

COFFS HARBOUR LGA



Positive Ageing Strategy

2020-2024



COFFS HARBOUR CITY COUNCIL

www.coffsharbour.nsw.gov.au



Sailing, boating and fishing are popular activities enjoyed here in Coffs Harbour.

Acknowledgment of Country

Coffs Harbour City Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land, the Gumbaynggirr people, who have cared for this land since time immemorial. We pay our respects to their elders, past, present and emerging, and commit ourselves to a future with reconciliation and renewal at its heart.

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Executive Summary

The population of the Coffs Harbour Local Government Area (LGA), like many other regions in Australia, is ageing. According to the 2016 Census, the proportion of the Coffs Harbour LGA aged 65 years and older is 22.1%, which is greater than the proportion for New South Wales (16.2%).

There is no specific age at which a person becomes old. Age does not define a person's lifestyle, aspirations or needs. People experience the ageing process in different ways at different times. Ageing is affected by physical and social environment, health, economic and life experiences as much as it is by chronological age. This Strategy however will focus on people in the Coffs Harbour LGA who are 65 years and over or 55 years and over who identify as Aboriginal.

Council recognises the significant contribution that seniors make to all aspects of community life. Seniors are active participants in civic, economic and cultural life and they contribute significantly to the thriving local area. Essentially, positive ageing is about getting the most of life, remaining fully active, empowered and in control of our lives.

Coffs Harbour City Council is committed to providing sound planning to support and embrace the opportunities presented by the changing demographics of the community. The Coffs Harbour LGA Positive Ageing Strategy 2020-2024 provides a "Whole of Council" plan which aims to maximise opportunities for seniors to participate and contribute in all aspects of community life in a sustainable and safe way. The Strategy is based on current research into ageing populations, as well as consultations with local seniors and service providers. The range of sources used to inform the Strategy included:

- A literature review of international and national research on topics relating to ageing and Local Government issues;
- Analysis of demographic data;
- Survey Results
- Focus Groups



Coffs Harbour has a Regional Art Gallery for residents and visitors to enjoy

The majority of the consultation feedback that has informed the Strategy was around three (3) major themes, each of which is interdependent. The three themes are ensuring Coffs Harbour LGA is liveable, safe and has opportunities for older people to participate.

Liveability Objective: We create liveable spaces, neighbourhoods and communities that are age-friendly for people to enjoy the benefits of living longer.

Participation Objective: Older People have opportunities to stay connected, participate in, contribute to and be included in their communities.

Safety Objective: We cultivate a safe community that older people feel connected to.

A strong Positive Ageing Strategy requires a collaborative approach to provide the best outcomes for the community. Not all the issues identified by the community for this strategy and the Action Plan can be completed by Council alone. Many will require the support, resources, goodwill and assistance of community groups, the business community, individuals and other levels of government. This Strategy lists the things we can all do as a community, Council, Key Stakeholders and Community Members.



Table of Contents

Acknowledgment of Country.....	2
Executive Summary.....	3
1. Introduction.....	5
1.1 Purpose of the Strategy.....	5
1.2 Structure.....	5
1.3 Strategic Context.....	5
2. Development of the Strategy.....	9
2.1 Research.....	9
2.2 Demographic Analysis.....	9
2.3 Consultation.....	9
2.4 Strategy Development and Endorsement.....	9
3. Older Persons Community Profile.....	10
3.1 Ageing Population.....	11
3.2 Key Findings.....	12
3.3 Future Projections and Demographic Trends.....	13
4. Issues and Opportunities.....	14
4.1 Ageing in Place.....	16
4.2 Community and Cultural Facilities Plan (in development)....	17
4.3 Ageing Workforce.....	17
4.4 Impact on beach usage.....	18
4.5 Increased demand for Health Services.....	18
4.6 Navigating the Service System.....	18
5. The Positive Ageing Strategy.....	19
5.1 Vision:.....	19
5.2 Purpose.....	19
Liveability.....	22
Participation.....	26
Safety.....	30
6. Reporting and Monitoring.....	34
7. Definitions.....	35

1. Introduction

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY

Coffs Harbour LGA's population, like much of Australia's is changing. The population is getting older. The ageing of the population is a positive social trend and it is an indication that people are living longer, healthier lives. This presents the Coffs Harbour LGA with opportunities as well as challenges that require consideration, planning and resource allocation. An ageing population will impact on the services and facilities Council provides.

Council has a role in supporting the development of the Coffs Harbour LGA for all its citizens, including older residents, in a manner that encourages participation in all aspects of community life. Engagement strategies and planning are based on the social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights.

The actions in this Strategy aim to identify some of the things that Council, other agencies and older residents themselves can do to facilitate positive ageing. Council wants to create a place where older people:

- have a sense of belonging and purpose;
- feel safe;
- are supported in participating in all aspects of community life;
- the opportunities for people to live independently are supported;
- and where our community supports lifelong learning.

1.2 STRUCTURE

The Positive Ageing Strategy is structured as follows:

Section 1 – Introduction (this section) provides an introduction to the Strategy including the strategic context in which the Strategy will operate.

Section 2 – Development of the Strategy, provides an overview how the Strategy was developed. A separate Consultation Report provides detailed information on all of the consultations that influenced the development of the Strategy. This can be obtained from Council.

Section 3 – A brief Community Profile, which provides an overview on the Demographics of the Coffs Harbour LGA as well as discussing demographic trends.

Section 4 – Issues and Opportunities, discusses the issues and opportunities both internal and external to Council that were considered in the development of this Strategy and may impact on this Strategy.

Section 5 – The Positive Ageing Strategy, this is the actual Strategy which lists the aspirational outcomes and actions that Council is working on as well as offering suggestions on actions that other agencies, community members and Older Residents themselves may undertake.

Section 6 – Definitions, this is a list of definitions used throughout the document.

1.3 STRATEGIC CONTEXT

THE NSW STATE PLAN

This plan has a number of key strategies that relate to the development of the Coffs Harbour City Council's Ageing Strategy. One of the key goals for the State Plan is to "Increase opportunities for seniors in NSW to fully participate in community life."

THE NSW AGEING STRATEGY

This was released in July 2012 advocates for:

- Seniors leading active and rewarding lives and being valued members of the community.

- Adults making decisions that support their independence and wellbeing later in life.
- NSW responding effectively to the challenges and opportunities of population ageing.

NSW AGEING STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2016–2020

This plan outlines the NSW Government’s projects and initiatives that will be implemented as part of the NSW Ageing Strategy, to achieve better outcomes for our ageing population. The plan has five priority areas:

- Health and wellbeing
- Working and retiring
- Housing choices
- Getting around
- Inclusive communities

ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local governments have a recognised and key role in supporting Positive Ageing within their communities. Council:

- Has an intimate knowledge of the local community and the diversity of older people;
- Acknowledges the local physical, health, ageing and economic environment supports the overall wellbeing of older people;
- Provides services and programs that are flexible and locally appropriate to the needs of older people;
- Enables community participation in local decision making and supports the development of community networks;
- Is a strong advocate on behalf of the local community with other government and non-government organisations.

Coffs Harbour City Council’s role in supporting its older residents currently includes three main streams: service planning and delivery, advocacy and provision of infrastructure.

Service planning and delivery – includes the planning and implementation of a range of programs and services that support people to connect and participate as active members of the community. Examples of this are programs such as the Home Library Service, iPads and Biscuits program.

Advocacy – advocating on behalf of our older citizens to ensure their needs are considered in future planning at both a local and broader state and national level. Council advocates for older residents in areas such as transport and health, both of which are very important to older residents.

