



THE CITY OF  
GREATER GEELONG

# RESPECTED, CONNECTED AND THRIVING

---

POSITIVE AGEING  
STRATEGY 2021–2047









# CONTENTS

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>INTRODUCTION</b>  | <b>4</b>  |
| SOCIAL EQUITY PRINCIPLES   | 4         |
| UNDERSTANDING AGEING   | 5         |
| <b>OUR COMMUNITY PROFILE</b>   | <b>6</b>  |
| Population growth and geographic distribution  | 6         |
| Community contribution   | 6         |
| Diversity  | 7         |
| Social and economic disadvantage   | 7         |
| <b>ABOUT AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES</b>   | <b>8</b>  |
| <b>ENGAGEMENT THEMES</b>   | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>OUR ROLE</b>  | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>RESPECTED, CONNECTED AND THRIVING<br/>– POSITIVE AGEING STRATEGY 2021–47</b>  | <b>10</b> |
| People, as they age, live in safe, welcoming and strongly<br>connected local communities   | 11        |
| People, as they age, are respected, supported and encouraged to<br>participate as active citizens in building strong local communities | 12        |
| As they age, people have equitable access to places,<br>spaces and services  | 13        |
| <b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>  | <b>14</b> |
| MEASURING PROGRESS   | 15        |

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Greater Geelong recognises the rich Aboriginal heritage of this country and acknowledges the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the land. We pay respect to their elders, past, present and future. We also acknowledge all other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are part of the Greater Geelong community today.

Incite Information Consultants conducted research and developed the background paper and strategy.

This strategy has been shaped by the honest, thoughtful and insightful contributions of residents, community organisations, governments and employees, and we would like to thank all those who contributed.

Opposite: Artwork entitled *On Country* by Ammie Howell



# INTRODUCTION

**In 2016, we joined 44 other Victorian councils by signing a Statement of Support and Partner Endorsement to the World Health Organisation's Age Friendly Declaration.**

This was a significant step for our organisation as it demonstrated our commitment to helping Greater Geelong become an even better place to live for people as they age; a place where they feel included, supported and valued.

Globally, the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing 2021–30 provides a renewed focus on improving the lives of older people, their families and the communities in which they live. It is therefore an opportune time to express our commitment to the health and wellbeing of our older community. This is especially the case in light of recently released findings from the Aged Care Royal Commission and the disproportionate impacts experienced by the older community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

People aged 55 years and over make up approximately 30 per cent of our region's population. Over the next 20 years, it is projected the total number of people in this age group will grow from approximately 72,000 to 120,000.<sup>1</sup> It is important that we are well placed to plan for, and respond to, this growth – particularly in areas like the Bellarine, where a large proportion of people over the age of 55 live.

Older people are an important and vital part of our community. Being 'older' simply means one thing: having lived longer. It does not define who someone is, nor what they are capable of. We want to do more to respect and celebrate the diversity of older people who live, work in and visit Greater Geelong, while respecting and supporting their individual experiences, preferences and backgrounds.

We uphold human rights principles in developing and implementing council policies, action plans and the delivery of services. This strategy helps to ensure the human rights of older people are acknowledged and respected.

## SOCIAL EQUITY PRINCIPLES

This strategy will be implemented in accordance with our adopted social equity principles:

1. All activities of the City will be informed by up-to-date demographic and geographic information on social equity in the region which identifies priority areas and groups for attention.
2. Planning of all activities will be informed by effective, focussed partnerships and engagement with priority groups and areas, aimed at fully understanding the needs and obstacles they experience in accessing services and facilities.
3. Service and infrastructure design, location, communication and support arrangements will address the needs and obstacles faced by priority areas and groups.





## UNDERSTANDING AGEING

Ageing is relevant to everyone. Not only are we all ageing, increasing numbers of people who live, work or visit Greater Geelong are older people. As such, many of us know, care for and interact with older people regularly.

When thinking about what it means to be an age-friendly city, we need to consider the following:

- Ageing impacts everyone differently and this can either hinder or support active and healthy ageing, access, security, inclusiveness and participation.
- Biological processes increase the likely need for specialised services and support for people as they age, while their functional capabilities, needs and preferences will vary. The amount and type of support and the age it is needed (if at all) varies significantly between individuals.
- Key transitional events that frequently occur later in life can have an impact on health and wellbeing, such as retirement, loss of a driver's licence, becoming an informal carer, loss of a partner or spouse, or dealing with end of life.
- Older people are an incredible resource in the community. They possess great knowledge, skills and experience, so it is important for society to value and support older people to express these qualities.

