



Age friendly Aotearoa New Zealand Toolkit



Te Tari Kaumātua
Office for Seniors



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Age friendly Aotearoa New Zealand Toolkit

Our toolkit provides guidance and support for communities that would like to become age friendly.

About this toolkit

The Age friendly Aotearoa New Zealand Toolkit has been developed to help communities and councils learn more about how to become an age friendly community, town or city.

This toolkit is divided into sections to help you plan what you need to do at each stage of the process. The five key steps to becoming age friendly are:

Step 1. Get started

In step 1 of developing an age friendly community, you will connect with others, set up a steering group and check any funding that might be available.

Step 2. Assess how age friendly your community is

Before you can develop an age friendly plan, you need to understand your community's current situation.

Step 3. Develop a plan

Communities working towards becoming age friendly should develop a plan that focuses on their own specific strengths, cultures, and needs.

Step 4. Implement the plan

With the assessment and planning done, you can now start to implement your age friendly actions.

Step 5. Evaluate your age friendly programme

Evaluating the programme is key to understanding what's working well, what's not, and what to focus on next.

About the Age friendly Aotearoa New Zealand Toolkit

This toolkit has been developed to help communities and councils learn more about how to become an age friendly community, town or city.

How we developed the toolkit

The Age friendly Aotearoa New Zealand programme is led by the Office for Seniors and provides guidance and support for communities that are exploring or committed to becoming age friendly.

Learn more about the Age friendly programme on the Office for Seniors website.

The toolkit is based on the World Health Organization's (WHO's) Age-friendly Cities and Communities framework and draws on information from local experience as well as international examples.

The Age friendly Cities and Communities framework is based on feedback from older people around the world about the features of our cities, towns and communities that help to make a place age friendly. The framework breaks these features down into eight elements of community life shown in the diagram on following page.

This toolkit is a living document and we will update it as we learn from others who are working to create age friendly communities.



What makes a community age friendly

An age friendly community is one with the desire and commitment to create policies, physical and social environments that support the wellbeing of older people.

In an age friendly community, older people can:

- be active
- feel secure
- enjoy good health and the respect of others
- continue to participate fully in society, regardless of their age
- mix with different generations
- easily access local services and parks, attend cultural events, and take part in further education.

Why make your community age friendly

Like many other nations, New Zealand's population is ageing. By 2036 almost one in four New Zealanders will be over 65. Not only is the number of older people growing, people are also living longer.

Older people make a significant contribution to their families and communities and have a wealth of knowledge and skills to share, so an ageing population brings many opportunities.

An age friendly Aotearoa New Zealand will help ensure that older people are engaged, active, contributing and valued members of the communities in which they live, work and socialise.

What makes a successful age friendly programme

The process to become age friendly is flexible – but successful age friendly programmes have some key success factors in common.

Auckland University of Technology (AUT) evaluated the work of three New Zealand cities that used the WHO framework to make their communities more age friendly.

The evaluation found there were five key success factors.

You can read and download the full evaluation report on the Office for Seniors website

Key success factors

1. Support – ensuring there is top-down support from central and/or local government, and bottom-up support from the community
2. Community engagement
 - Listening to the voice of the community and including diverse groups
 - Sharing information and lessons with other age friendly communities
3. A committed steering group – having strong leadership in place with the right range of skills to drive the work forward and help navigate community dynamics
4. Needs assessment
 - Undertaking a needs assessment of age friendly activities and projects
 - Understanding what is in place already and building on existing systems
5. Age friendly activities – having age friendly practices and initiatives already established in the community that you can learn from and expand.

Keep us updated

The Office for Seniors connects with communities across Aotearoa New Zealand that are interested in becoming age friendly. To help communities starting out on this journey, we are developing a kete of resources relevant to our local context.

If you're carrying out any age friendly activities – big or small – let us know how you're going so that we can continue to grow this kete. You can get in touch with us at ofs@msd.govt.nz.

Alzheimers New Zealand would also like to know about any dementia friendly work that's been included in your age friendly projects and you can contact them at dementiafriendlynz@alzheimers.org.nz

Age friendly contacts

Others already engaged in this work have volunteered their contact details, and are available to discuss their experiences of developing age friendly activities in their communities.

You can contact these people directly for age friendly inspiration, advice, or support.

Name / Contact details	Experience
<p>Rebecca Kruse Auckland Council</p> <p>» Rebecca.Kruse@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The spectrum of age friendly development, from plan development to application preparation
<p>Dame Peggy Koopman-Boyden Hamilton Age friendly Steering Group</p> <p>» pkb@waikato.ac.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning • Workshop facilitation • Tertiary research supervision
<p>Ruth Gerzon Eastern Bay Villages Older People's Network</p> <p>» easternbayvillages@gmail.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community development communications • Networking • Bicultural partnerships • Forming trusts • Home-share options
<p>Michele Grigg Napier City Council</p> <p>» micheleg@napier.govt.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community engagement • Establishing steering and reference groups • Strategy development • Data sources/analysis • Age friendly assessments of neighbourhoods using the OPERAT tool

Name / Contact details	Experience
<p>Gerry Brooking Wairarapa Positive Ageing Strategy » gerry@cdc.govt.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local government/ council staff engagement • Community engagement processes and resources
<p>Nicky McDonald Nelson City Council » nicky.mcdonald@ncc.govt.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forming and supporting community and council steering committees • Consultation • Age friendly assessments, research and surveys • Government agency collaboration • Website development • Strategy writing
<p>Madeleine Burdon Waimakiriri District Council » madeleine.burdon@wmk.govt.nz</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research • Forming and supporting steering committees • Community and stakeholder engagement • Needs assessments • Project planning • Project evaluation



The WHO Global Network for Age friendly Communities and Cities

New Zealand organisations, communities or cities can join the WHO Global Network of Age friendly Communities and Cities.