Provision of infrastructure – ensuring infrastructure planning and delivery supports older people in having places to connect. This can be in the form of designated spaces, such as senior citizens’ buildings, but can also be extended to include accessible open spaces and other community facilities where older people gather and connect.

Council provides a range of services and facilities for our community in the Coffs Harbour LGA. These include:

- Public spaces
- Public toilets and adult changing places
- Community facilities such as libraries, community centres and halls
- Public pools
- Lifeguard Services on beaches
- Multi-purpose indoor centres, sports fields, gardens, parks, playgrounds and outdoor fitness equipment
- Waste services
- Assessing development applications and land use planning

- Crematorium and cemeteries
- Transport infrastructure and road safety including transport and traffic management, bus stops, local roads, shared pathways, footpaths, cycle ways and parking
- Events and cultural activities and facilities including the gallery, museum and theatre

MyCOFFS love it!

The NSW State Government introduced a new Integrated Planning and Reporting framework for local government in 2009. The framework

includes the requirement for councils to develop a *Community Strategic Plan (CSP)*. The aim of the CSP is to set out the long-term aspirations of the Coffs Harbour community. Coffs Harbour City Council's CSP was endorsed in 2017 and is called "MyCoffs". The MyCoffs Community Strategic Plan (Plan) is a whole-of-community plan that sets out the long-term aspirations of the Coffs Harbour LGA community.

One of the aspirations in the "MyCoffs" plan is that "We facilitate positive ageing- (A2.2)"

Outcomes: Council's role- Provider, Partner, Advocate

- our senior residents are supported in participating in all aspects of community life
- our community supports lifelong learning
- the opportunities for people to live independently are supported

The Coffs Harbour City's Positive Ageing Strategy acts as a blueprint that sets out the plan to continue to develop Coffs Harbour LGA as a place where older residents are encouraged to fully participate in community life. It is intended to support the delivery of other aspirations in "MyCoffs" including:

- We foster a sense of community, belonging and purpose – (A1.2)
- We enrich cultural life through art, learning and cultural endeavour – (A1.4)
- We nurture mental health, wellbeing and social connection – (A2.3)
- We cultivate a safe community – (A2.4)
- We create liveable spaces that are beautiful and appealing (C1.1)
- We effectively manage the planning and provision of regional public services and infrastructure (D2.1)





A community member enjoying Harmony Festival in Coffs Harbour

Council has identified in the Creative Coffs – Cultural Strategic Plan 2017- 2022:

- Work with education and service providers to develop programs which use the arts to improve health, in particular mental health and healthy ageing in the community.

The Positive Ageing Strategy is aligned with a number of Council Plans and Strategies including:

- The MyCoffs- Community Strategic Plan
- Resourcing Strategy
- Delivery Program & Operational Plan
- Pedestrian and Mobility Plan
- Local Environmental Plan
- Coffs Harbour Economic Development Strategy 2017-2022
- The Coffs Coast Strategic Tourism Plan 2020
- Local Growth Management Strategies, including Public Realm Strategy (under development), Residential Strategy (under development), Industrial Lands 2009, Rural Land Use Strategy
- Creative Coffs- Cultural Strategic Plan 2017 – 2022
- City Centre Masterplan 2031
- Woolgoolga Town Centre Masterplan
- Community and Cultural Facilities Plan (in development)

2. Development of the Strategy

The development of the Strategy involved a three pronged research approach involving desktop research, demographic analysis and community consultation which informed the development of the key themes.

2.1 RESEARCH

- Reviewed current research and policy.

2.2 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

- Analysed demographic data including changes in population and demographic profile.
- Future trends and projections.
- Reviewed and analysed data for use of Coffs Harbour City Council's services by people 65 and over.

2.3 CONSULTATION

A separate Consultation Report has been written. This provides a detailed overview of the feedback Council received through the following consultation processes:

Community Surveys

- In May 2018, Coffs Harbour City Council commissioned Jetty Research to undertake a Wellbeing Survey as part of assessing progress towards the goals in MyCoffs. This survey was conducted with a sample of at least 500 adult residents in the CHCC LGA, utilising a random and representative CATI (telephone) survey methodology.
- As part of the consultation for the Positive

Ageing Strategy, CHCC undertook a written and online survey of older people in 2018. 228 people responded to this survey either online or in hard copy.

- Between 2 November 2018 and 17 February 2019, Place Score collected Neighbourhood Care Factor surveys and PX Assessments on behalf of CHCC. This data is the basis for the Neighbourhood Community Insights Report (2019).

Focus Groups

- A focus group was held with 10 older Aboriginal residents.
- Consultation was undertaken with members of the Have a Chat group which runs out of Boambee East Community Centre.

Stakeholder Consultation Group

- A Stakeholder Consultation group was formed with representation from the Local Health District, medical specialists, Dementia Australia, Carer Support, the Elder Abuse Collaborative, Residential Aged Care, the Primary Health Network, Community Transport and the community.

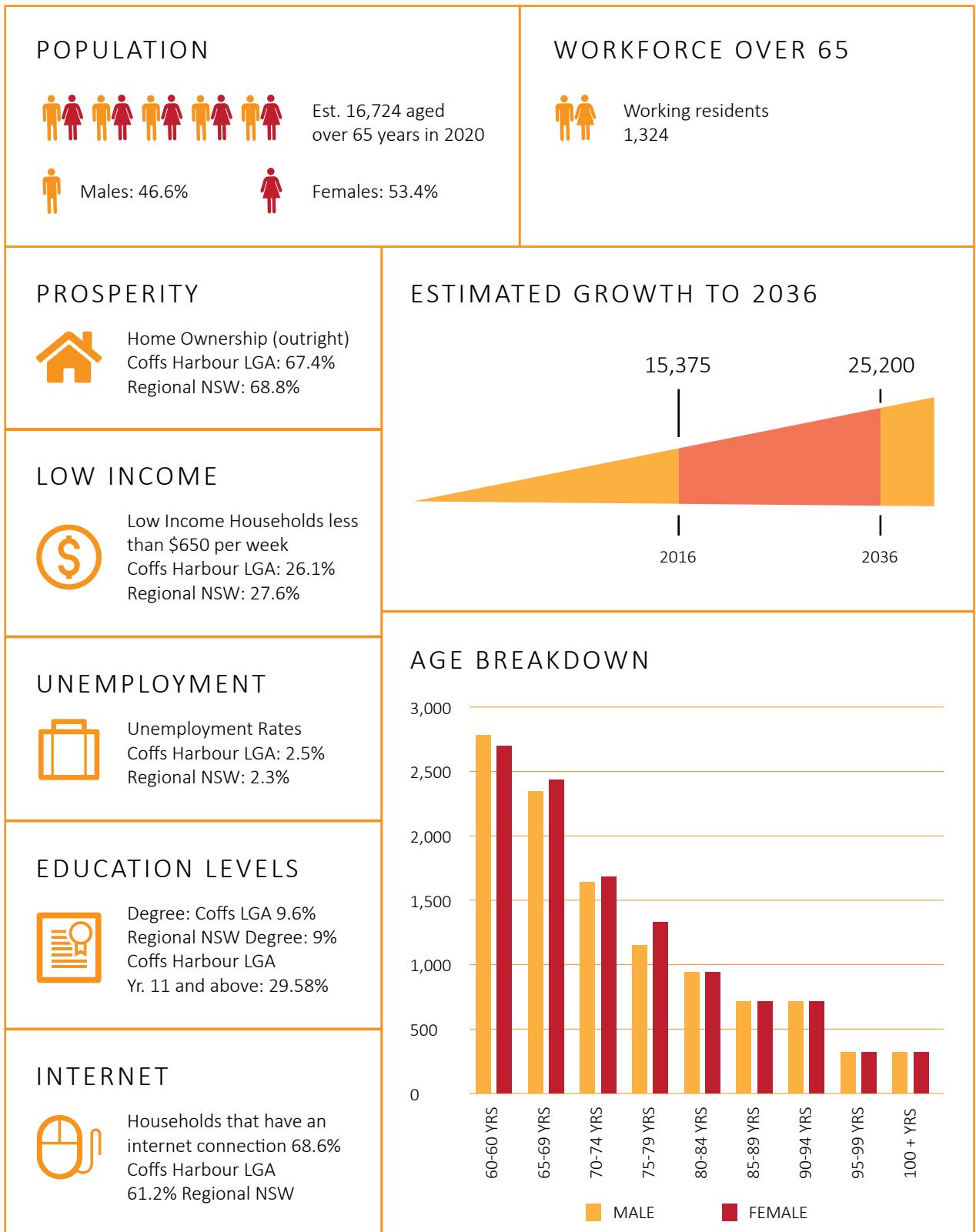
Council of the Ageing (COTA)

