

Liveable Communities Post Workshop Survey Report October 2012

Each council contact person was sent a link to an online survey using Survey Monkey and asked to distribute the link to those who attended. While the main intention of the survey was to ascertain the impact of the workshop on council staff, many service providers and individuals also completed the survey.

The survey was open throughout August and September 2012. Opportunity to provide narrative responses formed the major part of the questionnaire. The questions were open ended and respondents were not forced to answer all questions. Although the response rate is low (67), this could be due to difficulties with emailed links being assessed as junk mail by Internet Service Providers (ISPs). However, the responses gathered provide some insights into the type of outcomes resulting from the workshop.

In summary, two thirds of respondents now think more about an ageing population in their day to day work (66.7%), and the same number carried out the commitment they made at the end of the day. Actions taken as a result of the workshop included:

- Discussing the issues in the workplace and with friends and volunteer groups
- Becoming more aware of the issues
- Focusing on improving information about services available
- Ways to include older people in planning processes and delivery programs

Actions intended in the future were similar to those above or were intended to build on work already undertaken:

- Using enhanced awareness of the issues to play an advocacy role
- Updating or developing policies that impact on or relate to older people
- Reviewing and developing social service and information provision

Pedestrian access, footpaths, transport and access to buildings and the public domain featured strongly in actions respondents felt they were unable to make but wanted to. Housing and accommodation was also raised in response to this question, as well as improvements to social services.

Respondents were given an opportunity to make any final comments and these fell into two categories: comments about the issues already raised, and comments about the workshop itself, which were mostly positive and encouraging.

The specific questionnaire responses have been themed and are reported as follows.

Q. As a result of the workshop, do you think about an ageing population more often in your day to day work?

Yes	44	66.7%
No	1	1.5%
Same	21	31.8%

Comments:

- As I am in the ageing population I often wonder what the future will be.
- Impressed on other staff and Managers the need to bring forward writing a new Council Strategy for Older People
- Support the population with activities to increase their healthy living and ageing through my project however, I do feel that I understand more the issue the ageing population is facing.
- I provide assistance whenever possible
- More aware of the ability of individual's to contribute.
- I am involved with my aged Mother so yes.
- Yes. Projects that have the needs of older people need to consider many issues that came out at the workshop.
- I keep thinking of what else I can do for them, to make their life more enjoyable and meaningful.
- As I am in that age bracket it is a subject that comes up often amongst the people I mix with on various occasions.
- Trying to be more aware of needs of the elderly population, making contact, taking time to talk to the lonely and housebound.
- We have a huge ageing population. How will hospitals and age care facilities cope? People over 65 should start making their home liveable for the older age i.e. ramps, shower, toilets hand rails, low maintenance yards etc.
- I now feel a sense of frustration because I have been shown that Councils and Governments are aware of what should be done - but how can these works be funded!!
- Live with it every day
- Interesting
- Work in the field of ageing (x6)

Q. What actions have you taken as a result of the workshop?

Discussed with others, reported back

- Asked friends what problems do they encounter in daily 'getting out and about'.
- Talk to Councillors
- Talk to Councillors
- Discussed with planning manager
- Discussed issues that were raised with colleagues and other service providers in the area
- advised others on the impacts
- Dissemination of information to staff in team
- Spoken to the residents in our independent living units for ideas
- Coaching my staff on access considerations
- Reported to the members of the Bowral Hospital Auxiliary about what we did at the workshop
- Been talking to people about the issues.

Awareness of issues increased

- The workshop enlightened me to Age facilities, safety standards and the needs of Seniors in the community
- How it translates to our business.
- More aware of the dangers of crossing roads, and driving my car, making sure I cross at designated areas, paying more attention in parking my car, when and where, trying to shop outside school times i.e. between 9:30 and 4 pm.
- Become more aware of the needs of our ageing population.
- Been more aware that the age of applicants for positions is not relevant
- I am more aware of the issues older people deal with
- More awareness about the aged in town.
- Ensure infrastructure staff consider suitability of older people.
- Taken note of many things relevant to ageing population
- Consideration of the elderly environmental point of view - streetscape, visibility, seating etc.

Actions related to information

- Library has drafted a local Seniors Service Directory
- started working on a Seniors information brochure
- Organise tutorials for them that will keep them up to date with technology and online communication, such as Skype, Facebook, etc.
- Informed our local support group of the workshop and provided some relevant contacts for the group.
- Organised updated info on all the community services in our geographic area.
- Taken some of the links to further information and put together a resource list for my co-workers.
- Gathering information on all support services available and keeping a file.
- Circulated among friends the Travel Training Brochures etc.

