



CREATING AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES IN SMALL TOWNS PROJECT

*EVALUATION OF
PHASE ONE*

Acknowledgments

The Wheatbelt Development Commission (WDC) acknowledges the considerable input into the Creating Age Friendly Communities Wheatbelt Review by 33 of the Region's Local Governments, government agencies and trading enterprises at a regional and central level.

The development of this Evaluation was funded through the Royalties for Regions Regional Grant Scheme.

Disclaimer

This document has been prepared using a range of evidence to provide key stakeholders with a clear indication of the Wheatbelt Development Commission's thinking on priority actions to ensure a strong and vibrant future for the Region. All information is provided to the best of our ability and within the limits of our knowledge and resources.

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List of Terminology

| Evaluation Term | Definition ¹ |
|------------------------|--|
| Activities | The tasks that are required to be done in order to achieve program outputs |
| Appropriateness | Extent to which a program is, or remains, in accordance with the original government decision |
| Benchmark | Standard of excellence or achievement against which measurement can be made |
| Bias | In statistics, bias describes the extent to which a measurement or sample underestimates or overestimates the true value |
| Effectiveness | The extent to which a program's intended results were achieved |
| Efficiency | A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise and time etc.) are converted into results |
| Equity | The quality of being fair and impartial |
| Evaluation | The systematic collection and analysis of information to enable judgments about a program's effectiveness, appropriateness and efficiency |
| Impact | Looks beyond the immediate results of an initiative and identifies longer-term effects including unintended or unanticipated consequences |
| Inputs | The resources (number of employees and/or funds) expended on the policy/program |
| Objective | A specific and measurable result that can be reached to accomplish a particular goal |
| Outcomes | The results, impacts or accomplishments of the program. It is important to capture both intended and unintended results |
| Outputs | The product or service delivered |
| Policy | A statement of principle that articulates, and aligns with legislative, regulatory or organizational requirements |
| Process | How inputs are translated into outputs during service delivery |
| Program | A group of related activities (may be called a program, project, policy, intervention, initiative, strategy or service) undertaken by or for Government that intends to have a specific impact (that is, Government is choosing to do something to achieve a result) |
| Relevance | The extent to which the program's objectives meet the target group's needs or priorities |
| Result | An observable measure of achievement, performance or change. It provides evidence of activities, success or otherwise |

¹ Department of Treasury 2014, 'Glossary of Evaluation Terms', *Government of Western Australia*

1 Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is to evaluate the *Creating Age Friendly Communities (CAFC) in Small Towns Project Evaluation* (the Evaluation) for its effectiveness in achieving its key objectives.

It also aims to review the role that the Wheatbelt Development Commission (WDC) played throughout the Project implementation, including concept development and design, project management and administration throughout the Project lifespan.

This report will inform the development of future projects in the Wheatbelt region and beyond. It will be used internally by WDC and provided to key stakeholders where appropriate. It will also be available to the Department of Regional Development to utilise where it is applicable to other projects in the regions.

2 Executive Summary

The Wheatbelt region of Western Australia is ageing and currently has a higher median age than many other regions across the State². However, many Wheatbelt communities don't have the facilities and infrastructure required to facilitate older people to remain in their community as their care needs increase. As a result, many older residents are forced to relocate from their community to access the services and infrastructure they require to meet their aged care needs.

The *Creating Age Friendly Communities (CAFC) in Small Towns Project* formed part of a holistic solution to address aged care issues across the region.

The CAFC in Small Towns Project, which was the recipient of \$2.53 million through the Royalties for Regions Regional Grant Scheme, is integral to the Wheatbelt Development Commission's (WDC) support for Local Governments to implement recommendations from the Central East Aged Care Alliance (CEACA) Aged Care Solution/s and the Wheatbelt Aged Support and Care Solutions (WASCS) Report.

The Project aimed to improve the level of age-friendly infrastructure, services and inclusion across all 42 Local Governments in the Wheatbelt. \$2.17 million of the project funds aimed to do this through:

- An age friendly community planning toolbox that included an audit tool which identified specific age-friendly infrastructure and service gaps, a prioritisation worksheet that ranked projects which have filled infrastructure gaps, and a planning guide that assisted Local Governments to develop an age-friendly community plan; and
- Funding in the form of a small grants scheme acted as a catalyst for the implementation of infrastructure projects identified in the age-friendly community planning process.

The Project was designed, administered and managed by the Wheatbelt Development Commission (WDC).

Project Background

The *CAFC in Small Towns Project* was implemented over two years between 2014 and 2016. The project provided simplified tools and processes to help address aged care issues across the Wheatbelt and assisted Local Governments with age-friendly planning.

This Evaluation reviews the CAFC Small Value Grant Scheme and the CAFC Planning Toolbox, as outlined below.

Planning Toolbox

The CAFC Planning Toolbox was developed to assist Local Governments in the Wheatbelt to undertake the full age-friendly community planning process.

The Toolbox provided resources and guidance to step Councils through each stage to ensure an informed and integrated plan. For Councils that have developed age friendly community plans, this Toolbox can continue to assist and review current plans and progress.

Small Value Grants

The CAFC Small Value Grant Scheme aimed to improve age friendly community infrastructure and services in the Wheatbelt through funding projects that will enhance the quality of life as people age.

² Wheatbelt Regional Profile 2011, Western Australian Planning Commission

A total of \$1.765 million was allocated to the Small Value Grant, with Local Governments receiving between \$40,000 and \$60,000 to fund priority projects. Over the course of the Grants Scheme, over 118 projects were approved for funding across 36 of the 42 Wheatbelt Local Governments; projects included age-friendly parks, disability access installations and footpath improvements.

Evaluation Methodology

This evaluation was conducted in two parts:

Part 1:

- Evaluate the success and impact of the Project to deliver on the outcomes and outputs identified in the Financial Assistance Agreement between WDC and the Department of Regional Development (DRD).
- Evaluate the success and impact of the 118 individual projects delivered by Local Governments that were funded by the CAFC Small Value Grant Scheme. This includes all phases of project development and delivery, utilisation of the age friendly audit tool and the administration of the Small Value Grant Scheme.

Part 2:

- Evaluate the role the WDC has played during the CAFC Small Value Grant Scheme and Planning Toolbox. This includes concept development, management and administration throughout the Project's lifespan.

To evaluate Part 1, WDC created a survey to assess how each Local Government viewed the project development, community awareness, project implementation and audit tool training. Heartlands WA, a third party organisation who regularly engages with Wheatbelt industry and Local Governments, were contracted by WDC to collect the survey data from each Local Government.

Out of the 42 Local Governments in the Wheatbelt, 33 of the 36 participating Local Governments fully completed and submitted the evaluation survey used for this Evaluation.

To evaluate WDC's role in the *CAFC in Small Towns Project*, semi-structured interviews were conducted by the University of Western Australia (UWA) with WDC project officers and staff who were actively involved in the project. The surveys completed by the Local Governments also asked questions on their experience working with WDC.

Key Findings

The key findings for Part 1 of this evaluation include:

- The *CAFC in Small Towns Project* improved age-friendly infrastructure in all participating Local Governments. This infrastructure was reported to have benefited not only older residents, but also families, residents with mobility difficulties and young people;
- The Audit Toolkit developed as part of the *CAFC in Small Towns Project* provided a valuable framework for Local Governments to assess current infrastructure and undertake community engagement. The Audit Toolkit was rated user friendly and assisted 88% of Local Governments to identify age friendly projects;
- Consultation of community members (not exclusive to aged residents) in the initial stages of project selection helped identify priority projects to meet the communities' diverse needs. 82% of participating Local Governments engaged with their community members to determine their *CAFC in Small Towns Projects*;
- Local Governments were able to assess the age-friendliness of their communities using the Audit Toolkit. An unexpected outcome was the use of the Audit Toolkit for other projects such as health and safety, disability access, and property management; and

- The *CAFC in Small Towns Project* has improved the capacity of Local Governments to deliver age friendly projects. Early engagement including project conception, completion of audit plans and grant applications encouraged Local Governments to take ownership of their projects and carry out work independently and internally. By doing so, 97% of Local Governments believe their projects led to more awareness for officers and elected members in the need for aged infrastructure in the community.

The key findings for Part 2 of this evaluation include the following:

- Collaboration between Local Governments and the WDC has resulted in successful project completion. 97% of participating Local Governments found communication with, and support from the WDC either 'very good' or 'good';
- The time available for Local Governments to complete the audit and submit grant applications to the WDC was intensive and could benefit from an extended timeframe;
- Training and interactive workshops on the use of the Audit Toolkit provided by Localise and in conjunction with the WDC, who also provided follow-up support, was critical to the success of 80% of participating Local Governments undertaking audits internally:
 - *"Officers were aware of accessibility issues. The training process highlighted the health benefits of having a more age friendly community."* – Goomalling
 - *"The application was well supported by the training session."* – Dumbleyung
 - *"A barrier for the project officer was not attending the audit tool training that was provided in the Avon Sub-region and Central East Sub-region."* – Wyalkatchem

3 Aged Care in Australia: Context

3.1 Aged care in Australia

Rural and remote Australia is currently aging faster than any other region in the country³. These regional ageing populations are likely to experience significant challenges as local aged services and infrastructure continue to be reduced or made increasingly concentrated around regional centres⁴.

In Australia, there is a growing trend for older people to 'age-in-place', defined as a person's ability to live independently in their homes and communities with access to affordable services⁵. Recent academic literature suggests that the majority of persons over 75 years of age wish to remain in their homes for as long as possible^{6,7}. It is believed that older people who are given the choice to remain in familiar settings will have more positive outcomes in terms of independence, social participation and health than if they had to leave their home⁸.

For ageing-in-place to be a viable option for ageing residents there must be effective and high quality community health facilities, affordable appropriate accommodation options, a diverse range of retail options and accessible transport options⁹. The Australian Government has included the concept of ageing-in-place in recent aged care reforms¹⁰, particularly aimed to offer choice and flexibility to ageing residents and support people to stay at home and in their communities for as long as possible¹⁰.

Despite the desire to age-in-place, older adults living in Western Australia's Wheatbelt increasingly have to relocate to other regions to access the services and infrastructure they require to meet their aged care needs. This places increased pressure on Local Governments and communities to provide suitable age-friendly infrastructure and services across the Region for older residents to age-in-place.

The Wheatbelt has observed a strong, consistent trend of an ageing population in both absolute and percentage terms. Demographic analysis by Verso Consulting (2014) showed that by 2027 the population of the Wheatbelt aged 70 and over will have increased by 75.3% from 2011. An aged population of 7,646 will have increased to 13,400 by 2027, moving from 10.4% of the total population to around 17%¹¹.

3.2 Aged Care Spending in Australia

In Australia, aged care spending is expected to almost treble from 0.7% of GDP in 2001 to 1.8% of GDP in 2041¹². Cost savings are available through the delivery of Community Aged Care, which will assist older adults living in the community to remain at home longer and age-in-place, presenting significant cost-saving benefits to State and Federal health care budgets.

