

HEALTHY AND ACTIVE AGEING PLAN 2019 – 2023



*Yarra Ranges will be the best place in the world
for people to grow old.*

*Older residents will feel respected and be able to live,
participate in, and influence their community
of choice.*

Acknowledgement of Country

“Yarra Ranges Council proudly acknowledges the Wurundjeri people and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge all Aboriginal communities as Australia’s first people and custodians of the lands and waterways which sustain us.

We acknowledge the resilience of Aboriginal people – who have belonged to and cared for country for 65,000 years. While the impacts of colonisation and more locally the history of Coranderrk have had profound effects on traditional life, Aboriginal language, lore and cultural knowledge remains strong and continues to grow.

Local Aboriginal communities have always understood the importance of elders to guide future generations through their wisdom, love of country and care of community. These messages of strength and resilience, caring, sharing and the importance of connection to place and community, provide important lessons for us all about how to best support the whole community as it ages. ”

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Executive Summary

The purpose of the Healthy and Active Ageing Plan is to set the direction for Council over, at least, the next four years in supporting older residents. It outlines priority areas and helps guide the programs and services that Council provides to the community. Our vision “Yarra Ranges will be the best place in the world for people to grow old. Older residents will feel respected and be able to live, participate in, and influence their community of choice.” will guide Council and our partners in being an age-friendly community. It will assist Council to realise its overall vision for the community that “Whether you live here or visit, you will see how much we value our natural beauty, how connected our communities are, and how balanced growth makes this the best place in the world”.

This Plan supports the delivery of the Council Plan Objective 1 – Connected and Healthy Communities. It will address the needs of older people in having communities which are safe, resilient, healthy, inclusive and socially well connected. It will also address the objective to have quality services which are accessible to everyone.

In Yarra Ranges, the number of older people aged 50+ years is 53,778, representing 35.9% of the total population. By 2041 there will be 71,411 older adults aged 50+ years living in the Yarra Ranges, representing 38% of the total population. When compared with the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR) there are a range of health issues more common in Yarra Ranges, including poor dental health (7.6%, EMR average 4%), 80+ year olds with poor vision that can't be fixed by glasses or contact lenses (18%, EMR average 9%), and incidence of 80-89 year olds being admitted to hospital for a fall (70.9 per 1,000 population, EMR average 49.3)¹. Another health feature of note is the estimated number of dementia cases will increase significantly in Yarra Ranges, from 2,118 in 2016 to 15,656 in 2050².

From the engagement undertaken with the older community, there were six themes more regularly mentioned: social participation, respect, social inclusion, outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation and community support and health services. Engagement also confirmed that the Yarra Ranges is a key part of many older residents' identity who wish to age in their current township.

The periods of transition in a person's life were of high concern, this might include retirement, loss of friend/ family, changing carer role or declining health. For example “Older people, particularly those with declining health can become isolated very quickly. Totally by accident, they withdraw from society” (Yarra Ranges resident).

To support the development of the Healthy and Active Ageing Plan three key issues were identified for further investigation: dementia; hearing the voice of all older people; and age-friendly housing.

1 Inner East PCP (2107) EMR Health and Wellbeing Needs of Older People P22

2 Inner East PCP (2107) EMR Health and Wellbeing Needs of Older People P22

The literature review unpacks the issues and provides a snapshot on approaches taken by other communities tackling similar issues. It will help Council, partners and the community in designing evidence based responses which will create better outcomes for all.

The World Health Organisations (WHO) Age-friendly Cities Framework (2007) identifies eight areas of influence contributing to age-friendly cities. If a community continuously tries to improve in these areas of influence it will be progressing towards being an age friendly community. Yarra Ranges has used the WHO Age-friendly Cities Framework as its foundation to ensure a comprehensive approach to building an age-friendly community.

This Plan has four priority areas which will provide Council and other partner organisations with a clear focus of where action will be most beneficial:

Priority Area 1: The views of older residents will influence service and policy decisions

Priority Area 2: Age-friendly environments enable people to age in place with dignity and support

Priority Area 3: The older community will enjoy life-long economic, social and civic participation

Priority Area 4: Older residents will be healthy and connected to their communities of choice

A range of actions will complement the delivery of this Plan. The actions that will enable Council to achieve the Priority Areas along with identifying Council's role and measures for success. To deliver the Action Plan, Council will work in partnership with both the community and relevant local services. Council will seek, through partnership and informed by community voice, to identify impactful actions that can be by Council and/or others, including building the capacity of the community. This plan will not list all actions Council does to support older people.

It should be noted that significant reform remains underway across the Aged Care Service Sector with the ongoing implementation of the Australian wide age care reform program. There is also likely to be further reform following the conclusion of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. It is intended that this plan will inform Council's decision making regarding the future role Council can play in achieving positive outcomes for the older community.

A governance structure will be developed to oversee the implementation of the Plan. The Yarra Ranges Positive Ageing Reference Group will provide advice regarding the priority areas, goals and identifying any emerging issues impacting older people.

Through continual improvement and encouraging older residents to engage in the process, the Healthy and Active Ageing Plan aims to ensure Yarra Ranges is a community which enables people 50+ years to live healthy and active lives.

About Yarra Ranges

Yarra Ranges Council is located in the outer Eastern Metropolitan area of Victoria and covers an area of almost 2,500 square kilometres. It is home to over 55 suburbs, townships, and small communities in a mixture of rural and urban areas³. The municipalities natural beauty, stunning landscapes and reputation for exceptional local produce makes it a lovely place to live. This landscape also offers many complex issues in balancing growth and the needs of all residents to age well in their place of choice.