About the network

In 2010, WHO established a Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities in response to global population ageing and rapid urbanisation.

The Global Network promotes the development of age friendly cities, sharing resources, and documenting good practice.

The network is growing rapidly and (in August 2021) it includes over 1,000 communities across 41 countries, covering more than 240 million people worldwide. New Zealand became an affiliate of the WHO Global Network in 2018.

Find out more about the WHO's Global Network for Age friendly Communities and Cities on the WHO's Age friendly World website.

As part of the Network, the WHO has compiled toolkits and other resources from around the world, including: Age-friendly World Website Resource Library and the Global database of age-friendly practices.

Benefits of joining the network

Hamilton and New Plymouth were the first New Zealand cities to join the WHO Global Network and the Gore District is Aotearoa New Zealand's newest member. Others plan to join in future too. If your organisation or group intends to start working towards an age friendly community, you may consider joining the Global Network.

Joining:

- signals your community's intention to become age friendly
- gives your work visibility
- provides a way of outlining the steps you will take to achieve this goal
- links you with the other members of this international community, providing access to ideas, resources and platforms for sharing information.

Joining the network

There is no fee to join the Global Network and applications to join can be made at any stage of an age friendly journey, whether your work is in the early stages or your programme is well established. The Office for Seniors can help with the application process, which requires:

- a local council letter of commitment
- a description of any age friendly activities to date and an outline of any assessments, strategies, or action plans that have been developed
- a summary of how older people have been engaged in the process and what cross-sectoral collaboration has occurred
- identification of what contribution your membership would add to the network.

There is an expectation that each Global Network member posts at least one new project to their WHO network profile page each year.

Find out more about joining the WHO Global Network on the WHO's Age friendly World website.



Step 1 – Get started

In step 1 of developing an age friendly community, you will connect with others, set up a steering group and check any funding that might be available.

Creating an age friendly community is a continuous process that requires ongoing commitment and collective effort from a range of people and organisations.

Diversity increases with age and it is vital that older people with a range of backgrounds and life experiences are involved right from the beginning of this journey.

Be clear about your common purpose, which is to create a community where all older people have the opportunity to participate and be included.

Step 1.1 – Align with others

Find out who else is doing age friendly related work in your community and look at how you could link your work with theirs.

Coordinate with local groups

Creating an age friendly community generally requires coordination and cooperation between local community groups and organisations, such as:

- local councils
- district health boards
- iwi and hapū
- government agencies
- non-government organisations.

Review any strategies and plans these groups have online, and get in touch with them to explore how you could work together to improve the wellbeing of the community.

Look to other programmes

Combining your approach with other programmes can create more benefit for your community.

For example, dementia friendly approaches usually fit well with age friendly work.

Alzheimers New Zealand has developed these tools which are available on their website:

- Dementia Friendly Communities Toolkit
- Dementia Friendly Recognition Programme for businesses and organisations wishing to become more dementia friendly
- Dementia Friends programme is a short online awareness and education module where you can start learning about dementia and how you can help.

“We now have a really increased understanding of why it’s important to work together, others have been doing work but in isolation, we are starting to see collaborative projects coming out of the plan that otherwise might not have happened.”

Nick Chester, Hamilton City Council

Step 1.2 – Set up a steering group

Establishing an age friendly steering or advisory group can be useful to set priorities and maintain the focus needed to drive a plan forward.

How to set up a steering group

To set up a steering group you could:

- call for nominations
- advertise for people to nominate themselves
- use existing networks, including the groups you've identified that you could align with, to identify potential champions
- use a combination of these approaches.

Who to include

A steering group should include (or have access to) a wide spectrum of the community, including:

- older people
- disabled people
- elected members of council
- relevant council staff (including those working in community development, parks, transport, urban planning, recreation and libraries)
- community members from relevant organisations
- iwi representatives
- members of other ethnicity groups specific to your community.

Diverse representation is important but also give some thought to the skills that you'll need in this group to help guide your work. It is important that your group has the right expertise, leadership and that members are committed to the project for the long term.

“We chose a skill group rather than a representative group of people. Not all our steering group knew a whole lot about age friendly but they were extremely committed and performed really well as a team.”

Nick Chester, Hamilton City Council

Step 1.3 – Look into funding options

Check whether there are any grants or funding support to help get your age friendly plan underway.

Where to check for grants

Consider who might have funding available to support your project.

Some possibilities include:

- your local council
- Office for Seniors Age friendly fund
- Department of Internal Affairs Community Matters website
- Lotteries Grants
- Ethnic Communities Development Fund.

Speak with some of the groups you are looking to align with, as they may know of other possibilities. Find advice and examples of grant applications on Community Net Aotearoa's website.

Applying for grants

Make sure that your project is planned out before you start applying for grants.



