AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY PLANNING

December 2014   Planning Guide

GOVERNMENT OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Wheatbelt
Development
Commission

ROYALTIES
FOR REGIONS

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

This planning guide outlines a process and offers useful tools and resources for Age Friendly Community planning. It is not prescriptive and it is expected that each community will have its own style and language for strategic planning.

WHAT IS AN AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY?

Age Friendly Communities are those that encourage "active ageing by optimising opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance the quality of life as people age" (World Health Organisation)[1]. An Age Friendly Community is one which:

- ■ recognises the great diversity among older people;

- ■ promotes their inclusion and contribution in all areas of community life;

- ■ respects their decisions and lifestyle choices; and

- ■ anticipates and responds to ageing-related needs and preferences.

A community that exhibits these qualities is not only an Age-Friendly Community it tends to better cater for the whole population, where a wider range of abilities and needs are met.

Age Friendly Community Planning is a timely activity for local governments. The Wheatbelt Region is no exception. It is forecast that by 2027, the population of the Wheatbelt aged 70 and over will have increased by 75.3% from 2011. Furthermore, the 70+ population will have increased from 10.4% of the total population in 2011 to around 17% in 2027[2]. Generally speaking, older adults prefer to remain in their own home and continue to be part of their community where they can feel safe, valued and respected.

"An Age-Friendly Community is a friendly community"

It is critical that local governments prepare and plan to ensure that this can occur in the Wheatbelt.

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[1] Note that the Western Australia State Government has adopted the World Health Organisation's model (see http://www.communities.wa.gov.au/communities-in-focus/seniors/Pages/Age-Friendly-WA-.aspx).
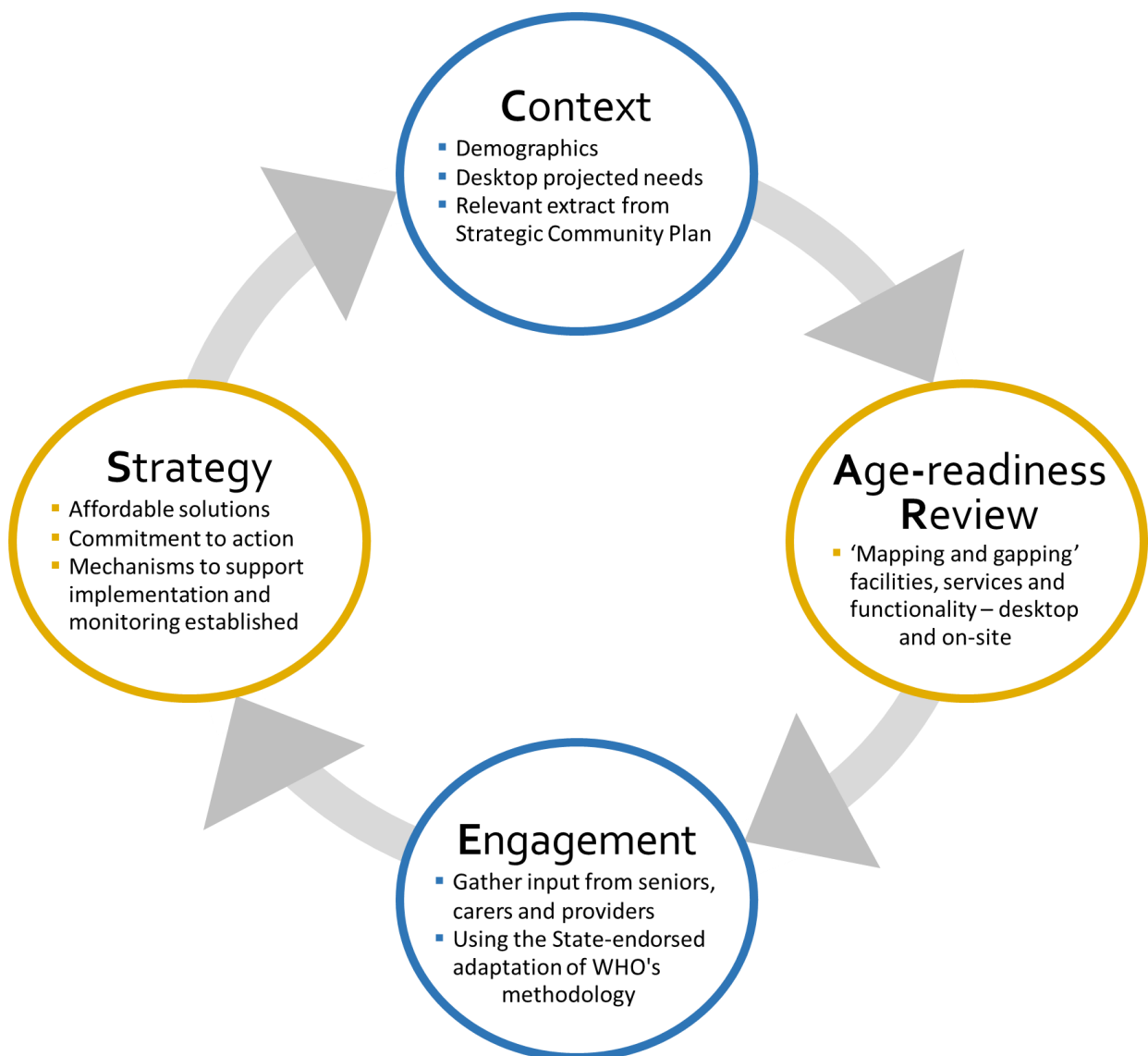
[2] Verso Consulting 2013, Wheatbelt Integrated Aged Care Plan.

AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES PLANNING

Overview

The planning model used in this Guide consists of a four step solution-focused process. It will ultimately produce an Informing Strategy consistent with and complementary to your Strategic Community Plan. The first step is to gain an understanding of each unique local community. A collaborative process involving service providers and seniors themselves is then used to develop a three to five-year plan. Each stage naturally progresses into the next, with the first three steps providing the essential information for understanding the current and longer term needs and preferences, as the basis for strategic planning and action.

4-step age friendly communities planning process

Context
- Demographics
- Desktop projected needs
- Relevant extract from Strategic Community Plan

Age-readiness Review
- 'Mapping and gapping' facilities, services and functionality – desktop and on-site

Engagement
- Gather input from seniors, carers and providers
- Using the State-endorsed adaptation of WHO's methodology

Strategy
- Affordable solutions
- Commitment to action
- Mechanisms to support implementation and monitoring established

Context

The first step of the Age Friendly planning process is to collate and consider the relevant demographics and demand profile for the local community, as well as the community's aspirations and strategic intent as expressed in the local government's Strategic Community Plan. This desktop exercise will provide baseline information of projected needs.

The information for this step will largely be sourced from the Australia Bureau of Statistics and other relevant existing sources (such as the Central East Wheatbelt Aged Support and Care Regional Solution/s (CEWASCS) Report or Wheatbelt Aged Support and Care Solutions (WASCS) (including individual Local Government Needs Analysis) or research undertaken for your Strategic Community Plan). Examples of relevant data include:

- Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) - a measure of remoteness in Australia essentially based on seniors distance from service centres.

- The 70+ population – there are Commonwealth funding opportunities for aged care based on the size and growth of this population.

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) population – it is recognized that people from this group experience issues relating to ageing at an earlier age. This is also reflected in Commonwealth funding and programs.

- Dementia needs estimates – a proportion of this population sector require specialised care.

- Insecure tenure - can be an indicator of a person's likely ability to remain at home and receive services.

- Proportion of people living alone – this can reflect the likelihood of an informal carer being available (family member/friend)

- The Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) measure – developed by the ABS, this index measures relative advantage and can indicate likelihood of being able to contribute to care costs and form of ownership which may be preferred in the case of new aged housing

Age-readiness Review

Step two is the first part of the audit process and essentially aims to review the age-readiness of the community – "mapping and gapping" the location, condition and convenience of community and transport infrastructure and services. The Age-readiness Review will also consider other information on quality of life factors, using the eight domains of the World Health Organisation Guide to Age-Friendly Cities and Communities. The domains have been configured to reflect Wheatbelt perspectives: health and community services; outdoor spaces and buildings; transport and movement; housing; sport and recreation; social participation; respect and social inclusion; and communication and information.

