

Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-26



Overview

- The Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022-2026 was adopted by Council at the October 2022 meeting.
- The Strategy was developed with consideration of best practice in Australia and internationally, the evolving Commonwealth government aged care reform agenda as well as the World Health Organisation's (WHO) focus on creating age friendly communities.
- It lays out the vision and priorities for Ballarat as an age friendly community where people feel valued, connected, included and respected and feel confident to participate fully in life however they choose.
- It has been developed with a strong focus on our residents and their feedback and is also closely aligned with City of Ballarat's Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021- 2031, Inclusion Framework 2022-2026 and reflects City of Ballarat's commitment to a healthy, connected and inclusive community as articulated in the Council Plan 2021 - 2025.
- The strategy includes nine areas of focus based on the 8 WHO age friendly domains and an additional focus on Leadership and Advocacy.
- Goals and key priority areas have been developed based on the community feedback, needs and aspirations.
- Since October 2022, the focus of the has been on foundational activities to establish a solid base for future work.
- **Key areas of focus have included:**
 - A strong focus on social participation and inclusion to reduce loneliness and social isolation.
 - A greater emphasis on intergenerational connection
 - Greater collaboration with local organisations to increase social connection opportunities and support across the community.
 - Addressing community need for more reliable information sharing and communication.
 - Strengthening key partnerships in and across the community - so we can work together to ensure Ballarat is age friendly for all.
 - A concerted focus on building respect & sharing the EveryAGE Counts campaign which asks us to help end ageism in Australia as well as celebrating our ageing community members along with the diversity within our community.

Summary of Key Achievements 2022-2024



FOCUS AREA 1: Places, Spaces & Buildings

Goal:

Our places, spaces and buildings are safe, inclusive, easy to navigate and encourage regular use by people of all ages and abilities.

Key achievements:

- Regular activation of Seniors Exercise Park at Mt Pleasant with weekly sessions held with community members.
- Contributed to the development of Guidelines, Strategies & Action Plans and Community Infrastructure planning across Council to ensure the needs of older people are considered and included such as:
 - Community Infrastructure Design Guidelines,
 - Housing Strategy,
 - Social and Affordable Housing Action Plan
 - Public Toilet strategy,
 - Biodiversity strategy,
 - Open Space strategy,
 - Footpath strategy
 - Inclusion Guidelines
 - Inclusive Language and Design Guidelines
 - Upgrades at City Oval,
 - New Eastwood Leisure Centre planning, and
 - Sebastopol Community Hub.

Summary of Key Achievements 2022-2024



FOCUS AREA 2: Transport

Goal:

Our city has accessible, affordable, inclusive and relevant transport options that allow people to participate in community life with ease

Key achievements:

- Partnered with Road Safe Central Highlands to deliver a range of community education sessions including 2 Wiser Driver Courses (4 week course), a Safer Driver education session and a Motorised Mobility Device Information session - 60 enrolments over the 4 courses.
- In partnership with CDC, delivered a BusAble session in Ballarat for older Chinese residents to provide bus travel education and information to those with accessibility barriers to empower personal mobility independence - well attended with 34 attendees and positive feedback.
- Developing Transport Guide for Older Adults to identify transport options available to community.

FOCUS AREA 3: HOUSING

Goal:

Our city has appropriate, affordable, inclusive and accessible housing options to meet the needs of residents throughout their lives and enables people to age in place.

Key achievements:

- Input provided into Housing Strategy to ensure the needs of older resident are considered. As a result, Housing Strategy outlines Ballarat's local policy considerations which includes Ageing in Place.
- Data profile of older adults in Ballarat developed for internal use which includes demographic data as well as a section on data on housing and homelessness.
- Establishing relationship with Housing for the Aged Action Group (HAAG) and local relevant service providers (CatholicCare, Wintringham, CAFs and Uniting Ballarat).
- Hosted session at Sebastopol Library in March 2024, to raise awareness of HAAG, their services & support they can provide for older people at risk of homelessness focus - 2 sessions held with community members & City of Ballarat staff.

Summary of Key Achievements 2022-2024



FOCUS AREA 4: Social Participation

Goal:

Our city has a range of inclusive opportunities to encourage people to stay socially connected and participate in the community as they age.

Key achievements:

- Implemented a new Social Activities program for residents 55 years and over focused including a variety of exercise-based activities and social activities including QiGong, Tai Chi, Pilates, Dance and Seniors Exercise Park activations with 2725 participants between August 2023 and June 2024.
- Expansion of regular locations to include Mount Pleasant, Ballarat East, Brown Hill, Lucas.
- Community activations via mini expo's at outlying areas such as Buninyong and Learmonth to engage with Ageing Well Services.
- Delivered a successful Seniors Festival in October 2023, in partnership with community groups, with over 3400 people attending 37 events across the month (11 delivered by City of Ballarat). This included the inaugural Get Connected Expo to launch Seniors Festival which was attended by over 300 residents.
- Continued strong partnerships with teams across council to deliver a range of other programs focused on older adults:
 - Libraries - growing participating rates at monthly movie program which has expanded its focus in 23-24 to ensure greater inclusion by partnering with Red Sunset Group (older Chinese residents) and the Ballarat Indian Association to show in language movies.
 - Ballarat Aquatic & Lifestyle Centre (BALC) - ongoing programs with older adult focus Active Ageing Cycle, Active Ageing Gymnastics, Gently Active, Warm Water basics and Warm Water workout. Higher levels of engagement in classes for members aged 65-74 and 75-84 compared with general members.
 - LGBTIQ+ Inclusion - Engagement and collaboration for events and activities within 2023 Seniors Festival & Pride Month collaborations.

