



ballina
shire council

Active Ageing Plan

Prepared by Ballina Shire Council

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Active Ageing Plan

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INTRODUCTION

Ballina Shire's population, like much of Australia's, is changing; our population is getting older.

The opportunity exists now to think about how these changes may affect Ballina Shire and take steps to prepare for our progressively ageing community.

The ageing of the population is a positive social trend and it is an indication that we are living longer, healthier lives. This presents our community with challenges and opportunities that require careful consideration, thoughtful planning and the allocation of resources from all spheres of government.

It is important that all members of our community think about and plan for growing old and the changes to our needs that will inevitably follow.



Participants of Intergenerational Paver Project, 2015

Plan preparation

This plan has been prepared from information gathered through research and consultation with older people, community groups and service providers. Council has developed the plan with a view to increasing awareness of the emerging issues associated with an ageing population.

This plan provides a set of key directions which, it is anticipated, will improve the way that our communities are planned and developed. The plan aims to facilitate an environment that provides opportunities for older people to be involved in their community and lead healthy, active lives.

The ageing plan is not just a rulebook for Council; rather it should be seen as a guide for the fostering of partnerships between all of the relevant stakeholders; including Council, shire residents, community service providers, and State and Federal Governments. The challenge for our community will be to implement the actions of this plan with the resources available to us.

This plan does not address all the issues facing older people, such as aged care policy and service delivery or the care needs of the frail aged, as these areas are outside the role and functions of Council and there other policy processes through which these issues are managed.

The Ballina Shire Active Ageing Plan incorporates the following:

- Predictions of changes to our population
- A brief profile of our shire residents
- Community consultation feedback
- Identification of actions.

Why have an Ageing Plan?

Council recognises that the make up of our community will continue to change in the future. This will have a range of impacts on the services and facilities it provides. Council has developed an ageing plan as a means of better preparing for that change.

The Ageing Plan is a tool that will guide Council in the forthcoming period as it identifies the current and future needs of our older residents. It also assists us, as families, carers and individuals, by improving our awareness of ageing and its associated issues.

Council recognises that people have different needs and aspirations depending on their life stage, and a person's life stage is not necessarily dictated by their age, or vice versa. It also recognises that, regardless of their life stage, the needs of older people are often quite different to the remainder of the population. These differences include characteristics such as mobility, income and physical activity.

The initiatives in this plan aim to identify some of the things that Council, organisations and individuals can do to assist our older residents, no matter what their life stage, to engage in community life. We want to create a place where older people have a sense of belonging and a sense of purpose; where people feel safe and have the opportunities to access and enjoy the activities that interest them.

Researchers tell us that, contrary to the wide belief that we will age in a nursing home, aged care facility or similar place, we are actually most likely to grow old in our own home and that only a relatively small percentage of us will require high levels of, or full time, care.

According to data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in 2011, 94% of people aged 65 years and over live in private dwellings.

Research also tell us that issues such as social isolation and lack of physical activity have an adverse impact on an individual's overall health and, if not addressed, can cause people to develop a range of illnesses that affect their physical and mental wellbeing.

Council, as a responsible public authority, has a role in supporting the development of this shire for all our citizens, including older residents, in a manner that encourages participation in all aspects of community life. This is consistent with the Local Government Act (LGA) 1993 (Chapter 13, Part 2 - Strategic Planning). Referred to as the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) Framework, this section of the LGA requires that a council's Community Strategic Plan be based on social justice principles.

“ Measures to help older people remain healthy and active are a necessity, not a luxury. ”

The World Health Organisation (WHO)

How was the Ageing Plan Prepared?

Council entered into a partnership with the Council On The Ageing (COTA) to undertake community consultation for the preparation of this plan. Representatives from Council and COTA met to formulate the consultation process. A workshop was designed to ensure that participants had ample opportunities to raise issues and suggest solutions that aim to address the issues.

The consultation brought together older people, community organisations, service providers, representatives from State Government departments and Council.

When we evaluated our consultation, 95% of people who attended the consultation indicated that the process was either good or very good. Council also reviewed a large number of research documents, undertook analysis of ABS Census data, reviewed ageing strategies from other councils and reviewed plans and policies of State and Federal Governments.

Where does this plan fit? ...at the State level

The **NSW State Plan** has a number of key strategies that relate to development of the Ageing Plan for Ballina Shire. One of the key goals for the State Plan is to *“Increase opportunities for seniors in NSW to fully participate in community life.”*

The **NSW Ageing Strategy** which was released in July 2012 advocates for:

- Seniors leading active and rewarding lives and being valued members of the community.
- Adults making decisions that support their independence and wellbeing later in life.
- NSW responding effectively to the challenges and opportunities of population ageing.

The **North Coast Ageing Strategy**, released in June 2014, takes a life course approach to ageing and identifies strategies that aim to assist older people to remain healthy and independent for as long as possible. The strategy identifies what can be done at the local level to address population ageing.