The Government-subsidised Home Care Packages program provides long-term support for older people who want to stay living at home. A range of services can be included and individualised in a Home Care Package including domestic assistance, personal care, social support, rehabilitation support, respite care, meals and food preparation, home maintenance,

³ Regional Australia Institute 2016, 'Fact sheet: Uncovering Regional Population Trends'

⁴ National Rural Health Alliance Inc. 2005

⁵ World Health Organisation 2007

⁶ Oldsberg and Winters 2005

⁷ Gitlin 2003

⁸ Sixsmith & Sixsmith 2008

⁹ Kinnear, P 2001

¹⁰ Department of Health 2016

¹¹ Verso Consulting 2014, 'Wheatbelt Integrated Aged Care Plan'

¹² Costello & Minchin 2002, pp. 8-9

transport and linen services. The four levels of home care provided for different levels of care and support needs are¹³:

- Home care level 1 – a package to support people with basic care needs;
- Home care level 2 – a package to support people with low level care needs, equivalent to the former Community Aged Care Package (CACP);
- Home care level 3 – a package to support people with intermediate care needs; and
- Home care level 4 – a package to support people with high care needs.

Table 1: Australian Government residential care basic daily subsidy rates, 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2015

| Home Care Package Level | Subsidy Rate |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Level 1 | \$21.43 |
| Level 2 | \$38.99 |
| Level 3 | \$85.73 |
| Level 4 | \$130.32 |

Within mainstream forms of aged care, the daily rate of CACP subsidy from 1 July 2014 – 30 June 2015 was \$38.99, compared to basic residential care subsidies for intermediate and high care clients of \$85.73 and \$130.32, respectively¹⁴ (See Table 1).

4 Project Background

4.1 The Creating Age-Friendly Communities in Small Towns Project

The *CAFC in Small Towns Project* forms part of a holistic solution to addressing aged care issues across Western Australia's Wheatbelt region. The Business Case proposal for *CAFC in Small Towns Project* was approved by the DRD in 2014 and successfully secured \$2.53 million in Royalties for Regions funding. \$1.765 million of this funding was administered by the WDC to Local Governments in the Wheatbelt via a *Small Value Grant Scheme* program between 2014 and 2016. \$413,000 was allocated to the project management of the *Small Value Grant Scheme* including developing the CAFC Planning Toolbox.

The Project was designed to help implement recommendations from the 2012 CEACA Aged Care Solution/s and the 2012 WASCS Report, as highlighted in Figure 1.

¹³ Department of Social Services, Guide to Aged Care Law 2016

¹⁴ Department of Social Services, Aged Care Subsidies and Supplements 2014

Project Development Timeline

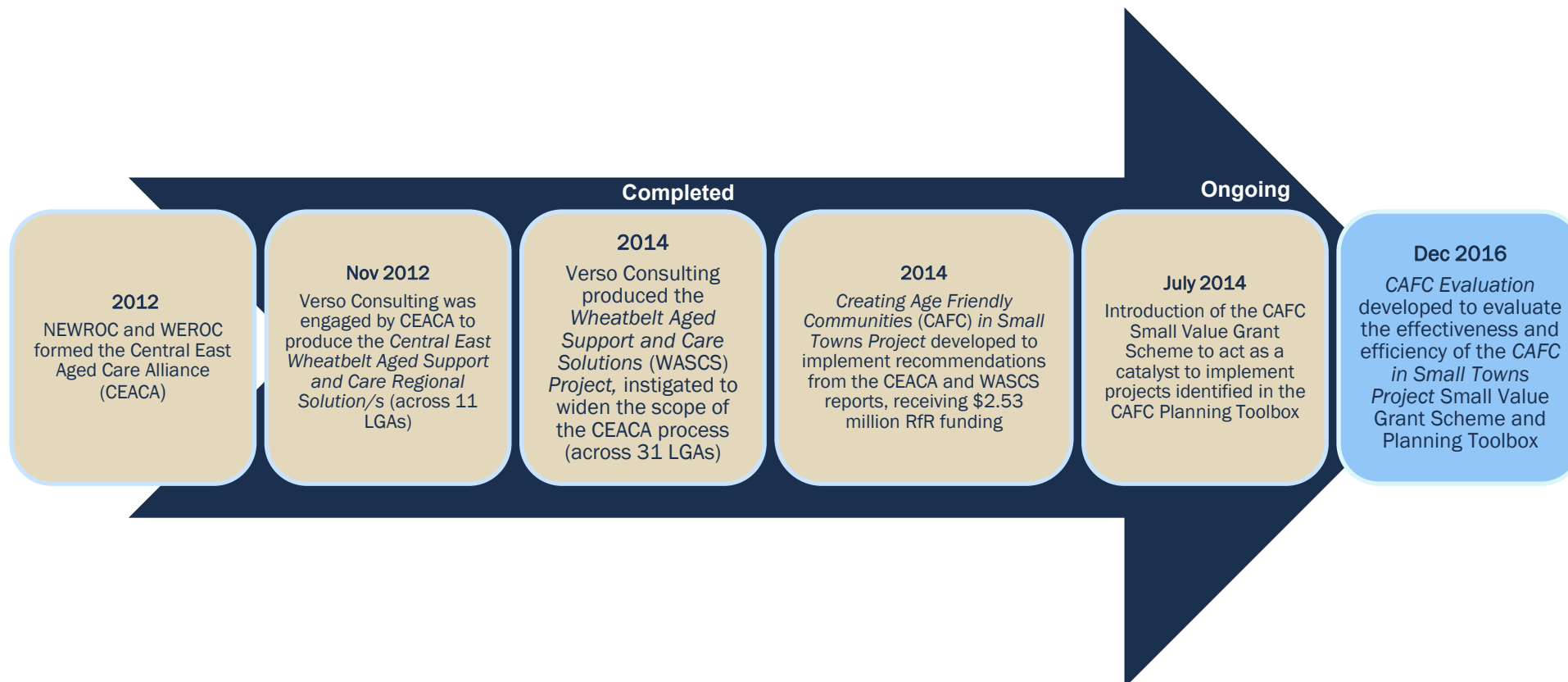


Figure 1: Major milestones of WDC's age care development that have led up to this evaluation

The *CAFC Small Value Grant Scheme* and *CAFC Planning Toolbox* were integral tools for Local Government to create and implement age-friendly infrastructure and services across the Wheatbelt, as highlighted in Figure 2.



Figure 2: *Creating Age Friendly Communities in Small Towns Project* (Wheatbelt Development Commission, 2015)

4.1.1 Planning Toolbox

The Toolbox provided resources and guidance to step Councils through each stage to ensure an informed and integrated plan. For Councils that have developed age friendly community plans, this Toolbox can assist to review current plans and progress. The Toolbox consisted of 2 key elements;

- Age Friendly Community Planning Guide; and
- Age Friendly Audit Tool

Age Friendly Community Planning Guide

The Age Friendly Community Planning Guide outlined a process and offered useful tools and resources for age friendly community planning. It was not designed prescriptive, rather to encourage each community to have its own style and language for strategic planning.

The planning model used in the Guide consisted of a four step solution-focused process that produced an Informing Strategy consistent with and complementary to Local Government Strategic Community Planning.

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.

Age Friendly Audit Tool

The Age Friendly Audit Tool is a digital data capture tool that was developed to assist Local Governments in conducting the Age-readiness review component within the broader planning process.

The Audit Tool allowed Local Governments and communities to 'map and gap' age friendly community features and identify priority projects.

The Audit Tool audits the location, condition and convenience of community and transport infrastructure and services, and other features applicable to the principles of Age Friendly Communities and has the ability to generate rich reports and export into a number of formats, including a Microsoft Word document or PDF.

Completion of the Audit Tool produced a comprehensive report that assisted Local Governments to identify projects for prioritisation and assist in informing the wider age friendly community plan that will guide future activities and investments.

The Audit Tool focused on questions about key elements of the age-friendly communities concept including; access to health and community services, outdoor space and buildings, transport and movement, housing, sport and recreation, social participation, respect and social inclusion. As part of the audit process, Local Governments were encouraged to utilise the publicly available Age Friendly Community Planning Guide.

WDC engaged Localise, a West Australian company, to develop both the Age Friendly Community Planning Guide and Audit Tool.

Once developed, WDC and Localise ran workshops throughout November and December 2014 to assist Local Governments to use the tool and develop their age-friendly community plans. These workshops provided Local Governments with comprehensive tutorials on how to use the Toolbox, including information on how it can be utilised to assist in developing an application for the *CAFC Small Value Grant Scheme* (described in Section 3.1.2).

One workshop was held in each of the Wheatbelt's five Sub-regions, with the majority of Local Governments attending. The WDC's communication with Local Governments was frequent and proactive. The Community Development Officers (or similar) were targeted for the workshops as it was most likely they would be the staff member undertaking the on-the-ground audits as well as completing the application. The workshops were advertised through a dedicated information page on the WDC website and all Local Governments were directly sent emails with regular project updates.

The audit tool enabled Local Governments to identify projects to improve the age-friendliness of their community. To prioritise and rank these projects, WDC and Localise created a prioritisation Excel worksheet. Ranking was achieved using weights, based on a number of 'quality/accessibility' inputs. By doing so, Local Governments could identify their infrastructure gaps and address the needs of an ageing population.

4.1.2 Small Value Grant Scheme

The *Small Value Grant Scheme* provided financial assistance to Wheatbelt Local Governments to implement projects identified in the CAFC in Small Towns Audit and Prioritisation process. A total of \$1.765 million was allocated to the *Small Value Grant Scheme*, with funding from \$40,000.00 to \$60,000.00 available to individual Local Governments who identified infrastructure projects through the Creating Age Friendly Communities Audit Tool.

These small value grants acted as a catalyst for local communities to increase awareness of, and initiative around the concept of age-friendly communities. Local Governments were required to utilise the Audit tool available through the Toolbox prior to submitting a request for funding.

The *CAFC Small Value Grant Scheme* met the following administrative milestones:

- CAFC Workshops in November 2014
- Small Value Grant applications opened in December 2014
- Grant applications closed 30 March 2015
- Grant scheme funding distributed to Local Governments by 30 June 2015

5 Evaluation Methodology

5.1 Rationale and purpose of this review

This Evaluation reviews the CAFC Small Value Grant Scheme and CAFC Planning Toolbox, as part of the *CAFC in Small Towns Project*, for its effectiveness in achieving its key objectives. It also aims to review the role that the WDC played throughout the Project implementation, including concept development and design, project management and administration throughout the Project lifespan.

The WDC developed performance measures for the project outcomes and outputs at the inception of the *CAFC in Small Towns Project*. These performance measures will be used in the Evaluation to determine if they were achieved to an appropriate level.

5.2 Approach

The purpose of this Evaluation was to:

1. Evaluate the success and impact of the 118 individual projects delivered by Local Governments. This includes all phases of project development and delivery, the age friendly audit tool, and the Small Value Grants Scheme.
2. Evaluate the role the WDC has played during the CAFC Small Value Grant Scheme and Planning Toolbox. This includes concept development, management and administration throughout the Project's lifespan.

The first aspect of the review, evaluating the individual projects, involved the creation and distribution of a survey to all participating Local Governments. This survey was created by the WDC but implemented through Heartlands WA, a third party organisation who regularly engages with Wheatbelt industry and Local Governments. The survey questions addressed how each Local Government viewed the project development, community awareness, project implementation and audit tool training. Full survey questions are available in Supporting Document 11.

The second aspect of the review, assessing the WDC process, included a semi-structured interview by UWA with key WDC project officers and staff who were actively involved in the *CAFC in Small Towns Project*. Findings from the interview and survey data were collated using thematic coding; a form of qualitative analysis which involves recording or identifying passages of text that are linked by a common theme or idea, establishing a framework of thematic ideas¹⁵.