Actions related to planning

- Beginning research into a council Ageing Policy
- Commenced work on an Ageing Strategy
- Take further action to initiate work on Strategic Plan
- More emphasis on planning for an ageing population in the redevelopment of our hall as a performance centre.
- Consideration of disabled in planning and construction of bus stops, seats, shelters and kerb ramps
- Assessing proposals more closely with a view to determining if anything can change to accommodate seniors and people with a disability
- Printed the Livable Housing Design Guidelines
- More emphasis on getting access to buildings right
- More consideration of local environment based on information received at workshop.
- Bus Stop audit
- Sourced information on the types of ageing housing facilities in our local area

Other Actions taken

- Installed hand rails next to steps and in the toilet. Meeting my neighbours and offering help or support if and when needed. Making a phone call to friends I haven't seen for 2 weeks
- A ramp has already been installed at Target
- Push for better wages for home care staff, greater numbers in the industry, allowing more aged persons to live in their own homes and communities
- Promoted the development of a community bus
- Continue to do what I always do - keep asking for access to be improved everywhere - giving Council a hard time
- The workshop helped me to secure help for myself and my Mother.
- I have followed up on my commitment to promote the Mens Shed
- Actions undertaken as per commitment at workshop
- Wasted my breath
- None or nil (x4)
- All my work involves the aged
- Involved in aging population daily
- same as before

Q. What actions do you plan to take in the future as a result of the workshop?

Advocacy Actions

- Become more of a VOICE to the local council and other government outlets (i.e. people friendly awareness) instead of huge developers taking over.
- As secretary of my local senior citizens club I invited members from all other senior clubs in our shire to attend a gathering in our centre. 74 attended. Senior clubs membership has declined over the past 10 years and one now very low in member numbers. Why is this so? I promote Seniors Clubs at every opportunity.
- Continue on the Council Welfare Committee
- Support the Bus project - listen to the needs and wants of our Seniors and try to provide options via the Library Service
- continue to highlight issues for our aged community
- Still keep nagging Council. I want to fix the problems.

Actions related to Planning

- Complete Ageing Strategy
- improve pedestrian walking facilities
- Consider this aspect when we are establishing projects.
- Continue to consider (2) in future planning and construction
- Strategic planning currently underway will have increased emphasis on needs of the aging
- Designing ageing housing facilities with a better understanding of the day to day issues that elderly people face.
- Make suggestions that may result in a more proactive approach to development
- Include strategies in long term plan especially related to recreational and lifelong learning activities in the library.
- Be aware of older people and including them in planning, through ease of access, where possible.
- Continue the partnership with Ryde Council to support the project plan

- Consider facilities for aged, including open space needs
- Greater focus on access to and within buildings.
- Ensure appropriate consideration of issues discussed when undertaking projects
- I will be incorporating in my design plans measures that will assist the older people
- Continued monitoring of approvals in relation to the aged and access
- Keeping this as a priority in planning capital works and events
- Encourage all areas/sections of council to consider the needs of older people in planning, projects and policies.
- Encourage Council to look at its works program and how it can improve on what it already does

Actions related to social services and information

- Organise info sessions on health issues for seniors.
- I have already utilised some of the organisations represented on the day.
- Working more closely with Community Services staff, further review of library collections
- Ensure a range of activities and social engagements are available in the aged care community
- Encourage local service providers to work together to address some of the issues raised. Develop programs that target a range of residents rather than only a few
- Ensure our information about aged services is up to date
- try to have more housing- care transport etc.
- Keep more up-to-date.

Other actions

- I have put myself forward as a candidate in the Council elections
- Try to make payment for our service easier
- Involve representation of older persons in survey of infrastructure suitability
- Have an agenda item at residents meetings for suggestions
- Safety. Welcoming people to Gilgandra and letting them know that we care about our citizens. Making an effort to make access easier - making people generally more aware about people who need a hand. We have great facilities here.
- Keep looking for answers and try to find out more about services available. Look into shopping by phone through supermarkets for people with disability, to have affordable access to transport.
- Think more about more experiences members of the community
- Plan more for my retirement

Q. What actions or changes do you want to make but are unable?

None, nil, not an issue (x10)

Pedestrian, transport and access issues

- Try to lobby for more pedestrian crossings, and public toilets (clean ones) to be incorporated into large supermarkets.
- Would like to see upgrade of access for pedestrians with or without walking aids to crossings at Bundanoon Railway Crossings. Tallong Railways Stn. is a problem when getting on/off trains

- Give priority to pedestrians in main streets - cannot do so because main streets are State/National highways
- I can't mend the footpaths and gutters that people trip over
- Additional footpaths, but \$ is an issue
- Making access issues a higher importance (some of those pictures were a real eye opener)
- One of the issues is transport - getting more difficult - high step from platform to train, buses not driving in parallel to the kerb.
- Create simple improved access to information on services to aged. Hold talks/events for aged clientele with transport provided
- Encourage management to have a better understanding of the DDA and the impact on the planning process at all levels.
- More upgrading of public transport facilities for disabled access, but limited by available funding

Social services issues

- I would like our local council to be more helpful to senior clubs. More exercise groups for aged - at low cost, speakers on maintaining good health and nutrition and managing a budget on the pension and eating fresh good food.
- I would like to see 'wellness' centres and easier access to health care available locally. The Library Service provides many resources to health care and provides facilities for Tai Chi sessions, Scrabble mornings and Mah-jong afternoons are a good start to social inclusion for Seniors which is always good for health.
- Much easier payment system for clients with limited mobility
- Provide more Internet classes for seniors but can't due to lack of qualified volunteer tutors.
- Would like to be able to influence more suitable accommodation in LGA

Housing and accommodation

- Housing
- More suitable accommodation in the future.
- At this point I would like to be able to determine the % of older persons who stay alone in their own house by choice, and their preferred choice of housing if they had to move, to better predict future housing needs.

