



AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES PLAN 2019-2024



CIRCULAR HEAD COUNCIL
WARATAH-WYNYARD COUNCIL

MARCH 2019

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This Age-Friendly Communities Plan was produced by The Social Yield Pty Ltd for Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard Councils in 2018-19.



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INTRODUCTION

It is with great pleasure that we present Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard Councils' inaugural Age-Friendly Communities Plan.

There has never been a better time to plan for age-friendly communities. Tasmania currently has the oldest population profile in Australia, and our population is ageing faster than the national average.

In Circular Head, 17% of our population was aged 65 or older in 2016, and in Waratah-Wynyard, this number was 22%. These proportions are growing. By 2037, the population of older adults in Circular Head is projected to reach 2,017, or more than one-quarter (27%) of the total population. In Waratah-Wynyard the population aged 65 and older is forecast to reach 4,703 by the year 2037, making up nearly one-third (32%) of the total population¹.

Ensuring that older people feel valued and can enjoy safe, welcoming and accessible communities will be essential to our collective wellbeing.

The integrated nature of this Age-Friendly Communities Plan reflects the ongoing close working relationship between the two Councils and the way in which our strategic goals are set in tandem. While the Plan is a joint strategy, we will target our actions to the needs of our individual communities.

MAYORAL MESSAGE

Within the context of an ageing population, local governments have an important role to play in ensuring that older people feel valued and can enjoy safe, welcoming and accessible communities. Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard Councils are working to support their older people by implementing this joint CHC & WWC Age-Friendly Communities Plan 2019-2024.

The Plan is a first for our councils. It is informed by World Health Organisation guidelines, community aspirations (including those of older adults), research data and the wisdom of our local community organisations and service providers.

Our vision is that Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard will be places in which older people are supported to be socially connected, to enjoy enhanced wellbeing and independence, to access the services and supports they need, and to remain valued and contributing members of the community.

Over the coming years, the Plan will guide our two Councils and our many local partners and providers in delivering on this vision. The Plan will be implemented through annual action plans, and we will use a framework of indicators to track progress towards our objectives.

We would like to thank all who contributed to the Age-Friendly Communities Plan, and we look forward to working to make Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard places where people can flourish as they age.



D. H. Quilliam

Cr Daryl Quilliam

Mayor Circular Head Council



R. H. W. Walsh

Cr Robby Walsh

Mayor Waratah-Wynyard Council

ABOUT THIS PLAN

This Age-Friendly Communities Plan is intended to help ensure that Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard local government areas are places where people can flourish as they age.

This is our first Age-Friendly Communities Plan, and we see it as a living document. We look forward to tracking our progress towards our goals, learning from experience, and strengthening this plan over time.

Developing the Plan

Development began with a review of the planning and policy context, including the World Health Organisation (WHO) parameters for Age-Friendly Communities as well as local and State government strategies and policies. Evidence from the Census and other research has helped us to understand community characteristics and needs.

We also drew on what we know about community priorities. A dedicated community engagement process with older people was beyond the scope of this project (although it is something we aspire to in the coming years). Instead, we derived information about community experiences and aspirations from existing sources, including:

- A Health and Wellbeing Planning Workshop held in May 2018 with 32 participants drawn from Council staff, community leaders and local and regional service providers.

While working through several health and wellbeing issues, participants identified a range of issues relating to age-friendly communities. This included naming potential enablers and barriers to achieving positive change.

- Findings from each Council's Annual Community Survey as well additional community consultation outcomes from internal research.
- Qualitative research and consultation findings relating to older adults and their experiences and aspirations compiled by other Tasmanian and Australian organisations, most notably the Council on the Ageing (COTA) Tasmania.
- Community input into *Sustainable Murchison 2040*, a joint strategic planning framework for Circular Head, Waratah-Wynyard, West Coast, King Island and Burnie.

Actions for this plan have been informed by this community evidence base, and they are also shaped by recommendations set out within the publications of COTA Tasmania, the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA), the WHO and other relevant agencies. There are also strong synergies between the actions of this Plan and those of the Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2024.

Feedback on the Plan

The draft version of this Age-Friendly Communities Plan was exhibited for community feedback between 26 September and 24 October, 2018.

Consultation on the draft Age-Friendly Communities Plan was undertaken alongside consultation on the Councils' draft Community Health and Wellbeing Plan and YPlan (Youth Plan). The drafts and the invitation to provide feedback were disseminated through the following channels:

Print media

- The draft plans and the call for community feedback were featured in *The Advocate* newspaper on 29 September and in the *Circular Head Chronicle* on 4 October.

Council website

- A media release about the draft plans and the call for community feedback were posted to both Council websites in the 'Latest News' and 'Have Your Say' sections on 26 September.

Social media

- A notice about the drafts and invitation to provide feedback was posted to the Circular Head Council Facebook page on 1 October, with an additional reminder posted on 22 October.

Hardcopies

- Hardcopies of the draft plans were placed in the Council foyer from 26 September and remained there throughout the feedback period.
- Hardcopies of the draft plans were distributed to the committees of the Service Providers Access Network (SPAN), Circular Head Education and Training Consultative Committee (CHETCC) and the Sport and Recreation Network.

- Hardcopies were also distributed to older adults at the Seniors Week Afternoon Tea and the Senior Citizens/Emmertons Park Clubhouse.

Email

- The plans were circulated by email to all participants of the original Health and Wellbeing Planning Workshop convened during the plans' development; as well as to the Service providers Access Network (SPAN) and the Sport and Recreation Network. A reminder email was sent to these recipients 22 October with links to the plans.

