



INDIGO AGEING WELL STRATEGY 2019-2023

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INTRODUCTION

Our community is ageing. In consultations we heard the community's concerns about the future and ideas on how Council could help promote an age-friendly culture. Indigo's residents as they age, want to partner with Council and other organisations to develop projects and initiatives to promote wellbeing and inclusion. This strategy captures that approach.

Age-friendly communities encourage active ageing by optimising opportunities for good health, social and economic participation and personal security. They recognise the great diversity of our older population, promote inclusion of older people and respect their decisions and lifestyle choices. Prioritising the needs of Indigo Shire's older residents is outlined clearly in our 2017-2021 Council Plan.

This strategy recognises that the built environment, service sector and the social context play equal roles in promoting health and wellbeing as people age. It acknowledges the need to shift attitudes from seeing ageing as a problem to be solved to a community asset to be celebrated as part of the positive Shire diversity.

The strategy is guided by global best practice, community demand, demographic changes, leadership acknowledgment of the broader community benefits for age-friendly communities and alignment with local agencies' priorities and state government policies.



CONTEXT

This strategy is informed by local data, international research, state policy context and best practice examples within Australia.

INDIGO SHIRE DATA

Indigo’s population is 16,035 with growth at approximately 0.6% per annum (ABS 2016). Census data from 2016 indicated growth of close to 64% in the 50 plus aged group in Indigo between 2011 and 2016. In 2016, there were 7,209 people living in the Shire over the age of 50; this represents 45% of the population. People aged 65 years and over made up 20.6% of the population.

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Indigo Shire Profile (2016) has indicated that there is significant projected population growth of Indigo’s aged community. In 2031 the population of Indigo Shire Council is expected to be 16,937 with the largest growth expected to be in the 70-84 age group. This age group is projected to grow from 1,376 to 3,150 representing a 128% increase over 15 years. The percentage of residents over 75 who live alone is also higher than the state average.

INDIGO SHIRE ENVIRONMENT

Located in the heart of North East Victoria, Indigo Shire is characterised by its natural beauty and significant collection of historic towns. The Shire is a rich blend of heritage architecture in unique towns, pristine natural environments and rural areas. Our people are dynamic, creative and enterprising and genuinely interested in being actively involved in their communities. Indigo’s location, its rich preserved architectural heritage, its varied environments, agriculture, viticulture, farming and tourism enterprises and its proactive community spirit create a dynamic and unique culture for all.

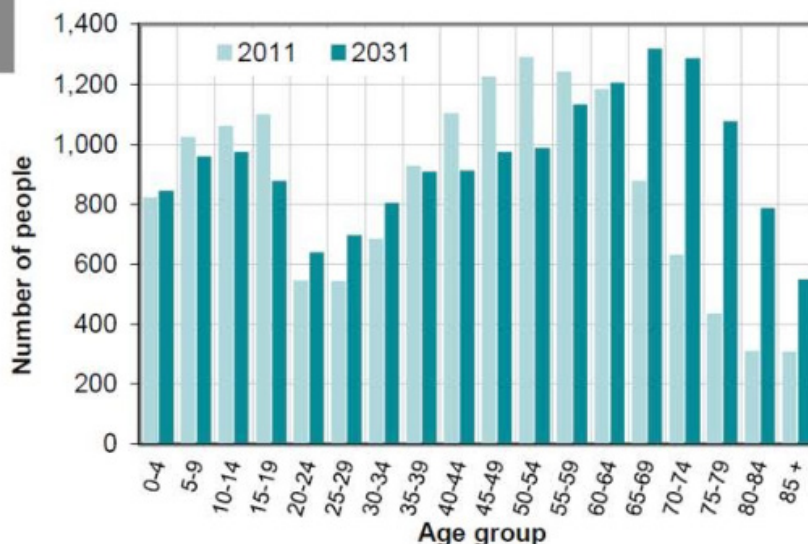
We are an ageing population which requires planning. Council’s planning and community development approach involves undertaking place making plans across our communities.

Some of the challenges to consider include access to outdoor spaces and buildings, appropriate transport, housing and employment options, adequate services and support and facilitating community connectedness.

The protection of valuable heritage assets whilst striving to improve accessibility is a shared dilemma and one which will require significant further consideration by Council and the community.

Age structures

Population by five-year age group, 2011 and 2031



STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Strategy development is part of Council's Ageing Well program of work and is building on extensive community consultation undertaken in 2017 as part of a DHHS funded Age-Friendly Victoria grant. The aim of the grant was to help rural and regional communities develop ideas for seniors to live happier and healthier lives.

A Steering Group with representation from senior citizens, local health services and the U3A provided oversight and input into the community engagement approach which was community led. Active Community Champions were recruited to host conversations with the community and gather information about needs and concerns. A survey was also promoted to over 60 community groups via social media, radio, posters, flyers, emails and street walks. Over 500 residents responded with 410 surveys completed and 90 people participating in hosted conversations.

The results of the engagement were considered at a Community Synthesis Workshop with 25 Community Champions and other active stakeholders, including health services and Steering Group members. The following questions considered:

- **What makes a place age-friendly?**
- **What services do you need as you age?**
- **What makes you feel part of the community?**
- **How does your community include you?**
- **When do you feel most useful?**
- **What knowledge, experience and skills would you like to offer the community?**
- **How do you keep yourself mentally and physically stimulated?**
- **What is one thing Council could do to help people age well in Indigo?**

The majority of respondents were female and between 66-80 years of age. This demographic in Indigo is proactive in assisting Council with services, initiatives and changes to improve their health and wellbeing as they age.

