

**Mobility, Mood and Place: Habitats for Happy and Healthy Ageing**

**John McIntyre Conference Centre, Edinburgh**

**11th - 14th October 2016**

# ***Proceedings***

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# ***Presentations***

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## **Everyday Life and Older People's Well-being in Local High Streets**

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### **Background**

In the UK local high streets have traditionally been at the core of everyday life in towns and cities, supporting patterns of local mobility and consumption. However there has been little attempt to understand the importance of the high street in the everyday lives of older adults. As a result, we have limited understanding of how these settings can be designed and managed to offer material and social opportunities for improving the well-being of older people ageing in place.

### **Aims**

To understand how local high streets can support the well-being of older adults, and how this learning can inform their improvement for an ageing-in-place agenda.

### **Methods**

Eighty-four (84) retired people (61 - 97) living independently were interviewed either individually, in small groups or as walk-along interviews, in three different locations in Edinburgh (UK). The findings were thematically analysed to develop an understanding of how the well-being of older adults is supported through everyday practices in local high streets.

### **Findings**

Several dimensions of well-being are supported by local High Streets. Going 'out and about' at these locales can be an enjoyable everyday activity tapping into positive emotions and happiness, and leading to feelings of attachment and belonging.

From fleeting to more intimate social interactions, local high streets provide places and opportunities for reducing isolation, offering restorative experiences away from the home. As "community-hubs", they may support participation and role fulfilment in old age.

Finally, proximity and ease of access to services and amenities can foster personal autonomy and sense of control, allowing for completion of activities of everyday living at a local level.