5.3 Definition of Success

For this review, the WDC's own definition of success will be employed; that is, success as a project being delivered in good quality, on time and in budget. In more general evaluations over the greater Wheatbelt region, a 70% uptake rate (and above) from Local Governments is also considered to be successful. This definition of success and the nature of the *CAFC in Small Towns Project* bring inherent limitations. The main limitations of this review include the challenge in evaluating social outcomes, as many of the measures are subjective. In previous literature this has been attributed to a lack of a national framework for evaluating the quality of age care and support, based on measurable quality indicators. With no regular reporting requirement of quality indicators, it is difficult to compare facilities¹⁶.

¹⁵ Gibbs, G.R. 2007, 'Thematic Coding and Categorizing', *Analysing Qualitative Data*. London: SAGE Publications, Ltd

¹⁶ National Seniors Australia 2010, 'The Future of Aged Care in Australia', *Access Economics*

6 Evaluation of the *CAFC in Small Towns Project*

6.1 Inputs (review of the WDC process)

Overall six WDC staff members dedicated time and resources for over two years to successfully implement the *CAFC in Small Towns Project*. These employees acted as the champions of the service, the instigators of the project and the key administrative team for the *CAFC Small Value Grant Scheme*. For specific project management, the relevant regional officer was available to offer assistance to participating Local Governments in all aspects of the project. However other WDC members were available for broader guidance and mediation roles throughout the project.

The responsibilities of the WDC staff members included:

- Concept development;
- Project implementation;
- Managing the marketing and communications;
- General Local Government liaison;
- Management and liaison with Localise (consultant engaged to develop the audit tool, iAuditor);
- Project reporting (both internal and to DRD);
- Budget management;
- Staff resourcing; and
- Liaison with the University of Western Australia and Heartlands WA.

| Inputs | Measures | Actual Achievement |
|--|--|---|
| Resources spent on projects by Local Government staff and WDC staff | Hours spent on audit, application, project delivery, reporting and acquittal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> On average, Local Governments spent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 126 hours on the audit 60.4 hours during the application phase 175.7 hours on the project delivery 29.2 hours on reporting 20.4 hours on acquittal WDC is estimated to have spent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 months on concept development; 3 months on audit and toolkit development; 6 months on audit and toolkit implementation and support; 2 months on the small grant application and assessment phase; 18 months on the project delivery; and An hour every few months on reporting. |

6.2 Survey Evaluation

The following provides an overview of the evaluation survey undertaken by participating Local Governments.

How many projects were undertaken in the Shire as part of the CAFC in Small Towns Project?

The number of projects undertaken by each participating Local Government differed, based on their respective age-friendly infrastructure needs. Across the 33 participating Local Governments, the number of projects ranged from 1 to 8, with 2 and 3 projects per Local Government being the most frequent (23% and 21%, respectively) (See Figure 3). The types of projects spanned from footpath upgrades, ramps and improved car park access, to street lighting and electronic sliding doors. While the number of projects per Local Government does not represent a factor of success or failure for the *CAFC in Small Towns Project*, it does show the versatility to which the *CAFC in Small Towns Project* can accommodate.

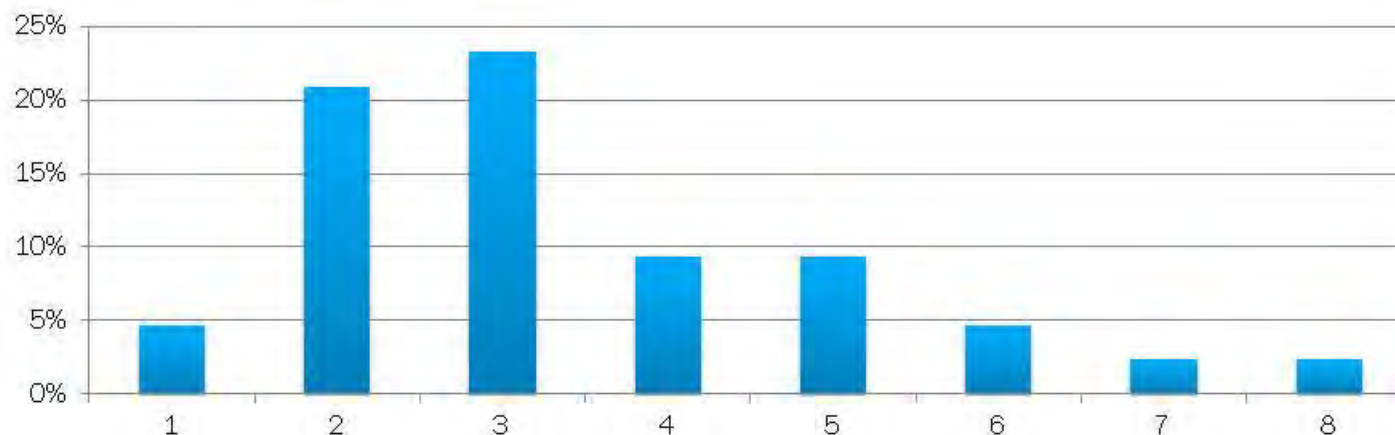


Figure 3: Frequency of number of projects per Local Government

What was the total Royalties for Regions value approved, and what was the total project value approved?

The amount of Royalties for Regions funding requested by the Local Governments mostly varied between \$35,000 and \$60,000 (See Figure 4), with exceptions to the Shire of Wyalkatchem who received approved funding of \$9,880, and the Shire of Narrogin who held and was responsible for funding for the Town of Narrogin (a separate Local Government to the Shire of Narrogin at the time of the project). Of the participating Local Governments, the majority (47%) received Royalties for Regions funding within the funding bracket of \$50,000-\$55,000, while 22% of Local Governments received funding within \$40,000-\$45,000. While total project spending ranged between \$40,000 and \$140,000, the majority (42%) of the Local Governments' total project value fell between \$50,000 and \$60,000. On average, Royalties for Regions funding contributed to 72% of the overall project costs.

The total project value and amount of funding requested and approved for use by the Local Governments was not necessarily correlated to the number of projects carried out. As an example, the Shire of West Arthur, who undertook eight age-friendly projects, requested and received approximately \$50,000 worth of RfR funding, whereas the Shire of Williams received approximately \$56,000 for a total of three age-friendly projects.

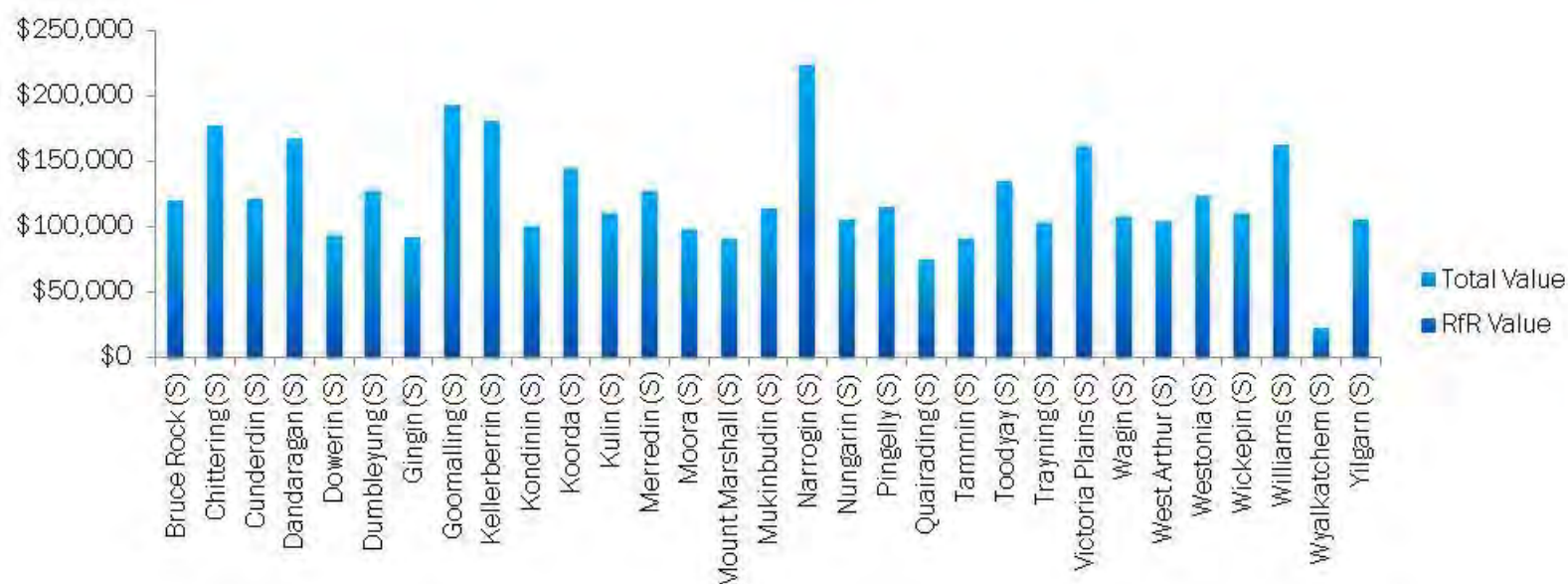


Figure 4: Total project value and proportion funded through Royalties for Regions for each participating Local Government; NB: The Shires of Northam and Wongan-Ballidu did not provide funding amounts

How was your experience in the grant application and approvals process?

From the survey results, and as shown in Figure 5 below, 64% of the participating Local Governments had a positive experience in the grant application and approvals process. 12% of them found the process to be very good while 52% found the process to be good. 6% of the participating Local Governments found the process to be average, and attributed their average experience to technical issues or miscommunication.

- *"The tool was challenging at the beginning... and information could have been more comprehensive."* – Koorda
- *"The communication between Northam, Localise and WDC could have been improved... the application was a rush at the last minute due to the miscommunication."* - Northam

However, no Local Governments reported or suggested the process to be bad or very bad; however 30% of the participating Local Governments did not answer the question sufficiently and so could not be used as a representative. One third of the Local Governments found the process easy.

- *"Pretty clear and easy. Time efficient."* – Narrogin
- *"Very straight forward. Approvals process was very timely."* – Quairading
- *"Grant application very smooth and WDC were very helpful. Approval process very good."* – Toodyay
- *"Approval process was a miracle, the turnaround time was brilliant."* - Chittering



Figure 5: Local governments' experience in the grant application and approvals process

What area/s did the project outcomes address?

Local governments were asked to identify whether their projects addressed any of the following outcomes:

1. Access to public buildings
2. Safety
3. Quality of Amenity
4. Quality of Service
5. Access to shops
6. Social/Recreational opportunities
7. Other (please specify)

The outcomes of the projects were readily realisable by 94% of the participating Local Governments. As shown in Figure 6 below, 91% of those believed their projects led to the improvement of access to public buildings; 88% believed there was an improved safety benefit as a result of their projects; 85% of Local Governments have improved their social and recreational opportunities; 76% have improved their access to shopping; and 58% and 82% of Local Governments believed the quality of amenities and services, respectively, have also improved as a result of their projects.

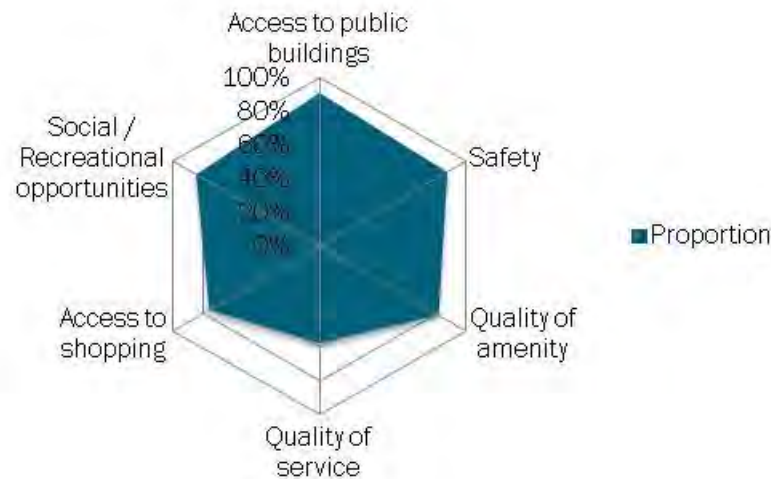


Figure 6: Proportion of outcomes met by the CAFC in Small Towns Projects

Did you make progress in the areas you intended to improve? If so, how much?