Community members and other stakeholders were invited to provide feedback on the draft plans via letter, telephone, the 'Have Your Say' online facility or email. Circular Head Council Facebook posts about the drafts made on the 1st and 22nd October reached 1,412 and 451 people respectively; and generated 66 and 7 engagements respectively. By close of the consultation period, Council had received seven written submissions on the drafts.

The resultant Age-Friendly Communities Plan is a five-year framework for action informed by community priorities. It is a shared plan across both Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard Councils. Annual implementation plans derived from the Age-Friendly Communities Plan will be comprised of actions targeted to the needs and characteristics of individual communities.

VISION

Our Vision and Principles are informed by the WHO approach to Age-Friendly Communities.

Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard will be places in which older people are supported to be socially connected, to enjoy enhanced wellbeing and independence, to access the services and supports they need, and to remain valued and contributing members of the community.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Respecting diversity

We recognise that older people are a heterogeneous group, and we respect their diverse capabilities, resources, lifestyles and preferences.

Fostering equity

We are committed to identifying and addressing inequities between groups, including but not limited to age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, ethnicity, religion and location.

Valuing participation

We value and welcome the contributions of older people and their participation in all spheres of life.

Upholding rights

We respect the rights of older people to live with dignity.

Encouraging co-design and co-creation

Older people are not only the beneficiaries, but also crucial agents of change. We acknowledge that creating an age-friendly community requires collaboration and coordination across sectors and with diverse stakeholders.

Ensuring a two-way approach

We acknowledge that a bottom-up participatory approach should be combined with top-down political commitment and resources.

Ensuring a life course approach

We acknowledge that a life-course approach—that encourages intergenerational relations, solidarity and mutual support—should be central to efforts to create age-friendly towns and communities.

DEFINING AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

Built and natural environments play a critical role in enabling people to flourish as they get older.

The following definition of age-friendly environments is from the World Health Organisation (WHO), whose Age-Friendly Cities and Communities program provides a framework for ensuring local environments help people to remain healthy, independent and autonomous as they age.

Age-friendly environments foster health and well-being and the participation of people as they age. They are accessible, equitable, inclusive, safe and secure, and supportive. They promote health and prevent or delay the onset of disease and functional decline. They provide people-centred services and support to enable recovery or to compensate for the loss of function so that people can continue to do the things that are important to them.

Without age-friendly environments, health for all cannot be achieved. Everyone should have the opportunity to achieve the highest possible level of health and wellbeing, regardless of age, sex or gender, cultural or ethnic background, wealth or health status.

Older people may experience negative attitudes and discrimination based on their age. Creating age-friendly environments acknowledges diversity, fights ageism and ensures that everyone has the opportunity to fully participate.

Creating barrier-free and affordable housing, accessible public spaces, and transportation enable people to stay independent and participate in community life. An age-friendly environment reduces the risk of falls and prevents the neglect and abuse of vulnerable older people by increasing the safety of the natural and built environments and the security and protection of older people in the community.

Older people play a crucial role in their communities – they engage in paid or volunteering work, transmit experience and knowledge, and help their families with caring responsibilities. These contributions can only be ensured if societies foster their health and participation.

Source: WHO (2018) Age-Friendly Cities and Communities

OUR PRIORITIES

Consistent with best practice in creating age-friendly communities, our plan is framed around eight priority areas. While these eight areas are common feature of most age-friendly community plans, our nominated actions and commitments respond to what we know about the older people of Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard local government areas.

1. *Outdoor space and buildings*

2. *Transportation*

3. *Housing*

4. *Social Participation*

5. *Respect and Social Inclusion*

6. *Civic Participation and Employment*

7. *Communication and Information*

8. *Community and Health Services*

1. Outdoor spaces and buildings

Our goal

Our environments—including green and natural spaces, buildings, streetscapes, public facilities and pathways—are safe, accessible and have a high level of amenity.

Why it matters

Barrier-free and accessible public spaces enable people to enjoy opportunities for exercise and to participate in civic, social and community life.

What we know

In consultation with older Tasmanians, ‘mobility and keeping physically active’ was the seventh-most commonly named issue affecting people as they age².

Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard adults report that public spaces—when functioning well—enable people to visit friends and families on foot; provide a ‘stage’ for special local events where the whole community can gather; provide access to recreational and sporting facilities; create spaces where walkers, cyclists and other users can exercise; and enable people to reach the shops, facilities and services they require³.

In 2016, residents of Circular Head rated the appearance of their neighbourhood/district as having high importance. At the same time, respondents felt that Council was not meeting their expectations for appearance and there was opportunity for improvement. Urban and rural land use planning was also ranked third-lowest in terms of performance. Residents named public toilets/amenities in their top-5 most important Council facilities and services, and ranked physical access to Council buildings (ramps, stairs, handrails) as the fourth-highest performing area of Council⁴.

In the same year, residents of Waratah-Wynyard residents similarly rated the appearance of their neighbourhood/district as having high importance. However, respondents felt the appearance of Wynyard CBD and Somerset CBD were areas in which Council was performing strongly. Urban and rural land use planning, however, ranked lowest for Council performance, and was named as a key area in which Council could improve. Among Council facilities and services, public toilets and amenities were rated as being most important to residents. Physical access to Council buildings (ramp, stairs, handrails) ranked second-highest in performance⁵.

