



Lake Macquarie
City Council

SUPPORTING OVER 55s IN THE CITY



Ageing Population Plan 2018–2022





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MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Planning for an ageing population is a process councils are undertaking as people in our communities live longer, more productive and rewarding lives.

Thanks to medical science and healthy lifestyle options, we not only enjoy longer life expectancies than previous generations but have much more opportunity to lead active and involved lives as we age.

Those Baby Boomers who have been at the heart of so much social change over their lifetimes are now reinventing the way we do retirement and ageing – people are working longer, continuing to participate in sports and fitness, travelling and remaining involved in community life well into their later years.

Council has been developing these plans since 2008 in recognition of the City's ageing population. This Plan is the third review.

One-third of the Lake Macquarie population is over 55, so planning to ensure that our services and facilities adequately support and cater to older members of our community is a high priority.

From a Council perspective, that means making sure that facilities like swim centres, libraries, community centres, parks and beaches are accessible and that we provide inclusive recreational facilities, such as exercise stations that are appropriate for older users.

We also strive to provide support through services such as the Over 55s Program, which provides more than 60 activity sessions across the City each year, social media workshops at Lake Mac Libraries and the Good Neighbour Project, which encourages people to assist neighbours who need help putting out their bins.

We receive important feedback on issues and priorities for seniors and their carers from our Ageing and Disability Advisory Panel, a group that includes representatives from the community, Council and service providers. Council also helps to connect members of our community with aged care service providers and assistance networks.

This Plan will help maintain that strong focus on our older population over the next four years. It will ensure that residents over 55 within our community have the opportunity to participate socially and enjoy a good quality of life.

Cr Kay Fraser

Mayor of Lake Macquarie





INTRODUCTION

Lake Macquarie City's population is more than 205,000, making it the largest city in the Lower Hunter. The population is expected to increase by 24,450 by 2030 (Hunter Region Plan 2036, NSW Department of Planning).

Lake Macquarie is a landscape of more than 780 square kilometres, comprising beaches, lake and mountains and is home to one of the largest coastal saltwater lakes in Australia.

While the definition of age can differ, this Plan focuses on those aged 55 years and over.

POLICY AND LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The NSW Ageing Strategy outlines the response that will be taken to address the opportunities and challenges of our ageing population and advocates for:

- older people to live an active and rewarding life and to participate in the community as valued members; and
- adults making informed decisions about their independence and wellbeing later in life.

The World Health Organisation sets out some strategies in Age-friendly Cities and Communities, which encourage communities and governments to provide environments that foster healthy and active ageing.

Changes have happened in the national aged care system. Aged care reforms are being progressively implemented in three phases over 10 years to move towards a consumer-directed care model. This model will give consumers more choice and control over the services they receive.

My Aged Care is a national aged care system that aims to give more choice, more control and easier access to information and referral to a range of aged care services, including home support, garden maintenance and residential care. It includes a website and a national contact centre and uses a nationally consistent screening and assessment and referral processes.



SNAPSHOT OF COMMUNITY

AGE CHARACTERISTICS – COMPARISONS

(source: ABS: Census of Population and Housing, 2016)

	Lake Macquarie City	NSW	Australia
Median age	42 years	38 years	38 years
Proportion of population aged 55-64 years	13.2%	11.9%	11.8%
Proportion of population aged 65 years and over	20.6%	16.2%	15.8%

