

Positive Ageing Strategy

2020-2025



**MORNINGTON
PENINSULA**
Shire



Mornington Peninsula Shire acknowledges and pays respect to the elders, families and ancestors of the Bunurong/Boon Wurrung people, who have been the custodians of this land for many thousands of years. We acknowledge that the land on which we meet is the place of age-old ceremonies, celebrations, initiation and renewal; and that the Bunurong/Boon Wurrung peoples' living culture continues to have a unique role in the life of this region."

We are committed to the cultural safety of older people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, culturally and linguistically diverse and LGBTI backgrounds.

Message from The Mayor

It gives me great pleasure to present the Positive Ageing Strategy 2020-2025. The Shire has a proud history of recognising older people and was one of the first local governments to develop a strategy dedicated to supporting older residents, adopting the 'The Elder Citizens Strategy' in 2001. This strategy builds on the work done over the past 19 years and benefits from input and direction from the Peninsula Advisory Committee for Elders (PACE).

The Strategy is based on the World Health Organisation's Age-Friendly Cities Framework which identifies eight areas of influence that contribute to creating an age-friendly community. These "domains" span many facets of Council business and we are well placed to support positive ageing.

In 2017 the Mornington Peninsula Shire was accepted into the World Health Organisation's Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, demonstrating an ongoing commitment to healthy ageing.

An age-friendly community promotes a human rights-based approach where people of all ages and abilities are included and respected. As an age-friendly community, the Mornington Peninsula Shire values the social and economic contribution older people make and we are committed to enhancing wellbeing for all people as they age.

Councillor Sam Hearn
Mayor
Mornington Peninsula Shire

Message from the CEO

*George Bernard Shaw once wrote, “We don’t stop playing because we grow old.
We grow old because we stop playing.”*

Positive ageing embraces the idea of being active, connected, valued and respected as you grow older in your community. The Positive Ageing Strategy 2020-2025 is the third Positive Ageing Strategy developed by the Shire since the inaugural “Elder Citizens Strategy” in 2001 and it is based upon the World Health Organisation’s Age-Friendly Cities Framework. The Framework highlights eight domains that contribute to creating an age-friendly community. These are;

Transport	Social Participation
Respect and Social Inclusion	Housing
Communication and Information	Community Support and Health Services
Civic Participation and Employment	Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

This strategy adds a ninth domain, Quality of Life which identifies opportunities to address population health challenges such as obesity, dementia, climate change and now the recovery phase of the COVID-19 pandemic. The economic, social and health and wellbeing impacts of the pandemic have the potential to affect our community for a long time. This Strategy will play a key role in directing efforts towards ensuring our community is one where older people can continue to thrive, contribute and be appreciated.

John Baker
Chief Executive Officer
Mornington Peninsula Shire

Message from the Chair

As the Chair of the Positive Ageing Steering Committee (PASC), I am proud to present the Positive Ageing Strategy 2020-2025.

This Strategy builds on the Shire's previous 19 years of strategic planning focussed on our older community and uses a "whole of Council, whole of Community" approach that reflects the voices of over five hundred people who have helped guide and shape its direction and development over the many years.

The Positive Ageing Steering Committee encourages the participation of member representatives from departments of Council, key service providers, community stakeholders and the Peninsula Advisory Committee for Elders (PACE). Tasked to oversee and monitor the progress of the Strategy over the next five years, the Committee will bring their wide range of knowledge, experience and skill to help direct and support the implementation of the Strategy.

The Committee looks forward to taking on the work required to support the Positive Ageing Strategy 2020-2025 and will make it their aim to ensure that older people in our community are respected, remain connected and continue to experience life on the Mornington Peninsula in a meaningful way.

Councillor Antonella Celi
Chair Positive Ageing Steering Committee
Mornington Peninsula Shire

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Positive Ageing Strategy 2020-2025

Introduction

The Mornington Peninsula Shire is committed to developing an age-friendly community, ensuring that the areas of our lives which influence our ability to engage in society are enhanced.

An age-friendly community benefits all community members, not just older residents. Council is well placed to influence the domains that contribute to an age friendly community, enabling positive ageing for all. As a member of the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Global Network for Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, the Shire has shown an ongoing commitment to these principles. This strategy has been written using the World Health Organisation's Framework for Age-Friendly Communities.

This strategy commenced during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has had far reaching impacts on positive ageing. Social distancing, staying at home and the shutdown of all recreation, exercise and social activities throughout the community has been necessary and played an essential role in controlling the spread of the virus. However, the impacts on the physical and mental health of older people will only be fully understood once the crisis has past and support will be required as the restrictions are lifted, and the community re-establishes.

Vision

To create a community that enables all residents to participate, belong and contribute.

Background

Healthy Ageing is defined by the 'World Report on Ageing and Health' as, "the process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables wellbeing in older age." There are several terms that are used to describe ageing well. '**Positive ageing**', '**Active Ageing**' and '**Healthy Ageing**' are commonly used and have been used interchangeably for the purpose of this report. The 50+ years population is generally the target audience for positive ageing. ¹

For the first time in history, most people can expect to live longer than any other generation. Along with this increase in life expectancy, Australian fertility rates started to steadily decline by the 1960s and have been below the population replacement level for the last twenty years. The result of which is that Australia, like other modern societies is experiencing a new ageing demographic and social dynamic. ²

A longer life brings great opportunities, yet the extent to which we can benefit from these extra years depends heavily on one key factor: health. Evidence suggests that older people are not experiencing better health than previous generations and that those who have experienced disadvantage across their lifetime have a higher risk of poor health. ³

¹ World Health Organisation (2015) *World report on Ageing and Health* <https://www.who.int/ageing/events/world-report-2015-launch/en/>

² Kalache, A (2013) *The Longevity Revolution* <http://www.flinders.edu.au/sabs/fcas-files/Publications/The%20Longevity%20Revolution.pdf>

³ Kalache, A (2013) *The Longevity Revolution* <http://www.flinders.edu.au/sabs/fcas-files/Publications/The%20Longevity%20Revolution.pdf>

It is therefore imperative that society focuses on maximising opportunities for healthy ageing. This must be a coordinated approach by all levels of government and includes developing plans such as this one at the local government level to enable local opportunities for action. The World Health Organisation has recognised this and in 2007, released the WHO Age-Friendly Cities Framework that identified eight areas of influence contributing to age-friendly cities. Since 2007, the international context for ageing has been refocussed following the release of the World Health Organization (WHO) World report on ageing and health 2015.

The framework highlights 8 domains for action in order to create an age-friendly community. ⁴



The eight domains of the WHO age-friendly-framework span many areas of council business. Creating age-friendly environments requires collaboration across multiple sectors engaging diverse stakeholders, including older people.

Local government has an important role in supporting communities where people of all ages, regardless of ability or life stage, can live a quality life.⁵

Age-friendly environments promote health, remove barriers and provide support for people experiencing losses in capacity; they can ensure older people age safely in a place that is right for them, remain connected to their community, are free from disadvantage and can continue to experience life in the fullest capacity.

