken on a more localised approach, with the municipal government driving the development of age-friendly strategies.



The Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) oversees the region's age-friendly initiatives, including the Ageing Hub, a partnership of organizations that has worked together since 2016 to address the challenges faced by the aging population (Manchester City Council, 2017). The Hub has partnered with key stakeholders such as the national-level Center for Ageing Better, which has helped to fund certain age-friendly related research and initiatives; local organisations that have helped to drive change within the city; and research institutions which have worked to find innovative ways to improve the city's age-friendly strategy. In 2023, the city released a new five-year strategy, Manchester: A City for Life (2023–2028), building on the success of previous aging strategies. This initiative aligns with Manchester's broader goals of creating a more inclusive, sustainable, and age-friendly city. Manchester's age-friendly strategies are built around four main themes from the WHO framework: promoting age equality, creating age-friendly neighborhoods, supporting services for healthy aging, and fostering age-friendly work, skills, and financial security (Manchester City Council, 2017). The city places particular emphasis on aging in place and avoiding institutional care, focusing on age-friendly housing, positive images of aging, increasing involvement in decision-making, and mental and social health support.

Taipei

Taipei has emerged as one of the cities at the forefront of age-friendly initiatives in East Asia, paralleling Manchester's proactive approach in Europe. Both cities recognised the challenges of an aging population early on, and have worked to implement strategies to support this demographic. Taipei AFC initiatives began as a broader initiative from the national government to enact age-friendly city policies, with the Health Promotion Administration (HPA) of the country's Ministry of Health and Welfare initiating many of the country's programs (Lin et. al, 2018).

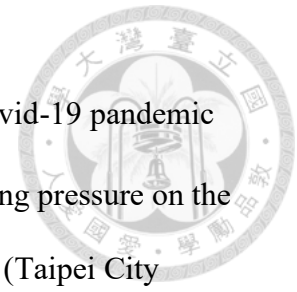
The city's age-friendly development progressed through three key streams which eventually merged together in 2014. During the mid-20th century, the government acknowledged supporting older adults through forms of elder welfare, as seen in Figure 3. Some of the initiatives during this time included publicly funded elder care institutions and the Elder Welfare Act (1980) which worked to ensure assistance to older disabled adults. However, lack of enforcement resulted in relatively unsuccessful implementation of this law until it was revised in the 1990s and broadened to include all older adults (Taiwan Today, 2015). The second stream of AFC development incorporated health integration, which took place in the 1990s. This stream development can be identified in Figure 3. This contrasts with Manchester, in which health integration has yet to be effectively implemented. During this time, Taipei piloted different programmes such as long-term care services (i.e Elderly Long-Term Care Three Year Plan) and home nursing into its strategy (Hsein-Lin et al, 2010). In 2010, Taiwan launched its third age-related stream through its pilot AFC program in Chiayi City, and in 2011 Taipei committed to AFC development after signing the "Dublin Declaration" at the first WHO international conference on AFCs (Health Promotion Administration, n.d.). By 2014, every city and county

had committed to becoming an AFC, as seen in Figure 3. This made it the only country in the world where all cities are dedicated to this cause. This marked the formal merging of these three streams (elder welfare, healthcare, and age-friendly city initiatives) into the overall AFC movement. Today, Taiwan is the country with the highest number of cities that have committed to age-friendly cities, working to improve the city through the WHO's 8 domains of AFCs: outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication and information, and community support and health services (Health Promotion Administration, 2019). The HPA has been instrumental in helping cities implement age-friendly policies through advocacy, enabling programs, and mediation, and has played a key role in promoting communication between different cities in Taiwan (Health Promotion Administration, 2019). During this year, Taiwan promoted an Age-Friendly City competition across the country, which cemented an expert-led, top-down model. This structure continues to be used today, with the publishing of the Super-Aging Policy White Paper (2023) also promoting a nationally-led, healthcare centered AFC strategy (“因應超高齡社會對策方案,” 2022)

The central government has supported local governments with funding, policy advocacy, and expert consultation (Wang & Wu, 2012). They collaborate with Taipei's main driver of age-friendly city policies, the Department of Social Welfare. The DOSW plays a key role in promoting the city's AFC initiatives, and the city has emphasised intergenerational activities, infrastructural improvements, and integration of AFCs and health services (Taipei City Department of Social Welfare, n.d.). In Taipei, policies have been shaped by the WHO Age-Friendly City Framework, White Paper on Aging Society, and the Countermeasures for a Super-Aged Society White Paper, which provides a national guide for aging policies (Social and

Family Affairs, Administration, 2019; 衛生福利部社會及家庭署, 2025;

“因應超高齡社會對策方案,” 2022). Recent developments such as the Covid-19 pandemic increased social isolation and costs of living amongst older adults, all putting pressure on the country’s resources and further galvanising the city’s age-friendly policies (Taipei City Government, 2023).



Manchester			
Early Foundations	Program Development	Global Network Integration & Evolution	Expansion
1993: EU Year of Older People Older Age & Opportunity Working Party (to combat ageism and improve opportunities) 1998: Better Government for Older People Group launched (to combat ageism and improve opportunities)	2003: Valuing Older People's Programme launched (forum for older adults, partnerships with other stakeholders) 2004: Age-Friendly Older People's Board (to give older people a voice)	2010: Joined WHO GNAFCC (first UK city, among first 11 globally); first city-wide strategy released 2014: Rebranded as "Age-Friendly Manchester" to further align with AFC strategy 2015: UK Devolution of Funding (Manchester given greater autonomy to promote policy)	2016: Ageing Hub created under Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) (increased stakeholder collaboration) 2017: Age-Friendly Manchester Strategy Document published 2023: Most recent AFC strategy released (Manchester: A City for Life (2023–2028)), focusing on age equality, neighborhoods, services, and employment/financial security

Figure 2: Progression of Manchester’s AFC Policies & Development

Taipei			
Early Foundations	Program Development	Global Network Integration & Evolution	Expansion
Mid-20th Century: Government begins providing elder welfare services (e.g. publicly funded elder care institutions). 1980: Elder Welfare Act passed (to support disabled older adults) 1990s: Elder Welfare Act revised to include all older adults <i>Marks the first key stream: Elder Welfare</i>	1990s: Health-focused aging strategy begins (second stream: health integration) Initiatives: Elderly Long-Term Care Three-Year Plan, Home nursing programs	2010: National-level AFC pilot launched in Chiayi City 2011: Taipei signs the Dublin Declaration at first WHO AFC conference 2012: Taipei officially becomes AFC (third stream: AFC development)	2014: All cities and counties in Taiwan commit to becoming Age-Friendly Cities (three streams merged) 2014: Age Friendly City Competition is held, cementing national top-down approach 2015: White Paper on Aging Society 2010s: HPA takes major coordinating role 2023: Super-Aged Society White Paper

Figure 3: Progression of Taipei's AFC Policies & Development

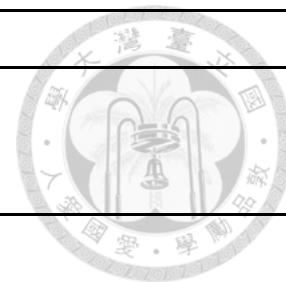
Table 3. Timeline

Manchester	Taipei
1993 - Older Age and Opportunity Working Party established in response to EU Year of Older People to increase opportunities for older people 1998 - The Better Government for Older People launched to oversee research projects and opportunities for older adult participation 2003 - Age Friendly Manchester launched under the name "Valuing Older People" 2009 - Road Safety for Older People (Accessibility of Public Transportation Vehicles) 2010 - Manchester: A Great Place to Grow Older (2010-2020) launched "Valuing Older People" was renamed into Age Friendly Manchester and recognised for its WHO accreditation - Manchester became first city in the UK to make age-friendly commitment - Accessible Buses (Accessibility of Public Transportation Vehicles)	Early 2000s - Promoting Private Participation in Senior Citizens' Housing" (BOT) project (Affordability of Housing) 2007 - Long Term Care 1.0 launched (Availability of Health and Social Services) 2010 - Taiwan initiated commitment to WHO's AFC framework; Chiayi City became first demonstration city for AFC programs - New Taipei Elderly Health Promotion Station Project Vaccination Stations (Availability of Social & Health Services) 2011 - Elderly Volunteer Recruitment (Engagement in Volunteer Activity) - Recognition of Age-Friendly Hospital and Health Services (Availability of Social & Health Services) 2012 - Taipei officially joined WHO's AFC initiatives

Manchester	Taipei
2011	(DOSW begins implementing services to support older adults, such as community services, welfare resources, care visitations, telephone greetings, referral services, catering services, health promotion)
2012 Take a Seat Campaign (Neighborhood Walkability)	Love Bell and Calling Card (Neighborhood Walkability): promote elderly safety
2013	
2014 - The North City Nomads (Decision in Local Decision-Making) - Sustainable Living Intergenerational Programs (Environmental Health)	2013 - Introduction of “Senior Easy Card” - Age-Friendly Supervision Office (Positive Social Attitudes Toward People) - Distribution of Safety Bags (Engagement in Volunteer Activity) - Silver Club (Engagement in Socio-Cultural Activity)
2015 Housing for Age-Friendly Manchester strategy launched (Affordability of Housing)	
2016 - Promotion of Apprenticeships (Paid Employment) - Ambition for Ageing programme launched 12 age-friendly neighborhood networks launched	2014 - Expansion of public transportation services to be more accessible (installation of elevators/ramps) - Neighborhood walkability lectures (Neighborhood Walkability) - Driving Training Class (Accessibility of Public Transportation Vehicles)
2017 - Manchester recognised as “Site of Excellence” by EU for its work in age-friendliness - Generations Together Manifesto (Positive Social Attitudes for Older People) - Manchester Age-Friendly Neighborhood Project (Participation in Local Decision-Making)	2015 - Established 14 senior centers across 12 districts, offering educational/recreational programs, welfare consultation, and social activities - Low floor buses (Accessibility of Public Transportation Vehicles) - Food Sharing Cabinet Program (Engagement in Socio-Cultural Activity) - Elderly Welfare Law (Quality of Life)
2018 - Cycling & Walking and Commissioner Bee Network (Neighborhood Walkability) - Greater Manchester Active Ageing Programme (Engagement in Socio-Cultural Activity) - Transport Action Group (Participation in Local-Decision Making)	2016 Implemented a system of telephone calls to keep in touch with older residents (Engagement in Socio-Cultural Activity)
2019 - Ring & Ride (Accessibility of Public Transportation Vehicles) - Free Safer Driving for Longer Course (Accessibility of Public Transportation Vehicles) - Pride in Ageing (Positive Social Attitudes Toward Older People) - Information and Advice Service (Economic Security)	2017 - Launched initiatives to promote aging in place, including development of barrier-free housing and community spaces - Increase in Long-Term Care Budget (Availability of Social & Health Care Services) - Long-term Care Ten-Year Plan 2.0 (Quality of Life) 2018 - Began integrating AFC principles into urban

Manchester	Taipei
Sexual Health of Older People	planning, focusing on creating environments that support active aging - Age-inclusive playground (Accessibility of Public Spaces and Buildings) - Elderly Health Station Promotion Project (Accessibility of Public Spaces and Environment)
2020 Valuable Not Vulnerable Campaigns (Positive Social Attitudes Towards Older People)	
2021 - Age-Friendly Housing Charter (Affordability of Housing) - Older People's and Housing Strategy (Affordability of Housing) - Resetting the conversation, 'valuable not vulnerable' (Affordability of Housing) - Improve or Move (Affordability of Housing) - Rightsizing and RightPlace (Affordability of Housing) - Basics of Being Age Friendly Training Sessions (Engagement in Volunteer Activity)	2019 - Expansion of free Wi-Fi hotspot networks to include major public facilities - Employment Promotion Law for the Middle-Aged and Elderly Persons (Paid Employment) - Eye and Denture Care (Availability of Social and Health Services)
2022 - Age-friendly Benches (Neighborhood Walkability) - GM Falls Prevention (Neighborhood Walkability) - Age-Friendly Library Badge (Accessibility of Public Spaces and Buildings) - Greater Manchester Ageing in Place Pathfinder (Affordability of Housing) - Pension Top Up Campaign (Paid Employment) - Promotion of Age-Friendly Employer Pledge (Paid Employment) - Age-Friendly Employer Toolkit (Paid Employment) - Greater Manchester Falls Collaborative (Availability of Social and Health Services) - Big Splash (Engagement in Socio-Cultural Activity) - Re-engage Tea Party (Participation in Local-Decision Making)	2020 - Launched digital literacy programs targeting older adults to enhance their ability to use technology for communication and accessing services - Senior-Friendly Restaurants (Accessibility of Public Spaces and Buildings)
	2021 Increased number of meal centers for older adults, providing more opportunities for social interaction and community engagement
	2022 - Introduced programs to encourage older adult's participation in civic activities/employment - Elderly Relocation Program (Affordability of Housing)
2023 - Bus Pinch Point Schemes (Accessibility of Public Transportation Stops) - Images of Ageing Campaign (Positive Social Attitudes Towards Older People)	2023 - Taipei integrated AFC principles into its long-term care policies - Increased font size of stop signs on MRT & Bus Stops (Accessibility of Public Transportation Vehicles)
2024 - Working Well Support to Succeed Program (Paid Employment) - Business Support and Entrepreneurship Classes (Paid Employment) - Uncertain Futures (Engagement in Socio-Cultural Activity) - Always, Everywhere (Engagement in Socio-	2024 Focus on improving infrastructure, services, and community engagement Expansion of EasyCard services (Accessibility of Public Spaces & Buildings)

Manchester	Taipei
- Cultural Activity) - Formal Academic/Vocational Courses (Engagement in Socio-Cultural Activity) Refresh of Age-Friendly Strategy	



4.3 Challenges & Objectives of Implementing AFCs in Manchester and Taipei

Both Manchester and Taipei aim to enhance older adults' quality of life and promote active aging through comprehensive age-friendly strategies. However, their objectives differ slightly in scope and emphasis. Manchester focuses on shifting the social narrative of aging, promoting equity and inclusion, and positioning itself as a global leader in aging innovation. In contrast, Taipei's objectives are more rooted in providing medical, social, and environmental support aligned with national policy goals, emphasizing intergenerational harmony and sustainable social development.