Local service providers and community leaders report that public spaces in both Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard are not always accessible to those with mobility issues⁶. This issue has also been emphasised by adults living in Waratah-Wynyard who point to the need to both manage the infrastructure itself (i.e. the physical condition of surfaces and kerbs) and build awareness around correct usage (i.e. accommodating the conflicting needs of pedestrians, wheelchairs and motorised scooters)⁷.

What we will do

- 
- Enhance the accessibility of built and natural environments
 - Enhance community safety
 - Foster connected townships

2. Transportation

Our goal

Our public and community transport networks are reliable, accessible and affordable. They enable people to move around easily and safely.

Why it matters

Diverse transport options help people to retain their independence, access the services and supports they need, and stay connected to their social and family networks.

What we know

In consultation with older Tasmanians, 'transport' was the fifth-most commonly named issue affecting people as they age⁸. Local service providers and community leaders report that a lack of transport creates barriers for older people, both in terms of service access and in connecting with others⁹. Consultation with older Tasmanians has shown that limited transportation is the most commonly reported factor preventing people from feeling connected to their local community¹⁰.

In 2016, 371 (6.5%) private dwellings in Waratah-Wynyard had no motor vehicle, and 134 (4.3%) dwellings in Circular Head had no motor vehicle. While the proportion of dwellings without motor vehicles was lower than both the Tasmanian and Australia average, this should be viewed in the context of the availability and viability of other modes of transport, such as walking, biking, public transport and taxis. When surveyed by Council in 2016, only a minority of residents (35%) in Circular Head agreed that public transport was adequate to meet their needs¹¹. This number was higher in Waratah-Wynyard, where a majority (62%) agreed public transport was adequate to meet their needs¹².

Research into the transport needs of older adults in Tasmania has found that inadequate coordination is preventing the State from making best use of existing transport resources for older people. It found that older people are generally not well-informed about their transport issues, and they can hold negative perceptions of some forms of transport (e.g. perceived risks of taking taxis). The research also found that some elements of public transport operations worked as a barrier for older people and made public transport less age-friendly. For example, public bus stops often have low amenity due to a lack of seating, weather protection, signage and lighting¹³.

As an indicator of growing demand for transport assistance, Community Transport Services Tasmania (CTST) has reported a Statewide increase in demand for its services, with a year-on-year increase in demand of 8.5% for State Home and Community Care-funded trips recorded in 2016-17, including growth in both medical and social trips. Under the Commonwealth Home Support Program, CTST reported continued growth in non-emergency medical transport to people aged 65 and older¹⁴. Volunteer recruitment is named a barrier to expanding services to meet demand.

What we will do

- 
- Enhance the diversity of transport options available to older people
 - Enable older people to utilise a range of transport services and options
 - Foster a strong local transport network

3. Housing

Our goal

Our housing stock is diverse and provides people with affordable, accessible, high-quality options for people to rent and purchase.

Why it matters

Good quality housing enhances physical and mental wellbeing and supports people to ‘age in place’ in their communities, where they can maintain important social connections.

What we know

In consultation with older Tasmanians, ‘housing and home maintenance’ was the sixth-most commonly named issue affecting people as they age¹⁵. Local service providers and community leaders report a lack of independent living options for older people in the community¹⁶.

Australian household size has declined over recent decades. Living alone is associated with older age and is slightly more common amongst women than men¹⁷. In 2016, 28% of households in Circular Head and 30% of households in Waratah-Wynyard were lone person households, closely equivalent to the State average but higher than the national average. However, in the same year, the majority of dwellings in both local government areas had three bedrooms. Only 3% of Circular Head’s housing stock and 4.3% of Waratah-Wynyard’s housing was comprised of 1-bedroom dwellings in 2016, lower than both the State and national average¹⁸. Anecdotal evidence from Council suggests that some older people living alone would prefer a two-bedroom dwelling to accommodate guests/visiting family.

Older people are at higher risk of homelessness when they rent in the private market and do not own their own home. Consultation with older Tasmanians renting in the private market has found that renting is most successful in situations where both the accommodation and the location facilitate healthy ageing. Supportive factors include accessible streetscapes and nearby facilities, affordable heating options, the ability to access home help services, and opportunities to modify their homes to enable them to remain in their homes safely. These alterations require the permission of the owner and regularly incur costs for the tenants, their families or the DHHS¹⁹.

The Murchison community’s vision for the future includes, ‘Aged care is delivered to people’s homes, enabling them to stay in their communities as long as they can’²⁰.

What we will do

-  Enhance the accessibility of new and existing homes
-  Foster compact towns and neighbourhoods
-  Increase the diversity and availability of high-quality accommodation options

4. Social Participation

Our goal

People are supported to be active and engaged with their communities, maintaining important existing connections and exploring new opportunities for social, community and civic participation.

Why it's important

Social participation is a key predictor of a person's health and wellbeing. Reducing isolation and enabling connectedness are priorities for our communities.

What we know

Being socially connected has a positive influence on emotional, psychological and physical health. Conversely, experiencing social isolation—through living alone, having few social ties or little social engagement—is associated with poorer health outcomes, including a higher rate of mortality²¹.

For people of all ages, factors that protect against social isolation include strong relationships with friends and families and having someone to confide in. Risks for isolation include widowhood, never being married, having no children or no living children, being from a migrant and refugee population, identifying as LGBTI, or living in rural and remote areas. Older people living in a rural or remote locality have a higher risk of social isolation due to limited access to services, the changing roles they experience within their community, and the potential for a greater disconnect with family²².