Purpose of the Healthy and Active Ageing Plan

The purpose of the Healthy and Active Ageing Plan is to set the direction for Council over the next four years. It outlines priority areas and helps guide the programs and services that Council provides to the community.

Our vision “Yarra Ranges will be the best place in the world for people to grow old. Older residents will feel respected and be able to live, participate in, and influence their community of choice.”

Development of the Healthy and Active Ageing Plan

This Healthy and Active Ageing Plan has been developed from consideration and analysis of the following:

- Review of relevant International, National, State and local policy and plans
- Yarra Ranges Demographic Profile
- Yarra Ranges Consultation and Engagement with Older Residents
- Literature review of current evidence on key issues impacting older people

³ Yarra Ranges Council (2017) Council Plan 2017 – 2021 P12





Demographic Profile^{*}

Healthy ageing is underpinned by a wide range of intersecting factors ranging from the intrinsic mental and physical capacity of the individual to the wider environmental and societal influences, which shape the broader context for the individual's life. Intrinsic capacity is shaped by genetic heritage, personal factors such as gender and ethnicity, health factors such as illness status, lifestyle factors such as the use of alcohol and medications, and psychological factors such as motivation and self-efficacy. These factors in turn, are strongly influenced by the physical, social, and economic environments in which people are born, live, and work⁴.

^{*} All data has come from .id Consulting Pty Ltd (2019) Community profile, social atlas and population forecast reports for Yarra Ranges Council unless otherwise referenced.

⁴ World Health Organization (2015) World Report on Ageing and Health



Personal features

In Yarra Ranges, the number of older people aged 50+ years is 53,778, representing 35.9% of the total population. This is slightly higher than the proportion of older people in Victoria at 32.9%. In Yarra Ranges the largest population of older residents reside in the urban area; however the area with the highest proportion of older residents is in the Valley with 38.4%.

	Population 50+ years (Percentage)
Victoria	32.9%
Yarra Ranges	35.9%
Valley area	38.4%
Urban area	34.5%
Hills area	36.5%

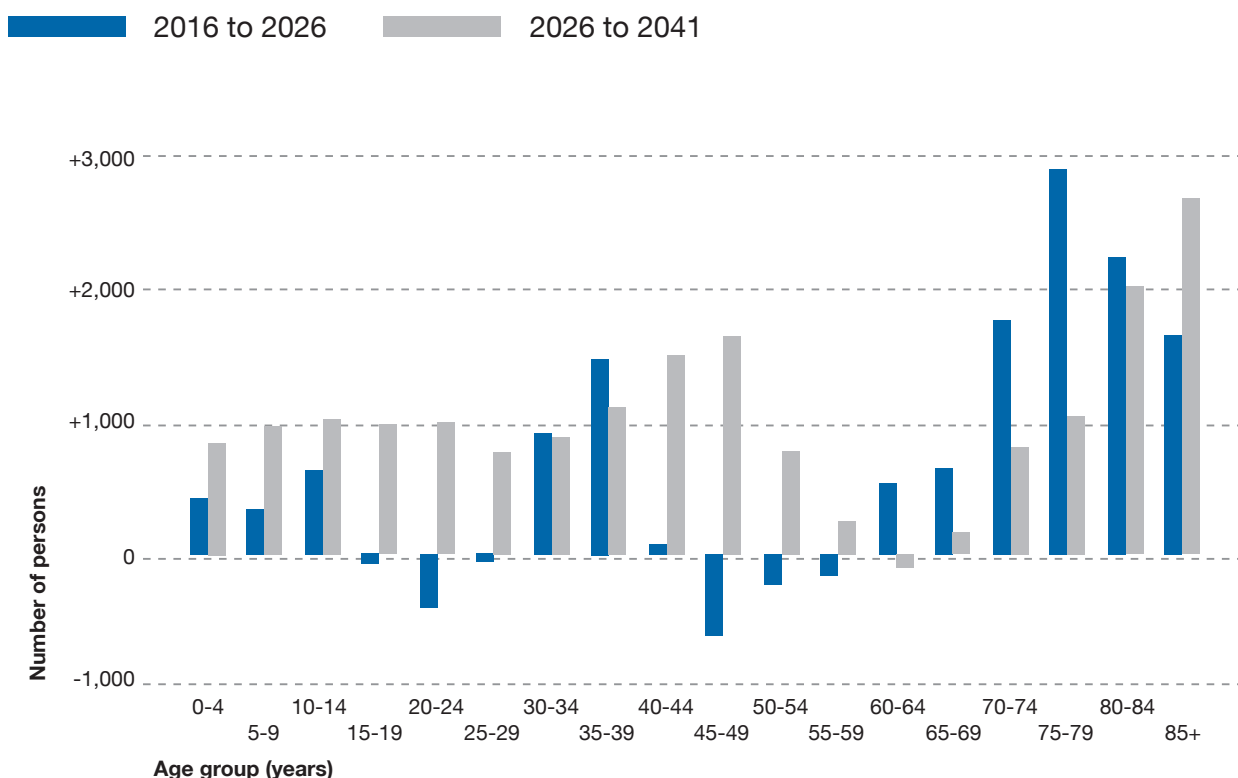
50+
years

From 2016 to 2026 the 50+ aged populations in the Yarra Ranges is predicted to increase by approximately 9455 individuals. This increase is being primarily driven by 70-79 year olds, which is expected to increase, from 9956 people (2016) to 14,684 people in 2026. By 2041 there will be 71,411 older people aged 50+ years living in the Yarra Ranges, representing 38% of the total population.