In terms of challenges, both cities face issues related to aging infrastructure and social inequalities. Manchester struggles with outdated housing stock, funding cuts due to austerity, and limited national collaboration. Taipei, meanwhile, faces rapid demographic aging, fragmented policy coordination, and legal obstacles to infrastructure renovation. Both cities also contend with low economic participation among older adults and the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly digital exclusion and social isolation.

Manchester's main goals center around shifting the narrative of aging to encourage the idea that older adults can continue to contribute to society in a positive manner (Manchester City Council, 2014). It is working to improve the overall quality of life for older adults and to involve them in the decision-making process. The city's original goal was to become the UK's first age-friendly city region (Mitchell, 2021). Having achieved this, it has now shifted its policy goals to

a more international standpoint, and aims to become a global hub for aging by pioneering research, technology, and innovative solutions (Manchester City Council, 2017). In Manchester, the age-friendly city strategy targets older adults aged 50 and above (Manchester City Council, 2014; Manchester City Council, 2017).



Manchester’s age-friendly strategy is built around four key themes, derived from the WHO’s framework. The first of these, “age-friendly work, skills, and money”, focuses on increasing opportunities for employment and volunteering among older adults. The second theme, “age-friendly neighborhoods” works to create accessible and inclusive communities, with an emphasis on improving housing, promoting social engagement, and encouraging local organisations to adopt age-friendly practices. The city particularly promotes the idea of “aging in place,” and incorporates models such as the “village approach,” which emphasises decision-making (Mitchell, 2021). The third theme addresses health and care services. Manchester is working to integrate place-based health strategies that encourage preventative care and independence. Initiatives include fall prevention programs, promotion of physical activity, and services aimed at enabling older people to stay in their homes for as long as possible (Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2024a). The last theme emphasizes cultural and social participation, encouraging creativity and community involvement.

Manchester has also prioritised initiatives promoting equity and diversity. The city has shown commitment to reducing social and economic inequalities, especially amongst ethnic minorities and marginalized groups (Manchester City Council, 2017). This commitment is reflected in the city’s age-friendly motto, “Manchester: A Great Place to Grow Older,” which is promoted throughout the city as a way to promote knowledge on the city’s age-friendly initiatives (Manchester City Council, 2017).

Despite these achievements and goals, the city continues to face a number of challenges. One of these has been to adapt the city's infrastructure, particularly with housing. The UK has the oldest housing stock in Europe, and many houses lack amenities for adults to live independently and healthily (Piddington et al., 2020). The city has struggled to close deprivation and poverty gaps, and still experiences some of the lowest life expectancies in the country. Plans to promote age-friendly neighborhoods have also been compromised by an increasing trend of economic austerity. In Manchester, local authorities have experienced a 24.5 percent cut in spending power from 2010 to 2021, making it difficult to find funding to sustain age-friendly city initiatives, particularly for low-income neighborhoods (McGarry, 2024). The city's AFC policies run on a municipal level, and collaboration with other UK cities and the national government is limited (Buffel et. al, 2014).

Taipei

Taipei has prioritised its age-friendly strategies to target residents aged 65 and over (Social and Family Affairs, Administration, 2019), and follows the White Paper on Aging Society's (2015) outline of five key goals: enhancing the health and autonomy of older adults through quality medical and social care; strengthening social connections via employment and social participation; fostering intergenerational harmony; creating a safe and accessible environment; and promoting sustainable social development (Social and Family Affairs, Administration, 2019). In order to achieve these goals, the city has worked to expand access to recreational activities, improve medical care for the elderly, increase the number of intergenerational programs, and promote safety measures such as fall prevention, fraud prevention, and traffic safety (Social and Family Affairs, Administration, 2019).

The city's main challenge it has faced has been the accelerated rate of demographic aging. This rapid growth has increased pressure on the city's physical infrastructure, healthcare systems, and social services, which has spurred support from the national government (臺北市府, 2023). This has led the city to emphasise employment amongst older adults, where it has struggled to expand economic participation to this demographic (Taipei City Government, 2023). Many of these policies have been created with limited decision-making from elderly residents themselves. Other persisting issues include outdated infrastructure which is made hard to renovate as a result of legal and practical issues that come from property owners (Lin et. al, 2018). In addition, limited coordination between different stakeholders has led to redundant initiatives and budgeting which has led to inefficient distribution of resources. Like Manchester, the city has also had to adapt to recent changes in society caused by Covid-19, which deepened the digital exclusion gap and increased social isolation (Taipei City Government, 2023).

4.4 Assessment

4.4.1 Accessibility of the Physical Environment

Neighborhood Walkability

Manchester and Taipei have both prioritised improving their neighborhood walkability as a significant part of their age-friendly strategies. Each city has implemented initiatives to improve infrastructure for older adults and support safe walking environments. For example, both cities have worked to expand walking routes and promote safety features to help older adults be more confident and comfortable with navigating their environments (Manchester City Council, 2017; 臺北市府衛生局, n.d.). Both cities have prioritised behavioral changes for older adults in their approaches (Manchester City Council, 2017; Wang & Wu, 2012). Manchester's "Take a Seat" campaign, launched in 2012, pushed for businesses to offer

amenities such as seating, toilets, and water, improving comfort for older pedestrians and encouraging them to go out into their neighborhoods more frequently (Manchester City Council, 2023b). Similarly, Taipei launched Neighborhood Walkability Lectures to educate residents about pedestrian safety and create more awareness of age-friendly environments while also encouraging them to go out into their neighborhoods more often(臺北市府衛生局, n.d.).

However, these lectures were focused on older adults themselves rather than businesses in the city, as was the case in Manchester.

Both cities have also focused on infrastructure safety. Manchester has implemented practical improvements such as retiming pedestrian signals and fixing pavements based on user feedback, while Taipei has upgraded pathways with anti-slip surfaces, sloped walkways, and leveled steps to accommodate older walkers (Health Promotion Administration, 2019). These efforts show a shared recognition that walkable environments are essential for healthy, independent aging.

However, differences emerge in the scope and policy integration between the two cities. Taipei has taken a more systematic and policy-driven approach, and they focused on walkability outside before focusing on indoor spaces. The Alleyway Pedestrian Environment Improvement Program, launched in 2015, specifically targets sidewalk and alleyway accessibility for older adults. Taipei also implemented the Love Bell and Calling Card programs as early as 2012 to help older adults if they become lost or injured, reflecting a proactive focus on pedestrian safety from the beginning (Wang & Wu, 2012). Meanwhile, Manchester focused first on indoor public spaces through its “Take a Seat” campaign and gradually expanded to outdoor environments. The city’s Cycling & Walking Bee Network was launched in 2018, followed by the installation of age-friendly benches in 2022. In Manchester, the importance of green spaces are

acknowledged in the city's strategy, but the city has fewer targeted policies to expand them for older adults. Instead, improvements such as new cycling routes have indirectly increased accessibility to existing green areas (Manchester City Council, 2023a).



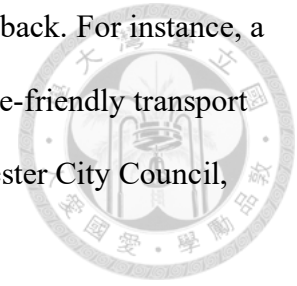
Accessibility of Public Spaces and Buildings

In terms of public space and building accessibility, both cities have made efforts to ensure that key public spaces are welcoming and inclusive for older adults. In Manchester, libraries have been recognized with the Age-Friendly Library Badge since 2022 for meeting standards that support older users, offering services like IT support, volunteer opportunities, and social programming (Manchester City Council, 2023b). In Taipei, the city has focused on transforming urban parks to be more age-friendly, including the installation of fitness equipment and benches, alongside biweekly sessions since 2018 to help older adults learn how to use these machines effectively (臺北市政府衛生局, n.d.).

Both cities also recognize the importance of accessible everyday services. Taipei has improved waiting areas at service locations and promoted senior-friendly restaurants offering healthy meals at discounted rates, although access to these services remains uneven across districts (臺北市政府衛生局, n.d.). Manchester, on the other hand, has focused on fall prevention training for both older adults and workers in transportation and healthcare (Manchester City Council, 2017).

The primary difference lies in the approach and integration of services. Taipei's model is more centralised, with formal policies supporting the development of age-friendly public spaces and amenities. It emphasizes education, health promotion, and the conversion of urban spaces into intergenerational, inclusive environments. Manchester's model, by contrast, is grassroots-

driven, and has its foundation in community partnerships and resident feedback. For instance, a 2017 survey showed that 68% of older adults wanted more benches and age-friendly transport options, which directly influenced the city's policy priorities after (Manchester City Council, 2017).



Transportation Vehicles

Both Manchester and Taipei have prioritized making public transportation vehicles safer and more age-friendly. One key area of overlap is their early adoption of low-floor buses, which make getting on and off buses easier for older adults. Manchester reports an impressive 99% low-floor bus coverage, while Taipei closely follows with 88% (Musselwhite, 2018; Taipei City Department of Social Welfare, n.d.). These efforts reflect both cities' shared commitment to removing mobility barriers for their aging populations. In addition, they have also offered support programs for older drivers to increase this population's sense of independence. Taipei began offering driving classes as early as 2014, while Manchester launched a similar initiative in 2022. In Taipei, these classes require a fee to participate, while it is free in Manchester (臺北市府衛生局, n.d.; Musselwhite, 2018). Both cities also provide affordable transportation options for their older adults. Manchester allows adults over 60 to ride buses for free, with a £10 annual fee which grants access to off-peak times for trains and trams. Taipei offers a transportation subsidy card for those aged 65 and above, which was expanded in 2025 to include outer Taipei regions, outpatient medical costs, and even admission to public venues, encouraging greater mobility and social participation (Taipei City Department of Social Welfare, n.d.; 臺北市府社會局工作報告, n.d.).

Both cities are also expanding flexible transport services. Manchester's Ring & Ride program, launched in 2018, offers free door-to-door transport via accessible minibuses and is charity-funded (Manchester City Council, 2017). Similarly, Taipei launched a Demand Responsive Transit System (DRTS), which adjusts routes and service times based on older adults' needs. However, Taipei's DRTS is only accessible with a mobile app, which may be difficult for some older adults to use. Moreover, Manchester's system may be more suitable for individuals living in remote areas, compared to Taipei's model, which follows a fixed-route system (Social and Family Affairs Administration, 2019; Manchester City Council 2019).

A major difference between the two lies in how they manage public transportation. Following the Bus Services Act of 2017, Manchester brought its bus system back under local government control for the first time in over 40 years. This shift led to the creation of the Bee Network, which focuses on affordability, accessibility, and environmental sustainability, including the release of electric buses in 2024 (Manchester City Council, 2017). Taipei, meanwhile, relies on 15 private operators that jointly work together to cover the city, with special training for drivers to support older passengers (Wang & Wu, 2012).

Accessibility of Public Transportation Stops

Both cities have also taken significant steps to make public transportation stops more accessible and user-friendly for older adults. They have introduced audio-visual announcements at bus stops and enhanced their real-time information systems. Taipei's real-time bus information network was introduced as early as 2009, while Manchester launched its Bus Pinch Point Schemes in 2023 to improve level boarding access, add real-time passenger information boards, and target high-delay routes for infrastructure upgrades (Manchester City Council, 2017; Taipei

City Department of Social Welfare, n.d.). Additionally, both cities have worked to improve transportation safety. Manchester introduced the Road Safety for Older People program, which engages older adults in shaping road safety policies to reduce traffic-related incidents (Manchester City Council, 2023a). This type of participatory policy development demonstrates Manchester's strong emphasis on co-production with residents in transportation planning.

Affordability of Housing

Manchester and Taipei have both acknowledged the importance of housing affordability and accessibility as a key point in age-friendly cities, and the idea of “aging in place” has gained traction as a key principle. The cities have emphasised the need for housing that supports older adults to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible, and have made efforts to retrofit existing homes and adapt urban housing strategies to meet the needs of this demographic. In Manchester, 80% of the homes that will exist in 2050 have already been built, which shows the urgency of making already-existing houses more age-friendly (Manchester City Council, 2017). In Taipei, the local government offers a Home Repair Subsidy Service, which works to fund safety renovations and assistive devices in older adults' homes (Taipei City Department of Social Welfare, n.d.)

Additionally, both cities have offered alternatives to institutional care, focusing on the concept of “aging in place”. In Manchester, although other forms of housing exist, the city's age-friendly housing strategy does not explicitly include residential care homes. Instead, it chooses to prioritise independent living, which can be seen through initiatives such as the Gorton Mill House, which provides 106 accessible apartments featuring communal areas and energy-efficient technologies to support older residents (Manchester City Council, 2019). Taipei also

acknowledges the importance of aging in place, but also offers public and self-paid residential homes as part of its AFC strategy, as well as long-term care facilities for those with more serious medical needs (Chao & Yang, n.d.; 服務成果. 臺北市政府社會局, 2025). Both cities also engage in changing the rhetoric of portraying older people as important contributors economically when it comes to the housing industry. In Manchester, there is a concerted effort to portray older people as “valuable not vulnerable,” especially as a way of engaging housing developers and policy makers in the housing sector (Mitchell, 2021). Taipei also recognizes the economic influence of older adults, which was demonstrated in the city’s earlier attempt to involve private investment through the BOT (Build-Operate-Transfer) project aimed at stimulating senior housing development. However, this initiative was discontinued due to its low demand and uptake (Chao & Yang, n.d.).