Local governments were asked whether their projects helped to progress the intended areas they wished to improve. The overall consensus from this question was positive - 100% of the participating Local Governments stated “Yes”, they did see improvements to their intended areas. As shown in Figure 7 below, 36% of the Local Governments also implied that the extent of the improvement was ‘large’, while 33% implied ‘medium’ improvements.

- “Yes – widened pathways and access to buildings to meet regulations. Toilet is now accessible to all generations with mobility issues. Created access for areas that weren’t necessarily accessible previously.” – Goomalling
- “Yes, most definitely.” – Mukinbudin
- “Yes – exceeded expectation especially with being able to tie the projects in with several projects.” – Toodyay
- “Yes, most definitely, great improvement for the Shire and its assets.” - Yilgarn

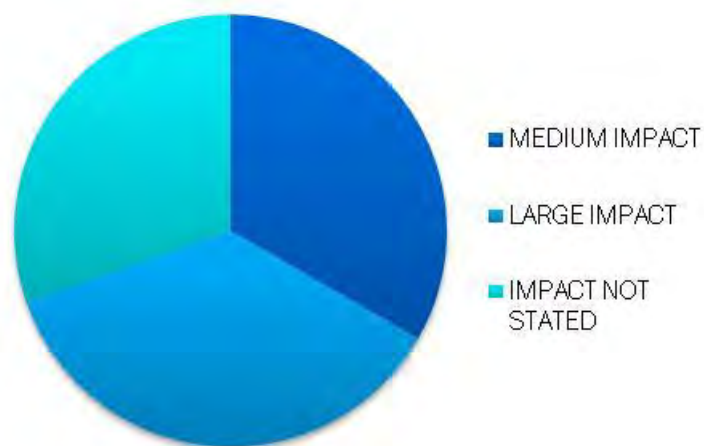


Figure 7: The scale/extent of progress made to the intended areas of improvement

Was the community involved in determining the projects either in the initial stages or prior to the project grant being available? If so, in what way were they engaged?

Working in partnership with community agencies and residents to achieve locally appropriate age-friendly infrastructure outcomes is essential. By utilising a collaborative approach that engages older residents and service providers, age-friendly features and barriers of a community can be assessed. In the identification of communities' strengths and gaps, older residents can draw on their own experiences, provide suggestions of change and be involved in enhancing age-friendly features¹⁷ which cater the needs of an ageing population.

The participating Local Governments were asked whether they incorporated the involvement of community members during the initial stages or prior to the project grant application. 82% responded "yes", that the community was in some way involved during these stages. Community meeting/consultation was the most frequently used approach to engage with local community members, with 52% of the 82% utilising this form of engagement (See Figure 8). Senior group meetings and surveys were also readily used forms of engagement (27% and 12%, respectively). Interestingly, no Local Governments reported the use of 'email' as a form of community engagement.

- *"Community meeting was extremely well received with approximately 40 people in attendance. It was a big day to organise but very much worth it."* – Moora
- *"A morning tea was held with senior residents to assist them complete the community survey, it was very well received."* – Mukinbudin

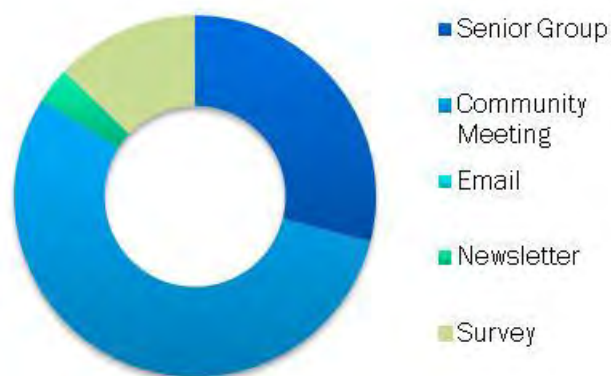


Figure 8: Types of engagement, and the frequency to which they were used by Local Governments to involve community members in the initial stages of project development

¹⁷ World Health Organisation 2007, 'Global Age-friendly Cities: A guide'

Are the aged residents in the community aware of the concept of creating age-friendly communities, and are residents in the greater community (not exclusively aged residents) aware of the concept of creating age-friendly communities?

As mentioned previously, it is important to enable older people to have a central role in defining and activating key age-friendly elements of their community and to ensure their perceptions and experiences are used as a precursor for age-friendly initiatives. However, as well as involving older people in the identification of age-friendly infrastructure, it is important to also engage with a range of stakeholders across multiple disciplines – including residents within the wider community – as various community members, outside of the aged resident bracket, will benefit and share resources.

The Local Governments were asked whether the aged residents in particular were aware of the concept of creating age-friendly communities. 88% of Local Governments stated “yes”; however, when asked whether the wider community (not exclusively aged residents) were aware of the concept of creating age-friendly communities, only 73% stated “yes” while 21% stated “no” and 6% who did not answer the question sufficiently (See Figure 9).

- *“It is suspected no, if there is not a direct benefit to that age bracket it is most likely they would not be engaged.”* – Kulin
- *“No – unless involved directly through employment at the shire.”* – Mount Marshall
- *“Yes, a fair portion of the community would be aware and understand what the Shire is aiming to achieve – continuing to educate and break it down for the community so that they are well informed.”* – Williams

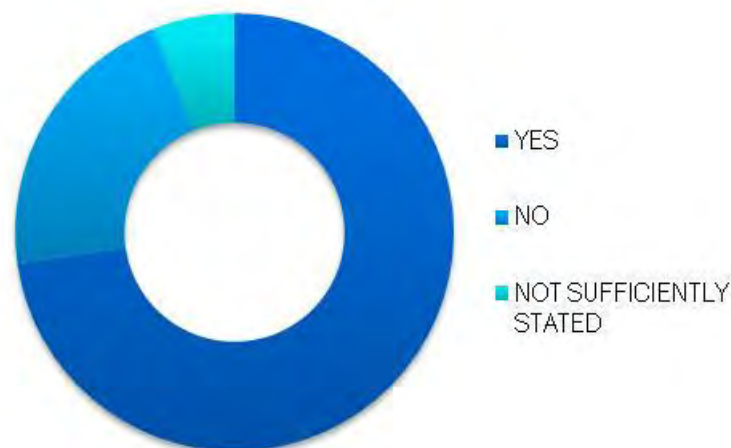


Figure 9: Community awareness (not exclusively aged residents)

Has the project impacted any other groups in the community (in addition to older residents)? If so, how?

100% of Local Governments believed their projects impacted community members outside of older residents. The types of community members who were impacted by the CAFC projects included visitors, young people, families and residents with mobility disabilities (See Figure 10 below). 76% reported their projects benefited families; 67% stated benefits were apparent to residents with mobility disabilities; 61% reported benefits to young people; and 21% said visitors/tourists were also positively impacted.

- *"Residents with mobility issues, i.e wheelchairs; mums with prams have easier access to the post office and the pool ramp will be of great assistance once the pool is operational in summer."* – Dowerin
- *"Yes, it has positively impacted children, parents and residents with mobility issues."* – Bruce Rock
- *"The seating has improved access at the skate park. There are a lot more people walking now with the installation of the footpath. It has impacted the Shire's future planning of footpaths and all footpaths will be built for dual purpose."* – Koorda
- *"Everyone in the community has been positively impacted from children on scooters, mums and mining workers. The Shire has seen heightened physical activity by all age groups."* – Westonia

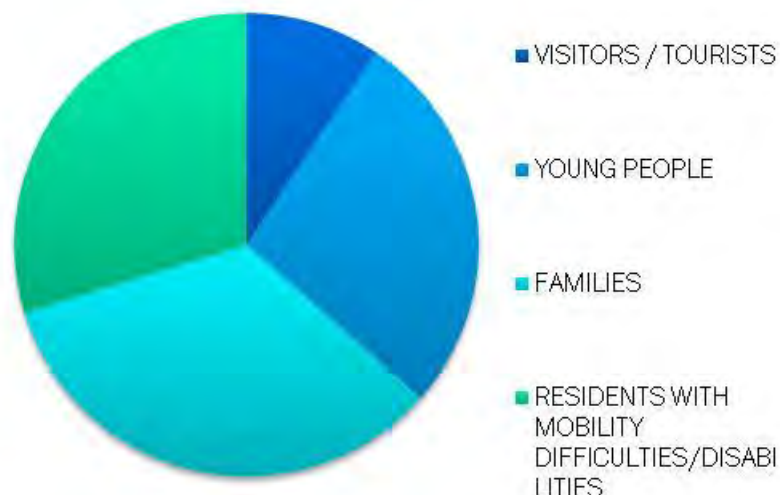


Figure 10: Types of community members who were impacted by the project

Has the Local Government sought funding from the Department of Local Government and Communities for an Aged Friendly Community Plan?

The Department of Local Government and Communities supports the development of age friendly communities, encouraging Local Governments across the State to consider and plan for the ageing of their community¹⁸. Local Governments are able to apply for funding through the Department's grant program to help them undertake age-friendly planning, including the development of an Aged Friendly Community Plan.

The participating Local Governments were asked whether funding was sought from the Department to develop a Plan for their community. 52% of Local Governments had sought funding at some stage prior to the commencement of their CAFC projects, while 33% did not (See Figure 11). Of the 52%, all Local Governments sought funding in collaboration with other Shire/s or within organisation councils.

- "Yes, collaborated with the Shire of Gingin. Localise completed the plan on behalf of the Shires." – Dandaragan
- "Yes, this was completed in conjunction with Corrigin" – Kondinin
- "Yes – through NEWROC. One plan developed across 6 Local Governments with a snapshot of each community." – Mount Marshall
- "Yes with the Shire of Wickiepin. Development of two separate plans. Verso completed the plans." – Narrogin
- "In 2009 the Shire received funding through West Arthur, as part of the 4WDL alliance the plan was completed." – Williams

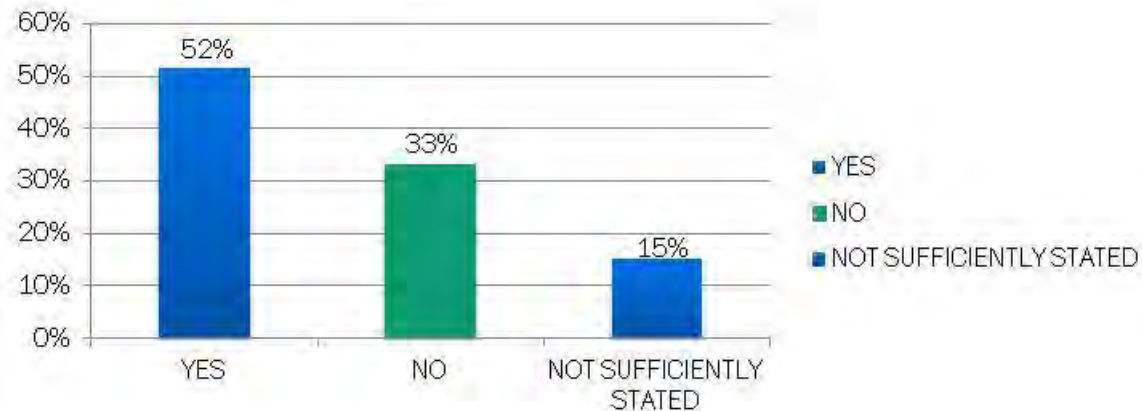


Figure 11: Proportion of participating Local Governments who sought funding from the Department of Local Government and Communities

¹⁸ Department of Local Government and Communities, 2016, 'Age Friendly Communities'

Was there any value added by Local Governments for this project to ensure its success, and was there any need to vary your projects, if so why?

