

He Rautaki Whakatupuranga

City For All Ages Strategy



AGE FRIENDLY
AOTEAROA
NEW ZEALAND

NELSON

Whakatauki

He waka eke noa

**A canoe which we are
all in with no exceptions**

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What is a City For All Ages?

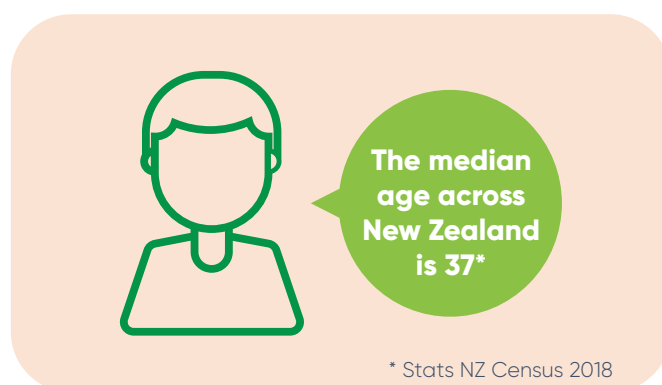
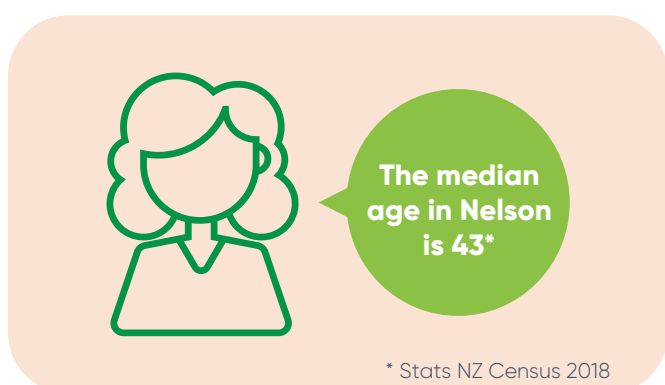
This Strategy has a vision that a City For All Ages is:

An age-friendly community that values the experience and wisdom of all people

He hapori manaaki, ngā Whakatupuranga

This Strategy aims for Whakatū Nelson to be a place where older adults can live well, contribute to, and connect with, their community as they age. However, the actions in the Strategy aim to benefit everyone and make Whakatū Nelson truly a City For All Ages.

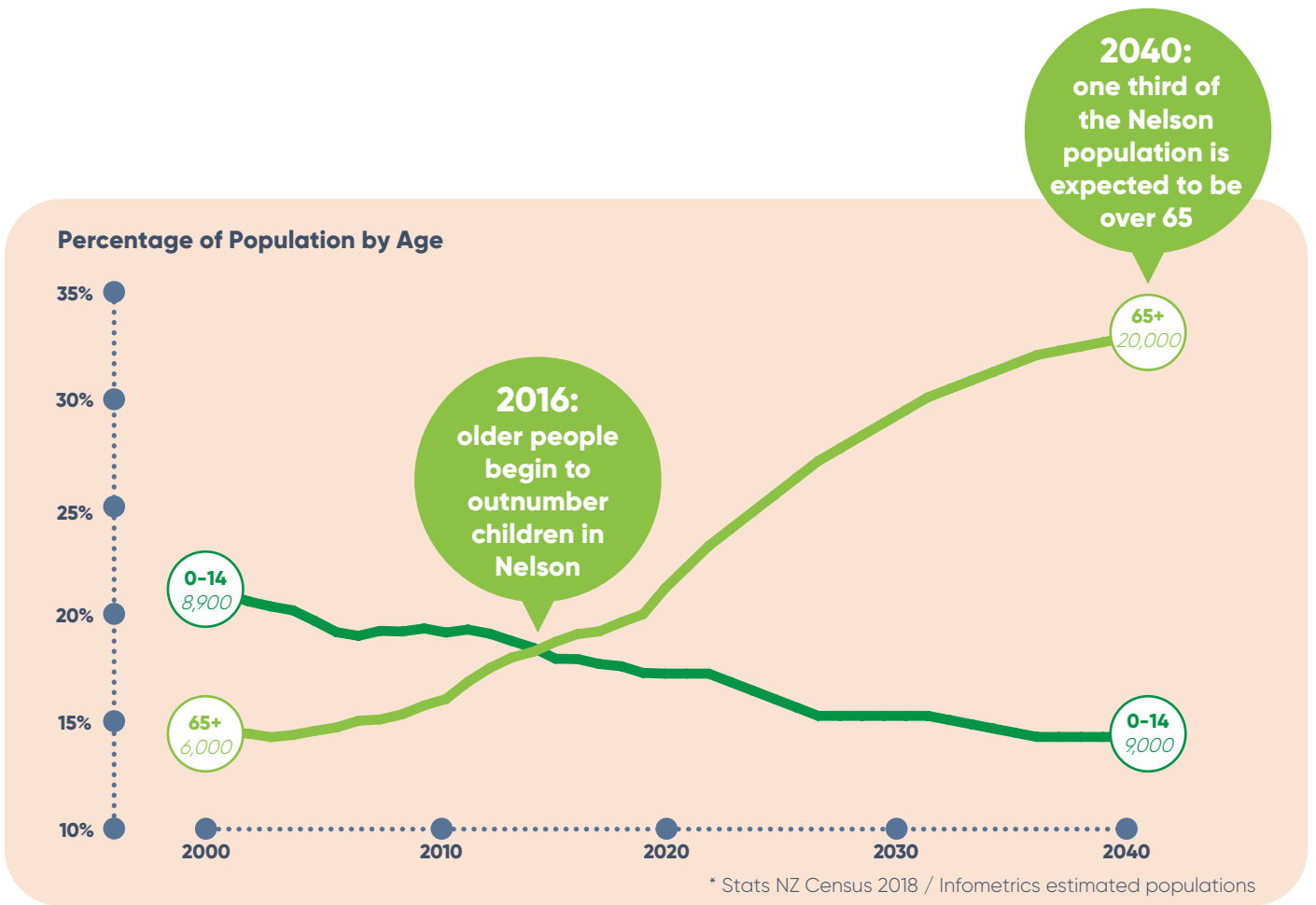
Around the world, in developed and developing countries, older age groups are growing faster than any other.