Buskers at Ballina Coastal Country Music Festival, 2014



Shared pathways in Ballina Shire

“The Northern Rivers has one of the fastest growing and ageing populations in NSW, with the number of people aged 65 years and over expected to double in the next 25 years.”

NSW Northern Rivers Regional Plan

Where does this plan fit? *...at the Local level*

Councils in NSW are required to prepare and implement a Community Strategic Plan (CSP). These CSPs are developed to encourage councils, the community and other organisations to work together to plan for the future in an efficient and collaborative manner. Ballina Shire Council's CSP was endorsed in 2013 and is called "Our Community: Our Future". It sets out the Council's overall plan for the development of the shire, and the communities within it.

Our Ageing Plan is intended to support delivery of our CSP and act as a blueprint that sets out our plan to continue to develop Ballina Shire as a place where older residents are encouraged to fully participate in community life.

The Ageing Plan also links with, and complements other Council plans including:

- Resourcing Strategy
- Delivery Program & Operational Plan
- Pedestrian and Mobility Plan
- Local Environmental Plan
- Growth Management Strategy
- Affordable Housing Strategy



Carol Roberts, 2013, Photo by Michael Aird

Who are we talking about when we refer to an older person?

The primary focus of this plan is on people who are 65 years of age and over and Aboriginal people aged over 50. This plan uses a number of terms when describing people who are aged over 65 years including seniors, senior citizens, older people, the ageing, aged persons and elders.

Our ageing population

Most of us are aware that Australia is experiencing growth in the number of older people within our population. Statistically, there are two basic scenarios that are occurring:

- **Numerical Ageing** refers to an increase in numbers of older people largely due to increased life expectancy.
- **Structural Ageing** is an increase in proportion of older people primarily caused by low/falling birth rates.



Lennox Lions, 2013, Photo by Tony Partridge

When we examine the Census data we can see that Ballina Shire is experiencing both forms of ageing. The expectation is that this will continue into the future. We will not only have an increase in the number of older people living within the shire, but those older people will also make up a larger proportion of our overall population. This conveys a general expectation that there will be a greater demand for the provision of age friendly infrastructure, appropriate housing and an increase in demand for services targeting older residents.


What are the characteristics of our population?

According to the 2011 Census, Ballina Shire had a total resident population in excess of 39,273 people. This was an increase of approximately 800 people from 2006. The Census tells us that our population is increasing and that it is ageing. In 2001 the median age of our residents was 41 years; in 2011 this had risen to 45 years.

Table 1: Five year age groups in Ballina Shire.

The following table breaks down the population into 5-year age groupings from birth to over 85-years.

Ballina Shire		2011	
Service age group (years)	Number	%	Regional NSW %
Babies and pre-schoolers (0 to 4)	2,138	5.4	6.3
Primary schoolers (5 to 11)	3,319	8.5	9.0
Secondary schoolers (12 to 17)	3,151	8.0	8.2
Tertiary education & independence (18 to 24)	2,430	6.2	8.1
Young workforce (25 to 34)	3,283	8.4	10.4
Parents and homebuilders (35 to 49)	7,632	19.4	19.5
Older workers & pre-retirees (50 to 59)	6,021	15.3	13.9
Empty nesters and retirees (60 to 69)	5,132	13.1	11.9
Seniors (70 to 84)	4,756	12.1	10.3
Elderly aged (85 and over)	1,411	3.6	2.3
Total population	39,273	100.0	100.0

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2006 and 2011. 
Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts. (Enumerated data)