Despite having similar goals, the cities differ in their strategies, governance models, and success in delivering affordable and age-friendly housing. Taipei uses a top-down governance model, where most housing initiatives are led by the local government. Programs include publicly funded relocation subsidies, emergency rescue systems for older adults living alone, and efforts to move older residents into social housing buildings while retaining ownership of their original properties (Taipei City Department of Social Welfare, n.d.; 服務成果.

臺北市政府社會局,2025). However, many of these programs have not been successful as a result of poor marketing, narrow eligibility criteria, and the unwillingness of seniors to relocate to other homes.. In contrast, Manchester implements a more bottom-up and collaborative approach. The Greater Manchester Housing Providers’ Age-Friendly Housing Charter (2021) provides guidance for retrofitting existing homes as well as developing new, accessible housing. It has been widely disseminated among local authorities, developers, architects, and planners. The city also

promotes community-led projects like the Ageing in Place Pathfinder, which empowers older adults to shape their neighborhoods and supports the development of Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2024a).



Manchester has actively identified properties that lack essential accessibility features, such as narrow staircases or doors, and plans to construct 15,000 age-friendly homes over 20 years in Victoria North. There is also increased collaboration among housing organizations, architects, and policy makers to integrate rightsizing (versus downsizing) as a strategy, which allows for older adults to move to homes that better meet their needs without compromising their independence (Hammond et. al, 2019). Taipei's approach has leaned more toward institutional solutions and public housing provision. As of 2014, the city had 94 long-term care institutions and nursing homes, and it promotes public residential care for low-income older adults and self-paid residential options in public-private settings (Chao & Yang, n.d.; Wang & Wu, 2012). In contrast to Manchester's focus on independent living, Taipei's planning assumes a greater role for residential care and support facilities, particularly for older adults with physical limitations.

Another notable difference lies in intergenerational living strategies. Taipei has experimented with co-living schemes that bring together older and younger residents to reduce social isolation and encourage mutual support. Manchester, by contrast, has yet to implement such models and currently faces increasing age segregation, with younger people tending to live in newer developments and older residents remaining in less accessible homes. This trend, which has doubled in the past 25 years, exacerbates social isolation among older adults (Manchester City Council, 2017). Taipei's past efforts to integrate private investment through the BOT housing initiative ultimately failed due to a mismatch between market offerings and older adults' preferences, as many could not afford the new residences or preferred to stay in familiar

environments. The lack of trust between private developers and the government also hindered progress (Chao & Yang, n.d.). Manchester, on the other hand, has sought to build trust and dialogue with developers, aiming to showcase the economic value and housing demand of older adults as a means to encourage innovation and inclusive design in new housing projects.

While the two cities have both prioritised housing as a key aspect of AFCs, Manchester's strategy is more bottom-up, research-informed, and highly collaborative, focusing on retrofitting, rightsizing, and community empowerment. Taipei's model is top-down, government-led, and more reliant on institutional and subsidized care, though it also acknowledges the importance of home modification and intergenerational living.

4.4.2 Inclusion of the Social Environment

Positive Social Attitudes Toward Older People

Both Manchester and Taipei have implemented initiatives to foster more positive social attitudes toward older adults. Each city works to improve perceptions of aging and enhance older adults' sense of belonging. While both cities promote community inclusion, they take different approaches: Manchester places more emphasis on combating ageism and challenging stereotypes, whereas Taipei highlights intergenerational interaction and maintaining independence as a way of integrating older adults into society.

Manchester has placed considerable emphasis on improving older adults' sense of belonging in the community through campaigns that focus on changing the language, imagery, and narratives surrounding aging. This can be seen through the city's slogan "Valuable Not Vulnerable" as well its age-friendly city branding "Age-Friendly Greater Manchester - Doing Ageing Differently" (Manchester City Council, 2023a).

These campaigns highlight the city's ongoing priority to tackle ageism, which began with the "Valuing Older People" strategy in 2003 (Manchester City Council, 2014). According to the Centre for Ageing Better, national data from the UK show that 55% of adults believe that the country is ageist, and one in three people report experiencing age-based discrimination (Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2024c). Manchester has tried to address these concerns through creative means of public engagement, such as through the campaigns "Pride in Ageing" (2019), "Images of Ageing" (2023), and the "Valuable Not Vulnerable" campaign (2020). These have featured art exhibits, photo competitions, city-wide billboards, and advice groups co-organized by the LGBT Foundation, the Centre for Ageing Better, and the Greater Manchester Combined Authority. Older adults are not only represented but actively participate in these campaigns, such as through sharing their experiences, appearing in images, and contributing to project development (Manchester City Council, 2017).

In contrast, Manchester has done less to develop intergenerational initiatives as part of its strategy for improving social attitudes. Its main policy, the "Generations Together Manifesto" (2017), encourages organizations to promote intergenerational interaction and joint decision-making (Manchester City Council, 2017). However, there is no major city-wide program systematically integrating younger and older generations, making this subdomain underdeveloped compared to Taipei.

Taipei also prioritizes positive social attitudes toward older adults but emphasizes a developmental and empowerment-based approach. The city promotes independence and capability in older adults as a method to cultivate respect and integration into society, rather than focusing directly on public perceptions or negative stereotypes (Social and Family Affairs, Administration, 2019). The Health Promotion Administration (HPA) has introduced senior-

friendly dining programs that offer discounts and encourage social interaction (臺北市政府衛生局, n.d.). In addition, the Age-Friendly Supervision Office, established in 2013, has also worked to improve attitudes towards older adults by providing services such as cognitive function testing and driver's license renewal counters to increase older adults' sense of autonomy (臺北市政府衛生局, 2024). These initiatives are designed to strengthen older adults' sense of control and belonging. Taipei also offers more extensive intergenerational programming compared to Manchester. Domestic surveys have identified prevalent negative views among younger people in Taiwan, such as the belief that older people are dependent, burdensome, or difficult to get along with (Social and Family Affairs, Administration, 2019). In response, Taipei has created programs that foster direct interaction and collaboration between generations. These include initiatives such as the Qingyin Learning Together Program, which feature joint educational programs at senior learning centers, “Social Innovation Dadingpu”, which promote shared hobbies and activities between generations, and intergenerational co-living. While impactful, many of these programs are limited to specific districts, and should be broadened to include more older adults in Taipei (臺北市政府衛生局, n.d.; Social and Family Affairs, Administration, 2019; 臺北市政府社會局工作報告, n.d.)

Engagement in Volunteer Activity

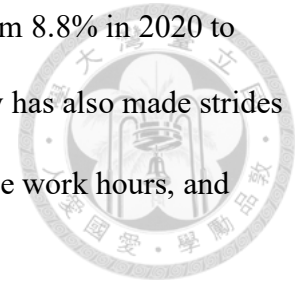
Both cities recognize the importance of volunteering for strengthening older adults' social integration and civic life. However, Taipei has provided more consistent support for older adults volunteering, which compares with Manchester's more limited approach. Manchester's main initiative for volunteering is the “Basics of Being Age Friendly Training Sessions,” launched in 2021. These sessions focus on promoting community volunteering, and while they

are inclusive of older adults, this initiative is more broad and also encourages other age groups to participate (Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust, 2021). In contrast, Taipei has proactively pursued older adult involvement in volunteering. As of 2022, 31% of all volunteers in Taiwan were over 65, a significant increase from 23% five years earlier (台北時報, 2023). This rise is the result of several well-established and ongoing initiatives. Volunteer programs include the distribution of safety bags to vulnerable seniors during holidays, originally launched in 2013 by the Tucheng Branch Supervision Office and later expanded to include meal coupons and other necessities (Social and Family Affairs, Administration, 2019). The Civil Affairs Bureau has also organized volunteers to clean older adults' homes during national holidays. Community care centers in Taipei often require that at least 25% of volunteer teams consist of individuals aged 65 and above (Wang & Wu, 2012). Older adults also participate in public service roles, such as during the 2011 Flower Expo and tobacco control campaigns. In recognition of their contributions, the city offers the Evergreen Volunteer Award, which shows appreciation and recognition for older volunteers. Taipei's early integration of older adult volunteers into its age-friendly planning further reflects its long-standing and institutionalized commitment to this domain (Wang & Wu, 2012).

Paid Employment

Both Manchester and Taipei have recognized the critical importance of increasing paid employment among older adults, and have adopted initiatives that address raising senior employment levels and valuing older adults in the workforce. In both cities, older adults are remaining in or re-entering the labor force in growing numbers. Employment rates for individuals aged 50 and above in Manchester have reached record highs, while in Taipei, the

labor force participation rate among adults aged 65 and older increased from 8.8% in 2020 to 9.6% in 2022 (Centre for Ageing Better, 2022; 台北時報, 2023). Each city has also made strides in implementing initiatives to promote employer engagement, more flexible work hours, and training opportunities to increase older adults' work participation.



Both cities have recently prioritised employer-focused initiatives. Manchester launched the Age-Friendly Employer Badge (2022) and the Age-Friendly Employer Toolkit, which provide practical guidance for businesses to develop inclusive hiring techniques and environments that support older adults. The toolkit recommends initiatives such as flexible work arrangements, anti-ageism workshops, and career development resources (Manchester City Council, 2023b). Similarly, Taipei's Employment Promotion Law for Middle-Aged and Elderly Persons (2019) requires employers to not discriminate against age in their recruitment policies, and consider fixed-term contracts for older workers in order to encourage more older adults to enter the labor market (Social and Family Affairs, Administration, 2019).

Manchester's focus has mainly been to expand apprenticeships and support programs. Since the early 2000s, the city has offered apprenticeships for older adults who are trying to re-enter the workforce or develop professionally in their career (Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2021). However, awareness of these apprenticeships was low until 2016, when the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) began promoting these opportunities as part of the city's AFC strategy. By 2019, 5% of total apprenticeship participants were aged 50 and above, an encouraging growth considering the fact that apprenticeships were traditionally for younger adults. Additionally, the city has made efforts to increase this number by offering £3,000 employer incentives per elderly apprentice, expanding opportunities for older adults (Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2021). Furthermore, the city introduced the Working

Well: Support to Succeed Program in 2024, which aims to support individuals with health-related barriers. Since its inception, it has helped 4,500 older adults by offering personalised support and access to training workshops (Manchester City Council, 2023b). In order to promote entrepreneurship amongst older adults, Manchester Libraries has also launched business classes as a means of helping these people find other forms of income (Manchester City Council, 2023a). Additionally, the city has also implemented the Pension Top-Up Campaign, which seeks to help older adults access pension credit and attendance allowances, and has so far generated over 3 million pounds of income for this demographic (Manchester City Council, 2023a).

Taipei has taken a legislation-based approach, with legal policies forming the foundation of its employment support for older adults. The Employment Promotion Law for Middle-Aged and Elderly Persons (2019) works as the main initiative, and offers pre-employment training, job-matching services, and subsidised loans for older adults who want to start businesses (Social and Family Affairs, Administration, 2019). Additionally, the government has established a talent database of retired citizens, which are aimed at matching job seekers with employers. The city has also prioritised intergenerational collaboration through initiatives such as the Silver and Green Co-Creating Program, led by the Ministry of Labor. This program encourages cross-generational cooperation and improves the physical and social work environment for elderly employees (Social and Family Affairs, Administration, 2019). Taipei's initiatives are more legally binding, with formal protections helping to support older adults, as opposed to Manchester, whose efforts are more incentive-driven.

Engagement in Socio-Cultural Activity

Manchester and Taipei have both promoted socio-cultural engagement through various initiatives. Both cities have acknowledged the connection between physical health and social interaction. In Manchester, the Greater Manchester Active Ageing Programme encourages older adults to remain both physically active and socially engaged through participating in activities such as orienteering and yoga (Manchester City Council, 2017).

Moreover, the Big Splash programme in the city provides free swimming passes to older adults to encourage them to be more physically active (Manchester City Council, 2017). Similarly, Taipei's Elderly Health Promotion Station Project (2015) offers seniors the opportunity to engage in guided exercise in local playgrounds, blending physical and social wellbeing (臺北市政府衛生局, n.d.).

Both cities also host social clubs and community programs. Manchester supports a variety of social activities, including woodworking, book exchanges, sewing, trivia, LGBT groups, and gentle fitness classes, many of which include transportation assistance for participants (Age UK Manchester, n.d.). Likewise, Taipei's Silver Club (2013) encourages older adults to participate in meal sharing, karaoke, board games, and health promotion workshops (Social and Family Affairs, Administration, 2019). In addition, travel has been used in both cities to enrich older adults' social experiences. Manchester's North City Nomads (2014) offers discounted day trips to nearby destinations to promote social inclusion (Manchester City Council, 2023b). In Taipei, older adults also exchange travel information and participate in group outings through community programs like the Silver Club.

Manchester's strategy emphasises culture, art, and formal education. For example, initiatives such as the Always Everywhere (2024) work on improving access to cultural events,

social clubs, and faith-based events (Manchester City Council, 2017.). The emphasis on art can be seen through the Uncertain Futures project, which collaborates with the Manchester Art Gallery, to use art to explore themes of inequality experienced by older adults, particularly older women. Moreover, museums and cultural institutions across the city engage older adults in workshops and exhibitions (Manchester City Council, 2023b). The city also incorporates formal learning opportunities through institutions like the University of Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan University, and Manchester College, which have become leaders in age-friendly education (Manchester City Council, 2023b). However, intergenerational recreation is notably underdeveloped in Manchester's current strategy.

In contrast, Taipei places more emphasis on community-based care, intergenerational engagement, and food-centered programs. This can be seen through initiatives like the Food Sharing Cabinet Project (2015), which collects surplus food from market vendors to host shared meals among older adults, especially those living alone (臺北市府衛生局, n.d.). Of the 505 community care centers in Taipei, 432 provide shared dining services that encourage social bonding through communal meals (服務成果. 臺北市府社會局, 2025). Taipei also integrates intergenerational interaction more explicitly. Programs include volunteer phone call schemes, which connect younger people with isolated seniors, creating valuable emotional and social ties (臺北市府衛生局, n.d.). However, some Taipei initiatives, such as the Silver Club, are still geographically limited, and would be more useful if it was expanded into other parts of the city.