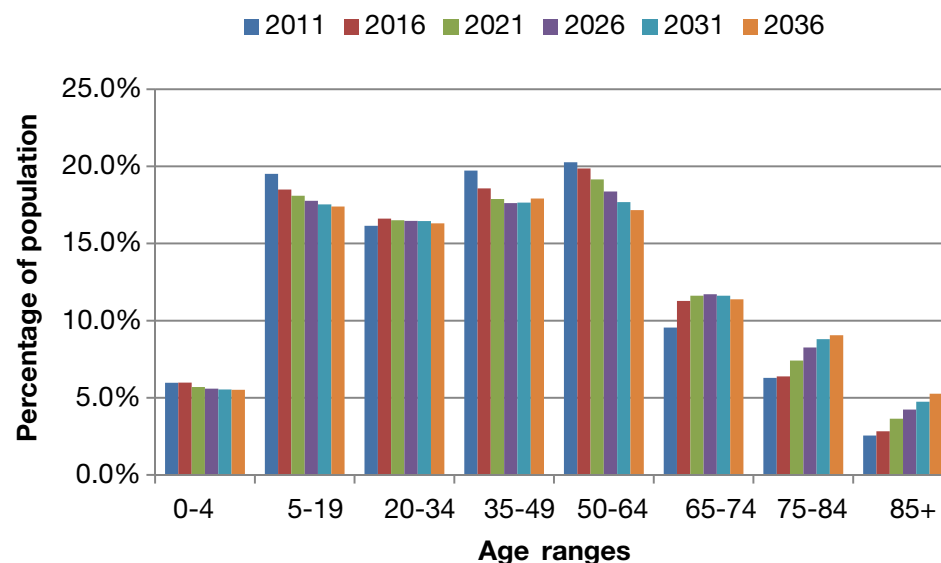
POPULATION PROJECTIONS

(Source: Remplan Population Projections for Lake Macquarie, 2018)

Over the next 18 years, the number of people aged 65 years and over is expected to grow from 44,263 people to almost 60,000 people. This is an increase of 35 per cent. Furthermore, the proportion of those aged 65 years and over is expected to increase from 20.6 per cent to 25.7 per cent by the year 2036. This will be most notable in the 85 years and over age group, which

will almost double from 2.8 per cent to 5.3 per cent. This is illustrated by the following graph, which identifies that while the percentage of the population in each of the age ranges through to 64 years are expected to decrease through to 2036, the age cohorts for those over 65 years will increase.

LAKE MACQUARIE AGE STRUCTURE BY YEAR







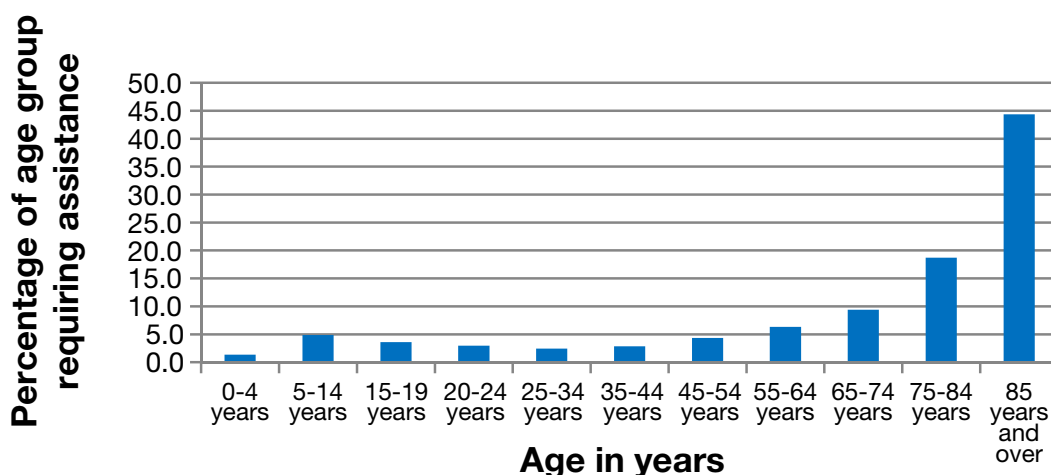
NEED FOR ASSISTANCE

(Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016)

At the last census, approximately 6.6 per cent of the Lake Macquarie population reported that they required assistance with a core activity (self-care, mobility or communication), with more than half (53.3 per cent) of these

people being over 65 years of age. This is illustrated in the following graph, which identifies that the likelihood of people needing assistance with a core activity increases with age.

CORE ACTIVITY NEED FOR ASSISTANCE



UNPAID ASSISTANCE

(Source: ABS Census of Population and Housing, 2016)

More than one in eight (13.6 per cent) people over 15 years of age in Lake Macquarie provide unpaid assistance to a person with a disability. According to the last census the largest age group providing this assistance was those aged 55-64 years (25.1 per cent). However, almost 25 per cent of those providing assistance to a person with a disability were aged over 65 years.

Almost one-third of people aged over 15 years provided unpaid childcare. While only 12 per cent of these are over the age of 65 years, 21.9 per cent of those aged 65-74 years are providing unpaid childcare, along with 6.6 per cent of those aged 75-84 years.



SNAPSHOT OF COUNCIL FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The following community facilities are provided in the City, which are relevant to our older population.