Resources to start an age friendly programme

Resources to use for more information when you're planning to start developing an age friendly community. You can find links to other useful resources in the Age Friendly section of the Office for Seniors website

Useful resources

- **Bibliography of age friendly research in New Zealand** is an easy reference for people who want to be informed about some of the research on older people in New Zealand.
- **Summary of Age friendly Cities and Communities, World experience and pointers for New Zealand** provides an overview of age friendly approaches from a local perspective.
- **Ministry for Ethnic Communities:** Provides resources to support targeted engagement, including a community directory with links to organisations by language group, faith, or region. It also offers a telephone interpreting service – Language Line.
- **Community Boards:** If your council has a community board, it can be useful to make contact as they may be able to facilitate contacts, meetings, and liaison between the community and council.
- **British Columbia Age-friendly Committee Terms of Reference (DOC 478KB):** These Terms of Reference outline how to form a committee with an age friendly mandate. They have been drafted in a way that they can be edited to suit local conditions.

Useful examples

- **Joint Wairarapa Councils Positive Ageing Strategy:** The three district councils in the Wairarapa region collaborated to create a joint strategy and plan to improve and integrate council services for older people, to help them lead valued, connected and fulfilling lives.
- **Hamilton, New Zealand – Age Friendly City (PDF 6.4MB):** Page 9 of Hamilton City’s Age Friendly Plan demonstrates the guiding principles referenced during the development of their plan.
- **New Plymouth’s Positive Ageing Trust:** The Trust started as a group organising seminars and events but later formed two arms – one a Positive Ageing Trust overseeing governance and management of the organisation and the other a Positive Ageing Council which includes all members and representatives of kindred organisations. It is a good example of the range of organisations invested in age friendly communities.
- **A Really Good Home for our Kaumātua - A Toolkit for Kaumātua (PDF 8256KB):** Page 12 provides a Vision, Mission, and Values example and pages 16-19 provide tools and tips for building collaborative relationships and partnerships.
- **Age-friendly City Champions, Banyule City Council, Victoria, Australia:** The Banyule City Council was one of the initial pilot cities for the WHO Age-friendly Cities project. The Council has had such a positive response to the project that they established an Age-friendly Champions programme, demonstrating the untapped public interest for age friendly development in their community.
- **Waimakariri’s Age friendly plan (PDF 12MB):** Page 7 of the plan provides a timeline of activities undertaken to develop the plan.

Step 2 – Assess how age friendly your community is

Before you can develop an age friendly plan, you need to understand your community's current situation.

Before you start an assessment, identify the people and skills required to help you create an age friendly community, and agree how you will work together.

After you have done that, it is useful to understand your community's current situation. Carrying out a baseline assessment helps identify both the:

- areas that are currently working well
- issues that need attention.

The baseline assessment provides a starting point to measure your progress over time. You will also need a baseline assessment if you intend to join the WHO Global Network. Find out more about joining the WHO Global Network on their website

Checklist of core age friendly features

The WHO has drafted a checklist of core age friendly features which is intended to provide a universal standard for an age friendly city. The checklist is a guide only – it does not offer technical or design specifications, as the changes needed in each community will be unique.

Step 2.1 – Review local statistics

To start the review of your community's age friendly status, have a look at local data around current and future demographics.

Start by looking at the community demographics, including:

The number of older people in your community

How many older people are there in your community? How many are there expected to be in the future?

Many communities have increasing numbers of older people, mainly due to increasing longevity. This increase in the numbers of older people is called 'numerical ageing'.

Why this matters

Numbers equal demand (for resources and services) and also supply (for example, of potential workers and volunteers).

Use numbers (at any age) when considering what types of resources and services are needed locally (for example, housing suitable for older people, aged-care workers, doctors, community services).

Proportion of older people

The increasing numbers of older people, along with declining birth rates, are altering the makeup of our population. What proportion of your local population is aged 65+ years, compared to the proportion aged 20–64 years, or 0–14 years?

Key age groups for population ageing analysis

- 0–14 years (child/school age population)
- 5–24 years (high school/leavers/university and labour market entrants)
- 25–39 years (primary reproductive age group)
- 40–54 years (primary parental age group/peak home buyers)
- 55–64 years (entering retirement zone/peak homeowners)
- 65–74 years (retirement zone/home ownership stable/reducing)
- 75+ years (older population/home ownership reducing)
- 85+ years (the 'older-old')



Why this matters

Use proportions for comparison.

For example, you can use proportions to show whether your community is 'older' or 'younger' or ageing faster or slower than another, or to show how much of your local population growth is accounted for by those aged 65+.

Knowing the relative proportions can be useful to reference when reporting or seeking resource funding, and for working out the mix and type of resources and services that are needed locally (eg, facilities, transport).

Changing age structures (age composition)

The proportions at each age give each community a unique age structure.

The structure could be quite square, with similar proportions in each age bracket. It could be pyramidal, with more younger people and fewer older people, an upside-down pyramid, with more older people than younger people, or it could look like an apple core.

Why this matters

Knowing your local age structure (by assembling the proportions at each age) is a valuable tool for strategic planning. The age structure of a population determines overall demand and supply, whether it be for services, facilities and resources, the types of local shops and businesses that might flourish, or identifying gaps in local provision.



Drivers of population change

The local age structure, and whether the population grows or declines or is ageing faster or slower, is the result of interactions between births and deaths (natural change) and migration, by age.