Age structure forecasts for the Yarra Ranges Council area indicates that by 2026 there will be a 4.6% increase in population under working age, a 39.9% increase in population of retirement age, and a 1.4% increase in population of working age. This will place additional pressure on meeting the workforce demands and providing adequate services for these more at need service age groups. Forecasts for 2026 to 2041 continues to see growth in the retirement ages with the greatest growth being for those aged over 80.

Forecast change in age structure - 5 year age groups

Yarra Ranges Council area - Total persons



Population and household forecasts. 2016 to 2041, prepared by .id the population experts, June 2018

.id the population experts

There is a higher proportion of women in all age groups 50+ years. Approximately 73% of women 75+ years are living alone⁵. Due to the longer life expectancy of women assisting and providing support for women to remain healthy and live independently will be important for Yarra Ranges.

Yarra Ranges has the highest number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents when compared to other Eastern Metropolitan municipalities. It also has increasing cultural diversity with 9.4% of residents 60+ years speaking a second language and 16% of residents 60+ years not speaking English well or not at all⁶.

5 Inner East PCP (2017) Yarra Ranges snapshot

6 Inner East PCP (2017) Health and Wellbeing Needs of Older People data file

Health features

Yarra Ranges residents' median age at death is 81, the same as the Australian average. The main causes of death in Yarra Ranges are heart disease, dementia/Alzheimers disease, lung cancer, and lung diseases. Diabetes was amongst Yarra Ranges' top ten causes of death, accounting for 2.4% of total deaths. Compared to the whole of Australia, Yarra Ranges residents had a very high age standardised rate of death from accidental falls – the death rate was 56% above average. The rate of deaths from lung diseases, heart disease, and dementia/Alzheimers is also well above average⁷.

When compared with the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR) there are a range of health issues more common in Yarra Ranges, including poor dental health (7.6%, EMR average 4%), 80+ year olds with poor vision that can't be fixed by glasses or contact lenses (18%, EMR average 9%), and incidence of 80-89 year olds being admitted to hospital for a fall (70.9 per 1,000 population, EMR average 49.3)⁸.

Health Feature	Yarra Ranges	Eastern Metropolitan Region
Poor Dental Health	7.6%	4%
80+ years old with poor vision that can't be fixed by glasses or contact lens	18%	9%
Incidence of 80-89 year olds being admitted to hospital for a fall	70.9 per 1000 population	49.3 per 1000 population

Yarra Ranges also shows lower incidences of participation in cervical cancer screening (46% of 60-69 year old female population, EMR average 51%). The 2015-16 hospital admissions data shows that 80+ year olds in Yarra Ranges present to hospital emergency departments at a notably higher rate (141.5 per 1,000 population, EMR average 102.9), and show a higher rate of being admitted to hospital for heart failure, circulatory and respiratory diseases and disorders, and musculoskeletal diseases and disorders⁹.

Another health feature of note is the estimated number of dementia cases will increase significantly in Yarra Ranges in the near future, from 2,118 in 2016 to 15,656 in 2050¹⁰. This will be further explored in the literature review chapter.

7 Yarra Ranges Council (2017) Yarra Ranges Health and Wellbeing Profile P15

8 Inner East PCP (2107) EMR Health and Wellbeing Needs of Older People P22

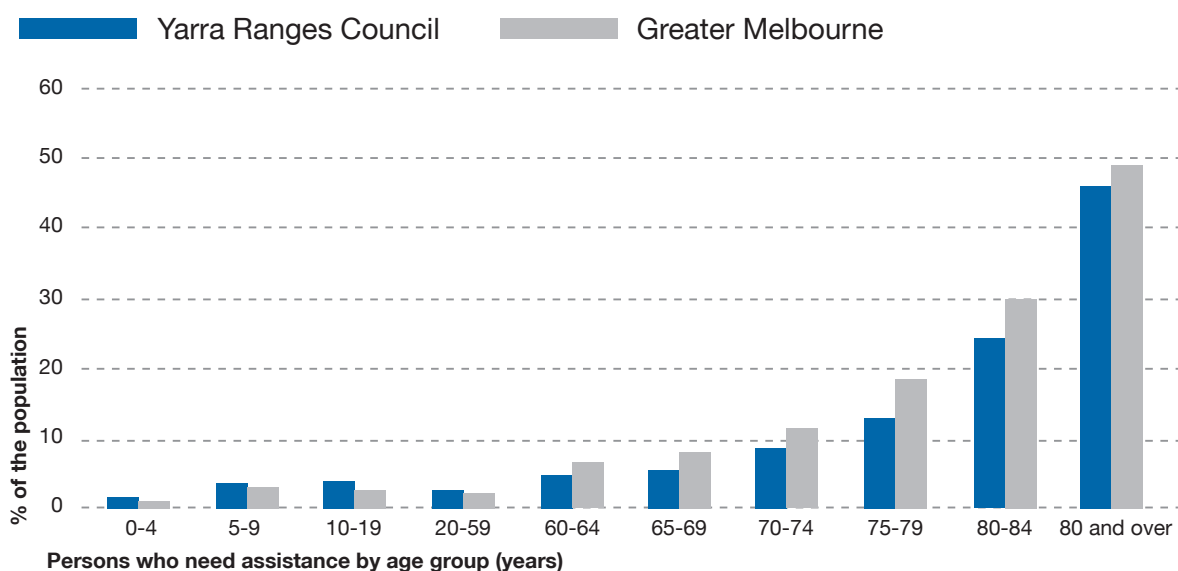
9 Inner East PCP (2107) EMR Health and Wellbeing Needs of Older People P22