Here in Whakatū Nelson, we are fortunate to enjoy one of the highest average lifespans in New Zealand – 86 years old for women and 81 for men. Rewind 200 years, and no country had an average life expectancy above 40. Now, no country has one lower.

These incredible gains in longevity are a remarkable achievement – a success story involving hundreds of years of improving public health, medical care, social and economic development. As a result, we can reasonably expect two, three or more decades of life than our great grandparents.

It is how we live these extra decades that this Strategy will focus on.



By mid-century, one in four New Zealanders will be over the age of 65. Our older population will be increasingly diverse, with numbers of older people increasing across all ethnicities.

It is important, in our bicultural society, to consider the wellbeing of our kaumātua who will make up an increasing number and proportion of the Māori population. In Whakatū Nelson, the percentage of the Māori community aged 65 and over is projected to more than triple, from 4% in 2013 to 13% by 2038⁽⁰¹⁾.

While some countries are trying to counter the ageing demographic, offering tax breaks and other incentives for new births, the young populations of our past are unlikely ever to be seen again. In Whakatū Nelson, we want to embrace this change for the benefit of our entire community. Far from benefitting only older people, the actions this Strategy promotes are important for Whakatū Nelson's future economic and social wellbeing and in the interests of all residents.

He Wero, He Mea Angitu rānei? Challenge or Opportunity?

While extra longevity is a great gift for us as individuals, as a society, we tend to focus on its challenges. Common metaphors for an ageing population - age quake, ageing tsunami, population bomb – use the language of disasters. Articles focus on growing healthcare budgets, a shrinking workforce, unsustainable superannuation costs and the tax burden for future generations.

While there is no doubt that there are challenges, these go hand-in-hand with a set of opportunities. We may be getting older, but we are also doing more. Older New Zealanders are remaining healthier for longer, fueling the economy by putting off retirement, helping volunteer groups stay afloat, and providing invaluable family and community support.

Whakatū Nelson has an opportunity to harness the wealth of skills, knowledge and

experience of our older residents for the good of all. Supporting older Nelsonians to stay connected and contributing is not only good for our city; it can provide a sense of purpose and increase the wellbeing of individuals.

Equally, there will be those who face hardships, be they financial, health or otherwise, in their later years, and we need to find ways to support and keep them connected. Older Māori, for instance, have poorer health outcomes, lower rates of homeownership and greater rates of financial insecurity. We need to ensure all older residents of Whakatū Nelson have the opportunity to experience a positive later life in our community.

The actions in this Strategy can support our community during an exciting period of change as we redefine what it means to be “old”.

Mātāpono Principles

In seeking to achieve its vision, the Strategy will apply three principles.

Local action – encourage, inform and empower the community to plan for and respond to the needs of older people

Collaboration – work together to achieve more

Value diversity – acknowledge and celebrate the range of experiences and backgrounds of older people in Whakatū Nelson



Ngā Aronga Matua Focus Areas

The Strategy has seven areas of focus, and each has its own chapter describing what it covers, the issues for Whakatū Nelson and the actions we can take. The Strategy has avoided listing existing actions and instead has focussed on new initiatives that can take us further down the path to an age friendly Whakatū Nelson. There is a wealth of wonderful projects and programmes already underway in our community and documented in a companion document, the Baseline Assessment.

Actions are not evenly spread throughout the focus areas but rather reflect where there have been partners willing to work with the Steering Group. The Steering Group welcomes suggestions of new partners who might be able to take action to fill gaps in the Strategy.

Implementation

The Steering Group, once the Strategy is finalised, will become an Implementation Group and report annually on progress. The Group will also champion the Strategy and update it with new actions and projects.

Any group, agency or individual wanting to support the Strategy or suggest new actions can email cityforallages@ncc.govt.nz







Oranga Tonutanga Wellness

In this Strategy, Wellness covers health, physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing, fitness and physical training, hobbies, sports activities, community care, support services eg. support for caregivers, dementia support, residential care.

Wellness topic includes:

Physical wellness

There are many aspects to staying physically well as we age. Research shows that movement is key to retaining function and autonomy in later years. Older adults who move their bodies help to keep them fit, strong, flexible and coordinated.

Many of the leading causes of death are linked to the amount of movement in our lives. Being physically active is protective against many chronic diseases, from heart disease and cancer to diabetes and dementia. It is also protective against mental health issues.