70% of Local Governments provided some form of value-add to their projects to ensure project success. The types of value-add identified included labour, resources and funding (as shown in Figure 12).

- *"The Shire undertook the site works. Initially they were not going to undertake this but it ensured that the works were completed quicker."* – Gingin
- *"There was additional in-kind contributed by the Local Government to ensure the projects were completed successfully."* – Pingelly
- *"The Shire put cladding on the upgraded toilet to make it more visually pleasing and added a disabled parking bay at the front of the Shire office building."* - Cunderdin
- *"The Shire contributed an additional \$9,000 through shire labour and materials to ensure the project was completed to a higher standard. The audit fee was more than what was anticipated."* – Mount Marshall

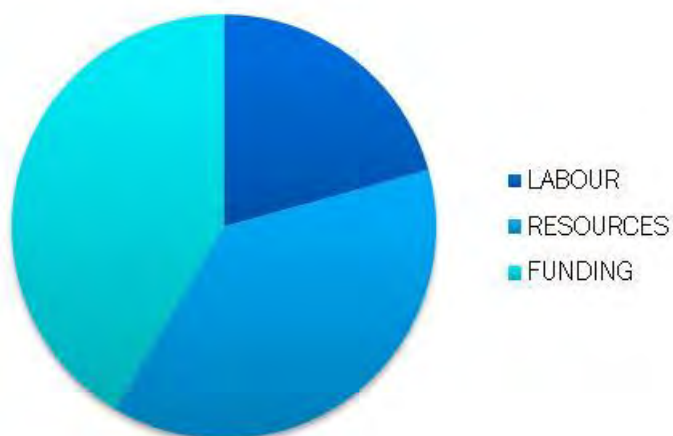


Figure 12: Form of value added by Local Government

Approximately how much time was spent on each aspect of the project?

As part of the *CAFC in Small Towns Project*, funded by Royalties for Regions Regional Grant Scheme, Local Governments were required to complete the following aspects:

- An audit process;
- Application;
- Project delivery;
- Reporting; and
- Acquittal.

Local governments spent an average of 176 hours on project delivery, taking up approximately 40% of their entire project timeframe. The audit process was also relatively time intensive (126 hours to complete on average) and taking up approximately 31% of the entire project timeframe (See Figure 13).

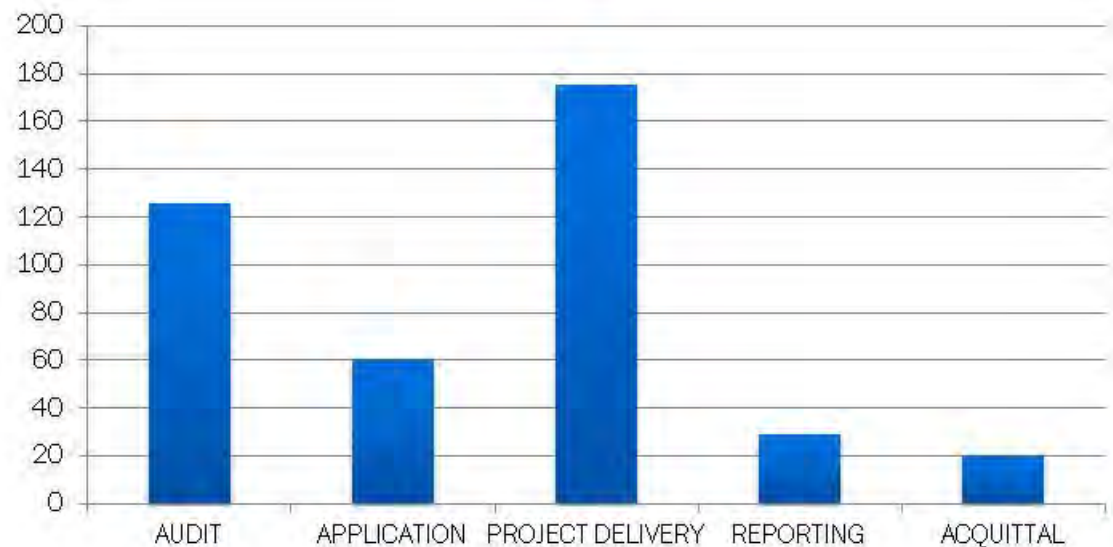


Figure 13: Average hours spent on each aspect of the projects

Has this process led to more awareness for Local Government officers and elected members for the need for age appropriate infrastructure in the community?

Local Governments are ideally placed to take on key leadership roles in creating age-friendly communities. By acknowledging the need for age appropriate infrastructure, Local Governments are in a position to engage a wide variety of stakeholders, coordinate activities, undertake community assessments and oversee project implementation. The role of Local Government is therefore unique to its own local planning, regulation and coordination of age friendly services and infrastructure. Through examining existing age-friendly initiatives, projects with stronger Local Government support were found to be more likely to succeed¹⁹. As a result, providing awareness to Local Government members for the need for age-friendly infrastructure is essential.

The participating Local Governments were asked whether the *CAFC in Small Towns Project* led to more awareness for officers and elected members for the need for age appropriate infrastructure in their community. Of the Local Governments who sufficiently answered this survey question, all identified that the process led to more awareness for their Local Governments' officers and elected members.

- *"Yes definitely, the Shire has recognised that they need to provide appropriate infrastructure for their aged residents as their aged population increases."* – Gingin
- *"Yes – definitely discussed at Council more regularly and actively seeking more funding to upgrade more footpaths and facilities for their seniors."* – Kellerberrin
- *"Most definitely and being part of the CEACA project has assisted."* – Trayning
- *"Absolutely, the officer that undertook the audit and project management became more aware of the access issues and restrictions met by the senior community on a daily basis. The audit tool provided the officer with the education to ensure that accessibility was considered in future project planning."* – Wyalkatchem
- *"Yes, most definitely."* – Victoria Plains
- *"Yes, it has been an intricate part of their long term planning."* – Quairading
- *"Through the CAFC and the aged friendly community planning with Verso, has raised awareness for officers and staff."* – Kulin

¹⁹ Buffel et al. 2014, 'Developing Age Friendly Cities: Case studies from Brussels and Manchester and Implications for Policy and Practice

Has the shire identified further projects in order to create a more age friendly community?

88% of participating Local Governments have identified further age-friendly projects as a result of the *CAFC in Small Towns Project*.

- *"Yes. The Shire is currently working with WA Country Health and the local hospital auxiliary committee; this has been inspired from this process."* – Dumbleyung
- *"Yes, access at the lake, only accessible via steps. Looking at including a ramp. Transport is an issue for seniors."* – West Arthur
- *"Yes, 'Changing Places' project identified in Meckering with funding of \$110,000 and \$56,000 in-kind has been received."* – Cunderdin
- *"Yes, more footpaths are required to create better footpath networks and better access for aged residents."* – Gingin
- *"Yes, more footpaths, the Shire has identified more works that will be completed this year which will also require ramps."* – Westonia
- *"Yes, \$10,000 for a ramp at the post office would see great benefit to seniors and the broader community. Removing the curbs outside key businesses in the CBD for better access. Communal zone for aged residents, access from footpaths to gazebo areas."* – Wyalkatchem

Would you consider the projects a success, and what elements made the project successful/unsuccessful? Were there barriers to the implementation of your action plan, and if so, how can they be dealt with or utilised in future projects?

The participating Local Governments were asked whether they considered their project a success. 100% said “yes”, they believed their project was successful in the areas intended. When the Local Governments were asked what elements made the project successful or unsuccessful, answers included community participation, timeline, budget/funding, organisation, resources, Shire commitment and defined outcomes. The most frequent answers for success included an aspect of organisation (33%), community participation (21%), Shire commitment (21%) and defined outcomes (21%) (See Figure 14).

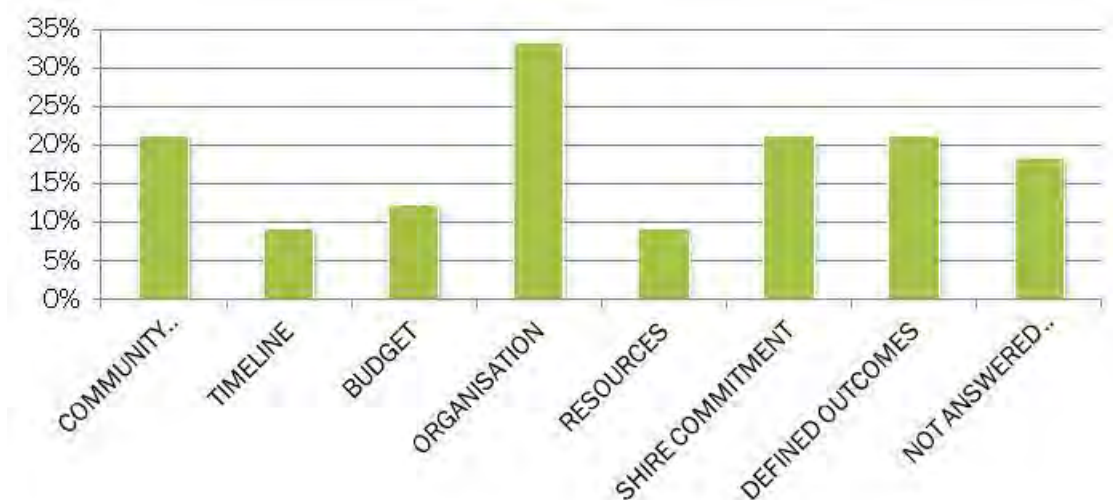


Figure 14: Elements that influenced project success

70% of participating Local Governments highlighted that they experienced barriers during the implementation phases of their project/s. Barriers that were highlighted include:

- Weather
- Time constraints

- Lack of communication
- Staff availability
- Lack of local contractors
- Works crew
- Design/supply of goods

As shown in Figure 15, time constraints (30%) and staff and local contractor availability (21% and 18%, respectively) were of the most frequently listed unsuccessful aspects/barriers to their projects.