An Audit Tool is available in digital format or in excel to assist Wheatbelt local governments to undertake a physical site assessment as well as collect data from a range of other sources.

Engagement

Step three is the second part of the audit process (also captured in the Audit Tool) to include ratings and insights from seniors, their carers and service providers. This step ensures the knowledge and views of seniors and those who care and provide for them inform the assessment of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for the community in becoming more age friendly. There are two primary methods of engagement that can be applied; surveys and focus groups. Local governments are encouraged to design creative engagement processes (eg including a seniors' focus group in a main street audit, seniors' photo competition to supplement a survey etc).

Surveys

A survey is a data collection tool that involves posing a set of standard questions to a range of people, in this case; seniors, carers and service providers. Surveys can be conducted in a variety of means including electronically, face to face, by telephone and written forms.

Focus Groups

In 2012, the Department for Communities released the Age Friendly Communities: A Western Australian Approach. The document provides high level guidance for Local Governments undertaking an Age Friendly Community planning process. It contains specific guidance related to conducting focus groups with seniors and service providers as part of the planning process. It is suggested that focus groups are structured around the eight WHO AFC domains with participants involved in assessing these features in their own community. A suggested framework for focus group discussion questions can be found at: http://www.communities.wa.gov.au/communities-in-focus/seniors/Pages/Age-Friendly-WA-.aspx.

Questions for Consultation

An extract of the Audit, Questions for Consultation, is also available and can be used by Local Governments as a guide for planning and conducting surveys or focus groups.

CEACA and WASCS Community Consultation Data

You may wish to include data collected during the CEACA and WASCS community consultation. An overview of these findings is available from your individual CEACA or WASCS Local Government Needs Analysis.

Strategy

The fourth and final step develops real and sustainable strategic solutions. Actions will be prioritised and included in the final plan where responsibility for delivery is identified and accepted. The plan is an "informing strategy" under the Western Australia Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework. Actions involving the local government will therefore need to be tested in that context.

Whilst the process is presented as a systematic approach it is likely to be iterative and evolve over time. The process needs to be tailored to meet the needs of each community and organisation. The steps described below are a guide from which local governments are encouraged to design their own process.

Collate findings from previous stages and identify issues and options

The first step in putting together an Age Friendly Community Plan is to understand where the Local Government is at. All the findings from previous stages should be collated including the Context, results of the Age-Readiness Review and the feedback collected through the Engagement process. In collating this information, local governments should identify the issues that require attention. Following the identification of issues, local governments should identify the options that exist to address the issues and unmet needs. Multiple solutions may be possible and should all be put on the table in this early phase.

Council workshops to seek direction

Elected Members should be engaged in considering the issues and options to give early guidance and establish the broad parameters for the Plan. Most Local Governments chose to do this by way of facilitated workshops where the participants work together to agree on a way forward.

Prepare draft Plan

The information collected up to this point can be used to begin the preparation of the draft Plan.

Community Engagement

Once the draft Plan has progressed to a point where the Council is happy to engage with the community, it should be publicly released and engagement activities undertaken.

Revisions as required based on community feedback

The community's feedback needs to be considered by the Council, along with further advice as required from the Administration.

Finalise Plan

The resource implications of the Plan need to be considered in the context of the four year budget and long term financial plan, alongside other priorities in the Strategic Community Plan and Corporate Business Plan. The final revisions are then made and the Plan is adopted by the Council.

Model Table of Contents

While each Local Government will have its own language (eg Goals or Outcomes instead of Objectives) and format, an Age-Friendly Community Plan will typically include:

- Objectives
- Strategies
- Key actions and projects, identifying:
  - Role and commitment of the Council (operational areas where relevant)
  - Role and commitment of external service providers/stakeholders
- Success measures
- Resourcing implications
- Implementation mechanisms
- Monitoring progress
- Review cycle

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

A number of useful Age-Friendly Communities resources are listed below.