- In 2018 COTA staff conducted consultation with the older residents in Coffs Harbour. Their findings were shared with Council and contributed to understanding the most important issues for older people.

2.4 STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT AND ENDORSEMENT

The Draft Positive Ageing Strategy will be placed on public exhibition and the community invited to provide feedback before the Strategy is adopted by Council.

3. Older Persons Community Profile



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

3.1 AGEING POPULATION

The population of the Coffs Harbour Local Government Area (LGA), like many other regions in Australia, is ageing. There is no specific age at which a person becomes old. Age does not define a person's lifestyle, aspirations or needs. People experience the ageing process in different ways at different times. Ageing is affected by physical and social environment, health, economic and life experiences as much as it is by chronological age. This profile will focus on people in the Coffs Harbour LGA who are 65 years. However not all of the data matches up with this.

While it is recognised that some older people are frail and dependent, the majority of our older residents are healthy and active and play a vital role in our community. To support positive ageing, we need to recognise that ageing is not just about getting older but about the context in which we age.

O'Brien and Phibbs¹ identify that:

“ageing will potentially impact on local infrastructure and services. It is the impact on local infrastructure and services, in particular the built environment, roads, pedestrian access, outdoor space, recreation facilities, transport and home care services which, as our population ages adds to the cost of local government and state government service delivery. This is of particular concern for rural local government authorities that are impacted by rate pegging, increasing responsibilities handed down by other levels of government, limited capacity to increase own source revenues, rising human resource expenditure and a foreseeable decrease in rate revenue due to demographic shifts and community support for policies that defer rates payable by older residents.”

Guy Luscombe, The New Architecture for the New Aged (NANA) project² writes:

“Places that are appropriately designed, that aid health and wellbeing, promote participation by an increasingly elderly workforce and make cities and neighbourhoods more ‘age friendly’, will not only benefit individuals but would have bottom line benefits for the economy, potentially decreasing the projected demand on health services and providing a whole new group of active citizens.”

¹ O'Brien, Elizabeth & Phibbs, Peter & Ageing, Disability & Home Care (N.S.W.) (2011). Local Government and Ageing : Literature Review. ADHC, Sydney, N.S.W <https://trove.nla.gov.au/work/160998630>

² Guy Luscombe, The New Architecture for the New Aged (NANA) project, a new architecture for the new aged that advocates a better built environment for older people, Byera Hadley, Travelling Scholarships Journal Series, 2015, <https://www.architects.nsw.gov.au/download/2015-BHTS-NANA-Project-FINAL-lo-res.pdf>





3.2 KEY FINDINGS

It is estimated that in the Coffs Harbour LGA there are approximately 16,724 people aged 65 years and over in 2020 (approximately 20% of the population) and this is predicted to increase to approximately 23,000 people (24% of the population) by 2036. In 2036 the number of people aged 65 years and over will be greater than the number of people under 15 years of age. The biggest projected increase will be for people aged 70 to 84 with an extra 5,454 (66.11%) people in this age group by 2036, compared to an increase of 9886 (49%) for Wollongong City Council and 5314 (43%) for Port Macquarie – Hastings Council.³

Analysis of the five year age groups of the Coffs Harbour LGA in 2016 compared to Regional NSW shows that there was a higher proportion of people in the older age groups (65+). Overall 21.1% were aged 65 years and over, compared with 20.6% for Regional NSW. The major differences between the age structure of the Coffs Harbour LGA and Regional NSW were a larger percentage of persons aged 60 to 64 (7.3% compared to 6.7%). The number of people aged over 65 years will increase significantly over the next 20 years.

In 2016, Toormina had the highest proportion (17.3%) of older lone person households in Coffs Harbour LGA. 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 such as gardening, domestic assistance, meals, shopping, social support and transport. It can also indicate the location of retirement villages.

An important finding in the Index of Wellbeing for Older Australians 2016 is that the factor contributing most to older person wellbeing when calculating the Index, is the need for functional assistance. This includes the need for assistance with everyday tasks such as grooming, bathing, dressing, toileting, eating and walking, through to transport, gardening and social support. Access to assistance services is becoming an increasingly important part of wellbeing for older people, alongside and closely connected to other factors such as housing affordability and appropriateness.

The health care and social assistance industry in Coffs Harbour is currently experiencing unprecedented growth generating \$442 million in 2018/19 (6% increase from 17/18). This industry contributes 15.5% of the total value added for the Coffs Harbour LGA. This includes \$92.09m for Residential Care Services and \$118.67m for Social Assistance Services. It is believed that for every \$1m in increased revenue in aged care and social assistance, \$1.88m flows into the regional economy through employment and uptake of local goods and services.⁴

³ Census of Population and Housing, Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016

⁴ Walker & Green, 2014, *Mid North Coast: Connected, Regional Development Australia - Mid North Coast*