The New Zealand Ministry of Health recommends people aged 65 and older aim for

- two muscle-strengthening sessions per week
- plus 30 minutes of moderate aerobic activity five days a week
- plus three flexibility/balance sessions.

These recommendations can be a daunting goal for many as modern urban life prioritises convenience over movement. However, the design of the built and natural environment in and around Whakatū Nelson City can be used to encourage activity. Even small amounts of movement can have a protective effect and keep residents mobile and active for longer.

Mental wellness

Some mental wellbeing challenges are more common in later life, such as bereavement, health problems, and reduced mobility or reduced independence. Transitions such as moving from work to retirement, losing a partner, moving house or losing a driver's license can result in lost connections and feelings of loneliness.

Older New Zealand men (85+) have high rates of suicide⁽⁰²⁾, comparable to the high rates among young New Zealand males in the 15 to 30 age group. These rates mirror international research showing the highest global rates of suicide are in people aged 70 years and older⁽⁰³⁾. Research suggests

multiple potential causes such as losing a partner, loneliness, poverty, shifting to residential care and illness.

Creativity

Involvement in the arts and creative activity can bring a sense of purpose and opportunities for connection. There is growing evidence of the ability of arts interventions to improve cognitive function and wellbeing. Nelson has a considerable arts and creativity heritage that provides opportunities for older residents to continue to explore creative arts.

Spirituality

An important part of wellbeing for many older residents in the community comes from their faith traditions. In the 2018 census 54% of Nelsonians over 65 reported a religious affiliation. While rather less than the national average for this age group (61%) it shows faith playing a much greater role for older adults than the Nelson population as a whole (37%).

Elder abuse

As many as one in 10 older people in New Zealand will experience elder abuse⁽⁰⁴⁾, most commonly psychological or financial. Abusers are often close to the victim and someone they depend upon. Sadly almost 80% of abusers are family members⁽⁰⁵⁾.

Alcohol harm

Hazardous drinking in later years is a problem in New Zealand. Older men are at particular risk, with 38% not following the Ministry of Health guidelines⁽⁰⁶⁾. A 2017 report⁽⁰⁷⁾ comparing eight countries found that older New Zealanders were more likely to drink, drink more often and drink in more harmful quantities than almost all of the other countries studied. Overconsumption increases the risk of falls, can have negative interactions with common prescription medicine and contributes to conditions like liver disease, high blood pressure or dementia.

Opportunities

The Baseline Assessment shows there are many health and wellness support services available locally but a projected growth in chronic diseases and impairments such as dementia will see demand rise. There is good evidence that many challenges of

older age can be improved by changes to lifestyle factors. Projects that support older adults to be more active, coupled with social connection opportunities, can benefit physical and mental health.

Proposed actions



Establish a new fitness class for older adults at Saxton Stadium. The class will be resistance-based and focus on increasing strength. After the class, there'll be a chance for attendees to get together for a cup of tea. (Sport Tasman, Council)



Increase safe use of outdoor gym equipment at Saxton Field through regular walk and exercise classes to be led by a physiotherapist who will train older adults to use the equipment. If successful, extend to the gym equipment along the Maitai, at Tāhunanui and on the Railway Reserve. (Sport Tasman, Council)



Following the 'Tai chi on Tāhunanui Beach' model, provide a weekly outdoor mobility class in selected neighbourhood parks (in areas with the highest density of older adults) to encourage people to spend time outdoors, meet neighbours, learn something new and be active. (Sport Tasman, Age Concern, Council)



Explore with arts facilities in Whakatū Nelson, opportunities to encourage and support older adults to participate in the creative arts. This should include investigating channels for best reaching older adults so they are aware of the many options on offer in Whakatū Nelson and can find one suitable to their interests and experience. (Council)





Meet Mic

An intergenerational football team is kicking out stereotypes about ageing with a weekly game that celebrates players of all ages and abilities. When football fan Mic Dover moved from Reading, in the UK, to Nelson, he wasn't about to leave his beloved sport behind.

It was 2001, and Mic took matters into his own hands, placing an ad in the local newspaper looking for like-minded football enthusiasts of any age and ability who were keen for an informal weekly game. More than a dozen replies later, he had himself enough players for a kick around.

Now, 20 years later, the Nelson Botanicals FC has about 30 regular and occasional players who meet rain, hail or shine every Sunday afternoon at the Botanical Reserve. The players range in age from 14-74 and are a melting pot of nationalities – English, Irish, Scottish, Kiwi, German, Portuguese, Korean, Australian and American. Many of the players, including Mic, now aged 70, suffer from a few “dodgy” body parts, and they don’t bother with keeping score – the team only plays itself, ideally seven-aside.

The team is a great example of an intergenerational activity that can bring younger and older generations together to have a bit of fun and, at the same time, build respect for each other’s strengths. Mic says the mixed age range reminds the older players to watch their language and tackles but also meant the game became more about strategy for the older players. Those who can’t run that fast – or at all – use their experience instead of their speed to outwit their younger counterparts, while also relying on the “youngsters” in their teams to get the ball up and down the pitch.





Pāpori Social

The Social topic covers community support, respect and non-discrimination, inclusion, appropriate services, activities for older adults, intergenerational connection and avoiding age-segregation, neighbourhood gathering places and visiting programmes for the housebound. Social connection is one of the key contributors to individual and community resilience and wellbeing.

