



Ageing Well Background Discussion Paper





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Introduction

This Background Paper has been prepared to inform the development of the City of Port Phillip's new Positive Ageing Policy. Council's Positive Ageing Policy will set out the needs and aspirations for older people, generally people aged 60 years and older, in our municipality and guide Council decisions about its role in positive ageing.

The paper summarises available data and research around positive ageing in the City of Port Phillip and sets out what further information we would like to understand from older people and their families and friends to help us create a Positive Ageing Policy.

Background

Life expectancy for people aged 60 years and over continues to increase. On average, Victorians reaching 60 years and older today still have nearly a third of their lives to live and can retain high levels of wellbeing, activity and independence well into their 80s and beyond. People who are of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) backgrounds continue to have lower life expectancies. For this reason, the term older person encompasses Indigenous people aged over 50.

This has great potential to increase social and economic capital as well as enhance individual wellbeing and quality of life as people age. Promoting an age-friendly living environment creates opportunities to enhance outcomes for older people and has benefits across society.

In 2016, there were 16,151 people aged 60 years and older living in the City of Port Phillip. By 2041 it is forecast that this population will double and make up an increasing proportion of population.

The World Health Organization has identified eight topics that can enable cities to become more age-friendly and encourage active ageing. These eight topics overlap and are interrelated. The following explores each of these topics in the context of the City of Port Phillip.



Executive Summary

Whilst the City of Port Phillip will continue to have a younger population compared to Greater Melbourne, the proportion of residents aged 60 years and older is forecast to rise from 16 per cent to 20% over the next twenty years. This proportion will be highest in South Melbourne, Port Melbourne and Middle Park/Albert Park with more than one in four residents aged 60 years and older in these suburbs. There are slightly more female than male older residents, however up until aged 75, genders are equally represented.

About 40 per cent of residents aged 60 years and older were born overseas and there is a large cohort that speak other languages at home with Greek, Russian, Italian, Polish and German the most common.

A higher proportion of older people live in lone households compared with Greater Melbourne. This proportion is higher in women compared with men (35% older women living alone compared with 26% men). Loneliness and isolation are key risk factors for poorer health outcomes and people living alone, people who identify as LGBTIQ+ and carers are more at risk of experiencing loneliness or isolation.

Many residents who are aged 60 years and older experience high levels of advantage. Older people living in Port Phillip are more likely to hold a bachelor or higher degree, more likely to be employed full-time and more likely to fall in the highest income quartile compared with their counterparts in Greater Melbourne. However, the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on local jobs and business activity is likely to disproportionately impact some groups, including those nearing the end of their working lives and women.

The number of residents receiving the age pension has declined between 2015 and 2018 with almost half of residents aged 65 years and older received the age pension in 2018. Additionally, just over 400 residents received a carer payment in 2018 and a further 1,160 residents received a carer allowance.

Compared to Greater Melbourne, a lower proportion of residents aged 65 years and older recorded needing daily assistance. In 2016, there were 1,918 residents aged 65 years and older that recording needing daily assistance. Rates of dementia are increasing across Australia and research suggests the number of people with dementia living in the City of Port Phillip is anticipated to increase threefold from 1,197 people in 2050.

The World Health Organization identifies that outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication and information and community support and health services are the key topics that enable cities to become more age-friendly and encourage active ageing.

Additionally, climate change is a key long-term challenge and will have impacts on positive ageing. Port Phillip is already experiencing the impacts of climate change and research indicates that older people are more vulnerable to adverse health impacts than their younger counterparts.

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Compared to Greater Melbourne, a much higher proportion of people aged 60 years and older are renting (21% compared with 11% in Greater Melbourne) and a much higher proportion are living in social housing (9% compared with 3% in Greater Melbourne). There is some evidence that owning your home is associated with more favourable health outcomes.

While the number of homeless older men is greater than the number of homeless older women, national research indicates that older women - those aged 55 and over - were the fastest growing cohort of homeless Australians between 2011 and 2016.

Compared to Greater Melbourne a higher proportion (some 15%) of older residents living in Port Phillip do not own a car suggesting a higher reliance on other forms of transportation. Much of Port Phillip is well serviced by public transport and on weekdays Council offers a free on-demand community bus. Southport Daylinks also offer a volunteer-based door to door transport for residents who are transport disadvantaged.

Feeling safe in the community was rated highly important in a recent survey of older people in Victoria. A City of Port Phillip survey of residents in 2021 found that around three quarters of residents aged 65 and older (74%) agreed they “feel a sense of safety and security in Port Phillip”. This is higher than all other age groups. The same survey found that whilst around seven in ten older residents (71%) agreed that “the City of Port Phillip is a welcoming and supportive city for everyone”, the level of agreement has declined compared to previous years and it is lower than younger residents. About 16% of older residents reported volunteering in the 2016 Census which is slightly lower than the rate for Greater Melbourne.