Participation in Local Decision-Making

In regards to local decision-making, Manchester has prioritised older adult participation as a core part of its age-friendly strategy, which has not been reflected in Taipei. Manchester's

approach is well-established, and was one of the first domains that the city addressed at the beginning of its AFC development. The Age Friendly Manchester Older People's Board, founded in 2004, serves as the city's main consultative group, and consists of approximately 15 members above 50 years old. The board meets every eight weeks to advocate for policies and shape age-friendly initiatives (Manchester City Council, 2017). Additionally, the Age Friendly Manchester Older People's Assembly acts as a wider consultative body, ensuring that older residents can influence city development.

Manchester also engages older adults in its decisions regarding urban design and infrastructure planning. For example, the Manchester Age-friendly Neighborhood Project (2017) has adopted a participatory co-design model, taking feedback from older adults through various workshops. This feedback was used by the Manchester School of Architecture in designing their age-friendly housing. Decision-making is also the core value of the Transport Action Group (2018), which allows older adults to have a voice in co-creating transportation services to accommodate their needs.

By contrast, Taipei has not yet incorporated older adults into formal local decision-making processes. The city lacks policies or structures that facilitate the inclusion of older people in planning, service design, or policymaking. This represents a significant gap in Taipei's age-friendly framework.

Availability of Information

Both Manchester and Taipei have developed a number of initiatives to improve older adults' access to information, particularly in health education, financial literacy, and fraud prevention. Each city has recognised the need for relevant, age-appropriate information, and

have aimed to increase digital inclusion among this demographic. In Manchester, the city distributes a monthly age-friendly e-bulletin to over 12,000 older adults via email, highlighting positive aging stories, current events, and AFC updates. A physical edition is also available to accommodate those with limited digital access (Manchester City Council, 2023b). Additionally, Manchester Libraries have expanded their support for older residents by offering workshops, IT assistance, and dementia-focused sessions known as “Dementia Friends.” Notably, 60% of library staff are over 50, improving peer-based support for information sharing (Manchester City Council, 2017). Taipei similarly prioritizes older adults’ access to health and safety information. The city has launched initiatives such as the Wanmei Life Anti-Fraud Propaganda, which educates older adults about common scams and includes sticker campaigns via Line to encourage peer sharing. Police patrols have also been introduced to assist seniors making large cash withdrawals (臺北市府衛生局, n.d.).

Health education is also emphasized in both cities. In Manchester, the Winterwise campaign offers older adults seasonal information on fall prevention, mental health, and financial aid related to heating costs. It is paired with the Pension Up campaign, which promotes awareness of later-life benefits. Thousands of free advice booklets are distributed annually across public locations (Independent Age and Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2023; Manchester City Council, 2023a). In Taipei, community clinics and care centers provide health education on diabetes, cardiovascular disease, mental well-being, and physical fitness, and lectures such as “Late Beauty Life” focus on financial and fraud protection (Chiou, S.-T, n.d.; Wang & Wu, 2012). Both cities also offer free financial advice. In Manchester, Age UK’s Information and Advice Service (2019) provides consultations by phone, in person, and at home.

Taipei promotes similar financial guidance through its “Late Beauty Life” series and senior clubs (Manchester City Council, 2023b; 臺北市政府衛生局, n.d.).

Despite these shared efforts, Taipei has placed more emphasis on older adults accessing public information through initiatives such as implementing larger font on public transportation and billboards, which has not yet been done in Manchester. Taipei has also addressed digital literacy with the Dafeng Digital Mobile Phone Image Production Camp, which teaches older adults how to use smartphones, verify media content, and install applications (Social and Family Affairs, Administration, 2019). While Manchester does provide IT support through libraries, there is no equivalent program dedicated to hands-on digital training. Taipei has further supported information access through public computers in libraries, health centers, and local offices, and created information exchange platforms for older adults living alone (Wang & Wu, 2012).. Meanwhile, both cities have not yet addressed the subdomain involving assistance with form-filling, indicating a shared policy gap in administrative support for older adults.

Availability of Social and Health Services

Both Manchester and Taipei have taken steps to address the health and wellbeing of older adults, though through different approaches. Each city has shown a commitment to preventative health strategies, such as focusing on community-based fall prevention and elderly-specific health promotion. In Manchester, the Greater Manchester Falls Collaborative was established in 2022 with a £100,000 grant from the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities. The program provides resources for fall risk assessment, strength training, and educational workshops to reduce fall-related incidents and support rehab efforts (Manchester City Council, 2023a). In Taipei, similar health promotion efforts have been implemented through the Elderly

Health Promotion Station Project (2010), which includes community vaccination stations that improve immunization of older adults (Chiou, S.-T, n.d.). Additionally, since 2019, Taipei has distributed free reading glasses and subsidized dentures to older adults and has launched information campaigns to encourage regular screenings and greater awareness of services (Social and Family Affairs, Administration, 2019).

However, the starkest difference between the two cities' AFC strategies is the integration of health and social services with their age-friendly city strategy. Manchester's strategy focuses more narrowly on preventative health education, and does not directly incorporate healthcare facilities and hospitals into its framework. The city has promoted initiatives such as Sexual Health of Older People (SHOP) in 2019, which seeks to normalize the conversation of sexual health education for older adults. SHOP provides staff training and public campaigns, and has developed the Over 50s Sexual Health Action Plan, which focuses on the sexual wellbeing and support for older individuals (Manchester City Council, 2023b). However, beyond this, broader access to clinical healthcare services, infrastructure improvements in hospitals, or long-term care systems are not addressed within the city's AFC strategy.

In contrast, Taipei's AFC strategy has fully integrated health and social services into its age-friendly framework. Since 2011, the city has implemented an accreditation system for age-friendly hospitals and clinics, requiring features such as barrier-free environments, rehabilitation-friendly layouts, elderly hotlines, and shuttle van services (Chiou, S.-T, n.d.). Facilities are frequently monitored and evaluated, and are provided indicators to assess performance and accessibility standards (臺北市府衛生局, n.d.). Taipei's more integrated approach is also evident in the development of the Long-Term Care (LTC) system. Initially launched as LTC 1.0, the program aimed to create a community-based care system with services such as in-home care,



meals-on-wheels, and assistive device distribution. However the system suffered from limited scope and lack of service integration, and was later replaced by LTC 2.0 in 2017. Under LTC 2.0, the government increased the long-term care budget from 5 billion to over 60 billion, enabling a wider service network, better geographic coverage, and the inclusion of preventative and dementia care (Chen & Fu, 2020; Taipei City Government, 2024). As of 2024, Taipei has established 505 Community Care Centers, with 78.5% coverage of the city's neighborhoods. These centers focus on services that promote health, provide meals, and offer regular check-ins and social visits. Originally, they focused on cultural and recreational places, but have since expanded to offer integrated services which include health and social services (臺北市府社會局工作報告, n.d.; 徐瑩, 傅子安, & 林文勝, 2014). These community service centers have also worked to reduce duplication of services. Moreover, Taipei has also taken into account the well-being of family caregivers, and has launched caregiver support centers that provide counseling, stress relief workshops, and caregiving guidance (臺北市府社會局工作報告, n.d.). However, while Taipei's approach is more comprehensive in regards to the integration of the healthcare system as part of its AFC strategy, the city still faces barriers in efficient coordination across services. Some of the city's programs overlap or duplicate efforts, leading to inefficiencies in the overall system (Taipei City Government, 2023).

Economic Security

Economic security is an important area for AFCs, and both Manchester and Taipei have implemented initiatives to support the financial wellbeing of older adults through employment support, financial advice, and anti-poverty efforts. The city has some overlap on its focus on financial literacy initiatives. These include Manchester's Information and Advice Service and

Pension Up campaign, and Taipei's Wanmei Life Anti-Fraud campaign and Late Beauty Life lectures (臺北市政府衛生局, n.d.; Manchester City Council, 2023a). Furthermore, both cities are working to increase older adult employment and combat ageism in the labor market. In Taipei, the Employment Promotion Law for Middle-Aged and Elderly Persons (2019) aims to broaden job access for older adults. Similarly, Manchester's Working Well to Succeed Program (2024) supports disadvantaged older job seekers through skill-building and employment matching (Social and Family Affairs, Administration, 2019; Manchester City Council, 2023b). These efforts help reduce the number of older adults living below the risk-of-poverty threshold, as can be seen in both cities' reports of increase in older adult employment. For instance, Manchester's employment rates for older adults reached record highs in 2022, while Taipei saw growth in older adult labor workforce participation between 2020 and 2022 (Centre for Ageing Better, 2022; 台北時報, 2023).

Taipei differs in the fact that it provides direct financial incentives. The city offers a "respect-for-seniors" cash gift during the Chongyang Festival, and provides monthly subsidies of up to 3,000 NTD for disabled older adults, helping to offset transportation, healthcare, and miscellaneous expenses. Additionally, housing subsidies are available for eligible seniors, especially those with disabilities (臺北市政府社會局工作報告, n.d.). In contrast, Manchester's age-friendly strategy places a stronger emphasis on promoting financial independence through employment and public education, rather than direct subsidies (Manchester City Council, 2023b).

Quality of Life

Ensuring a high quality of life for older adults is another feature of the AFC framework in this study, and includes facets such as life satisfaction and reduced feelings of loneliness. Both Manchester and Taipei have implemented initiatives to foster environments where older people can live with these features. Manchester's strategy prioritises creating an inclusive environment emphasising cultural and political participation and neighborhood planning that encourages older adults to take advantage of their city's resources. These initiatives, which were mentioned in other respective domains include but are not limited to the "Take a Seat" campaign (allowing for older adults to engage comfortably in public places), free social clubs by Age UK, participation in city-wide policymaking, and numerous positive aging campaigns to break harmful stereotypes towards older adults. By involving different sectors of the city such as the local government, businesses, NGOs, and volunteer groups, the city has worked to create an environment in which older adults can have an enhanced quality of life. Taipei's strategy looks at intergenerational living, community-based services, and accessibility to improve the quality of life of older adults. These include senior service centers which offer recreational programs, co-living housing models, and initiatives to increase independence (driving training, cognitive tests). Each city's initiatives for each indicator can be found in Table 4, and the summary of main findings for each city in regards to each indicator can be found in Table 5.

4.4.3 Equity

In regards to equity, Manchester has woven this key domain into many of their initiatives. Their age-friendly strategy focuses on the Equality Impact Assessment, which identifies inequalities amongst different races, genders, sexual orientation, and disabilities (Manchester

City Council, 2017). The city aims to address these problems and how they interact with other problems older adults face, such as digital exclusion, social isolation, employment difficulties, and ageism. The city established Equality Panels in 2022 to support efforts to combat difficulties and challenges faced by many minorities and help to codesign policies that are implemented. The Equality Panel is categorised into seven panels, such as the Disabled People's Equality Panel, LGBTQ+ Advisory Panel, Race Equality Panel, and Women's Panel, and recruitment efforts work to ensure representation from all of the city's districts. The city also has made efforts to increase diversity in older adults' decision-making boards (Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2024c).

This focus on diversity is further evident in many of the policies described earlier, such as retrofitting homes for people with disabilities and focusing on lower-income neighborhoods, particularly through the Ageing in Place Pathfinder Programme launched in 2022 (Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2024a). Cultural events and accessibility of information is often provided in different languages, and the city has encouraged the growth of groups with racial, cultural, and sexual minorities (Mitchell, 2021)

Contrarily, Taipei has placed most of its emphasis on equality on disabled older adults as well as lower-income adults. It has worked on distributing its care centers to lower-income neighborhoods within the city. Moreover, it has implemented initiatives to improve the quality of lives for older adults with disabilities by ensuring home safety and accessibility plans and offering subsidies for housing and accessibility modifications (臺北市府社會局工作報告, n.d.). The city does not have decision-making boards which emphasise disparities between populations, and focuses more on providing concrete resources to disadvantaged populations as

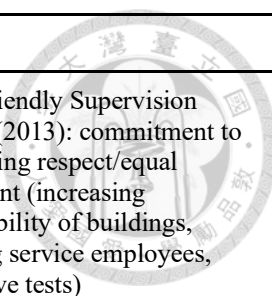
opposed to involving these groups in discussions to improve representation and policy making, which is emphasised in Manchester.