Social topic includes:

Intergenerational

Intergenerational activities are focused on finding ways to break down barriers and help people from different generations engage. Feedback on the Strategy from the community emphasised the importance of encouraging and growing opportunities for older adults to enjoy intergenerational connection.

Respect and inclusion

Feeling valued, respected and included by their community helps older people participate in the life of the city. Education can help change an outdated narrative around age by challenging ageism and stereotypes. It is important to recognise the multitude of roles older adults play

that contribute to the wider community. For instance, a sometimes forgotten role older people often take on to support their families, is caring for grandchildren and whānau members. It is also important to recognise older people are not homogenous, they have a wide range of life experiences, abilities and preferences.

Connection

The impact of loneliness can be significant, for both mental and physical health. A lack of social connection can raise the risk of cognitive decline, negative health outcomes and even death. Although the over 65 age group has historically been perceived to be at particular risk of loneliness, recent research suggests that the story is more complex. A 2020 New Zealand study⁽⁰⁸⁾ showed older adults had the lowest level of prolonged loneliness of all age groups. However particular groups can be at higher risk eg. the disabled and Māori.

Opportunities

Many local events and programmes provide social connection opportunities for older adults (see Baseline Assessment). A significant new collaboration between Age Concern and Volunteer Nelson aims to address social isolation and loneliness

through connecting people to community services and groups (the Wellby project). One area the strategy aims to be active is in making the stories of older adults more visible in the community to increase understanding and respect.

Actions



Promote positive and diverse images of ageing in publications, including through regular articles in Council's Our Nelson publication showcasing older adults in roles that challenge stereotypes. (Council)



Investigate the possibility of recording kaumātua oral histories. (Council)



Age Concern to trial a physical location for service delivery in the Nelson city centre. (Age Concern)

DID YOU KNOW?



8 in 10 people say they have respect for older adults

* Attitudes Towards Ageing Report 2016, Office for Seniors



Meet Chrissy

Although she is retired, work has never really stopped for Chrissy Randall, Te Uri O Hau, Ngāti Whātua. The 65-year-old grandmother of four has been helping to look after two of her grandchildren, aged 11 and four, since the elder was born.

While she used to juggle paid employment with childcare duties, now she has retired Chrissy estimates she spends at least 20 hours a week – the equivalent of a part-time job – caring for her grandchildren while their mother, a solo mum, works. Chrissy drives to her daughter's house every day, gets the children ready for school and kindergarten, respectively, and drops them off. Later in the day, she will pick them both up and look after them until their mother finishes work.

In addition, she often does household chores for her daughter and cooks meals. The commitment means she has only a short window of opportunity for things like socialising. It also means she is restricted in her ability to leave town, often helping out on weekends and in school holidays.

While her responsibilities are a tie, Chrissy says helping the next generation to thrive is more important than anything else she could be doing, and she knows she's not alone. "I think there are a lot of grandparents who do this. You see it happening all over, grandparents with their grandchildren at the pool during work hours. "We're contributing to the economy by enabling parents to work. We all want our children to do well. Costs are going up, and our young people are struggling."





Mahi Work

Work includes paid and volunteer work and the topic covers working longer, age-friendly employment, senior entrepreneurs, encore careers and encouraging/supporting volunteering and caring roles.

Work topic includes:

Working for a wage and volunteering

A growing number of New Zealanders over the traditional retirement age of 65 are staying on in paid employment. By mid-century, it is estimated that participation levels in this age group will be around 30%⁽⁹⁾. Their annual contribution to the government's tax income will be \$17 billion, helping to fund many of the services we all rely on.

Many older adults also support their community by giving their time and skills for free. If the value of the contribution older volunteers make is converted into a dollar figure, by mid-century, it is predicted to add \$35 billion of value to the country, more than double their contribution through paid work. However, the reliance on ageing volunteers can also be a risk and a 2020 survey⁽¹⁰⁾ showed the voluntary sector saw the ageing of its volunteer workforce as a significant concern

Massey University research has shown that continued employment is associated with better health outcomes⁽¹¹⁾. A longitudinal