Data on the prevalence of elder abuse across Victoria is unavailable, however it is widely acknowledged that it is a significant and growing issue. In August 2021, Council pledged its support for the [EveryAGE Counts](#) campaign to end ageism.

Much care and support for older people to maintain health, social connections and wellbeing is provided by family, friends or neighbours. Council also provides a range of programs to support positive ageing including the Older Persons Advisory Committee, Linking Neighbours Program, Seniors Festival, housing and homelessness support, pensioner rebates and is also a provider of Commonwealth-funded entry level aged care services.

Aged care services operate in a complex and rapidly changing environment with regulation and policy oversight predominantly the role of the Australian Government. They are significantly subsidised however people are expected to contribute where they can. Along with Council, there are a range of service providers who deliver aged care services in Port Phillip. These are a mix of state and community health services, not-for-profit organisations and for-profit organisations.

Through our survey we are keen to understand:

- Your experience of the City of Port Phillip as place to live for people of all ages and abilities
- What you would most like to improve in your local area?
- What are the barriers to you ageing well?

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- What one change would make City of Port Phillip a better place for people of all ages and abilities?

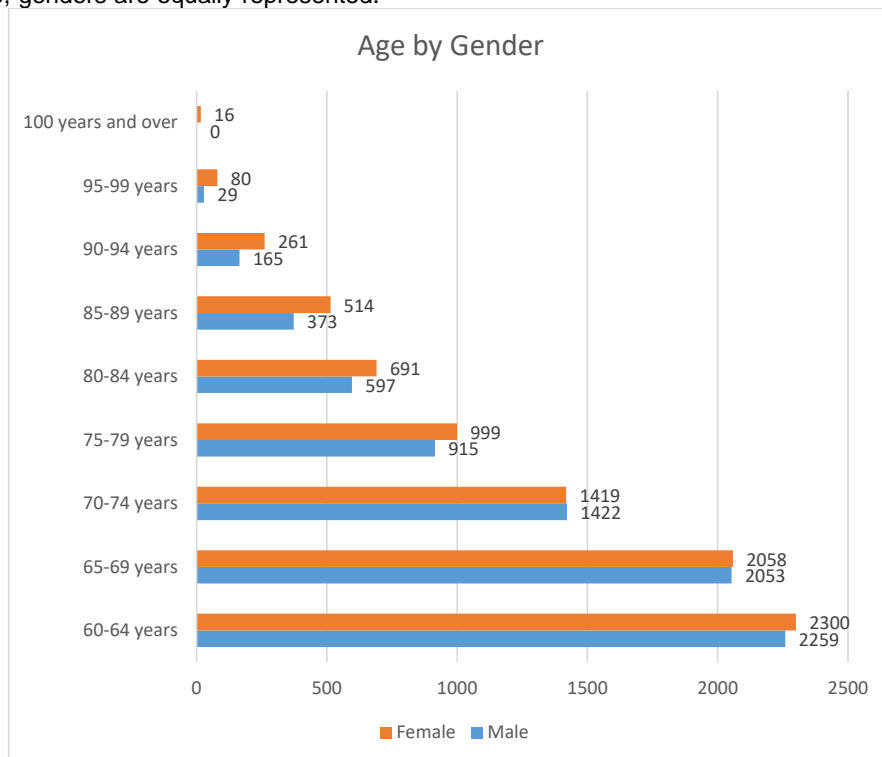


Profile of older people

In 2016 there were 16,151 people aged 60 years or older (representing 16% per cent of the total population) of which 7.7% are male and 8.3% are female). This is slightly less than the proportion of those aged 60 years or older in Greater Melbourne (19%) and Victoria (21%).

Age and gender

The number of residents in each five-year age grouping between 60 and 100 decline with age. There are slightly more female than male residents aged 60 years and older, however up until aged 75, genders are equally represented:



Where do older people live in Port Phillip?

The areas with the highest proportion of older people are Middle Park / Albert Park (at 22.7%) and South Melbourne (21.9%). East St Kilda and Elwood/Ripponlea have the lowest proportion of older people (at 11.6% and 11.9% respectively):



Area	2016	
	Number	%
City of Port Phillip	17,314	15.9
Domain	645	13.0
East St Kilda	1,989	11.6
Elwood – Ripponlea	1,929	11.9
Fishermans Bend	13	10.2
Middle Park - Albert Park	2,773	22.7
Port Melbourne	3,390	19.4
South Melbourne	2,025	21.9
St Kilda	3,321	13.6
St Kilda Road	1,227	17.6

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

People who are of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) backgrounds have lower life expectancies (The health and welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, 2015). For this reason, the term older person encompasses Indigenous people aged over 50.

It is estimated that 75 of the City of Port Phillip's total 395 ATSI population were aged 50 years and over and 35 aged 60 years and over. This represents less than 1%, a similar proportion to Greater Melbourne.