Table 4. Manchester & Taipei AFC Initiatives

Indicator	Manchester	Taipei
Neighborhood Walkability	- Age-Friendly Benches (2022): placement of benches determined by older adults - Take a Seat Campaign (2012): provides seating, toilets, drinking water to older adults from participating businesses - GM Falls Prevention (2022): fall-prevention activities, integration, reconditioning, training staff around city to know what to do in a fall Cycling & Walking and Commissioner Bee Network (2018): connect more walking/cycling trails in the city-region	- Improvement to sidewalks: anti-slip designs, sidewalk seps - Unused space converted to parkland - Neighborhood Walkability Lectures (2014): series of lectures to enhance safe walking - Love bell and calling card (2012): ensure safety if emergencies occur Alleyway Pedestrian Environment Improvement Program (2015): redesigning alleyways and sidewalks
Accessibility of Public Spaces and Buildings	Age-Friendly Library Badge (2022): libraries certified with AFC standards including clear signs, social activities, no stairs, IT support, audiobooks, etc.	- Age-Inclusive Playground (2018): senior fitness areas with equipment and natural shade - Elderly Health Promotion Station Project (2018): exercise lessons at age-inclusive playgrounds - Senior-friendly Restaurants (2020): affordable prices, healthy ingredients, AFC designs - Waiting areas/improved station facilities: improved services in public areas and toilets
Accessibility of Public Transportation Vehicles	- Accessible Buses (2010s): low-floor buses, audi-visual bus stop announcements, free for over 60s - Ring & Ride (2019): door-to-door accessible minibus service - Free Safer Driving for Longer Course (2022) - Road Safety for Older People (2009): involves older people to reduce number of collisions through infrastructural and behavioral changes	- Driving Training Class (2014) - Low-floor buses (2007) - Bus Driver Training - Demand Responsive Transit System (DRTS): different service times/routes to meet needs of older adults, individuals can reserve transportation on an app - Senior Love Card: subsidies for public transportation, expanded to subsidise direct outpatient hospital costs and access certain venues in the city
Accessibility of Public	Bus Pinch Point Schemes (2023): increase level bus stops, real-time information	Increased font size of stop signs on MRT & Bus Stops (2023)

Indicator	Manchester	Taipei
Transportation Stops	boards, target pinch points to reduce delays and improve streets	
Affordability of Housing	● Age-Friendly Housing Charter (2021): guide to retrofitting/investing in age-friendly homes and promoted to housing providers, developers, architects, planners; formal recognition of age-friendly houses ● Older People's and Housing Strategy (2021): increase supply of council homes, shared ownership homes, improve houses that lack accessibility, monitor improvement to reach goal of 15,000 new age-friendly homes ● Resetting the conversation, 'valuable not vulnerable' (2021): improve evidence of later-life market, promote AFC housing to developers ● Improve or Move (2021): financial support to move/adapt current homes ● Gorton Mill House (2021): 106 age-friendly apartments with communal facilities, energy-efficient technology, making adults feel "normal" while providing care options ● Rightsizing and Right Place Research Projects: promote concept of rightsizing to inform housing strategies in Manchester ● Greater Manchester Ageing in Place Pathfinder (2022): 4 million pounds invested to create ten neighborhood based partnerships of age-friendly neighborhoods - promotes creation of naturally occurring retirement communities	 ● Self-paid residential home: senior citizens home: older adults who are healthy to care for themselves can apply to live in publicly-owned, privately-run homes or other private residential care homes; low-income elders can receive public payment for care in registered privately-run facilities (private/publicly-owned) ● Public residential care home: Haoran Senior Citizens' Home provides care for low-income elderly living alone but healthy enough to care for themselves ● Intergenerational Housing: individuals can rent rooms and share common area for 20% cheaper rent than on market ● Elderly Relocation Program (2022): relocate older adults to social housing buildings with elevators while keeping original property, mostly unsuccessful due to poor advertisement/unwillingness to move ● Home repair subsidy service: assist in safety repairs/installing life-assistive devices ● Emergency Alarm Service: for older adults living alone at home ● Publicly funded resettlement subsidies for the elderly: must be over 65 years old, be low-income, moderately/severely disabled, must have dedicated long-term caregiver ● Promoting Private Participation in Senior Citizens' Housing" (BOT) project (early 2000s): discontinued in 2008, government tried to collaborate with private housing sector by implementing build-operate-transfer housing model

Indicator	Manchester	Taipei
Positive Social Attitudes Toward Older People	• Pride in Ageing (2019): improve well-being of LGBTQ+ elders through art exhibits, social groups, advice groups, awareness campaigns • Images of Ageing Campaign (2023): promotes images of older adults to challenge negative stereotypes • Generations Together Manifesto (2017): declaration of intent for companies/organisations to improve intergenerational relationships • Valuable Not Vulnerable Campaigns (2020): highlights positive stories of older adults, celebrate older people's talents through theater, shows, performances; also has launched photography competitions	 • Age-Friendly Supervision Office (2013): commitment to improving respect/equal treatment (increasing accessibility of buildings, training service employees, cognitive tests) • Senior friendly dining restaurants: dining discounts, encourages seniors to eat out, promote social interaction • Social Innovation Dadingpu: students/older adults interact to participate in hobbies together • Qingyin Learning Together Program: intergenerational learning programs held in senior learning centers • Co-Living Social Housing
Engagement in Volunteer Activity	• Basics of Being Age Friendly Training Sessions (2021): free training sessions to improve volunteer engagement of all ages	• Distribution of Safety Bags (2013): distribute bags with food and essentials • Cleaning Elderly Homes: mobilise volunteers to help clean houses of isolated older adults • Cleaning Days: holds cleaning days once a week, with emphasis on including older adults as 25% of the team • Elderly Volunteer Recruitment: encourages older adults to participate with award incentives such as the Evergreen Volunteer Award
Paid Employment	• Pension Top Up Campaign (2022): encourages people to take up their entitlements; training sessions for staff + councillors + older adults, has generated 3 million pounds of additional income • Working Well Support to Succeed Program (2024): support people who have experienced health barriers to employment, supports 4500 residents, participants receive personalised support and can access training, workshops, and services to improve employment skills • Promotion of Age-Friendly Employer Pledge (2022): pledge for businesses to sign to improve work for people in 50s and 60s • Age-Friendly Employer Toolkit (2022):	• Employment Promotion Law for the Middle-Aged and Elderly Persons (2019): protect elderly from discrimination, helps unemployed find work, supports pre-employment training, entrepreneurial guidance, business loan interest subsidies, talent database of retired labor force • Silver and Green Co-Creating: encourages cross-generational industrial cooperation

Indicator	Manchester	Taipei
	information on age-inclusive workplaces, flexible working, how to hire age-positively, career development for all ages • Business Support and Entrepreneurship Classes (2024) • Apprenticeships (early 2000s, promoted in 2016): for older adults looking to change career paths, restart career, or progress in current career	
Engagement in Sociocultural Activity	• Greater Manchester Active Ageing Programme (2018): promote physical activity of older adults through activities like orienteering/yoga; hold sessions on strength & conditioning • Uncertain Futures (2024): art project to highlight age inequalities for older adults, particularly women • Always, Everywhere (2024): access to drop-in sessions, social clubs, faith/spiritual support, cultural activities; focus on promoting cultural activities • Formal Academic/Vocational Courses • Big Splash (2022): free swim pass scheme for older adults • Age UK Social Clubs ○ Men in Sheds - woodwork ○ Book and Jigsaw Exchange - chat about books and jigsaws ○ Crossacres Stitchers - sewing, repairing and upcycling ○ Group Quiz at Brunswick Village - weekly friendly general knowledge quiz ○ 'Out in the City' older LGBT group - support group for over 50s members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities ○ Brews Brothers - a group for men to socialise, and play cards or dominoes over a brew ○ Seated Exercise Session - gentle exercise class followed by a coffee and a chat. • The North City Nomads (2014): organises trips near Manchester, costs less than 10 pounds • Re-engage Tea Party (2022): help older adults to connect with new people through tea parties, free transportation to/from venue	• Food Sharing Cabinet Project (2015): encourages market vendors to donate food for older adults to dine together • Elderly Health Promotion Station Project (2015): invite older adults to participate in age-inclusive programs • Silver Club (2013): provides shared meal services, health promotion activities, KTV, board games, travel information exchange platform

Indicator	Manchester	Taipei
Participation in Local Decision-Making	- Manchester Age-Friendly Neighborhood Project (2017) : co-design approach, older adults have a voice to address barriers in housing and events - Transport Action Group (2018): meetings with older adults to discuss changes in transportation, allows older adults to have a say in decision making and service design - Age Friendly Manchester Older People's Board (2004): city's main consultative group of older people, gives direction to AFC initiatives	
Availability of Information	- AFM E-Bulletin/Newspaper: published every month, 12,000 people receive - Manchester Libraries: age-friendly support, age-friendly hour, staff spend time with older adults, free workshops, older adult staff - Winterwise Campaign (2022): campaign released every winter, available for free in public spaces, includes content on physical health, staying warm, claiming benefits, and paying bills - Increased awareness of pension reforms/elderly debt	- Wanmei Life Anti-fraud propaganda for the elderly - Health education promotion "Late Beauty Life" lecture series: emotions, financial security, anti-fraud lectures - Increase font size of information, billboards - Information exchange platform for seniors living alone in Taipei - Computers for public use in health centers, local offices, public libraries - End-of-life counseling services
Availability of Social and Health Services	- Greater Manchester Falls Collaborative (2022) - Sexual Health of Older People (SHOP) (2019): social media campaigns, creatively engages older adults with sexual health issues, Over 50s-Sexual Health Action Plan	- Facilities: non-slip floor surfaces, clear walkways, emergency alarm services, hand railings, bed heights, etc.; hospitals with larger premises are also offering shuttle van - Recognition of Age-Friendly Hospital and Health Services (2011): accreditation for age-friendly hospitals/spaces - Eye/Denture Health (2019) - New Taipei Elderly Health Promotion Station Project Vaccination Stations (2010) - Increase in Long-Term Care Budget (2017) - LTC 2.0 (2017) - Family Caregiver Support Centers
Economic Security	Information and Advice Service (2019)	"Late Beauty Life" lecture series: emotions, financial security, anti-fraud lectures - Chongyang Festival cash gift:

Indicator	Manchester	Taipei
		older adults offered 3000 NTD • Wanmei Life Anti-fraud propaganda for the elderly • Housing subsidy for older adults with disability
Quality of Life		• Elderly Welfare Law (2015) • Long-term Care Ten-Year Plan 2.0 (2017)
Equality	• Equity is weaved into the AFC strategy • Equality Impact Assessment: age-friendly strategy centers around inequalities among different races, genders, sexual orientation, disabilities • Equality Panels (2022): categorised into 7 panels to address challenges of minorities • Attempts to diversity decision-making boards • Cultural events/information provided in different languages • Groups focused on DEI	• Less of a focus on equity when it comes to diversity, equity in Taipei focuses on lower-income neighborhoods and those with disabilities • Focus on distributing care centers to lower-income neighborhoods

Table 5. Main Findings of AFC Comparison: Manchester vs. Taipei

Indicator	Manchester	Taipei
Neighborhood Walkability	• Infrastructural upgrades (retiming pedestrian signals and pavement repairs) • Started with indoor comfort, later expanded to outdoor infrastructure • Community surveys drive planning (e.g. 68% of older adults requested benches) • Emphasis on businesses (<i>Take a Seat</i> campaign (2012) encourages businesses to offer amenities) • Started with indoor comfort, later expanded to outdoor infrastructure (Cycling & Walking Bee Network (2018); added age-friendly benches (2022))	• Infrastructural upgrades (anti-slip surfaces, sloped walkways, levelled steps) • <i>Alleyway Pedestrian Environment Improvement Program</i> (2015) targets dense walking areas • Policy-led, systematic approach that began with outdoor spaces • Focus on behavior of older adults (i.e. Neighborhood Walkability Lectures) and safety (<i>Love Bell</i> and <i>Calling Card</i> programs (2012) help lost/injured seniors)
Accessibility of Public Spaces and Buildings	• Focus on library as community hubs: Age-Friendly Library Badge awarded to libraries (2022) for older adult services like IT help and volunteering • Fall prevention training • Strong emphasis on co-production and grassroots engagement	• Focus on outdoor areas (age-friendly playgrounds) and spaces such as senior-friendly restaurants and improved waiting areas • Highly centralized implementation with formal policy frameworks
Transportation Vehicles	• 99% of buses are low-floor. • Free driving classes since 2022 • Subsidised transportation • <i>Ring & Ride</i> (2018): free, accessible minibuses for door-to-door service; more flexible than Taipei • Deregulation of public transportation has allowed city to take control of its network, with reformed bus laws and the launch of electric buses	• 88% low-floor buses. • Driving classes since 2014 (fee required). • Senior transport card includes subsidies for medical trips and public venues (expanded in 2025) • Demand Responsive Transit System (DRTS) adjusts routes by user demand via mobile app. • Operated by 15 private firms with senior-friendly driver training

Indicator	Manchester	Taipei
Accessibility of Public Transportation Stops	● Real-time transit info, audio-visual announcements ● <i>Road Safety for Older People</i> initiative co-develops policies with older residents	● Real-time transit info, audi-visual announcements ● Policy development is top-down with less direct public input
Affordability of Housing	● Emphasis on retrofitting (80% of 2050 housing stock already exists) ● Gorton Mill House: 106 energy-efficient, age-friendly units ● Prioritizes independent living, avoiding institutional care. ● <i>Age-Friendly Housing Charter</i> (2021) supports collaboration and retrofitting between different stakeholders ● Rightsizing encouraged to allow aging in familiar areas ● Engages older adults in shaping neighborhoods ● Plans to build 15,000 age-friendly homes in Victoria North. ● Struggles with age segregation as younger/older residents become spatially separated, no intergenerational housing schemes	● Emphasis on retrofitting (Home Repair Subsidy Service helps fund safety adaptations) ● Offers long-term care institutions and self-paid residential options ● Government-led relocation support and social housing programs are not very successful due to eligibility barriers, weak outreach, and reluctance to relocate ● BOT senior housing project failed due to low interest and cost concerns, indicating low trust and collaboration between government and private stakeholders ● Intergenerational co-living trials address isolation
Positive Social Attitudes Toward Older People	● Focus on anti-ageism campaigns and changing the narrative for older adults: “Valuable Not Vulnerable”, <i>Pride in Ageing</i> (2019), <i>Images of Ageing</i> (2023) ● Older adults actively participate in art, storytelling, media campaigns ● <i>Generations Together Manifesto</i> (2017) exists but intergenerational programming remains underdeveloped	● Focuses on autonomy of older adults (i.e. driver’s license renewal, cognitive testing to increase self-sufficiency) ● Intergenerational programs (i.e. Qingyin Learning Together)

Indicator	Manchester	Taipei
Engagement in Volunteer Activity	• Less developed for older adults, programs are for all age groups (i.e. Basics of Being Age Friendly Program) • Limited institutional structure for recruiting older adult volunteers	• 31% of all volunteers in Taiwan are 65+ (2022). • Long-standing programs include safety bag delivery, home cleaning, meal distribution • Community care centers mandate 25% of volunteer teams to be older adults • Recognizes volunteers via Evergreen Volunteer Award
Paid Employment	• Incentive-driven for employers (i.e. Age-Friendly Employer Badge & Toolkit (2022)) • Apprenticeships for 50+ adults; 5% uptake by 2019 • Working Well (2024) supports older adults with health barriers. • Offers business classes and pension access campaigns • Less focus on legislation + intergenerationalism	• Employment Promotion Law (2019) prohibits age discrimination • Law offers job-matching, training, and subsidized loans for elderly entrepreneurship • Retiree talent databases match employers with retirees. • Silver and Green Co-Creating Program encourages intergenerational workplaces
Engagement in Socio-Cultural Activity	• Strong focus on art, culture, and education: museums, art galleries, Uncertain Futures project, university programs • Emphasis on physical/social interaction (i.e. Greater Manchester Active Ageing Programme and Big Splash) • Strong ties with local universities offering senior education. • Intergenerational recreation remains weak	• Limited cultural focus; emphasis on shared meals and daily recreation (Food Sharing Cabinet, community care centers) • Emphasis on physical/social interaction (i.e. Elderly Health Promotion Stations) • Intergenerational programs: (i.e. phone call programs, food sharing programs)
Participation in Local Decision-Making	• Older adult participation is a core part of AFC strategy. • Age Friendly Manchester Older People's Board (est. 2004) meets every 8 weeks. • Wider engagement through the Older People's Assembly. • Participatory co-design used in urban planning via Age-Friendly Neighborhood Project. • Older adults help shape transportation via Transport Action Group.	• No formal structures for older adult participation in planning or policy. • Lack of mechanisms for older adults to influence city development. • Represents a gap in the AFC framework.