● **over 65's in employment in Whakatū Nelson**



● **over 65's in employment in Tasman District**



● **over 65's in employment in New Zealand**

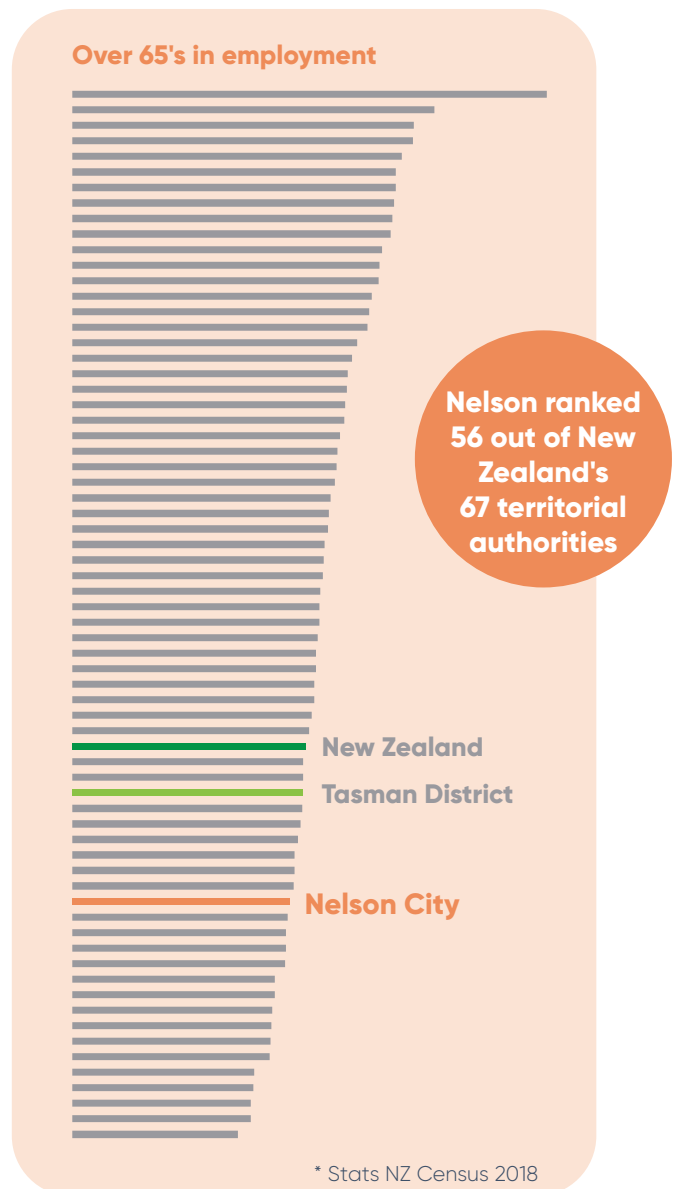


*Stats NZ Census

study into work and retirement shows that enabling workforce participation for over 65s brings a number of economic benefits for the country, and most importantly delivers improved wealth and wellbeing for older people. Of course, this is not true for every worker or every profession and stressful/physically demanding jobs, lack of flexibility and the need to care for family may mean working longer is not the best choice.

New Zealand has one of the highest levels of older workers in the OECD, helped by the removal of compulsory retirement in 1999. Nelson, however, has bucked that trend and consistently has one of the lowest 65+ participation rates in New Zealand⁽¹²⁾. A survey of workers and employers⁽¹³⁾ about continued work did not identify any factors particular to Whakatū Nelson that could explain this, but health was the main enabling factor allowing longer working lives.

Underutilisation rates in our older population are hard to judge as they don't often register as job seekers. But, loss of income later in life can have serious economic and wellbeing impacts.



Senior entrepreneurs are on the rise internationally. Business owners aged 55 to 64 have gone from making up less than 15% of new entrepreneurs in the US in 1996 to more than a quarter in 2016⁽¹⁴⁾. In Australia, senior entrepreneurship is the fastest-growing sector of entrepreneurship⁽¹⁵⁾. Data for New Zealand is not so easily available, but indications are that here too, older adults are pursuing the autonomy, flexibility and fulfilment that growing their own business can bring.

A related trend is the “encore career”, where an older worker may switch to a new field, a job with less responsibility, seek work with social impact or otherwise look for a new career path. This can bring income or may be in the voluntary sector.

Overseas research has found that older people who volunteer live longer⁽¹⁶⁾, and volunteering can bring social, mental and physical benefits. It is also a way to give back to the community and can be very personally rewarding.

Opportunities

The Government has made employment one of the three priority areas of its Action Plan for the Better Later Life strategy. There is also an Older Workers Employment Action Plan under development by the Office for Seniors with input from Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment. This means government agencies have a mandate to

partner in action on these issues and that is reflected in the actions below. It is also important to keep a focus on volunteering where older adults provide a huge range of services and experience to the wider community in areas as diverse as coaching youth sport to mentoring business start ups.



Meet Biddy

Alongside a busy volunteering schedule that includes helping out at Kai Rescue, Waimārama and Tahunanui Community Gardens and teaching English to refugee families, Biddy Myers is also a volunteer member of the Nelson Tasman Climate Forum and offers help to those that are wanting clothes mended at its regular Repair Café sessions.

“Volunteering has definitely become part of my life,” says Biddy. “When I was cut off from it during the COVID-19 lockdown, I was bereft. It gives you a reason to get up. It gives you a reason to go out, even on a very cold morning. The connections that you form with a range of people are so important – young, old, people with different worldviews, it’s vital to maintaining our physical and mental wellbeing.”

Actions



Establish a subgroup of the Regional Skills Leadership Group (RSLG) to collaborate on older workers. (Council, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Ministry of Social Development, Nelson Regional Development Agency, Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology)



Identify effective channels to reach older residents with information about work opportunities. (RSLG subgroup)



Work with employers to identify skills shortages relevant to older jobseekers and advise on training opportunities that will help match those jobseekers into appropriate work opportunities. (RSLG subgroup)



Explore ways to help employers support their older workers, including considerations such as Health & Safety, retraining, flexible working arrangements. (RSLG subgroup)



Explore micro-credentials and other types of training to assist older workers to re-skill and up-skill in a way that supports them in their career choices and is flexible for different needs. (RSLG subgroup)



Advocate with the Government to expand the definition of “working age” beyond the current 18 to 64 so that older workers are not excluded from participation in employment services available to younger workers. (Council)



Develop policies aimed at supporting older workers e.g. around flexible work, avoiding bias, access to training etc. Council to develop a policy for its workforce and once completed make available on its website as a model for other Whakatū Nelson employers. (Council to develop model, Chamber of Commerce to promote to members)



Showcase employers who are effectively using the skills of older workers to mentor younger people within workplaces. (Chamber of Commerce and Nelson Regional Development Agency)



Work with Volunteer Nelson to encourage more volunteers amongst older adults. (Council, Volunteer Nelson).