A net gain of people aged over 75 (for example, when a new retirement village opens) makes a population structurally older, as does a net loss of young adults – which occurs in most areas of New Zealand almost every year. By contrast, a net gain of young adults (almost exclusively to university cities and key tourist areas) or a net loss of older people (often from Auckland) slows structural ageing.

Why this matters

Once a population has more older people than children, it loses its ability to replenish from natural increase (more births than deaths) and moves into a natural decrease state (more deaths than births). After that, it can only grow from migration. The age of those migrants, not just their number, will determine future growth.

Understanding these local drivers and their impact on the local age structure is crucial for planning. Usefully, local drivers tend to be reasonably consistent year-on-year, as the age structure changes in a fairly predictable manner.

Local ageing in context

You should also consider location in relation to the ‘age’ of neighbouring suburbs or communities, towns and regions. Is your community located in a structurally older area, such as the Thames-Coromandel area or the Nelson/Marlborough/Tasman area, or is it closer to a youthful city, like Hamilton?

Why this matters

Structurally older areas tend to have lower unemployment because demand for people of working age is outstripping their supply. If the region surrounding them is also ‘older’, there will be fewer workers available locally to fill the jobs.

Knowing both your local demography and that of your local labour market area is valuable for thinking about local employment issues, especially in terms of where your labour supply and services will come from.

Where to find this information

Contact your local council as a starting point – they may have done some of this work already.

Statistics New Zealand has tools to create bespoke tables of demographic information.

Other places that might have useful information include:

- your local district health board
- Accident Compensation Corporation
- the New Zealand Disability Survey
- the New Zealand Health Survey
- the New Zealand Atlas of Population Change.



Step 2.2 – Engage with the community

After looking at local data, your next step in assessing your current level of age friendliness is to gather information from the community.

Gather information

Community engagement should identify community strengths, challenges, and priorities.

Community engagement can be carried out in many different ways – choose what works best for your community. You could include:

- surveys
- interviews
- focus groups
- workshops
- forums.

Your approach should make it easy for people to voice their opinion if they wish to do so. For example, people living with dementia may find it easier to give feedback and make suggestions if someone goes through the process with them in person.

The Department of Internal Affairs has advisory teams located around Aotearoa New Zealand to help build strong, sustainable communities, hapū and iwi. Community advisors can help in various ways, including providing information about community-led development and community projects, acting as facilitators and connecting you with other local people, groups or agencies.

Effective engagement with Māori

It is important to include a Te Ao Māori perspective when undertaking age friendly work. Genuine engagement with Māori is based on reciprocity and includes building long-term relationships with relevant people from local iwi, hapū and whānau.

Involving Māori at the start of your work enables the development of an enduring partnership to inform planning and to support the ongoing needs of kaumātua Māori in your community. Take the time needed to build these relationships.

If you want to start having conversations with relevant iwi and hapū and you are not sure where to start, link in with other groups with established relationships. Talk to council staff or your regional Te Puni Kōkiri office, as there may be an existing relationship in place that you could contribute to as part of your work.

There are a number of useful resources to help you engage effectively with Māori in our resources page:

Effective engagement with Pacific communities

The Ministry for Pacific Peoples provides a range of resources to guide engagement with Pacific peoples. These include:

- a policy analysis tool called Kapasa to support a strengths-based approach to policy development focused on the values of Pacific communities.
- a comprehensive guide on engagement called Yavu. This series of resources provides a framework on how to engage with Pacific peoples in a way that is culturally responsive and sustainable.

Find out more on the Ministry for Pacific Peoples website

The Ministry for Pacific Peoples also has teams around New Zealand which can provide additional support.

Engaging with migrant communities

Forecasts show that the greatest percentage growth in our older communities will be in ethnic groups other than New Zealand European, Māori, and Pacific peoples.

This growth will significantly increase the diversity of our older population in the next 20 years. Connecting with local representatives of a range of ethnic groups will help you to develop programmes that will be appropriate for your future community.

If you are looking for help, council staff in policy and/or community development roles are a good starting point as they may have established links with community groups.

You could also contact the Ministry for Ethnic Communities – their website includes a range of resources, including the Ethnicity Matters guide to working with and responding to the needs of ethnic communities.

Find out more on the ministry for ethnic communities website.

Working with rural and remote communities

Our rural communities face unique challenges – some useful resources include:

- **Rural proofing guidance** – Ministry of Primary Industries
- **Age-Friendly Rural and Remote Communities: A Guide** – Government of Canada
- **Engaging in my rural community: Perceptions of people aged 85 years and over** – Auckland University of Technology

Share your findings

Make the findings of the engagement publicly available so that the wider community knows what was discussed and what the conclusions were. This also enables those who engaged in discussions to confirm that their views have been accurately represented.

“Believe in and trust in the wisdom of your community. They live it, they know it. Demonstrate your belief with every interaction and action so we role model the values of respect and community belief.”

Madeleine Burdon, Community Development Advisor, Waimakariri District Council



Step 2.3 – Identify opportunities for collaboration

As part of your assessment, consider how other programmes can help to inform what you're doing.

Creating partnerships and connections

One of the keys to a successful age friendly plan is to connect your work to other key strategies and projects.

You may have already identified other local groups you could work with in step 1 – as well as these, you might want to look more broadly at existing programmes that could fit with your work.