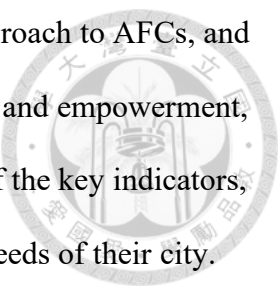
Indicator	Manchester	Taipei
Availability of information	• No widespread physical accessibility changes in signage or billboards • Monthly age-friendly e-bulletin (digital and print); libraries offer IT workshops • Lectures on financial literacy via Winterwise and Pension Up campaigns • No structured support for administrative form-filling	• Large fonts in public spaces; accessible transport signage, emphasis on digital inclusion • Lectures on anti-fraud + financial literacy (i.e. Wanmei Life campaign, Late Beauty Life lecture series) • Digital literacy emphasis (i.e. Dafeng Digital Camp) • No structured support for administrative form-filling
Availability of Social and Health Services	• Focus on preventative strategies, (i.e. Greater Manchester Falls Collaborative (2022) + SHOP campaign) • AFC strategy does not include integration of healthcare facilities, long-term care, or hospital systems	• Fully integrated health/social services into AFC • Age-friendly accreditation for clinics/hospitals (since 2011) + LTC 2.0 (2017) + community care centers • Overlap in service responsibilities remains a coordination challenge
Economic Security	• Focus on financial literacy, older adult employment, and anti-poverty efforts (Pension Up and Info & Advice services; Working Well to Succeed Program (2024)) • Strategy promotes employment over subsidies.	• Focus on financial literacy, older adult employment, and anti-poverty efforts (Wanmei Life, Late Beauty Life, Employment Promotion Law) • Direct financial support through festival cash gifts and housing subsidies
Quality of Life	• Focus on inclusion via urban design, public engagement, and anti-ageism campaigns. • Initiatives include "Take a Seat", arts, policy participation, and social clubs. • Intersectoral approach involving local gov, NGOs, and communities.	• Emphasis on intergenerational housing, recreation, and service center access. • Programs support independence (driving tests, co-living). • 505 service centers offer health, meals, and social programming. • Strategy focuses on enabling environments and community integration.

Chapter 5: Discussion

5.1 Comparative Approaches to Age-Friendly City Development in Manchester and Taipei

Manchester and Taipei are both cities that have been at the forefront of AFC development, and have served as models for other AFCs. Manchester was the first city in the UK and one of the first in the world to join the GNAFCC, while Taipei has emerged as the only city whose national government has fully committed all of its country's cities to the age-friendly initiative (McGarry 2024; "Age-friendly cities. 衛生福利部國民健康署", n.d.). The two have both referenced the WHO Age-Friendly City model, and their policies and initiatives have aligned with the domains identified in the model.

Both cities have made efforts to address all three domains emphasised in the modified AFC framework: accessibility of the physical environment, inclusion of the social environment, and equity. This shared commitment to improving these domains has been reflected in the breadth of key indicators that the two cities have addressed, with Taipei directly working on 12/13 (with the exclusion of participation in local decision-making) and Manchester also addressing 12/13 (excluding availability of social and health services). In order to effectively address these key indicators, the two cities have tackled a number of the sub-indicators identified in the modified framework, with Taipei addressing 30 out of 32 of them. Gaps for this city's AFC implementation include sub-indicator 22 (older adults who participated in decision-making) and 23 (assistance for older adults in filling out forms). Manchester has addressed 27 out of 32 indicators, with gaps in sub-indicator 20 (intergenerational recreation and social programs), 23 (assistance for older adults in filling out forms), 26 (assistance in accessing healthcare), 28 (local health information), and 29 (support for daily living and health-related needs). Both cities lacked sub-indicator 23.



Manchester and Taipei have both successfully adopted a holistic approach to AFCs, and have integrated their aging policies with urban planning, social engagement and empowerment, and equitable development. Both cities have encouraged the development of the key indicators, although with different developmental process timelines that reflected the needs of their city. They have both recognised the importance of multi-sectoral governance. While their goals and outcomes show significant alignment, Manchester and Taipei have used different strategies to implement their AFC policies, which have been shaped by various contextual, cultural, and socio-political factors. Much of this can be attributed to the cities' differing governance models, with Manchester exemplifying a bottom-up model with a focus on local governing bodies, and Taipei emphasising a top-down, nationally coordinated approach. The literature reviewed in this study highlighted the importance of multi-sectoral and multi-level governance, with Steels (2015) and Scharlach (2015) stressing the importance of diverse stakeholder engagement as well as multi-level governance. Moreover, research has found that overcoming stakeholder barriers can help to promote AFC development and improve input indicators (enablers) (Rémillard-Boilard et al., 2020). Manchester boasts a strong cross-sectoral collaboration, particularly with local partnerships and at the grassroots level ("Age-friendly Greater Manchester - Doing Ageing Differently", n.d.; Chao & Huang, 2016). Examples of this include involvement from partners such as housing providers, universities, volunteer organisations, and transport authorities. Taipei also engages in cross-sectoral collaboration, but here, more emphasis is placed on the integration of health, welfare, and labor systems in efficient policymaking. This has resulted in efficient policymaking, but has offered less flexibility for grassroots-level and community partnerships ("Taipei city elderly statistics and figures", 2022). The city's top-down approach has ensured political commitment from the national level as well as the municipal level. Taipei's

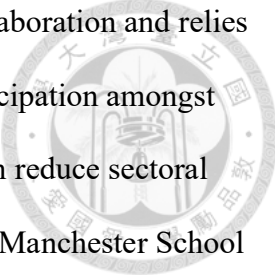
policies have prioritised and excelled in intergenerational collaboration, healthcare integration, delivery of services, and legal policies that promote employment. Manchester's priorities and achievements have involved promoting cross-sectoral collaboration, community-based decision making, and integration of health to a broader well-being context such as urban policy and infrastructure as opposed to healthcare delivery. Manchester's age friendly strategy's target population aims to serve individuals aged 50+, while Taipei's definition of "older adult" is more narrow, and focuses on those aged 65+.

The two cities' target age groups also highlight differing philosophies. Manchester's focus on adults 50+ reflects its preventive, inclusivity-driven goals, particularly for marginalized groups who may experience aging challenges earlier in life ("An age-friendly Manchester", n.d.). Taipei's focus on 65+ is more aligned with its service-oriented, government-led approach, and reflects the demographic pressure of the city to provide support to its increasing elderly population. In Taipei, 65 is the official retirement age, and this is the age where most government services such as senior cards, subsidies, and pensions are offered ("Taipei city elderly statistics and figures", 2022) Seeing as Taipei's AFC strategy is mostly spearheaded by the national government, targeting this age demographic makes logical sense.

Another characteristic of a "good" AFC is its ability to adapt to the local context of the particular city, which has been done in both cities (Steels, 2015; Lui et al., 2009). This can be demonstrated by Manchester's commitment to more culturally inclusive events and initiatives and Taipei's attention to intergenerational initiatives. However, Manchester's policies are more adaptive to the specific localities and neighborhoods within its city limits, while Taipei's policies are more rigid as a result of its higher-level coordination. Taipei can work to better identify and address the needs of local neighborhoods within its city to incorporate a more contextual AFC. In

regards to the sustainability of the two AFC developments, both have shown lasting commitment and sustainability, although Manchester's commitment is undermined with funding problems and maybe a problem in the future (McGarry, 2024). However, the city's commitment to releasing annual reports and long-term strategy plans has worked to counteract this. Moreover, the two cities have worked to integrate physical and social dimensions of an AFC, which is highlighted in all of the policies identified in this study.

Each city faces its own implementation challenges. Taipei struggles with limited community-level engagement from older adults themselves, sectoral silos, and redundant initiatives that result in inefficient use of resources ("Taipei city elderly statistics and figures", 2022). Research has shown that the effectiveness of age-friendly city development is strongly linked to the extent and quality of multisectoral and intersectoral collaboration (Black & Oh, 2022). Taipei demonstrates strong vertical multisectoral action through its integration of health services with other aspects of AFcs, such as infrastructure and transportation, which can be seen through interdepartmental collaboration between health, social welfare, and urban planning. However, it lacks horizontal intersectoral collaboration, particularly when it comes to non-governmental stakeholders and community-based organisations. This issue of bureaucratic incohesiveness is also highlighted in Buffel et al.'s writing (2020), in which both Dublin and Brussels struggled with complexity across different bureaucracies. For example, Dublin reported duplications of efforts as has been seen in Taipei, while Brussels experienced disjointed agendas between different stakeholders (Buffel et al., 2020). These issues should be addressed in order to promote more stable and innovative policy development. These challenges are not as apparent in Manchester because the city has formalised community involvement mechanisms such as explicit decision-making boards which help promote opportunities for civic participation. The



city's devolved governance structure incorporates efficient cross-sector collaboration and relies on civic and academic institutions as intermediaries. Moreover, shared participation amongst different sectors promotes mutual trust and intersectoral dialogue, which can reduce sectoral silos ("Age-friendly Greater Manchester - Doing Ageing Differently", n.d.; Manchester School of Architecture, n.d.). Unlike Taipei, Manchester demonstrates a strong horizontal intersectoral culture in which collaboration between community partnerships, local academic institutions, and voluntary organisations is emphasised. This strength, however, is coupled with its limited vertical integration, in which the city has struggled with aligning its healthcare system with its AFC goals due to limited authority over institutional health systems. This governance gap is present in other age-friendly cities. In the United States, AFCs are broadly implemented at the local level, and share a lack of overarching federal coordination. Like Manchester, cities in America such as Portland, New York City, and Palo Alto have emerged from community-led movements, which has also led to similar barriers regarding funding and sustainability (Greenfield, 2015). These examples align with existing research which states that the absence of strong national support puts AFCs at risk of being unevenly distributed and short-lived (Scharlach, 2015; Black & Oh, 2022).

Rapid population aging, low labor participation among older adults, and evolving family structures have also pushed Taipei to explore alternatives to family-based care while maintaining its aging-in-place philosophy (Lin & Yi, 2019; Chao & Huang, 2016). One of the alternatives that the country has targeted has been the employment of live-in foreign caregivers, many of whom come from Southeast Asia, and are hired to help supplement or replace the roles of family members in providing care to older adults (Ministry of Labor, 2024; Wang, 2013). While this trend is encouraging in some aspects because it can sustain aging-in-place models which the city

has emphasised, the sustainability of the approach has raised some concerns, as the city's reliance on foreign caregivers may be vulnerable to rising labor costs and increasing pressure on labor rights, as these workers often work in isolated home settings with limited formal oversight. Moreover, overreliance on this model could isolate older adults who cannot afford a foreign caregiver. Long-term dependence on foreign labor may reduce public investment on other care options (Wang, 2013). Some alternatives to this model to diversify the city's care options could be to build local capacity through other partnerships, and provide care through other means such as timebanks, volunteer-based programs, and community housing programs (Tsai et al., 2024). In addition, enhancing support for informal caregivers (such as family members and volunteers) such as caregiver education and financial subsidies could also help to preserve the aging-in-place strategy while reducing overreliance on foreign labor.

In Manchester, recurring budget cuts and funding instability threaten the sustainability of AFC efforts. As cities often cut preventive programs first, AFC initiatives can be particularly vulnerable (McGarry, 2024; Buffel & Phillipson, 2016; Buffel and Phillipson, 2016). One way to address this, as identified in the literature review is to embed age-friendly initiatives into other sectors and urban policy ideas such as sustainability, housing, and transportation to secure long-term sustainability and financial stability (Buffel et al., 2020). Moreover, Manchester's efforts to tackle historical inequalities and accommodate a growing migrant population have driven the city to diversify its approach and ensure inclusivity across all older adult communities (McGarry, 2024; "The state of ageing in Greater Manchester", 2024).

5.2 Drivers for Age-Friendly City Commitment in Taipei and Manchester

Both cities began their AFC process early compared to many other cities worldwide, albeit for different reasons. At the time of joining the GNAFCC, both cities were relatively stable politically and economically - a key enabler for age-friendly development (Scharlach, 2015; McGarry, 2024; Lin et. al, 2018; Buffel et al., 2020). A stable political climate has been identified as one of the pathways to AFC development, with other cities like Dublin and Brussels also experiencing political stability in their cities (Buffel et al., 2020). However, in Manchester, the city faced deeply ingrained inequality issues as a result of its highly diverse population, income and health disparities, and one of the lowest healthy life expectancies in England, which made developing age-friendly policies an issue of social justice as well (McGarry, 2024). In Taipei, the AFC agenda was seen as an issue of national importance as a result of the city's rapidly aging demographic, in which the city was reaching the threshold of a "super-aged society" faster than most other regions of the world. One of the key drivers for cities to begin adopting AFC strategies is economic rationale, as these cities have stronger motivation to invest in AFC policies to reduce healthcare costs, keep older adults in the workforce, and promote aging in place (van Hoof and Marston, 2021). This sense of economic and social urgency in Taipei allowed the city to receive a strong level of support in its AFC development early on.