Type	Number
Community facilities including multi-purpose centres, neighbourhood centres, men's shed, surf clubs	51
Libraries, including mobile and home library service	10
Art gallery	1
Cemeteries	9
Child care centres	14
Shared pathways	12
Sports fields	122
Skate parks	8
Boat ramps	29
Playgrounds	114
Swim centres	6
Beaches	4
Public toilets	106

Council is committed to upgrading facilities to improve accessibility. These improvements are identified in Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2017-2021.





COUNCIL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES PROVIDED

Council employs two full-time team members including a Community Planner - Ageing and Disability and an Ageing and Disability Officer to assist with the delivery of:

INFORMATION TO SENIORS AND COMMUNITY

Council's website was upgraded in 2016, with improvements to aged services pages, including the introduction of an Over 55s page.

An Over 55s eNewsletter was also introduced in 2016, with 10 editions produced annually.

Council's Customer Service Centre answers enquiries over the phone and provides hard copies of information as required for seniors that have no access to internet.

Seniors' expos are organised by local Members of Parliament (average two annually) and attended by Council's Ageing and Disability officers to provide information on Council services, home support services and activities available in the community.

COUNCIL'S OVER 55s PROGRAM

A free annual program, operating from February to November. The program focuses on health, safety and wellbeing with a minimum of 60 sessions held at various locations throughout the City. The program, previously known as The Annual Seniors Program, was renamed the Over 55s Program in October 2016 following feedback from participants and specialist staff.

NSW SENIORS WEEK CONCERT

This concert is held annually to celebrate NSW Seniors Festival, with an average of 300 older people attending each year.

In addition, a weekly program of activities was introduced in 2017 as part of NSW Seniors Festival (replaced NSW Seniors Week).

SERVICE PROVIDER NETWORKS

The Community Care Network holds quarterly meetings attended by representatives from 20 aged care service providers.

The Elder Abuse Collaborative commenced in 2016 following an initiative from the Newcastle/Lake Macquarie Community Care Network. Council is part of the Collaborative, with four meetings held annually. The aim is to create community awareness and support services for those affected by elder abuse.





LIBRARY SERVICES AND RESOURCES

To assist our older population, Council has purchased additional resources for our Lake Mac Libraries branches including screen readers, daisy readers and 3D books. A new mobile library service was introduced to connect people across the City. This smaller vehicle, 'The Rover', replaced the older large van.

BLUE DOT WASTE SERVICE

Council provides a special needs waste collection service for those who are unable to take their bin to and from the kerb due to a medical condition.

THE GOOD NEIGHBOUR PROJECT

This project encourages people to assist their neighbours who are unable to put out their bins. This increased support from community will reduce reliance on assisted waste services.

ADVOCACY

Council officers provide comment on development applications, including seniors housing developments, master plans and Council facilities with a public use to ensure non-discriminatory access and use.

AGEING AND DISABILITY ADVISORY PANEL

The Ageing and Disability Advisory Panel was established in 2010 to ensure equity of access to services and facilities for all Lake Macquarie residents. The panel holds five meetings annually and provides Council with advice on the broad range of issues that affect seniors, people with a disability and carers, as well as providing information back into the community on Council services and plans.

Issues discussed include access to services and facilities, pedestrian infrastructure, transport, health, housing, support services and activities.

The Panel consists of elected members from:

- local ageing and disability service providers;
- community members from the target groups including older adults, people with a disability and carers; and
- Council representatives including Councillors and specialist staff.

VOLUNTEERS

Council engages volunteers through various Council departments including Sustainability, Landcare, Library Services, Art Gallery and Community Planning. Volunteering benefits the individual and the community through improved social connection and valued contribution - this is important as people age.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

During September 2017, we asked the community for ideas to help make Lake Macquarie an even better place to live as our residents get older.

We conducted a survey as part of our community consultation to better understand the needs of older people and the level of satisfaction with Council services and facilities catering to over 55s.

The input from the community helped us to prepare this Plan.

WHO PARTICIPATED:

We heard from a range of community members including:

- older residents;
- family members;
- carers;
- local aged service providers;
- Shortland Seniors Expo attendees;
- independent service provider forums; and
- Council's Disability and Ageing Advisory Panel.