Summary of Key Achievements 2022-2024



FOCUS AREA 5: Respect and Social Inclusion

Goal:

Our ageing community feel valued, respected and included and the community benefits from their contribution

Key achievements:

- Delivered the 2022 & 2023 Seniors Awards which celebrates the volunteer contribution of older residents in Ballarat. The deserving award winners captured the attention of local and national media.
- In March 2022, Council passed a resolution to become an organisational member of EveryAGE Counts (EAC) to stand for a world without ageism where all people of all ages are valued and respected.
- Strong focus on tackling ageism by sharing EveryAGE Counts campaign, annual events held to raise awareness and campaign shared widely within City of Ballarat and in the community, partnering with Ballarat Community Health & Ballarat and Grampians Community Legal Service to deliver Every Age Matters roadshow in the community.
- Delivering and supporting several intergenerational activities across the year to promote respect and connection across all ages including:
 - Annual Tackling ageism writing/creative competition for school age students.
 - Annual Ageism Awareness Day and collaboration for Children's Week activities including Intergenerational Games events, Intergenerational Story time and Ageless Play group session.
 - Youth program collaborations - Visit with aged care residents on International Day of Happiness and cooking workshops with CWA.
- Strengthening relationships, and partnerships including growing collaborations with community groups to ensure greater inclusion of our older adults & celebrating the diversity in our community in everything we do.
- Implemented a new Social Activities program for residents 55 years and over

Summary of Key Achievements 2022-2024



FOCUS AREA 6: Civic Participation & Employment

Goal:

Our ageing community are empowered to share their views, are actively engaged in the community through employment, volunteering opportunities, and involvement in community groups and are encouraged to participate in council decision making processes as they choose

Key achievements:

- Provided advice and support to teams across Council with their community engagement activities to ensure older adults are considered and included.
- Through a Strategic Partnership with the Ballarat East Neighbourhood House (BENH), one-on-one governance support and free training sessions for community groups has been delivered both online and in person, including a program exclusively designed for Senior Citizens Clubs.
- Continuing partnership with Libraries to host programs and activities focused on older adults including:
 - sessions on financial wellbeing for older people, accessing affordable housing and preparing for retirement.
 - strong focus on digital literacies and online safety for older adults via a range of initiatives through the Library Tech Cafe and outreach program delivered in Lucas Hub including Be Connected program & sessions focused on Snap Send and Solve app, My digital library, Understanding Tech Terminology, Fun with robotics and virtual reality.
 - Information literacy sessions focused on how to recognise good information from bad (supporting Media Literacy Week), Scam Watch and reading URLs and a Civic literacy focus with an information session held on demystifying the referendum process.

Summary of Key Achievements 2022-2024



FOCUS AREA 7: Communication and Information

Goal:

Our ageing community can easily access information and advice they need to age well, stay informed and connect with the community

Key achievements:

- New Ageing Well in Ballarat webpage established on Council website including information on program, services and supports.
- Participation in Community Directory reference group for procurement and development of digital platform for community
- Development of an internal Community Directory comprising of 170 entries for usage by Ageing Well Staff supporting community enquiries. Community groups/clubs and organisations will be invited to register information on the public Community Directory once established
- Introduced Ageing Well Services monthly news (email and hard copy) to keep residents informed of program, events and Ageing Well initiatives in Ballarat.
- Introduced community education program including information sessions and presentations focused on areas of transport, housing, financial wellbeing and navigating aged care services in the community.
- Developing Transport Guide for Older Adults to identify transport options available across Ballarat.

Summary of Key Achievements 2022-2024



FOCUS AREA 8: Community Support & Health Services

Goal:

Ballarat has appropriate community support and health services to assist residents as they need throughout their lives.

Key achievements:

- Worked closely with the new CHSP funded agencies to transition City of Ballarat CHSP clients to new providers by 30 June 2023.
- Introduced a new Community Connector Service to help older residents navigate the services and supports they need to age well. This included over 1300 interactions in 2023-24 including home visit, phone, email, drop in and outreach support.
- Strong advocacy focus to advocate for the best outcomes for residents during ongoing Commonwealth aged care reforms including:
 - Regional Assessment Service (RAS) staff and Community Connections staff supporting individuals to connect with supports and services they need, including avenues for specialised advocacy and to complaints processes as needed.
 - Strengthening our collective advocacy focus with Ageing Well Services team members attending regular Commonwealth and State government meetings, Aged Care network meetings, MAV meetings and LGA meetings regionally and state based to stay up to date with reforms and other areas of interest and to advocate for residents as required.

Summary of Key Achievements 2022-2024



FOCUS AREA 9: Leadership & Advocacy

Goal:

Our council is committed to becoming an age friendly city by leading and advocating for our community to enable positive and healthy ageing for all.

Key achievements:

- A set of Age Friendly Indicators for Ballarat have been developed with assistance from experts in the field and in consultation with older residents in Ballarat and relevant teams across Council.
- Development of Ballarat LGA Older Adults data profile (55 years and over) to guide evidence-based practice.
- Participation and contribution to the development of strategies, policies, and advocacy across the organisation to ensure the needs of our older population are represented.
- Local Age Friendly Partnership Network established to share current issues, priorities and ideas to foster collaboration. Ageing Well Services team leads the network currently comprising representatives from Hepburn Shire, Moorabool Shire, Golden Plains Shire, Pyrenees Shire, and Macedon Ranges Shire.
- Application seeking membership of the Global Network for Age Friendly Cities and Communities sent to the World Health Organisation in May 2024 for their consideration. This included signed letter of commitment from Mayor and CEO.