



Age Friendly Community Plan

2024 - 2029



Forest to Wheatbelt

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Acknowledgment of Country

The Shire of West Arthur respectfully acknowledges that the land upon which we work and live is the traditional land of the Wilman Noongar people. We recognise their cultural heritage, beliefs, and continuing relationship with the land. We honour Elders past, present, and emerging, and we support the principles of a reconciled Australia for all its people.

About the Document

This document was prepared by the Shire of West Arthur.

Disclaimer

All information and content in this material is provided in good faith and is based on sources believed to be reliable and accurate at the time of development. The Shire of West Arthur and its respective officers, employees, and consulting agents do not accept legal liability or responsibility for the material or any consequences arising from its use.

Feedback

Any feedback related to this document should be emailed to: shire@westarthur.wa.gov.au

Acknowledgments

The Shire of West Arthur would like to thank the people and organisations who contributed time and expertise to the development of the Shire of West Arthur Age Friendly Community Plan.



Message from the President and CEO

It is with pleasure that we present the Shire of West Arthur's *Age-Friendly Community Plan*. The Shire of West Arthur recognises the value of the contributions older people make to our community and so has developed this plan to identify priorities for our aging residents.

It is critical that we plan for an aging community, as the percentage of older people in the Wheatbelt is projected to increase to over 17% of the population by 2027. There will be challenges but also opportunities to ensure that the quality of life of the aging population remains high.

Identification of key stakeholders both within and outside of the Shire is already in progress, with responsibility for addressing the needs being shared amongst them. The Shire of West Arthur is already working collaboratively with partners to address the needs of current and future older residents and will continue to identify new opportunities as they arise. We recognise that the improvements identified in this Plan will also benefit the wider community.

The Shire of West Arthur's *Age Friendly Plan* outlines our commitment to our older residents, both current and future. The strong community spirit and level of participation in this Plan have helped to develop comprehensive actions that will further enhance the lives of our residents.

Neil Morrell
Shire President

Vincent Fordham Lamont
Chief Executive Officer



Executive Summary

In 2023, the Shire of West Arthur directed the creation of an Age-Friendly Community Plan, which will assist in the development of an age-friendly future for the community.

‘Ageing-in-place’ is regarded as the ability of older people to live in their own homes and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or intrinsic level of capacity (World Health Organisation - WHO, 2015). In essence, ‘aging-in-place’ is about ensuring access, affordability, and attitudes to maximise health and well-being outcomes for older people. It is recognised that population aging is a global problem. It is estimated that the global population of people aged 60 and over will almost triple by 2050, and those aged 80 and over will increase almost fivefold.

In June 2007, 17% of the Western Australian population was aged 60 years and over. It is estimated that by 2041, this percentage will increase to nearly one in three. The highest projected growth rates overall are among the population aged 85 and over, which is projected to increase from 1% of the population to between 7-11%. There are significant implications for assisted housing, health, and disability services.

With the aging population, it is projected that there will be an increase in the number of people with dementia, of between 12.5% and 25%, by 2050 (estimations vary, reflecting improvements in diagnosis and changes in definitions of dementia). As a result, there will be an increased demand for dementia-specific services both in terms of community services and residential aged care.

Inland rural communities are experiencing aging in a different way. There has been a pattern of inland rural population decline, particularly in the young adult groups of 15-24 and 25-34 years. By default, this means there is aging in rural and remote communities. Some rural communities have seen an influx of older people seeking cheaper housing and alternative lifestyles. Some communities have had structural changes within them, including the loss of public and private services such as schools, hospitals, sporting clubs, and social opportunities, which makes the community less attractive to younger people. This leads to implications for the sustainability of the community and the provision of suitable housing, health and disability services, transport, and social participation for older people.

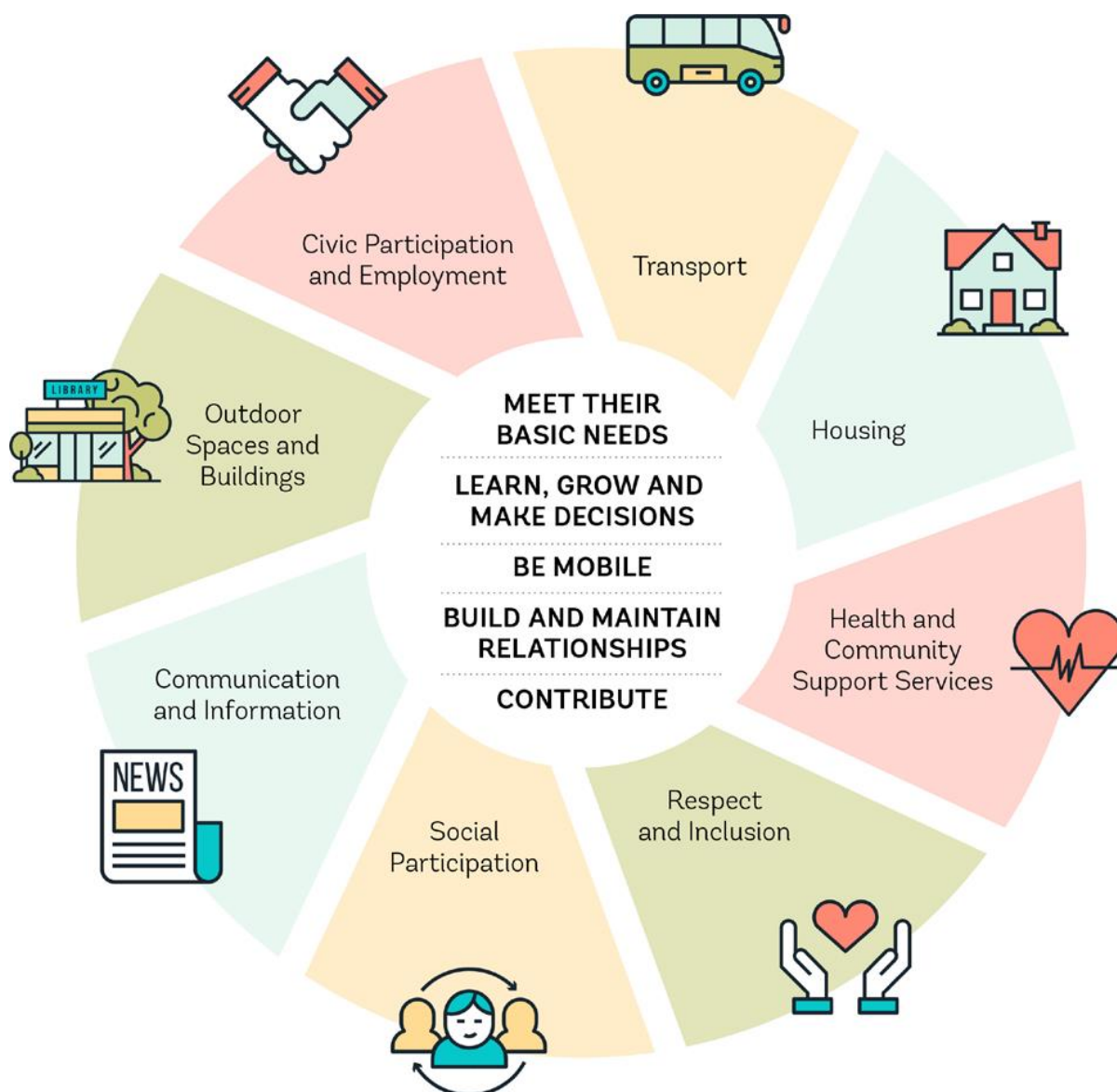
To respond to these and other socio-economic changes, communities need to be responsive and proactive, adopting an approach to develop a community that promotes active aging and strives to be a community where people of all ages and abilities can participate in the physical and social environment and enjoy good health and well-being. Communities with an age-friendly approach have been shown to respond to these changes most effectively.

The preface of the World Health Organisation’s (WHO) *Report on Ageing* highlights that for most older people, “the maintenance of functional ability has the highest importance” and “the greatest costs to society are not the expenditures made to foster this functional ability, but the benefits that might be missed if we fail to make the appropriate adaptations and investments” (WHO, 2015). The *Report on Ageing* outlines the five essential functional elements for older people to age safely in a place that is right for them, to continue to develop personally, to be included, and to continue contributing to their communities while retaining their health. These elements are:

- Meet their basic needs.
- Learn, grow, and make decisions.
- Be mobile.
- Build and maintain relationships.
- Contribute.

The framework developed in WHO's *Global Age-Friendly Cities Guide* proposed eight essential features that can help to identify and address barriers to the well-being and participation of older people. These features include:

- Transport.
- Housing.
- Health and community support services.
- Social participation.
- Outdoor spaces and buildings.
- Respect and social inclusion.
- Civic participation and employment.
- Communication and information.



What is an Age-Friendly Community?

An age-friendly community encourages active aging by offering opportunities for health, participation, and security in order to enhance the quality of life of life as people age.

It is a community that:

- Recognises the great diversity among older people.
- Promotes their inclusion and contribution in all areas of community life.
- Respects their decisions and lifestyle choices.
- Anticipates and responds flexibly to aging-related needs and preferences.

An age-friendly community is one that has appropriate housing, transport, physical infrastructure, and social and civic supports that enable people to maintain participation in the community as they grow old. Being age-friendly also means that a community has reviewed and adapted its physical and social infrastructure to help older people age in place.

The seniors' population now spans more than 40 years (from 60 to 100+ years) making it very diverse in terms of health, family, economic, emotional, physical, and household circumstances.