Age-friendly is friendly for all ages: designing and implementing activities and initiatives to promote access and participation by people as they age will be beneficial for everyone.



# OUR COMMUNITY PROFILE



## POPULATION GROWTH AND GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

In 2016, people aged 55 years and over comprised approximately 30 per cent of the population of Greater Geelong. The number of people aged 55 and over is expected to increase by 68 per cent between 2016 and 2041 (from approximately 72,000 to 120,000)<sup>1</sup>.

Growth in the number of older residents reflects the wider, rapid growth in Greater Geelong's population, which is projected to increase by 64 per cent between 2016 and 2041 (from approximately 240,000 in 2016, to 393,000 in 2041).

Older people may face additional challenges related to the significant increase in the overall number of people living, working and visiting Greater Geelong. Higher volumes of people and traffic may increase risks in relation to safety, falling and reduced enjoyment, while significant changes to buildings and streetscapes may result in confusion and a reduced sense of connection.



## COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION

Older people make a significant contribution to the community socially and economically: they contribute to the local economy and promote economic sustainability; they provide assistance and care through volunteering and as informal carers; and contribute to civic life and community strengthening through ongoing participation in their local communities.

- **Workforce participation:** 28.7 per cent of residents aged 55 and over in the municipality are still engaged in the labour force, with 33.7 per cent of the workforce aged 55 and over employed in professional and managerial positions. This indicates a proportion of the population are educated and affluent.
- **Volunteering:** 20.5 per cent of the population in Greater Geelong reported doing some form of volunteer work in 2016. Of the total population that volunteer, 37 per cent are aged 55 and over.
- **Caring responsibilities:** Older people play an important role as informal carers, with 15.1 per cent of people aged 55 and over providing unpaid assistance to others. Of the total carers in Greater Geelong, 45.5 per cent were aged 55 and over.

Central Geelong attracts older people that reside outside the municipality for retail, arts and cultural activities, medical services, business opportunities, and other services and activities. In addition, the region's natural environment and major events attract large numbers of older people for tourism and recreation.

<sup>1</sup> The source for all population data including projections for 2041 is the id Community website [www.forecast.id.com.au/Geelong](http://www.forecast.id.com.au/Geelong) accessed on 26 February 2021.



## DIVERSITY

The diversity of older people living, working and visiting Greater Geelong adds to the vibrancy and cultural fabric of the community. It is important to recognise and celebrate the variety of individual experiences and preferences. People over the age of 55 are not a single, uniform group; they have diverse backgrounds in terms of culture, gender and sexuality.

- **Gender:** 45.7 per cent of the population aged 55 years and over are male, however females live longer than their male counterparts and females account for 71.4 per cent of all centenarians in the municipality.
- **Country of birth:** 16.3 per cent of residents were born overseas, with 10.1 per cent of residents born in countries where English is not the main language. The top countries of birth for residents aged over 55 years include England, Italy, Netherlands, Germany and Croatia.
- **Main language:** 10.6 per cent of all residents speak a language other than English at home, with the most commonly spoken non-English languages including Italian, Croatian, Mandarin, Macedonian, Greek, German and Serbian, as well as some emerging languages such as Punjabi, Vietnamese, Arabic and Hindi. It is particularly important to note the main languages of older, lone persons with limited English fluency which are: Croatian, Italian, Macedonian, Greek, Polish, Spanish, Russian, Serbian, Ukrainian and Bosnian.
- **Indigenous:** For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons, the ageing process is considered to commence at 45 years of age. Just over half a per cent of the population aged 45 and over identify as Aboriginal, Torres Strait Islander, or both. One in 7 Indigenous Australians aged 50 and over were removed from their families.
- **LGBTI:** Current estimates put LGBTI people as representing 11 per cent of the population. LGBTI people are likely to be represented by at least the same proportion in older populations.



## SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGE

Many older people in Greater Geelong face disadvantage and other barriers that affect their health and wellbeing, as well as opportunities for social and economic engagement in their communities.

- **Need for assistance:** Approximately 12.6 per cent of the population aged over 55 years requires assistance with core activities. Not surprisingly, the requirement for assistance increases with age, with approximately 45.4 per cent of individuals over 85 years requiring assistance.
- **Income:** In 2016, almost 57.6 per cent of the population aged 55 and over were receiving a personal income at the modest level (\$499) or below. Just over 5.1 per cent were receiving no, or negative income. In June 2020, around 64.7 per cent of the total population aged 65 and over was receiving an age pension allowance<sup>2</sup>.
- **Geography:** There are pockets of advantage and disadvantage which will require different supports and programming depending on location. The areas with the highest level of socio-economic disadvantage include: Norlane – North Shore, Whittington, Corio and South Geelong, Thomson, Breakwater.
- **Housing:** 24.5 per cent of the population aged 55 and over lives in a lone person household. Older women, and pensioners who are renting, are at increased risk of homelessness.