In consultation with older Tasmanians, 'social connections, family and friendships' was the third-most commonly named issue affecting people as they age. Most responses associated with this issue highlighted the need to feel part of something, feel part of the community or make connections with others. A substantial number of respondents cited 'loneliness' as a key issue for them²³. When asked in 2016, 'Do you feel that you are part of your local community?', 21% of Circular Head residents and 19% of Waratah-Wynyard residents responded 'No', both higher than in 2014^{24, 25}.

Consultation with older Tasmanians has shown that limited transportation is the most commonly reported factor preventing people from feeling connected to their local community. Other significant factors were a lack of interaction with others, a lack of information and communication, and health and wellbeing²⁶.

Service providers and community leaders confirm that isolation is a key issue amongst older adults in Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard, particularly for older people living alone. They point to high levels of anxiety and depression amongst older people²⁷.

What we will do

- 
- 1 Increase opportunities for informal and formal social interaction
 - 2 Support participation in social interaction
 - 3 Encourage the wider community to address social isolation

5. Respect and Social Inclusion

Our goal

All people in our community—regardless of their age, ability, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, family structure or socio-economic status—are valued and experience a sense of belonging.

Why this matters

Social exclusion hurts individuals and damages the social, civic and economic fabric of the community. Embracing diversity helps ensure that everyone can flourish as they age.

What we know

In consultation with older Tasmanians, ‘respect and identity’ was the fourteenth-most commonly named issue affecting people as they age. Those who contributed additional comments around this issue were concerned about societal attitudes towards ageing and older people. Some reported feeling patronised, undervalued or had concerns about age discrimination²⁸.

Discrimination and social exclusion is not just age related, but can also occur around factors such as ability, gender, sexuality, ethnicity and socio-economic disadvantage.

Where disability is concerned, in 2016 a total of 364 people in Circular Head reported a need for assistance. 47.3% of these people were aged 65 or older. In Waratah-Wynyard, 1,118 people reported a need for assistance. 48.3% of these were aged 65 or older²⁹.

The total LGBTI (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual or Intersex) population of Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard is unknown due to a lack of data. However, it is estimated that people of diverse sexual orientation, sex or gender identity may account for up to 11% of the general population³⁰.

Both Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard are home to a relatively high proportion of people who identify as Indigenous. In the 2016 Census, there were 1,244 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people living in Circular Head, making up 15.7% of the population, and in Waratah-Wynyard this number was 1,033, or 7.6% of the population³¹. Local service providers and community leaders report that racism, stigma and prejudice can impact health and wellbeing, both in terms of access to suitable health care and in terms of mental health impacts³².

The SEIFA index of disadvantage is derived from attributes that reflect disadvantage such as low income, low educational attainment, high unemployment, and jobs in relatively unskilled occupations. In 2016, Circular Head local government area had a SEIFA score of 940, while Waratah-Wynyard had a score of 925, indicating both had higher levels of disadvantage compared to the national average³³.

Local service providers and community leaders note that different people require different supports to enjoy enhanced health and wellbeing, and that true ‘community’ wellbeing is achievable only if every member of the community is included³⁴.

What we will do

- 
- Reduce discrimination and barriers to participation
 - Foster a sense of community inclusion
 - Encourage intergenerational connectedness

6. Civic Participation and Employment

Our goal

Our community values the contributions of all people. Older people enjoy opportunities to participate in employment and volunteering, lifelong learning, and civic decision-making.

Why this matters

Civic and economic participation are personally rewarding and confer a sense of worth and purpose. The rich experiences, contributions and voices of older people contribute to community strength and resilience.

What we know

Local service providers and community leaders report that the contributions of older people can be undervalued and underutilised in Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard³⁵. Australian research reveals that ageist attitudes are prevalent in the workplace, characterised by erroneous beliefs that older employees provide less return out of training, should be given a reduced role, or should be given less employment priority than younger people³⁶.

Yet work remains important to older people for many reasons. Staying in the workforce for longer has been noted as the most effective way for older Australians to improve their standard of living³⁷. The participation of older workers is also expected to have significant benefits for the wider economy, to help maintain social inclusion and improve health outcomes³⁸. The raising of the Australian age pension qualification age adds to the imperative for older people to remain in the workforce longer.

The Murchison community has emphasised the importance of lifelong learning and training. The community's vision for the future includes having access to the University of the Third Age (U3A) and additional educational opportunities via online platforms³⁹. There is currently a U3A in Wynyard with approximately 150 members⁴⁰.

Volunteering is associated with improved mental and physical health. In Tasmania, older people choose to volunteer in order to improve or maintain their health, but they also value the opportunities for social connection that volunteering provides⁴¹. Australian volunteers aged 65 and older report building several skills through volunteering. The most commonly named skill was patience, closely followed by teamwork, friendliness, cooperation and confidence⁴². In 2016, 23.6% of Circular Head residents and 20.1% of Waratah-Wynyard residents reported doing some form of voluntary work⁴³.

Residents in both local government areas are seeking more opportunities to participate in civic decision-making. In 2016, residents of Circular Head ranked 'opportunities for the community to participate in decision-making' as the lowest-performing area of Council and felt there was room for improvement⁴⁴. In 2016, Waratah-Wynyard also rated 'opportunities for the community to participate in decision-making' poorly, ranking it as the fourth-lowest performing area of Council⁴⁵.

'Being connected to each other and engaging with the world' has been named as one of the four key aspirations of the Murchison community⁴⁶.

What we will do

-  Enhance opportunities to contribute to Council decision-making
-  Support opportunities to participate in employment, volunteering and lifelong learning

7. Communication and Information

Our goal

People in our community can easily access the communications and information they need in a range of formats and styles to suit their diverse needs and preferences.