Aging well requires planning to enable older people to age with dignity, maintain their independence, play active and valued roles, and have their rights respected and upheld. The WA government's planning approach for seniors is underpinned by the following principles:

- An individual's choices, rights, and dignity are fundamental.
- Aging well is a lifelong journey.
- 'Aging in place' benefits everyone.

It benefits both seniors and their communities to have opportunities to stay connected, to have a say in the services that affect them, and to remain mentally and physically active. When seniors benefit, the whole community benefits.

Planning for an age-friendly WA means:

- Promoting health and well-being.
- Access to essential services.
- Economic security and protection of rights.
- Welcoming and well-planned communities.
- Opportunities to contribute.

Background

Previous Plans

A joint plan between six Shires: Dumbleyung, Lake Grace, Wagin, West Arthur, Williams, and Woodanilling was developed in 2010. This plan looked at the region but included snapshots of information about West Arthur. The researchers created focus groups, interviewed service providers, and surveyed individuals. It was recognised that there were limitations to the interpretation of the data; however key issues were identified, and a framework developed for future planning.

In 2018 a review of the Plan was carried out, creating an Addendum specifically for the Shire of West Arthur. The review identified improved infrastructure and the delivery of new or improved services, including:

- Eight independent living units constructed in Darkan as part of the 4WDL Well Aged Persons Housing Project.
- The engagement of a part-time senior's support officer by the Shire.
- Activities for seniors including bus trips and outings funded and organised by the Shire and the Community Resource Centre (CRC).
- The West Arthur Group of Seniors (WAGS) has formed with weekly gatherings for activities.
- Parkinson's support group meetings; and
- Improvements to Shire infrastructure and equipment to support seniors in our community.

Findings in the review also identified that the overall demographic was stable but aging, attributing this to the additional independent living units, the good health of the older residents, and the provision of services enabling them to stay within their community for longer.

The Shire of West Arthur participated in two projects before the review: the Wheatbelt Development Commission's (WDC) Creating Age-Friendly Communities in Small Towns (2015) and Enterprising Communities in 2017.

The original findings had not changed in that overall older people felt that in many respects the community was age-friendly despite some significant barriers. They felt safe, valued, and respected. They enjoy the freedom that country living gives them and supported by family, friends, and neighbours, as well as service providers, are able to stay active and involved in community life, without being a 'burden' on their families.

Issues identified in the review included:

- Lack of transportation.
- Need for more GP/community nursing hours.
- Delivered meals service.
- Access to Telehealth.
- Pharmacy access.
- Parking and access to facilities, including shops; and
- Footpaths.

This Addendum was not completed and did not go to Council for endorsement.

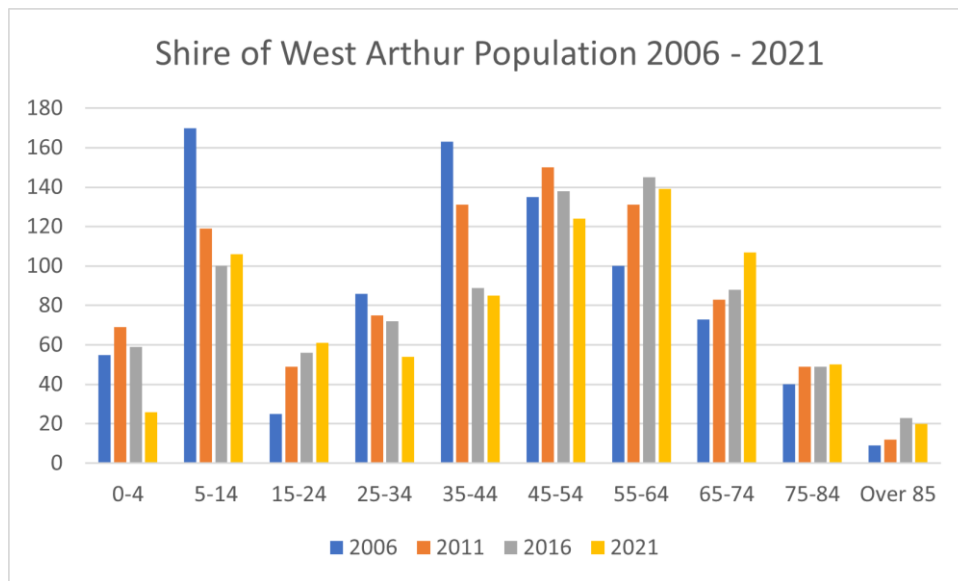
About Our Community

Demographic Profile

Situated 204km southeast of Perth and 115km east of Bunbury, the Shire of West Arthur is nestled between the forests of the South-west and the Wheatbelt. The western side of the Shire is typified by bush and forest, and the eastern side is predominantly broad-acre farming with less than 5% remnant bush.

At 2580km², it is one of the largest shires in the area. Peaking in 1966 at 1427, the population of the Shire of West Arthur steadily decreased and is currently 773 (2021 Census).

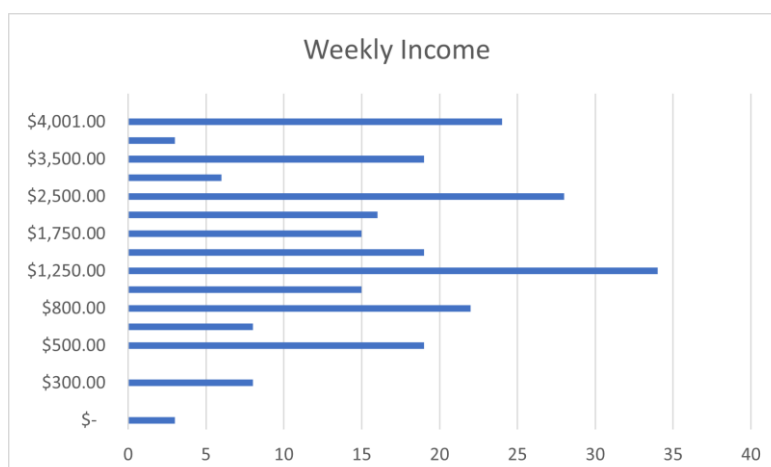
In recent times, West Arthur has had increases in the 15-24 age group but significant declines in the 0-4 and 35-44 age groups. There have been corresponding increases in the older age groups.



Socio-Economic Profile

There are several measures that can be used to evaluate the socioeconomic status of residents. One is the weekly income.

The average weekly income across Australia in August 2022 was \$1,250, an increase of \$50 (4.2%) since August 2021. Figures for West Arthur are shown below.



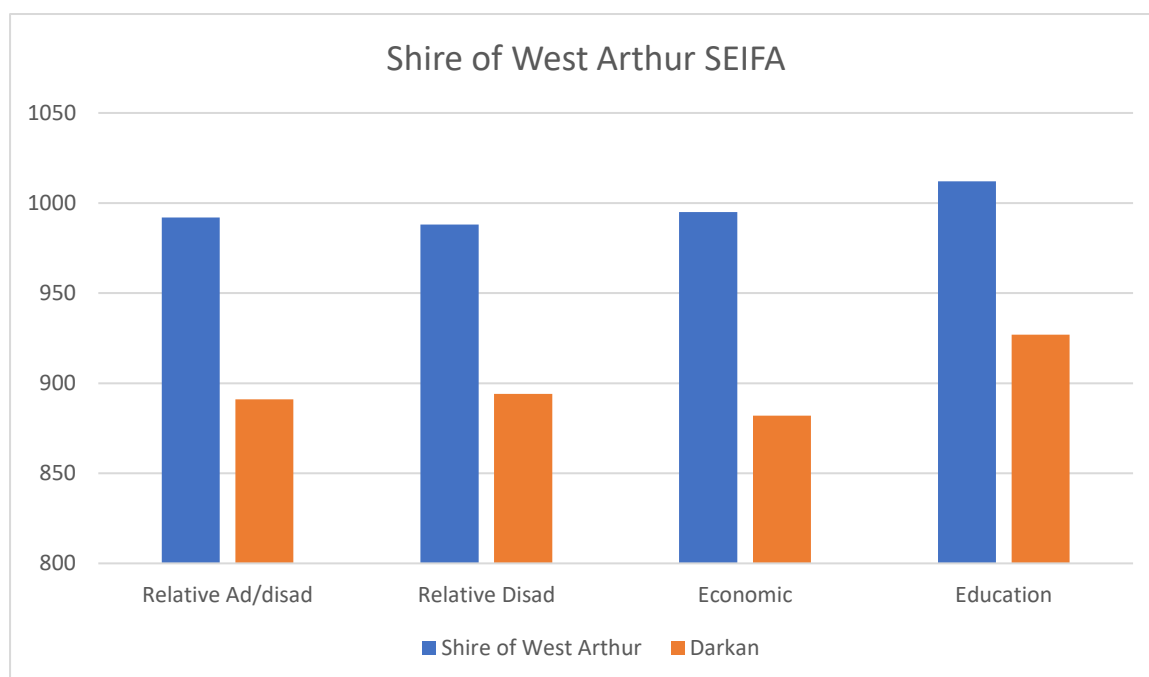
Data from Services Australia show that in 2020 there were 136 people in the Shire that received some form of assistance, with 70 people receiving an Age Pension, 26 receiving a Disability Support Pension, 22 on Jobseeker and 18 on carer or parenting allowances. All pensions and allowances are means tested.

The maximum basic rate per fortnight (excluding supplements) for age pensions is \$936.80 for singles and \$1412.40 for combined couples. Maximum JobSeeker fortnightly payments are \$668.40 for singles, \$718.60 for a single with a dependent child or children, \$718.60 for a single, 60 or older, after 9 continuous months on payment and \$608.70 for partnered. Disability Support Pensions are the same as the age pension.