<sup>2</sup> PHIDU, 2021, Social Health Atlas of Australia, Victoria, Data by Local Government Area, February 2021

# ABOUT AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES

The World Health Organisation's (WHO) Age-friendly Cities Framework is an internationally recognised guide for governments and communities. Since 2002, it has been promoting healthy and active ageing in urban environments by informing public discussion and action.

The framework provides a holistic, multi-dimensional approach across a range of domains that are grouped into three environments. We used this framework as a guide during the engagement process.

| ENVIRONMENTS         | AGE-FRIENDLY DOMAINS   |
|----------------------|--|
| Physical environment | Outdoor spaces and buildings<br>Transportation<br>Housing                              |
| Social environment   | Social participation<br>Respect and social inclusion<br>Employment<br>Civic engagement |
| Services and support | Community and health services<br>Communication and information                         |



Solace road trauma memorial, Don Walters



## ENGAGEMENT THEMES

Using the Age-friendly framework as a guide, we talked with older residents, as well as other government and community organisations. These discussions helped us better understand the future aspirations and current barriers for older people.

### LIVING IN WELCOMING AND CONNECTED LOCAL COMMUNITIES

As they age, people ...

- want to feel welcomed, known, valued and respected by other people within their local community
- want to have intergenerational connections, including interactions with young children, school children, young adults and families
- do not want to feel isolated or segregated from the rest of the community
- require federal, state and local governments to be responsive to local desires and concerns, recognising that there may be significant variation in needs and preferences by geographic location and community of interest.

### BEING VALUED AND RESPECTED FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Older people...

- want to feel respected for what they have done in the past, and recognised and valued as people that are still capable of offering much more
- want negative stereotypes of older people and ageism, including workplace discrimination, to be addressed.

### HAVING EQUITABLE ACCESS TO PLACES, SPACES AND SERVICES

Older people...

- need additional effort to address age specific barriers, ensuring that they have the same level of access to services and facilities, as well as opportunities to participate in their communities
- need accessible information on available services and support; particularly access to, and training on, digital and social media
- need places, spaces and services to be responsive to diversity and the specific needs of vulnerable groups, including responsiveness to the variety of older peoples' cultures, gender and socio-economic statuses.

The strategy identifies priority areas for action for each of these three themes.

## OUR ROLE

As the closest level of government to the community, we are best placed to understand, plan and advocate for local and diverse community needs. However, we recognise that collaboration with local communities, organisations and other levels of government is required to effectively influence the breadth and complexity of factors impacting the health and wellbeing of people as they age.

Our various roles in supporting Greater Geelong to become an age-friendly place include:

**Planner** – participating in service coordination, networking, policy development, stakeholder consultation, data collection and research.

**Resource provider** – providing and maintaining buildings and infrastructure and delivering community grants, and education and training.

**Service provider** – delivering services and supports.

**Partner and broker** – working with others to provide services and facilities.

**Advocate** – supporting important issues on behalf of the community.

**Community capacity builder** – coordinating, engaging and encouraging inclusive practices.



# RESPECTED, CONNECTED AND THRIVING

## POSITIVE AGEING STRATEGY 2021–47



### OUR CLEVER AND CREATIVE VISION

By 2047, Greater Geelong will be internationally recognised as a clever and creative city-region that is forward looking, enterprising and adaptive and cares for its people and environment.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Greater Geelong is an age-friendly place where:

- people, as they age, are valued and thrive
- people, as they age, are respected, supported and participate in strong, local communities
- people, as they age, have equitable access to social, economic and civic activities and
- people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities are welcomed and enjoy interacting with each other.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Engagement and participation – encouraging and supporting older people from different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives to share their views and shape their future
- Local community responsiveness – planning and working to meet local needs and aspirations, and building on existing community assets
- Connection and collaboration – embracing a whole-of-organisation approach and promoting partnerships with, and between, local communities and other organisations





## THEME 1

# PEOPLE, AS THEY AGE, LIVE IN SAFE, WELCOMING AND STRONGLY CONNECTED LOCAL COMMUNITIES

## PRIORITIES

- a. Our places, activities and events are intergenerational and welcome older people
- b. Activities and events that appeal to the diverse needs and preferences of older people are held in a variety of local neighbourhoods
- c. Services and supports are available to enable older people to create and maintain informal networks and social connections
- d. Housing (including social housing and residential aged care) is appropriately located in areas that are safe and close to services, and the rest of the community
- e. Older people feel safe in the community
- f. The amenity and safety of local neighbourhoods is promoted by appropriate footpaths, ramps and pedestrian crossings, good street lighting, public seating and toilets