Cultural and linguistic diversity

Over 40 per cent of older residents living in the City of Port Phillip were born overseas. Greece, the United Kingdom, Italy, Ukraine, and Poland are the most common overseas birthplaces. A slightly higher proportion (64.2 per cent compared with 62.8 per cent in Greater Melbourne) speak only English at home. Other than English, Greek, Russian, Italian, Polish and German are the most spoken languages.

LGBTIQ+

Older people who are LGBTIQ are at a higher risk of loneliness and less inclined to enter mainstream services because of concerns they will face discrimination. This can lead to poorer health outcomes (Gerard Mansour, Commissioner for Senior Victorians, 2016). Port Phillip has been a proud supporter of the LGBTIQ+ community including its older members and services for older people have been Rainbow Tick accredited for several years.

Local migration patterns for older people

Between 2011 and 2016, those aged 65 years and over showed a net migration out of the municipality by 138 residents with more residents moving out of the municipality than moving in.

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Of those leaving the municipality, the highest volume moved to neighbouring cities of Glen Eira, Bayside or Stonnington. There was also some who moved the Mornington Peninsula and smaller number moving to the City of Melbourne. Similarly, the most frequently migrated from locations included Stonnington, Glen Eira, Boroondara, Melbourne, Bayside and Mornington Peninsula.

A city of economic and social contrasts

While there are generally high levels of advantage and favourable health outcomes in Port Phillip, extreme disadvantage and poorer health outcomes exist in some of our neighbourhoods. For some people, necessities such as housing and food security are out of reach without support. Homelessness continues to be a major concern and older women are the fastest growing group at risk of homelessness. This challenge is one of eight that the Council Plan 2021-2031 seeks to address and will be an important consideration in developing this policy to ensure our city is inclusive for all.

Future proofing our growing city

Planning and responding to significant growth in our city is another key challenge that the Council Plan 2021-2031 seeks to address.

The number of residents aged 60 years and over is forecast to increase to 36,531 by 2041 (or by 19,217 residents). While those aged 60 years and over currently make up 16% of our resident population, by 2041 they are forecast to represent almost 21%. This age group will make up an increasing proportion of who Council is providing services to and facilities for.

The highest proportion of this growth is expected to be in the growth areas of Fishermans Bend (which is forecast to house 22% of the additional 19,217 residents aged 60 years and over in 2041) and St Kilda (20%). While Middle Park/Albert Park and East St Kilda are forecast to house additional older people, they will represent a lower proportion of the total growth of this population (at 5% and 7% respectively):

Areas	Growth from 2016 to 2041	% of total growth
City of Port Phillip	19,216	100%
Domain	1,543	9%
East St Kilda	1,288	7%
Elwood – Ripponlea	1,679	10%
Fishermans Bend	3,897	22%
Middle Park - Albert Park	855	5%
Port Melbourne	1,756	10%
South Melbourne	1,551	9%
St Kilda	3,465	20%
St Kilda Road	1,484	8%



Forecasts indicate that the proportion of older people in each area will increase and that more than one in four residents in South Melbourne, Port Melbourne and Middle Park/Albert Park will be aged 60 years and over (at 27.1%, 27.5% and 30.5% respectively):

Area	2016		2041	
	Number	%	Number	%
City of Port Phillip	17,314	15.9%	36,531	20.7%
Domain	645	13.0%	2188	19.7%
East St Kilda	1989	11.6%	3279	16.4%
Elwood – Ripponlea	1929	11.9%	3608	20.8%
Fishermans Bend	13	10.2%	3909	13.1%
Middle Park - Albert Park	2773	22.7%	3628	30.5%
Port Melbourne	3390	19.4%	5146	27.5%
South Melbourne	2025	21.9%	3576	27.1%
St Kilda	3321	13.6%	6786	22.7%
St Kilda Road	1227	17.6%	2711	22.1%

Health outcomes for older people

A study commissioned by Dementia Victoria in 2017 estimated that 1,197 Port Phillip residents were living with dementia in 2016 and that this would increase more than threefold by 2050 (NATSEM, 2016).

In Victoria, 10 per cent of people over 60 experience chronic loneliness (Department of Health and Human Services, 2019). Living alone is a key risk factor for mental ill health (Flood, 2005) and there is much evidence that loneliness and social isolation can have detrimental health outcomes and that being socially connected significantly reduces the risk of premature death. There are a higher proportion of older people who live in lone households in the City of Port Phillip (31% residing in lone person households compared with 20 per cent in Greater Melbourne). This proportion is higher for females compared with males with 35% of females living alone compared with 26% of males.

The 2018 Disability, Ageing and Carers in Australia survey (ABC, 2018) indicated there are 10,030 carers in the City of Port Phillip (up from 8,709 in 2015). Older people have become more likely to undertake roles and responsibilities related to being a carer and older carers are at a high risk of social isolation and loneliness (Gerard Mansour, Commissioner for Senior Victorians, 2016).