Kāinga Housing

Housing covers affordability, choice, warm and healthy construction, universal design in new builds, ageing-in-place, safe neighbourhoods and catering to older residents during emergencies.

Housing topic includes:

Housing supply and affordability

Housing supply and affordability is a problem for communities across the country, and Whakatū Nelson is impacted more severely than most, consistently being one of the least affordable regions when incomes are taken into account⁽¹⁷⁾. Whakatū Nelson currently sits fifth on the list of most unaffordable places to live, behind number two, our neighbour Tasman⁽¹⁸⁾.

Whakatū Nelson's median house prices have increased 88% compared to five years ago⁽¹⁹⁾. Applications to the government's housing register are up 48% in the past year⁽²⁰⁾. The unaffordable local housing market places great stress on many households, including a growing number of older residents.

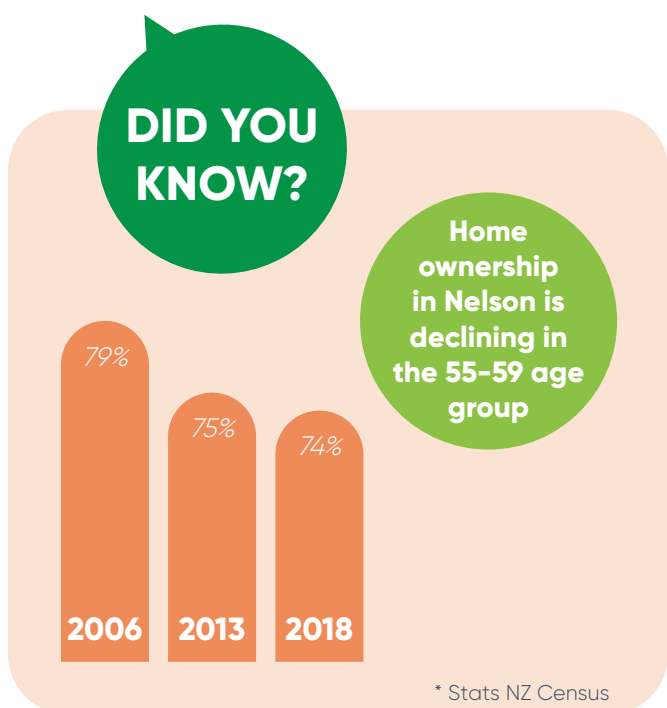
It's also true that development in Whakatū Nelson continues to produce family homes

rather than smaller easy-care units that might appeal to older residents. The average number of bedrooms per home in Whakatū Nelson is three. Older residents who stay in larger homes often find keeping up maintenance is a struggle⁽²¹⁾, and lack of maintenance may create health and safety hazards.

Declining home ownership

A decline in homeownership amongst older New Zealanders and a corresponding increase in renting are ongoing national trends. Analysis⁽²²⁾ shows that in Whakatū Nelson, there has been an increase in renting among people aged 65+ of 82.2%, compared to 43.8% for New Zealand as a whole. While this decline in Whakatū Nelson looks particularly steep because it comes off a high peak of homeownership, it flags a risk for the wellbeing of our older residents. Non-homeowners are almost five times more likely to struggle in retirement as homeowners⁽²³⁾.

New Zealand's retirement income settings assume that most people come to retirement as owner-occupiers and mortgage-free. While applauding our universal pension, a recent United Nations review⁽²⁴⁾ noted that as New Zealand's "basic pension remains very close to the poverty threshold, and house prices rise, there are still concerns about poverty among older persons".



Universal Design

The design of Whakatū Nelson's housing stock could also be better suited to an ageing population. Universal design is about making buildings accessible to people of all abilities at any stage of life. It may mean flat access, wider doorways (for wheelchairs), lever handles rather than hard to turn knobs, non-slip flooring in bathrooms, grab rails at strategic points. It is 10 times cheaper⁽²⁵⁾ to include such features at the building stage rather than retrofitting later. It also makes a home more flexible noting that 60% of New Zealand's single family dwellings will house a person with a disability at some point⁽²⁶⁾.

Meet Matt

Matt* feels lucky to have a warm, safe flat in such a beautiful part of the world as Whakatū Nelson. But for a time, Matt was without a home.

Originally from the UK, Matt put his savings into buying a home with his daughter after she moved to New Zealand. The pair had always been close, with Matt having raised her as a solo dad, and the plan was that he would retire to New Zealand to live in a flat attached to the house.

The arrangement worked well until his daughter married, and relationships deteriorated. The locks were changed, and Matt found himself with nowhere to go. With the help of Age Concern and the Nelson Tasman Housing Trust, Matt now lives in an affordable rental. Matt has not had contact with his daughter for five years, and legal efforts to recover his investment in the house are ongoing.