- *"The Works Manager didn't adhere to the timeframes which made the projects run late."* – Cunderdin
- *"Coordinating contractors created some time management issues."* – Mukinbudin
- *"The "rushed" approach possibly hindered the planning and quantities of funds received by the Shire."* – Wyalkatchem

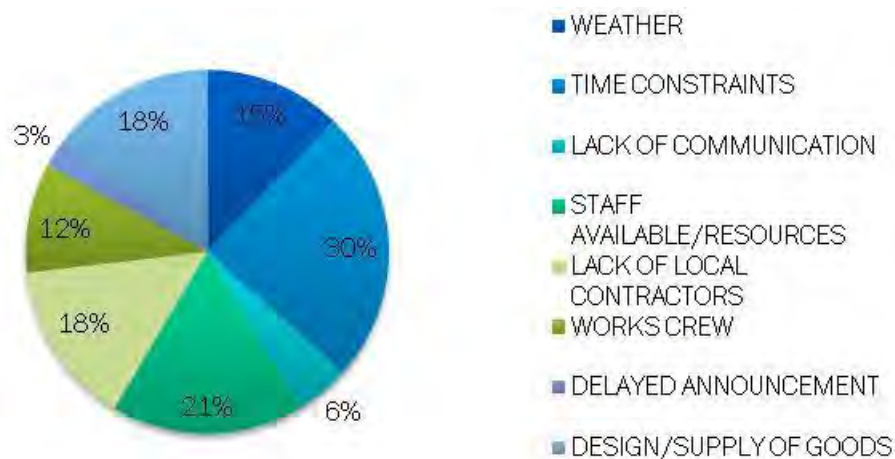


Figure 15: Types of barriers experienced by Local Government during implementation phase/project delivery

On a scale of 1-5, how user-friendly did you find the creating age-friendly communities audit-tool?

Local Governments were asked to rate the user-friendliness of the CAFC audit tool, ranging from 1 to 5; 1 = not user-friendly, 5 = very user-friendly. With 45.5% of Local Governments rating the audit tool positively (a 4 or 5), 24.2% ratings of 3, 9.1% ratings of 2, and 0% ratings of 1 (as shown in Figure 16), majority of Local Governments (69.7% above a rating of 3) believed that the audit tool had a degree of usability, and was adequately designed to achieve audits with effectiveness, efficiency and satisfaction.

21.2% of the Local Governments who did not answer the question sufficiently are not representative of the audit tool's user-friendliness.

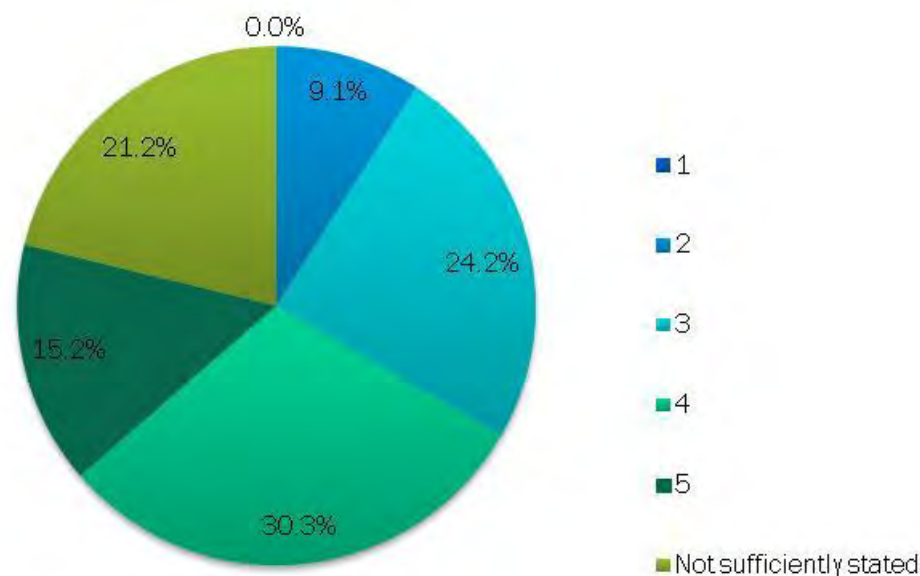


Figure 16: User friendliness of the audit tool was rated by Local Governments on a scale of 1-5; 1 = not user friendly, 5 = very user friendly

Were there any issues associated with the creating age-friendly communities audit tool?

While the majority of participating Local Governments believed the audit tool was user-friendly to a degree, 52% stated they experienced issues associated with the audit tool. As shown in Figure 17, technical issues were most frequently highlighted (39%). However, the types of technical issues varied across Local Governments and included syncing problems, loading issues, issues with exporting reports, converting reports to PDF, and printing issues.

- *"Syncing issues, printing issues."* – Trayning
- *"Yes – uploading the photos. Issues with syncing. Manually put the photos into the Word version."* – Moora
- *"Syncing issue – relating to printing. Possibly an in-house technical issue."* – Kellerberrin
- *"The lack of internet within the town caused issues with uploading, syncing and setting up the audit tool."* – Nungarin

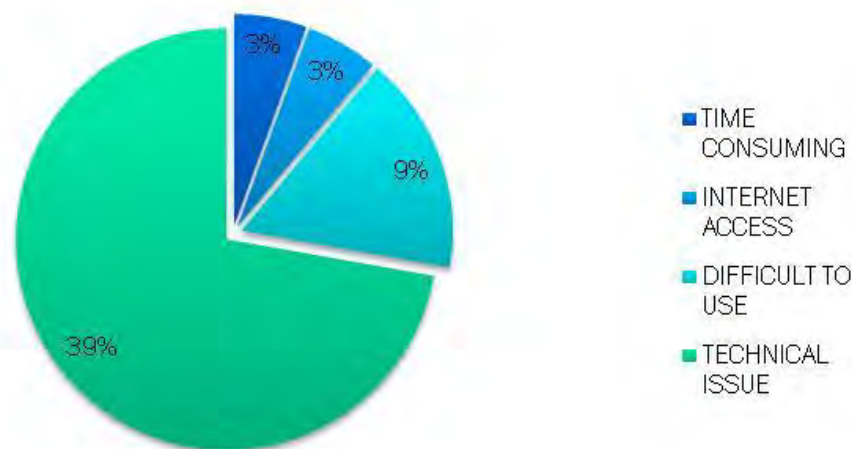


Figure 17: Types of issues experienced and associated with the CAFC audit tool

To mitigate such issues, the WDC provided support through training sessions, interactive workshops and over the phone support, as well as established a template of the iAuditor for use offline to avoid issues with internet coverage. Further technical issues will lessen over time as the technology is updated and improved.

Did a Local Government staff member attend the training for the audit tool, and was the support offered for using the creating age-friendly communities audit tool sufficient?

As the purpose of the audit tool was to enhance Local Governments' ability to 'map and gap' age friendly communities features and identify priority projects without relying on external consultants, it was important that they receive the necessary guidance and assistance from WDC and Localise when required. WDC and Localise ran workshops throughout November and December 2014 to assist Local Governments to use the tool and develop their age-friendly community plans. These workshops provided Local Governments with comprehensive tutorials on how to use the Toolbox, including information on how it can be utilised to assist in developing an application for the *CAFC Small Value Grant Scheme*. One workshop was held in each of the Wheatbelt's five Sub-regions. The Community Development Officers (or similar) were targeted for the workshops as it was most likely they would be the staff member doing the on-the-ground audits as well as completing the application.

As shown in Figure 18, 79% of Local Governments had a staff member attend training for the audit tool. Further to these training sessions, onsite training sessions were also available/provided to those Local Governments who either could not attend workshops or who needed further assistance.

- "WDC provided a one on one training session also to assist setting up the iAuditor." – Koorda
- "Lauren undertook a couple of sessions with staff. Staff attended the training session also." – Narrogin
- "Did not attend the training. Dannelle provided an onsite training session." - Nungarin

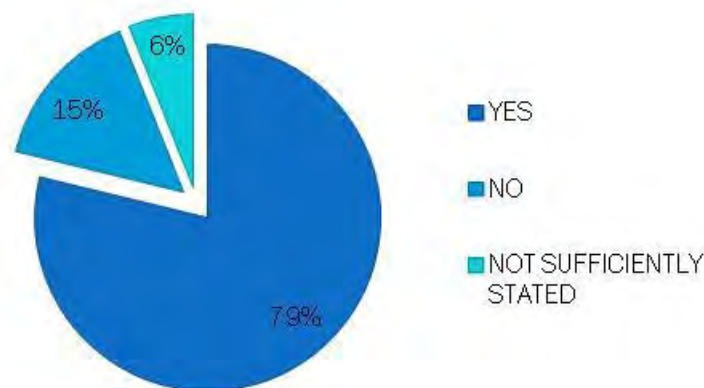


Figure 18: Percentage of Local Governments who attended a training session for the audit tool

Local Governments were asked whether the support offered to them during the use of the audit tool was sufficient enough. There was an overall consensus that support was sufficient – 73% of Local Governments answered the question sufficiently, and 73% answered “yes”; the remaining 27% of Local Governments who did not answer the question sufficiently could not be used as a reliable representation.

- “Yes, the training session was great.” – Dumbleyung
- “Yes, WDC staff were able to assist and rectify issues.” – Yilgarn
- “Yes, WDC staff were very helpful and available when needed.” – Kellerberrin

How did you find the process and communication with the Wheatbelt Development Commission?

The *CAFC in Small Towns Project* required a high degree of communication between Local Governments, the WDC (Grant Scheme Administrator) and external contractors (if utilised) during all stages of project development. Therefore, it was deemed important to maintain high communication and transparency between all involved to ensure project success.

The participating Local Governments were asked to rate their level of communication with the WDC, and overall the general consensus was positive. As shown in Figure 19, 61% of Local Governments rated their communication with the WDC as “very good”; 36% rated it “good”; 3% rated it “average”; and 0% rated it “bad” or “very bad”.

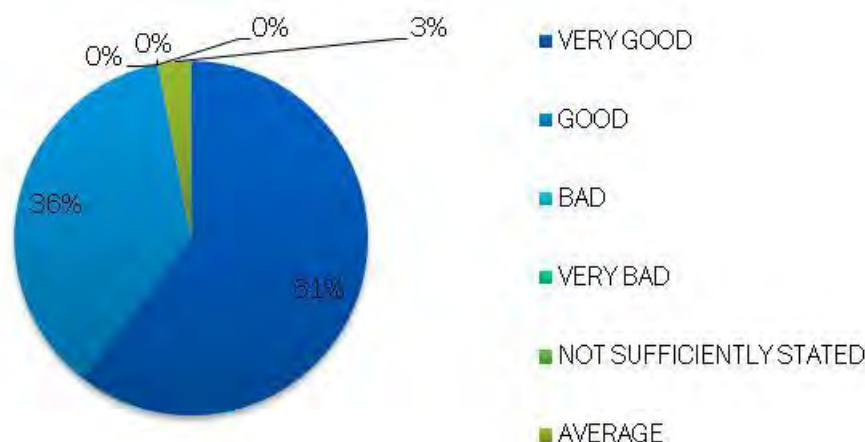


Figure 19: Level of communication with the Wheatbelt Development Commission

6.3 Overview of Issues and Limitations

The *CAFC in Small Towns Project* was scheduled to take 2 years from grant applications to project delivery, however a total of 2.5 years was needed to complete the projects due to barriers including delays, planning issues and other project variations. The table below highlights the issues and limitations identified in the *CAFC in Small Towns Project* Small Value Grant Scheme and Planning Toolbox. The negative impact (high, medium and low) of each issue on the *CAFC in Small Towns Project* is detailed, as well as how the issues were managed throughout the project and what could be done to resolve these issues in future projects.