Prevalence of disability

The prevalence of disability increases with age. As the number of older people in Australia has increased, the prevalence of disability in this population has remained stable (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2018). Among Australians with aged 65 years and old with disability:

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- 35.4% had a profound or severe limitation
- 15.0% had a moderate limitation
- 40.1% had a mild limitation

In 2016, 1,918 residents aged 65 and over who lived in the City of Port Phillip (equivalent to 17% per cent of older people) were recorded as needing help in one of three core activity areas: self-care, mobility, and communications. This is lower than the proportion for the Great Melbourne region of 28 per cent.



Influences on positive ageing

Preventative approaches to create age-friendly communities can increase healthy behaviours and social participation and enable older people to make incredibly valuable contributions to our communities. This can prevent or delay the onset of many illnesses.

The World Health Organisation's Global Age-friendly Cities guide sets out eight areas that research indicates encourages positive ageing. Each area overlaps and is inter-related to create conditions for healthy ageing. The eight areas are:





Outdoor spaces and buildings

The World Health Organisations Global Age-friendly Cities Guide (2007) states that ‘the outside environment and public buildings have a major impact on the mobility, independence and quality of life of older people and affect their ability to age in place.’

The City of Port Phillip has an enviable public space network of parks, gardens, streets, the foreshore and urban plazas that is generally well-spread across the municipality (City of Port Phillip, 2021). Council’s **Places for People: Public Space Strategy 2022 - 2032** sets out Council’s aspiration for a well-connected network of public spaces for all people that nurture and support the health, wellbeing, social connection, creative expressions, economy and environment of our community.



Research indicates that successful public spaces become well-used venues for extending daily life beyond the home (Buys, 2017). But when public spaces are not well designed and maintained and their needs are not met, older people are discouraged from getting out and about. Studies have identified the following elements of public space which optimise its use by older people:

- A wide variety of places for people to sit, to enjoy being out in public and watching people. Seating is especially important for older people as rest-stops or destinations.
- Handrails on stairs and steep paths for safety and confidence.
- Drinking fountains and trees to provide shade and comfort.



- Plentiful and clean public toilets. The lack of such facilities can be debilitating and an obstacle to some older people's enjoyment of the public realm.
- Wide walk paths and safety buffers between pedestrian paths and high-traffic roadways.
- Safe and clearly posted pedestrian crossings on busy thoroughfares to avoid or reduce the risk of pedestrian and motorist confusion at intersections.
- Paths, crossing and access points that cater for people with various levels of mobility.
- Clear delineation on paths between areas for cyclists and runners and those who tend to move more slowly, such as older people and children.

Good public space amenities particularly in high-density neighbourhoods are essential for older people's participation and interaction in public life.

Climate Change and the environment

Port Phillip is already experiencing the impacts of climate change. Since 1950, temperatures have increased 1.2 to 1.4 degrees, rainfall has decreased 10-20 cm and sea levels have risen 8-20 cm. Council declared a climate emergency in 2019, recognising that as climate change is a global challenge, everyone must play their part.

Research indicates that older people are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change (Environmental Protection Agency, 2016). Extreme heat, poor air quality, extreme weather events and illnesses caused by contaminated water are more likely to impact, or to impact to a greater extent, older people than their younger counterparts.

Extreme heat exposure can increase the risk of illness and death among older adults, especially people with congestive heart failure, diabetes, and other chronic health conditions that increase sensitivity to heat. Higher temperatures have also been linked to increased hospital admissions for older people with heart and lung conditions. Older adults with limited incomes who own air conditioning units may not use them during heat waves due to the high cost to operate them.

Changing weather patterns and more intense and frequent bushfires also raise the amount of pollution, dust, and smoke in the air. Poor air quality worsens respiratory conditions common in older adults such as asthma and air pollution can also increase the risk of heart attack in older adults, especially those who are diabetic or obese.

Climate change affects the frequency and intensity of some extreme weather events, such as flooding, droughts, and bushfires. Older adults are more likely to suffer storm and flood-related fatalities, have reduced access to medical care and those with reduced mobility will have more difficulty with evacuations. Extreme events can also cause power outages that can affect electrically powered medical equipment and elevators, leaving some people without treatment or the ability to evacuate.

Through our survey we are keen to understand:

- Whether you feel you can easily access parks and open space
- Whether you feel you can remain healthy and physically active
- Level of concern that climate change may impact you or your family



Transportation

The World Health Organisation's Global Age-friendly Cities Guide (2007) states 'transportation including accessible and affordable public transport is a key factor influencing active ageing. Being able to move about the area in which you live determines social and civic participation and access to community and health services'. The framework identifies accessible, affordable, reliable public transportation and well-maintained roads, specialised transport for people with disability and well-regulated traffic flow with convenient and safe parking and drop-off areas as essential elements. This is supported by a recent survey of older people in Victoria that identified personal mobility as one of the most important factors in ageing well (Commissioner for Senior Victorians, 2020).