10 Inner East PCP (2107) EMR Health and Wellbeing Needs of Older People P22

Community Care features

In 2016, 4.6% of the Yarra Ranges population reported needing assistance with core activities, compared with 4.8% for Greater Melbourne. When exploring age groups it was found that a significantly smaller percentage of Yarra Ranges older people were reporting a need for assistance compared to Greater Melbourne. This indicates that a higher number of older people in the Yarra Ranges are remaining independent for a longer period of time. As a single piece of information it sounds like a good outcome for Yarra Ranges older people. However, these findings should be considered with the above information on the range of health issues which are more commonly occurring in Yarra Ranges and the very high rate of deaths from accidental falls.

Need for assistance with core activities, 2016



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2016 (Usual residence data)
Compiled and presented in .id the population experts.

.id the population experts

In Yarra Ranges there were 15,157 carers providing unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, long term illness or old age in 2016. In total, 13% of people 60+ years provide unpaid assistance to others, potentially indicating difficulty in accessing in-home support, or support for the carers themselves.

Yarra Ranges is proud of a long history in providing support to others through volunteer opportunities. Of people 60+ years, 19% volunteer regularly. This is similar to the EMR average¹¹.

11 Inner East PCP (2017) Yarra Ranges snapshot

Lifestyle features

42% of people aged 60+ years do not meet fruit and vegetable consumption guidelines and 37% of people aged 60+ years do not meet physical activity guidelines.

Yarra Ranges has a relatively high level of residents receiving the age pension amongst residents aged 65 plus - 72% of older residents, compared to 66% across Melbourne¹².

In March 2016, the level of age pensioners and residents with pensioner concession cards was highest in Kilsyth, which has a relatively high level of older residents; and in Yarra Ranges' more disadvantaged areas, around Yarra Junction, Healesville/Badger Creek, and Millgrove/East Warburton¹³.

A total of 21% of people 60+ years are still paying a mortgage or renting. This is slightly higher than the EMR average at 18%¹⁴.

Physical features

An asset of Yarra Ranges is its close connection with nature, however this also creates challenges as it takes longer for residents to travel to recreation areas and only 3% of the land area is within 400m of a bus/tram or 800m of a train station (EMR average 12.1%)¹⁵.

Older lone person households often indicate an area which has been through its suburb life cycle, with a mainly elderly population who will need relevant support services. It can also indicate the location of retirement villages. In 2016, 8.6% of Yarra Ranges Council's households were classed as older lone person households. The five areas with the highest percentages of lone person households were:

Kilsyth (12.9%) – location for several residential aged care facilities

Warburton and Surrounds (11.6%)

Yarra Junction - Millgrove - Wesburn (11.5%)

Healesville and Surrounds (11.5%)

Lilydale (10.3%)

The level of rentals in Yarra Ranges, which would be affordable to people on benefits, has dropped from 28% of total dwellings in March 2007 to 8% in December 2016. Given minimal growth in availability, combined with a low but steady level of population growth, the total number of affordable rentals has dropped considerably, by 66%¹⁶.

12 Inner East PCP (2107) EMR Health and Wellbeing Needs of Older People P34

13 Inner East PCP (2107) EMR Health and Wellbeing Needs of Older People P3

14 Inner East PCP (2017) Yarra Ranges snapshot

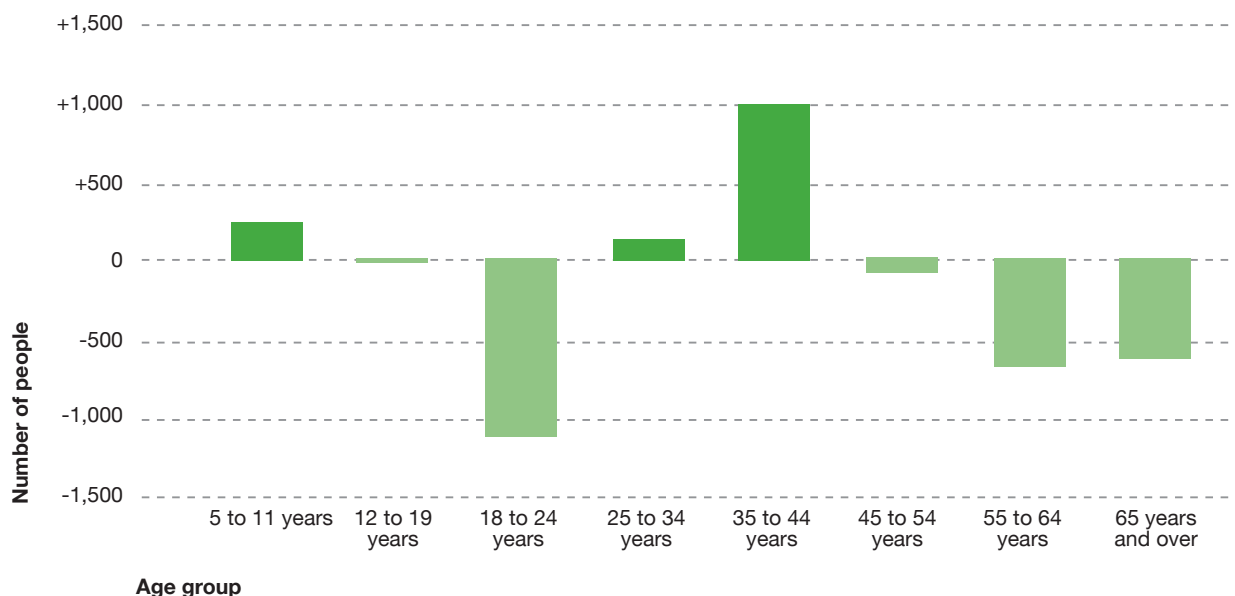
15 Inner East PCP (2107) EMR Health and Wellbeing Needs of Older People P22