| Issues Theme | Affected Parties | Issue/Limitation Description | Consequence | Negative Influence of Project Rating | How This Was Managed | Recommendations |
|----------------------|-------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| CAFC Toolbox Process | | | | | | |
| Time Limitations | WDC Local Government | Small window for undertaking audit and submitting grant applications for CAFC Small Grants (opened in December 2014 and closed on the 30 th March 2015) | Time intensive process for Local Governments | High | WDC expanding their role beyond guidance to assist with grant applications | <p>Extend timeframe for grant applications</p> <p>Increase timeframe across all aspects of the CAFC initiative to allow more detailed and capable planning</p> <p>Ensuring that application processes occur outside the months of December and January</p> |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|---|--|--------|---|--|
| Technical Issues | Local Government | Technical issues of the Audit tool were related to loading, syncing, exporting documents, internet availability etc. | 36% of Local Governments experienced technical issues associated with the CAFC audit tool | Low | <p>WDC provided interactive workshops and training sessions on the use of the audit tool. One-on-one sessions were also provided to Local Governments who could not attend the sessions</p> <p>Following the workshops, Local Governments could call WDC or Safety Culture (company with iAuditor platform) for technical support</p> <p>WDC provided an excel version of the iAuditor as an alternative option</p> | <p>Technical issues will lessen over time as the technology is updated and improved</p> <p>Continue to provide support through training sessions, interactive workshops and over the phone support</p> <p>Establish the template of the iAuditor to use offline and avoid issues with internet coverage</p> <p>Ensure that the appropriate Project Officer attends the training sessions</p> |
| Project Management | | | | | | |
| Planning | WDC | The CAFC in Small Towns Project and the Small Value Grant Scheme was the first grant scheme designed, administered and managed by the WDC | The CAFC in Small Towns Project built the WDC's skill set but remained a steep learning curve in relation to project management and planning | Medium | Improvements were carried out in the process | Ongoing assessment and evaluation of the Small Value Grant Scheme process to highlight key learnings |
| Planning | WDC | MoU, SLA and PES system were not in place prior to commencement | Impacted the planning process, resulting in duplicated efforts and time inefficiencies | Medium | Improvements were carried out in the process | <p>Upfront planning via the Project Office before project commences</p> <p>Separate the project management function from the project officers and topic expert</p> |

| Implementation and Project Delivery (for CAFC Small Value Grant Projects) | | | | | | |
|---|------------------|---|--|--------|---|--|
| Project Variation | Local Government | Variation in project design, budget and timeframe during project delivery | 67% of Local Governments were required to adjust their projects to ensure project success | Medium | <p>Local Governments were required to apply for a variation to Project Scope</p> <p>Projects were provided with extended timeframes</p> <p>Local Governments were responsible for any additional costs</p> | <p>Incorporate a design contingency into project planning and budget</p> <p>Set more specific milestones with funding attached</p> |
| Project Variety | Local Government | Variety of projects were limited | Potentially missed the delivery of more innovative, age-friendly community projects due to a limited project scope | Low | <p>Local Governments were able to proceed with their nominated Project as long as it aligned with findings of the CAFC Audit Report</p> <p>More innovative projects were used in media opportunities where possible</p> | <p>Encourage creativity in project conception phase</p> <p>Encourage engagement with community members to widen project scope</p> <p>Design specific Project themes to encourage more diverse projects</p> |

Negative Influence of Project Rating

| | | | | |
|----------------------|------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|
| Insignificant (2) | Low (3) | Medium (4) | High (5) | Extreme (6) |
|----------------------|------------|---------------|-------------|----------------|

Negative Influence of Project Rating Scoring System

| | 1 = Unlikely | 2 = Moderate | 3 = Likely |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| 1 = Minor | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2 = Moderate | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 = Major | 4 | 5 | 6 |

6.4 Outputs and Outcomes

The following outcomes and outputs were listed in the preliminary *CAFC in Small Towns Project* 2013/2014 business case to outline the tangible end product/s and the intended impacts that are expected as a result of Royalties for Regions funding. This evaluation has aligned the 'actual achievements' to the intended outcomes and outputs. Actual achievements, including quotes and interpreted results, have been derived from the surveys that were directed to Local Governments for their feedback on the *CAFC in Small Towns Project* and *Small Value Grant Scheme*.

Using the WDC's definition of success (good quality, on time, in budget and with at least 70% uptake), the measurable outputs or tangible end product/s of the *CAFC Small Towns Project* are as follows.

| Outcomes | Measures | Actual Achievement |
|---|---|---|
| Improved age friendly infrastructure that meets the needs of the community | Audit of age friendly infrastructure and services is completed for each community with clear and concise priorities for infrastructure investment identified; Increase in the number and/or quality of age friendly infrastructure including green spaces and walkways, ramps and handrails, outdoor seating, adequate shade, public toilets and lighting by 30 June 2015 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100% of participating Local Governments achieved progress in areas intended. Of this progress 69% had a medium to large impact. 100% of participating Local Governments believed their projects impacted other groups in the community in addition to older residents; 76% reported positive impacts to families, 67% to residents with mobility difficulties/disabilities, and 61% to young people. 100% of Local Governments believed their projects were successful. Organisation was rated as the most influential factor to a projects success. 91% of Local Governments have improved access to public buildings, and 76% improved access to shops and services through infrastructure upgrades and development; this is reflected in the following personal stories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "A gentleman in a wheelchair can now access the post office. Previously, post office staff would bring his mail outside for him. He can easily enter the post office, receive his mail and also do any shopping and socialise." – Dowerin "Numerous residents on gophers are thrilled to be able to easily access the medical centre." – Kondinin "A senior resident at Merriville Retirement Village was ecstatic that she could exit her unit and go straight onto the footpaths to access the CBD. This has reduced risks and allowed more social interaction for the resident." – Merredin "Mrs Davey rides a gopher from Johnson Street; she had been knocked off her gopher on the road due to the ramps not being available. She now rides her gopher to the CRC regularly and to the shopping precinct. Prior to the ramps being installed she was quite isolated at home. She is now active, safe and social." – Wongan-Ballidu |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| Improved age friendly infrastructure that meets the needs of the community (Cont.) | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Johnson Park has created an intergenerational space. The playgroup, young mum’s (active group) all use the equipment and the Park. The netball, football and hockey teams utilise the equipment as well as part of their scheduled training sessions. Its locality to the recreation centre creates an exercise route for the groups and has increased usage of the facilities. Further funding has been sought to extend the amount and variation of equipment.” – Wickepin • “Blanche, a senior resident has some mobility issues, she is now able to move from her home to the town centre. Previously she had no access the town centre via the footpaths. It is now safer and easier for her to undertake basic daily tasks. Using the footpaths has seen an increase in seniors walking.” – Westonia |
| Efficient and collaborative investment, minimising the cost of consultants and infrastructure | Costs associated with consultants to conduct an audit of current age friendly infrastructure are avoided | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimising costs associated with Local Governments having to invest in consultants to determine age friendly opportunities is projected to save \$400,000 across the 42 Local Governments. • Through the completion of the Age Friendly Community Audit Tool, 36 Wheatbelt Local Governments have identified key infrastructure projects to improve the age-friendliness of their communities. • Of the 36 completed audits, only 8 Local Governments engaged the assistance of a consultant to complete the audit, with the remaining utilising internal capacity, resulting in cost savings. |
| Establish an Aged-Care model that can be replicated around WA and Australia | Promotion of the project to key stakeholders external to Wheatbelt; Monitoring and recording of project interest external to Wheatbelt | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The <i>CAFC in Small Towns Project</i> has had a high profile since its development in 2014. It’s featured on the WDC website, e-newsletter, and in the WA Local Government Association Western Councillor Magazine and was introduced as a presentation topic at the Department of Local Government and Communities Age Friendly Community Conference. More recently the project has been highlighted in a media story for the Australian Bureau of Statistics and in an article for the International Ageing Federation, a non-governmental organisation with consultative status with the United Nations and the World Health Organisation. • The WA Local Government Association, through the Department of Local Government and Communities’ Age-Friendly Communities Local Government Grants program, now have a \$20,000 Innovation and Implementation Grant available to support Local Governments progress priorities identified in their age-friendly planning. |
| A pilot program that delivers a more efficient public transport system | Satisfaction surveys addressing the success of the pilot program | NA – Still in progress |

| Outputs | Measures | Actual Achievement |
|---|---|---|
| Toolkit for the assessment of sustainable aged care services | Completion of a toolkit that can be used to assess sustainable aged care friendly infrastructure and services in all other Western Australian regions; Verify with Local Government their ongoing use of the Audit Toolkit in June 2016 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>CAFC in Small Towns Project</i> was developed in 2014 including an audit tool, prioritisation worksheet and planning guide to assist Local Governments to develop an age friendly community plan. • 45% of Local Governments rated the toolkit a 4 or 5 on the scale of 1-5 for user friendliness. Of the remaining 55%, 24% of Local Governments rated the toolkit a 3, 9% a 2, 22% did not sufficiently answer the question, and none of the Local Governments rated the toolkit a 1. • 88% of the participating Local Governments were able to identify additional age friendly projects as a result of the audit toolkit. Some examples include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"Upgrading administration front desk – it is not the correct height for accessibility. Footpath widths – ensuring when upgrading footpaths that they are the correct width."</i> – Dumbeyung • <i>"It is envisaged that research and plans into additional footpath networks will be developed for the 2017/18 budget."</i> – Gingin • <i>"The audit report gave a real practical analysis for the projects that need to be developed. Although time consuming to complete the audit, it is very worthwhile... It was a very practical way to address age issues within communities."</i> – Kondinin • <i>"The awareness of what came out of the audit has impacted future planning for infrastructure projects."</i> – Mount Marshall • <i>"Automatic sliders at the Mukinbudin CRC and District Club have been identified as much needed future projects. Funding is yet to be sourced from other bodies, would be fabulous for another round of CAFC."</i> – Mukinbudin • The audit toolkit provided a valuable framework for Local Governments to assess current infrastructure and begin community engagement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"Undertaking the audit created a real awareness of the issues facing the seniors."</i> – Bruce Rock • <i>"Surprised at the need for footpaths. The requirements for aged persons in now obvious."</i> – Gingin • 79% of Local Governments had staff members attend training for the audit tool: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"The training session was really good, and also a great networking opportunity."</i> – Quairading • <i>"The training session was great."</i> – Dumbleyung • The most common issue associated with the audit tool was related to technical issues (39% of the participating Local Governments experienced some technical issues). Examples of technical issues include the following: |

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| Toolkit for the assessment of sustainable aged care services (Cont.) | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The lack of internet in the town caused issues with uploading, syncing and setting up the audit tool.” – Nungarin • “Setting up and logging in aspect of the audit tool was an issue. Syncing issues were also experienced.” – Yilgarn • “Syncing issues related to the printing. Possibly an in-house technical issue.” – Kellerberrin • WDC staff offered support in using the CAFC audit tool, which assisted with some of these issues. 73% of the participating Local Governments reported that the support offered by WDC was sufficient (the remaining 27% did not sufficiently answer the survey question). |
| A plan to assist Local Governments to achieve age friendly communities | Completion of an "Age-Friendly Community Plan" for each Local Government area that identifies the age friendly infrastructure and service projects across the Wheatbelt, proposed costing and timeframe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 84% of the 42 Wheatbelt Local Governments were successful in completing the Age-Friendly Community Plans (compared to the State average of 50%)²⁰. • 52% of the participating 33 Local Governments confirmed that they sought funding from the Department of Local Government and Communities to develop an Aged Friendly Community Plan. |
| Funding in the form of a small grant | Local Governments receive allocated funding for proposed projects (between \$40,000 and \$60,000 excluding GST per Local Government) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Wheatbelt Development Commission allocated a total fund of \$1.765 million, supporting over 118 projects across 36 Wheatbelt Local Governments. • The allocated funds made up 71% of total project costs²¹. |
| An Integrated Transport Plan for the Wheatbelt | Completion of the Integrated Transport Strategy | NA – Still in progress |
| Rollout of the Integrated Transport Pilot Program and submission of the final report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal evaluation via UWA Partnership • Satisfaction surveys addressing the success of the service from a community perspective | NA – Still in progress |

²⁰ The Department of Local Governments and Communities ran a grant funding program to support the development of these Age-Friendly Community Plans

²¹ As determined by the sum of total costs for 31 of the participating Local Governments. Excluding Dalwallinu, Wandering, York, Northam and Wongan-Ballidu where total costs were not provided.