An age friendly approach promotes:

- a human rights-based approach
- an integrated approach to ageing from government and community
- a civil society where people of all ages and all abilities are included and respected
- the social and economic contributions and value that older people make to families and communities

⁴ World Health Organisation 2007 Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide
https://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global_age_friendly_cities_Guide_English.pdf

⁵ Municipal Association of Victoria and Council of the Ageing 2017 *Age-friendly Cities and Communities Information Kit for Local Government Councillors and Senior Management*. http://www.mav.asn.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0018/7083/Age-friendly-cities-and-communities-information-kit-for-local-government-Jul-2017.pdf

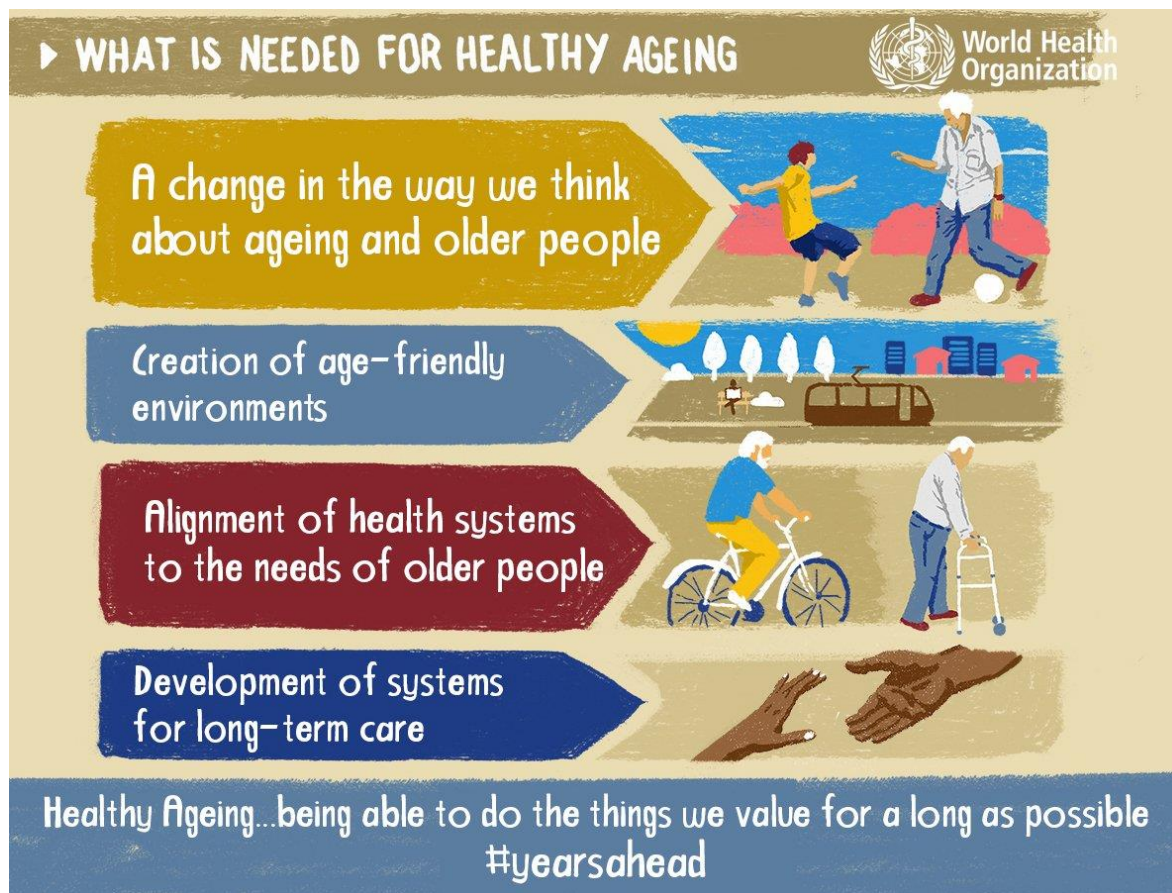
- independence, wellbeing and quality of life for all people as they age.⁶

Age-friendly cities and communities continues to gain momentum across the world. In 2017 the Mornington Peninsula Shire was accepted into the WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities, demonstrating an ongoing commitment to healthy ageing. There are currently eleven Local Government members in Victoria and 30 across Australia. In 2016, the Victorian Government, the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) along with the Mornington Peninsula Shire signed the Age-friendly Victoria Declaration to provide leadership for better state and local planning for more age-friendly communities.

There is now a growing body of evidence demonstrating that in an age friendly community, the social and economic contributions of the older population outweigh the cost of pensions and healthcare. Age-friendly communities make good sense economically and socially. Benefits include:

- lower public and personal costs related to illness and health care
- the prevention or delayed onset of many chronic and preventable illnesses
- increased healthy behaviours and social participation
- the added social and economic 'value' to communities when older people contribute to and participate in their communities.⁷

Creating an Age-friendly community is one of the important steps in promoting healthy ageing.



Infographic: www.who.int/ageing/events/world-report-2015-launch/healthy-ageing-infographic.jpg

⁶ World Health Organisation 2016 *Framework for Action on Ageing and Health*. <https://www.who.int/ageing/global-strategy/en/>

⁷ Neal, M Kenneth, A (2016) *A The case for Age-friendly Communities* DeLaTorre Portland State University

Context

The Mornington Peninsula Shire has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to promoting and enabling positive ageing. This new strategy will build on progress over the past nineteen years using a “whole of Council, whole of Community” approach, guided by the Positive Ageing Steering Committee (PASC) whose members comprise representatives from departments of Council, key service providers and community stakeholders and the Peninsula Advisory Committee for Elders (PACE).

The Shire was one of the first local governments to adopt a strategy dedicated to older residents with the development of ‘The Elder Citizens Strategy’ in 2001. This work led to the formation of the Peninsula Advisory Committee for Elders (PACE) in 2006. PACE was one of the first advisory committees of its kind, providing independent advice to Council on matters relating to older residents. They continue to play a valuable role in orientating Council towards positive ageing, including in the development of this strategy.

In 2011, the Shire undertook a Positive Ageing Strategy project which sought to develop a shared community vision and goals for older people on the Peninsula. The result was the Positive Ageing Strategy 2013-2018, “A Community for All Ages”.

A key feature of the 2013-2018 Strategy was the implementation of an annual “Positive Ageing Community Summit” where community members were invited to attend and reflect on progress of the strategy and gather feedback on emerging needs, opportunities and current successes.⁸

The Shire has continued to commit resources to the ongoing development, implementation and monitoring of these plans. The development of this Strategy continues the work of the previous strategies, building on successes and capturing emerging needs and opportunities.

⁸ Mornington Peninsula Shire 2013 *A Community for All Ages; Positive Ageing Strategy 2013-2018*

Alignment of the Positive Ageing Strategy

This table outlines how the Positive Ageing Strategy links a range of legislation, standards, practices and planning that impact Local Government.