A major driver for Manchester's early participation in the GNAFCC were its close ties to academic institutions within the city, such as the University of Manchester (McGarry, 2024). These institutions conducted key research that helped to inform policy and also pushed for the early adoption of AFC initiatives, which was a key driver in the city (McGarry, 2024). This strong connection with academic institutions as a driver of AFCs is evident in some Canadian cities such as those in British Columbia and Quebec, as well as other cities in the UK, such as

Liverpool, where researchers at universities have played pivotal roles in both the implementation and evaluation of AFC initiatives (Plouffe & Kalache, 2010; Buckner et al., 2019). Interestingly, the strong collaboration between academic institutions and the AFC movement in these two countries' AFCs has resulted in the development of evaluation frameworks (Public Health Agency of Canada's Age-Friendly Communities Evaluation Guide and the UK Urban Ageing Consortium's Research and Evaluation Framework (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2015; "A Research & Evaluation Framework for age-friendly cities," n.d.). This focus on promoting specific indicators and an evaluation framework may have helped to spur the development of the overall AFC movement in these cities, and provided a pathway for Manchester, Quebec, and British Columbia to move towards more detailed outcome-based evaluations to help inform policymaking.

The UK's increasing trend of devolution allowed the city to have more control of its local policy, allowing it to shape itself as a role model for other UK and European cities to follow ("Age friendly Manchester refreshed strategy 2023-2028", 2023). Manchester's policies were first pushed by local councils and academic institutions, while Taipei's policymaking was pushed by national institutions such as the HPA.

Close ties with universities can act as important catalysts in driving AFCs. Academic institutions are able to provide substantial evidence bases that can galvanise policymakers to follow. Universities, particularly those in Manchester, also perform participatory research methods that include older adults in the research process, which can promote inclusive policies and encourage older adults to take more interest in initiatives that affect the quality of their lives (Rémillard-Boilard, Buffel, & Phillipson, 2017). Moreover, universities often work as neutral

actors between stakeholders, which can help to facilitate better cross-sector collaboration and the integration of AFCs.

While Manchester boasts a strong bottom-up structure today, it originally was spearheaded by a collaboration between academic institutions and the city council, who created what was known as the *Older Age and Opportunity Working Party* as a response to the EU's *Year of Older People and Solidarity between Generations* in 1993, which aimed to provide a variety of opportunities and services for elderly people. This group aimed to challenge the previously dominant “care-based model” and encourage a changing in narrative of older adults. To do this, it created advisory boards and programmes that were made up of older adults themselves (McGarry, 2024). This priority is echoed in the research in the literature review by Rémillard-Boilard et al. who claimed that sustaining the political momentum for an AFC can be to promote positive narratives of aging and aging-related issues. Moreover, the country's general trend of devolution and returning power to local cities and communities also helped to galvanise a bottom-up structure. Therefore, while the city initially was started from a top-down push, it quickly embedded bottom-up mechanisms from the start through its creation of the *Valuing Older People* initiative. This combination of strong participation and co-production as a driver of AFC development is strongly demonstrated in Manchester, and supported by previous literature such as that of Moulaert and Garon's writing (2016). This writing identified other AFCs in Argentina and Hong Kong as being able to produce more efficient and response age-friendly initiatives as a result of co-creation. In order to move towards a bottom-up model, cities would benefit from having local governments which support participatory structures, strong academic partnerships which can enable co-research and evidence, a strong base of NGOs and community organisations, a more devolved city government structure which allows for communities to

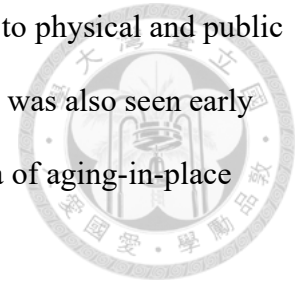
innovate in accordance to their specific needs, and stable funding (Buffel, 2017 & Britteon et. al, 2022).

In Taipei, the city's culture of Confucian and collectivist traditions may have prioritised community responsibility and respect for elders, further pushing the support for AFCs (Chao & Huang, 2016). Taipei's political standpoint was further galvanised by its mayor for much of this time (2014-2022), who was a physician and helped to accelerate the integration of health policies with urban development (Alcorn, 2022). Taipei's desire to gain visibility and legitimacy on the global stage may have also motivated its swift entry into the GNAFCC ("Services for the elderly", 2024; "Taipei, a Warm and Friendly City", 2013). Moreover, the cities differed in their framework of aging, with Manchester pushing for an agenda that framed older adults as being valuable, empowered, and included in society as opposed to a welfare model that saw them as dependents in need of further resources and support. Taipei's AFC policies were framed more with the mindset that older adults require more support to ensure elder care and improved quality of life ("Age friendly Manchester refreshed strategy 2023-2028", 2023; Chao & Huang, 2016).

5.3 Accessibility of the Physical Environment

Both Manchester and Taipei addressed improvements to the physical environment early in their AFC development, but there were differences in their focus and driving forces in their strategy. In the early 2000s, Manchester's main focus was on respect and social inclusion, and encouraged the promotion of older adults' decision-making abilities to reduce inequity. To address this gap, the city first focused on public transportation as a way to boost mobility and improve equal opportunities across the city. Later in the city's development, it also began to improve infrastructure of indoor spaces and neighborhood walkability. In contrast, Taipei's focus

was initially on healthcare services and integration, but it later also shifted to physical and public space accessibility. Like Manchester, its emphasis on public transportation was also seen early on in the city's AFC development. Both cities have also prioritized the idea of aging-in-place when it comes to their housing, although their methods diverged.



Manchester's early attention to transportation stemmed from local concerns involving transportation equity and social inclusion. Much of these initiatives took in feedback from older adults themselves, such as the "Valuing Older People" board (2003) and the Take a Seat Campaign (2012), which were both community-led. This highlights the city's bottom-up approach to AFCs ("Age Friendly Manchester EIA Guidance," 2017). Later on in its AFC strategy, Manchester turned to improvements in housing and walkability, such as the Housing for Age-Friendly Manchester strategy (2015) and the Bee Network (2018) ("Age friendly Manchester refreshed strategy 2023-2028," 2023).

In contrast, Taipei's AFC development initially focused on healthcare accessibility through programs like Long-Term Care 1.0 (2007) and the age-friendly hospital certification system (2011) ("Taipei city elderly statistics and figures," 2022; Chiou, S.-T., n.d.). However, like Manchester, public transportation and were also introduced early on, with initiatives such as the Senior Easy Card (2013) and low-floor buses (2015). As the strategy progressed, Taipei added features such as age-inclusive playgrounds (2018) and food-sharing cabinets (2015), which demonstrates the city's changing attention to the physical environment.

An important similarity between the two cities' approaches to the accessibility of the physical environment is their emphasis on promoting aging in place, although this domain has been achieved in different ways as a result of their governance structures. In Manchester, the city focuses on retrofitting, rightsizing, and collaborative development, which has helped give older

adults opportunities to shape their living environments (Greater Manchester Combined Authority, 2024b). Older adults are seen as active members in decision-making to improve the urban environment. This focus is mirrored in some US cities such as Portland, where infrastructural improvements in urban design are embedded with broader frameworks for sustainable and smart cities, and older adults are seen as valuable contributors to helping with urban design (Greenfield, 2015). Taipei, while supporting aging-in-place, has also leaned more towards offering institutional care and subsidised public housing as part of its AFC strategy. This approach reflects the city's top-down governance model, as these housing programs, relocation initiatives, and subsidies are mostly state-led. As a result of the city's top-down structure, some of these programs, such as relocation support, face limited participation due to strict eligibility criteria and older adults' reluctance to relocate (服務成果. 臺北市政府社會局, 2025).

Manchester is more open in its approach to hearing feedback and collaboration with both older adults and housing developers to promote tailored responses to improve housing, which stems from its bottom-up approach. The city's decentralisation has allowed for localised innovation to urban infrastructure issues and increased cross-sector collaboration. Its strong civil society and academic sector have helped to promote inclusive housing and urban planning strategies (Hammond et al., 2019; McGarry, 2024). In contrast, Taipei's centralization of its initiatives has ensured stable resource allocation, but has also resulted in limited responsiveness to community-specific needs. This has been reflected in efforts like the BOT initiative, which sought to increase private senior housing investment but ultimately failed (Chao & Yang, n.d.). For Taipei in particular, the integration of older adults into the planning process of its urban and housing infrastructure policies could increase the effectiveness and inclusivity of its policies.

5.4 Inclusion of the Social Environment

Manchester has emphasised civic participation, anti-ageism, and social empowerment as key parts of its AFC strategy, while Taipei has historically centered on the provision of care, with recent efforts to promote more participatory inclusion. In Taipei, healthcare and employment are central to the city's strategies, whereas in Manchester these areas are more localised and fragmented as a result of the city's decentralised structure.

Manchester has adopted a participatory model in order to promote inclusion in the social environment through initiatives such as “Valuable Not Vulnerable” and “Uncertain Futures”, which have actively worked to reshape narratives around aging (“Greater Manchester age-friendly strategy 2024–2034,” n.d.). This strategic branding and social marketing approach also parallels some other age-friendly cities, particularly those in Canada, which engage in awareness programs and “age-friendly” labels within communities to promote community engagement (Plouffe & Kalache, 2010). In Manchester, older adults are involved as co-researchers, advisors, and leaders, while in Taipei, older adults are viewed by the government as recipients of care (“Manchester: A great place to grow older,” n.d.). This emphasis on older adult participation can be attributed to academic-community partnerships and a longstanding history of social innovation in the city (McGarry, 2024). Local universities and research institutes provide support for co-research opportunities, and decision-making boards across the city allow for policy implementation without waiting for national-level change. This once again demonstrates Manchester's bottom-up structure, which allows for community-level change but also results in weaker integration of sectors such as employment and healthcare policies. In Taipei, older adults are less involved in policymaking or co-design, which reflects the city's top-down planning model as those that have relevant experience and knowledge are often the ones making



decisions. (Steels, 2015). In recent years, more initiative has been pushed to promote community integration and older adult participation through the development of senior service centers, which allow older adults to seek help when needed, but overall decision-making for this demographic remains limited (Social and Family Affairs Administration, 2019). In order to create a truly holistic and responsive AFC, Taipei should leverage the voices of older adults and promote their participation through decision-making boards or other methods.



A notable difference between the two cities has been Taipei's emphasis on intergenerational initiatives, which can be seen through strategies such as co-living schemes, communal dining spaces, and intergenerational learning programs. This aligns with their cultural values, which is influenced by Confucian teachings and places a high value on filial piety and respect for elders, encouraging interactions between older and younger generations. While Manchester has outlined the importance of intergenerational interactions, there has been less emphasis on this, with more focus on elderly-to-elderly interaction. It may be beneficial for Manchester to promote intergenerational interactions in some of its AFC policies, possibly through cultural activities or co-living and learning opportunities, as intergenerationalism is highlighted as a key principle of AFCs (Plouffe & Kalache, 2010).

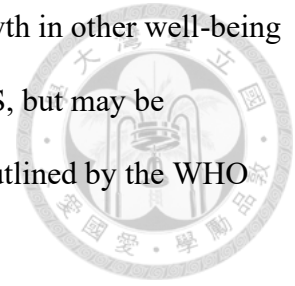
A key difference in the two cities' age-friendly city strategy is Taipei's emphasis on integrating healthcare delivery and employment services into its AFC strategy and Manchester's less robust approach to these key indicators. For the domain "availability of health services", Manchester lacks direct authority over healthcare, which is managed by the NHS, and this limits the city's capacity to integrate their healthcare with the AFC strategy. Instead, the city focuses on preventative programs and promotion, such as the GM Falls Prevention strategy and STI awareness campaigns ("Age friendly Manchester refreshed strategy 2023-2028", 2023). This

decentralised approach is also evident in the city's strategy targeting employment, where Manchester lacks legal employment laws and protection systems, and focuses instead on local initiatives such as encouraging employers to be more accommodating towards older adults (e.g., Age-Friendly Employer Pledge) ("Manchester: A great place to grow older", n.d.).

In contrast, Taipei has successfully integrated these two key indicators. In regards to healthcare services, its Long-Term Care Plan 2.0 and age-friendly hospital certification have helped older adults access targeted healthcare initiatives, which is promoted by the Health Promotion Administration ("Taipei city elderly statistics and figures", 2022; Chiou, S.-T, n.d.). In Taipei, employment support is also legally backed, and governed by the Middle-Aged and Elderly Employment Promotion Act, which ensures age-inclusive hiring and workforce protections for older adults (社家署全球資訊網 :: 高齡社會白皮書, 2019).

These differences, as seen in other parts of the city's AFC strategies stem from differing governance structures. Taipei's national-level governance has enabled the integration of care and employment protections, but has also led to some barriers in their AFC development, namely the duplication of certain services, which may be a result of limited cross-sectoral collaboration and reduced community ownership and feedback. In Manchester, the main coordinating body, the Greater Manchester Combined Authority is not directly responsible for healthcare delivery, which is managed by the NHS, a completely separate body. As a result, Manchester's AFC strategy does not include healthcare delivery, but rather focuses on local issues such as social inclusion, civic participation, and housing. Similarly, for the domain regarding employment, Manchester lacks legal employment laws and protection systems, and focuses instead on local initiatives such as encouraging employers to be more accommodating towards older adults (e.g., Age-Friendly Employer Pledge) ("Manchester: A great place to grow older", n.d.). Not including

healthcare delivery as a domain in their AFC strategy has encouraged growth in other well-being areas, and spearheaded new and innovative ideas not promoted by the NHS, but may be excluding an essential facet of a truly holistic age-friendly city model as outlined by the WHO framework of AFCs.