16 Yarra Ranges Council (2017) Yarra Ranges Health and Wellbeing Profile P57

The age structure of people who move into and out of Yarra Ranges Council is strongly influenced by the residential role and function of the area and can influence demand for particular services. The following graph has used broad age groups which correspond with life stages when people are likely to make housing decisions and move (e.g. leaving home, starting a family, retirement). The 'net migration' equals 'in migration' minus 'out migration'.

Net migration by age group 2016

Yarra Ranges Council



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Census of Population and Housing, 2016 (Usual residence data)
Compiled and presented in profile by .id the population experts.



In all age groups 50+ years there are more people migrating out of Yarra Ranges than moving in to Yarra Ranges. This suggests that the Yarra Ranges is not providing all older people with the opportunities to age in place and remain in their neighbourhood. This information can assist Council to plan services for the community and advocate to other levels of government to provide infrastructure, opportunities and facilities which may help to retain older age groups which are otherwise leaving the area.

Yarra Ranges has a very low level of residential care places. In June 2016, it had a total of 1,205 places, or 54 places per 1,000 residents aged 65 plus. This compares to 80 per 1,000 for Victoria. The rate was highest in Kilsyth, at 316 places per 1,000 residents. Montrose was slightly above average at 92 per 1,000. Healesville-Yarra Glen is similar to the Victorian average, with 79 places per 1,000. Lilydale-Coldstream, Mooroolbark and Yarra Valley were all significantly below average, with respective rates of 47, 41.5 and 40 places per 1,000 residents. There were no places in Belgrave-Selby, Chirnside Park, Monbulk-Silvan, Mount Dandenong-Olinda, Mount Evelyn, Upwey-Tecoma or Wandin-Seville¹⁷.

17 Yarra Ranges Council (2017) Yarra Ranges Health and Wellbeing Profile P145



The gap between local service availability and the state average also varies by type of care.

Yarra Ranges has:

43 residential care places per 1,000, compared to 58 across Victoria.

6.7 low care places per 1,000, compared to 15.7 across Victoria – less than half of the Victorian rate.

4.5 high care places per 1,000, compared to 6.4 across Victoria¹⁸.

This demographic profile has identified a range of issues which are more apparent within the Yarra Ranges older population. With an increasing older population the provision of adequate health, accessible transport, and aged care and community services to support the healthy ageing of this diverse population will continue to be of great importance.

18 Yarra Ranges Council (2017) Yarra Ranges Health and Wellbeing Profile P145

Engagement with Community

Regular engagement through surveys, formal consultations and activities such as the senior's festival are some of the ways Council gathers information on the emerging needs for older residents.

During 2017, 179 older residents participated in consultations which took place across the municipality. Over 1345 pieces of data were coded into themes which have helped shape this Healthy and Active Ageing Plan. Council was keen to learn what aspects of growing older are most exciting, but also what is of personal concern. Residents made many suggestions on how to make Yarra Ranges a more age-friendly community which have and will continue to inform this action plan.

From the engagement with community there were six themes which were more regularly mentioned: social participation, respect, social inclusion, outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation and community support and health services.

Many residents are embracing older age finding that they are "busier now, I do not know how I used to fit employment in". There was a strong theme of people looking forward to increasing their civic participation in older years. For some this was having a voice on projects of interest or increasing participation in volunteering. For others growing older was a time to actively learn.

The importance of maintaining social connections was identified through the desire to participate in formal (clubs) and informal (catch ups) activities with people that have similar interests. It was acknowledged that for some people this would be establishing new friendships.

Respectful inclusion was discussed in regards to older people remaining independent and having their choices carried out during times of transition and death. For example, "I am prepared for my death - I have a plot organised and the family know my wishes. I am in control and it was my decision". The joy that connecting with grandchildren and family brings, with people acknowledging that they had time in older age to work on these relationships.

Intergenerational exchanges were explored beyond the realms of being a grandparent. It included the value of mentoring opportunities such as bookaburra and through schools. The worth of intergenerational learning was also discussed, especially around an understanding of digital technology.

The periods of transition in a person's life were of high concern, this might include retirement, loss of friend/ family, changing carer role and/or declining health. For example "Older people, particularly those people with declining health can become isolated very quickly. Totally by accident, they withdraw from society". Addressing isolation, particularly for men was raised "Males leave the workplace and not know what to do. Now I have seven days to do nothing! We need to understand male minds - don't try to change males - understand them".

The wellbeing benefits of outdoor space and nature were regularly voiced during the community engagement, as an aspect and benefit older people love about Yarra Ranges.

Many older people enjoyed the small township feel and felt that they were in close proximity to everything. While this was felt by some, it was not the feeling of all older people. An analysis of the information by townships did not make these comments around proximity clearer. Regardless of township, some people felt well serviced by community and shopping facilities, public utilities and pathways while other people did not. Some residents had even identified aspects of their community which made it more age-friendly “The new soccer field has seating for grandparents”.