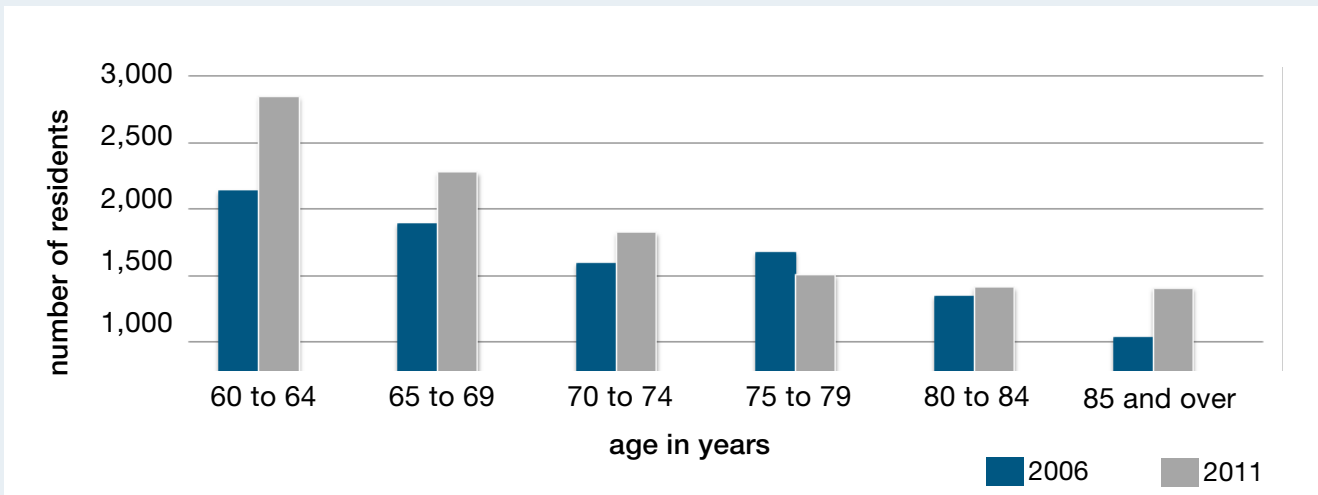
How we compare

The major differences between the age structure of Ballina Shire and Regional NSW (in 2011) were:

- A lower percentage of babies and pre schoolers (5.4% compared to 6.3%);
- A lower percentage of primary schoolers (8.5% compared to 9.0%);
- A slightly lower percentage of secondary students (8.0% compared to 8.2%);
- A larger percentage of persons aged 55 to 59 (7.6% compared to 6.7%);
- A larger percentage of persons aged 60 to 64 (7.3% compared to 6.5%);
- A larger percentage of persons aged 80 to 84 (3.6% compared to 2.7%);
- A larger percentage of persons aged 85 and over (3.6% compared to 2.3%);
- A smaller percentage of persons aged 20 to 24 (4.1% compared to 5.6%) and
- A smaller percentage of persons aged 25 to 29 (4.0% compared to 5.2%).

Graph 1: Changes in the older age structure in the Ballina Shire between 2006 and 2011

The graph shows we currently have approximately 8,500 residents aged over 65 years.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2006 and 2011. Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts. (Enumerated data)

While as a whole, we have a higher proportion of residents people aged 65 years or more, it is important to note that this varies in locations within the shire.

Percentages ranged from a low of 12.3% in the northern rural part of the shire to a high of 35.4% in Ballina.

Table 2: Distribution of residents aged over 65 years.

Ballina Shire - enumerated		2011	
Location	Number of residents over 65	Total locality population	% of residents over 65
Alstonville	1,475	5,504	26.8
Ballina (Island)	2,570	7,250	35.4
Ballina (North)	288	1,077	26.7
Cumbalum – Newrybar Corridor	336	2,450	13.7
East Ballina	1,091	5,497	19.8
Lennox Head - Skennars Head	984	7,285	13.5
Rural Hinterland South	249	1,609	15.5
Rural North - Teven - Brooklet	193	1,569	12.3
Wardell - Pimlico and District	302	1,834	16.5
West Ballina	769	2,840	27.1
Wollongbar - McLeans Ridges	380	2,454	15.5
Ballina Shire	8,624	39,450	21.9

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing 2011. Compiled and presented in profile.id by .id, the population experts. (Enumerated data)

What we are being told

The NSW Department of Planning & Environment has developed a series of population projections that provide communities like ours with an idea on what the make up of our population is likely to be.

Whilst the projections are not precise, they do give us an indication of what we can expect, based upon current rates of growth and improved life expectancies.

The population projections tell us that in the year 2031 older people will likely make up 29% of our total population.

Table 3: Population projections in Ballina Shire to 2031

age	number of people			age distribution (% of total population)			growth 2011 - 2031	
	2011	2021	2031	2011	2021	2031	No.	%
< 15	7,250	7,700	7,550	17.8	17.5%	16.6%	300	3.9%
15 - 64	24,850	25,250	24,600	61.0	57.5	54.1	-250	-1.0%
64 +	8,650	11,000	13,300	21.2%	25.0%	29.3%	4,650	54.0%
all ages	40,750	43,950	45,450	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	4,700	11.5%

Source: New South Wales Department of Planning & Environment 
Local Government Area Population Projections: 2013 preliminary revision

*The Productivity Commission prepared a report in 2013 titled, **An Ageing Australia: Preparing for the Future**. This report outlines numerous statistics that highlight the projected changes in Australia's population. The report states that:*

“ In 2012, there was roughly one person aged 100 years or more to every 100 children aged less than 1 year old. By 2060, the ratio is projected to be 25 to 100 and, with continued small increases in longevity, in the year 2100, there will be more centenarians than babies. ”

