



# Supporting our older citizens in ageing positively

## Surf Coast Shire Council Positive Ageing Strategy 2015-18: Summary

**Surf Coast Shire Council's Positive Ageing Strategy 2015-18 focuses on achieving better outcomes for older citizens by guiding our work over the next three years across the key areas of:**

- planning and delivering services to help people to age positively in our community
- advocating to ensure older citizens' needs are considered at local, state and national levels, and
- providing infrastructure to enable them to connect with others via access to open spaces, senior citizens centres and other community facilities.

This summary will introduce you to the strategy's key points. You can access the complete document at [www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au](http://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au) or by contacting Customer Services (P. 5261 0600 E. [info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au)).

### **Themes and principles provide the foundation**

The strategy's goals and objectives are built around five key themes identified by the desktop research and confirmed by the community during the consultation phase. These are:

- Access
- Knowledge
- Connection

- Quality frameworks, and
- Change.

The strategy is also underpinned by the following guiding principles based on the concept of Surf Coast Shire as an 'all ages friendly community':

1. Accessible and inclusive built and natural environments, services and facilities, information, events and activities.
2. Safe and supportive environments and open spaces.
3. Responsive programs, services and policies, taking into account the specific needs of each life stage from birth to old age.
4. Providing opportunities to participate, socialise and have fun in the community.
5. Respect and dignity including the right to express opinions and contribute to decision-making.
6. Diversity as characterised by our communities' diverse attributes and needs requiring targeted approaches.
7. Holistic in working together and with others to create an 'all ages friendly community'.

Together the themes and principles provide the foundation for the strategy's goals and objectives, and their implementation via its actions and outcomes.



# We are committed to working together, with our community, our partners and others to support Surf Coast Shire's older citizens in ageing positively.

The following goals and objectives outline how we plan to fulfil this commitment over the next three years.



**Goal 1 - ACCESS:** We make it easy for older citizens to access what they need.

## Objectives

- 1.1 Review annually the development, coordination and delivery of accessible positive ageing services for Surf Coast residents (inclusive of residents from diverse backgrounds and special groups) by Council.
- 1.2 Promote and support the continued development of accessible built and natural environments.
- 1.3 Respect the diverse communication needs of older people in our community.
- 1.4 Ensure Council's planning, community, infrastructure and advocacy programs provide for older citizens' needs.

## We will know we have succeeded when we see:

- service plans which promote multidisciplinary approaches and holistic care and health planning
- age friendly design and access criteria applied to infrastructure development and communication strategies, and
- older citizens' needs are represented in Council's advocacy efforts.



**Goal 2 - KNOWLEDGE:** We build and use knowledge to respond to the needs of older citizens and their families.

## Objectives

- 2.1 Maximise use of available data to better inform services/program planning and delivery.
- 2.2 Continue to strengthen interagency partnerships/networks and key government contacts, with a focus on knowledge sharing and facilitating collaboration in representing and responding to older people's needs.
- 2.3 Consult and engage with community and internal stakeholders to ensure the needs of older citizens are reflected in Council's services and program planning.
- 2.4 Support services and program planning on an ongoing basis.

## We will know we have succeeded when we see:

- older citizens' voices represented in broader communication and engagement processes
- interagency partnership approaches to funding and service planning
- increased use of data to inform service development, and
- regular reports and evaluation of projects, programs and services.



**Goal 3 - CONNECTION: We facilitate connections between older citizens, their families and the Surf Coast community.**

**Objectives**

- 3.1 Explore existing and new avenues for promoting the participation of older citizens in community life and lifelong learning.
- 3.2 Actively work with and support local communities in facilitating initiatives encouraging connection/ participation, including opportunities for intergenerational relationships and activities.
- 3.3 Improve understanding of factors which may increase vulnerability or risk for older citizens.
- 3.4 Support and celebrate the valuable and diverse contributions our older citizens make to the community.
- 3.5 Continue to advocate to ensure all services and infrastructure are supporting community connection

**We will know we have succeeded when we see:**

- increased community participation by older citizens in civic and community activities
- increased opportunities for intergenerational activities, and
- improved engagement with hard-to-reach groups.



**Goal 4 - QUALITY FRAMEWORKS: Our direct services and programs meet quality framework standards.**

**Objectives**

- 4.1 Ensure direct services and programs meet legislative requirements, funding agreement terms, best practice frameworks and industry standards.
- 4.2 Continue to improve governance arrangements, including regular reporting to Council, funding bodies and clients/ community.

**We will know we have succeeded when we see:**

- quality improvement plans in place and regularly monitored
- accreditation ratings achieved, and
- Increased reporting to Council and the community on program and service achievements.



**Goal 5 - CHANGE: We plan ahead to enable our services and programs to adapt to change.**

**Objectives**

- 5.1 Build organisational capacity to adapt to ongoing policy and sector reforms through effective planning.
- 5.2 Build organisational capacity to stay abreast of and respond to population growth, demographic and other significant changes (eg political, economic, social, technological).
- 5.3 Advocate on community's behalf to ensure critical gaps in services/program provision and community infrastructure are adequately addressed.

**We will know we have succeeded when we see:**

- service planning and development in response to demographic changes
- service reviews completed and informing future needs and opportunities for early years and youth
- successful advocacy for services, infrastructure and programs for our growing community.

## The need for a new strategy

The *Council Plan 2013-17* identifies reviewing our existing *Positive Ageing Strategy* (adopted in 2009) as critical to building quality services, long-term community partnerships, healthy, safe environments, and accessible, well-maintained infrastructure.

At the same time, the *Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-17* aims to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for all Surf Coast residents, including older people. The *Accessible and Inclusive Surf Coast Shire Strategic Plan 2014-24* also focuses on making our shire more accessible and inclusive for everyone.

While these key Council documents provide a sound internal basis for developing a new strategy, our growing population and ongoing aged care reforms at State and Federal Government levels represent critical external catalysts. For example:

- older citizens currently comprise about 14 per cent of our total population, forecast to double by 2031, and
- major government reforms currently underway include responsibility for all aged care programs and services for people over 65 transitioning from State to Federal Government and the ongoing roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

## Developing the strategy

The process of developing the strategy included:

- a three-pronged research approach, involving desktop research, demographic analysis and community consultation
- meetings with Positive Ageing Unit staff members to discuss key findings and determine strategic directions
- briefings with Council and the Executive Management Team to seek feedback on the draft strategy, and
- a public exhibition process to seek community feedback.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the strategy's development.



## More information

The complete strategy is available at [www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au](http://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au)

Enquiries can be directed to our Aged and Family Services Department

**P.** 5261 0600

**E.** [info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au)