The feel of respect and social inclusion was strongly felt through residents having a ‘sense of community’ with their township. There was not one common activity in creating that community inclusion. The renovation of the church/ hall in Powelltown, the Avenue of Honour replanting in Milgrove, the lantern festivals in Belgrave and Yarra Glen were all examples which allowed older people to feel a sense of community inclusion. Neighbours, shop keepers and locals they passed at the shops were also identified as positive examples of feeling a sense of community inclusion.



“The pace of society is moving so fast. The experience of older people is not seen as relevant as in past generations.”

Healesville resident

The importance of ‘the chat’ with an older person (particularly elderly) was seen as respectful inclusion and an action in addressing isolation for older people. Many of the Seniors Clubs felt that this was part of their welfare role to older (elderly) members. The function of customer service staff (Council or retail) in having ‘the chat’ was acknowledged “The ‘chat’ is important. For some older people it is their only social conversation. Retail in the past would have a chat - not now days”.

Social participation through a range of events, activities and social clubs was seen as working well in most locations within the municipality. The role of local community facilities and Council support in creating environments for social participation was acknowledged.



“There are lots of dual occupancy within Lilydale - smaller land to manage - but needs to be single storey.”

Lilydale resident

Seniors Clubs have an important role in the provision of social and welfare support for older people. Many Senior Clubs are struggling with aspects of running their Club. For example recruiting new members for the Committee, providing a fresh / new range of activities and having a process in place to welcome potential members. Other types of clubs with majority older members are growing in number but have inadequate building spaces or no voice in the management of the building.

Communication of information on the range of Senior Clubs and activities was raised by both Committee members and older residents seeking to find a club which may offer an activity/ hobby they are interested in pursuing.

Older people need to have safe paths of travel from their home to the point of destination. For this journey to take place there is a need for multiple community assets - even pathways, appropriately placed public seating and accessible toilets. In general, residents were not seeking pathways in all locations; it was to have pathways safely assisting them to points of regular destination. Another concern was the physical safety along shared pathways, in particular the mix of pedestrians and high speed cyclists (non-residents) using the same trails.

Many older people are aware that if they cannot drive, they have limited or no transportation options available to them, which would increase their risk of isolation, for example “Once you have lost capacity to drive, it is very hard to access the community. No vehicle has a real loss on independence”.

The Yarra Ranges is part of many older residents identity. They would like to age in their current township. Concerns were raised about when a spouse dies or that declining health may lead to a change in their housing requirements. They have a need to have suitable housing options within their township.

“The community transport is vital for me to leave the house and get to Clubs.

Mooroolbark resident ”



A number of older people had considered what was important to them in regards to housing and their desire to age in place, for example “My husband and I have discussed our housing and plan to stay in our current home. I have even agreed to allow the bins to be in the front yard when mobility makes it hard to move them”. Small home modifications make it possible for some older people to continue to age in place, yet this is not the case for all.

The lack of housing options available for older people to remain in their township was of concern. Living on steep blocks and the inability to subdivide land was seen as an issue in being able to build smaller dwellings. Others raised the need for land near the centre of the townships to be designated for older person residential housing. Many of the older people were already being impacted by housing limitations with friends leaving their township to ‘down-size’. A regular comment made was “there is not enough accommodation for older people who wish to ‘down-size’. Many of us want to stay in the area”.

Often the best suggestion on how to improve a situation comes from the people being directly impacted by the situation. To be an age friendly community older people need to be encouraged to be part of the solutions process. For example one older resident from Yarra Junction found that “the background waffle (music) in some shops makes it noisy and annoying”. Council are working with Trader Associations to encourage businesses to consider the needs of older people.

Yarra Ranges Council has been a major provider of Direct Care Services through the Commonwealth Home Support Program, including domestic assistance, personal care and respite care. Consumers of the service who have provided survey feedback expressed the importance of these services being available, and that they anticipated an increased need for domestic assistance and personal care, as well as transport services¹⁹ as they got older. As a respondent pointed out “what is most vital is to stay at home”.

¹⁹ Yarra Ranges Council (2018) Direct Care Services Survey Report 2017 P10

Key issues identified for Yarra Ranges 50+ population

The findings from the demographics profile and the engagement with community were reviewed to identify the key issues impacting the healthy and active ageing of Yarra Ranges residents.

The list of key issues was then further explored with the assistance of the Yarra Ranges Positive Ageing Reference Group. These key issues have been consolidated to form the priority areas, goals and actions.

Physical and Natural Environment	Social and Economic Environment	Intrinsic Capacity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access, prepare nutritious food - Active and Healthy Lives - Older people are physically active - Adequate public toilets - Age-friendly buildings - Outdoor seating - Safety in outdoor spaces / buildings - Age-friendly Transport - Driving conditions / parking - Transportation – Affordability - Transportation – Availability / Frequency - Travel destinations - Walkways and cycling paths - Ageing in place - Housing – Design, Modifications - Housing – Maintenance - Housing options - Health services accessibility - Emergency planning and care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community inclusion - Fostering community integration - Respectful and inclusive services - Economic inclusion - Education / Training options - Employment options - Volunteering options - Social Participation – Awareness of activities - Social Participation – range of activities - Addressing isolation - Civic Participation (voice heard) - Public images of ageing (ageism) - Valued contribution - End of Life Care - Information and Communication - Elder abuse - Wellbeing for Carers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indigenous Elder wellbeing - Having good Mental Health - Rapid growth in Dementia - High incidence of accidental falls



Policy landscape

Strategic context

The population in Yarra Ranges is ageing, with older residents (aged 50 years and over) making up a relatively high proportion of the total population (35.9%). Older age is characterised by great diversity. “Some 80-year-olds have levels of physical and mental capacity that compare favourably with 20 year-olds. Others of the same age may require extensive care and support for basic activities like dressing and eating. Policy should be framed to improve the functional ability of all older people, whether they are robust, care dependent or in between”²⁰.