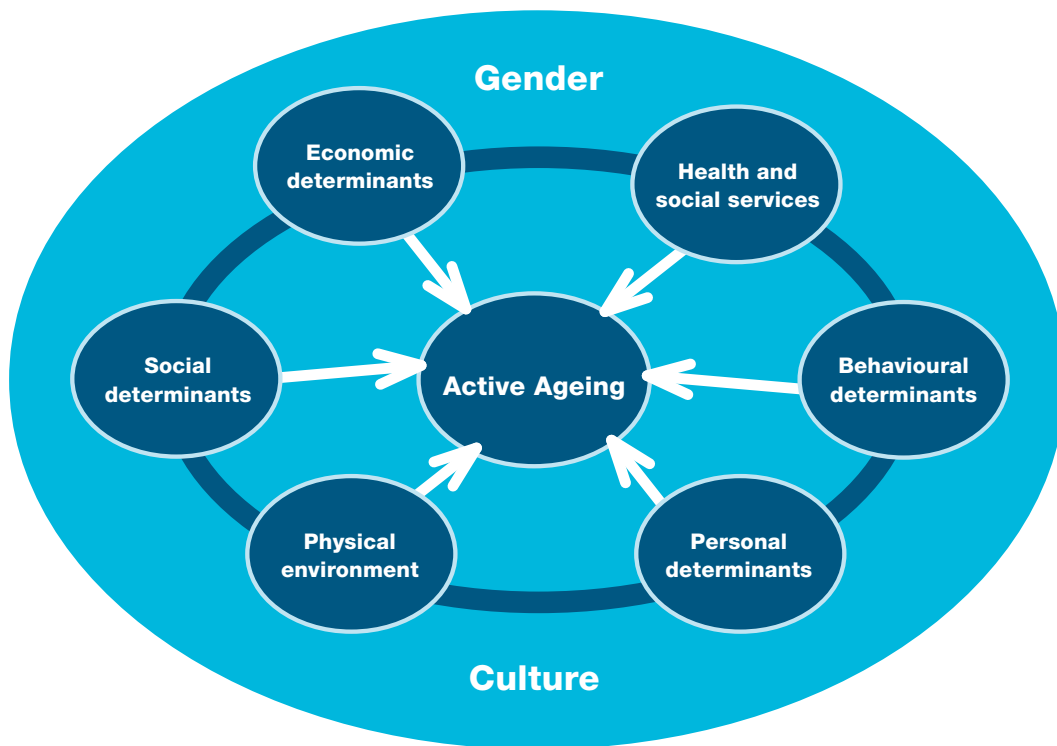
What we are being told (con't)

The dominant view amongst health practitioners is that it is important that older people do not become socially isolated. Older people need to have the opportunity to mix with other people and feel like they are part of the community. Addressing social isolation was identified as an important issue during our community consultation.

It is important to ensure that older people stay active into their retirement. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has championed the term 'active ageing' in its publications and practice. The WHO defines active ageing as:

“The process of optimising opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age.”

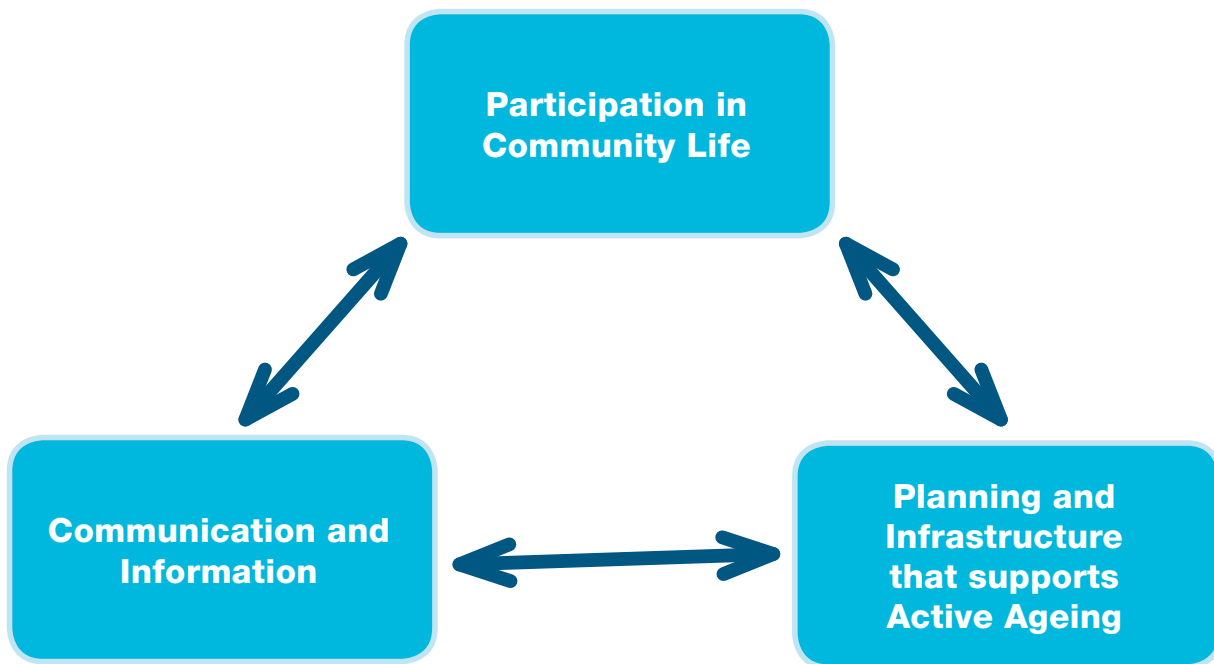
The WHO advocates that all governments should develop and implement policies and programs that aim to enhance an older person’s ability to participate in community life and improve their overall health. According to the WHO, active ageing is about participation in all social, economic, cultural, spiritual and civic components of a society, and is impacted in a variety of ways as shown below.