Attitudinal issues

- Always a challenge to change culture in an organisation so that needs of ageing population are considered at every step
- Difficulty in engaging all areas of council to see that the issues of older people need to be considered in all areas of work
- Get "aged care" out of the ghetto mentality of the various bureaucrats
- Developers need to include in their designs measures that will assist older people
- Have all levels of Council involved in planning, not have planning see community services as the 'soft' section but be involved in planning and infrastructure

Not enough funding

- Cannot do more work in addition to my existing workload - requires additional resources
- Limited funding

Other

- Should I be voted a position on Council then I will be better positioned to promote matters to benefit the seniors.

Q. Did you carry out the commitment you made at the end of the day?

Yes	37	66.1%	Skipped question 11
No	5	8.9%	
Partially	14	25%	

Comments

- I have to ask why membership is so low in seniors clubs - when I find out the answer I will take action to remedy this. There are lots of old lonely people out there!
- There is no power in the power of one. Nearly 10 years I have complained to this council about access to certain building but nothing has been done.
- This interesting workshop was shortened / rushed because of another commitment. The "making of commitments" was not part of the shortened program.
- My concerns were for more aged care and upgrade of the footpaths of my own street. Council are building a retirement village which will not meet the needs of the aged in the district. Footpaths still not upgraded.
- Community Information Directories were distributed to all local Doctor Surgeries and medical centres. We are hoping that people who may be socially isolated will find this tool with access to local services useful. A number of medical centres have called for more copies.
- My commitment was to visit some housing for ageing people but time has not yet allowed this
- Continued with nagging - that was my commitment.
- I would need to be reminded what that commitment was!!
- General Manager's secretary rang me and asked to explain about my idea about a sign that welcomes visitors to Gilgandra. They are working on it. I am very pleased about that. I am more aware of the aged and do what I can - I have helped one lady in particular.
- Involved in aging population daily
- To update our community services info.
- The day was a help to me.
- Trying hard!

Q. Any other comments?

About the issues

- Group Manager has recently called key staff from the whole group to emphasise the need for everyone to consider older people for all projects

initiated by Community Life Group and Other Groups. I believe this realisation came partly as a flow on from the Workshop

- Assumption by COTA that Ryde will have a financially, well-resourced ageing population. Assumption population will be healthy to volunteer in environment sector, wouldn't this be better done by younger school leavers or those on the dole?
- I realise some older persons can be rather reluctant to use public transport and community resources - perhaps better services and accessibility may be the answer - country areas seem to be behind in this. However we do love to live in Wingecarribee!!
- Community transport is very good service but not all pensioners can stretch their pension to cover cost of a trip to seniors club. Provide free transport to and from seniors clubs.
- Although the council building is due to be pulled down, they could still do something about the lighting at night for safety now. Have a good working relationship with the customer service person. Just got to get public transport right for older people and people with prams.
- Looking forward to reports and interested to see information from other councils.

About the workshop itself

- Many thanks for arranging these workshops and for interesting speakers, judging by the numbers attending same, it proves a point.
- It was a really worthwhile day - Thank you
- A good seminar with a good balance of group participation and information
- enjoyed the workshop very much thank you
- Thank you for a wonderful workshop and well done
- I couldn't stop talking about the workshop. I thought it was an interesting and informative day. It was good to have people stand up and give their opinions and ideas - it was fantastic. Even my husband enjoyed it and he doesn't usually like these sorts of things. It opened up areas I don't usually think of - very enlightening. I feel that Council is moving forward on the issues - they immediately installed a ramp at Target.
- It was an important day of information leading to increased awareness
- Good workshop - made people who don't regularly deal with the elderly stop and think
- Worthwhile workshop
- Very well presented and informative
- That was a wonderful workshop. Any follow-up?
- It was a very encouraging day. The local support group were incredibly responsive to and appreciative of the event. It acknowledged the community.
- It was a very worthwhile day
- It was a very well organised, very useful workshop.
- Enjoyed the workshop
- Although the workshop was interesting it could have been more targeted to certain professionals.
- Workshop should have addressed which items to prioritise - I know there are a lot of things to do and are wrong, but I want to know which items have the biggest impact and as such should be prioritised

Survey Conclusions

Although the intended focus of the survey was to ascertain the impact of the workshop on council staff, the survey responses revealed that community service providers and community members also benefited from the workshop. At the workshops it was expected that service providers and older community members would have insights into issues of ageing and share these with council staff during their discussions. However, the survey, and the end of workshop evaluation forms both indicate that service providers and community members also increased their understanding of the issues and found ways in which they could contribute to making improvements.

Overall, the workshops appear to have achieved their aim in raising awareness of the issues of an ageing population as well as facilitating council staff, service providers and community members to achieve simple and cost effective outcomes, and in identifying issues for further attention and action.

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