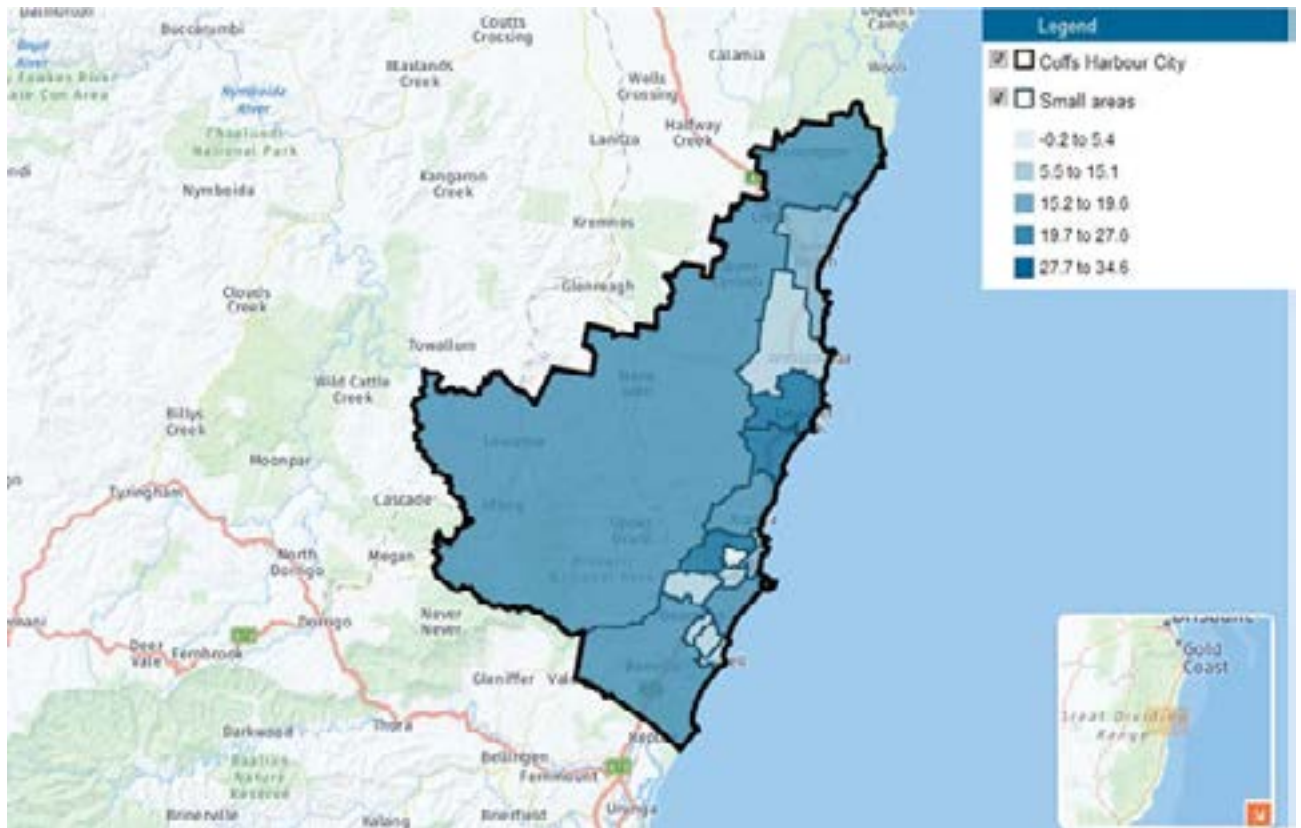


Figure 1: Population and age structure map, 65 to 85+ years in Coffs Harbour LGA, 2020-2026 percentage change, population and household forecasts, .id, the population experts, 2017

The health care and social assistance industry was the largest employing industry in the Coffs Harbour LGA, generating 6,207 local jobs in 2018/19. The industry, spanning sectors such as hospitals, GPs, residential care and social assistance services, grew by around 5 per cent from 17/18. The industry now accounts for 18.2 per cent of Coffs Harbour LGA’s working population, increasing from 16.1 per cent in 2012/13 and 13.7 per cent in 2006/07.

According to North Coast Primary Health Network a Region is considered a Dementia ‘Hot Spot’ with a prevalence of more than 1040 cases of people with dementia. It is currently estimated that 1435 people in the Coffs Harbour State Electoral District are living with Dementia and is expected to rise to 3019 by 2050 (112%).

51.4% of people using permanent residential aged care in the Coffs Harbour LGA on 30 June 2018 had a diagnosis of dementia.

Dementia as a principal diagnosis or as a comorbidity for people aged over 65 years who are hospitalised in the Coffs Harbour LGA now exceeds the NSW rate per 100,000 population.

3.3 FUTURE PROJECTIONS AND DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Between 2020 and 2036, the forecast age structure for Coffs Harbour LGA indicates an increase of 6,272 persons (37.5% growth) in the population of people who are aged 65 years and older⁵.

⁵ [Community Profile .id 2016](#)

There are a number of factors that contribute to the ageing of the population. Two major ones are increasing life expectancy through improved living standards and advances in medical technology.

The increase can also be due to sustained immigration, declining birth rates and the ageing of the 'baby boomer' generation.

Minister for Mental Health and Ageing (2010-2013), Mark Butler⁶, says in his 2015 book, *Advanced Australia – the Politics of Ageing*, "(this) is not a one off event isolated to the baby boomers. The present shift is a window into the new normal for Australia: where a much larger share of the population is (and will continue to be) 65 or older."

The Coffs Coast is and will continue to be an attractive place for older people to retire both through ageing of the resident population and the settling of new retirees in the area. Between 2016 and 2026, the age structure forecasts for Coffs Harbour LGA indicate a 28.7% increase in population of retirement age, compared to a 22.9% increase in population of retirement age for Wollongong City Council and a 27.0% increase in population of retirement age for Port Macquarie-Hastings Council.

In the next 5 years the localities with the highest expected growth for people aged over 65 years are Moonee Beach (33.7%), Coffs Harbour West (32.3%), Sandy Beach/Emerald Beach (27.7%), Bonville/Bundagen/Boambee (26.7%) and Coffs Harbour South East (25%).

Council recognises that as the population ages different population cohorts have differing needs.

- The 50 to 59 year older workers and pre retirees need future planning for ageing health, housing, and taking on carer responsibilities, finances, opportunities to maintain health and wellbeing with appropriate exercise and diet.
- Empty nester and retirees, 60 to 69 need flexible work places, opportunities to down size housing and opportunities to maintain health and wellbeing.
- Seniors, 70 to 84 years need access to healthcare, affordable housing, transport and aged care support services.
- Finally, the elderly aged need increasing access to healthcare including palliative care, affordable housing, transport and aged care support services including residential aged care.

⁶ Mark Butler, 2015, *Advanced Australia – the Politics of Ageing*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne



Coastal and forest walks can be enjoyed in many nearby National Parks and Coastal Headlands

4. Issues and Opportunities

According to Professor Graeme Hugo⁷, there are four demographic aspects of the ageing of Australia's population over the next two decades:

- The numbers of older people will increase rapidly because the 'shockwave' of baby boomers will all move past age 65. The ABS anticipate the numbers aged 65+ in Coffs Harbour LGA will increase by 7,909 between 2016 and 2036.
- The proportion that the older (65+) population will make up of the total Coffs Harbour LGA population will increase from 20.2 percent in 2016 to 23.9 percent in 2036. This raises issues of worsening ratios between the working and non-working population and the effects of intergenerational transfers.
- The third dimension of population ageing in Australia is one which is often overlooked and relates to their characteristics. They are quite different to earlier generations entering the retirement stage of the life cycle – economically, socially, and in their values, attitudes, expectations and, most importantly, their health. This is because each cohort lives through quite different economic, social and cultural conditions, and have different sets of education, world experience, etc. Baby boomers differ in a myriad of ways from the previous generation of older people and this will also have a major impact on the nature of the care and residential arrangements which they need, seek, prefer and can pay for.
- Finally, the geography of the next generation of the older Australian population will be different to that of the previous generation. The distribution of Australians aged 65+ and 80+ in 2021 and 2031 will be quite different to that of 2001 and 2013. Yet much of the aged care infrastructure, especially residential care are 'location specific capital' (De Vanzo, 1981). They have a fixed location which will be increasingly mismatched with the location of older Australians.

The CSIRO⁸ has completed an analysis of the global trends that will be of most influence in Australia in to the future. The three that are particularly relevant to this Strategy include;

- **Ageing** – An ageing population will have an impact on the economy and the cost of living, particularly with retirement savings gaps and rising healthcare expenditure pressures.
- **Virtually here**- This megatrend explores what might happen in a world of increased connectivity where individuals, communities, governments and businesses are immersed into the virtual world to a much greater extent than ever before. This impacts on retail models, how and where people work, city design and transportation models will need to adapt.