↑ **Figure 1: Determinants of Active Ageing.** Source: World Health Organisation, 2007, p.5. Hills Posit

What the community told us

Throughout our community discussions, many issues were raised. Some sit within the responsibility of Council whilst others are beyond the ambit of local government. An analysis of the responses from our consultations showed a number of emerging themes that have been collated into the following key directions.



Participation in Community Life: Maintain and create opportunities for our older residents to participate in community life.

Planning and Infrastructure that Supports Active Ageing: Plan for an ageing community; design and build infrastructure with older people in mind.

Communication and Information: Deliver information in plain English and in a variety of formats.

When combined, these key directions form a blueprint for action that aims to create a community that has, at its core, the wellbeing of its older residents.

What the community told us (con't)

In preparing this plan we wanted to link directly to the key directions that are in our Community Strategic Plan (CSP):



The consultation workshops were structured to ensure that the participants were able to identify actions that respond to the key directions of the CSP. We asked the participants how the key directions can include older residents. The responses were varied and at times repeated across the key themes.

For simplicity we have endeavoured to minimise repetition and include the proposed actions once, even though they may be addressing two or more themes.

PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY LIFE

We feel safe, connected to the community, and there are services, facilities and transport options that suit our needs.

Our consultation told us that social isolation is becoming a significant issue for many older people. The reasons for the isolation are varied and may include family separation, becoming less mobile, being frightened to go out and loss of a partner or lifelong friends.



Appreciation Morning Tea for Ballina Shire Council Volunteers, 2014

Community Interaction

Participants at the consultation advised that whilst the use of new technology may assist some older people feeling less isolated, there are many of our older residents who have no access to technology, nor do they have an interest in pursuing new technology. For this group of older people there is no substitute for face to face contact.

It is important to ensure that older people feel they are part of the community and that there are opportunities to participate in community life. Utilising the skills and knowledge of older people was seen as a potential positive, not only for the older people but for the community at large. Skills of the older people can be utilised in many ways, including as mentors or volunteers.

Volunteering was identified as an avenue whereby older people can contribute to the overall wellbeing of our community. The benefit of volunteering is that it can also assist older people to make connections, which in turn build upon the sense of belonging in the community. However there was a sense expressed by some of the participants that often older people do not know where they can volunteer or how to get involved.

There was a belief that we need to ensure there are opportunities for older residents to remain in and re-enter the workforce. Many of the participants felt there was often reluctance amongst employers to employ older residents. Promoting the benefits of employing older workers was seen as a possible means to increasing this engagement. Participants at our consultation suggested that employment opportunities in working with the aged will

likely grow as there will be demand for services across the aged care spectrum in providing services to the aged. This will increase employment opportunities in the sector and this should be promoted.



Northern Rivers Community Gallery Volunteers, 2014

Creating opportunities for older people to participate in lifelong learning was also seen as a means to increase the level of community participation. Better promotion of existing learning programs and community assets, such as our libraries, were suggested as possible strategies to assist with this.

There was an understanding that current support services targeting older residents are increasingly finding it difficult to meet the current needs. There was a concern that as our aged population grows there will be an increasing pressure on our service providers. The participants felt that there was a role for council to play in advocating for increased levels and diversity of services in our community.

What does Council do now?

- Promotes opportunities for older people to volunteer at the Northern Rivers Community Gallery, Coastcare, Ballina Byron Gateway Airport, Gardening Volunteers and the Ballina Visitor Information Centre;
- Maintains community infrastructure such as network of shared pathways and public amenities ;
- Provides and maintains community facilities that promote social inclusion and participation in our older people such as community centres, libraries and seniors citizens centres;
- Sponsors and funds a number of seniors related community events ;
- Provides Broadband for Seniors computer training;
- Conducts educational programs to improve road safety for older people;
- Supports numerous community groups through the annual community donations program;
- Sponsors the annual seniors week concert; and
- Provides facilities that are leased to community organisations that work with older people.

“We will work in partnership with local stakeholders to ensure that our residents have a variety of opportunities to participate in community life.”



Did you know ...

Ballina Shire Council hosts free internet access and computer training for seniors?

The aim of this program is to support senior Australians in gaining confidence and building new skills in the use of computer technology. Topics include; navigating a computer, using email, email etiquette, exploring the internet (world wide web) and using word processing software to write letters. New lessons such as Microsoft Office, social networking, Android and iPad tablet computing, and digital photography are also available.