Legislative and Policy context

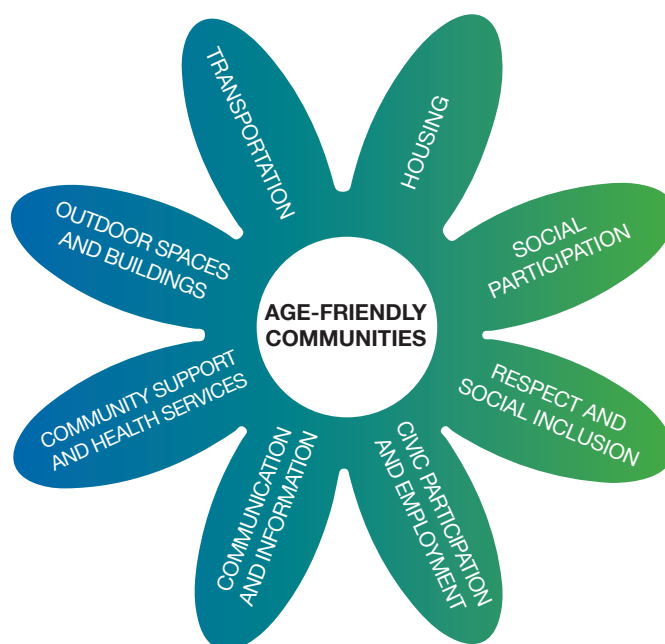
“For the first time in history, most people can expect to live into their 60s and beyond. When combined with marked falls in fertility rates, these increases in life expectancy are leading to the rapid ageing of populations around the world”²¹. All levels of government have a responsibility to foster a person’s functional ability. Governments can also make appropriate adaptations and investments to capture the benefits of having a growing older population. The following documents have been considered in the establishment of the Healthy and Active Ageing Plan.

International Policy context

World Health Organization, Age-friendly Cities and Communities.

Since 2007, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has been focused on governments’ role in making sure communities are prepared for rapid ageing of populations around the world. The principles directing their work includes that an age-friendly approach promotes:

- human rights
- 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
- independence, well-being and quality of life for all people as they age²²



20 World Health Organisation (2012) Fighting Stereotypes World Health Day 2012

21 World Health Organisation (2016) World Report on Ageing and Health, Executive Summary. P5

22 COTA Victoria and Municipal Association of Victoria (2017) Age Friendly Cities and Communities, Information Kit for Local Government Councillors and Senior Management.P7

The WHO Age-friendly Cities Framework (2007) identifies eight areas of influence contributing to age-friendly cities. If a community continuously tries to improve these areas of influence it will be progressing towards being an age friendly community.

To support local government the WHO established the Global Network of Age Friendly Cities. This network provides peer learnings and encouragement for Cities on their age-friendly journey. Other WHO directional resources include the World Health Organisation Report on Ageing and Health (2015) and the Measuring the Age-friendliness of Cities, A Guide to Using Core Indicator (2015).

Australian Government context

The Living Longer Living Better reforms passed into legislation on 26 June 2013. This combined with the Productivity Commission (2013) report titled An Ageing Australia: preparing for the future saw the Commonwealth Government launch a package of reforms to the aged care system that are progressively being rolled out. The reform package aims to create a more sustainable, streamlined and flexible system of care.

Reforms have included the introduction of My Aged Care as a central hub consisting of a website and a contact centre where older people, their families, and carers can obtain information and services relevant to their support and care needs. Further reform is scheduled that will see the introduction of a new single Streamlined Assessment Service, and an Integrated Care at Home Package replacing the Commonwealth Home Support Programme and Home Care Packages for higher levels of in-home support²³.



“Women of interest luncheons keep me engaged and participating in local community”.

Yarra Junction resident.

23 National Ageing Research Institute (2018) Healthy Ageing. P7

Victorian Government context

Commissioner's report Ageing is everyone's business, April 2016

In 2013 the Victorian Government appointed Victoria's first Commissioner for Senior Victorians. A key role of the Commissioner is to report to the Victorian Government on priority policy issues affecting senior Victorians. The Commissioner for Senior Victorians report Ageing is Everyone's Business identified that 10% of older Victorians (if not more) were experiencing loneliness at any one time. The report includes recommendations to work toward reducing social isolation and loneliness amongst older people.



Age-friendly Victoria Declaration, April 2016

The Age-friendly Victoria Declaration was signed by the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) together with the Victorian Government in April 2016. It provides a commitment to working together on creating age-friendly communities by:

- promoting an age-friendly Victoria
- supporting state and local planning processes
- providing local government with access to advice, expertise and support
- empowering and encouraging seniors' involvement
- addressing issues listed in the World Health Organization Age Friendly Cities Guide 2008
- valuing stakeholder engagement and collaboration

The MAV is encouraging all local governments to become signatories of the Age-friendly Victoria Declaration. Yarra Ranges Council moved the motion to become a signatory of Age-friendly Victoria Declaration in 2016.

Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Department of Health and Human Services, 2015

The Victorian Health and Well-being Plan now see older people as a focus for health promotion as it covers all ages in the life-course. The vision of the plan is for Victoria to be free of the avoidable burden of disease and injury enabling all Victorians to enjoy the highest attainable standards of health, well-being and participation at every age²⁴. Each Local Government is in turn expected to develop and publish a Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan. The current Yarra Ranges Health and Wellbeing Strategy contains 17 goals including that 'older people enjoy active and healthy lives' and acknowledges that many of the other goals also contribute to achieving an age-friendly Yarra Ranges. This plan will also advance this goal of the Health & Wellbeing Strategy.

24 COTA Victoria and Municipal Association of Victoria (2017) Age Friendly Cities and Communities, Information Kit for Local Government Councillors and Senior Management. P11

“More basic help
would take the
strain off me”

CHSP Client

Human Rights Charter

In Victoria, all public authorities, including local councils, must comply with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities. The Charter does not over-ride existing Local Laws or Policies. However, Council must still make decisions and undertake actions in compliance with the Charter. The Charter sets out 20 basic human rights that are protected under the Act, these relate to Freedom, Respect, Equality and Dignity. The Charter also requires that all statutory provisions be interpreted so far as is possible in a way that is compatible with human rights.

Yarra Ranges Council context

Council Plan

It is important to acknowledge the relationship the Healthy and Active Ageing Plan has within the Council Plan and also ensure that the directions in this Plan aligns with other key policies, strategies and plans within Council.

In late 2016, more than 1000 residents contributed to the development of the Yarra Ranges 2036 vision statement.

Whether you live here or visit, you will see how much we value our natural beauty, how connected our communities are, and how balanced growth makes this the best place in the world.

The Healthy and Active Ageing Plan supports Yarra Ranges Vision 2036 with a strong focus on connected communities.

This Plan supports the delivery of the Council Plan Objective 1 – Connected and Healthy Communities. The Healthy and Active Ageing Plan will address the needs of older people in having communities which are safe, resilient, healthy, inclusive and socially well connected. It will also address the objective to have quality services which are accessible to everyone.

The International, National, State policy have been considered in the establishment of the Healthy and Active Ageing Plan. The Plan reflects the Yarra Ranges Vision 2036 and supports the delivery of the Council Plan.



Healthy and Active Ageing priority areas

From the analysis of data, policy context and community consultation the following priority areas have been identified for action.

Specific actions intended to be taken forward over the period of 2019-2023 will be set out in a separate Health & Active Ageing Implementation Plan. These will be reviewed on at least an annual basis.

Priority Area 1:

The views of older residents will influence service and policy decisions

- 1A. Ensure meaningful consultation occurs with older residents on issues that affect them.
- 1B. Address ageism and promote positive respectful inclusion.
- 1C. Ensure older residents have access to adequate information which enables them make informed decisions about their lives.

Priority Area 2:

Age-friendly environments enable people to age in place with dignity and support

- 2A. Design, build and maintain open spaces, community facilities and outdoor infrastructure that support older resident's connections to their local community.
- 2B. Advocate for continual improvements in accessible transport and pedestrian access to support older resident's connections to their local community.
- 2C. Enable the availability of a range of housing options to meet the needs across the age continuum.
- 2D. Ensure older residents can access emergency planning information to make informed choices.



Priority Area 3:

The older community will enjoy life-long economic, social and civic participation

- 3A. Build the capacity of older people during times of life transition to navigate their changing world.
- 3B. Increase opportunities for engagement in a diverse range of employment, continual learning and volunteering activities.
- 3C. Enable opportunities for older residents to engage and socially participate in their community.
- 3D. Ensure service connections are culturally sensitive and inclusive for our older Aboriginal population.
- 3E. Ensure service connections are inclusive for our vulnerable older people - LGBTIQ, migrant groups and gender specific.

Priority Area 4:

Older residents will be healthy and connected to their communities of choice

- 4A. Enable older residents to be physically active and have good nutrition.
- 4B. Raise awareness of mental health, and support activities that will assist older residents who may be experiencing depressed mood, stress or sense of isolation.
- 4C. Ensure that appropriate community support and health services are available to assist residents throughout their life, especially older residents.
- 4D. Promote the health behaviours that reduce the risk of dementia and support dementia friendly outcomes.
- 4E. Enable older residents to have information to make informed choices in relation to end of life care.
- 4F. Raise awareness and support activities that will prevent elder abuse and enhance safety for older residents.

Methodology – how will Council achieve this?

Council will seek to develop the resources required to undertake the following key activities, which will enable these priorities to be achieved:

Council will be active in monitoring and influencing outcomes for older residents

Council will coordinate partnerships with stakeholders (including agencies and ideally other tiers of government) to collectively plan to ensure access to services for older residents

Council will listen to and co-design with the community to test solutions to identified issues

Council will coordinate or undertake activity that addresses/prevents priority health issues

Council will support residents to navigate service systems

Council will collaborate internally to ensure YR is an age and dementia friendly municipality

It is anticipated that a significant portion of the first year will be spent developing relevant partnerships and engaging with stakeholders to further test the draft implementation plan.

Implementation and monitoring

Within Council, the Plan's implementation will be the primary responsibility of Aged and Disability Services.

An Implementation Group will be established to oversee the implementation of the Action Plan. It will consider the Action Plan on a regular basis and include new initiatives as part of the Council's annual budget process. The actions will then flow into individual Business Units annual work plans to allow resource allocation and monitoring to occur.

The Yarra Ranges Positive Ageing Reference Group will guide implementation by providing advice regarding the priority areas, goals and identifying any emerging issues impacting older people.



"The "chat" is important. For some older people it is their only social conversation. Retail in the past would have a chat - not now days".

Lilydale resident

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