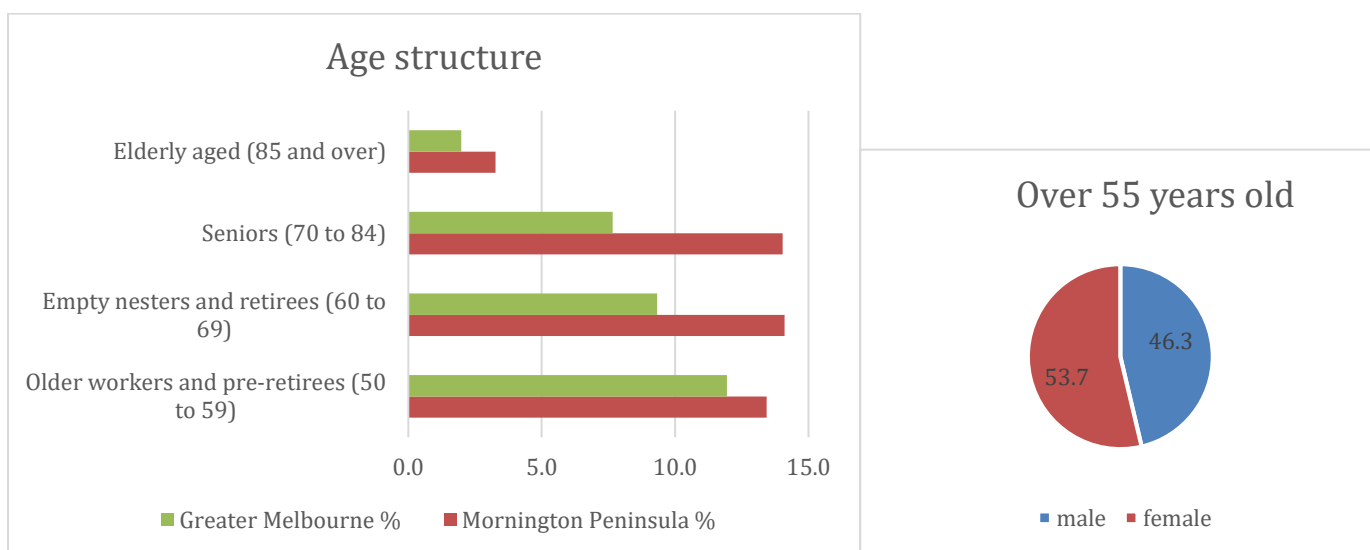
WHO Age-friendly Cities and Communities Internationally endorsed direction linked to eight age-friendly domains.							
Transport	Social Participation	Respect and Social Inclusion	Civic Participation and Employment	Outdoor Spaces and Buildings	Community Support and Health Services	Communication and Information	Housing
Australian Human Rights Commission Act and Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act The Victorian Charter requires local government to act compatibly with human rights, and to consider human rights when developing policies, delivering services and making decisions.							
Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-23 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• tackling climate change and its impact on health• increasing healthy eating• increasing active living• reducing tobacco-related harm. <i>Tailoring our approaches across the life course</i> A life course approach aims to optimise health and wellbeing across all ages and stages of life including <ul style="list-style-type: none">• promoting active and healthy ageing.							
Age discrimination Act Prohibits direct and indirect discrimination on the basis of age							
Local Government Act Under the Act, Council’s role includes fostering community cohesion, encouraging active participation in civic life, improving overall quality of life of people in the local community.							
Mornington Peninsula Shire Council Plan-Our Peninsula 2021 Vision: To value, protect and improve the unique characteristics of the Mornington Peninsula Community.							
Our Place		Our Connectivity		Our Prosperity		Our Wellbeing	
Mornington Peninsula Shire Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan- Our Health and Wellbeing 2021 Vision: To protect and promote health and wellbeing of the Mornington Peninsula community							
Disability Inclusion Plan		Gender Equality Strategy		Climate Change Community Engagement strategy		Positive Ageing Strategy	
Triple A Housing Plan	Pedestrian Access Strategy		Arts and Culture Strategy	Sustainable Transport Strategy		RideSafe Strategy	Integrated Transport Plan

Our Community

The Mornington Peninsula is located at the fringe of Melbourne's outer southern suburbs, approximately 60 kilometres south of Melbourne CBD. It consists of more than forty townships and villages encompassing an area of 720 square kilometres.

The Mornington Peninsula Shire's Estimated Resident Population for 2018 was 165,822. The Shire has the highest population of older residents in Greater Melbourne. At the last census in 2016, the number of people aged 50 and above was 69,478 or 44.8% of the population compared with Greater Melbourne at 30.9%. The largest proportion of people were those aged between 60 and 84 and there were 5,059 people over the age of 85.

This number is predicted to rise steadily over the next 20 years to 46.1% with the largest increase in numbers occurring in the age range of 70 – 84 (8256).⁹



Life expectancy

Life expectancy for women is 84.5 years and for men 80.4 years. For those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, it is approximately 10 years less for both men and women.

Diversity

The Mornington Peninsula Shire is less culturally diverse than Greater Melbourne with the percentage of residents over the age of 55 who were born overseas in a non-English speaking country at 10.4% compared with 34.4% in Greater Melbourne. The top five non-English speaking countries of birth were Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, Greece and Croatia.

The population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on the Mornington Peninsula in 2016 was 1,296. 20.2% were aged 50 and above.

Due to a lack of comprehensive publicly available data, it is difficult to estimate the total LGBTI population. Australians of diverse sexual orientation, sex or gender identity may account for up to 11 per cent of the Australian population.¹⁰

⁹ I.d community demographic resources <https://profile.id.com.au/mornington-peninsula>

¹⁰ Department of Health, Australian Government, [National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex \(LGBTI\) Ageing and Aged Care Strategy](#) (2012)

How we live

Housing

In the Mornington Peninsula Shire, 80.2% of people aged 55 years or more were in households who were purchasing or fully owned their home and 10.7% were renting. The rate of home ownership is slightly higher than that of greater Melbourne (79.3%) and concurrently, rates of renting are slightly lower, the greatest difference being the amount of social housing (2.8% in Greater Melbourne compared with 1.3% on the Peninsula.)

22.1% of people over the age of 55 lived in single person households, compared with 19.6% in greater Melbourne. This number increased by 1597 since the 2011 census. 51.0% of households are couples without children which is higher than greater Melbourne (40%). This means that 73.1% of the population do not have children permanently living in the household.

Employment

30.3% of people over 55 were participating in the labour market. 96% had either full or part time employment and 4% were looking for work. 62.5% were no longer participating in the labour force.

Volunteering

20.0% of the population reported doing some form of voluntary work in 2016. This compares with 17.6% in Greater Melbourne.

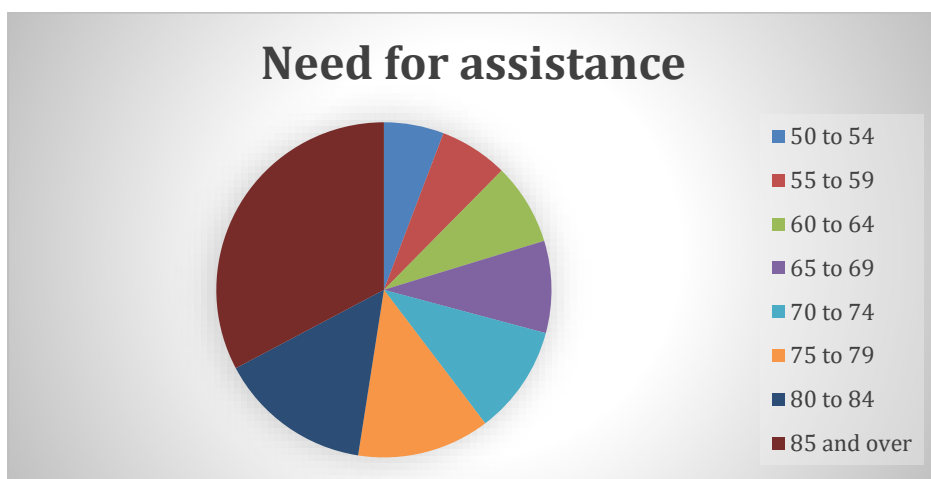
Income

There were 25,984 people in low income households living in Mornington Peninsula Shire, with largest age group represented aged 65 to 79 (5492). Overall, 21.3% of those people aged 50 and above are living in low income households. 24,104 people are receiving the aged pension.

Health

Need for assistance

This is defined as, “people who need assistance in their day to day lives with any or all of the following activities – self-care, body movements or communication – because of a disability, long-term health condition, or old age”. 6347 (9.1%) people over the age of 50 need assistance with daily living skills, 33% of these people are aged over 85.



i.d community demographic resources <https://profile.id.com.au/mornington-peninsula>

Dementia

The Mornington Peninsula Shire has the second highest rate of dementia for local government areas in Victoria with the current number 4,022, predicted to rise to 14,441 in 2050.¹¹

Wellbeing and risk factors

According to the Victorian public health and wellbeing outcome measures, there have been some improvements in people's perception of their general health on the Mornington Peninsula since 2012 with over half rating their health as very good or excellent. The rates of obesity, smoking and premature death due to illness have decreased slightly with the only noticeable increase in rates of psychological distress.¹²

However, 56.1% of the adult population on the Mornington Peninsula are overweight compared with 50.8% across Victoria. And the rates of smoking (25.8%) are higher than the Victorian average (16.7%)¹³

Food security

7.3% experienced food insecurity and 48.8% do not meet the fruit and vegetable consumption guidelines.