## THEME 2

### PEOPLE, AS THEY AGE, ARE RESPECTED, SUPPORTED AND ENCOURAGED TO PARTICIPATE AS ACTIVE CITIZENS IN BUILDING STRONG LOCAL COMMUNITIES

#### PRIORITIES

- a. Older people are valued and acknowledged for their past, present and future contributions
- b. The diverse experiences and views of older people are actively sought, and supported, to inform the development, implementation and monitoring of our activities
- c. Older people are depicted positively and without stereotyping in communications and media
- d. A range of flexible opportunities for older people to continue to develop, use and share their skills and expertise is promoted – for example, mentoring, volunteering and learning opportunities
- e. Older workers and employees are embraced and celebrated
- f. Older people participate in fulfilling arts and cultural activities and actively contribute to the fabric of society







### THEME 3

## AS THEY AGE, PEOPLE HAVE EQUITABLE ACCESS TO PLACES, SPACES AND SERVICES

### PRIORITIES

- a. A range of health and support services is available to promote, maintain and restore health, and support independent living
- b. Barriers impeding access to health and community support services are minimised and outreach is provided to vulnerable and disadvantaged people
- c. There is timely, accurate and relevant information available about services, activities and events, including details about costs, accessibility of facilities and transport options
- d. There is wide public access, training and support to use the internet, social media and digital technologies
- e. Transport is affordable, accessible and available when it is needed
- f. Parks and open spaces are designed with the needs of older people in mind
- g. Older people have access to facilities, infrastructure and opportunities to support healthy lifestyles



# IMPLEMENTATION

**We recognise the important civic leadership role that community engagement can play in achieving real outcomes for communities, and we strive to have a collaborative partnership with the community to deliver positive changes across our region.**

Authentic community engagement promotes greater trust and confidence in local democracy, builds stronger relationships and leads to better outcomes for all of us. That's why it is critical that the decisions that support the health and well-being for people as they age are informed and influenced by the people who live, work, visit or do business in the region.

A **Positive Ageing Action Plan** will be developed and implemented in partnership with older residents, local communities, service providers and other stakeholders.

The participation of everyone in our community is encouraged, welcomed and valued, because it helps us make better decisions and achieve better outcomes. We will check in with you to make sure your views are heard.

The **Positive Ageing Action Plan** will outline the activities, timelines, responsibilities and measures of progress for each priority area.

Actions may be led by communities, with our support; led by us and/or led by partnerships with organisations, such as the G21 Regional Alliance.

Our roles, responsibilities and activities identified in the action plan will be embedded in our operational plans and reporting frameworks to support effective implementation and accountability.







## MEASURING PROGRESS

**A comprehensive framework to measure progress towards the desired outcomes for older people will be developed with the Positive Ageing Action Plan.**

The measurement framework will 'tell the story' of the strategy by indicating how particular actions and initiatives will achieve the strategic objective: that is, what we would like to achieve in key theme areas and what is required to achieve those outcomes.

The measurement framework will provide a range of perspectives including:

- longer-term outcomes and more specific measures for shorter term activities and initiatives
- progress towards achieving different themes
- considering both process – that is, guiding principles – and results.

The measurement framework will ensure that the Positive Ageing Strategy is integrated with risk management, monitoring and evaluation activities. The framework will, therefore, also be an invaluable tool to evaluate the effectiveness of different activities, guide continuous improvement and develop new and innovative approaches. As a result, the community, stakeholders and decision-makers will have appropriate information regarding the progress towards, or risks in relation to, achieving the themes.

Progress against the action plan will be monitored annually and population level indicators will be reviewed at five yearly intervals. Progress reports will also be made available to the community on an annual basis.



---





#### **CITY OF GREATER GEELONG**

Wadawurrung Country  
PO Box 104  
Geelong VIC 3220  
**P:** 5272 5272  
**E:** [contactus@geelongcity.vic.gov.au](mailto:contactus@geelongcity.vic.gov.au)  
[www.geelongaustralia.com.au](http://www.geelongaustralia.com.au)

#### **CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE**

100 Brougham Street  
Geelong VIC 3220  
8.00am – 5.00pm  
ISBN: 978-0-6483576-0-5  
© City of Greater Geelong 2021

#### **LATEST NEWS:**

-  [@CityofGreaterGeelong](#)
-  [@GreaterGeelong](#)
-  [@CityofGreaterGeelong](#)
-  [CityofGreaterGeelong](#)