Indigenous populations have been consistently shown to have an overall lower socio-economic status. In the 2021 Census, data shows that 3.5% of the population identified as being indigenous; however, this figure could be higher as 13% of the population did not state their indigenous status.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) also analyses statistics from various aspects of the census, along with other data to develop Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA). The ABS broadly defines relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage in terms of people's access to material and social resources, and their ability to participate in society. A lower score for a Statistical Area Level 1 (SA1) indicates that an area is relatively disadvantaged compared to an area with a higher score. However, it is important to remember that the scores are an ordinal measure, so care should be taken when comparing scores. Common uses of SEIFA include:

- Determining areas that require funding and services.
- Identifying new business opportunities; and
- Assisting research into the relationship between socio-economic disadvantage and various social outcomes.



It is important to note that while the Shire overall rating is in the 4th quintile, the town of Darkan's overall rating is in the 1st quintile, putting it in the most disadvantaged category. Potentially, this could be because of the number of aged people living in the community.

SEIFA scores do not measure accumulated wealth, infrastructure, transport, and differences in cost of living. When used in the rural context, these issues need to be considered.



Links with our Strategic Community Plan, Corporate Business Plan, and Disability Access and Inclusion Plan

Local governments in Western Australia are required to comply with the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework, which includes development of a Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Business Plan as well as other Informing Strategies and Plans, such as the Age-Friendly Community Plan.

In the process of developing this Age-Friendly Community Plan, the Shire's Strategic Community Plan was considered to ensure alignment with Council's priorities.

| Theme | Outcome | Strategy |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Community – Safe, Friendly and Inclusive | 1.1 A safe place to work, live, and visit | 1.1.1 Support for the provision of emergency services and volunteers 1.1.2 Prevention of crime 1.1.3 Communication of risks and hazards to the community and assist with the management of these |
| | 1.2 Support available for people of all ages and abilities | 1.2.1 Actively support and promote a range of activities for a range of ages and abilities 1.2.2 Maintain and support the growth of medical facilities, childcare, and aged services in the district 1.2.3 Provide services and infrastructure to meet the needs of the community |
| 4. Built Environment – well-maintained roads and infrastructure which reflects our identity | 4.2 Our built infrastructure is well-maintained, attractive, and inviting | 4.2.2 Community facilities are continually reviewed and upgraded as required through asset management plans 4.2.3 Our townscapes are attractive and well-developed with consideration for current and future usage |
| 5. Leadership and Management – inspirational, dynamic, transparent | 4.4 Actively engage with community, business, and other stakeholders to grow and develop the community | 4.4.1 Continue to collaborate with other regional shires to achieve maximum benefits for the region 4.4.2 Council will advocate on behalf of the community on issues that the community identifies as important 4.4.3 Continued improvement in communication with the community through various platforms that ensure all |

| | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------------------------------|
| | | members of the community have access to information |
|--|--|-----------------------------------------------------|

As part of developing the Shire's Corporate Business Plan, the Council must consider the core business functions of the Shire, all informing strategies and plans, budgetary constraints, resources available, and identified community needs as outlined in the Strategic Community Plan. The community priorities identified in this Age Friendly Community Plan and the proposed actions to address them will be considered by the Council as part of the annual planning process.

Methodology

The Community Development Officer was instructed to carry out community consultation through a variety of means, including:

- Face-to-face consultation.
- Email.
- Informal surveys.

It was important to consult with as many participants as possible, including seniors, carers, service providers, and stakeholders. This was conducted through meeting with local groups and individuals in an informal setting ('yarning'), making the participants feel more comfortable in providing information.

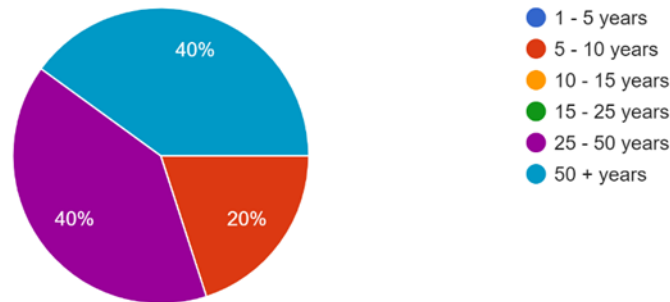
The survey covered eight domains of age-friendliness that influence the health and quality of life of older people.

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

Key Findings

The Shire of West Arthur consulted with the community by a survey process using social media, the Shire website, and the local newsletter ‘The Bleat’. Surveys were also delivered to key stakeholders. These methods were successful, with several respondents.

Most respondents indicated that they had lived in the community a long time, with 80% having lived in the Shire of West Arthur between 25 and 50+ years. A lesser percentage showed that they had relocated to the Shire to retire.



All respondents indicated that they were planning on staying in the community long-term.

What we like about living here

‘No hustle and bustle of the city...’; ‘the facilities and the people...’; ‘quiet and peaceful...’; ‘friendliness of the country...’; ‘peace and quiet, community friendship...’

What we don’t like about living here

‘Lack of shopping...’; ‘businesses closing...’; ‘distance from major services...’; ‘understocked supermarket...’



Community and Health Care

Summary

Accessible and affordable community and health services are crucial in keeping seniors healthy, independent, and active. This involves an appropriate supply of aged care services conveniently located close to where older people live and trained health and social workers to provide these services.

Seniors have different healthcare needs and preferences. A range of services along the continuum of aged care, such as preventive care, geriatric clinics, hospitals, adult day centres, respite care, rehabilitation, residential nursing home care, home care and palliative care, would meet these diverse needs. These services should be easily accessible at locations convenient for seniors to reach. Residential care services, such as nursing homes, located within residential areas would allow older residents being cared for there to remain connected to their familiar surroundings. Education on the health system and available health services would raise awareness among seniors of the areas of care available to them. Health services should be affordable to provide seniors with peace of mind that they will be able to receive care regardless of their ability to pay. (WHO 2021)

The Council of the Ageing's Conversations summary report outlined that older Australians want to have choices about their services, and there is a need for good information about options and service quality, along with the support to make the best choices (COTA, 2011). Services should also cater for diversity and not discriminate against the individual (COTA, 2011).

There is an ongoing need to challenge the stereotype of an older person and increase knowledge and understanding of the process of ageing (WHO, 2015). Older Australians have indicated they want to be respected for who they are and that they are valued as contributing members of society (COTA, 2011). In addition, older people should be fundamentally recognised as a diverse group of people with individual choices, rights, and dignity – i.e., 'one size does not fit all' (DLCG, 2016).

Community Consultation Findings

Limited Health and Allied Services are available in the Shire of West Arthur, with the population being required to travel to larger regional centres such as Narrogin or Collie to access services such as hospitals, dentistry, optical, or physiotherapy.

The Health and Resource Centre, managed by the West Arthur Community Resource Centre, is located in Darkan and provides a range of services, including:

- A weekly doctor
- Weekly blood testing service
- A twice-weekly health nurse
- Chiropractic clinic every 8 weeks
- Exercise classes.

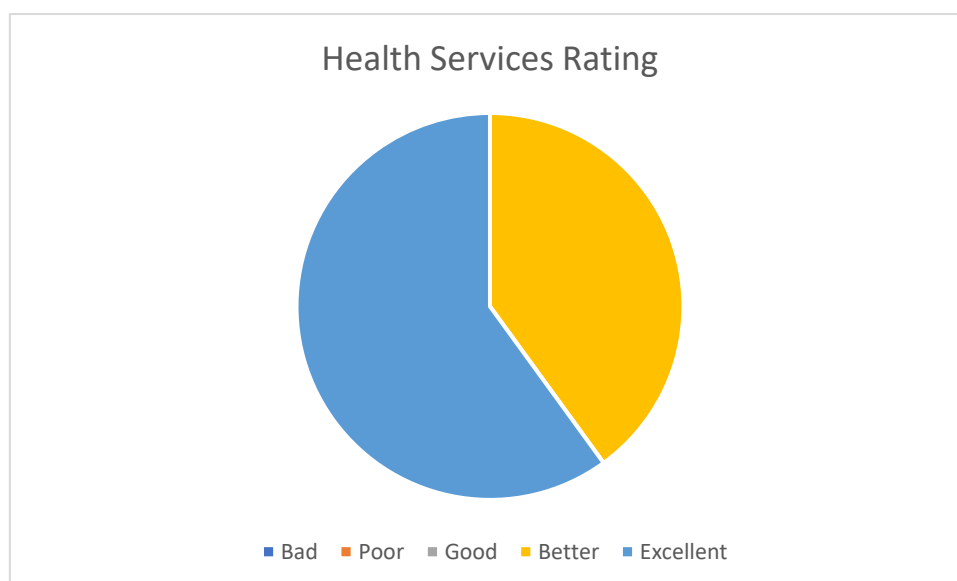
Telehealth appointments and video appointments can be facilitated. Counselling is available by appointment only.

The West Arthur Community Resource Centre also offers Seniors Care, partnering with InCasa Country. After registration with My Aged Care, clients receiving community care packages are eligible for these services.

Regarding community support and health services, the recipients rated the following statements:

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| There is an adequate range of services | 40% |
| Home care services include health, personal care and housekeeping | 100% |
| The services are affordable | 60% |
| Services are well-promoted | 20% |
| Appropriate information is provided on services | 40% |
| Health and community support services are conveniently located | 80% |
| Buildings are well-constructed and fully accessible | 80% |
| My home is located close to services and the community | 80% |
| Service delivery is coordinated | 0% |
| The administration is simple | 0% |
| Staff respect older people | 80% |
| Staff are trained to server older people | 60% |
| Emergency planning considers older people | 20% |

All participants indicated that they were keen to stay and 'age in place'; however, due to the lack of adequate health care, those who develop high needs will have to relocate.