⁷ *The Demographic Facts of Ageing in Australia, 2014* https://agedcare.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/11_2014/002_the_demographic_facts_of_ageing_in_australia_-_revised_0.pdf

⁸ Hajkowicz, Stefan; Cook, Hannah; Littleboy, Anna. *Our Future World: Global megatrends that will change the way we live*. Brisbane: CSIRO; 2012. <https://doi.org/10.4225/08/584ee9706689b>





- **The Importance of fostering social interaction in our communities.** This highlights the importance of planning infrastructure and services on a place based model which draw people in to their local communities.

In addition to these global trends the following local issues and opportunities were identified as part of the consultation for this Strategy.

4.1 AGEING IN PLACE

Staying in their own home or “ageing-in-place” is a priority for the majority of older people. Ageing-in place is generally understood to mean that people remain in their home of choice as they age for as long as they choose. Typically, this means living in the community in familiar surroundings and being able to remain independent. Many older people do age-in-place, however not necessarily in the traditional family home. For many reasons, people may review their housing situation as circumstances change. Ageing-in-place can be complemented and extended by accessing a range of community support options and implementing universal design practices. Many retirement villages and residential aged care facilities also provide the opportunity to age-in-place with living arrangements and accommodation adjusted to reflect progressive levels of care needed.

The greater emphasis on older residents ageing in place in their own homes creates a number of considerations for local government in terms of the planning and regulation of land use and development in relation to facilitating a mix of housing choices, seniors living development and affordable housing within easy walking distance to town centres, services and facilities. It also presents opportunities to explore flexible and innovative ways to deliver home based services, for example waste and library services.

‘Place’ is an important consideration for the participation of older people in their community. The quality of neighbourhood locations such as parks, cafés and shops, and the transitory zones people pass through during their daily activities, influence social participation and general life engagement. Poor-quality neighbourhood conditions, such as discontinuous or broken footpaths, poor or no public transport, lack of street lighting and high traffic levels, limit older people’s ability to connect and interact.

The importance of the neighbourhood environment for wellbeing is especially pertinent to older people, given the preference of many older adults to ‘age in place’ at home, the increasing number of older people who will do so into the future, the number of older people reliant on the aged pension and the increasing number of older people living alone, particularly women. As the population ages, the role of government and other key stakeholders, including peak bodies and local community organisations, in creating age friendly neighbourhoods is increasingly important for promoting social participation and maintaining quality of life for older adults.

4.2 COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL FACILITIES PLAN (IN DEVELOPMENT)

Supporting communities through the delivery of community and cultural facilities makes the Coffs Coast region vibrant and provides a lifestyle that residents desire. Community and cultural infrastructure is essential for the health and wellbeing of communities, increasing connectivity and encouraging interaction and community spirit amongst residents.

Community infrastructure can also help to develop strong and prosperous communities by attracting investment and growth, and is therefore a strong economic driver. Providing a range of quality community infrastructure can help to attract and service a diverse population of different ages, cultures and socio-economic backgrounds.

Facilities provide a space for groups to interact, promoting social cohesion, community connections, participation and ownership. They also provide suitable spaces to deliver services, programs and activities to meet social, cultural, leisure or community well-being needs and build community capacity.

Demand for a diverse and adaptable range of community and cultural facilities is growing, driven by population increases and the expanding needs of ageing, socially and culturally diverse communities. Coffs Harbour LGA requires well designed community and cultural infrastructure that supports current and new residents with a sense of well-being, belonging, culture and community cohesion.

The Community and Cultural Facilities Plan when finalised will provide a strategic framework to guide decision making about existing assets, their use and future development needs in the Coffs Harbour LGA.

4.3 AGEING WORKFORCE

Australians are increasingly working to older ages. In January 2018, Australians aged 65 and over had a workforce participation rate of 13% (17% for men and 10% for women), compared with 8% in 2006 (12% for men and 4% for women)⁹. The rate is likely to continue to increase as the retirement intentions of Australians change. In 2004–05, just 8% of Australians aged 45 and over intended to work until age 70, compared with 20% in 2016–17 [6]. In 2016–17, the average intended retirement age was 65 (66 for men and 64 for women), with just under 1 in 4 (22%) men aged 45 and over intending to work beyond age 70¹⁰.

These trends, together with today's high cost of living and inevitable increases in the eligible age for receipt of Australia's age pension, indicate that the number of older Australians participating in the labour force will continue to rise. At the same time, as Australia's demographics continue to change, it will also become necessary for businesses to engage and retain mature-age workers to reduce the impact of a large non-working population on the economy and welfare system.

An ageing workforce means that employers now need to deal with the very real issue of how to manage and cater to the needs of older employees. While Australians are living and working longer and are healthier than ever, even the healthiest workers will be impacted as they experience age-related declines in speed, physical strength and cognitive ability. Additionally, mature-aged workers are likely to have a greater desire for flexible working arrangements in order, for example, to be able to care for ageing parents (a reality for many in their 50's and 60's) or to transition to retirement.

⁹ ABS 2018. *Labour force, Australia, detailed—electronic delivery, Table 01: Labour force status by age, social marital status and sex.* ABS cat no. 6291.0.55.001. Canberra: ABS

¹⁰ ABS 2017. *Retirement and retirement intentions, Australia, July 2016 to June 2017.* ABS cat. no. 6238.0. Canberra: ABS.

Acknowledging the needs of mature-aged workers and implementing suitable initiatives to accommodate these needs will benefit not only the employees but also their employers.

4.4 IMPACT ON BEACH USAGE

The Coffs Harbour City Council Lifeguard Service Strategic Plan 2019-2024¹¹ identified various at risk group and the older age demographic was amongst these. The increased proportion of retirees and older people are likely to impact on beach usage patterns. For example, retirees have more leisure time and their leisure activities frequently incorporate beach activities including swimming and walking. This will potentially increase the numbers of people visiting the beach during off-peak times, so as visiting the beach in traditionally quieter weekday periods.

While the highest risk associated with drowning is associated with young men (often involving alcohol), pre-existing medical conditions (which increase with age) are also a significant risk factor. This also impacts on instances of provision of assistance which rise in relation to complications with existing health issues with some of the common medical conditions including cardiac and respiratory conditions as well as epilepsy.

¹¹.Coffs Harbour City Council Lifeguard Service Strategic Plan 2019-2024, Locale Consulting Pty Ltd

¹² Budget Paper 5 Intergenerational Report 2016. www.treasury.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2017-01/Budget_Paper_5_-_Intergenerational_Report_2016_-_full_report.pdf

¹³ Australia's Health 2016 AIHW www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/9844cefb-7745-4dd8-9ee2-f4d1c3d6a727/19787-AH16.pdf.aspx

4.5 INCREASED DEMAND FOR HEALTH SERVICES

The State Government expects health to be the biggest area of funding in 2056, consuming 36% of the state's budget¹². There is also an increased demand for the management of chronic disease with 87% of people aged 65 years and over having at least one chronic disease¹³.

4.6 NAVIGATING THE SERVICE SYSTEM

More and more service directories and services are moving their service information referral online. This can create a barrier for some older people who either lack the technology required to go online or lack the skills required to search for the services needed either for themselves or the person they care for. General Practitioners aren't always aware of the services available to older people and often don't have the time to refer people to them. People in outlying areas in the LGA can find it even more difficult to access services or to find out about them. Coffs Harbour Council has moved to an online service directory called MyCoffs Connect.

5. The Positive Ageing Strategy

5.1 VISION:

Older people in the Coffs Harbour LGA are valued, have opportunities to participate and enjoy a Liveable Community.