The key overall themes which emerged from the data included:

- Social Activities & Inclusion
- Information
- Communication & Advocacy
- Transport
- Health Services
- Facilities and Footpaths
- Housing

Most people wanted action on increasing opportunities for seniors to socialise; followed by help to navigate health services, improving access to facilities, increasing transport services and improving footpaths. This data has been invaluable in informing the vision, principles, priorities and actions of this Strategy.

As well as the extensive work undertaken in 2017, this strategy has also been informed by stakeholder workshops in September 2018 in Chiltern and Yackandandah, input from Councillors and Council officers across a range of departments, meetings with the Indigo Health Consortium and Indigo Community Access Committee, input from DHHS and Upper Hume Primary Care Partnership representatives and consultation with Creating Age Friendly Communities in North East Victoria Principal Project Lead.



STRATEGIC CONTEXT

World Health Organization

This Indigo Ageing Well Strategy aligns with international best practice in age-friendly planning, as defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) Age-Friendly Cities and Communities approach and the Global Strategy and Action Plan on Ageing and Health (2016 - 2020). WHO action plan focus areas of relevance for Indigo Shire includes:

- Working collaboratively to develop age-friendly environments with many stakeholders - government, service providers, civil society, older people and their organisations, families and friends
- Ensuring older people live healthier as well as longer lives; stretching life in the middle and not just at the end, the extra years being as productive as any others
- Creating environments that are truly age-friendly regarding health, long-term care, transport, housing, labour, social protection, information and communication through collaborative endeavour
- Reorienting health systems to ensure affordable access to evidence-based medical interventions that respond to the needs of older people and can help prevent care dependency later in life, and
- Focusing research, new metrics and methods to better understand healthy ageing to inform policy and evaluation.

Council is seeking to become a member of the WHO Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. Organisations who achieve this status are acknowledged for their commitment to creating age-friendly communities.

Age-Friendly Declaration Victoria

In August 2016 Indigo Shire Councillors signed the Victorian State Government and the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Age Friendly Victoria Declaration. The declaration was a significant step in Indigo Shire demonstrating its commitment to

working towards an age-friendly community. Ageing is everyone's business: A report on isolation and loneliness among senior Victorians
In January 2016 the Commissioner for Senior Victorians investigated the issue of social isolation and loneliness among Victorian seniors. The Victorian Government responded to this with an action statement in April 2016. These documents have set the policy direction for Age-Friendly initiatives across Victoria.

Age-Friendly Northeast Victoria Alliance

The DHHS has dedicated resources to supporting regional Councils in the Ovens Murray area to develop individual and a shared age-friendly approach to planning and action. This strategy recognises the strategic guidance of the Ovens and Murray Age-Friendly Rural Community Alliance Project.

Australian Best Practice

The City of Unley is 1 of 26 Councils within Australia to be a member of the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. The Council is recognised as a local government leader in age-friendly planning for Australian cities. This Strategy is modelled on the structure and approach of The City of Unley's Active Ageing Strategy.

Council Plans

This strategy is informed by and aligns with the Indigo Shire Council Plan 2017-2021. A key strategic theme in the Council Plan is **'Supporting our people and our communities'** with the associated strategic objective **1.1 Our community members are physically and mentally healthy and active.**

One of the related Council Plan strategic actions is **1.1.6 Develop and implement the Indigo Ageing Well Strategy** that creates opportunity for the elderly to interact with young people and stay connected and engaged with their community.

There are also links to a number of other key Council documents including the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021 and Active Indigo Recreation Strategy 2018-2026.

OUR VISION

A vision has been developed to guide Indigo Shire in its focus on ageing well over the next four years. It reflects Council's strong commitment to supporting all Indigo Shire residents to live and age well within the community. Our vision is:

“Indigo Shire residents are connected and engaged with the community as they grow older; age is no barrier to inclusive, respectful and accessible participation.”

To achieve our vision, the Ageing Well Strategy is underpinned by a set of key principles and structured around priority areas which include a range of strategic actions for Council's focus.