Why this matters

Being able to easily access suitable, timely and age-friendly information enables people to stay connected with friends and family, keep up with current events, access the services and supports they need, make important decisions, and engage in the activities they enjoy.

What we know

In consultation with older Tasmanians, ‘communication’ and ‘information’ were the eighteenth- and nineteenth-most commonly named issues affecting people as they age⁴⁷. Older Tasmanians report seeking information to help them to identify ways to live independently, healthily and socially; to meet their needs around managing income and finance; and to meet their telecommunication and computer needs. Information about home help services was the most commonly sought information type, followed by health, transport and social activities⁴⁸.

When older Tasmanians were asked what difficulties they experienced in finding the information they needed, more than three-quarters reported ‘communication’ (including over the phone and written communication), with the remainder nominating physical access, technology (computer and internet, mobile phones), ‘cost’, and ‘confidence and connectedness’ (social isolation and ageist attitudes)⁴⁹.

The internet can provide opportunities for enhanced social connectivity as well as access to supports, services and information. In 2016, the proportion of households in Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard with an internet connection was lower than both the Tasmanian and Australian average⁵⁰. Older adults are less likely to use the internet and to enjoy high levels of digital literacy. In 2016-17, Australians aged 65 and older had the lowest proportion of internet use: 55% compared to 87% of the total population⁵¹. Tasmanians over 65 have one of the poorest digital literacy scores in Australia, and older people unable to access the internet experience greater disadvantage than their online peers⁵².

A non-English language was spoken in a total of 98 (3.1%) Circular Head households, and 155 (2.7%) Waratah-Wynyard households, compared with 22.2% for all Australian households⁵³. While these proportions are small, the potential for isolation and poor information access for these groups can indicate a higher need for information in more than one community language.

What we will do



8. Community and Health Services

Our goal

People in our community are supported by high quality, accessible and timely community and health services that reflect their diverse needs and backgrounds.

Why this matters

High quality services enable people to maintain health, wellbeing and independence as they age. Services that respond appropriately to diverse needs help ensure that everyone in the community is assisted to 'age well'.

What we know

In consultation with older Tasmanians, 'health and wellbeing' was the issue most often named as affecting people as they age, and 'access to facilities and services' was second-most commonly named issue. In terms of access to facilities and services, many comments cited geographic barriers⁵⁴.

Local service providers and community leaders note that people find difficulties and need support with My Aged Care. They report an overall lack of knowledge about what's available for at-home care within Commonwealth Home Support Program services⁵⁵. Local service providers and community leaders also report a need for improved access to approved training for workers in aged care and disability, and that there were issues with the timeliness of services being approved and delivered⁵⁶.

Mental health is a key issue for our region. The prevalence of depression and anxiety rose in the north west region between 2009 and 2016, from 20.0% to 29.4% of the general population⁵⁷. In 2016, just over one in ten (11.7%) of people in the north west reported experiencing high/very high levels of psychological distress⁵⁸.

Local service providers and community leaders report that families face difficulties accepting the loss of a loved one's independence and their transition into aged care services. Home environments where someone has dementia can become especially challenging. They also report there is currently not enough support at home for the carers of people with health issues, and for people who are dying. This is compounded by a limited palliative care services in the region⁵⁹.

Being a carer can diminish a person's ability to socialise, work and stay healthy. Nationwide, in 2015 the average age of a primary carer was 55 years, with females making up the majority of carers. Over one third of primary carers in Australia (37.8%) lived with a disability themselves⁶⁰. In 2016, 647 people (10.3%) in Circular Head and 1,420 people (12.6%) in Waratah-Wynyard reported providing unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, long-term illness or person aged 65 or older in the previous two weeks, compared to 11.3% of people in Australia⁶¹. Carers in Tasmania report experiencing impacts on their own health and wellbeing, which can result in poor mental health⁶².

The Murchison community has described a future in which technology is helping deliver home-based aged care and older people are ageing independently at home in their communities. In this future scenario, the emphasis in aged care is on strength and wellbeing⁶³.

What we will do



AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES PLAN 2019-2024

Note: Potential partners for co-delivering these actions will be identified as annual implementation plans are developed.

Goal: 'Our environments—including green and natural spaces, buildings, streetscapes, public facilities and pathways—are safe, accessible and have a high level of amenity.'				
	Objectives	Actions	Indicator	Baseline
1. Outdoor spaces and buildings	Enhance the accessibility of built and natural environments	Develop a policy to ensure that Council's open spaces and facilities are accessible to people of all abilities and ages.	Proportion of Council-owned facilities that are fully accessible by wheelchair and to people who have limitations in mobility, hearing and vision (Council data).	Data not collected 2018.
		Provide Council employees and partner organisations with information about the benefits and characteristics of age-friendly environments.		
		Encourage local businesses to achieve high standards of disability accessibility through advocacy and information provision.		
		Seek funding to produce a mobility map for each major township.		
		Incorporate age-friendly principles (including walkability, safety and visual appeal) into strategic and statutory land-use planning and development approval decisions.		
		Provide meaningful opportunities for older adults to contribute to Council decision-making in regard to rural and urban design.		
		Advocate for the inclusion of age-friendly principles in regional and State planning land-use planning and policy initiatives.		
	Enhance community safety	Continue to manage Council's open spaces, facilities, and road and footpath infrastructure to support community safety.	% residents who report their local government area is a safe place to live and work (Council Community Survey)	89% in Circular Head; 94% in Waratah-Wynyard in 2016.
		Provide and/or facilitate workshops, events and information to community members on personal safety awareness.		
	Foster connected townships	Explore opportunities to improve the amenity and accessibility (e.g. providing seating, lighting, toilets) of public spaces to support informal everyday access as well as community events and activities.	% town streets that have pedestrian paths that meet locally accepted standards (Council data).	N/A CHC; 75% WWC streets have acceptable footpaths and crossovers in 2019.
Through Council's strategic land-use activities, prioritise walkable town centres where shops, services, facilities and parks are located together.				
Build and maintain accessible pathways through townships to connect homes with destinations.		Completion of Coastal Pathway between Wynyard & Burnie (Council data).	Not complete in 2018.	