Council's **Integrated Transport Strategy: Move, Connect, Live** (City of Port Phillip, 2018) sets out Council's aspiration for a City that is connected and easy to get around.

Compared to Greater Melbourne a higher proportion (some 15%, almost double the rate for Greater Melbourne at 8%) of older residents living in Port Phillip do not own a car suggesting a higher reliance on other forms of transportation such as walking and public transport.

Much of Port Phillip is well serviced by public transport in the form of trains, trams and buses and on weekdays Council offers a free on-demand community bus to assist people to visit their local library, the South Melbourne Market, shopping, medical and community centres. The buses are wheel-chair accessible and there is assistance to help people get on and off the bus.

"The community transport is a service that caters for community members unable to use regular public transport without assistance. It provides means of access to South Melbourne Market and to the many activities" Council Plan 2021-31 participant.

Southport Daylinks also offer a volunteer-based door to door transport for people who are transport disadvantaged and live in the City of Port Phillip.

There are some indications that older people living in Port Phillip are more sensitive to road condition than people in other age groups. For example, in 2021, a lower proportion of residents (56%) aged 65 years and older rated the performance of sealed local roads as good or very good compared with other age groups.

"I only use bike tracks... I've tried the road but it's not safe for older people." Integrated Transport Strategy consultation participant.

Overall, the City of Port Phillip has good walkability with the City being flat, having a highly permeable street network and most of our streets having footpaths. There are however there are a range of pedestrian network improvements planned to make it even safer and easier to get around, including improved footpath condition, safer crossing points, additional seating and lighting.

Through our survey we are keen to understand:

- What is the main form of transport you use to get around?
- Whether you can easily walk around your local community?
- Whether you can easily access public transport?
- How satisfied you are with getting around the community?



Housing

The World Health Organisation's Global Age-friendly Cities Guide (2007) states 'housing as essential to a persons' safety and well-being'. This is supported by a recent survey of older people in Victoria, which ranked having secure housing or accommodation as the most important factor to their independence as they age (Commissioner for Senior Victorians, 2020). Council's Older Persons' Advisory Committee has also identified housing as a key issue and advocates for social housing and residential aged care facilities to be considered in any new developments.

Research indicates that many people prefer to "age in place" and remain in their local community. This requires suitable housing that meets needs such as downsizing, affordable long-term rentals and universal design along with practical support and care so people can live in their own homes (Commissioner for Senior Victorians, 2020). A City of Port Phillip survey of residents in 2021 found that most residents aged 65 and older agreed they "feel proud of, connected to and enjoy living in" their neighbourhood suggesting a strong connection to place.

Additionally, health outcomes are often better among older people who own their own homes (Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2008). According to the 2016 ABS Census, almost half (49%) of Port Phillip residents aged 60 years and over own their homes outright while around 12% of both men and women are still paying a mortgage. Compared to Greater Melbourne, a higher proportion of older people are renting (21%) including 9% in social housing (vs 11% of older residents in Greater Melbourne of which 3% are in social housing). There are no differences in the proportion of men and women renting and in social housing.

Category		Code Port Phillip (%)	Greater Melb (%)
Housing tenure	Fully owned	59	68
	Mortgage	15	18
	Renting – Total	21	12

Compared with Greater Melbourne, older people in Port Phillip are more likely to be residing in medium or high-density housing reflecting the availability of housing in the municipality:

Category		Code Port Phillip (%)	Greater Melb (%)
Housing density	Separate house	15	77
	Medium density	44	19
	High density	41	4

While the number of homeless older men is greater than the number of homeless older women (older men are more likely to be homeless than older women by 2:3), national research undertaken by the Australian Human Rights Commission in 2019 (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2019) indicated that older women—those aged 55 and over— was the fastest growing cohort of homeless Australians between 2011 and 2016, increasing by 31%. The study reported it is likely this trend will continue given the ongoing shortage of affordable housing, the ageing population and the significant gap in wealth accumulation between men and women across their lifetimes.