*name changed to protect privacy

Opportunities

Meeting housing needs is a challenge facing the whole country and affecting all age groups. Older adults will be increasingly reaching later years needing to rent or with a mortgage. Council is working with partners such as Kāinga Ora to increase the supply

of affordable housing in Whakatū Nelson but this will be very much a long-term effort. It is challenging to find actions that could address what is a significant national issue but the Strategy has focussed on some practical actions below.

Actions



Promote resources for older residents to help with understanding housing options, home maintenance and renting in later life, eg publications "Going for Good Renting" and "My Home, My Choices". (Council, Age Concern)



Collect relevant data on older adult accommodation to incorporate in the regular housing capacity assessments. (Council)



Explore collaboration by relevant local agencies on a workstream for older adults housing issues. (Housing Working Group, Top of the South Impact Forum)





Āheinga Nuku Mobility

Mobility captures the wider issues of transport, including private, public and community transport and active modes of transport, including cycling, walking and micro-mobility. Mobility, including accessible and affordable public transport, is a key factor influencing active ageing and ageing in place.

Mobility topic includes:

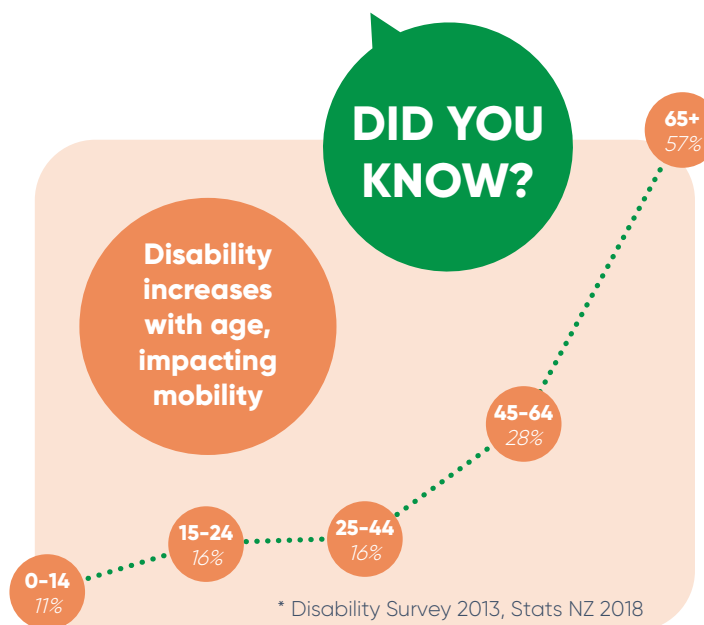
Personal transport

Access to, and use of, private motor vehicles decreases in older age, although access to motor vehicles has increased overall in recent years. A reduction in driving can lead to other issues around social isolation and decreased wellbeing.

As the number of people driving in older ages decreases, other ways of getting around increase, especially walking. As this shift happens, the pedestrian environment may present barriers such as sloping or uneven footpaths, paths shared with cycles and scooters. To support active ageing and ageing-in-place in urban areas, we need to create safe, welcoming walking environments.

Public transport

Public transport can play an important role in older adults keeping active and connected once they no longer drive themselves. It can help to maintain a sense of freedom and independence, especially as older adults can be reluctant to rely on family and friends for transport. Considering older adult needs in the design of routes and the provision of information on transport options will help maintain mobility.



Note: In StatsNZ 2013 Disability Survey, disability is defined as: "an impairment that has a long-term (six months or longer), limiting effect on a person's ability to carry out day-to-day activities".





Meet Adele

Acclaimed theatre actor, award winning weaver and qualified teacher Adele Tippet's life has always been devoted to the creative arts. Adele's weaving "Breath of Spring" is in the Auckland Museum permanent collection.

It is however teaching that Adele calls "the most wonderful thing" and recalls how she loved watching her students grow and develop. Completing her teaching qualification at the age of 55 she shows it's never too late to follow your dreams. A Nelsonian since 1981 she taught until she was 69 years old, providing individual lessons attached to the Nelson School of Music.

Unfortunately, Adele has experienced mobility issues become a barrier for her since suffering an accident. Since the accident that limited her mobility, Adele has relied more and more heavily on services provided by the community. Adele is visited each week by a volunteer visitor coordinated by Age Concern, "on Mother's Day she (her volunteer visitor) baked me scones and we ate off the good China" she says happily. She is a regular user of the Total Mobility transport subsidy scheme to help to get into town and gratefully receives books and DVDs via the library's delivery service. Adele expressed how grateful she has been especially during lockdowns for the services and connections the community has provided. Adele highlights barriers created by inadequate public transport options and a difficult urban environment for older adults as factors behind her lack of social connectivity.

Opportunities

The Baseline Assessment shows a range of public and private transport options for maintaining mobility in later age. Of particular interest to older adults are likely to be parking, the transition from driving a

private vehicle and also the walkability of footpaths and walkways around the city (given the popularity of walking for exercise and as a means of getting around). The actions below address those areas.

Actions



Develop an Active Transport Strategy that takes into account the travel needs of people of all ages. (Council)



Develop a Parking Strategy which will recognise the parking needs of the whole community. (Council)



Develop and implement an enhanced bus service with cheaper fares and more frequent buses. (Council)



Review the timing and operation of the traffic signals where there is evidence of difficulties crossing in time. (Council)



Improve pedestrian crossing provision on Songer St at the Railway Reserve. (Council)





Pārongo Information

Information relates to age-friendly information, accessible information, lifelong learning and digital literacy. It is vital for active ageing to stay connected with people and to be able to access relevant, practical information to manage life, personal needs and services.