Some useful programmes and resources to help with this include:

- Safe Communities
- 8 80 cities
- Comparison of place-based programmes with the World Health Organization's Age-friendly Cities and Communities model
- Alzheimers New Zealand's Dementia Friendly Communities toolkit
- WHO's Checklist of Essential Features of Age-friendly Cities
- Child friendly cities.

Step 2.4 – Self-assessment for councils

It can be useful for councils to do an age friendly self-assessment across their own suite of strategies, guidelines, standards, and forward planning documents.

The self-assessment could include reviewing how age friendly public-facing council services are.

For example, to help make council services more aware of and able to respond to the needs of older people and those with dementia, councils can engage in the:

- Age friendly Business programme (more information is available on the Office for Seniors website)
- Alzheimers New Zealand's Dementia Friendly Recognition Programme

You can carry out an assessment of how well your local residential area meets your physical, cognitive and sensory needs using the Older People's External Residential Tool (OPERAT) which is administered by Massey University in New Zealand.

Find out more about the OPERAT on their website.

Resources for assessing age friendliness

Useful resources when assessing how age friendly your community is, and which other programmes might work well with yours.

Resources for assessing current state

- Your local council: Check out what is available on the council website and/or in council publications. Local demographics can be a useful tool to demonstrate the need for an age friendly approach.
- Checklist of Essential Features of Age-friendly Cities: This checklist is a useful starting place for assessing the age-friendliness of your community.
- The mechanisms of subnational population growth and decline in New Zealand 1976-2013: This guide, by Dr. Natalie Jackson, provides a summary of a comprehensive project that looked at population change across New Zealand towns, rural centres, and territorial authority areas over a 37 year period.
- Assessment templates from the:
 - Government of Western Australia,
 - Queensland Government
 - Government of South Australia (page 30 onwards).
- Survey Monkey: A free tool to create your own online survey.
- Building Great Communities - Consider an Age friendly Community Assessment from Grantmakers in Aging. Provides a matrix to help guide what type of assessment would be useful and which tool to use
- Comparison of place-based programmes with the World Health Organization's Age-friendly Cities and Communities model (PDF 949KB)

Resources for engaging with Māori

There are many other resources available to support your work with Māori:

- Te Arawhiti's Guidelines for engagement with Māori help with effective and genuine engagement that supports relationships based on trust and confidence.
- Building Relationships for Effective Engagement with Māori from Te Puni Kōkiri (TPK). You can also contact your local TPK Regional Office for additional support.
- Kaumātuatanga – The Needs and Wellbeing of Older Māori, a report commissioned by Te Pou Matakana that sought to understand what an ageing population means in the context of Whānau Ora approaches.

- Inspiring Communities is a New Zealand collaboration that supports community-led development. It has a number of useful resources including:
 - Ngā Mātāpono CLD Principles
 - Neighbourhoods
 - Te Reo resources.
- Kia Tūtahi Relationship Accord Engagement Guide by The Department of Internal Affairs provides practical advice for engaging with Māori, Pacific peoples, ethnic communities, and disabled people.

Resources for engaging with Pacific communities

The Ministry for Pacific Peoples provides a range of resources to guide engagement with Pacific Peoples on their website.

Resources for engaging with ethnic communities

The Ministry for Ethnic Communities offers a range of resources on their website, including the Ethnicity Matters guide to working with and responding to the needs of ethnic communities.

Resources for working with rural and remote communities

As part of the consultation on Better Later Life He Oranga Kaumātua 2019 to 2034, demography consultant Dr Natalie Jackson provided the following article about regional opportunities arising from an ageing population.

The Ministry for Primary Industries has developed 'rural proofing' guidance, to help policy makers consider the challenges faced by the rural sector.

Another practical guide has been developed in Canada which identifies indicators of age friendly rural/remote communities.

Age-Friendly Rural and Remote Communities: A Guide can be found on the Public Health Agency of Canada website.

Useful examples

- Age friendly Auckland survey – summary video: In June 2019, Auckland Council undertook extensive consultation across its diverse communities and used a simple summary online as a useful way to reach a large and diverse group.
- Auckland University of Technology is undertaking research to determine the factors that influence the age friendliness of rural communities.
- Age friendly Auckland – An Age friendly Tāmaki Makaurau.
- Measuring the Age-friendliness of Cities: WHO monitoring framework.
- Napier City Council age friendliness assessment gathered information with help from volunteers using the OPERAT tool.
- Accessibility Photo Library: The New Zealand Human Rights Commission and Access Alliance teamed up to create a photo library which demonstrates positive and problematic examples of accessibility.
- Age-friendly Cities and Communities Information Kit for Local Government Councillors and Senior Management: This resource was developed by Council on the Ageing (COTA) Victoria and the Municipal Association of Victoria, Australia. It includes a mapping of existing local plans and strategies to the age friendly approach (page 18).
- Age Friendly City Survey: The Australian Capital Territory produced a short report on the results of their survey.



Step 3 – Develop a plan

Communities working towards becoming age friendly should develop a plan that focuses on their own specific strengths, cultures, and needs.

Before you develop your plan, make sure you understand your community's current situation.

Aotearoa New Zealand is a unique and diverse nation. When planning, it is important to think about the impacts of our:

- geographic isolation
- relatively small population
- rural/urban split
- bicultural framework for relations between the Crown and Māori
- vulnerability to natural hazards such as flooding, extreme weather events, rising sea levels, earthquakes and tsunamis.