Goal: 'Our public and community transport networks are reliable, accessible and affordable. They enable people to move around easily and safely.'

		Objectives	Actions	Indicator	Baseline
2. Transportation	Enhance the diversity of transport options available to older people		Investigate options for promoting a local carpool or volunteer rideshare network.	No. aged-focused Council initiatives to promote active transportation such as walking and cycling annually (Council data).	N/A CHC and 2 for WWC current in 2019.
			Encourage active transportation through continued development of walking and cycle pathways and signage.		
	Enable older people to utilise a range of transport services and options		Assist older adults to know more and feel confident about using the transport services and options available to them, including active transport (e.g. walking and cycling).	No. Council-led initiatives to improve the safe sharing of roads and footpaths while using diverse transportation methods (e.g. walking, wheelchairs, motorised scooters).	None recorded in 2018.
			Regularly evaluate the condition and appropriateness of visual cues associated with Council-managed carparks, streets and roads, such as signage and edge lines.		
			Support older drivers by facilitating access to resources such as the Tasmanian Older Drivers' Handbook and promoting relevant RACT programs.		
			Assist community members to safely share roads and footpaths while using diverse transportation methods (e.g. walking, wheelchairs, motorised scooters).		
	Foster a strong local transport network		Advocate to the Tasmanian government for enhanced public transport options, including the amenity of associated infrastructure.	% residents who report that public transport is adequate to meet their needs (Council Community Survey)	35% CHC in 2016 62% WWC in 2016
			Explore opportunities to partner with community transport providers.		
			Assist local community transport providers to promote their volunteer recruitment needs.		

Goal: 'Our housing stock is diverse and provides people with affordable, accessible, high-quality options for people to rent and purchase.'

		Objectives	Actions	Indicator	Baseline
3. Housing	Enhance the accessibility of new and existing homes		Through Council's building and development services, educate developers and builders about the principles and importance of universal design.	Advice on universal design provided to developers and builders (Council data).	No publicly available guidance on CHC or WWC websites as of 2018.
			Provide information tailored to renters and homeowners on how to achieve the home modifications they require, including assistance programs available.		
	Foster compact towns and neighbourhoods		Within Council's strategic land-use planning activities, prioritise the location of residential development close to shops, services and facilities.	Evidence of co-location principles in Council land-use policy (Council data).	CHC and WWC interim planning schemes 2018: 'require all new use or development has access to adequate utilities and community services'
	Increase the diversity and availability of high-quality accommodation options		Encourage an increase in the availability of one- and two-bedroom dwellings by sharing demand information with potential developers and housing providers.	% one-bedroom dwellings (defined in the Census as '0 or 1 bedrooms') and two-bedroom dwellings in total housing stock (ABS data).	3.4% one-bed, 15.2% two-bed in Circular Head; 4.6% one-bed, 19.1% two bed in Waratah-Wynyard in 2016.
			Support and promote existing initiatives that seek to ensure the amenity and appropriateness of rental properties.		
			Assist older people to 'winterise' their homes by sharing information on low-cost modifications that can increase heat retention and minimise issues with damp and cold.	% residents who report that there is good choice and availability of housing options (Council survey).	70% in Circular Head; 73% in Waratah-Wynyard in 2016.
			Enhance the availability of supported accommodation options by continuing to advocate for high-quality accommodation services and by attracting new providers to the area.	No. local providers of aged-specific housing (Council data).	CHC: Emmerton Park Inc Independent Living Units, Housing Connect; WWC: Spencer Park Inc. Myrtle Park Inc., DHHS, Housing Choices, Yaraandoo and the Wynyard Care Centre
		Explore options to educate older adults about their options to downsize their housing.			

Goal: 'People are supported to be active and engaged with their communities, maintaining important existing connections and exploring new opportunities for social, community and civic participation.'

4. Social Participation	Objectives	Actions	Indicator	Baseline
	Increase opportunities for informal and formal social interaction	Within Council's strategic land-use planning activities, support urban design and development that facilitates more opportunities for interaction.	No. Council-owned facilities available to community groups for sustaining social networks (Council data)	6 in CHC and 7 in WWC in 2019.
		Audit existing Council and community assets suitable for building and sustaining social networks.		
		Provide information in electronic and hardcopy versions—in readable formats—to older adults about the social activities, events, groups and programs that are available in their local area.		
		Ensure Council events and activities that include older people, or that utilise volunteers, are accessible for older people.		
	Support participation in social interaction	Work in partnership with local organisations to help ensure that social activities and events are accessible to people of all ages.	% residents who report being a member of a community group (Council survey data)	56% in Circular Head; 52% in Waratah-Wynyard in 2016.
		Explore opportunities to support organisations already providing age-friendly social activities.		
		In partnership with local residents and service providers, investigate local interest in, and potential funding opportunities for, creating an initiative modelled on the Waverton Hub model, NSW.		
	Encourage the wider community to address social isolation	Raise community awareness about social isolation amongst older people.	% residents who report they feel a part of their local community.	79% in Circular Head; 81% in Waratah-Wynyard in 2016.
		Promote ways in which local business, community and service organisations can help alleviate social isolation amongst older people.		
Promote provisions for older people to include their pets on outings, e.g. dog water stations outside of cafes, shops and community facilities.				
Encourage service providers to incorporate animal therapy for older adults, e.g. Delta Dogs.				
Explore opportunities to partner with outreach organisations in disseminating information to isolated older people.				