PRINCIPLES

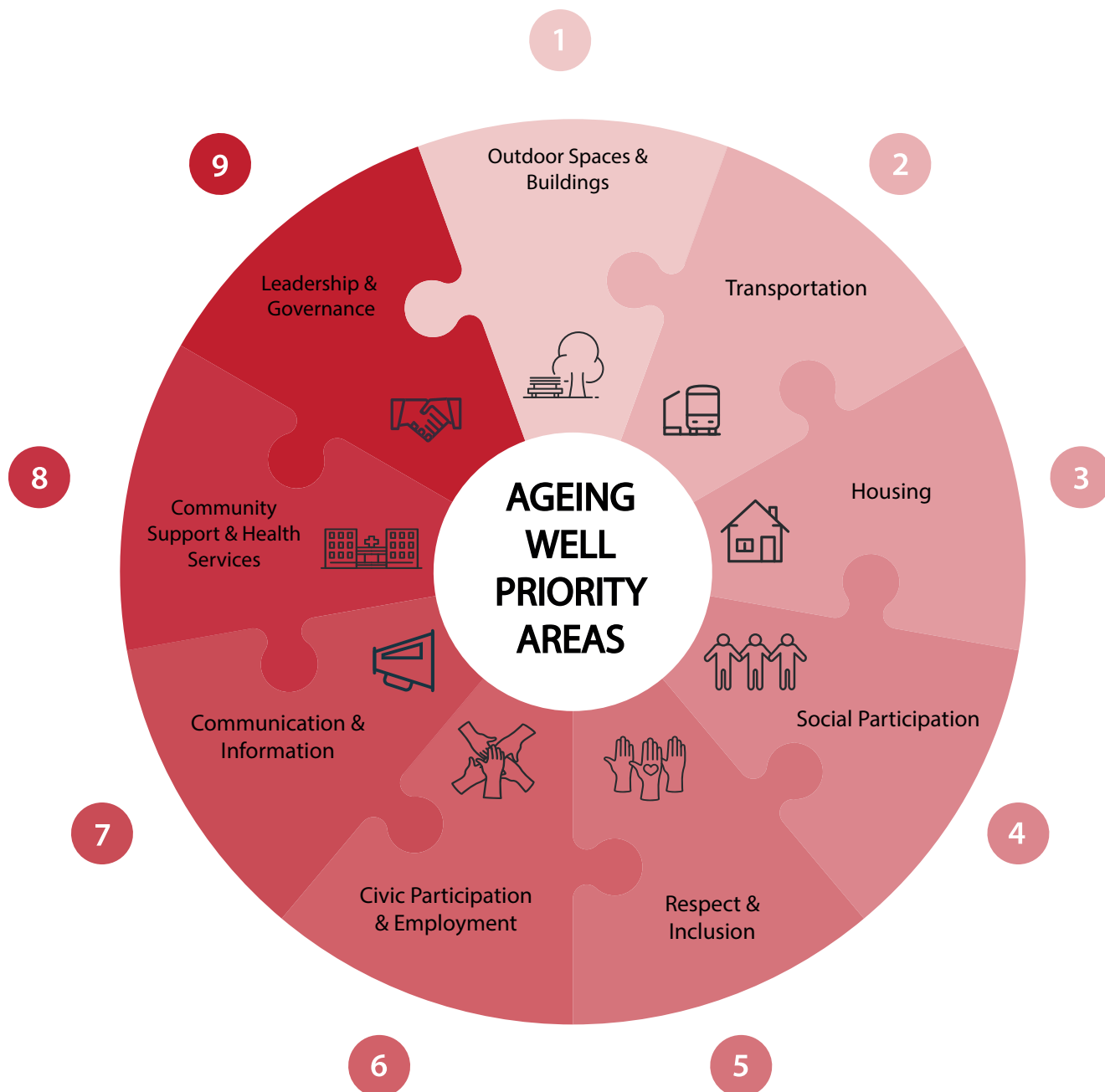
- We work together: our work is more effective when we partner meaningfully with the community and our service partners.

- We promote attitudinal change: mainstreaming an age-friendly focus in all that we do role models best practice to the community.
- We acknowledge strengths: our older residents possess significant skills, knowledge and experiences. This is an asset to be celebrated by our community.
- We ensure accessibility: age, ability and diversity will not be a barrier to access services, programs or infrastructure across the Shire.
- We advocate, inform and connect: Council is a trusted source of information, we play a role in connecting people as they age and advocating on strategic issues.
- We focus on ageing well because of its whole-of-community benefit: we know that the health and wellbeing of the entire community benefits from this work.



PRIORITY AREAS

Our Ageing Well Strategy is based on the WHO Age Friendly Cities and Communities Checklist which feature eight key focus areas. We have included a ninth key focus area to highlight our leadership role in developing an age-friendly community within Indigo Shire.



PRIORITY AREA 1: OUTDOOR SPACES AND BUILDINGS

A feature of an age-friendly community is that its outdoor spaces and buildings are accessible and safe. Footpaths, roads, parks and public areas should encourage people to be physically and socially active and we want people to feel welcome and confident that they can do what they want and go where they need.

Across the Indigo Shire we have an attractive built environment, significant and unique historic buildings, urban and rural streetscapes, open spaces and trees. The historic nature of some of our assets means there is added pressure on maintenance however, it is important for us to be focussed on ongoing improvements.

Community comments

“More signage would be good.”

“Access around the town – footpaths etc. that need improvement – don’t realise how bad some are until you are trying to use them in a wheel chair or with a walker. Safer places to cross the road. Need the Access Committee to review.”

“Safe environments in homes and around town (eg. Provision of ramps, even walking surfaces, accessibility to shops and offices).”

Aim

To ensure our built environment facilitates safe and active living.

Strategic Action

- Maintain and update the Shire wide Infrastructure Assessment Tool, in conjunction with the Indigo Community Access Committee (ICAC)
- Ensure all new building infrastructure projects are designed to be fully accessible and Dementia friendly where practical and have operational procedures where relevant to assist all to have access
- Existing Council facilities, infrastructure and services will be progressively reviewed and adapted to ensure Dementia friendly design principles and accessibility for residents
- The Indigo Shire Footpath Upgrade assessment processes will consider accessibility and ageing needs; criteria for prioritisation and annual projects are communicated to the community
- New applications for annual capital works projects will consider the needs of older residents (i.e. seating, shade, access to water, toilets prioritised)
- Review and update or increase as required the amount of appropriately located way-finding signage, street lighting, seating and pedestrian crossings across the Shire
- Work with local retailers to implement the Good Access = Good Business accreditation program
- Improve the amenity of parks and facilities to accommodate seniors and consider activation initiatives within these open spaces
- Investigate funding options to enhance all abilities access for users of Indigo Shire pools

Indicators of Success

- Greater accessibility of public spaces and buildings.
- There are sufficient local open green spaces with adequate seating, shade, access to water and suitable pathways.