6.5 Project Value-Add

The following Table identifies the additional benefits derived from the *CAFC in Small Towns Project*, as outlined in the CAFC SVG Evaluation Surveys by the Local Governments who experienced such benefits. These added benefits have come about during the process of the Local Governments' CAFC project development, and are subject to the Local Governments' own value-add. These added benefits had not been originally intended through the *CAFC in Small Towns Project* and are additional to the outcomes and outputs that were listed in the preliminary *CAFC in Small Towns Project* 2013/2014 business case. As a result, the following indicates added benefits outside of the age friendly communities scope.

| Project Value-Add | Achievement Statements |
|--|--|
| Age-friendly infrastructure incorporated into existing community projects to deliver larger CAFC benefits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"The ramps project was incorporated with a footpath being constructed so value added to the project and delivered a much larger benefit."</i> – Wyalkatchem |
| Toolkit for the assessment of alternative Local Government services and infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"The audit tool has also been used for other projects within the Shire. Using it more has enhanced (the Shire's) knowledge of the tool and (they) get a lot more benefit from it than (they) did with the initial audit."</i> – Dumbleyung • <i>"The audit tool was used following the audit and adapted to audit the Shire's own property management. The audit tool was also used for the disability audit and potentially will be used for occupational health and safety assessments."</i> – Goomalling • <i>"Used the audit tool for the disability and access inclusion plan."</i> – Pingelly |
| Improve community involvement in, and awareness of, age-friendly communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion of projects in communities e.g. newsletters, posters, signage, media releases, websites. • 82% of Local Government projects involved the community, either in the initial stages or prior to the project grant being available. • The main forms of consultation occurred via community meetings (52%) and senior groups (27%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>"Seniors that currently utilise gophers to move around the community provided input. A walk through town with the Disability Services Merredin was undertaken which was of great benefit to identify projects."</i> – Kondinin • <i>"In the initial stages the community was asked what they wanted. The CRC met with the leisure group and CWA etc. to ask them what they wanted. Their input was valuable."</i> – Koorda |

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| <p>Improve community involvement in, and awareness of, age-friendly communities (Cont.)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Community consultation was undertaken on the 10th February at Moora Rec Centre. It was extremely well received with approximately 40 people in attendance. It was a big day to organise but very much worth it.” – Moora</i> • <i>“Prior to the projects being selected, a morning tea with senior residents was held to assist them to complete a community survey. The survey was also made available to residents not able to attend the morning tea. Very well received.” – Mukinbudin</i> • The remaining 18% of Local Governments who did not engage with their community either provided insufficient reasoning or had consultation with the community prior to the project. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Projects were determined by officers from the outcomes of the audit tool. The CEO is very engaged with the community so was aware of the needs of the community.” – Nungarin</i> • <i>“They were not consulted. (The Shire’s) knowledge on the community assisted the delivery of projects that would be of benefit to the relevant portion of the community.” - Yilgarn</i> • 52% of Local Governments used media releases and newspapers as their main form of project promotion. 45% also used websites including social media, and 36% included project information in local newsletters. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>“Promotion was focused on both the RfR funding and the age-friendly concept, to ensure the community was aware where the funding came from and what its purpose was.” – Koorda</i> • <i>“Promoted through signage, media releases, shire website, monthly newsletter and Facebook. Directly affected residents were also notified by mail drop.” – Chittering</i> • <i>“After completion there was an age-friendly update in the local papers and advertised through social media. It included the projects in the CAFC project and also projects in the Age Friendly Community Plan.” – Dandaragan</i> • 88% of Local Governments believe that the aged residents in their community are aware of the concept of creating age-friendly communities. • 73% of Local Governments believe that the residents in the greater community (not exclusively aged residents) are aware of the concept of creating age-friendly communities. |
| <p>Build capacity in Local Governments to acknowledge aged friendliness and accessibility (in all ages) in future projects</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Government involvement in <i>CAFC in Small Towns Projects</i> and staff awareness of the need for age-friendly infrastructure. • Local Governments were required to complete their own Grant Application Forms for the <i>CAFC Small Value Grant Scheme</i> to be approved by the WDC. • 64% of Local Governments found the grant application and approvals process either ‘very good’ or ‘good’, and 30% of those Local Governments also believed the process was ‘easy’; of the remaining 36%, 6% of Local Governments found the process ‘average’ and 30% did not sufficiently answer the question. |

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| <p>Build capacity in Local Governments to acknowledge aged friendliness and accessibility (in all ages) in future projects (Cont.)</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Governments were encouraged to carry out their audits independently using internal capacity, which allowed them to base their decisions on their own derived outcomes instead of relying on external consultation. The <i>CAFC in Small Towns Projects</i> involved a number of parties during all stages of the project. 97% of the projects involved Shire Officers, 76% of the projects involved the community's Work Crew members, 45% involved local contractors and 39% relied on outsourcing. 97% of Local Governments believe that their project has led to more awareness for officers and elected members in the need for aged infrastructure in the community. The remaining 3% did not answer this question efficiently. Level of planning that Local Governments are now incorporating into new infrastructure to ensure it is age and mobility friendliness. Through the survey process Local Governments were made aware of possible Department of Local Government and Communities funding that they can apply for if they have completed their Creating Aged Friendly Communities Plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"Elected members are more aware and more proactive."</i> – Bruce Rock <i>"The audit was very helpful and raised areas of concern. Having the opportunity to focus on that demographic (the aged) to pinpoint priority projects and bring awareness to officers was very beneficial."</i> – Dandaragan |
| <p>Enhance the capacity of Local Governments and the WDC to work collaboratively</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration between Local Governments and the WDC resulted in successful project completion. Positive attitudes towards RfR and WDC for implementing a small but extremely beneficial funding round for infrastructure to allow people to age-in-place. WDC staff offered support in using the CAFC audit tool, which assisted with some of these issues. 73% of the participating Local Governments reported that the support offered by WDC was sufficient (the remaining 27% did not sufficiently answer the survey question). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"WDC staff were very helpful and available when needed."</i> – Kellerberrin <i>"WDC staff were very helpful."</i> – Koorda <i>"Support from WDC was very good."</i> – Mount Marshall 97% of participating Local Governments found communication with, and support from the WDC either 'very good' or 'good'. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"WDC staff have been wonderful, have been easy to access and understanding of the Shire's circumstances."</i> – Dowerin <i>"Fantastic, Carol was brilliant, most amazing support with a grant application and follow-up."</i> – Chittering |

Engaging Heartlands WA to survey Local Governments and complete this evaluation of the grants process and gain an understanding on the impact of the project

- Linking Local Government with Local Government (through the Heartlands WA survey process) for project information (reducing duplication in officer work load).
- Interaction through HWA surveys on the project gave the WDC a better insight on the impact of the project than what the normal acquittal process does. It also led to a comprehensive grant evaluation to be developed.

7 Conclusions

This report provided a comprehensive evaluation of the *CAFC in Small Towns Project* Small Value Grant Scheme and Planning Toolbox. It evaluated 118 aged care projects undertaken by Local Governments in the Wheatbelt and the process undertaken by the WDC to design, administer and manage the *CAFC in Small Towns Project*. This evaluation was written to be used internally by WDC and distributed to Western Australian Local Governments, the DRD and the World Health Organisation.

The *CAFC in Small Towns Project* aimed to promote 'ageing in place' and improve the level of age friendly community infrastructure across the Wheatbelt. \$1.765 million of the *CAFC in Small Towns* funding was awarded to a range of projects, including but not limited to improvements to footpaths and pedestrian networks, rail and ramp installations, disability access upgrades, improved public services and amenities, improved lighting for evening access to key community facilities and disability parking. The 118 age friendly projects delivered as part of the *CAFC in Small Towns Project* has helped to improve physical, emotional and mental wellbeing of older people living in the Wheatbelt. In doing so, this evaluation has highlighted the need to support independent living and continued community participation in cultural, social, economic and civil affairs as older residents age-in-place.

A second, indirect goal of the *CAFC in Small Towns Project* was to build the capacity of Local Governments to undertake independent projects and deliver age friendly infrastructure that meets the needs of their aged residents. Encouraging Local Governments to carry out their audits independently using internal capacity allowed them to base their decisions on their own derived outcomes rather than rely on external consultants.

This evaluation considers the *CAFC in Small Towns Project*, Small Value Grant Scheme and Planning Toolbox as highly successful with 100% of the evaluated projects reporting positive project impacts on community members (not exclusive to senior residents). By independently carrying out their projects from conception to completion, Local Governments believe their projects led to more awareness for officers and elected members in the need for aged infrastructure in the community. Subsequently, additional age friendly projects, following the *CAFC in Small Towns Project*, have been identified by majority of the participating Local Governments.

This evaluation undertook interviews with participating WDC staff members to evaluate their role in the *CAFC in Small Towns Project*, including support and guidance to the participating Local Governments as well as their planning and management capabilities during all stages of the CAFC process. From the semi-structured interviews and the feedback from the Local Governments, it was evident that the WDC's *CAFC in Small Towns Project* was successful in initiating the identification and prioritisation of age friendly infrastructure across the Wheatbelt.

The collaboration between Local Governments and the WDC has resulted in successful project completion where the majority of participating Local Governments found communication with, and support from the WDC either 'very good' or 'good'. While the support and guidance offered to the participating Local Governments was highly rated, there were limitations and issues regarding the planning phase of the *CAFC in Small Towns Project*. The key limitations included:

- The time available for Local Governments to complete the audit and submit grant applications to the WDC was intensive and could benefit from an extended timeframe; and
- Upfront planning including the MoU, SLA and PES systems were not in place prior to commencement which impacted the planning process, resulting in duplicated efforts and time inefficiencies. As a result, improvements were ongoing throughout the planning process and project management standards were compromised.

8 Supporting Documents

The following documents have contributed to the development of this Evaluation.

- Supporting Document 1 – Wheatbelt Aged Support and Care Solution/s Final Report, (Verso Consulting 2014)
- Supporting Document 2 – Creating Age Friendly Communities in Small Towns Project Small Value Grant Application Form Template, (Wheatbelt Development Commission 2015)
- Supporting Document 3 – Creating Age Friendly Communities in Small Towns Project Small Value Grant Guidelines for Applicants, (Wheatbelt Development Commission 2015)
- Supporting Document 4 – Creating Age Friendly Communities in Small Towns Project Small Value Grant Final Acquittal Report, (Wheatbelt Development Commission 2015)
- Supporting Document 5 – Variation to Approved Royalties for Regions Budget Template, (Wheatbelt Development Commission 2015)
- Supporting Document 6 – Age Friendly Community Planning Audit Tool, (Localise & Wheatbelt Development Commission 2014)
- Supporting Document 7 – Age Friendly Community Planning, Planning Guide, (Localise & Wheatbelt Development Commission 2014)
- Supporting Document 8 – Quarterly Progress Report Template, (Wheatbelt Development Commission 2015)
- Supporting Document 9 – Variation to Project Scope, (Wheatbelt Development Commission 2015)
- Supporting Document 10 – Variation to Project Scope – WDC Review, (Wheatbelt Development Commission 2015)
- Supporting Document 11 – Creating Age Friendly Communities – Project Evaluation, (Wheatbelt Development Commission 2015)



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