Safety

60.8% of people reported feeling safe walking at night and there was a lower number of crimes reported than in previous years.¹¹

Evidence regarding the prevalence of elder abuse in Australia is lacking, but drawing on international studies, it is likely that between 2% and 14% of older Australians experience elder abuse in any given year, with the prevalence of neglect possibly higher.¹⁴

Socioeconomic disadvantage

The Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage (SEIFA) indicates that there are a number of townships that have a high proportion of people living with disadvantage:

- Capel Sound
- Hastings
- Tootgarook
- Rosebud
- Crib Point
- Dromana

Suicide

The number of reported deaths by suicide in Victoria in 2017 in was 9.6 deaths per 100,000 people dropped slightly from the previous census (9.9 per 100,000) however it is noted that men over the age of 60 are over represented in the statistics and are at a higher risk of dying by suicide than other age groups.¹⁵

¹¹ National centre for Social and Economic modelling (NATSEM) University of Canberra, January 2016. Commissioned by Alzheimer's Australia Vic.

¹² Victorian Government 2018 *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcome Measures Mornington Peninsula LGA*

¹³ Victorian Government 2018 *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcome Measures Mornington Peninsula LGA*

¹⁴ Kaspiew, R., Carson, R., & Rhoades, H. (2015). [*Elder abuse: Understanding issues, frameworks and responses*](#) (Research Report No. 35). Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies

¹⁵ 2018 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Causes of Death data summary, prepared by *Mindframe*.

Motor vehicle ownership

Analysis of car ownership in 2016, indicates 57% of households in Mornington Peninsula Shire had access to two or more motor vehicles, compared to 51% in Greater Melbourne. 4% of the population did not own a car.

Developing the Strategy

A plan developed with older people, not for older people with a “whole of Council, whole of Community” approach

One of the fundamental principles of creating an age- friendly community is wide and varied input from the older residents and the involvement of key stakeholders, internal teams, community partners and organisations. This process commenced with the 2018 Positive Ageing Summit. In June 2019, community consultations were conducted, gathering ideas and feedback from over 500 residents with 22 community partners and organisations providing assistance. The process was designed to capture both qualitative (forums/workshops) and quantitative data (surveys). This comprised the following:

- Face-to-face community forums in Rye, Hastings and Safety Beach
- A workshop for the Regional Seniors Meeting (representatives from the 21 Seniors clubs across the Mornington Peninsula)
- A workshop with Councillors
- A forum with local service providers
- A questionnaire provided on-line and hardcopy via Shire offices
- Data gathered at the Positive Ageing Community Summit held in November 2018 (at the conclusion of the previous Strategy.)
- Input from internal stakeholders via meetings with the relevant teams across the Shire.

The consultation was structured around two simple questions:

- 1) *What do you think makes growing older on the Mornington Peninsula easier?*
- 2) *What do you think makes growing older on the Mornington Peninsula more challenging?*

Separate questions were then posed specific to the eight domains of the World Health Organisation’s Age Friendly Cities and Communities Framework as well as an extra domain, added in response to feedback from the Positive Ageing Steering Committee, Lifestyle Factors.

What the Community is saying

Generally, people are living active, enjoyable lives and believe there are many great elements about ageing on the Peninsula. People identified the beauty of the natural environment, availability of health services and the many opportunities to connect, be active and learn as some of the key highlights of life as an older person on the Mornington Peninsula.

“The beautiful environment! Access to health services. Being near friends and family. Leash free beaches. Parks and reserves to enjoy. A great library”

There are other older people who, for a range of reasons, are not enjoying life to its fullest and experience considerable challenges. They are disconnected, without transport, have health issues and/or may not be aware of the options available to them.

These fell across all nine domains, with the three most challenging areas identified for action being transport and mobility, communication & information and social participation. The domain of Respect and Social Inclusion was also highlighted as there seemed to be a lack of awareness and understanding within the community. Given that it is one of the key drivers for Elder Abuse, it has been included as an important action area.

“I am unable to live an active and healthy lifestyle for reasons such as access and affordability. Being able to obtain information and services in an accessible, affordable and timely manner”

The Strategy

Domain 1 – Transport
Goal: An age-friendly Mornington Peninsula has accessible, affordable and appropriate transport options that meets the needs of older residents.
Domain 2 – Social participation
Goal: An age-friendly Mornington Peninsula has a range of inclusive opportunities to connect and participate in the community.
Domain 3 – Communication and information
Goal: An age-friendly Mornington Peninsula has appropriate and timely information in a range of accessible forms.
Domain 4 – Respect and Social Inclusion
Goal: An age-friendly Mornington Peninsula is one in which older people feel valued, respected and included.
Domain 5 – Housing
Goal: An age-friendly Mornington Peninsula has appropriate and affordable housing options to enable older people to age in place.
Domain 6 – Civic Participation and Employment
Goal: An age-friendly Mornington Peninsula has ample opportunities for older people to contribute and feel valued by participating in paid and voluntary work.
Domain 7 – Community Support and Health Services
Goal: An age-friendly Mornington Peninsula has appropriate, accessible and affordable health and community services.
Domain 8 – Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
Goal: An age-friendly Mornington Peninsula has attractive, safe and accessible outdoor spaces and buildings that are accessible and encourage active participation of older people within intergenerational spaces and places.
Domain 9 – Quality of life
Goal: An age-friendly Mornington Peninsula is a community where people can maximise health and wellbeing by being active and fully engaged in their community.

Access to regular, appropriate, affordable and safe transport plays a crucial role in ageing well in the community. It underpins many of the other domains and is one of the most significant challenges that residents face on the Mornington Peninsula. The Shire has the second lowest provision of public transport per person in metropolitan Melbourne and 82% of the Peninsula is not serviced by public transport. Two out of three of the Peninsula's major activity centres are not serviced by train and rely on bus services – the only metropolitan municipality in the state with this situation.¹⁶

What you told us

Considering these issues, it is not surprising to learn that lack of adequate transport is the highest priority for older people on the Peninsula. 60% of all respondents in the community survey identified transport as a major barrier to ageing well on the Peninsula. When the survey specifically asked if transport was an issue for them or anyone they knew, 77% of respondents responded “yes”. All community consultation forums echoed similar results. Poor transportation was identified as creating barriers to:

- Participation in social activities
- Health and fitness pursuits
- Keeping connected to the community
- Doing the shopping
- Getting to the hospital and medical appointments

Some specific issues identified were:

- Infrequency of buses
- Bus stops too far apart
- No public transport in some areas at all
- No direct route from the Western Port side to the Port Philip side
- ‘Dial A Bus’ not offered frequently enough
- Buses do not go directly to Frankston Hospital

Issues around walkability and mobility also featured highly in response to the question “what makes growing older on the Mornington Peninsula more challenging?”

- Lack of footpaths in some townships
- Lack of connectivity of footpaths
- Poor condition of some paths making it difficult for those with mobility aids

“Lack of public transport is a worry for some once they lose their licences to drive. Spending an hour from Dromana to Mornington on the bus is not easy. Lack of footpaths in Dromana is a problem for my husband in a wheelchair.”

¹⁶ Mornington Peninsula Shire *Better Buses Campaign* <https://www.mornpen.vic.gov.au/About-Us/News-Media-Publications/Initiatives-and-Current-Issues/Better-Buses-for-the-Mornington-Peninsula>

“All infrastructure planning should address pedestrian, bicycle, wheelchair and mobility scooter use as a priority over motorised vehicles. Create opportunities for more personal activity as a fundamental design. More people moving more often leads to a healthier community.”

What is working well

- The Shire’s ‘Dial A Bus’ was mentioned frequently as a great service.
- For those that drive, many commented on the lack of traffic and good availability of parking for most of the year.

“I go on the Dial-a-bus once a week for my shopping, it is great. But I have so many things I am interested in participating in on other days, but I cannot attend any of them as I don’t drive.”

“The time will come soon enough when I’ll have to stop driving. Public transport isn’t so good here.”

Domain 1 – Transport

Goal: An age-friendly Mornington Peninsula has accessible, affordable and appropriate transport options that meets the needs of older residents.