What Council will do moving forward

EL1 OUR COUNCIL WORKS WITH THE COMMUNITY					
CSP DIRECTION	KEY ACTIONS	THE BENEFITS WILL BE...	RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES
EL 1.3 Actively advocate community issues to other levels of government	1.7 Advocate for improved services for older people	We will raise the awareness of issues that are impacting on our older residents	All of Council	Ongoing	Internal
CC2 WE FEEL CONNECTED TO THE COMMUNITY					
CSP DIRECTION	KEY ACTIONS	THE BENEFITS WILL BE...	RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES
CC2.1 Encourage community interaction and volunteering	1.1 Promote opportunities for volunteering in Ballina Shire	Improved awareness of opportunities for volunteering within Ballina Shire.	Strategic and Community Facilities Group	Ongoing	Internal
CC2.2 Create events and activities that promote interaction and education	1.2 Encourage organisers of community events to ensure that their events are accessible to older people and people with disabilities 1.3 Promote and advocate for seniors focused content as part of key festivals and events	Older residents will be better informed of opportunities to engage in activities, have improved access to information and increase opportunities to develop social connections			
CC2.3 Support disadvantage groups within our community	1.4 Address social isolation in older people by promoting and assisting in the development of social networks				

CC3 THERE ARE SERVICES AND FACILITIES THAT SUIT OUR NEEDS						
CSP DIRECTION	KEY ACTIONS	THE BENEFITS WILL BE...	RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES	
CC3.1 Provide equitable access to a range of community services and facilities	1.5 Ensure that all newly constructed community facilities are accessible to older people and people with disabilities	Our community facilities will have universal access	Strategic and Community Facilities Group	Ongoing	Internal	
CC3.3 Provide strategies for older residents to be part of our community	1.6 Integrate planning for an ageing population into the review of the Community Strategic Plan	Aged friendly criteria embedded in Council Policy and practice.				
PE3 WE CAN WORK CLOSE TO HOME						
CSP DIRECTION	KEY ACTIONS	THE BENEFITS WILL BE...	RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES	
PE3.3 Encourage technologies and transport options that support work at home or close to home business activities	1.8 Support and encourage initiatives that increase opportunities for older people to remain in the work force	Greater workforce participation by older residents	Strategic and Community Facilities Group	Ongoing	Internal	

PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE THAT SUPPORTS ACTIVE AGEING

Our aim is to plan and deliver infrastructure that meets the needs of older people.

Council understands that it plays a significant role in the development of a community for everyone, including our current and future older residents.

We need to ensure that we include older residents in our conversations when we plan for the future. The specific needs of older residents must be considered when we prepare plans for our community.

We need to ensure that proposed large scale developments and civic improvement programs are assessed in terms of their aged appropriateness.

The establishment of a seniors' advisory group would provide an opportunity to have an ongoing point of contact between Council and a representative group of older residents.



Lifeball Participants, Lennox Head Cultural & Community Centre, 2014

Housing

Housing for our older residents will likely become a significant issue in the future. It will be important to ensure that there are housing options for people as they move through their life stages. Our consultation told us that many older, often women, live alone in houses that are too large for them to maintain. Most people would prefer to live in an area that is familiar to them and that is close to services, shops and transport. The ideal situation is for an older person to age 'in place' so that they can keep their community connections and feel part of the broader community.

Many older people expressed a belief that currently there are limited options to downsize, as our existing housing stock is dominated by detached dwellings. The challenge will be in ensuring that there will be an ample supply of appropriate types of housing for older people. The consultation group felt that it would be beneficial to encourage a variety of housing types that are appropriate and adaptable for older residents.

Council's land use planning policies such, as the Local Environmental Plan and the Development Control Plan have substantial influences on the location and type of housing being developed in the Ballina Shire. These plans permit the development of a range of housing types to meet the varying needs of our community. The current temporary waiving of certain development charges for the construction of secondary dwellings in urban areas is an example of Council's willingness to explore options that aim to increase the variety in our current housing stock



Lewis Cook, 2013. Photo by Michael Aird

Local emergencies

We are all aware that many of our older residents are vulnerable, particularly during emergencies such as flooding and storm events. It is important that planning for emergency management include strategies that take into account the needs of older people. Considerations should include providing timely information on the location of emergency accommodation centres and emergency contact numbers.

Public facilities and infrastructure

Good physical access is essential for older and less mobile people to move around freely. Not surprisingly, good access is seen as a critical element in promoting active ageing. The ideal is to create an 'age-friendly' built environment to facilitate social interactions.



With the ageing of our population we will need to ensure that our footpaths and pathways are able to accommodate the increased usage of mobility aids. Signage is important as it assists older people to find their way in their day to day activities. Infrastructure such as public seating, tables and bus shelters should be designed with older people in mind and include elements such as arm rests and shade.