PRIORITY AREA 2: TRANSPORTATION

Mobility equals independence, whether it's using a scooter or wheel chair, walking, driving, cycling or using public transport. Access to adequate, appropriate and affordable transport is a key factor that influences active and healthy ageing.

Our Shire is characterised by a series of small towns and rural settlements and connectivity is a major ongoing challenge. Isolation can seriously impact on quality of life and we will focus on supporting our community to link and engage with available transport modes and encourage them to access sustainable transport options.

Community comments

"Affordable transport options for around town and visiting other communities"

"Better access to transport options for people who can no longer drive."

"There is only one taxi in Yack – a mini bus around town would be useful. Could the community car pick people up and drop them at the Men's Shed?"

Aim

To enable social mobility and access to services within and beyond the Shire.

Strategic Action

- Partner with local providers to implement a project aimed at assisting residents to access additional free community transport options to and within nearby towns
- Public transport advocacy will be prioritised via the Council Advocacy Plan and focus on improving access to and reliability of public transport options for residents
- Information is provided to older people on the range of transport options available
- Advocate for a strengthened Community Transport service which is responsive and supportive of residents who have a mobility impairment
- Community bus options are investigated in partnership with local health services
- Maximise opportunities for safe use of scooters and investigate funding for charging stations for mobility devices in key locations across the Shire
- Provide adequate numbers of appropriate disability parking spaces, both on the street and, where possible, in Council car parks and monitor their usage

Indicators of Success

- Adequate local community transport services are available.
- Adequate and convenient parking, including priority/disabled spaces are available.



PRIORITY AREA 3: HOUSING

Age-friendly communities ensure diversity of housing options to suit different needs and cater for a smooth transition from independent residential living to retirement homes and finally to long term care if needed.

As the population ages, there will be an increased need for age-friendly housing options that assist people to remain in their own homes. A range of designs or modifications can be incorporated into existing homes that contribute to age-friendly housing.

Indigo Shire has a range of existing housing options, however we need to ensure that in the future, there are real choices for all older people to remain at home or move to alternate accommodation as they age.

Community comments

“Enable people to downsize into affordable accommodation which would in turn, enable them to remain in their respective towns close to friends and family.”

“Support people who wish to build smaller homes in their local townships.”

“Aged Care facilities that support independence and accessibility to the community, and perhaps more of them given the growing population of the ageing.”

Aim

To facilitate a range of housing options for people as they age and enable them to age in place.

Strategic Action

- Inform older people about services (i.e. gardening and home maintenance, modifications and repair work) to enable them to live independently and safely in their own homes
- Promote and advocate for the development of diverse residential offerings that are close to services and facilities and appropriate to the needs of older people
- Develop information on housing options within Indigo Shire, including options to provide granny flats/dual occupancies in large single dwelling houses
- Explore and promote arrangements which may improve living affordability (i.e. shared living arrangements)
- Consider the long term needs for affordable seniors retirement and residential aged care housing within Indigo Shire as a component of Council’s placemaking projects
- Strengthen links with homelessness prevention agencies and promote connection to these services where applicable
- Promote energy saving options for seniors to assist with reducing the cost of utilities

Indicators of Success

- Older people know how and where to obtain assistance with home maintenance and modifications.
- Diverse, age friendly housing options are available locally.

PRIORITY AREA 4: SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Age-friendly communities have a diverse range of activities for different types of interests and abilities. These activities contribute to people getting out of their homes and moving about and are critical in terms of preventing isolation and supporting overall health and well-being.

Indigo Shire has very positive results in community safety and wellbeing measures. However, there are opportunities to improve outcomes for any residents experiencing isolation. We would like to encourage our residents and provide opportunities for them to participate in the community throughout their lives.

Community comments

“Social networks that embrace an ageing population.”

“Involvement in community activity becomes difficult and at times, impossible when health slips back and you are unable to maintain connections and regular activities (isolation of older people is a key concern for individuals, families and service providers).”

“Opportunities to be part of the community and give back (eg to participate in volunteer programs, intergenerational programs and events).”

“I believe you connect with people on a different level when you’re older. It’s about acceptance, communication, understanding and connecting with people of your own generation.”

Aim

To support community connectedness and reduce isolation.

Strategic Action

- Partner with Beechworth Health Service, Yackandandah Health and Indigo North Health to implement the Indigo Calling project aimed at increasing social interaction between older residents and other community members
- Implement the Indigo Skillswap project in partnership with local providers to assist residents exchange skills and services. Older residents will be able to reach out for assistance and offer skills and services in exchange for support received
- Partner with local providers to promote recreational activities for seniors aligned with the Active Indigo Plan 2018 – 2026 and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2018 – 2021
- Investigate opportunities for intergenerational activities between organisations (Men’s Sheds, CWAs, U3As, Community Centres, Service Clubs and Aged Care Facilities) and Schools
- Explore, in partnership with the RSPCA and local Vets, the establishment of a program to promote and increase pet ownership and pet therapy programs as a means of mitigating loneliness
- Secure a suitable premises for Indigo University of the Third Age for their ongoing activities

Indicators of Success

- Indigo Calling and Skillswap initiatives are successfully implemented.
- New intergenerational activities are identified and initiated.