REMPAN data also shows that a small percentage of the population requires assistance with core activities. This could indicate the limited health and allied services available for those in need of assistance, forcing people to move outside of the Shire for the required services.

| Need for Assistance | West Arthur | Wheatbelt | Southwest | Western Australia |
|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Does not have a need for assistance with core activities | 84.04% | 83.49% | 88.35% | 88.72% |
| Has need for assistance with core activities | 3.06% | 5.16% | 5.29% | 4.58% |
| Not stated | 12.90% | 11.07% | 6.14% | 6.43% |

REMPAN data from the 2021 Census shows that residents in the Shire of West Arthur have fewer long-term health conditions than the rest of the Wheatbelt, but in conditions more associated with aging residents, there is a higher percentage than when compared to the state of every condition excepting kidney disease. This could be because of the older population within the Shire, as well as the fact that people have had to relocate closer to service providers if they are suffering from major health conditions, including kidney disease and dementia.

| Long-Term Health Conditions | West Arthur | Wheatbelt | Southwest | Western Australia |
|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Arthritis | 10.11% | 10.47% | 10.02% | 7.62% |
| Asthma | 7.98% | 8.09% | 8.09% | 7.32% |
| Cancer (including remission) | 2.79% | 3.41% | 3.24% | 2.73% |
| Dementia (including Alzheimer's) | 0.66% | 0.69% | 0.78% | 0.66% |
| Diabetes (excluding gestational) | 4.92% | 5.52% | 4.69% | 4.39% |
| Heart Disease (including heart attack and angina) | 4.12% | 4.77% | 3.95% | 3.55% |
| Kidney Disease | 0.40% | 1.00% | 0.81% | 0.76% |
| Lung Condition (including COPD or emphysema) | 2.13% | 2.37% | 1.94% | 1.58% |
| Mental Health Conditions (including depression or anxiety) | 5.32% | 8.38% | 9.53% | 8.25% |
| Stroke | 0.93% | 1.05% | 0.98% | 0.81% |
| Any other long-term health condition(s) | 3.59% | 7.04% | 7.64% | 7.36% |
| No condition / Not stated | 70.74% | 66.36% | 66.41% | 69.90% |

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Summary

The external environment has a major impact on older people's mobility, independence, and quality of life as they go about their daily lives outside the comfort of their homes. A clean city with well-maintained recreational areas, ample rest areas, well-developed and safe pedestrian and building infrastructure, and a secure environment provides ideal living conditions for seniors to age in place.

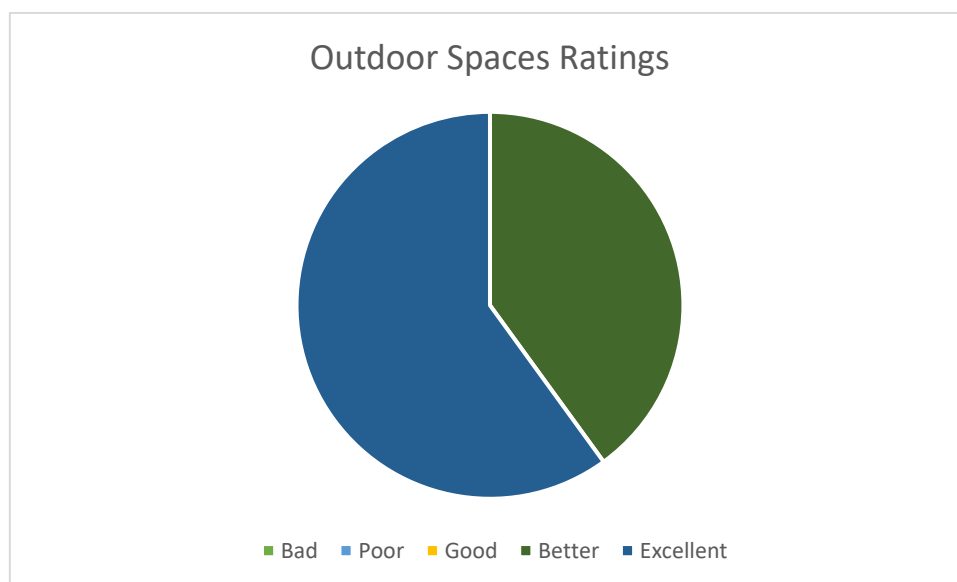
A town's cleanliness, noise levels, odours, and green spaces affect its age-friendliness. When towns develop clean and green environments and take age-friendly features into consideration for urban planning, towns can become great places for older residents to live out their golden years.

Narrow, uneven, cracked, and congested pavements are potential hazards for older people, compounded by the weather when it rains. Cars parked on pavements and cyclists also pose safety risks as pedestrians are forced to walk on the roads. Pedestrian crossing lights that change too quickly are another danger for older pedestrians, who may rather not go out in extreme cases. A lack of rest areas makes it even more difficult for seniors to get around when they tire. Public facilities and shops located far away from where seniors live would deter seniors from using these facilities.

A community will not be cohesive and integrated if residents feel unsafe. This, in turn, discourages older people from going about their daily lives independently and affects social integration between generations. Making residents feel safe also involves putting adequate measures in place against natural disasters. (WHO 2021)

Community Consultation Findings

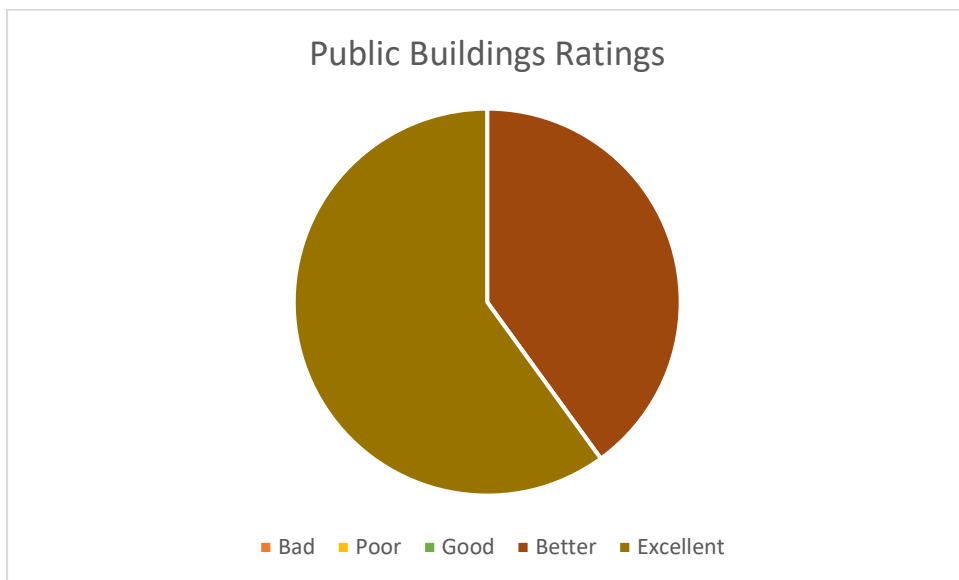
Participants and stakeholders were asked to rate the outdoor spaces in the Shire of West Arthur and to provide feedback on seating, footpaths, pedestrian crossings, and street lighting.



| | |
|---------------------------------|------|
| There is enough outdoor seating | 100% |
| The seating is well-maintained | 80% |
| There are enough public spaces | 80% |

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|------|
| They are clean and pleasant | 100% |
| The footpaths are well-maintained | 40% |
| The footpaths are wide enough for wheelchairs and gophers | 60% |
| There are enough pedestrian crossings | 0% |
| Drivers give way to pedestrians | 20% |
| I feel safe getting out and about | 100% |
| There is adequate street lighting | 100% |
| The footpaths are mostly well-lit | 20% |

While the outdoor spaces were well-rated, it is obvious that work needs to be done to improve footpaths and pedestrian crossings.



| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| The services are co-located together | 80% |
| The services are conveniently located | 80% |
| The buildings are accessible | 60% |
| There are special customer service arrangements for older people | 60% |
| The buildings have adequate signage | 60% |
| There are seating or rest areas | 80% |
| The buildings have ramps, railings and automatic doors | 40% |

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| The buildings have good lighting | 60% |
| The buildings have non-slip floors | 40% |
| There are enough public toilets | 60% |
| They are well-maintained | 80% |
| The toilets are accessible | 40% |

Whilst the Shire Administration Centre and the West Arthur CRC have automatic doors, no other public buildings have them. The public toilets are located on Coalfields Highway, away from the main shopping precinct. While the public buildings have toilets, they are not accessible outside of opening hours, which can cause problems.



Transportation

Summary

Accessible and affordable public transport is key to ensuring a town's elderly population can age actively and remain engaged with their community, with access to health and social facilities. Driving conditions and parking facilities in a town should also keep older drivers in mind.

Older people should ideally be able to navigate their town's transport system with ease. Apart from the affordability of transport services, residents' perceived safety of public transport services would affect their willingness to use them. Transport services should cater to people with a range of mobility needs. In addition, helpful drivers sensitive to elderly needs would be able to better assist older commuters. Finally, information on safe, age-friendly, and affordable transport services must be made available to older people to facilitate their usage.