Aged care facilities

Aged care facilities (sometimes known as a nursing home or residential aged care facility) are designed for older people who can no longer live at home and need ongoing help with everyday tasks or health care. There are a range of aged care facilities operating in the City of Port Phillip and surrounds including:

- Napier Street Aged Care Services, South Melbourne
- Emerald Hill Residence, South Melbourne
- Wintringham Hostel, Port Melbourne
- South Port Community Residential Home, Albert Park
- Sacred Hearth Community, St Kilda
- Japara Central Park, Windsor
- Jewish Care Residential Homes Windsor, Melbourne
- Mecwacare Trescowthick Centre, Prahran
- Bupa Windsor, Windsor
- Chomley House Hostel, Prahran
- Estia Health Prahran, Windsor
- Coppin House, Melbourne
- Villa Maria Catholic Homes O'Neill Aged Care Residence, Prahran
- Montclair, Brighton
- Arcare Brighton, Brighton
- Victoria by the Park, Elsternwick
- Graceland Manor, Elsternwick
- Arcare Caulfield, Caulfield
- HammondCare - Caulfield Village, Caulfield
- HammondCare - The Glens, Caulfield
- Vasey RSL Care Brighton, Brighton
- Benetas Lovell House, Caulfield North
- BlueCross Sheridan Hall Caulfield, Caulfield North
- Mecwacare Jubilee House, Caulfield North

Through our survey we are keen to understand:

- Whether you feel you have access to suitable housing options.
- Level of concern about staying in your community as you age.
- Level of concern about access to safe and affordable housing.
- Level of concern about being able to stay living at home as you age.



Social Participation

The World Health Organisation's Global Age-friendly Cities Guide (2007) cites that 'social participation and social support are strongly connected to good health and well-being throughout life. Participating in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities in the community, as well as with family allow older people to continue to exercise their competence, to enjoy respect and esteem, and to maintain or establish supportive and caring relationships.'

Participation in sporting clubs and community groups

Sporting clubs and community groups have an important role in creating opportunities to build community connections. There are many sporting clubs and community groups in the City of Port Phillip which offer a range of opportunities to volunteer, pursue interests and get involved.

Feeling safe and welcomed

Feeling safe in the community was rated highly important in a recent survey of older people in Victoria (Commissioner for Senior Victorians, 2020). A City of Port Phillip survey of residents in 2021 found that around three quarters of residents aged 65 and older (74%) agreed they "feel a sense of safety and security in Port Phillip". This is higher than all other age groups.

The same survey found that whilst around seven in ten older residents (71%) agreed that "the City of Port Phillip is a welcoming and supportive city for everyone", the level of agreement has declined compared to previous years and it is lower than younger residents.

There are many factors that can reduce the quality of life for people as they age however a recent survey of older people in Victoria found a common theme were factors that inhibited participation in social events, their interests and their community (Commissioner for Senior Victorians, 2020).

A City of Port Phillip survey of residents in 2021 found that around two thirds of residents aged 65 years and older agreed they had "the opportunity to participate in affordable local community events and activities" in Port Phillip. This result was consistent with responses for other age groups but demonstrates small decline in perceptions for this group.

"Creative arts are an essential element of any healthy community and should be fully supported."
Participant in Council Plan community consultation 2021

Through our survey we are keen to understand:

- Whether you feel connected to people in your community
- Whether you can easily access progress and activities you are interested in
- Whether you have friends or family to talk to regularly
- Level of concern about being lonely
- Level of concern about being isolated
- Level of concern about the impact COVID will have upon my family and friends



Respect and Social Inclusion

The World Health Organisations Global Age-friendly Cities Guide (2007) cites that 'older people report experiencing conflicting types of behaviour and attitudes towards them. The extent to which older people participate in the social, civic and economic life of the city is also closely linked to their experience of inclusion.'

Raising awareness of ageism and advocating against the discrimination of older people is a key focus of Council's Older Persons' Advisory Committee.

Elder abuse is one of the worst manifestations of ageism and inequality in our society, and most commonly occurs within the family. Whilst elder abuse is believed to be greatly under-reported, the World Health Organisation estimates that it affects between 1 to 10% of older people worldwide.

Whilst data on the prevalence of elder abuse across Victoria is unavailable, Victoria Police, Age Care service providers and family violence practitioners all identify elder abuse as a significant and growing issue, which must be addressed (Department of Health and Human Services, 2019).

Through our survey we are keen to understand:

- Whether you feel you are a valued member of my community
- Whether you feel safe in your home
- Whether you feel safe in a public space



Civic Participation and Employment

The World Health Organisations Global Age-friendly Cities Guide (2007) cites that ‘an age-friendly community provides options for older people to continue to contribute to their communities, through paid employment or voluntary work if they so choose, and to be engaged in the political process.’

Residents aged 60 years and older people living in Port Phillip are more likely to hold a bachelor or higher degree, more likely to be employed full-time and more likely to fall in the highest income quartile compared with Greater Melbourne. Port Phillip residents aged 60 years and over had a similar likelihood of volunteering as older residents residing in Greater Melbourne, making up 11.5 per cent of residents who volunteer:

Category		Port Phillip (%)	Greater Melb (%)
Education	Bachelor or Higher degree	27	14
	No qualification	33	45
Employment	Employed full-time	47	47
	Employed part-time	43	42
Income	\$100k+	14	5
Volunteering	Volunteered	16	19

Of the approximately 11,600 residents aged 65 years and over, more than 5,565 (less than half) were receiving the age pension in 2018. This number declined on 5,844 in 2015. Additionally, just over 400 residents received a carer payment in 2018 while a further 1,160 received a carer allowance.

