

# Together in the Neighbourhood Project

JOY AND SENSE OF COMMUNITY TO THE LIVES OF ELDERLY RESIDENTS

*Murto J, Mustonen O, Heimonen S, Karvinen E, Topo P. Age Institute, Helsinki, Finland*

## AIMS

Together in the Neighbourhood Project (2017-2019) aims to increase togetherness and common activities in housing companies and combat feelings of loneliness.

A housing company may include several apartment houses. The project will co-design a model of mobile housing company that is distributed nationwide.

## METHODS

- The project is aimed especially to elderly residents who spend most of their time at home, who have mobility problems or experience loneliness.
- Activities are organised in two cities (Helsinki and Kotka) in 20–40 housing companies, mostly City rental housing.
- Residents' hopes for activities are investigated with a

- questionnaire, interviews and workshops.
- Common activities include, for example, outdoor exercise, fitness exercise, games and discussions.
- Activities are organised by volunteer group leaders. They receive free training, materials and support.
- Feedback is collected for evaluation and development with a questionnaire, interviews and workshops.

## RESULTS

- Regular activities have already been started in 15 housing companies by trained volunteers.
- The project promotes cooperation between elderly residents, housing companies, public sector and local NGOs
- The participating older residents have welcomed the activities with great enthusiasm.

*The activities take place in common rooms of the housing companies or nearby locations or courtyards.*



## CONCLUSIONS

According to initial results, it appears that free activities close to home promote the participation of older people with decreased functional capacity and feelings of loneliness. This improves residents' sense of community.