PRIORITY AREA 5: RESPECT AND INCLUSION

Building positive community attitudes involves promoting positive images of ageing and intergenerational understanding. It also requires recognition that older people may share common experiences, however they can also be incredibly different.

Our shared attitudes toward ageing including providing respect and recognition for the role of our seniors are important factors for establishing an age-friendly community.

Our older residents display extraordinary diversity which should be understood and appreciated. We value our residents of all ages and their contributions to our community.

Community comments

“Community shows respect for and inclusion of all age groups – includes respectful awareness and responses to older people who need assistance with accessing places, goods and services.”

“People feel valued when there is give and take, rights and responsibilities are shared, stories heard, feelings acknowledged, people respected, diversity celebrated, individuality encouraged.”

Aim

To respect and value people as they age and celebrate their contributions.

Strategic Action

- Promote various Seniors awards to acknowledge the contribution of active residents
- Investigate innovative programming for the annual Seniors Festival in October and explore options for additional arts and cultural engagement activities
- Partner with our local health services to implement the Indigo Community Connectors project to train community leaders as ‘go to’ people in their area for social connections, general advice and support
- Ensure the fees and charges for Council venues support affordability for Seniors Groups and Programs
- Review current usage of Senior Citizen’s Centres to ensure equity of access to community space and innovative use of existing infrastructure
- Recognise local businesses for demonstrating good practice focussed on inclusivity and access
- Develop a multi-media program to highlight and celebrate our seniors through the production of profiles/stories
- Promote improved understanding of the impact of Dementia to Council staff and the community via such initiatives as the online ‘Dementia Friend’ learning module
- Continue to support the work of the Dementia Carers Support Group and investigate opportunities to expand to other towns within the Shire

Indicators of Success

- Indigo Community Connectors initiative is successfully implemented
- A multi-media program is developed and seniors’ profiles promoted



PRIORITY AREA 6: CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT

The wealth of knowledge and skills that our seniors offer can strongly contribute to civic activity. Additionally, the ability to remain employed or source meaningful employment may be an important means of both providing economic security for individuals as well as a talented and experienced workforce for employers.

The Indigo community is strengthened by volunteerism with hundreds of volunteers actively supporting the delivery of services provided by Council and health and community service organisations. There is also strong and passionate representation on sporting facility Committees of Management, Advisory Committees and a range of other committees. The value of these contributions is significant and important for the successful delivery of vital services.

Here in Indigo, we have a growing local economy. There are diverse employment offerings including in manufacturing, agriculture, viticulture, horticulture, health care, retail and accommodation and food services. Improving retention of working age adults in the workforce is an important contributor to the local economy.

Community comments

“Stay involved in the community decision making.”

“When your skills are recognised and utilised, you have a purpose.”

“Contributing to public services and organisations (eg by membership on boards and committees). Opportunities to impart skills to others of all ages.”

Aim

To encourage our residents to be actively involved in the community throughout their lives.

Strategic Action

- Promote and support volunteering across the Shire through training and committee governance assistance
- Celebrate and recognise the contribution of volunteers in Indigo Shire
- Explore the possibility of an Indigo wide register of skilled volunteers and centralised information about volunteering opportunities
- Local clubs and community groups are supported to recruit and retain volunteers to assist with their activities
- New volunteering opportunities for people as they age are identified and promoted and an approach that aims to match volunteer skills and interests to community need is encouraged
- Council led community engagement initiatives will consider an age-friendly approach with accessible and easy to read materials made available and participation convenient and straightforward
- Council’s recruitment policy and employment conditions will enable flexibility to assist and support our own staff to remain in the workforce and transition to retirement
- Advocate for training opportunities to develop skills and experience to enhance securing and maintaining employment

Indicators of Success

Information about local volunteering opportunities for older people is available.

Volunteers are recognised for their contributions. Older people have access to employment and training opportunities in their local community.

PRIORITY AREA 7: COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

Information technologies are rapidly changing and an age-friendly community should strive to ensure that information about community events or services is delivered in accessible and appropriate formats for older adults with varying abilities and resources.

We would like to be targeted in our approach to dissemination of information and flexible in our communication style to meet the needs of our diverse seniors. Our residents have a wide range of preferences in terms of preferred communication channels to access information including use of phone and emails, newspaper updates and hard copy bulletins.

Community comments

“Easily accessible knowledge about what is happening in the community across a number of different media and networks/platforms and not all of it electronic as some don’t use it.”

“Information could be disseminated via print (eg local papers and Indigo Informer, Yackety Yack and Stanley News type of publications) as well as online.”

“Formal collation and communication of advice to assist with everyday living and accessing services.”

Aim

To ensure residents have access to relevant, up to date information in their preferred format.

Strategic Action

- Map current local communication channels and agreed relevant services including health services
- Develop and widely distribute an Ageing Well Connect bulletin which will include information about services, special interest groups, community events and project updates
- Develop a multi-media awareness campaign to promote Indigo Ageing Well Strategy and projects
- Use Council’s communication channels including library, customer service, website, Facebook, Indigo Informer etc to improve the focus on projects, works and initiatives of relevance to older residents
- Ensure new website improvements include useful information for seniors and accommodate vision and hearing impairment needs
- Promote opportunities for older adults to learn and stay updated with changing technology and communication platforms

Indicators of Success

- An Ageing Well Connect bulletin is developed and broadly distributed.
- Information about local services and amenities is updated and provided in accessible formats.

PRIORITY AREA 8: COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES

The availability of a sufficient range of affordable services to support physical and mental health can assist residents to enjoy a good quality of life. Our older population in Indigo is expected to grow and access to a range of community support and health services is needed to enable our residents to age well.

