

# AUCKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL OF SOCIAL SERVICES (ADCOSS)

## Age-friendly Cities

Around the world local authorities are exploring ways of making their cities 'age-friendly.' Their explorations have involved the provision of appropriate and accessible facilities and services, but also recognised the diverse contributions that older people make to the wider community, and discovered how those contributions can be facilitated and enhanced.

Globally two major demographic changes are occurring simultaneously:

- City populations are expanding rapidly and this urbanisation is placing pressures on agencies (local government, health and social services) to handle this growth.
- Populations are also ageing and this is also adding pressures to health and other services.

Auckland is facing these identical challenges. The Auckland District Council of Social Services (ADCOSS) has prepared this paper with a view to beginning conversations with appropriate agencies and the wider community about these challenges. We recognise that solutions are not easy to find, but we urge organisations to start engaging with older people so they can plan to co-create appropriate environments and services for our ageing population.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) promotes the concept of Age-friendly Cities and has provided an easy-to-read policy framework.

**The WHO Age-friendly Cities policy framework highlights eight domains that cities and communities can address to adapt their structures and services so they meet the needs of older people: The built environment, Transport, Housing, Social participation, Respect and social inclusion, Civic participation and employment, Communication and information, and Community and health services.**

Further information about the WHO policy framework can be obtained from:

[http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global\\_age\\_friendly\\_cities\\_Guide\\_English.pdf](http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global_age_friendly_cities_Guide_English.pdf)

Many cities around the world are now accredited with the WHO as 'age-friendly'. Interest is growing in New Zealand cities, with Tauranga and Hamilton leading the way. ADCOSS members look forward to entering into a dialogue with interested agencies, groups and individuals, so that the Age-friendly City message can be shared widely across communities in the Auckland region.

**For more information contact ADCOSS (Auckland District Council of Social Services) by emailing: [bronwyn@adcoss.org.nz](mailto:bronwyn@adcoss.org.nz)**

Over the page is a list of the eight WHO policy domains with suggested actions that different agencies can take to facilitate co-designing a truly age-friendly Auckland.

# AN AGE-FRIENDLY AUCKLAND: KEY ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN BY ADCOSS & OTHER ORGANISATIONS (2016)

This list uses the framework and checklist of essential features of Age-friendly Cities prepared by the World Health Organisation.

Refer [http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Age\\_friendly\\_cities\\_checklist.pdf](http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Age_friendly_cities_checklist.pdf)

Domain	Key Action	Comments
<p><b>Outdoor spaces &amp; buildings</b></p>	<p>A key priority for council and Auckland Transport expenditure should be the upgrade of all public footpaths.</p> <p>Auckland Council should continue to provide open space for a growing population. This will contribute to the wellbeing of everyone.</p> <p>The provision of outdoor exercise equipment for seniors and others would assist in building and sustaining the mobility, agility and fitness of this age group.</p> <p>Seniors need access to appropriate seating in public spaces, and to accessible public toilets.</p>	<p>This will reduce falls due to uneven footpaths, which can be a major health event for some older people. All agencies concerned about the health and wellbeing of older people should advocate for such improvements.</p>
<p><b>Transportation</b></p>	<p>Government and Auckland Council to maintain and enable access to transport entitlements for people with a Gold Card.</p> <p>Planners need to provide for increases in mobility aids, from walkers through to mobility scooters.</p>	<p>This is an essential service for older people in terms of costs of travel, access to services and social engagement. Auckland Transport (AT) needs to engage more readily with older people in relation to their use of public transport services.</p> <p>As the population ages there will be an associated increase in the usage of mobility aids.</p>

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Key Action</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Housing</b>	<p>An advisory service should be provided for older people who might be considering moving from a large house to one more suited to their needs.</p> <p>Government and Auckland Council should collaborate in re-instating pensioner housing.</p> <p>Formulating plans with older people to enable them to 'age in place' safely, and ensure there are diverse housing and accommodation options for older people.</p>	<p>A community organisation might consider delivering such a service, starting with a pilot scheme.</p> <p>The involvement of housing groups will also be an important feature of such a scheme.</p>
<b>Social participation</b>	<p>Community organisations should provide opportunities for older people to gather.</p> <p>Creating appropriate meeting spaces and places with elder-friendly acoustics that foster regular community interactions.</p> <p>Loneliness is a serious issue in Auckland. Age Concern provides volunteer visiting services, but the demand is increasing.</p>	<p>Examples of this include the North Shore Older Women's Network and Community Arts Centres. Can this be replicated in other areas?</p> <p>Other community organisations such as residents associations should ensure that their older citizens do not become isolated and lonely.</p>
<b>Respect &amp; social inclusion</b>	<p>Government and Auckland Council publications should ensure that images of older people are positive.</p>	<p>Auckland Council needs a mechanism to check the visibility of older people in their publications across all their communication channels.</p>

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<b>Civic participation and employment</b>	<p>Government and Auckland Council (including its CCOs) should consult older people (including the Council Seniors' Panel) on new policies and plans.</p> <p>Employers should recognise that older workers are often good employment models, as well as providing guidance and support for younger employees.</p>	<p>The multiple glitches in Auckland Transport's (AT's) communications and operations managing the transition processes involved in users acquiring a Gold AT HOP card has highlighted the need to consult more broadly with seniors.</p>
<b>Communication &amp; information</b>	<p>Council libraries should continue to provide internet and other IT facilities and training for citizens, including older people.</p> <p>Community organisations should give priority to dealing with the loneliness of older people.</p>	<p>The expansion of this service should be considered.</p> <p>Community ethnic/migrant groups often provide such services for their older citizens.</p>
<b>Community &amp; health services</b>	<p>Encouraging all people aged 65 years and older to enrol in a Primary Health Organisation (PHO), as a pre-requisite to accessing two annual, free, 'warrant of fitness' health checks with a practice nurse.</p> <p>Encouraging the MoH and Pharmac to consider purchasing hearing aids in bulk, to reduce their price; and to provide appropriate problem-solving aural rehabilitation services that enable older people with age-related hearing losses to continue participating in social discourse in the community.</p> <p>Co-locating services so that they are centralised in conveniently accessible places.</p>	<p>Maintaining older people's health and wellbeing are critical to ensuring they age well. Early detection of risk factors associated with chronic diseases will facilitate focusing on lifestyle modification to enhance quality of life and reduce disabilities.</p> <p>All older adults experience attrition of hearing, and many avoid obtaining assistive listening devices on account of the associated costs.</p> <p>The benefits of providing one-stop-shops for essential products and services are self-evident.</p>