5.2 PURPOSE

Population ageing is a feature of all developed countries. Worldwide, the proportion of people aged 65 years and over is growing faster than any other age group. As a community we are healthier and more active than any generation that has gone before us – so we are living longer. The strength of the local community and the natural environment also attract many people to relocate to this region for their retirement years.

There are three key drivers for the Coffs Harbour City Council's Positive Ageing Strategy 2019 – 2023.

1. Understanding and responding to the needs of older residents.

The Strategy will provide a strategic framework to guide the ongoing development and delivery of programs and services, where applicable for Coffs Harbour LGA's older residents.

2. Understanding and planning for the impact of population ageing.

It is important to understand and plan for the ageing of the population, in order to maximise the benefits, and proactively manage the challenges, associated with this demographic change.

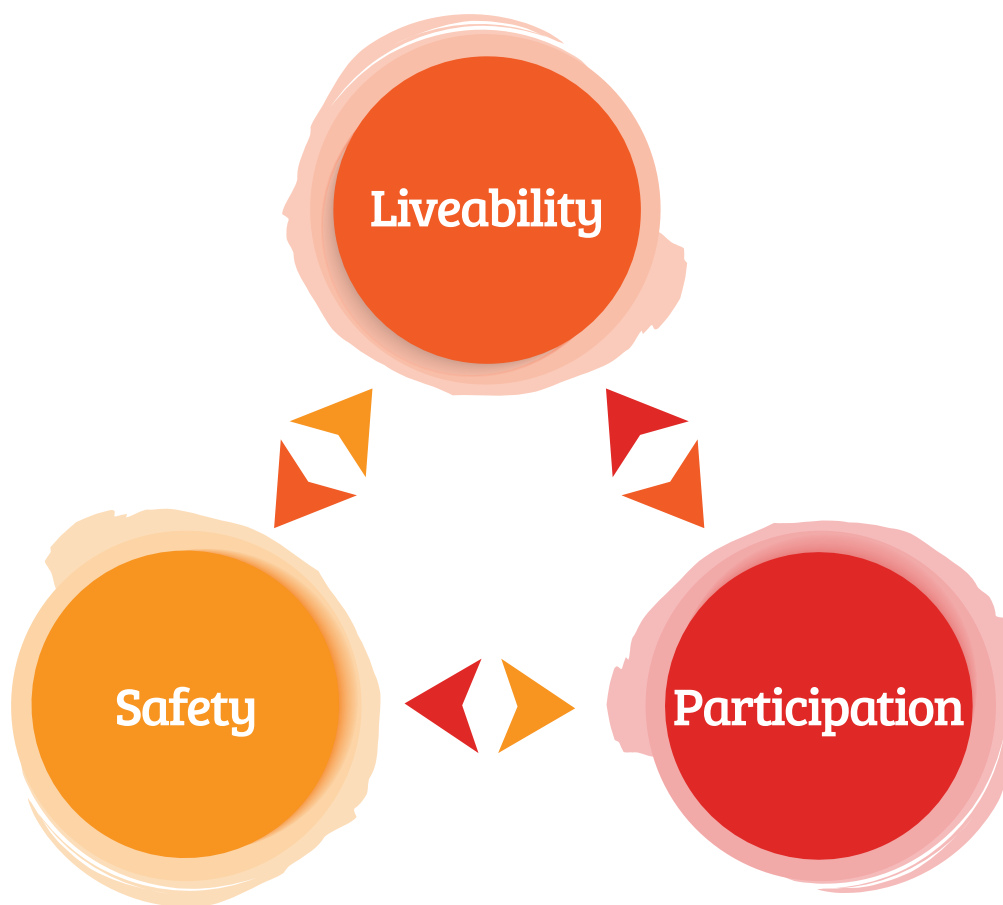
3. Advocating for the needs of older residents.

Council's role is to help promote publicly, and where appropriate lobby, responsible stakeholders to deliver services and programs to meet the changing needs of Coffs Harbour LGA's older residents.

The priorities in the Strategy reflect current research and what local people have told us. Not all the issues identified by the community for this strategy and Action Plan can be completed by Council alone. Many will require the support, resources, goodwill and assistance of community groups, the business community, individuals and other levels of government. A strong Positive Ageing Strategy requires a collaborative approach to provide the best outcomes for the community. This Strategy lists the things we can all do as a community, Council, key stakeholders and community members.



The Strategy has 3 key priority areas, each of which is interdependent.



A liveable community encourages older people to participate in their community and they will only participate if they feel safe. A community where people feel safe and participate will in turn increase its liveability.



“96% of people surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that Coffs Harbour is definitely a good place to live.”

A couple at the opening of the West Coffs Park Upgrade

Liveability

Objective: We create liveable spaces, neighbourhoods and communities that are age-friendly for people to enjoy the benefits of living longer.

A liveable community is one that is safe and secure and offers supportive community features and services. Once in place, those resources enhance personal independence allow residents to age in place, and foster residents' engagement in the community's civic, economic, and social life.¹⁴

Liveability reflects the wellbeing of a community and represents the many characteristics that make a location a place where people want to live now and in the future.¹⁵

The Internationally the World Health Organisation (WHO)¹⁶ has been instrumental in developing tools and resources that can be used by local communities and government to guide the development of age-friendly cities and communities. According to WHO, an age-friendly city encourages active ageing by optimising opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age.

In a liveable community, all people feel engaged, can participate in local activities and do not face barriers to carrying out their regular daily lives. Some features of a liveable community are:

- Walkable pathways, road crossings & ramps.
- Accessible seating in public places.
- Accessible and well located public toilets.
- Public spaces are well lit and have weather protection and where possible hand rails.

- Accessible parking is located near essential services.
- Signage is clear, and where possible includes Braille.

WHAT COUNCIL IS DOING?

The MyCoffs Community Strategic Plan states that Council will aspire to:

- 1.1** Plan, design and maintain neighbourhoods that are age-friendly with liveable environments and that all new development meets the changing needs and expectations of the community.
- 1.2** Ensure our urban and business centres offer the amenity, connectivity, lifestyle and liveability options that encourage businesses and professionals to relocate to our area to help service the needs of an ageing population.
- 1.3** Promote sustainable design and best practice development to provide a diverse range of quality housing options and explore innovative solutions to affordable accommodation provision.
- 1.4** Encourage our partners in State and Federal Government, private sector and community to provide services for older people especially increased aged care and medical services.

¹⁴ AARP Liveable Communities; <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/about/info-2014/what-is-a-livable-community.html>

¹⁵ Victorian Government (2007) Issues Paper Inquiry into enhancing Victoria's Liveability

¹⁶ World Health Organisation (2007) Global Age-friendly Cities: a guide

1.5 Champion business, innovation and technology to stimulate economic growth and local jobs to meet the changing needs of the ageing population.

1.6 Develop collaborative approaches, based on evidence to best reduce disadvantage particularly for our older residents.