HOW YOU PARTICIPATED



More than 6000
online newsletters were sent



2648 people
were engaged via social media



380 visits
to Shape Lake Mac website



77 submissions
and online surveys were received

WHAT WE HEARD:

“My hubby and I retired this year but many over 55s still work and many exercise programmes for them are only 9am-5pm Mon-Fri.”

“Provide more and better walking tracks and footpaths, more accessible parking for shopping, encourage transport providers to provide more public transport, including direct transport to public hospitals.”

“Better public transport facilities and more outdoor activities such as night markets.”

“Bus stops with covers and seating”

“By making it easier to get around once you cannot drive.”

“Provide better infrastructure for scooter users.”

SURVEY RESULTS

What would you like?

48%

would like more or improved footpaths, shared pathways and walking tracks

38%

would like more or improved recreational facilities, especially outdoors

35%

would like better transport options and bus shelters

How satisfied are you?

79%

are satisfied with current Council services for older residents

70%

are satisfied with current Council facilities for older residents

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Priority area	Action	Key performance indicator
Providing information to the community on aged care services and activities	Continue to update Council's website and community noticeboard with relevant information.	Website updated
	Staff to continue to answer community enquiries and make necessary referrals to services.	Occasions of enquiries and referrals
	Continue to provide information to community and community groups.	Occasions of Seniors Expo attended and presentations to community groups
	Continue to provide a free annual program of events to over 55s to improve health, safety and wellbeing including an activity to celebrate NSW Seniors Festival.	Over 55s program maintained and implemented between February and November
Improving infrastructure and the built environment	Continue to review Development Control Plans (DCP) to better meet target's needs, through increasing ratios of seniors' housing, adaptable housing, liveable housing and car parking.	DCP reviewed
	Review Development Applications relating to seniors' housing and public use facilities to ensure compliance with relevant standards and regulations.	Number of referrals and Development Applications assessed
	Liaise with Council departments to monitor capital works program and associated infrastructure strategies to improve access for older people including cycling and footpath strategies, recreation and land plans and developer contribution plans.	List of works developed and maintained and promoted through Council's Operational Plan
Advocating for older people to improve service delivery	Continue to promote the Good Neighbour Project. Extend the program to include encouraging neighbours to mow and maintain the verge and nature strips.	Requests for Blue Dot service and mowing of verge and nature strips reduced
	Continue to facilitate Council's Ageing and Disability Advisory Panel to represent and advocate for seniors.	Five meetings held annually
	Continue to attend and participate, in relevant networks and forums to advocate for older people's needs.	Occasions of forums and meetings attended
	Advocate for inclusion of older people in Council publications and promotions, where appropriate.	Number of publications and promotion that include seniors

Outcome	Timeframe	Responsibility
Information will assist community to make more informed decisions	Ongoing	Customer Service and Communications Community Planning
Information will assist community to make more informed decisions and improve quality of life	Ongoing	Customer Service and Communications Ageing and Disability Officer
Information will assist community to make more informed decisions	Ongoing	Community Planner Ageing and Disability Ageing and Disability Officer
Improve social participation and quality of life Introduce new topics and activities	Ongoing	Ageing and Disability Officer Lake Mac Libraries
Increased choice and quality of life for older people	Ongoing	Community Planner Ageing and Disability Integrated Planning
Increased choice and quality of life for older people	Ongoing	Community Planner Ageing and Disability
Improved access for older people at Council facilities through appropriate infrastructure provision	Ongoing	Asset Management
Improves quality of life of seniors Promotes community participation/support	Ongoing Annual promotional campaign	Community Planner Ageing and Disability Customer Service and Communications
Council is engaged with the community and service providers about relevant areas affecting seniors	Ongoing	Community Planner Ageing and Disability
Increased choice and quality of life of seniors Council is engaged with service providers on areas that affect seniors	Ongoing	Community Planner Ageing and Disability Ageing and Disability Officer
Promote seniors in a positive manner within the community and Council	Ongoing	Community Planner Ageing and Disability Customer Service and Communications





MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Council's Ageing and Disability Advisory Panel will monitor the progress of the actions listed in this Plan. In addition, Council officers will report on the actions of the Plan in monthly reports and quarterly Operational Plan reports.

Council will also report on the Ageing Population Plan actions as part of its Annual Report, which is available on Council's website.

The Ageing Population Plan will be reviewed and updated in 2022.



LAKE MACQUARIE CITY
AGEING POPULATION PLAN
2018–2022



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