Traditional models of aged care service delivery will need to adapt and respond to community need and given the pattern of settlement within Indigo Shire, further outreach or mobile service models may need to be planned and supported. Additionally, as temperatures increase, older residents may be at risk for increased incidences of heat stress and potential support strategies will need to be investigated.

Community comments

“Provision of adequate and reliable health care, including provision of education and health promotion activities oriented to ageing, caring for others and independent living.”

“Services need to be adequate for the demographic profile of country towns.”

“Access to medical services including rehab options. There are some services available at the hospital but the information isn’t readily available.”

“Services that meet the needs of an ageing population.”

Aim

To ensure residents can access the services they need to age well.

Strategic Action

- Support the partnership between Alpine, Beechworth, Yackandandah and Indigo North Health Services to deliver home and community care services
- Promote relevant support groups, including the Dementia friendly group ‘Changing Minds Beechworth,’ Parkinson’s and Grievance and Carer Support Groups
- Encourage and promote the benefits of continued volunteer support for meals on wheels, community meals and community transport programs
- Develop and promote referral mechanisms to services for vulnerable older residents (i.e. elder abuse, homelessness etc)
- Maintain a Vulnerable Persons Register and support vulnerable people to plan for and recover from emergency events
- Collaborate with health and community service agencies to ensure relevant and current health service information is provided to residents
- Work with health service partners to enhance community outreach and support programs
- Attract and encourage participation in healthy ageing seminars, expos and events
- Promote existing ‘Cool Relief Centres’ and explore provision of cool refuge public indoor spaces on days of extreme heat

Indicators of Success

- Older people know how to access home based care and support services.
- Partnerships formed with new service and support offerings available.

PRIORITY AREA 9: LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Council is committed to leading the development of an age-friendly community and continuing the dialogue and partnering with the community, health organisations, non-government organisations and state government. An important aspect of this strategy involves the strengthening of alliances with older people and service providers in the Shire of Indigo.

We will strive to create an age-friendly environment through a continuous process of improvement in the following key areas:

- Engaging stakeholders including older people to understand their needs and preferences and the existing barriers and opportunities for healthy and active ageing
- Planning strategically on a strategy to tackle challenges
- Acting via implementation of age-friendly practices
- Measuring and evaluating progress and defining priorities for future action (ie. briefing Council annually on action progress, consulting the Indigo Health Consortium during the annual review process, developing a thorough monitoring and evaluation process)

We plan to build on the engagement undertaken as part of the Ageing Well project in 2017 and more recent consultations which have informed the development of this Strategy.

Aim

To lead the development of an age-friendly community within Indigo Shire.

Strategic Action

- Maintain a commitment to signatory status on the Victorian Government and MAV Age-Friendly Declaration Victoria Declaration
- Apply for membership of the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities
- Engage the Indigo Health Consortium to oversee the implementation of this strategy
- Convene age-friendly community working groups to enhance specific projects
- Actively participate in regional initiatives relating to age-friendly communities
- Explore opportunities to participate in broader network age-friendly special interest groups and projects
- Explore opportunities to attract external funding and support for Ageing Well initiatives

Indicators of Success

- Age-Friendly signatory and membership status achieved at State and Global Network levels.
- Partnerships with community and service providers established and overseeing strategy implementation.
- Age-Friendly Northeast Victoria Checklist piloted in at least one Indigo Shire town.
- Evidence of additional funding targeted to age-friendly activity.

MONITORING & EVALUATION

Council will play a lead role in implementing strategic actions in partnership with a range of providers as outlined in the following table. The Indigo Health Consortium will be engaged to assist with evaluating outcomes, and along with active community input, also assist with informing priorities for future action. Indicative timeframes for actions have been identified: ongoing, short term (1-2 years), medium term (2-3 years) and long term (3-4 years).

Lead Council Officers will be identified internally to champion implementation of each strategic action. Ongoing monitoring and an annual review of progress

to examine performance and identify any areas for improvements will be conducted and documented.

We will work with and on behalf of our community on the range of actions and projects outlined and may need to reconsider an action or refine a direction that no longer serves the community well.

Our aim is to have a whole of Council approach to population ageing, to learn and develop along the journey with our community and to add value over time.



Strategic action	Partner organisations	Timeframe	Indicators of success
1. Outdoor spaces and buildings			
1.1 Maintain and update Shire wide Infrastructure Assessment Tool, in conjunction with ICAC	ICAC	Ongoing (biannual checks)	<p data-bbox="1150 837 1487 896">Greater accessibility of public spaces and buildings.</p> <p data-bbox="1150 1055 1487 1178">There are sufficient local open green spaces with adequate seating and suitable pathways.</p>
1.2 Ensure all new building infrastructure projects are designed to be fully accessible and Dementia friendly where practical and have operational procedures where relevant to assist all to have access	Contractors Funding bodies	Ongoing	
1.3 Existing Council facilities, infrastructure and services will be progressively reviewed and adapted to ensure Dementia friendly design principles and accessibility for residents		Ongoing	
1.4 The Indigo Shire Footpath Upgrade assessment processes consider accessibility and ageing needs; criteria for prioritisation and annual projects are communicated to the community	ICAC	Ongoing	
1.5 New applications for annual capital works projects will consider the needs of older residents (i.e. seating, shade, access to water, toilets prioritised)		Ongoing	
1.6 Review and update or increase as required the amount of appropriately located way-finding signage, street lighting, seating and pedestrian crossings across the Shire	Vic Roads	Medium	
1.7 Work with local retailers to implement the Good Access = Good Business accreditation program	Local businesses	Short	
1.8 Improve the amenity of parks and facilities to accommodate seniors and consider activation initiatives within these open spaces	State & Commonwealth government Sporting Clubs	Ongoing	
1.9 Investigate funding options to enhance all abilities access for users of Indigo Shire pools	State & Commonwealth Government	Medium	