Driving can be an essential transportation option for older people, particularly in suburban and more remote residential areas. Heavy traffic, poor road conditions, inadequate street lighting, and poorly positioned signage are some barriers to city driving, particularly as older people may face vision difficulties. Maintaining confidence as drivers age is also important in ensuring a safe driving experience. Parking bays close to buildings and drop-off and pick-up bays are welcomed by seniors, too. (WHO 2021)

The ability to be mobile refers to movement in all its forms, whether powered by the body (with or without an assistive device) or a vehicle. Mobility is influenced by not only an individual's intrinsic capacity but decisions about mobility are in turn shaped by the built environment and the attitudes of others. It is recognised that when older people are not able to move around, their social networks are affected, and the community may lose the valuable contribution of these older people to overall community cohesion and function. (WHO, 2015)

When considering ways to maximise the use of a public transport system by older people, key elements to consider include the physical accessibility of vehicles and stations/stops, creating a convenient route and timetable, offering free or discount fares and distributing clear information about what public transport is available and how to access it (WHO, 2015).

Liveable Neighbourhoods, an initiative launched by the WA Planning Commission to embrace 'new urbanism' planning concepts, aims to achieve a site-responsive urban design based on safe, sustainable, attractive neighbourhoods interconnected through a street layout that promotes greater use of public transport, walking and cycling, reducing dependency on private vehicles (WAPC, 2015). The urban design principles of Liveable Neighbourhoods are particularly important for older people as they emphasise the need to create an environment that accommodates the effective and safe use of different modes of transport when individuals cease to drive.

Environmental characteristics associated with increasing the physical activity of older people include providing safe spaces for walking (i.e., footpaths and parks) and ensuring easy access to local facilities and services (WHO, 2015).

Community Consultation Findings

Participants were asked to rate transportation services within the community. It is acknowledged that there is no public transportation within the Shire, with residents required to drive themselves, rely on family and friends, or utilise home care services.

This is reflected in the REMPLAN data, which shows that only 0.53% of the Shire's population does not have a vehicle, compared to 2.24% in the Wheatbelt, 2.19% in the Southwest, and 3.06% in the State.

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| I have a motorised wheelchair or gopher | 33.3% |
| I use the road or footpath safely | 0% |
| There are places to leave the scooter or gopher | 0% |
| I have access to or utilise active transport (walking or cycling) | 66.7% |
| I feel safe when walking or cycling | 66.7% |

Gopher users rated the roads and paths as 2 out of a possible 5.

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| There is a community transport service | 20% |
| There are specialised transport services for older and disabled persons | 20% |
| Transport stops are conveniently located | 0% |
| Information is provided about routes and services | 0% |
| I drive myself | 80% |
| The roads are well-maintained and well-lit | 20% |
| Traffic signs and intersections are visible and well-placed | 0% |
| Signs are easy to read | 40% |
| There is enough parking | 60% |
| There are priority seniors parking bays | 0% |

Housing

Summary

Liveable Neighbourhoods, an initiative launched by the Department of Planning to embrace 'new urbanism' planning concepts, aims to achieve a site-responsive urban design based on safe, sustainable, attractive neighbourhoods interconnected through a street layout that promotes greater use of public transport, walking and cycling, reducing dependency on private vehicles (DOP, 2015). The urban design principles of Liveable Neighbourhoods are particularly important for older people as it emphasises the need to create an environment that accommodates the effective and safe use of different modes of transport when individuals cease to drive.

Environmental characteristics associated with increasing the physical activity of older people include providing safe spaces for walking (i.e., footpaths and parks) and ensuring easy access to local facilities and services (WHO, 2015).

According to WHO's Report on Ageing, the most important basic needs identified by older people beyond health and long-term care are adequate housing and personal and financial security.

In 2009, in response to the final report delivered by the State government's Housing Authority Social Housing Taskforce, the Council of the Ageing (COTA) noted that there was a need to closely consider the changing circumstances of older people in relation to their housing needs, including an increasing incidence of dementia and the development of appropriate accommodation for people who suffer these conditions; changes in home ownership patterns including an increasing proportion of people entering into retirement either as renters or with a mortgage; and not all Baby Boomers are able to live comfortably in retirement – especially women (COTA, 2009).

Research by the Retirement Living Council indicates that by 2025 the demand for retirement living accommodation is forecast to double from the current level of 5 percent of senior Australians living in retirement villages, but at the current rate of development, there will not be enough retirement villages to meet consumer demand (Property Council of Australia, 2015).

Other research analysing how quality housing design can allow 'aging-in-place' noted that planning legislation is fundamental to ensuring older people's accommodation is being built to meet the unique physical and emotional needs of older people and at the same time remain responsive to the neighbourhood context (Paduch, 2008).

Regarding personal security, factors such as age, gender, level of physical or mental capacity, socioeconomic status, and ethnic or religious background are all important influences on personal risk and how it is experienced. Furthermore, the characteristics of neighbourhoods and communities can also have an impact on crime and stress levels and result in older people restricting their movements (WHO, 2015).

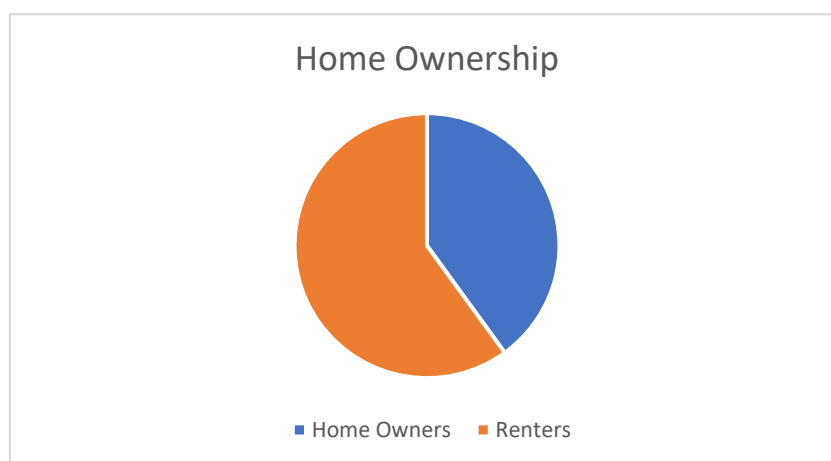
Lack of financial security in older age is a major obstacle to healthy aging, and in OECD countries, older women who are living alone are at an increased risk of poverty, including in Australia (WHO, 2015).

Community Consultation Findings

Regarding the home that respondents live in, 60% of respondents indicated that they were renters.

When asked about their homes, the following information was provided. No one used a gardening service.

| | |
|---------------------------------------------|-----|
| I feel comfortable in my home | 80% |
| The home is well designed for older people | 80% |
| The home is close to services and community | 80% |
| I feel safe in my home | 80% |
| My home is well-maintained | 80% |
| I struggle to get a maintenance service | 20% |



Future housing needs identified that 20% of recipients believed that there is an option for them to move into more suitable housing; however, none believed that there was suitable housing for them if they developed health issues.

While most respondents are retired, 20% indicated that they are employed. All the employed cohort believed that there are flexible and appropriately paid opportunities, and that workplaces are adapted to meet the needs of disabled persons.

REMPAN data shows that there are no unoccupied dwellings within the Shire of West Arthur. Private dwellings include residences in caravan/residential parks, camping grounds, manufactured home estates, and retirement villages (self-contained).

| Dwelling Type | West Arthur | Wheatbelt | Southwest | Western Australia |
|------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|
| Occupied Private Dwellings | 100% | 93.78% | 96.91% | 95.41% |
| Unoccupied Private Dwellings | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% | 0.00% |
| Non-private Dwellings | 0.00% | 6.20% | 3.09% | 4.46% |

REMPAN data shows the type of structures, ranking them as low, high, or medium density. Most housing in the Shire of West Arthur is low-density, with minimal medium-density housing available.

| Structure | West Arthur | Wheatbelt | Southwest | Western Australia |
|------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|
| Separate House | 96.28% | 95.19% | 91.84% | 84.03% |
| Semi-detached with 1-storey | 1.60% | 2.16% | 4.61% | 7.12% |
| Caravan, cabin, or houseboat | 1.33% | 1.48% | 1.34% | 1.37% |
| Not stated | 0.80% | 0.06% | 0.28% | 0.29% |



Social Participation

Summary

Participating in leisure, social, cultural, and spiritual activities in the community fosters seniors' continued integration with society and helps them stay engaged and informed. Seniors' participation in such activities, however, is affected by access to transport and facilities, their awareness of such activities, and their affordability.

Older people have a broad range of interests and needs. A variety of social activities would cater to such diverse interests. Such opportunities should also be accessible for people with disabilities and those who live further away. Activities taking place within hours suitable for older people and at convenient and accessible locations served by transport options would encourage greater participation as well. Activities must be affordable for older people to facilitate their participation. Hence, costs should be considered when planning the activities. Lastly, awareness of such activities must be raised among seniors to keep them informed of the opportunities available.

Seniors' participation in social activities helps to prevent social isolation. Seniors want to socialize and integrate with other age groups and cultures in their communities. Intergenerational activities are mutually enriching and fulfilling for all ages, with older people passing on knowledge, traditions, and experience while the young may help seniors with new technology and practices (WHO 2021).

Maintaining relationships is often identified by older people as central to their well-being (WHO, 2015). However, research has found that increasing age was found to have a particular correlation with exclusion from social relationships, service provision and material consumption (Naughtin, 2008).

It is understood that the ability to build and maintain relationships and social networks is closely related to a range of competencies and levels of intrinsic capacity. Creating more opportunities for social engagement and participation in social networks helps reinforce meaningful roles in the community, and in turn, this can improve a sense of value, belonging, and attachment. Loneliness and lack of social contact are known to be associated with a decrease in health status and quality of life. (WHO, 2015)

Creating more opportunities for engagement between different generations is increasingly being understood to benefit both older and younger people regarding the sharing of different competencies, experiences, and interests (WHO, 2015).