1.7 Develop a Transport Strategy in conjunction with Transport NSW that includes a focus on making it easier to walk and cycle and providing mobility options for all ages. The transport strategy is to incorporate a Pedestrian and Access Mobility Plan.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- % of over 65 year olds who express satisfaction with the appearance of public areas Source: Community Wellbeing Survey No baseline – to be set in next Wellbeing Survey
- % of over 65 year olds who express high levels of pride in the Coffs Harbour local government area Source: Community Wellbeing Survey No baseline – to be set in next Wellbeing Survey
- % of over 65 year olds satisfied with the quality of life in the Coffs Harbour local government area Source: Community Wellbeing Survey – increase
- % of over 65 year olds that feels safe in the local government area Source: Community Wellbeing Survey-increase
- % of new dwellings on greenfield sites Source: Coffs Harbour City Council- Decrease
- % of new dwellings on urban infill sites Source: Coffs Harbour City Council – Increase



Liveability

What others can do	What you can do
 <p>Improve Public Transport and deliver a more connected public transport system. Provide up to date public transport information.</p>	 <p>Walk instead of using the car. Car pool with neighbours and friends. Attend mobility scooter awareness training.</p>
 <p>Provide a range of transport services including community transport. Investigate alternative and flexible transport options such as the autonomous vehicle trial and on-demand buses.</p>	 <p>Familiarise yourself with the transport options, subsidies, parking permit, rules/regulation and volunteer organisations that can help you get around. Volunteer as a driver for community transport.</p>
 <p>Plan neighbourhood that are age-friendly with liveable environments that are attractive to older people.</p>	 <p>Report vandalism or suspicious behaviour around community facilities and public spaces. Report access issues like cracked footpaths to Council so that can be prioritised for repair.</p>
 <p>Improve the accessibility of your premises for older people and people with a disability.</p>	 <p>Make sure your street number is clearly displayed at the front of your house in case of emergency, Familiarise yourself with the My Aged Care website and local aged care services available to you.</p>
 <p>Plan and fund health facilities to deliver more services in the area. Advocate for and encourage medical practitioners, including specialist to relocate to the area.</p>	 <p>Participate in local initiatives such as community gardens and neighbourhood improvement projects.</p>
 <p>Provide affordable gym, exercise and sporting facilities via subsidies for seniors to participate or flexible membership options</p>	 <p>Identify how Coffs Harbour can be more liveable and age friendly by participating in surveys, focus groups or providing feedback to Council through appropriate channels.</p>



Coffs Harbour Library is more than just books. They also offer CDs and DVDs.

Participation

Objective: *Older people have opportunities to stay connected, participate in, contribute to and be included in their communities.*

With the advent of new technologies coming in to the market place all the time, it has never been easier for people to connect with others. However, through the consultation for this Strategy older people told Council they don't have access to the technology, no internet, they don't know how to use the technology or don't want to learn how to use it. This can further isolate older people and restrict them from being able to participate in their community.

Research¹⁷ published in the Australian Health Review in 2016, found that Social participation (consisting of three inter-related concepts most informatively labelled Social Connections, Informal Social Participation, and Volunteering) shared a positive relationship with health in older adults, regardless of the measure of health that was used. Longitudinal cohort studies further demonstrated that baseline social participation in any of the three forms is associated with better health outcomes at follow-up on several indices of health, including cognitive function, depression, better self-rated health and physical functioning, and even a reduced incidence of falls.

James et al., 2011 in their research¹⁸ suggests that if older adults' increase their activity level by one social activity, there would be a reduction in the proportion of people with Activities of Daily Living (ADL) disabilities from 38% to 21.7%—a 16.3% decrease. Put another way, for every 7 older adults who increase their social activity level, one person would remain disability-free within about

a 5-year time frame. We would further reduce the proportion of older adults who develop a mobility disability from 62% to 43%—a 19% decrease. In other words, for every 6 older adults who increase their social activity level, one person would not develop mobility disability.

Research indicates that there tends to be an underestimate of the relevance of social factors such as loneliness and social isolation, and other social, economic and environmental determinants of health¹⁹. For example, a recent meta-analysis showed that social isolation is associated with an overwhelming 29% increase in mortality, and there is evidence to suggest that 20% of all GP visits are for social issues primarily²⁰. This further supports the importance of ensuring Older People are connected, feel a sense of belonging and that they have opportunities to participate in their community.

¹⁷ *Social participation as an indicator of successful aging: an overview of concepts and their associations with health;* Heather Douglas A C, Andrew Georgiou B and Johanna Westbrook B; *Australian Health Review* 41(4) 455-462 <https://doi.org/10.1071/AH16038> 2016

¹⁸ James, B. D., Boyle, P. A., Buchman, A. S., & Bennett, D. A. (2011). *Relation of late-life social activity with incident disability among community dwelling older adults.* *Journals of Gerontology Series A: Biological Sciences & Medical Sciences*, 66(4), 467–473. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/gerona/gdq231>

¹⁹ *Social cure, what social cure? The propensity to underestimate the importance of social factors for health.* Haslam SA, McMahon C, Cruwys T, Haslam C, Jetten J, Steffens NK. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/29274614>

²⁰ *Loneliness and social isolation as risk factors for mortality: a meta-analytic review.* Holt-Lunstad J, Smith TB, Baker M, Harris T, Stephenson D. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25910392>

WHAT COUNCIL IS DOING?

The MyCoffs Community Strategic Plan states that Council will aspire to:













- 2.1** Provide safe, affordable and inclusive street environments, community facilities, spaces and activities that bring people together to participate in social, cultural, sport or recreational activities.
- 2.2** Ensure our education, training and library service provision meets the needs of our growing ageing population
- 2.3** Undertake workforce planning and ensure training opportunities anticipate emerging employment and qualification needs to ensure that older employees are valued and are given opportunities to work as long as they want to, are able to and with flexibility.
- 2.4** Advocate to NSW Health to ensure health service provision meets the needs of our growing and ageing population.
- 2.5** Have increased awareness and understanding of the issues and challenges around mental health for older people.
- 2.6** Provide information and support services where appropriate to meet the needs of an ageing population
- 2.7** Be a leader for the provision of art and health programs within aged, community and health care settings as Council recognises how valuable art is to our health, positive ageing and social connections in our community.
- 2.8** Attract people to invest, work, live, study and visit Coffs Harbour City.
- 2.9** Value and recognise volunteering as well as offering opportunities for older people to volunteer in our community to help others.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- % of over 65 year olds that regularly participate in recreational activities with others Source: Community Wellbeing Survey increase
- % of over 65 year olds that regularly participate in organised sporting activities with others Source: Community Wellbeing Survey increase
- People Self-Reporting Health Source: Community Wellbeing Survey- No baseline – to be set in next Wellbeing Survey
- % of over 65 year olds involved in volunteer activities or community groups Source: Community Wellbeing Survey
- % of over 65 year olds that regularly attend arts and cultural activities Source: Community Wellbeing Survey
- % of over 65 year olds satisfied with the opportunities to attend arts and cultural activities in the local government area Source: Community Wellbeing Survey
- Employment figures (Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR))
- Statistics of Older People utilising Council services such as the Home Library Service which currently provides a service to 84 Elderly residents.



Participation

What others can do	What you can do
 <p>Deliver opportunities for older people to continue learning. Provide services for older people to live independently. Offer respite for carers of older people.</p>	 <p>Say hello and look out for your neighbours. Plan ahead to be involved, develop your interest and social networks before you retire-consider developing a “life plan”</p>
 <p>Promote helplines and government services that support and protect older people. Promote opportunities for older people to volunteer.</p>	 <p>Build a relationship with a local GP by having regular check ups. Get a group of friends together so you can motivate each other to keep active.</p>
 <p>Deliver age friendly activities including health, wellbeing and exercise groups in Council’s facilities and halls. Deliver and promote health education and prevention programs.</p>	 <p>Make healthy lifestyle choices such as doing at least 20 minutes of moderate exercise every day. eg. gardening, walking the dog or joining a walking group of community garden.</p>
 <p>Consider employing older people as a way to diversify your workforce. Provide subsidised entry or discount to encourage older people to participate in your business or activities.</p>	 <p>Sign up for a course or training session on information technology and smart devices. Join the library. Seek out opportunities to try new activities and keep your mind active.</p>
 <p>Provide information about health and Aged Care services for older people. Utilise MyCoffs Connect to promote opportunities for older people to connect and participate in groups, classes, events.</p>	 <p>Plan ahead for your financial future talk to experts before you retire about how to make your retirement income stretch further. Become a volunteer to support local community groups and causes.</p>
 <p>Ensure that venues for events and activities are conveniently located, accessible, well-lit, affordable and easily reached by public transport. Offer outreach services and activities to include people at risk of social isolation.</p>	 <p>Consider owning a pet for companionship. Investigate your employers approach to “phased” retirement through flexible work arrangements such as part-time work.</p>



Coffs Harbour has a variety of groups and classes which older residents can participate in.