Strategic action	Partner organisations	Timeframe	Indicators of success
2. Transportation			
2.1 Partner with local providers to implement a project aimed at assisting residents to access additional free community transport options to and within nearby towns	Partnerships currently under facilitation	Short	Adequate local community transport services are available. Adequate and convenient parking, including priority/disabled spaces are available.
2.2 Public transport advocacy will be prioritised via the Council Advocacy Plan and focus on improving access to and reliability of public transport options for residents	State & Commonwealth Government	Ongoing	
2.3 Information if provided to older people on the range of transport options available	Public Transport Victoria Health Services	Ongoing	
2.4 Advocate for a strengthened Community Transport service which is responsive and supportive of residents who have a mobility impairment	Health Services	Short	
2.5 Community bus options are investigated in partnership with local health services	Health Services in Indigo Shire	Short	
2.6 Maximise opportunities for safe use of scooters and investigate funding for charging stations for mobility devices in key locations across the shire	State & Commonwealth Government	Medium	
2.7 Provide adequate numbers of appropriate disability parking spaces, both on the street and where possible in Council car parks and monitor usage	ICAC	Ongoing	

Strategic action	Partner organisations	Timeframe	Indicators of success
3. Housing			
3.1 Inform older people about services (i.e. gardening and home maintenance, modifications and repair work) to enable them to live independently and safely in their own homes	Health Services in Indigo Shire	Ongoing	Older people know how and where to obtain assistance with home maintenance and modifications. Housing designed to suit older people (i.e. wheelchair accessible etc.) is locally available.
3.2 Promote and advocate for the development of diverse residential offerings that are close to services and facilities and appropriate to the needs of older people	Developers	Ongoing	
3.3 Develop information on housing options within Indigo Shire, including options to provide granny flats/dual occupancies in large single dwelling houses		Short-Med	
3.4 Explore and promote arrangements which may improve living affordability (i.e. shared living arrangements)		Medium	
3.5 Consider the long term needs for affordable seniors retirement and residential aged care housing within Indigo Shire as a component of Council's placemaking projects	Retirement & Residential Aged Care Providers	Med-long	
3.6 Strengthen links with homelessness prevention agencies and promote connection to these services where applicable	Salvation Army, Hume Region Homelessness Network	Short	
3.7 Promote energy saving options for seniors to assist with reducing the cost of utilities		Ongoing	

Strategic action	Partner organisations	Timeframe	Indicators of success
4. Social participation			
4.1 Partner with Beechworth Health Service, Yackandandah Health and Indigo North Health to implement the Indigo Calling project aimed at increasing social interaction between older residents and other community members	Beechworth Health Service, Yackandandah Health and Indigo North Health	Short	Indigo Calling and Skillswap initiatives are successfully implemented. New intergenerational activities are identified and initiated.
4.2 Implement the Indigo Skillswap project in partnership with local providers to assist residents exchange skills and services. Older residents will be able to reach out for assistance and offer skills and services in exchange for support received	Partnerships currently under facilitation.	Short	
4.3 Partner with local providers to promote recreational activities for seniors aligned with the Active Indigo Plan 2018-2026 and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2018-2021	Community Health agencies, sporting clubs, private recreational operators	Ongoing	
4.4 Investigate opportunities for intergenerational activities between organisations (Men's Sheds, CWAs, U3As, Community Centres, Service Clubs and Aged Care Facilities) and Schools	Primary & secondary schools, Men's Sheds, CWAs, Aged Care providers	Short-Med	
4.5 Explore, in partnership with the RSPCA and local Vets, the establishment of a program to promote and increase pet ownership and pet therapy programs as a means of mitigating loneliness	RSPCA Vets	Medium	
4.6 Secure a suitable premises for Indigo University of the Third Age for their ongoing activities.	Indigo University of the Third Age	Medium	

Strategic action	Partner organisations	Timeframe	Indicators of success
5. Respect and Inclusion			
5.1 Promote Seniors awards to acknowledge the contribution of active residents	DHHS, Health Services	Ongoing	Indigo Community Connectors initiative is successfully implemented. A multi-media program is developed and seniors' profiles promoted
5.2 Investigate innovative programming for the annual Seniors Festival in October and explore options for additional arts and cultural engagement activities	Arts Councils and local and regional arts groups	Ongoing	
5.3 Partner with our local health services to implement the Indigo Community Connectors project to train community leaders as 'go to' people in their area for social connections, general advice and support	Beechworth Health Service, Yackandandah Health, Indigo North Health	Short	
5.4 Ensure fees and charges for Council venues support affordability for Seniors Groups and Programs	Seniors Groups	Ongoing	
5.5 Review current usage of Senior Citizen's Centres to ensure equity of access to community space and innovative use of existing infrastructure	Senior Citizen's Committees	Short-Med	
5.6 Recognise local businesses for demonstrating good practice focussed on inclusivity and access	Businesses in Indigo Shire	Ongoing	
5.7 Develop a multi-media program to highlight and celebrate our seniors through the production of profiles/stories		Medium	
5.8 Promote improved understanding of the impact of Dementia to Council staff and the community via the 'Dementia Friend' initiative involving completion of a learning module	Dementia Australia	Ongoing	
5.9 Continue to support the work of the Dementia Carers Support Group and investigate opportunities to expand to other towns within the Shire	Dementia Carers Support Group, Beechworth Health Service	Ongoing	