Maintaining equitable engagement and participation by older people with Indigenous and CALD backgrounds in social networks requires adherence to principles of a culturally sensitive and responsive approach to the provision of health and other support services. Achieving this will require meeting the demand for culturally competent care workers (including care workers who are from Indigenous and CALD backgrounds) and enabling meaningful involvement of Indigenous and CALD community representatives in the development of policy design and review of services (Per capita, 2014).

Community Consultation Findings

Participants in the survey rated the social participation of older people in the community.



| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| I can easily socially participate in the community | 60% |
| Activities and events are affordable, with no hidden extra costs | 80% |
| Activities and events are conveniently located, accessible and well lit | 100% |
| Activities and events are held regularly | 80% |
| Activities and events are held at convenient times | 80% |
| Activities and events are held at various locations | 20% |
| Activities and events are interesting and varied and appeal to a wide range of people | 60% |
| Activity and events are well publicised with good information provided | 40% |
| There is outreach to include older people at risk of social isolation | 60% |

Respect and Social Inclusion

Summary

An inclusive society encourages older people to participate more in their city's social, civic, and economic life. This, in turn, promotes active aging.

While respect for seniors is mostly healthy in many cities and communities, negative preconceptions of aging still exist. There is a need to facilitate intergenerational interactions to dispel such notions. Education about aging should also begin early to raise awareness of aging and associated issues so that people learn to appreciate their elderly.

Social engagement can contribute to seniors' esteem. Age-friendly initiatives involving all seniors in activities where they have experience can keep them engaged with the community and help them feel valued. Older people should always be consulted when making decisions concerning them.

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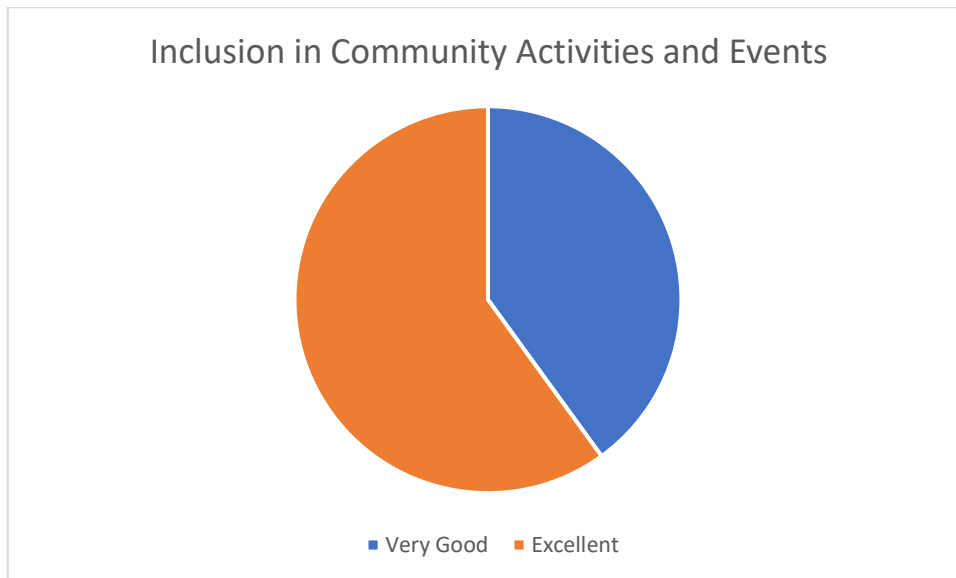
Community Consultation Findings

Survey participants indicated they felt respected by the community.



| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| I am regularly consulted by public, voluntary, and commercial service providers on how to serve me better | 40% |
| There are services and products to suit varying needs and preferences | 100% |
| Service staff are courteous and helpful | 100% |
| Older people are positively depicted in the local media | 80% |
| Older people are recognised for their contributions | 100% |
| Older people are respected by younger people | 60% |

Survey participants indicated that they felt included in community activities and events.



| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Community events attract all generations | 100% |
| Community events accommodate older people’s needs and preferences | 80% |
| Older people are included in ‘family’ events’ | 60% |
| The school provides opportunities for students to learn about aging and older people | 40% |
| Older people are involved in school activities | 20% |
| Financially disadvantaged people have good access to public, voluntary, and private services | 40% |

Civic Participation and Employment

Summary

Older people are an asset to the community, and they continue contributing to their communities after retirement. An age-friendly city and community provides ample opportunities for older people to do so, be it through voluntary or paid employment, and keeps them engaged in the political process.

Older people can gain fulfilment from active involvement in voluntary activities or work, as it provides satisfaction and keeps them socially engaged. A wide range of volunteer and employment opportunities caters to seniors' diverse preferences, needs, and skill sets, and awareness of the vacancies available connects seniors to these opportunities. Age-friendly urban and transport infrastructure removes any physical barriers seniors may face in accessing volunteer or job opportunities. Continued training for seniors also helps them remain relevant and connected. Entrepreneurial opportunities are another way to support seniors' participation in the workforce and ensure their sustained self-sufficiency.

There have been reports of age discrimination in the workplace. Building up employers' positive attitudes towards retaining and recruiting older workers would help to ensure employment opportunities for seniors. The workplace can continue to be made more welcoming for seniors to put their experience and expertise to good use.

Older people's participation in the political process must be facilitated. Seniors may be involved through platforms to voice their concerns and views to government officials or through participating in interest groups. They should also be involved in decision-making on issues that may impact them (WHO 2021).

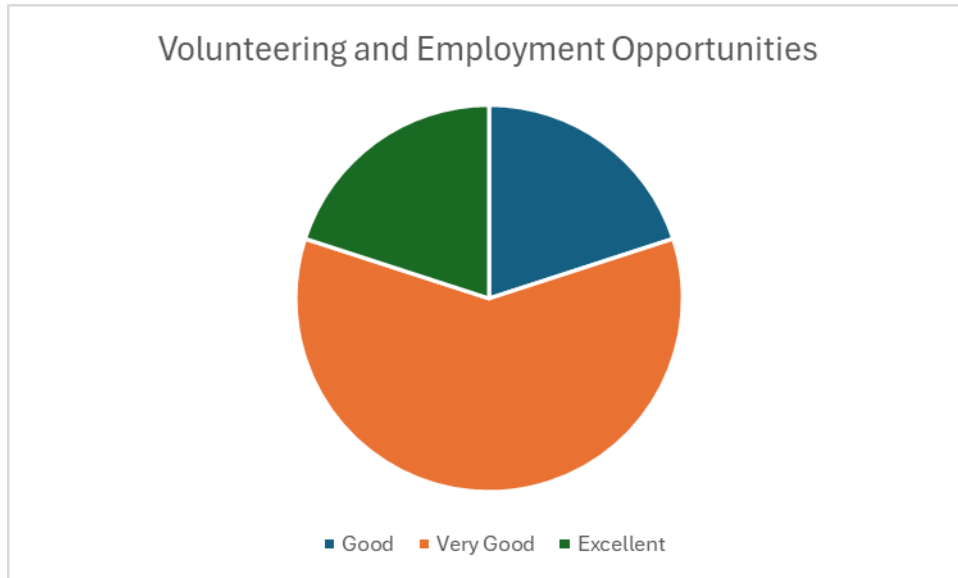
The ability to contribute covers the many contributions that older people make to their families and communities, whether that be through their social networks, place of employment, or as a volunteer.

It is recognised that volunteering and working are two important ways that adults use to find fulfilment in older age, and some studies among older people have found a positive link between volunteering and self-rated assessments of physical health (WHO, 2015).

Age discrimination in workplaces has been well-researched. One study explored the major barriers to mature-age participation in the workforce and outlined these key barriers: ongoing discrimination in employment on the basis of age; significant caregiving opportunities; lack of available flexible work arrangements; discrimination in recruitment practices; insufficient job search skills; lack of appropriate skills due to rapid technological innovation; physical illness, injury, and disabilities; superannuation rules; disincentives in the tax and transfer system; and poor quality workplaces (Per capita, 2014). Another study completed by the Australian Human Rights Commission found that a significant number of businesses had standard cut-off age rates for hiring (average age of 50 years old) and believed that older workers were less likely to be promoted and would have greater difficulty adapting to change (Per capita, 2014).

Addressing ageism in the workplace will require policy changes and the investment of resources to shift the negative perception and stereotype of mature-age employees. In Australia, this may include reforming pension systems, offering gradual retirement options, and catering for flexible working arrangements (WHO, 2015).

Within the West Arthur community, survey participants rated the volunteering and employment opportunities as below.



20% of the survey participants are employed. The following information was provided in relation to their experience with paid employment in the community.

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Qualities of older workers are promoted | 0% |
| There are flexible and appropriately paid opportunities for older workers | 100% |
| Older workers are discriminated against because of age | 0% |
| Workplaces are adapted to meet the needs of disabled people | 100% |
| Older people are encouraged to take up self-employment opportunities | 0% |
| Training is provided for post-retirement options | 0% |

Regarding participation in public community affairs, such as community associations or local government councils, all survey participants agreed that the membership or participation of older people was encouraged. However, none agreed that older people are consulted on key matters.

When asked about their participation in voluntary work, the following information was provided.