Entry into public and private buildings should be easily accessible with clear entrances. We need to ensure that current and future pathways that lead to our community centres, libraries, public amenities and parks will be accessible to all people.

Public toilets were also identified as being important pieces of infrastructure elements. Participants felt that our public toilets should meet the needs of a growing older population and, as such, they should be constructed to accommodate older people who use walking aids and mobility scooters.

Transport

During our consultation transport was also raised as a significant barrier for many of our older residents. After a lifetime of being in control of their individual transport needs, older people may find the transition in relying on others to assist with transport difficult. Without transport support older people may stay at home and become socially isolated.

Our local transport operators provide extensive school services and regular daily services however the transport needs of older residents are not entirely met. Services such as community transport provide valuable support to many of our older residents. We were told that often older people require a more flexible and affordable service that caters to their respective needs.

An obvious transport solution for many older people is the use of personal mobility scooters. Participants at our consultation promoted the use of scooters as means for older people to remain independent. Whilst this mode of transport enables older people to remain active in our community it is not without its issues.

Our infrastructure is often not constructed to deal with the scooters. Our infrastructure is constructed to meet Australian standards, however many scooters are so large that they are not able to be accommodated in our amenities such as public toilets. There is an expectation that as the use of mobility scooters continues to become more popular and affordable means of older people moving around there will be more demand for our infrastructure should better accommodate their use.

What does Council do now?

- Develops long term plans for the Ballina Shire;
- Provides, constructs and maintains pathways and footpaths;
- Provides and maintains parks and open spaces that are able to be used by older people;
- Takes into consideration the needs of older and less mobile people when assessing new developments to ensure relevant standards are met;
- Makes provision for adaptable housing in the Development Control Plan ;
- Provides financial support for the publication of the Northern Rivers Transport Guide and
- Currently conducts road safety workshops for scooter uses.



Did you know ...

Ballina Shire Council has waived developer contribution charges for certain secondary dwellings (granny flats) in the urban areas of Ballina Shire for an initial 2 year period until 31 March 2016?

What Council will do moving forward

CC1 WE FEEL SAFE					
CSP DIRECTION	KEY ACTIONS	THE BENEFITS WILL BE...	RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES
CC1.2 Ensure adequate plans are in place for natural disasters and environmental changes	2.1 Work with key partners to ensure that the managers of the emergency evacuation centres take into account the needs of older residents	Local disaster management centres will be better able to deal with the needs of older people	Civil Services Group	Ongoing	Internal
	2.2 Provide residents with information on what to do in the event of a natural disaster	Our older residents will be informed of the location of emergency evacuation centres	Strategic and Community Facilities Group	Ongoing	Internal
CC1.3 Monitor the built infrastructure and services delivered to the community to ensure relevant standards are being met	2.3 When planning and designing community infrastructure Council will assess it in terms of its aged friendliness	Improved level of information on how to act during an emergency			
		Future Council Infrastructure will incorporate best practice design to ensure equitable access for older people and people living with a disability	Civil Services Group	Ongoing	Internal

What Council will do moving forward

CC3 THERE ARE SERVICES AND FACILITIES THAT SUIT OUR NEEDS					
CSP DIRECTION	KEY ACTIONS	THE BENEFITS WILL BE...	RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES
CC3.1 Provide equitable access to a range of community services and facilities	2.4 Undertake an audit of Council infrastructure and facilities in regards to its 'age-friendliness'	Identification of accessibility issues within existing infrastructure will allow for the development of a schedule of works to address identified needs. Improved accessibility to our community facilities and amenities for older people.	Strategic and Community Facilities Group	2-years	Internal
CC3.3 provide strategies for older residents to be part of our community	2.5 Review our planning documents such as the LEP/DCP in terms of their responsiveness to the needs of older residents and where necessary make amendments	The specific needs of older people are taken into consideration when preparing/reviewing our principle planning documents	Strategic and Community Facilities Group	3-years	Internal
	2.6 Assess proposed developments and civic improvements programs in terms of the impact on older residents	The needs of older people are taken into consideration when assessing developments	Development and Environmental Health Group	Ongoing	Internal

1. the LEP and DCP have been through a comprehensive review process in 2014 which included consideration of an ageing population.