Make sure you also consider the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on your community, Aotearoa as a whole, and any overseas stakeholders or partners you may be working with.

Step 3.1 – Develop an engagement strategy

Include all the members of your community and gather feedback from a diverse range of voices to inform your work.

Who to seek feedback from

An engagement strategy defines who you will engage with and how.

Make sure you include a range of people and groups. This will help to give a voice to people who might not otherwise be represented or heard in community meetings.

It will also ensure services and activities are relevant to the people who need more assistance with social connection and inclusion.

Include all members of your community, including the perspectives of:

- Māori
- Pacific peoples
- disabled people
- people living with dementia
- older migrants
- former refugees
- the LGBTI community
- those who live remotely
- any groups that are at risk of being marginalised.

You may have already engaged with some of these groups as part of your assessment.

Organisations that can help

Connect with relevant organisations for advice on how to meet the specific needs and preferences of these diverse groups, for example:

- Alzheimers New Zealand
- Ministry for Ethnic Communities.

Canterbury District Health Board and Age Concern Christchurch have worked with people with dementia to gather their perspectives on how the city could become more dementia friendly for their report *Developing a Dementia Friendly Christchurch*.

Include a Te Ao Māori perspective

Māori models of wellbeing are holistic, strengths-based and put people and communities at the centre.

Work with appropriate iwi and hapū representatives and the kuia and kaumātua living in your community to ensure your initiative caters for the needs and preferences of kaumātua Māori. Initiatives that work well for Māori often work well for community members of all ethnicities.

Use the relationships you have built with kaumātua and other community leaders to help you understand and apply kaupapa Māori models of wellbeing to your project.

“Hamilton libraries have an oral historian on staff, who is now working with Kaumātua to gather their histories. We were officially welcomed onto Rauawaawa late last year to start this project, which was a real highlight for me.”

Nick Chester, Hamilton City Council

Working with community members

Working closely with stakeholders – and maintaining those relationships – is key to ensuring a suitable plan is developed for your context.

Consider seeking and including the views of community members in their 50s and 60s who will be impacted by long term plans.

Working with social and health sector organisations

Work with the older people in your community, as well as seeking feedback from other social and health sector organisations – for example, non-government organisations and district health boards

A ‘bottom-up/top-down’ approach helps to develop programmes that are relevant and attractive to the target audience, while also ensuring that there is a good overview to prevent gaps or duplication of services or activities.

“We had to challenge our traditional ways of working to bring this strategy through. While it’s a Council strategy, we wanted great community engagement.”

Gerry Brooking, Carterton District Council

Step 3.2 – Define scope and key indicators

The scope and detail of your plan will reflect your community's unique challenges and opportunities.

Structuring your plan

Your plan needs to reflect the nature and resources of its community.

Your plan might:

- have a large or small scope as required
- cover all eight of the WHO age friendly domains or topics (see page 9 of the WHO Global age-friendly cities guide) and incorporate dementia friendly work – or focus on only a few of these domains
- establish actions over a long time period, or it might be a shorter plan with more immediate time horizons.

Hamilton City developed its age friendly plan in three key steps:

- information gathering
- identifying age friendly projects, and
- establishing an evaluation group.

Your community may have its own unique challenges and opportunities. Participants may identify the need for additional age friendly domains to include in your plan.

Set some key indicators

Indicators can be used to:

- help build a shared understanding of the community's age friendly priorities so that the project's goals align with the most important themes
- measure the community's baseline level of age friendliness and monitor progress over time
- gain political and social commitment to support the long-term sustainability of actions.

You can develop your own indicators that are specific to your community, or you could use some or all of those set by the World Health Organization, in their framework: Measuring the Age-friendliness of Cities.

Step 3.3 – Make a monitoring plan

It is important to include a monitoring component in your plan so you can keep an eye on how your work is tracking over time.

What you should monitor

A good monitoring programme assesses:

- the progress of the project, and
- the process taken to get there.

Make sure to file all relevant documentation for future reference throughout all stages of your work.

Ways to structure a monitoring framework

There are many ways to structure a monitoring framework. For example:

- Hamilton City has established a separate steering group to oversee the implementation of their plan
- Banyule City Council in Victoria, Australia, has engaged older people to monitor actions and has Think Tanks or Age Friendly Ambassadors who assist with ensuring their age friendly actions are being met.

When engaging with Māori and/or other ethnic groups, ensure they have a strong voice in developing the monitoring and evaluation components of the project. This will enable differing worldviews to inform a shared vision of success.



Resources for developing an age friendly plan

Useful resources to help you develop a plan and monitoring strategy.

Useful resources

- **Good Practice Guide to Improving Liveability for Older People in Small Towns:** This guide was produced by the Municipal Association of Victoria and the State Government of Victoria. It describes a five-step methodology for developing small-scale projects, supported by examples from various small towns and communities.
- **Active Ageing Model:** This policy framework, by WHO, is intended to inform discussion and the formulation of action plans that promote healthy and active ageing.
- **An Age-Friendly Approach to Disaster Recovery:** This guide was created by Age-Friendly Northeast Victoria following the January 2020 bushfires.