Strategic action	Partner organisations	Timeframe	Indicators of success
6. Civic Participation and Employment			
6.1 Promote and support volunteering across the Shire through training and committee governance assistance		Ongoing	<p>Information about volunteering opportunities for older people is available</p> <p>Volunteers are recognised for their contributions</p> <p>Older people have access to employment and training opportunities in their local community</p>
6.2 Celebrate and recognise the contribution of volunteers in Indigo Shire		Ongoing	
6.3 Explore the possibility of an Indigo wide register of skilled volunteers and centralised information about volunteer opportunities	Health Services, Community organisations and groups	Short-Med	
6.4 Local clubs and community groups are supported to recruit and retain volunteers to assist with their activities	Community groups and clubs	Ongoing	
6.5 New volunteering opportunities for people as they age are identified and promoted and an approach that aims to match volunteer skills and interests to community need is encouraged	Health Services, Community organisations and groups	Ongoing	
6.6 Council led community engagement initiatives will consider an age-friendly approach with accessible and easy to read materials made available and participation convenient and straightforward		Ongoing	
6.7 Council's recruitment policy and employment conditions will enable flexibility to assist and support our own staff to remain in the workforce and transition to retirement		Ongoing	
6.8 Advocate for training opportunities to develop skills and experience to enhance securing and maintaining employment		Ongoing	

Strategic action	Partner organisations	Timeframe	Indicators of success
7. Communication and Information			
7.1 Map current local communication channels and agreed relevant services including health services	Health Services	Short	<p>An Ageing Well Connect bulletin is developed and broadly distributed</p> <p>Information about local services and amenities is updated and provided in accessible formats</p>
7.2 Develop and widely distribute an Ageing Well Connect bulletin which will include information about services, special interest groups, community events and project updates	Community groups & organisations	Short	
7.3 Develop a multi-media awareness campaign to promote Indigo Ageing Well Strategy and projects		Short	
7.4 Use Council's communication channels including library, customer service, website, Facebook, Indigo Informer etc to improve the focus on projects, works and initiatives of relevance to older residents		Ongoing	
7.5 Ensure new website improvements include useful information for seniors and accommodate vision and hearing impairment needs		Short	
7.6 Promote opportunities for older adults to learn and stay updated with changing technology and communications platforms	Quercus, Yackandandah Community Centre, High Schools	Ongoing	

Strategic action	Partner organisations	Timeframe	Indicators of success
8. Community Support and Health Services			
8.1 Support the partnership between Alpine, Beechworth, Yackandandah and Indigo North Health Services to deliver home and community care services	Health Services in Indigo Shire	Ongoing	Older people know how to access home based care and support services. Partnerships formed with new service and support offerings available
8.2 Promote relevant support groups, including the Dementia friendly group 'Changing Minds Beechworth,' Parkinson's and Grievance and Carer Support Groups	Relevant Support Groups	Ongoing	
8.3 Encourage and promote the benefits of continued volunteer support for meals on wheels, community meals and community transport programs	Health Services	Ongoing	
8.4 Develop and promote referral mechanisms to services for vulnerable older residents (i.e. elder abuse, homelessness etc)	Homelessness Support agencies, Salvation Army, Seniors Rights	Short	
8.5 Maintain a Vulnerable Persons Register and support vulnerable people to plan for and recover from emergency events	DHHS, Emergency Service agencies, Health services	Ongoing	
8.6 Collaborate with health and community service agencies to ensure relevant and current health service information is provided to residents	Health services, Community Service agencies	Ongoing	
8.7 Work with health service partners to enhance community outreach and support programs	Health & Community Services	Short-Med	
8.8 Attract and encourage participation in healthy ageing seminars, expos and events	DHHS, Community Groups, Service Groups	Ongoing	
8.9 Promote existing 'Cool Relief Centres' and explore provision of cool refuge public indoor spaces on days of extreme heat	Health services & businesses	Short	

Strategic action	Partner organisations	Timeframe	Indicators of success
9. Leadership and Governance			
9.1 Maintain a commitment to signatory status on the Victorian Government and MAV Age-Friendly Victoria Declaration	Victorian Government, MAV	Ongoing	Age-Friendly signatory and membership status achieved at State and Global Network levels
9.2 Apply for membership of the WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities	WHO	Short	Partnerships with community and service providers established and overseeing strategy implementation
9.3 Engage the Indigo Health Consortium to oversee the implementation of this strategy	Indigo Health Consortium	Ongoing	Age-Friendly Northeast Victoria checklist piloted in at least one Indigo Shire town
9.4 Convene age-friendly community working groups to enhance specific projects	Health & Community Services		
9.5 Actively participate in regional initiatives relating to age-friendly communities	Research institutions	Short-Med	Evidence of additional funding targeted to Age-Friendly activity
9.6 Explore opportunities to participate in broader network age-friendly special interest groups and projects	MAV, LGPRO	Short	
9.7 Explore opportunities to attract external funding and support for Ageing Well initiatives	State & Commonwealth Government, Philanthropists	Short-Med	

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