The strength and diversity of our local economy

In September 2020, Council declared the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on local jobs and business activity should be treated as an economic emergency. This is likely to disproportionately impact some groups, including those nearing the end of their working lives and women.

Through our survey of residents, we are keen to understand:

- Whether you feel you can access employment if you need or you want
- Whether you can share your knowledge and skills to help others in your community through volunteering
- Level of concern about financial security



Communication and information

The World Health Organisations Global Age-friendly Cities Guide (2007) cites that 'staying connected with events and people and getting timely, practical information to manage life and meet personal needs is vital for active ageing.'

While there is no 'typical' resident or customer in the City of Port Phillip, we understand that our customers expect high quality, efficient public services and meaningful opportunities to communicate and engage with Council. There are also increasing expectations around transparency of information and Council decision-making processes. About 47% per cent of people living in the City of Port Phillip are 'digital natives', aged under 34 years of age, however, a considered approach is required that does not create or exasperate a 'digital divide' that disadvantages those with less access to, or knowledge of, technology means providing a range of ways for people to interact remains important.

Digital Literacy

Poor digital literacy may increase the risk for social isolation. During COVID-19 many older people cancelled their community activities or support services for fear of being exposed to COVID-19. Social isolation increases risk of physical and mental decline, increasing risk of elder abuse as older people may have less contact with people they may disclose to.

A survey completed by COTA in 2020 showed that digital literacy has an impact during times of disaster such as the COVID-19 pandemic, as people retreat into their homes and away from their routines, social activities and engagement with the natural environment (COTA Australia, 2020). Pandemics and disaster highlight structural inequalities.

'Generally, people who are already relatively advantaged are more likely to use the information and communication opportunities provided by the internet to their benefit in a health pandemic, while less advantaged individuals are less likely to benefit. Therefore, the COVID-19 crisis is also enforcing existing inequalities.' (Deursen, 2020)

However, it is not enough to assist older people to gain basic digital literacy. While worldwide digital use is increasing among older people, we cannot assume that older people will remain digitally engaged without on-going support. (Damodaran, 2012)

Older people are already considered a population group at risk of social isolation and digital exclusion increases this risk. Developing physical disability or injury (such as visual, motor or musculoskeletal) increases the risk of digital disengagement, even with tools to increase accessibility (Damodaran, 2012)

Preference for Communications

A paper newsletter remains the preferred source of information from Council for many older people with 71% of some 100 participants in Council's Linking Neighbours Program who responded to Council digital literacy survey in 2021 preferring to receive a paper newsletter in their mailbox. 22%

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preferred to read a Council newsletter online while 21% didn't mind either a digital or paper newsletter.

When asked what they would like to read about in a newsletter, many people expressed an interest in local community issues, climate change, Council decisions, events and activities, festivals, concerts, music, art, opera, books, craft such as painting and needlework, outings, gardening, exercise groups, walking groups. Many people had valuable ideas for things they would enjoy reading in a newsletter including letters to the editor, rights for transgender people, classes on technology, photography. Some people expressed a desire for a resources list to be produced by council with a list of contact phone numbers for local services. Some participants would prefer to read a newsletter in their preferred language including Serbian and Greek. Some people felt the Linking Neighbours newsletter was adequate.

Through our survey we are keen to understand:

- Levels of concern about having access or how to use technology
- How you prefer to receive information from Council



Community support and health services

The World Health Organisations Global Age-friendly Cities Guide (2007) cites that 'health and support services are vital to maintaining health and independence in the community.' Whilst it is acknowledged that primary health care is outside the responsibility of local government, it is a key concern of local residents. Council does provide a number of facilities and services that support active lifestyles and promote good health. These include opportunities to maintain health through physical activity, social interactions, mobility, and access to health services and improvements for personal safety.

Victorian local governments are required to promote the health and wellbeing of all its residents, including older people.

Services supporting people as they age

Older people are not a homogenous group and many benefit from a range of universal services that support the health and wellbeing of people of all ages in the community.

Much care and support for older people to maintain health, social connections and wellbeing is provided by family members, friends or neighbours however many older people will access some form of government funded aged care, whether in home support, home care packages or residential care.

Services for older people operate in a complex and rapidly changing environment with regulation and policy oversight of aged care services predominantly the role of the Australian Government. Aged care services are significantly subsidised by the Australian Government however people are expected to contribute where they can and may be charged fees.

Government, legislative and technology changes

Over the last ten years, numerous Commonwealth and State inquiries have considered reforms and made needed changes designed to improve the aged care sector.