Useful examples

- **Age-friendly Auckland:** Auckland Council have developed a series of infographics presenting key demographic data to inform stakeholder and community engagement.
- **The Waimakariri Age-Friendly Plan:** This Plan sets out a useful and clear process that shows how the plan was developed, including a number of community engagement steps.
- **Nelson City Council's 'City for All Ages' website:** This outlines Nelson's approach to developing an age friendly strategy.
- **Ready for Living:** Gore District Council identified six focus areas when developing its Action Plan. The website also shares the Council's timeline, feasibility study, and project overview.
- **Tauranga Age-Friendly City Strategy 2013-2023:** Tauranga was one of the first communities to develop an age friendly strategy. This document clearly presents the various components of Tauranga's strategy.
- **Hamilton Age Friendly Plan 2018-2021:** Hamilton's plan gives a useful overview of the process the City followed and its guiding principles. The goals for each domain demonstrate how to build on what is already in place. Implementation can be monitored easily with indicators, timeframes, and identification of responsible agencies.

- Horowhenua District Council completed its Age-Friendly Communities Strategy in 2021. It outlines a range of actions that will contribute to making the district age friendly.
- Napier City's Positive Ageing Strategy 2020-2024: This strategy identified seven priority areas and five key principles to guide the Council's work.
- ACT Strategic Plan for Positive Ageing 2010-2014 – Towards an Age-Friendly City: The Australian Capital Territory (ACT) strategic plan outlines the process used to develop it and how it will be implemented, identifying the objectives, actions, indicators, and lead agencies.
- Banyule City Council: The Council developed a simple policy statement, a strategic plan, and a separate action plan.
- Age Friendly Clarence Plan 2018-2022: The City of Clarence was the first Tasmanian council to join the WHO Global Network in 2014. Its comprehensive plan describes the development approach taken, and community feedback received. It sets out a five-year plan, describes the various roles the Council will play, and the actions to which it has committed.
- Age-Friendly Melville Plan 2017-2021: This plan from Western Australia provides an overview of the process followed and the priorities developed.
- The City of Melbourne's 'Melbourne: A great place to age 2020 to 2024' takes COVID-19 response and recovery into account in this strategic document.
- The AARP have adapted the 8 WHO domains in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Step 4. Implement the plan

With the assessment and planning done, you can now start to implement your age friendly actions.

Implementation is the part of the project where strategies and plans turn into actions. Actions should align with the goals of the strategy or plan. Putting actions in place shows the community the results of your planning which, in many cases, they will have been part of.

“People really appreciated the engagement. It can take longer and be ‘messier’, but in the long run we ended up with not just a strategy but a whole concept that the community believes in and not just something that lives on the shelf. It makes us more accountable because people ask about it - ‘what happened to this’ and ‘what about that.’”

Gerry Brooking, Carterton District Council



Step 4.1 – Make an action plan

However big or small your age friendly plan is, you'll need to work out when projects can be undertaken and who will oversee them.

Plan your projects

Actions should flow from the priorities established during the community assessments and can be big or small. Do not be worried about starting small, as small things can make big differences in people's lives.

To reduce your workload, think about what resources are already available. For example, consider using existing age friendly templates and adapt these to the local context rather than creating something entirely new.

Develop a schedule

When developing the schedule for your age friendly plan, keep in mind that you won't be able to do everything you want to all at once.

Prioritise your work and consider a range of initiatives, from projects that can be implemented quickly and easily at low or no cost, to more complex initiatives involving multiple parties and requiring funding.

Identify when you expect the different parts of your action plan to be completed. Create a timeline to demonstrate how all the pieces of this work link together and to help you with project planning.

Identify any funding available through grants and/or your local council or district health board, and when it would be available for your project. Not all funding will be available at the same time so plan around this.

Costs can be high during the implementation phase and implementation delays are not uncommon. They can happen for many reasons.

Monitoring the implementation of the project and keeping good notes will enable you to reflect on the process and improve delivery for next time. This documentation will be important for identifying lessons learnt when you evaluate your implementation process.

Assign responsibilities

An age friendly plan might be overseen by one responsible person or team, with projects or priority areas led by communities, not-for-profit organisations, charities, local councils and central government.

Having older people lead and directly participate in age friendly projects aligns with a community led development approach and is key to their success.

Resources for implementing an age friendly plan

Resources and examples to use for more information when you're ready to implement your age friendly plan.

Useful resources

- Age-Friendly Communities in Canada: Community Implementation Guide – Toolbox – This resource offers practical guides and templates to facilitate implementation of an age friendly plan, including how to conduct a focus group, how to compile a newsletter, and tips on media releases.
- A Research and Evaluation Framework for Age-friendly Cities – The United Kingdom has a resource which utilises the WHO domains to assess a city and implement the resulting plan.
- AARP is a national organisation promoting and supporting age friendly and dementia-friendly communities across the United States. Its website provides many useful resources across a variety of mediums (articles, weblinks, videos, podcasts etc).

Useful examples

Read and watch the following case studies on the Office for Seniors website:

- Hamilton City Council changed the way they plan for their older population's well-being, while embracing their city's unique qualities. See how they learned these tips.
- Staff at Waimakariri District Council were inspired to create an age friendly plan after participating in their first Age-friendly Forum in Aotearoa/New Zealand and seeing how even small changes could make a big difference.
- With a small population spread across five towns and rural communities, the Wairarapa is governed by three district councils. To help their older people, it made sense for councils to take up the baton and work together.

