



16 September 2019

In reply please quote reference:

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World Health Organisation
Avenue Appia 20
1202 Geneva

To whom it may concern,

Darebin Council is located in the northern suburbs of Melbourne, Australia. The area boasts a community rich in diversity and culture. Older people play an important role as grandparents, parents, community leaders, volunteers, employees, employers, teachers and activists. Darebin's population at the 2016 census was 158,553 with over 20,000 people over the age of 65. Of this, 3,753 were people over the age of 85.

As a local government authority, Council has many responsibilities which include the provision of community services and facilities, maintenance of local roads; town planning and development approvals and urban renewal. With a significant ageing population, we are cognizant of our capacity to influence change at a local and systemic level by continuing to provide these services with a more considered approach to the planning of services and the built environment through the lens of ageing.

Darebin City Council has a proud history of supporting services and programs for older people. Examples of this commitment are highlighted below:

- Darebin Council is a signatory to the Age-friendly Victoria Declaration which reaffirms the organisation's long-standing commitment to make the city a better place for older people. The Age-friendly Victoria initiative is led by the Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services.
- Appointment of the Active and Healthy Ageing Advisory Board in 2011. This Council initiated committee is comprised of local older residents who represent the interests of older people living in Darebin. The role of the committee is to inform and assist Council in understanding how issues, policies and drivers can impact on the health and wellbeing of older residents ageing in Darebin.

Council is deeply committed to finding ways to embed the principles outlined in the World Health Organisation's Age-friendly Cities Framework. This is evidenced through recent work in which Council commissioned a review to engage older people to inform the organisation's understanding, planning and decision-making regarding how to create an age friendly city.

Communication and engagement with community took place over a two-month period during which over 1,130 older people, carers and community organisations participated in the consultation process through face to face meetings, focus groups, pop up and drop in sessions.

The findings of the report have been included in the report Towards an Age Friendly Darebin - Final Report July 2019. The report includes 98 recommendations and a number of initiatives that will help Council trial ideas based on the feedback by older people. To ensure there is strong organisational support for this work and

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opportunity to embed age friendly principles; three of these recommendations focus on Implementation, Monitoring and Reporting of the activities and initiatives contained in the report. A Cross Organisational Project Control Group has recently been established and is charged with oversight and monitoring and implementation of the project.

Through the consultation process older people have articulated very clearly the barriers to having a good life: navigating complex service systems; social isolation and loneliness; difficulty in physically navigating the built environment.

The recommendations contained in the report reflect a richness of ideas that only comes when working closely with the community. Armed with this, we are focused on working to embed age-friendly principles in all we do, placing greater emphasis on ageing across the life course to allow residents to move about, confident that regardless of where they live in Darebin, their community will be accessible, responsive to their need, socially inclusive and values their contribution.

We hope you will consider Darebin Council's application to become a member of the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Community. Membership will provide a platform for Council to learn from and share age-friendly projects and initiatives.

I have attached a copy of the report Towards an Age Friendly Darebin Final Report July 2019 for your information.

I look forward to your response and am available to answer any questions you may have regarding our application.

Sincerely,

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Susan Rennie". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

Councillor Susan Rennie
MAYOR