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| There are flexible options and a range of opportunities to suit your different interests | 40% |
| Information is provided on opportunities to volunteer | 20% |
| Training and guidance are provided | 20% |
| Volunteers are recognised for their efforts | 80% |
| Compensation is provided for personal costs | 0% |

Communication and Information

Summary

Staying connected with events, news, and activities with timely, accessible, and practical information is a key part of active aging, especially with the trend of information overload in urbanised cities. Technology can be tapped into to spread information quickly, but also plays a role in social exclusion. Cities must provide access to information to seniors in an accessible format and bear in mind the wide range of needs and resources older people have.

The media are instrumental in communicating information to the wider community. Older people tend to receive information through traditional print and broadcast media and through direct personal contact such as telephone calls, service centres in community facilities and clinics, etc. Seniors' access to information must be kept affordable so that cost does not become a prohibitive factor. Governments and organisations must ensure that information on policies and issues affecting the elderly can reach them in a timely, effective, and accessible manner through the communication channels seniors are familiar with. Making information accessible when older people experience vision and hearing loss is crucial to ensure their full understanding.

The growing conversion of services and documentation to computer technology could be alien to seniors, increasing social exclusion. Older people may also be deterred from picking up computer skills due to the cost of computers and their unfamiliarity with technology. Affordable access to computers for seniors in community facilities can play an important role in building technological literacy in seniors, together with computer training adapted to seniors' needs and pace of learning.

The Council of the Ageing's Conversations summary report outlines the fact that it was regularly expressed by older Australians that they would like access to good information – ranging from general information about services that are available to more complex information that would help people to make sense of personal circumstances. Furthermore, the report identified that older people also wanted to be able to access simplified aging services and care systems they could easily navigate. (COTA, 2011)

The Blueprint for an Ageing Australia report outlines that information and communications technology (ICT) has the potential to transform the lives of older Australians and maximise their continued contribution to the nation and society. Furthermore, ICT can provide improved health, quality of life, and general well-being through access to the many services now delivered online, including e-care, education, entertainment and financial management, as well as enhancing social interaction and relationships with family and friends (Per capita, 2014).

Community Consultation Findings

Survey participants rated the community and information availability as below.



When asked about the communication and information available in the community, the following responses were received.

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| Information is provided regularly | 80% |
| Information is distributed widely | 20% |
| Information is easy to understand | 80% |
| The print size is easily read | 40% |
| There is a centralised information source | 60% |
| Automated telephone answering services are clear and easy to follow | 20% |
| Electronic equipment has large buttons and big lettering | 0% |
| I own or have access to a smart phone, tablet, or computer | 100% |
| The internet is affordable | 0% |
| I access the internet at the Community Resource Centre | 40% |
| Person to person services are available | 40% |
| Verbal communication is promoted to older people | 60% |
| Older people at risk of social isolation are able to get information about services, community events, and other matters | 80% |



Emerging Themes

After considering all the information and data collected, 5 themes of significance were identified.

Engaging with the business community

Most participants recognise that the Shire of West Arthur is not responsible for all aspects of an age-friendly community and that collaboration with other organisations would be necessary and desirable. There is a need for improved age-friendly approaches within the retail sector. Discussions with the retail sector might bring positive results.

Road safety

The lack of suitable pedestrian crossings or street crossings was highlighted within the survey. While the participants indicated that the footpaths are wide enough, they also indicated that there were limited crossings, and that not all drivers gave way to pedestrians. The upgrade to the parking on Burrowes Street should assist with this, as could the potential installation of handrails at crossings near the Cottage Homes and along the shopping precinct.

Reliance on private transportation

With a lack of retail and specialised health services within the Shire of West, residents are required to travel to larger regional centres. Relying on private vehicles is putting additional costs on older members of the community. There has been limited support for the idea of a community vehicle.

Appropriate housing options

The consultation process identified that many older residents within the Shire of West Arthur had spent most of their lives in the area and wished to continue to live here. The concept of aging-in-place (the capacity to continue to live in the place where people had raised their families and/or worked) was very important to people. It is recognised that relocating people with existing long-term health conditions, such as dementia, to new regions can exacerbate the condition. It is to be recognised that there are limited housing options available for older people and that this should be included in the Shire of West Arthur's housing strategy.

Hearing the views of older people

The participants indicated that there was no engagement with older people outside of the development of this plan by the wider community when developing strategies for key matters. This can be addressed through targeted consultation when developing strategic documents and plans.

Potential Strategic Actions

“Age-friendly environments (such as in the home and community) foster healthy and active aging by building and maintaining intrinsic capacity across the life course and enabling greater functional ability in someone with a given level of capacity” (World Report on Ageing and Health).

In practical terms, age-friendly environments are free from physical and social barriers and supported by policies, systems, services, products, and technologies that:

- promote health and build and maintain physical and mental capacity across the life course; and
- enable people, even when experiencing capacity loss, to continue to do the things they value.

Age-friendly practices help build older people's abilities to:

- meet their basic needs.
- learn, grow, and make decisions.
- be mobile.
- build and maintain relationships; and
- contribute.

In doing so, age-friendly practices:

- recognise the wide range of capacities and resources among older people.
- anticipate and respond flexibly to aging-related needs and preferences.
- respect older people's decisions and lifestyle choices.
- reduce inequities.
- protect those who are most vulnerable; and
- promote older people's inclusion in and contribute to all areas of community life.

Vision

Older people within the Shire of West Arthur are valued and have opportunities for good health, active participation, and a sense of security, with facilities and services that are accessible and inclusive of their needs.

Outcomes and Strategies

| Outcomes | Strategies | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Community and Health Care Health and community support services are accessible, age-friendly, and focused on promoting healthy and active lifestyles</p> | 1.1 | Continued provision and support of the health centre and medical services |
| | 1.2 | Advocate for further allied health services within the Shire |
| | 1.3 | Work with organisations to ensure a range of home-based support and care services are available |
| | 1.4 | Continued provision and support of the Seniors meals program |
| <p>Outdoor Spaces and Buildings Outdoor spaces and the built environment are clean, accessible and safe</p> | 2.1 | Ensure all public buildings reflect best practise universal access design principles |
| | 2.2 | Work with local businesses to ensure accessible access for all residents |
| | 2.3 | Ensure outdoor spaces meet the active and passive requirements of older people |
| | 2.4 | Work with local businesses to investigate opportunities to enhance services |
| <p>Transportation Transport infrastructure meets the needs of older people</p> | 3.1 | Investigate raised pedestrian crossing for retail precinct |
| | 3.2 | Investigate the improvement of pedestrian crossings along Burrowes St, including drainage and handrails |
| | 3.3 | Work with West Arthur CRC on community car project |
| | 3.4 | Plan for adequate dual use foot paths suitable for mobility scooters |
| <p>Housing Housing options are available to facilitate aging in place, and to meet the needs across the age/well-being continuum</p> | 4.1 | Support the delivery of services that allow people to remain in their homes for as long as possible |
| | 4.2 | Facilitate diverse and affordable housing options |
| <p>Social Participation Local, accessible and affordable opportunities for social participation are readily available</p> | 5.1 | Explore strategies to engage with and support older people who are at risk of social isolation |
| | 5.2 | Facilitate the development of additional services and programs for older people |

| | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | 5.3 | Source additional funding to provide additional senior events, including Seniors Week |
| Respect and Inclusion Older people are included in all aspects of community life and are treated with respect | 6.1 | Consider the needs of older people when planning public events and activities |
| | 6.2 | Facilitate intergenerational programs and events |
| | 6.3 | Encourage the nominations of seniors for the annual Citizen of the Year Awards |
| Civic Participation and Employment Opportunities for civic contribution, continual learning, employment, and volunteering are actively facilitated | 7.1 | Regularly engage with older people to hear their views, particularly on issues that affect them |
| | 7.2 | Continue to encourage and provide volunteering opportunities |
| | 7.3 | Facilitate the delivery of continual learning opportunities |
| Communication and Information Information on services and supports is communicated in a variety of formats | 8.1 | Disseminate information in both hard-copy and electronic formats |
| | 8.2 | Facilitate the delivery of information on planning for retirement |

Action Plan

A list of actions has been developed and forms the basis for the Implementation Plan.

| Outcome | Priority Action |
|---------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.3.1 | Develop a campaign promoting Seniors Meals to the community |
| 1.3.2 | Develop a campaign seeking volunteers for Seniors Meals |
| 2.1.1 | Undertake an audit of public buildings for universal access design principles |
| 2.3.1 | Undertake an audit of existing seating in public outdoor spaces |
| 3.4.1 | Develop a Dual Use Pathway/Cycling Plan |
| 4.2.1 | Include housing options for seniors in the Housing Strategy |
| 5.1.1 | Work with stakeholder organisations to develop strategies to increase participation in events |
| 5.3.1 | Work with stakeholder organisations to ensure Seniors Week event is held annually |
| 6.2.1 | Encourage the school, sporting clubs, and community organisations to consider intergenerational programs and activities that invite older people's participation |
| 7.1.1 | Meet with local seniors quarterly to identify any arising issues and provide feedback on matters that concern them |
| 8.1.1 | Develop a Communication Plan to ensure older people receive information in suitable formats |

Communication Plan

It is important that the Age Friendly Community Plan is made available to the community and is available both electronically and by hard copy.

The availability of the Plan will be promoted via social media, the website, the Bleat, and posters on the local noticeboards.

A limited number of hard copies will be available at the Shire office and West Arthur Community Resource Centre.

Review

It is recognised that the Age Friendly Community Plan will require ongoing review and development, requiring continual community consultation and input. To encourage community involvement, the following process will be undertaken.