There have been and continue to be significant changes and reform about how aged care services are funded and supported by different levels of government. In 2021, the Commonwealth Government announced a range of reforms designed to create an aged care sector that puts the needs of senior Australians' first by making it simpler to navigate, empowers informed choice, is strongly regulated and transparent and values the workforce

Council-funded positive ageing programs

Council provides a range of programs designed to support people remain socially connected and engaged as they age including:

- *Older Persons Advisory Committee* – a committee which meets regularly to discuss issues relevant to older people and offer advice, insights and an older person perspective to Council decisions

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- *Linking Neighbours Program* - provides a range of outings and activities throughout the year, such as trips, exercise groups and neighbourhood activities.
- *Seniors Register* - a confidential and secure list of people's emergency information held at the Port Phillip City Council and St Kilda Police Station
- *Seniors Festival* – an annual festival held in October and offering a range of events (grants available to support activities)
- *Housing and homelessness support* - direct assessment, referral and interim case management support services for older persons in housing stress, at risk of housing loss or homelessness
- *Pensioner rebate* - a rebate on its rates in addition to the Victorian Government rebate to ease the burden on its pensioner resident
- *Multicultural senior's groups* - support programs including grants

There are also a range of universal services provided by Council that are important to the health and wellbeing of older people and enhance outcomes for older people across each of the eight domains. These included sport and recreation, roads, waste management, community facilities, libraries, parks and open space and footpaths.

Council facilities that support positive ageing

Several Council assets are also used to primarily support older people in the community including:

- *Betty Day Community Centre* - this is a community centre managed by Council that is used for the delivery of Commonwealth-funded social support programs for older persons and is also available for use by multicultural seniors groups
- *Southport Community Centre* - Council owned facility that is leased to Southport Community Centre to provide similar services to Betty Day
- *Mary Kehoe Community Centre* - Council owned facility that is used by U3A
- *Pinnaroo Housing* - Council asset that is leased to Department of Housing to house older people
- *South Port Nursing* - Council asset that is leased to CaSPA Care to provide residential care
- *Napier Street* - Council asset that is leased to CaSPA Care to provide residential care

Direct services provided by Council that support positive aging (partially Commonwealth and State Government funded):

Council is a provider for the Commonwealth's entry-level support program under the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP). Council contributes to the delivery of these services.

In combination, these services are delivered to approximately 1,100 eligible people in Port Phillip (approximately 10% of over 65 years old living in the municipality). This program provides:

- *Domestic Assistance* - including assistance cleaning, personal care, flexible respite and shopping

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- *Property Maintenance* - Home maintenance and home modifications
- *Social Support Programs* - group and individual activities that provide a social connection
- *Community Transport* – the community bus which provides free access to locations throughout the City on weekdays. Buses are also available for free use by local community groups and support the operation of Council programs.
- *Meals* – Providing a delivered meals program that Council contracts out as well as grants to community organisations providing group meals and a café meals program (food services)
- *Service enhancements* – Specialist support, Cultural group support, Connect and Cook (home and community care coordination) program
- *Access & Support* - Assertive engagement with hard to reach/diversity groups

Council is also a party to a State Government agreement to undertake assessment (known as Regional Assessment Service) on behalf of the Australian Government for people wishing to access aged care services.

Other providers operating in the City of Port Phillip that support positive aging

There are a range of service providers in addition to Council who deliver services targeting older people in the City of Port Phillip. These are a mix of state and community health services, not-for-profit organisations and for-profit organisations:

- *Alfred Health* – provide a range of health services (including hospitals and clinics) as well as community services (including “Better at home” which offers an alternative way for people to receive care and treatment in their own home) and assessment services
- *Star Health* – community health service that offers case management and home care packages across all service levels
- *Calvary Health Care Bethlehem* – provide a range of services designed to promote and support positive ageing, healthy living, active lifestyles and community connections (assists residents to get involved in society via walks, shopping, club activities etc). Also provide residential aged care and hospitals (offers home care packages).
- *Jewish Care* – provide programs at the active living centre (social groups and activities) and in-home services (offers home care packages)
- *Bolton Clarke* – offers a range of “Be health and active” programs to support positive ageing plus respite, restorative and palliative care, veteran support, a homeless persons program and HIV program (offers home care packages)
- *Russian Ethnic Representative Council* – offer an aged care program (among other cultural initiatives) such as social support groups, community transport and wellness and reablement.
- *Sacred Heart Mission* – provides individualised and tailored services to vulnerable people
- *Wintringham* - a specialised welfare company that provides housing and care to elderly, frail men and women who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Also offers case coordination to link people to services via home care packages.

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Through our survey we are keen to understand:

- Whether you feel you can easily access health and support services
- Level of concern about staying healthy and active
- Level of concern about access to healthy and affordable food
- Level of concern about accessing services I need as I age
- Whether you feel you could access services to help maintain your health and wellbeing if/when you needed them? Why did you respond this way?
- What is most important to you in your local service provider?



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