Strategies	Key actions
1.1 Support initiatives that provide effective, safe, affordable and accessible transport options.	Continue to advocate for better public transport through the Shire’s “Better Buses Campaign” and the Metropolitan Transport Forum where we are seeking improvements on bus connections, frequency, route design and funding for development of new services.
	Advocate and plan for better integration of transport modes through the Integrated Transport Plan.
	Investigate the expansion of the dial a bus program
	Continue to support Peninsula Transport Assist
	Investigate other models of affordable community transport including ride share, volunteer driver projects and other transport technology solutions.
	Continue to facilitate and encourage active transport through the Pedestrian Access Strategy, RideSafe Strategy, Bay Trials Missing Links Project and the Integrated Transport Plan.
	Explore options to provide community transport for social inclusion activities for community members who do not drive including library visits, gym, recreation activities, social clubs and groups.
1.2 Improve the community’s knowledge of local transport options available on the Mornington Peninsula.	Develop a comprehensive communication strategy for the Dial a bus program
	Develop community transport promotional information with the appropriate communication strategy.
	Continue to update the mobility maps, Principle Pedestrian Network maps and scooter charge points for the key townships on the Peninsula and ensure the maps are readily available at the Shire Offices and other relevant community facilities.

Social Participation

Social participation is a vital component of ageing well. Those who are socially isolated are more likely to experience:

- Reduced quality of life
- Decreased sense of self-worth and loss of confidence
- Increased risk of dementia
- Ill health e.g. poor diet, diminished immunity, depression
- Adopting risky behaviours e.g. self-medication, substance abuse
- Increased risk of elder abuse
- More vulnerable to weather emergencies like extreme heat and flooding.¹³

Social isolation has a profound impact on health and wellbeing. It is thought to be equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day. The Commissioner for Senior Victorians 2016 report *Ageing is Everyone's Business* includes recommendations to work toward reducing social isolation and loneliness amongst older people.¹⁷ Some of these include;

- Promoting meaningful roles for seniors within the community
- increase opportunities for seniors to join, attend and participate in existing clubs, groups, organisations or activities
- increase older people's knowledge of the importance of maintaining and strengthening their levels of social participation
- address personal mobility and local transport issues by building on existing networks

These recommendations align strongly with the goals of this Strategy.

Older Carers

Carers provide support to partners, family members and friends. They may care for someone with a disability, mental illness, chronic illness, or an older person with care needs.

The average age of primary carers in Victoria is 55 years.

- More than 62,000 carers are aged 65 years or older. Many care for their partners, older parents, adult children and/or grandchildren.
- 70% of all primary carers are women.
- Older carers mainly take on the care role because no other friends or family are available. They face a major challenge in caring for their own health and wellbeing as they get older while providing care for others
- Carers are at greater risk of social isolation due to the demands of their caring role.¹⁸

COVID-19 Pandemic

One of the consequences of the pandemic has been the cessation of all social activities, both formal and informal. Many members of the community have tried to maintain connection using

¹⁷ Mansour G, 2016 *Ageing is everyone's business: a report on isolation and loneliness among senior Victorians*. Victorian Government

¹⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018) *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Victoria: Summary of Findings*, 2018

online meetings and gatherings but for those older people who are not confident using digital technology, they are unable to participate. This has resulted in a cohort that has been completely isolated and at risk throughout the duration of the pandemic restrictions.

What you told us

The range of options for connecting people through existing clubs was a very positive component of ageing well on the Peninsula. 67% of respondents believed that there were adequate opportunities to participate in physical activities but only 47% of respondents believed that there were enough cultural experiences available.

“Services, environment, people, my club gives me opportunity to continue my life's plan of educating myself to make the very best of my life and my abilities.”

Several comments were made about living in areas where there were a significant number of holiday houses and therefore a lack of “neighbours” had a negative impact on the sense of community. People also stated lack of transport as a major barrier to their participation in activities. (see Transport)

Some respondents stated they have no friends, are lonely and are not able to go out, because of transport issues, cost, ill health and/or lack of knowledge. 18% respondents said they did not have enough friends, 26% said they mostly had enough friends, with 56% saying they are happy with their social connections. Respondents highlighted several barriers to being socially connected, including being a carer, experiencing ill health, lack of transport and/or being new to the area.

“I would like to be more involved but not sure how to get started/where to go”

Domain 2 – Social Participation

Goal: An age-friendly Mornington Peninsula has a range of inclusive opportunities to connect and participate in the community.

Strategies	Key actions
2.1 Facilitate opportunities for participation in accessible and affordable recreation, lifelong learning and cultural pursuits.	Continue to provide support to clubs and social based groups inclusive of older people.
	Explore options available for the provision of outreach library services including aged care facilities, community houses, seniors' clubs etc.
	Continue to support physical activity initiatives that incorporate social connection through community partnerships.
	Facilitate inclusive arts and cultural activities in alignment with Arts & Culture Plan.
	Continue to develop library events that connect and engage older people including classes, workshops, author talks, Seniors festival events
2.2 Support existing and emerging groups to continue to provide opportunities to engage in the community.	Continue to support community hubs, centres, neighbourhood houses and the diverse range of volunteer-run clubs and groups that support social inclusion opportunities for older people.
	Continue to support the Home Library Service to ensure responsiveness to community needs.
2.3 Continue to explore and expand options to address social isolation.	Promote initiatives that create a more inclusive community that target those at highest risk of isolation. e.g. "Dementia Friends"
	Encourage early involvement in pre-retirement planning for life-long community participation.
	Explore ways to connect older people into the community. For example, the Community Connector project, One Good Street or other community-based initiatives.
	Expand on-line learning opportunities to ensure older residents can confidently participate in digital social technology.
2.4 Recognise and support the role of the carer in our community	Promote and support carer services to ensure carers are linked with appropriate local support.

Communication is the key component that enables community members to participate and feel a sense of belonging. Households on the Mornington Peninsula that lack an internet connection are more likely to belong to residents over the age of 65¹⁹. Barriers can include the cost of connection and equipment, unfamiliarity or hesitation to engage with new technology.

With many services using online methods of communication and connection, those who do not engage with the digital world are at risk of becoming isolated and may find everyday tasks more challenging. The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in a community that encourages online banking and shopping for older people to reduce risk of infection and online social platforms have temporarily replaced social groups. For those who have no exposure to these technologies, they are isolated and have lost a level of independence by having to rely on others for basic services.

What you told us

Access to information was highlighted as a very important issue for older people across the Peninsula. 80% of respondents felt that they could find the information they required for current activities but only 68% were happy with the availability of information for services. You told us that the “Keeping Active, Involved and Informed – A Directory of Physical Activity groups and other information for older people” (The Directory) produced by the Shire in partnership with Peninsula Health and Frankston City Council was very beneficial. You also highlighted the importance of libraries, community hubs and centres as important sources of information.

“Any newcomer to the Shire is somewhat unaware of what not only may be available, but also it takes some time to learn of their existence.”

Those who found it difficult to access information expressed a sense of isolation and frustration at not being able to keep informed or find activities. Issues included:

- lack of local papers in some areas
- out of date information online or not readily available.
- Being a new resident and knowing where to find information
- Information dissemination, especially in hard copy as many do not have easy web access

“Sometimes can be difficult to find out about local events. Local papers now hard to get. Sometimes we hear of events after they have happened. Perhaps What’s On could be expanded, organisations & clubs notified, more notice boards, in Libraries or Shopping Centres. Internet is good but not everyone has access.”

¹⁹ <https://profile.id.com.au/mornington-peninsula/internet-connection>

Domain 3 - Communication and Information

Goal: An age-friendly Mornington Peninsula has appropriate and timely information in a range of accessible forms.