A possible recommendation for Manchester would be to promote collaboration with the NHS to promote the age-friendly services that are already in place by the national healthcare system as part of their age-friendly strategy to raise awareness of the policies that exist to support older adults' health without repeating the NHS's services. In addition, the city's AFC strategy could also involve identifying gaps in healthcare delivery as expressed by the community and co-developing age-friendly healthcare initiatives from this feedback. Promoting healthcare delivery in this population may help to address equity gaps, which is a significant focus of this city. Moreover, advocating for legal employment protections may also strengthen the city's goals to increase employment rates among older adults.

5.5 Equity

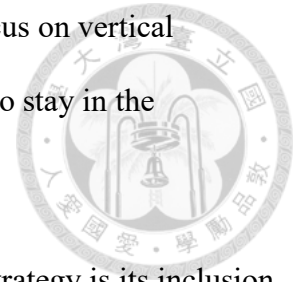
Manchester has incorporated equity as a key part of its AFC strategy, targeting marginalised groups and promoting anti-ageist messaging. In contrast, Taipei has prioritised universal access to services, but does not have a comprehensive scope on participatory equity. In Manchester's strategy, the city explicitly targets low-income groups, ethnic minorities, disabled people, and LGBTQ+ communities. This emphasis on equity has been echoed in other regions around the world, such as the United States, which focuses on the targeted inclusion of minority subgroups (Black & Oh, 2022). Manchester has taken advantage of public art, storytelling, and other forms of cultural activities to reduce stigma against older adults (McGarry, 2024). Taipei has promoted intergenerational cohesiveness as a method of improving the perception of older

adults, but lacks efforts on marginalised groups beyond those that are disabled. This may be because their population is more homogenous than Manchester's population. Its national-led model ensures stability of initiatives but lacks responsiveness and feedback from a participatory perspective. However, expanding the city's support to other underserved populations and including them in decision-making processes may prove beneficial in Taipei's strategy.

5.6 Policy Recommendations

Despite a shared goal of promoting age-friendly cities and improving the quality of life for older adults, Manchester and Taipei have contrasting models for AFC development, each with different strengths and limitations. While Manchester thrives in civic participation, its model is not a fully comprehensive AFC as it has significant gaps when analysed through the lens of the WHO framework for AFCs. Its local grassroots model lacks the legislative power to fully integrate healthcare and employment within its AFC strategy. The city does not have direct authority and integration of the NHS or national labor laws, and has opted for alternative solutions such as awareness campaigns, employer pledges, and preventative health promotion. While these have proven valuable, they are still incomplete. A policy recommendation to address this issue would be to initiate more formal alliances between the GMCA, local general practitioners, older adult policymaking boards, and NHS trusts. These greater coalitions could help to target gaps in the integration of healthcare and employment, such as promoting health issues such as dementia care into its strategy, similar to that of Taipei. While direct integration between the AFC strategy and NHS might prove out of the scope of the city's abilities, creating networks and awareness campaigns that promote the available health services for older adults through the national health system could help these individuals access the care they need. In regards to the integration of employment laws, the city can advocate for increased older adult

employment protections from the national government themselves, and focus on vertical collaboration to promote baseline employment laws that help older adults to stay in the workforce.



When compared with Taipei, a notable gap in Manchester's AFC strategy is its inclusion of intergenerational initiatives. While acknowledged as an important facet of age-friendly cities, the city lacks formal mechanisms to promote this. By piloting initiatives such as co-living schemes, intergenerational education programs, and shared hobby clubs, the city can improve its intergenerational cohesion and reduce the current age segregation that exists in the city. Manchester's strong tradition of culture and artistic endeavors to promote anti-ageism could also be improved by expanding its scope to promote intergenerational inclusion, with younger adults being encouraged to participate in these activities as well.

In contrast to Manchester, Taipei exemplifies a top-down age-friendly city system, with its achievements in healthcare and employment integration backed by powerful national backing. With its strong top-down system, however, comes a risk of treating its older adults as recipients of services as opposed to independent, high-functioning citizens. Decision-making in Taipei is reserved primarily for high-level institutions, and there is limited opportunity for older adults to voice their experiences and feedback. This gap is further exacerbated when comparing to Manchester's strong culture of civic participation, which is enforced through feedback surveys, decision-making boards, and the inclusion of older adults in campaigns throughout the city. Policy recommendations for Taipei would be to establish a formal advisory board of older adults from diverse neighborhoods across the city, which could help to consult on urban planning, transportation, digital inclusion, and care delivery. In addition, it could be beneficial to leverage already-existing institutions in Taipei such as community care centers, which could work as hubs

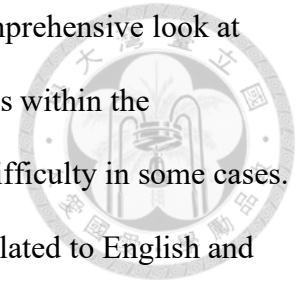
to have informal circles or feedback programs where older adults could discuss future improvements and offer feedback on current policies and programs. Stronger collaboration between formal decision-making bodies such as the DOSW and local partnerships and NGOs could help to drive innovation of new models, which could help drive Taipei as a model for other cities to emulate. By taking into account these policy recommendations and evolving into a more hybrid model in regards to AFC governance, the two cities could develop into more efficient and comprehensive age-friendly cities.

5.7 Limitations of Study

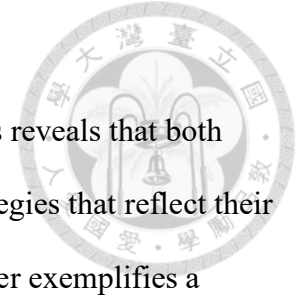
This study provided valuable comparative insights into the development of AFC initiatives in Manchester and Taipei, but there were limitations in the study that should be acknowledged. First, the research relied primarily on secondary data sources such as official publications, reports, and policy documents from government agencies and institutions. These materials were useful in providing information on the structure, goals, and implementation of the AFC initiatives in the cities, but they may reflect the priorities or perspectives of the respective institutions. Consequently, the documents that were analysed in this study may have presented a more favorable or idealised portrayal of age friendly city efforts in the cities, and may have overlooked certain implementation challenges or unintended consequences. The documents were analysed in accordance with the modified framework, and may have been limited in their efforts to cover all aspects of an age-friendly city. This study only used already-existing data, which may have not provided the most comprehensive perspective of the cities' AFC movements.

In addition, the reliance on secondary data sources also did not include primary data collection, such as interviews and focus groups with local stakeholders and older adults

themselves. This may have limited the study's overall efforts to gain a comprehensive look at AFC initiatives in the cities. Moreover, there were some barriers to analysis within the documents themselves, as language and data accessibility proved to be a difficulty in some cases. Some data for Taipei was only presented in Chinese, which had to be translated to English and may have not accurately captured the full breadth of the information. Some local-level data or private evaluations may have also been inaccessible. Despite these limitations, the study was still able to offer a useful foundation for future AFC comparative research.



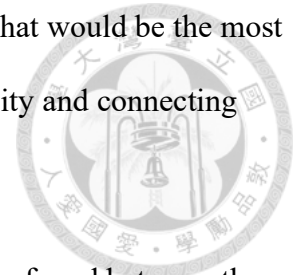
Chapter 6: Conclusion



This comparative study of Manchester and Taipei's AFC initiatives reveals that both cities have embraced the WHO AFC framework, albeit with different strategies that reflect their governing structures, cultural values, and contextual challenges. Manchester exemplifies a bottom-up, community-driven model that focuses on strong local partnerships. They have targeted social inclusion, local decision-making, and civic participation as core themes within their strategy. In contrast, Taipei has developed a top-down approach emphasising integrated healthcare services, legal protections, and intergenerational collaboration. As a result of this, the cities face different challenges, with Manchester's model being more vulnerable to financial instability and limited integration with healthcare services and Taipei faced with duplication of policies, a more rigid and siloed structure, as well as limited involvement with older adults themselves in decision-making.

Manchester and Taipei both began their AFC journeys earlier than other cities, although they were driven by different catalysts. In Manchester, AFC engagement stemmed from a need to address rooted social inequalities, whereas in Taipei, the city's age-friendly strategy was in response to the urgency of its rapidly aging demographic and the cultural emphasis of caring for the elderly. While both cities have made progress in each of the WHO's eight AFC domains, the two prioritised different aspects throughout their development. Manchester emphasised social inclusion, transportation, and local-decision making early in their strategy, while Taipei's foundation of AFCs began with their focus on health and social services. In later years, Manchester put more emphasis on its urban infrastructure and economic participation, while Taipei's later years were focused on integrating social and civic participation. This difference in priorities is a key point of interest in AFC research, as policymakers should work to frame their

target domains to shape the trajectory of their AFC development in a way that would be the most beneficial for its citizens (i.e focusing on the most urgent problems in the city and connecting them with domains of livability).



By analysing the development and initiatives of each city, gaps were found between the two cities in regards to their age-friendly strategies. Manchester would benefit from more comprehensive integration of their health services and employment protections, as well as strengthening their partnerships with more government levels to better secure long-term commitment and funding. Taipei could increase their community-level engagement, participation of older adults in decision-making and feedback, as well as expanding some of their services to more neighborhoods within the city. The experiences of Manchester and Taipei's AFC developments can serve as a model for other cities looking to improve their age-friendliness, and proves that there is no one-size-fits-all model. The city's varying local contexts, governing capacities, and cultural values can play a role in the structure of their AFCs, and in the future, creating a balance between top-down and bottom-up participation will be critical to ensure that both systemic support and community empowerment work together to create responsive AFCs that accommodate the needs of older adults.

6.1 Recommendations for Future Research, Practice, and Policy Making

This comparative study sought to offer valuable insights into the developmental context and implementation of AFC initiatives in Manchester and Taipei, but there were some key limitations which highlight areas for future research in this area. This study would potentially benefit from primary qualitative data collection, which could be done by conducting interviews with key stakeholders in the AFC strategy as well as older adults themselves. This study focused on secondary data from policy documents, academic literature, and other data sources, but the

voices of stakeholders and older adults were not specifically incorporated for the purposes of time and scope of this study. Future research would benefit from in-depth interviews, focus groups, or other participatory methods which could help capture the actual lived experiences and perspectives of key individuals from both Manchester and Taipei. This could allow for a more comprehensive understanding of how AFC strategies are actually implemented and experienced. By incorporating this strategy, assessment of the outcomes of the implemented indicators could be observed, which could further help to identify gaps in policy delivery, barriers to participation, and other areas which may not be able to be understood from secondary data alone.

Based on this study, there are a number of key takeaways for policymakers and advocates looking to develop an effective AFC. This study identified the value of academic institutions as a key driver of AFC innovation. In Manchester, partnerships with universities and research centers have helped to provide evidence-based planning, evaluation frameworks, and spurred the development of policies. Policymakers should aim to integrate academic expertise into AFC development as a way of securing cross-sector collaboration, long-term commitment, and supporting research and innovation that can help to drive new initiatives. This can be done in a number of ways, such as having advisory boards made up of academic experts, helping to fund AFC research in academic institutions, and formal collaborations between the government and universities.

Another critical area in which policymakers should focus on is the involvement of older adults in the policymaking. Policies should include older adults in decision-making, planning, and feedback loops in order to increase policy relevance and efficiency of initiatives. This can be done through older adult advisory boards, consistent survey feedback mechanisms, and co-production teams and research that work to solve AFC issues within the community. An

emphasis on equity and framing ageing as a social justice issue can help to ensure the inclusion of older adults in decision-making. Achieving this aim can help to ensure a bottom-up model which can reinforce the success of an AFC. Through the example of Taipei, strong coordination between local and national agencies can help to build strong multilevel governance and secure funding, organisation, and long-term commitment of policies. Cities should work to integrate different levels of government support into their AFC development. For cases like Manchester, ensuring national-level support may be more difficult, and cross-city collaboration within the region could further help to fill this gap by helping to sustain commitment and long-term planning. Collaboration with national organisations can help to create a comprehensive age-friendly city.

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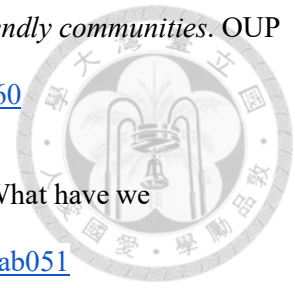
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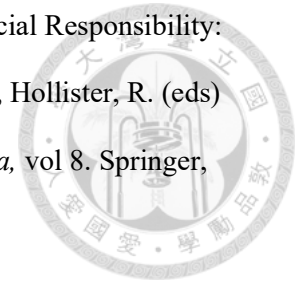
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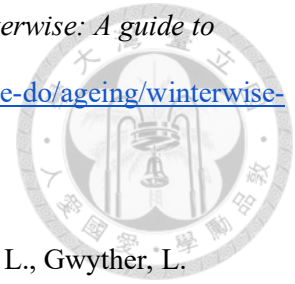
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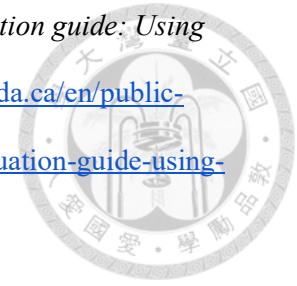
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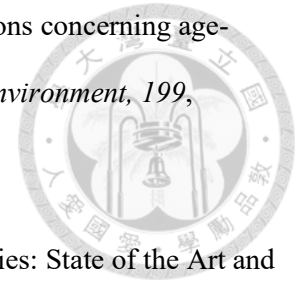
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