1. Community members are invited to provide feedback on the existing Plan.
2. An annual review of the Plan is undertaken by Shire of West Arthur staff, who will report on the status of actions.
3. A comprehensive review of the Plan is to be undertaken in 2029.

Implementation Plan

Vision - Older people within the Shire of West Arthur are valued and have opportunities for good health, active participation, and a sense of security, with facilities and services that are accessible and inclusive to their needs.

Outcome 1

Community and Health Care: Health and community support services are accessible, age-friendly, and focused on promoting healthy and active lifestyles.

Strategy 1.1: Continued provision and support for the health centre and medical services

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Continue the provision and support of the health centre. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire of West Arthur (MCS) West Arthur CRC | Operational | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of ongoing health centre services. Medical Receptionist available Maintain IT equipment |
| Continue the support of medical services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire of West Arthur (MCS) Boddington Medical Centre | Operational | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly visits by doctor |

Strategy 1.2: Advocate for further allied health services within the Shire

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Engage with allied health services to source additional services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire of West Arthur (MCS) Boddington Medical Centre | Operational | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of allied health services being delivered |

Strategy 1.3: Work with organisations to ensure a range of home-based support and care services are available

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monitor the need for home support and community Aged Care packages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Arthur CRC | West Arthur CRC | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing monitoring of need Additional packages received in the community |

Strategy 1.4: Continued provision and support for the Seniors Meals program

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Promote the Seniors Meals program to the community. **PRIORITY ACTION** | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire of West Arthur (CDO) | Operational | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of participants Increased number of volunteers |

Outcome 2

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings: Outdoor spaces and the built environment are clean, accessible, and safe.

Strategy 2.1: Ensure all public buildings reflect best practice universal access design principles

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Audit public buildings to improve adherence to best practice and make staged building improvements **PRIORITY ACTION** | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire of West Arthur (CDO) DAIP | Operational / Grant Funding | 24/25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit report assessed, and recommendations developed Submit grant applications for upgrades if needed |
| Develop policy to ensure that all new Shire of West Arthur building developments and upgrades reflect best practice universal access design principles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire of West Arthur (Building Surveyor) | Operational | 24/25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy is endorsed by the Council |

Strategy 2.2: Work with local businesses to ensure accessible access for all residents

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Facilitate discussion with the business community about accessible access | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire of West Arthur (CDO) Business community | Operational | 24/25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation occurred Improvement strategies developed |

Strategy 2.3: Ensure outdoor spaces meet the active and passive requirements of older people

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|---------|----------------------------|--------|-----------|---------------------|
|---------|----------------------------|--------|-----------|---------------------|

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Undertake an access audit for public outdoor spaces to ensure they meet accessibility requirements, including seating **PRIORITY ACTION** | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire of West Arthur (MWS / CDO / Parks & Gardens) DAIP | Operational | 2024 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audit undertaken Improvement strategies developed |
| Strategy 2.4: Work with local businesses to investigate opportunities to enhance services | | | | |
| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
| Facilitate discussion with the business community about accessible services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire of West Arthur (CDO) Business community | Operational | 24/25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consultation occurred Improvement strategies developed |

Outcome 3**Transportation:** Transport infrastructure meets the needs of older people**Strategy 3.1:** Investigate raised pedestrian crossing for the retail precinct

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Facilitate discussion with the senior community and business community regarding the installation of a raised pedestrian crossing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shire of West Arthur (CDO) • Business community • Seniors • DAIP | Operational | 24/25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation occurs • Improvement strategies developed |

Strategy 3.2: Investigate the improvement of pedestrian crossings along Burrowes St, including drainage and handrails

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Audit street crossings from Cottage Homes to the retail precinct | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shire of West Arthur (MWS / CDO) • Business community • Seniors • DAIP | Operational | 20/25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit occurs • Improvement strategies developed |

Strategy 3.3: Work with West Arthur CRC on the community car project

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Support West Arthur CRC with the development of a community car project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Arthur CRC | West Arthur CRC Grant funding | 24/25 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Arthur CRC source grant funding for the project |

- Trial of community car is carried out

Strategy 3.4: Plan for adequate dual-use footpaths suitable for mobility scooters

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Undertake an audit of footpaths within Darkan **PRIORITY ACTION** | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shire of West Arthur (MWS / CDO) | Operational | 2024 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit undertaken • Improvement strategies developed • Footpath / Cycle 10-Year Plan developed |

Outcome 4

Housing: Housing options are available to facilitate aging in place and to meet the needs across the age/wellbeing continuum

Strategy 4.1: Support the delivery of services that allow people to remain in their homes for as long as possible

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Monitor the need for home support and community Aged Care packages | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> West Arthur CRC | West Arthur CRC | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing monitoring of the need of additional packages received in the community |

Strategy 4.2: Facilitate diverse and affordable housing options

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Include senior housing in the Housing Strategy **PRIORITY ACTION** | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire of West Arthur (CEO / PO) | Operational | 2024 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing Strategy includes expansion of Seniors' housing opportunities |

Outcome 5**Social Participation:** Local, accessible, and affordable options for social participation are readily available**Strategy 5.1:** Explore strategies to engage with and support older people who are at risk of social isolation

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Seek community assistance to identify isolated older people and link them with seniors activities, and work with stakeholder organisations to increase participation **PRIORITY ACTION** | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Arthur CRC • Shire of West Arthur (CDO) • Community | Operational | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification undertaken • Strategies established if viable • Community engaged in process |

Strategy 5.2: Facilitate the development of additional services and programs for older people

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Facilitate additional services and programs for older people | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Arthur CRC • Shire of West Arthur (CDO) • Community | West Arthur CRC | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet with West Arthur CRC and seniors to identify additional services needed • Develop strategies |

Strategy 5.3: Source funding to provide additional senior events, including Seniors Week

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Work with West Arthur CRC to identify grant opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Arthur CRC • Shire of West Arthur (CDO) | Grant funding | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for available funding • Additional events held |

Outcome 6

Respect and Inclusion: Older people are included in all aspects of community life and are treated with respect

Strategy 6.1: Consider the needs of older people when planning public events and activities

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Ensure that all Shire of West Arthur events consider the needs of older people | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire of West Arthur (CDO) DAIP | Operational | 2024 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop checklist for events Promote events as suitable for older people |

Strategy 6.2: Facilitate intergenerational programs and events

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Encourage the school, sporting clubs, and community organisations to consider intergenerational programs and activities that invite older people's participation **PRIORITY ACTION** | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire of West Arthur (CDO) West Arthur CRC Community Groups | Operational | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased seniors participation in events Increased events that focus on intergenerational participation |

Strategy 6.3: Encourage the nominations of seniors for the annual Citizen of the Year Awards

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Encourage the local community to nominate deserving seniors in the awards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire of West Arthur (CDO) Community | Operational | September / October annually | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased nominations of seniors Increased recipients of the award |

Outcome 7

Civic Participation and Employment: Opportunities for civic contribution, continual learning, employment, and volunteering are actively facilitated

Strategy 7.1: Meet with local seniors quarterly to identify any arising issues and provide feedback on matters that concern them

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Invite local seniors to participate in quarterly meetings **PRIORITY ACTION** | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire of West Arthur (CDO) DAIP | Operational | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold quarterly meetings |

Strategy 7.2: Continue to encourage and provide volunteering opportunities

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Encourage the school, sporting clubs, and community organisations to consider volunteering opportunities that invite older people's participation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire of West Arthur (CDO) West Arthur CRC Community | Operational | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased senior volunteer opportunities Increased number of events that have senior volunteers |

Strategy 7.3: Facilitate the delivery of continual learning opportunities

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Survey local seniors to see if there is a gap in learning opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire of West Arthur (CDO) West Arthur CRC Community | Operational | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop survey Analyse results Increased learning opportunities for seniors |

Outcome 8

Communication and Information: Information on services and supports is communicated in a variety of formats

Strategy 8.1: Disseminate information in both hard-copy and electronic formats

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Develop a Communication Plan to ensure older people receive information in suitable formats **PRIORITY ACTION** | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire of West Arthur (CDO) DAIP Seniors | Operational | 2024 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Communication Plan |

Strategy 8.2: Facilitate the delivery of information on planning for retirement

| Actions | Leaders / Key Contributors | Budget | Timeframe | Measures of Success |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Work with the West Arthur CRC to ensure appropriate information is available | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shire of West Arthur (CDO) West Arthur CRC | Operational | Ongoing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Up-to-date information is available to older people |

The Path Forwards

This Plan was developed over 12 months in consultation with the community, Shire staff, and stakeholders.

The needs of older people within the community can differ greatly from each other, just as they do within the younger demographic. Providing age-friendly communities benefits everyone, from parents with babies in prams, young children, people with disabilities, people with mobility difficulties, as well as older people.

The Council will provide leadership to create an age-friendly community by:

- Leading the community by advocating for better health services;
- Having a whole of Council approach;
- Encouraging partnerships with Government and NGOs; and
- Elected members encouraging and mentoring to promote an age-friendly community.

The strategies contained in the Plan mirror work that is currently underway. The Shire of West Arthur will initiate activities that will assist the community in reaching the desired outcomes. Initiatives and activities will be reviewed annually and evolve to meet the needs of the community.

The Plan requires the Council to ensure that the older people in the community are afforded access to:

- Community and Health Care
- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Transportation
- Housing
- Social Participation
- Respect and Inclusion
- Civic Participation and Employment
- Communication and Information

References

Information used in the research phase of this plan was primarily drawn from the ABS Census (2021), SEIFA Index, REMPLAN, and the Shire of West Arthur Age-Friendly Survey.