Step 5 – Evaluate your age friendly programme

Evaluating the programme is key to understanding what's working well, what's not, and what to focus on next.

At this point in the process, you may already have a good idea of how you will evaluate your programme, particularly if you defined key indicators and made a monitoring plan in Step 3.

Why evaluate

An evaluation shows what progress has been made from the baseline assessment, and where improvements are still needed. It can reveal opportunities and barriers to further progress and may raise questions about whether the original goals are still the right ones.

Step 5.1 – What to evaluate

Work with others involved in the programme to evaluate what went well, what didn't, and what you've learnt as a result.

WHO evaluation indicators

The WHO has produced a guide that identifies key indicators to measure progress towards age friendliness. It suggests that measures should be used to track improvements in equity, accessibility and inclusiveness.

It also suggests that (as with all resources in this toolkit) resources should be adapted to suit local conditions in order to build an indicator set that is the most meaningful and relevant in the context.

Questions to ask

Questions commonly asked as part of an evaluation are:

- What did we do?
- How well did we do it?
- Is anyone better off as a result?
- What lessons have we learnt?

For example, the AUT evaluation of New Zealand's three pilot age friendly communities showed that:

- communities are generally interested and committed to the age friendly movement
- engagement of Māori, Pacific and migrant communities needed improvement
- ageist attitudes exist in the community and in the media, which can be a barrier to getting support to develop and implement age friendly plans
- there can be tensions between older people and council priorities
- physical environments, transport, and access to services and information are commonly considered important
- each community is different and a tailored approach is needed.



Step 5.2 – Choose your evaluation method

Choose a method that will best help you to gauge whether there has been any improvement and whether the project has achieved its goals.

Choose a method that works for your programme

Similar to strategic plans, the style of evaluation used can vary.

You might want to:

- repeat your baseline age friendly assessment to see what changes have occurred
- use the indicators and formats suggested by the WHO
- use your own indicators and measures that you developed when making a plan.

It can be useful to consider how you will present the findings to determine which methods will give you the most relevant information.

Decide how to gather information

Information gathering could take several different forms, including:

- surveys
- community workshops
- focus groups
- interviews.

You may wish to set up a new group or use an existing group.



Step 5.3 – Use your findings

The findings of your evaluation can help others learn and can be used to guide your next steps.

Share your experiences

Evaluation lets you celebrate your successes and share your findings, but don't be shy about identifying things that didn't go so well too – others can learn from these experiences.

Plan your next move

Use the evaluation's findings to regroup and move on to the next cycle of engagement, planning, and implementation.

The journey to becoming age friendly never really ends, as there will always be new cohorts of older people, new ideas and ways of doing things.

Evaluation is about monitoring the changing needs in our communities, thinking about the opportunities and challenges those needs bring, and planning to put ideas into action.

Resources and examples for evaluation

Resources and examples to help with planning the evaluation of your age friendly programme.

Wellbeing indicators for older New Zealanders

The Office for Seniors has developed a set of initial indicators to monitor the progress of the Better Later Life He Oranga Kaumātua 2019 to 2034 strategy. These indicators are for each of the strategy's action areas:

- achieving financial security and economic participation
- promoting healthy ageing and improving access to services
- creating diverse housing choices and options
- enhancing opportunities for social connection
- making environments accessible.

We have also developed indicators to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on older people (aged 65+) and on older workers (aged 50+)

Useful resources

- **Age-friendly Neighbourhoods Guidelines and Toolkit for Local Government:** This booklet, produced by the Government of South Australia, recommends assigning performance measures when developing age friendly initiatives, allowing for easier evaluation post-implementation.
- **A Research and Evaluation Framework:** This document, by the UK Urban Ageing Consortium, offers guidance on developing a Framework for Evaluating an Age-friendly City (page 176) as well as evaluation resources such as a template for age friendly evaluation and a template for an age friendly action plan (in Appendices A and B respectively).
- **AARP Livability Index:** The AARP has developed an accessible web-based index to evaluate community liveability. Because liveability means different things to different people, the index considers a highly liveable community as one with 'diverse features that appeal to people of all ages, incomes, and abilities'.
- **Results-Based Accountability (RBA)** is a common sense framework focusing on results. Further information and relevant RBA links are shared on the Ministry of Social Development website.
- **The Model for Improvement** is used widely in health and other organisations to deliver gradual service improvements. It uses a Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle to identify, implement and evaluate small scale changes which build upon each other.
- **Measuring the Age-Friendliness of Cities:** a WHO guide that identifies key indicators to measure progress towards age-friendliness. It suggests that measures should be used to track improvements in equity, accessibility and inclusiveness.

Useful examples

- **Hamilton, New Zealand – Age Friendly City:** Hamilton's plan identifies how each project relates to a domain, the responsible agency, and the indicators and timeframe for completion. Further evidence that evaluation has been considered during the planning process is the note that a new Evaluation Group will be formed, replacing the Steering Group.
- **New Plymouth's Positive Ageing Strategy 2010-2020:** This document includes a specific section on its monitoring and evaluation processes, including outcome measures and a monitoring framework.
- **Napier's Positive Ageing Strategy:** This strategy includes a section on monitoring and review, including population and performance measures, a strategy review timeframe, and project evaluation measures.
- **Age-friendly Report Card 2018-2019:** The Queensland Government produced a simple two-page summary of their progress across the eight WHO domains.

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