Strategies	Key actions
3.1 Maximise the effectiveness of information sharing both within the Shire and in the community.	Continue to connect with existing and emerging networks and organisations to increase information distribution.
	Ensure Peninsula Wide covers issues and news relevant to older residents
	Continue to cover senior's news in printed advertorials
	Support production of a web directory that gives info and links to services
	Continue to produce the Positive Ageing Newsletter and the 'Keeping Active, Involved and Informed' directory (in partnership with Peninsula Health and Frankston City Council) and improve their distribution.
	Continue to seek improved editorial coverage of Shire activities from local newspapers.
	Develop and distribute new resident 'welcome packs'
	Support information forums and workshops that encourage older people to age well.
3.2 Address barriers to internet access and digital technology.	Continue to support community facilities to distribute information on activities/ services for older people.
	Support and promote low cost internet/personal device training opportunities for older residents
	Continue to provide access and support for older residents to access public internet services at libraries, community facilities and seniors' clubs and groups.
	Ensure that all online and print material developed by Shire is in an accessible format.
	Continue to advocate for hard copy and on-line information to ensure those without internet access are not left behind.
	Advocate for "Smart Townships" that provide free Wi-Fi access in the local shopping areas.

Ageism is defined as “*the stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination towards people based on age*” - Ageism is prevalent in our society and directly influences our ability to age well. It influences societal attitudes about older people’s capacity, and it influences our own attitudes toward our ageing. Ageist stereotypes of older people as frail, burdensome and dependent are not supported by evidence and limit society’s ability to appreciate the potential human and social capital inherent in older populations.²⁰

Elder Abuse

Elder abuse is any act occurring within a relationship where there is an implication of trust, which results in harm to an older person. Abuse may be physical, sexual, financial, psychological, social and/or neglect. The primary prevention of elder abuse involves stopping it before it happens by understanding the underlying reasons for its occurrence and taking steps to eradicate or respond to them.

The reasons for elder abuse occurring are complex and varied, making the task of preventing it challenging. One of the main drivers of elder abuse is ageism and tackling ageist attitudes is a vital component of prevention.²¹

There is also a disconnect in the literature between intimate partner violence (IPV) experienced by older women and elder abuse. Despite evidence that IPV persists across the lifespan and carries greater health consequences for older women, the Preventing Violence Against Women (PVAW) field has so far, focussed much of its attention on younger women.²² One of the main drivers of IPV is gender inequity and it is important not to lose sight of this when looking at elder abuse in our community.

COVID-19 Pandemic and elder abuse

One of the unintended consequences of the public health response to managing the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has been the increased isolation of older people in their homes. This increases the risk of elder abuse and it is expected that we will see an increase in the number of people experiencing abuse.

Diversity

Diversity recognises that everyone is different and acknowledges people’s unique blend of knowledge, skills and perspectives. Diversity can include characteristics such as cultural background and ethnicity, age, gender, gender identity, disability, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, language and education. People from diverse backgrounds can experience barriers and discrimination within the broader community and this can further exacerbate difficulties as they grow older.

²⁰ World Health Organisation (2019) *Decade of Health Ageing* https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/documents/decade-of-health-ageing/decade-healthy-ageing-update-may-2019.pdf?sfvrsn=8915c4c2_2

²¹ Seniors Rights Victoria 2019 *Older, better together: A network approach to preventing elder abuse before it happens*. <https://seniorsrights.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/2019-06-28-Older-Better-Together-booklet.pdf>

²² Crockett C, Brandl, B & Dabby F (2015) *Survivors in the Margins: The Invisibility of Violence Against Older Women*, Journal of Elder Abuse & Neglect, 27:4-5, 291-302 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08946566.2015.1090361>

What you told us

The results were mixed when people were asked if they felt respected in the community. Many of those that were involved in a volunteer activity reported that they felt valued however there was an underlying message that people often felt invisible or disconnected from the community.

‘I love my weekly commitment. People seem to place value on my contribution’ – this comment by a woman of 90 who plays the church piano once a week.

“I have not experienced any lack of respect, but don’t feel necessarily included in the community”

At the community forums, participants struggled to link the concept of respect and inclusion with ageism. This topic area did not seem to be well understood and it presented some discrepancies in the evidence. People spoke about feeling respected, however then made comments such as, “but we need to work at it”.

“You do notice how invisible you become as you age”

The Peninsula Advisory Committee for Elders (PACE) reported that older women often felt disrespected when strangers spoke to them in a patronising way, using terms such as “love” or “sweetie”, even putting a protective arm around their shoulder.

Community members recognised that lack of respect and inclusion led to:

- Elder abuse
- Difficulty coming to terms with retirement
- Employers not interested in employing older people
- Undervaluing of older people by most people

Domain 4 - Respect and Social Inclusion

Goal: An age-friendly Mornington Peninsula is one in which older people feel valued, respected and included.

Strategies	Key actions
4.1 Provide a range of opportunities for older people to be involved in decision making.	Continue to support the Peninsula Advisory Committee of Elders (PACE) to provide advice to Council.
	Investigate the development of the “Older Ambassador” program in conjunction with PACE.
	Consult with local Aboriginal elders to strengthen recognition and inclusive opportunities.
	Support initiatives that promote gender equity and inclusion; challenging stereotypes and creating opportunities for older women in leadership roles as directed by the Shire’s Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2030.
4.2 Celebrate the valuable contribution of the Mornington Peninsula’s older residents.	Continue to celebrate the contribution of older people and those who help to create an age friendly Mornington Peninsula. (e.g. The Delys Sargeant Age Friendly Awards)
4.3 Raise community awareness on issues of ageism and the need for respectful inclusion	The Shire to continue to be an active member of the “Respecting Seniors” Elder Abuse Prevention Network on the Mornington Peninsula.
	Challenge ageist stereotypes and ensure the Shire promotes inclusive language and practice
	Support and encourage projects that promote meaningful intergenerational activities.
	Continue to ensure the Aged and Disability services workforce at the Shire are trained in recognising signs of elder abuse and can respond appropriately.
	Continue support for initiatives that raise awareness of elder abuse in the community.
4.4 Strengthen collaboration with diverse communities to ensure that all older people on the Mornington Peninsula can participate in healthy ageing opportunities.	Continue to engage with the local CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) community through support to CALD senior citizen clubs and the Peninsula Ethnic Seniors Committee.
	Increase awareness of the issues older LGBTI community members experience and promote inclusive practice.

The need for affordable, appropriate and available housing for older people is critical and homelessness among this age group is increasing on the Mornington Peninsula. There is a slightly higher rate of home ownership compared with Melbourne however older people with limited assets may have difficulty funding home alterations to enable them to age well in place.

There is also a significant number of people over 65 years who are low income renters. Research conducted in 2013 shows the Mornington Peninsula had the highest rate of low-income renters across Greater Metropolitan Melbourne.²³

Older people who are renting without any significant wealth to draw upon become vulnerable to losing their homes, forcing many to move away from their community networks. This can be triggered through sale of the property, rises in rent, loss of a partner's income or the shortage of suitable rental properties on the market.²⁴

Older single women are especially vulnerable. A health crisis, lack of adequate superannuation or a job loss in later years all contribute to a rising rate of homelessness in this demographic.²⁵ Housing stress is a risk factor in elder abuse and intimate partner violence.

What you told us

Homelessness was a concern for older people but not necessarily for themselves. Community members expressed concern for friends and people they see in the streets, with reference to the cost of rent and the impact that has on people's capacity to continue ageing-in-place. People discussed their future concerns for downsizing and whether this would be possible with the type of housing stock available. Residents also raised the difficulty they had finding tradespeople to do the small jobs, including the gutters and gardening at a reasonable affordable fee.

'I have a real concern about the homeless people down here and I would like to see more being done about this distressing situation'.

"Due to circumstances I rent rental properties are almost out of reach for someone on a pension. Office of Housing waiting lists are lengthy and almost non-existent are one-bedroom premises."

²³ Sharam, A, Ralston, L, & Parkinson, S, 2016, *Security in retirement: the impact of housing and key critical life events*, Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne.

²⁴ Mornington Peninsula Shire Council Draft *Triple A Housing Plan 2018-2030*

²⁵ McFerran, L, 2010, *It could be you; Female, single, older and homeless*, Homelessness NSW,

Domain 5 - Housing

Goal: An age-friendly Mornington Peninsula has appropriate and affordable housing options to enable older people to age in place with good access to services.