Goal: 'All people in our community—regardless of their age, ability, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, family structure or socio-economic status—are valued and experience a sense of belonging.'

5. Respect and Social Inclusion				
Objectives	Actions	Indicator	Baseline	
Reduce discrimination and barriers to participation	Work within Council and in partnership with local businesses and community organisations to raise awareness about the impacts of ageism.	No. participants reached by biennial service provider workshops.	Approx. 19 people in 2014.	
	Host biennial service provider workshop to provide specialist training in responding to the specific health and social needs of older adults.			
	Work to ensure that Council events, festivals, programs and facilities are accessible to older adults.			
	Facilitate awareness amongst businesses about the needs of older people in the delivery of products and services.			
	Provide information to support local service providers to understand and address the particular service needs of CALD, LGBTI and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander older people.			
Foster a sense of community inclusion	Deliver and promote Seniors Week activities and events to raise awareness of the contributions of older people—including those of Aboriginal Elders—in such fields as arts and culture, education, business, sports, etc.	% residents who report feeling a part of their local community (Council Community Survey)	79% in Circular Head; 81% in Waratah-Wynyard in 2016.	
	Regularly utilise positive and diverse images of older people across a range of Council print and digital publications.			
Encourage intergenerational connectedness	In partnership with community organisations and education providers, investigate and support existing opportunities to integrate youth and older adults' programs and initiatives.	No. locally available programs or initiatives for intergenerational interactivity.	CHC: Emmerton Park Inc., Library, Circular Head Christian School; WWC: Library, Live Well Tasmania, Rural Health Tasmania, Chat n' Choose (Baptist Church), Wynyard Community Garden, Man2Man (Baptist Church), Somerset Wynyard and Waratah Men's Sheds	

Goal: 'Older people enjoy opportunities to participate in employment and volunteering, lifelong learning, and civic decision-making.'

		Objectives	Actions	Indicator	Baseline
6. Civic Participation and Engagement	Enhance opportunities to contribute to Council decision-making	Within Council's community engagement activities, provide meaningful opportunities for older adults to contribute to Council decision-making across a range of service areas and issues.	Explore interest in, and feasibility of, establishing a Seniors Reference Group in CH and WW to advise Council on a range of matters.	% submissions to Council made by older persons' interest groups and/or Seniors Reference Group annually (Council data).	No data collected in 2018.
	Support opportunities to participate in employment, volunteering and lifelong learning	Work with other local providers to help ensure that older adults can access supports to find employment and to remain in the workforce for as long as they wish.	Work in partnership to run a promotional campaign about the value of older employees to the local business community.	% people aged 65 years and over who are fully or partially engaged in employment and education (ABS data).	16.3% in Circular Head; 8.5% in Waratah-Wynyard in 2016.
		In partnership with Volunteering Tasmania and other community organisations, assist older people in the community to know about, and access, the range of volunteer opportunities available to them.			
		Promote and deliver National Volunteers Week events to celebrate the contributions of local volunteers, and to enhance awareness of the community and personal benefits of volunteering.			
		Provide information to community groups on available grants/funding to cover the costs associated with engaging volunteers			
		Via grants, in-kind support and promotion, support local opportunities for lifelong learning, such as Universities of the Third Age and programs delivered by other organisations and providers.			

Goal: 'People in our community can easily access the communications and information they need in a range of formats and styles to suit their diverse needs and preferences.'

7. Communication and Information	Objectives	Actions	Indicator	Baseline
	Provide older people with tailored information	Expand the range of information resources currently provided by Council, including information about local programs and services.	Availability of a senior's directory for each of CHC and WWC (Council data).	Only social/recreational information provided as of 2018.
		Leverage libraries, neighbourhood houses and community facilities as places for distribution of information to older people.		
	Meet the communication needs of older people	Seek opportunities to provide dementia communication training to all Council staff with face-to-face service provision roles.	Requirements for accessible information provision evidenced within Council communications policy.	None evident in 2018.
Ensure that Council communications—including face-to-face, telephone, print and web formats—are accessible to older people and people with disabilities.				
Assess the need to produce Council information in simplified language, including plain English, to improve accessibility.				
Enhance the digital literacy of older people	Produce this Age-Friendly Communities Plan in a black-and-white version to facilitate easier reading and explore options for reproducing the Plan in a range of other accessible formats.	% households connected to the internet (ABS Census)	69.1% in 2016 71.2% in 2016	
	Support and promote older people's participation in digital literacy training initiatives delivered through Libraries Tasmania and others in the community.			No. of Digital Inclusion individual sessions run at Smithton and Wynyard libraries (Libraries Tasmania data)

Goal: 'People in our community are supported by high quality, accessible and timely community and health services that reflect their diverse needs and backgrounds.'