Core References

Western Australian Approach to Age Friendly Communities

The (then) Department for Communities, in partnership with the City of Melville, took part in the World Health Organisation's (WHO) Age-Friendly Cities (AFC) Project. The Western Australian Age-Friendly Communities approach incorporates the WHO *Checklist of Essential Features of Age-Friendly Cities*. http://www.communities.wa.gov.au/Documents/Seniors/SO64%20Age%20Friendly%20WA%20Toolkit%20Aug2012.doc

Methodology, Outcomes and Key Findings from the Western Australian Age-Friendly Communities Research Projects 2006-11

This paper summarises the methodology, outcomes and key findings from the Age-Friendly Communities funding program delivered by the (then) Department for Communities that underwrote research projects in 27 local government areas between 2006 and 2011. The paper is presented as a 'collective examination' of the most recent reports provided by 23 of these local governments. http://www.communities.wa.gov.au/Documents/Seniors/Age%20Friendly%20Collective%20Examination%20of%20local%20government%20research%20reports.docx

Council On The Ageing (COTA) Western Australia Age Friendly Communities Network

COTA has links to a number of useful resources for Western Australian local governments. http://www.cotawa.org.au/programs-projects/age-friendly-communities-network/

Australia Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Topics at a Glance - Aging

The ABS provides a highly useful compendium of relevant data and reports on Australia's aging population. http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/c311215.nsf/web/ageing

Older Australia at a glance (fourth edition) excerpt

The Australian Institute for Health and Welfare 'Use of Health and Aged Care Services Report' provides reliable statistical information and commentary on the needs and circumstances of older Australians. This excerpt gives an overview of the health and aged care services and how they are used and accessed. http://www.aihw.gov.au/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=6442454214

About seniors and Your Life Choices

An online resource with an accompanying print magazine targeted at readers in their 50s and beyond that provides extensive information about health, wealth, travel, work, new technology and great food. http://www.yourlifechoices.com.au/

Retirement living, seniors housing and seniors care in Australia

An online resource that provides information to Australian seniors and their families about retirement villages, home care and aged care services, including a searchable directory. http://www.itsyourlife.com.au/

Age Friendly Home Maintenance Kit

This resource by the Department of Local Government and Communities, provides relevant and practical information for seniors to ensure their homes are well maintained, safe and suitable. The kit offers key tips on common home maintenance issues that are often overlooked and can be prevented. http://www.communities.wa.gov.au/communities-in-focus/seniors/Pages/Age-Friendly-Home-Maintenance-Kit-.aspx

Guidelines for making information accessible

These guidelines provide tips and resources to assist with the development of printed information, signage and digital communications that meet accessibility standards ensuring people of all abilities can access information. The types of disability that impact on an individual's ability to access information include hearing loss or deafness, impaired vision or blindness and disabilities that affect the ability to learn or process information (such as intellectual disability and psychiatric illness). http://www.accesswa.com.au/content/documents/accessible_information.doc

Creating accessible events

A practical guide to assist with the planning and delivery of events, public meetings, consultations and functions that are accessible for all people, including those with disabilities. http://www.accesswa.com.au/content/documents/creating_accessible_events.doc

Other Strategies and Plans

Wheatbelt Aged Support and Care Solutions (WASCS) Report
http://www.wheatbelt.wa.gov.au/files/6014/1465/3838/Wheatbelt_Aged_Support_and_Care_Solutions_Final_080714.pdf

Central East Wheatbelt Aged Support and Care Regional Solution/s (CEWASCS) Report
http://www.wheatbelt.wa.gov.au/files/6213/9711/4518/Central_East_Aged_Care_Regional_Solutions_report.pdf

Examples

Age Friendly Communities – A Joint Approach across the Shires of West Arthur, Williams, Wagin, Woodanilling, Dumbleyung and Lake Grace
http://www.williams.wa.gov.au/Assets/Documents/Document-Centre/Public-Documents/Age_Friendly_Communities.pdf

Shire of Capel Age-Friendly Communities
http://www.capel.wa.gov.au/portals/0/doc/publications/age%20friendly%20communities%20final%20report%201.pdf

Shire of Donnybrook Age-Friendly Communities Study
http://donnybrook-balingup.wa.gov.au/files/2014/10/Donnybrook-Age-Friendly-Community-Study-Report-FINAL-August-2014.pdf

Shire of Moora Age-Friendly Communities Study
http://www.moora.wa.gov.au/assets/documents/REPORT-Shire-of-Moora-Age-Friendly-Communities-Study-June%202011.pdf