Strategies	Key actions
5.1 Support initiatives and advocate for accessible and affordable housing that incorporates universal design principles including dementia friendly design.	Leverage off existing Shire strategies such as the Disability Inclusion Plan, the Housing and Settlement Strategy, the Triple A Housing Plan and the Social and Affordable Housing Policy.
	Continue to advocate for the continued provision of Commonwealth subsidised home modifications that enable residents to age in place.
	PACE to continue to review planning applications for retirement villages and aged care facilities, ensuring they are appropriate and inclusive.
5.2 Continue to advocate for increased social housing and affordable rental accommodation on the Mornington Peninsula.	Advocate to all levels of government on key issues including the adequate provision of social and affordable housing
5.3 Support and promote opportunities to raise awareness of homelessness for older people on the Mornington Peninsula	Promote existing support for older people on the Mornington Peninsula, including local options for single, older women becoming or at risk of becoming homeless
	Implement Shire Aged and Disability staff training around understanding and responding to homelessness.

An age-friendly community provides options for older people to continue to contribute to society through both paid employment and volunteer opportunities. Volunteering provides numerous benefits to those who participate including a sense of connection, self-worth and determination. Volunteering is considered a protective factor in helping maintain good physical and mental health. The benefits to the community are numerous. Not only the economic benefits but the opportunity for intergenerational connection is strengthened when older people are volunteers in the community.²⁶ Evidence shows intergenerational experiences are a protective factor for mental health for both young people and older people.

Council also has role in empowering older people to develop skills to advocate to all levels of government and provide input into planning and policy where appropriate.

What you told us

Generally, people believed there were ample volunteering opportunities on the Mornington Peninsula and many of the community consultation participants were actively involved in volunteering. Others were unsure what opportunities were available or how to access information on volunteering. Respondents believed it was difficult to find paid employment due to the perception that people over 50 will not be recruited into high skilled positions. Older residents felt that most of the part time and casual work available was in occupations that were more suited to younger people (hospitality and aged care).

“If you are aware of what is available. As a member of my local club in Dromana, I’m able to share my knowledge and skills as a voluntary tutor.”

“Opportunities for continued paid employment are non-existent. Plenty in my age group have excellent skills that could support businesses or organisations, but these do not appear to be respected.”

²⁶ World Health Organisation 2007 Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide
https://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global_age_friendly_cities_Guide_English.pdf

Domain 6 - Civic Participation and Employment

Goal: An age-friendly Mornington Peninsula has ample opportunities for older people to contribute and feel valued by participating in paid and voluntary work.

Strategies	Key actions
6.1 Support, promote and develop opportunities for older people to access volunteering and employment opportunities.	Continue to support initiatives such as Volunteering Mornington Peninsula and the expansion of the Volunteer Information Hubs to include Community Support and Information Centres in Mornington, Westernport and Southern Peninsula.
	Support the Mornington Peninsula Volunteer Network to build capacity within organisations to provide governance, manage and develop their volunteer roles.
	Encourage opportunities for lifelong learning and relevant appropriate training including understanding and using technology.
6.2 Promote the rights and abilities of older people to participate in civic life.	Create awareness, with both the community and employers, of the changing nature of employment and the advantages it can offer to older workers.
	Advocate for an increase in employment opportunities and career pathways for older people, especially those aged under 65 who cannot access superannuation or the pension.
	Create awareness of the advantages of employing older skilled workers.
	Mornington Peninsula Shire to role model and promote practices that enhance flexible employment opportunities of older people.
	Recognise and acknowledge age-friendly businesses and services on the Mornington Peninsula.
	Explore options to actively promote age-friendly practices within the business community.
	Continue to provide advocacy opportunities for older people to provide input into policy and planning where appropriate.

Having access to health and community support services that are accessible, affordable and appropriate is an essential component of an age-friendly community. The changing landscape of the provision of support services in the home with the transition to an open market system will no doubt provide both opportunities and challenges. Council has always played an important role in advocating for residents, supporting them to navigate the aged care system and directing them to the organisation that best suits their requirements. It will be important to ensure that the Shire can continue to support residents to access appropriate services in the face of the upcoming changes to the Commonwealth Aged Care system.

What you told us

Community members were generally happy with the provision of health and community services, reporting that both the range and local proximity were key factors in making ageing easier on the Mornington Peninsula.

Some people did however mention a lack of access to some specialist practitioners and the challenge of needing to travel to Melbourne for consultations. This included access to daily dialysis and cancer treatment, often resulting in long, expensive and lonely extended stays in hospital.

A number of people also mentioned that the Rosebud Hospital needed upgrading. Lack of transport to medical appointments (especially Frankston Hospital) was also noted as an ongoing issue for those who do not drive.

“All the services; availability of access to doctors and hospitals and care. Many community programs are directed towards involving the Seniors in our local area.”

“I would like to see an upgrade of the Rosebud hospital to enable more services to be offered locally.”

“The bus system to Frankston needs a major overhaul. There should be direct buses to Frankston station via Frankston hospital. Many older people cannot easily get to appointments there or visit”

Domain 7 - Community Support and Health Services

Goal: An age-friendly Mornington Peninsula has appropriate, accessible and affordable health and community services.

Strategies	Key actions
7.1 The Shire will actively collaborate and advocate at the local, State and Federal levels to ensure the appropriate provision of community support and health services.	Continue to advocate for the best outcomes for residents during the Commonwealth Aged Care reforms at a State and Federal level.
	Provide advocacy and support to residents to navigate relevant aged care support systems.
	Ensure that quality “in home support” remains available to those who need it to maximise opportunities for residents to remain living at home for longer.
7.2 To support the provision of accessible and affordable transport to Frankston Hospital.	Continue the “Better Buses” campaign for a service to Frankston Hospital
	Investigate the expansion of the Shire’s “Dial a Bus” program to include transport to Frankston Hospital
7.3 The Shire will continue to play an active role in local health and community services networks.	Maintain membership of current appropriate health and community service networks.

The physical and built environment plays an integral role in ensuring a community is age friendly. Increasing levels of physical activity is one of the most important steps older adults can take to improve and maintain physical, social and mental health. An active lifestyle promotes good quality of life and reduces risk factors for lifestyle related illnesses such as Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. This should be addressed by providing adequate, accessible and affordable recreation options and designing townships to encourage active transport, with good mobility and access.²⁷

What you told us

Residents commented positively on the beautiful natural environment, walking on the beach and trails, free parking, dog off-leash parks, sporting grounds in good condition, the Rosebud Pier playground and other township specific facilities. They were also looking forward to the development of the Aquatic Centre in Rosebud.

“The best things are the beaches and walking trails, the library, the golf clubs, the relative safety of walking around the township.”

The main issue raised by community members was the need for footpaths and cycling tracks to be completed or installed, noting that the condition of some footpaths was poor for those using mobility aids. Beach access for those using mobility aids and wheelchairs was also a concern. Older Council buildings with poor access were problematic. Older community members requested year-round access to public toilets, more seating in public areas and an increase in safe road crossings.

“Some (buildings) are great but some are getting old like we are. Heavy doors and cold rooms are not good in some of the old halls and some have heavy furniture that needs to be moved around.”

²⁷ Brown WJ, van Uffelen JGZ. 2019 *Action area 10: Older people*. In: *Blueprint for an Active Australia*. 3rd ed. Melbourne: National Heart Foundation of Australia, https://www.heartfoundation.org.au/images/uploads/publications/Blueprint/Blueprint_Older_people.pdf

Domain 8 - Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Goal: An age-friendly Mornington Peninsula has attractive, safe and accessible outdoor spaces and buildings that are accessible and encourage active participation of older people within intergenerational spaces and places.