Safety

Objective: *We cultivate a safe community that older people feel connected to.*

Safety means different things to different people. It is not just about the level of crime in our community, it is about developing and implementing programs that can also prevent unintentional injury. It is about how people feel in our community and there are many factors that affect this.

Social isolation is often caused by public safety fears and safety concerns. This is often linked to the loss of a partner, illness and poor mental health.

Older persons worry about crime and in particular about home invasion and this can have an adverse effect on their life. Report of such a crime can spread fear through the community. Surveys in Australia and throughout the world have shown consistently that older people are far less likely than younger people to be victims of crimes such as robbery, theft, fraud, rape and homicide.²¹

Older people, like everyone else, have the right to feel safe at all times, and research shows that those who appear confident and take security precautions are less likely to be victims of crime.

To improve community safety all sections of the community need to work together to create a safer environment in which to work, live and play.

Those older people who are active and involved in their communities are least likely to be anxious about crime. Conversely, the more socially and physically isolated older people are from others, the more likely they are to lose confidence and trust and to withdraw further. Physical and mental health

benefits can result when people live in accessible, safe and well-designed communities.

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) outlines ways of creating safer spaces by providing guidelines and standards. CPTED assists in the creation of new/upgrading of public spaces, facilities and buildings. The intention is to reduce the likelihood of crime happening by creating environmental and social conditions that:

- Maximise risk to offenders through increasing the likelihood of detection, challenge and apprehension
- Maximise the effort required to commit crime by increasing the time, energy and resources required to commit crime
- Minimise the actual and perceived benefits of crime by removing, minimising or concealing crime attractors and rewards)
- Minimise excuse making opportunities by removing conditions that encourage/facilitate rationalisation of inappropriate behaviour.

In Australia, falls are the major cause of injury-related deaths and hospitalisations in people aged over 65 years. It's estimated that one in three older Australians will fall each year and this rate will substantially increase with age. Even if a fall does not result in injury, a fear of falling can lead to anxiety, social withdrawal, restriction of daily activities and increased dependence.

Another area of safety concern for seniors is their increasing vulnerability to crimes committed through the Internet.

²¹ Preventing crime against older Australians
AICrime reduction matters no. 29
<https://aic.gov.au/publications/crm/crm029>

WHAT COUNCIL IS DOING?

The MyCoffs Community Strategic Plan states that Council will aspire to:

- 3.1** Increase the safety and mobility of older people including older drivers, pedestrians, wheelchair and mobility scooter users.
- 3.2** Plan for a safe public realm for Older People
- 3.3** Work to address specific safety issues of concern to the ageing demographic.
- 3.4** Encourage and support connections in community and neighbourhoods to reduce isolation, create support linkages, celebrate diversity and foster a sense of belonging and safety.
- 3.5** Positively promote older residents
- 3.6** Create and support opportunities for Council to engage with older residents.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- % of community over 65 years that feels safe in the local government area- Source: Community Wellbeing Survey
- % of over 65 year olds that feel part of the community Source: Community Wellbeing Survey



Safety

What others can do	What you can do
 <p>Local Police facilitate quarterly Community Safety Precinct consultations in the Council Chambers to discuss local crime data and safety concerns.</p>	 <p>Ensure the reasonable safety and security of your house, vehicles, and other assets. Watch out for support and assist vulnerable community members in the neighbourhood.</p>
 <p>Offer patrons a courtesy bus to and from licensed venues such as pubs and clubs. Advocate to Government regarding community safety concerns.</p>	 <p>Be aware and take an interest in safety and security issues in your local area. Offer to bring in a neighbours bin or collect mail when they are away.</p>
 <p>Offer safety information and education for older drivers. Promote images of positive ageing. Engage with older people in planning and delivery of services.</p>	 <p>Be involved in solutions or ensure matters are reported to the appropriate authorities. Report vandalism and graffiti to authorities.</p>
 <p>Be understanding of the challenges facing older people. Be inclusive and respectful of older people. Provide activities, events and services that build a sense of community.</p>	 <p>Demonstrate and promote respectful behaviour to others. Contribute to the cleanliness and upkeep of properties and the neighbourhood.</p>
 <p>Consider including older people in community activities for families, especially those with care of the Grandchildren. Utilise the Elder Abuse Checklist in your service.</p>	 <p>Introduce yourself to you neighbours and help out when they need a hand. Hold a street party to get to know your neighbours.</p>
 <p>Provide opportunities for children and young people to learn about ageing and older people. Involve older people in school and prior to school activities. Value and encourage lifelong learning.</p>	 <p>Learn how to protect yourself as you get older through things like Advanced Care Planning, Power of Attorney and Enduring Guardianship.</p>



A Coffs Harbour resident using hand cycling technology for racing

6. Reporting and Monitoring

Coffs Harbour City Council has developed an Internal Positive Ageing Strategy Action Plan which underpins the Aspirational Outcomes in this Strategy. The Action Plan will be updated annually as part of the Operational and Business Planning Processes.

At the end of the 4 year Positive Ageing Strategy, Council will evaluate how the Aspirational Outcomes have been achieved using the various performance measures in the Strategy.



There are several opportunities in Coffs Harbour to join with others to sing and perform in the community

7. Definitions

ATSI

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Baby Boomer

The population group born 1946-1964

Positive Ageing

Positive Ageing is the process of optimising opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age.

It embraces the notion that individuals have opportunities and choices allowing them to maximise independence and control their own lives.

Common characteristics of positive and active ageing include:

- a whole-of-community, whole-of-life, multiple activity approach to ageing;
- a broad view of ageing that incorporates the constant aiming for and achievement of maximum quality of life; and
- a focus on the opportunities and challenges available to people as they grow older rather than consider ageing as a community problem.

Older people

While it is recognised that people age at different rates, this strategy however will focus on people in the Coffs Harbour LGA who are 65 years and over or 55 years and over, who identify as Aboriginal. This is the age at which people become eligible for many government funded aged care services and programs.

Retirement Age

There is no longer a fixed retirement age in Australia. Many people choose to retire when they become eligible for the Age Pension. The Age Pension age is currently 65½ and it rises in stages to 67 in July 2023. If current Government proposals are accepted, the Age Pension age will be 70 by 2035. This applies to both men and women.

Universal design

Designing housing with accessibility and adaptability features- is an important factor in keeping people living in the community and can prevent premature admission to residential care. This may include provision of wide interior doors and hallways, lever handles for opening doors rather than twisting knobs, grab rails in bathrooms and toilets, and entry ramps.



COFFS HARBOUR CITY COUNCIL

Locked Bag 155 Coffs Harbour NSW 2450

www.coffsharbour.nsw.gov.au