What Council will do moving forward

EL1 OUR COUNCIL WORKS WITH THE COMMUNITY					
CSP DIRECTION	KEY ACTIONS	THE BENEFITS WILL BE...	RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES
EL1.1 Facilitate and develop strong relationships and partnerships with the community	2.7 Establish Seniors advisory group that will meet quarterly	The Seniors advisory group will act as a conduit between older residents and Council	Strategic and Community Facilities Group	1-year	Internal
EL1.2 Involve or community in the planning and decision making process of Council	2.8 Consult with older residents on planning and policy matters	Older residents will be consulted when Council undertakes community consultation	All of Council	Ongoing	Internal
EL 1.3 Actively advocate community issues to other levels of government	2.9 Advocate for improved frequency, reach and accessibility of public transport services.	Improved public transport options that meets the needs of our older residents	Civil Services Group	Ongoing	Internal
	2.10 Actively participate in regional transport planning	The transport needs of our residents will be represented at the regional level			

What Council will do moving forward

PE3 WE CAN WORK CLOSER TO HOME					
CSP DIRECTION	KEY ACTIONS	THE BENEFITS WILL BE...	RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES
PE3.2 Facilitate and provide affordable infrastructure, both business and residential	2.11 Encourage alternative accommodation solutions for older people across the Ballina Shire	An increase the number and range of housing options for older residents	Strategic and Community Facilities Group	Ongoing	Internal
	2.12 Promote opportunities for the co-location of housing, amenities, community services and facilities	Encourage the development of smaller single level dwellings that provided an alternative housing choice for older people	Development and Environmental Health Group		
	2.13 Promote the liveable design guidelines	Existing housing stock will be adapted over time to incorporate liveable design features			

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

We will deliver information in plain English and in a variety of ways.

We want to ensure that older people are part of our community conversations and they have opportunities to stay connected by utilising our community facilities, and having opportunities to participate in activities and events.

One way they can do this is to have access to information on a range of facilities and services that can assist older people to participate in community life.



Raising awareness

During our discussions it emerged that, for many, there is a general lack of awareness about the local support services and facilities that are available to our older residents. The lack of awareness may be related to not knowing where older residents can access information. There was general consensus at the consultation that information concerning local services and facilities needs to be more publicly available.

Improving communication

We were told that older people access information from a variety of sources such as the local newspapers, community radio and increasingly information found online. Many of the participants at our consultation stated that information from Council was at times too complicated and difficult to understand. Council's Community Connect newsletter was identified as an example of information being passed on to residents in an easy to understand format. Our consultation told us that the information we provide should be delivered using a variety of sources and that regardless of which format the information is provided in, the content should be in plain English.

Promoting services and facilities

Participants at our consultations also indicated that it is important to promote the use of our existing infrastructure, like our libraries and community facilities, as places

where information can be found. These community assets were also seen as potential places where older people can meet and be part of groups. Participants also suggested that Council should promote services and activities that aim to improve the overall health, and wellbeing of our older residents. This can include providing information regarding activities and programs for older residents, transport options, information on services, providing links to other levels of government and by promoting Council's own services and contact number.

Improving signage

Signage and way finding infrastructure that identifies the location of facilities and amenities also play an important role in assisting older people to navigate their way. Walking is an activity that has many benefits what we need to ensure is that our way finding signage encourages and enables older people to walk. Council needs to ensure that our signage is legible and unambiguous; that it informs and promotes Council's amenities, infrastructure and way finding to older people.

What does council do now?

- Maintains an online community directory.
- Publishes a quarterly Community Connect newsletter.
- Publishes weekly notices in the local newspaper.
- Provides updates on Council's website.

What Council will do moving forward

CC2 WE FEEL CONNECTED TO THE COMMUNITY					
CSP DIRECTION	KEY ACTIONS	THE BENEFITS WILL BE...	RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES
CC2.3 Support disadvantaged groups within our community	3.1 Promote the My Aged Care Australia website, resources and hotline to increase awareness of, and access to, aged care options and services.	An improved awareness of services and facilities that are available to older residents	Strategic and Community Facilities Group	1-year	Internal
	3.2 Promote existing community infrastructure, community events, activities and resources for all older residents by using community noticeboards and other council networks for distributing information		Strategic and Community Facilities Group	Ongoing	Internal

What Council will do moving forward

CC3 THERE ARE SERVICES AND FACILITIES THAT SUIT OUR NEEDS					
CSP DIRECTION	KEY ACTIONS	THE BENEFITS WILL BE...	RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME	RESOURCES
CC3.1 Provide equitable access to a range of community services and facilities	3.3 Develop a positive ageing section on councils web page	Our older residents will have access to information in formats that suit their needs	Strategic and Community Facilities Group	1-year	Internal
	3.4 Have documents on public exhibition in multiple formats (including print)	An improved awareness of the services that are available to older residents	All of Council	Ongoing	Internal
	3.5 Undertake research into the information and communication preferences of older people			2-years	Internal
	3.6 Produce a yearly edition of Community Connect with a focus on seniors			Yearly	Internal
CC3.3 Provide strategies for older residents to be part of our community	3.7 Ensure that our signage meets the needs of older people	Our signage clearly informs and promotes amenities, infrastructure and way finding	Strategic and Community Facilities Group	Ongoing	Internal
	3.8 Collaborate with community groups and stakeholders to develop a positive ageing guide for older residents	Residents of Ballina Shire will have a guide for older residents			



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