8. Community and Health Services				
Objectives	Actions	Indicator	Baseline	
Support community health and wellbeing	Deliver a range of associated actions under the Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2024.	No. of annual plans associated with the CHWP implemented (Council data).	N/A as of March 2019	
Enhance the availability and accessibility of services	Explore options to support older people to understand and navigate the My Aged Care portal.	No. of local service providers with an aged-care focus (Council data).	CHC: Emmerton Park Inc. Senior Citizens Club, Rural Health TAS, Wyndarra Centre, CHAC, Libraries TAS; WWC: Wynyard Senior Citizens' Club, Men and Women's Probuss Clubs in Wynyard, Cam Retirees, Wynyard Adult Day Care Centre.	
	Encourage new community and/or private providers to update Council about their service offerings, so that Council may inform community members.			
	Provide older people with targeted information provision and informal referrals to connect them to support services.			
	Provide older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with targeted information provision and informal referrals to connect them to culturally appropriate support services.			
	Investigate demand amongst service providers for regular information exchange and collaborative planning around on the needs of older people.			
	Within regional and local government partnerships, advocate for improved health and aged-care service provision.			
Enhance the wellbeing of carers	Investigate opportunities to boost respite options for carers.	No. of locally available respite services (Council data).	CHC: Rural Heath Respite House, Emmerton Park Inc; WWC: Wynyard Care Centre, Yaraandoo Homes.	
	In partnership with community and government organisations, ensure carers are aware of the services available to them and the person/people in their care.			
	Celebrate the contributions of carers to the community.			
	Explore opportunities to enable carers to meet informally for the purposes of peer mutual support and information-sharing.			

APPENDIX—POLICY AND PLANNING CONTEXT

State policy and planning context

Strong, Liveable Communities: Tasmania’s Active Ageing Plan 2017-2022

*Strong, Liveable Communities: Tasmania’s Active Ageing Plan 2017-2022*⁶⁴ is a Tasmanian Government plan designed to support individuals aged 50 and older to make informed choices about their health and wellbeing, education, participation and security. The plan is supported by annual implementation strategies.

The plan acknowledges that older Tasmanians—as active participants in the workforce, volunteers, carers, parents and grandparents—contribute significantly to Tasmania’s future. The plan also acknowledges that not all Tasmanians enjoy the same life circumstances and there is a need to support the most vulnerable.

The plan sets out commitments against four key action areas:

- Health—*Tasmanians can access information and services to be active participants in managing their own health and wellbeing as they age.*
 1. Support people to be active in managing their own health.
 2. Facilitate access to physical activity to improve strength, resilience and participation.
 3. Provide information and programs about affordable healthy eating.
 4. Improve access to mental and physical health care in rural communities.

- Lifelong Learning—*Learning is accessible and inclusive of older Tasmanians so that they feel valued, accepted and able to cope with change.*
 5. Work collaboratively to increase confidence and skills to use digital technology.
 6. Provide opportunities for diverse groups to share skills and knowledge.
 7. Work to lift literacy and numeracy levels of older adults.
 8. Provide targeted information about education, training and learning opportunities.

- Participation—*Older Tasmanians are able to fully participate in family, community and civic life.*
 9. Strengthen the liveability of local communities.
 10. Maximise opportunities for older workers to re-enter, reskill or remain in the workforce.
 11. Work with local businesses to respond to the needs of an ageing community.
 12. Implement whole of community strategies to overcome transport barriers.
 13. Support a skilled, sustainable volunteering sector.
 14. Address ageism and combat age-related stereotypes.

- Security—*Older Tasmanians are supported to be safe and secure in their own home and in their community.*
 15. Support awareness and improve our response to elder abuse.
 16. Assist people to access appropriate cost of living support.
 17. Strengthen our efforts to provide appropriate and affordable housing.
 18. Facilitate education and support for older people to be safe online.
 19. Support older people to maintain independence as they age.

Legislative context

Section 20 of Tasmania's *Local Government Act 1993* requires local governments to provide for the health, safety and welfare of its community.

Local policy and planning context

The policy and planning context at the local level is set by each Council's 10-year Corporate Strategic Plan, which is actioned through each Council's four-year delivery program and annual operating plans. Each corporate plan is intended to be a 'living' document, adaptable to changing social, economic, environmental and regulatory circumstances.

Circular Head Corporate Strategic Plan 2017-2027

The *Circular Head Council Corporate Strategic Plan 2017-2027*⁶⁵ is founded on Council's mission, vision and values. The vision of Circular Head Council is 'to provide leadership excellence focused on strategic objectives through local and regional engagement to deliver value for money and services to meet community needs'.

The Plan is based around seven thematic goals: 1. Leadership and Governance; 2. Organisational Support; 3. Connected Communities; 4. Community Recreation and Wellbeing; 5. Economic Prosperity; 6. Transport and Access; and 7. Environment. In part, the Plan states that:

- The Circular Head community will be inclusive and resilient with a strong sense of belonging. People will be connected to one other and the world around them. The Circular Head community will be connected to its past and engaged in its present, creating a vibrant shared future.

Waratah-Wynyard Corporate Strategic Plan

The *Waratah-Wynyard Council Corporate Strategic Plan 2017-2027*⁶⁶ is founded on Council's mission, vision and values. The vision of Waratah-Wynyard Council is 'to deliver innovative, sustainable services to our community through strong leadership, clear direction and collaborative relationships'.

The Plan is based around seven thematic goals: 1. Leadership and Governance; 2. Organisational Support; 3. Connected Communities; 4. Community Recreation and Wellbeing; 5. Economic Prosperity; 6. Transport and Access; and 7. Environment. In part, the Plan states that:

- Waratah-Wynyard community members will feel a sense of inclusion, belonging and value within a thriving, innovative and diverse population. They will be actively engaged in developing Council facilities, services and programs, and will be encouraged to provide input to planning for community needs.

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