Strategies	Key actions
8.1 Promote mobility and accessibility by incorporating universal design and 'Dementia Friendly' principles into planning for infrastructure.	Leverage off existing Shire strategies such as Open Space and Public Toilet Strategy documents to ensure areas of need are addressed, including increased public seating, selected public toilets open all year and safe road crossings.
	Continue to expand beach access for all abilities as per the Disability Access Plan.
	Promote existing resources such as mobility maps.
	Continue to advocate for funding to build more pedestrian island refuges for vulnerable community members.
8.2 Ensure that infrastructure is created, upgraded and maintained to enable access for residents of all abilities and ages.	Continue to upgrade Shire owned facilities to incorporate universal design principles according to findings from fit for purpose audits
8.3 Continue to create and develop public spaces that encourage intergenerational participation and connection for formal and informal interaction.	Leverage off the sports capacity plan and the playground intergenerational plan to provide safe and accessible places for active and passive recreation.

This domain has been added to capture opportunities to stay well through physical activity, recreation, cultural pursuits, healthy eating and accessible health information.

What you told us

Residents clearly love living on the Mornington Peninsula and appreciate the environment within which they live, including the mix of rural and coastal areas. This contributes to their health and enables them to get out and enjoy the range of activities on offer.

Several barriers have already been mentioned, such as transport and issues with some footpaths. In addition, people raised education about health and wellbeing and the challenge to motivate people to take up the available options. Adequate warm pools for swimming and hydrotherapy and accessible facilities were also identified as amenities that were needed.

COVID-19 Pandemic recovery

The extreme restrictions that were necessary throughout the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic will have far-reaching effects on the community. The economic, social, health and wellbeing impacts will be seen for a long period of time after the restrictions and danger of the virus have passed. At the time of finalising this strategy, the pandemic was still in full swing with level three restrictions and a state of emergency declared throughout Victoria. Priority will be given to those actions in the Strategy that address some of these issues that have arisen as a result of the pandemic. The focus will be on addressing barriers to social inclusion, improving digital literacy and support for community lead recreation and these priorities will be reflected in the annual action plans.

Climate Change

Climate change is set to have a profound effect on healthy ageing. The World Health Organisation has described climate change as the defining issue for public health in the 21st century. Climate change affects health in many ways: directly by the increased intensity and frequency of extreme weather events such as prolonged heatwaves, floods and bushfires; and indirectly through worsening air quality, changes in the spread of infectious diseases, risks to food safety and drinking water quality and effects on mental health.²⁸ Known as the “silent killer”, heatwaves have caused more deaths in Australia over the past 100 years than any other natural event.²⁹

It is interesting to note that during the community consultation, climate change was not featured as an issue that concerned older people. Given the profound effects it will have on health over the coming years, this highlights an area of action to increase awareness for this age group. Since the consultation was conducted, the Shire has declared a Climate Emergency which will consider the health impact on residents.

²⁸ Victorian Government 2019 *Tackling Climate Change and its impact on Health* <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/health-strategies/public-health-wellbeing-plan/tackling-climate-change>

²⁹ Steffen, W., Hughes, L. and Perkins, S., 2014. Heatwaves : Hotter, longer, more often. Available at: <http://www.climatecouncil.org.au/uploads/9901f6614a2cac7b2b888f55b4dff9cc.pdf>

Dementia

The Mornington Peninsula Shire has the second highest rate of dementia in Victoria and numbers are set to continue to rise over the coming years. Most people with a diagnosis of dementia continue to live with support in the community and it is of utmost importance that we become a dementia friendly community. A dementia-friendly community is a place where people living with dementia are supported to live a high quality of life with meaning, purpose and value. Dementia-friendly communities encourage organisations, businesses, community groups and individuals to make practical changes that will have a positive impact on the lives of people living with dementia and their carers.³⁰

End of Life

Death and bereavement are a part of life that affects every one of us, but there is often a taboo or reluctance to discuss the topic. With advancement in medicine, end of life has become increasingly medicalised however many people report that where possible, they would prefer to die at home.³¹

The rationale for local government to become involved in end of life sits within the need for a shift in dying, death and bereavement from primarily a medical approach to a social community focus as an expected part of life. This shift in focus is not about local government becoming a service provider of end of life care but is more about utilising councils' position and links in the community (with residents, community groups and service providers) to promote a new way of thinking about end of life in the community setting.

Lifestyle factors

The Victorian Population Health survey 2017 noted some improvements in rates of obesity and smoking on the Mornington Peninsula however the rates are still higher than the Victorian average. The rates of psychological distress were also higher as were the percentage of people who do not meet the recommended physical activity guidelines. There is clearly evidence for programs and services that promote healthy lifestyle opportunities.

Gambling

Sixty-nine per cent of Victorian adults' gamble, with little difference between the participation rate of men and women. Participation increases with age. It is highest among Victorians aged 65–74 years at 78 per cent. This includes lottery, raffle tickets, betting and electronic gaming (pokies). Whilst not all gaming is harmful, every year, over half a million Victorians experience harm from gambling³².

³⁰ Dementia Australia 2019 *Dementia Friendly Communities* <https://www.dementiafriendly.org.au/what-is-a-dementia-friendly-community>

³¹ LaTrobe University 2017 *Victorian Councils: Supporting Communities Around End of Life Project* <http://www.mav.asn.au/policy-services/social-community/ageing-disability/end-of-life-project/Pages/default.aspx>

³² 2020, Fact sheet 2: Participation, Victorian population gambling and health study 2018–2019

Domain 9 - Quality of life

Goal: An age-friendly Mornington Peninsula is a community where people can maximise health and wellbeing by being active and fully engaged in their community.

Strategies	Key actions
9.1 Support, promote and develop opportunities for older people of all abilities to engage in activities that promote good health and wellbeing.	Work with relevant stakeholders to improve the accessibility of programs, information and facilities for older people.
	Leverage off the Shire's Health and Wellbeing Plan to support initiatives that promote food security, access to local healthy food and local emergency food relief.
	Promote programs and initiatives that improve older people's mental health.
	Promote the concept of a dementia friendly community, supporting organisations to improve understanding and accessibility.
	Promote programs and initiatives that tackle problem gambling and alcohol abuse in line with the Shire's Health and Wellbeing Plan.
9.2 Increase the community's awareness and preparation for the effects of climate change on health.	Support vulnerable residents to stay safe during extreme weather events
	Support residents to improve the efficiency of their homes to better withstand climate extremes.
9.3 Contribute to the 'normalisation' of dying, death and bereavement as part of everyday community life.	Begin the conversation with community, exploring compassion and the 'normalisation' of end of life within local communities, being respectful of cultural, religious and spiritual beliefs.

Implementation and Evaluation

Council will be responsible for implementing, monitoring and reviewing this strategy. This will be achieved with the oversight of the Positive Ageing Steering Committee (PASC), consisting of representatives from relevant Council departments, a Councillor representative, external stakeholders and community representatives. We will work with internal stakeholders, the Peninsula Advisory Council of Elders (PACE), local service providers and community groups enabling capacity building and developing partnerships where appropriate.

Review of the Strategy

- An annual action plan will be developed with measurable indicators to track progress
- A report on the annual action plan will be provided to Council each year
- An annual Positive Ageing Community Summit will be held to reflect on the progress of the strategy and to capture emerging issues and trends.

Acknowledgements

Our Community

The Shire would like to thank the many community members, groups and organisations who participated in the consultation. Your input has been invaluable in developing the strategy. Also thank you to the facilitators at our consultations for giving their time to support the community. Thankyou also to the service providers who attended the service provider workshop.

PACE (Peninsula Advisory Committee for Elders)

PACE plays an important role in developing and delivering the Positive Ageing Strategy. Thank you to all the members for your input to the process.

Internal Stakeholders

Thank you to Councillors for attending the Councillor workshop and providing their valuable feedback. Thank you also to the Shire teams who reviewed the strategies and actions and provided their input.

PASC (Positive Ageing Steering Committee)

PASC consists of Council officer representatives, Belgravia Leisure, Peninsula Health, U3A, PACE and is chaired by Councillor Celi. The committee meets bimonthly to review the progress of the strategy and have played an important role in shaping this strategy.

Consultants

Thank you to Sue Hendy for facilitating the community consultations and writing the consultation summary report that informed this strategy.

External Stakeholders

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