Information topic includes:

Information access

Connectivity with people, services, news and information is increasingly important in a hyper-connected, modern world. Traditional methods of sharing information are being replaced by the internet, leaving behind older adults who are not comfortable online. This limits access to services as banks, government and other providers move increasingly to digital platforms and can increase social exclusion. Access to information unlocks participation in community activities, whether employment, voluntary, event-based or interest focused⁽²⁷⁾.

As well as upskilling older adults, it is helpful to provide information through a variety of sources, including direct personal delivery, telephone, newspapers and radio. Information distribution in key locations is also important, for example, community centres, libraries, supermarkets, doctors' offices and health centres.

Lifelong learning

Studies have shown that lifelong learning provides an emotional boost, increases self-esteem and is a good way to increase social contacts. The trend towards longer working lives means that upskilling to stay relevant in the job market is also important for economic wellbeing. Research has also observed a link between higher levels of education and health benefits, including delaying the age of the onset of dementia.

Digital inclusion

Older adults are a group prone to low internet access as internet use diminishes with age, quite sharply above age 75⁽²⁸⁾. In Whakatū Nelson 89% of 65 to 69 year olds have internet access, but this drops to 52% for the over 85 group, the lowest of all age groups⁽²⁹⁾. The Government's Better Later Life Action Plan has identified digital inclusion as one of its three priorities for action as it is important that those without online access are not left behind.

Opportunities

One of the challenges of ensuring older adults have access to the information they need is the expansion of information sources in recent times. Until we have higher levels of digital access amongst older adults it will

be important to continue using a variety of sources to reach them. The Baseline Assessment shows many different channels currently in use and the actions below add two new approaches.

Actions



Host an information day at Nelson libraries to provide information on and promote the services the library offers for older adults. (Council)



Explore installation of an accessibility widget on the Council website (which can enlarge text, sharpen contrast etc) to improve accessibility of information. (Council)



Meet Helen

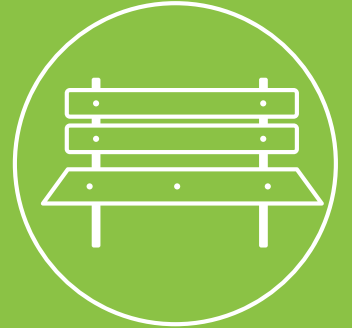
About 12 years ago, I decided to buy a computer and learn how to use it. I attended a SeniorNet open day, and I've never looked back. After three months of lessons, during which I learnt programs like Word and Excel, I was invited to become a SeniorNet tutor. I've been involved with SeniorNet as a tutor ever since and in addition to gaining computer skills, I've also made lots of good friends.

Learning how to use a computer and how to navigate the internet opened a whole new world for me. Tasks like paying bills and doing my banking are now very quick and easy. I can access any information I need on the internet, so I stay up to date with everything that's going on in New Zealand and in the rest of the world. I use my computer for emails, games and my photography hobby, and I get eBooks through the Nelson library, which I read on my Kindle. I'm also on Facebook and Instagram, mainly for the social side, and I follow a few gardening and photography sites.

One of my favourite things about being connected is how easy it is to stay in touch with friends and family who don't live nearby. There are so many different ways to connect online, and many of these are free to use. Chatting on FaceTime with my daughter, who lives in Australia, is brilliant. And just last week, I helped my partner connect with two friends on a FaceTime call. One friend lives in the UK and the other in America, they hadn't seen each other in years, and the three of them talked for ages.

I'd encourage anyone who is thinking about learning how to use a computer to go for it! SeniorNet runs interest groups and one-to-one sessions, so there is something for everyone. And it's not just about computers, SeniorNet is also a great place to socialise with friends and meet new people as there is always time for a chat over a cuppa after class. Find out about SeniorNet by visiting the webpage seniornetnelson.org.nz, or contact SeniorNet on (03) 548 9401 or via email at contact@seniornetnelson.org.nz





Ō-waho Outdoors

Outdoors focuses on providing easily accessible public spaces and buildings. This includes access to services, e.g. shops and community amenities, safe and clean environments, accessible neighbourhoods with appropriate services, outdoor seating and shade, easy access to nature and heritage protection (helping to value history and continuity in outdoor spaces).

Outdoors topic includes:

The importance of outdoor space

Access to nature and outdoor spaces supports physical health, brain function and psychological wellbeing⁽³⁰⁾ with the potential to promote community connection.

However, physical limitations, fear of falling and neighbourhood design may discourage older adults from getting outside and can result in more sedentary time indoors. It can also lead to insufficient Vitamin D⁽³¹⁾ in older adults, which may play a role in a number of chronic conditions and can lead to brittle bones.

The design of urban areas can also present barriers to older people⁽³²⁾. Walkable cities, provision for mobility scooters, urban parks and green spaces, age-friendly seating and adequate public toilets can all encourage

older residents to use public spaces. Public feedback on the Strategy highlighted the importance of safe walking paths where older adults feel safe. Legible, recognisable street signs with good visibility make wayfinding easier and help people living with dementia recognise their environment. Shared urban spaces provide opportunities for social interaction that can help combat isolation.

Easily accessible buildings

Accessible buildings allow older residents to participate fully in the world outside their home. Removing barriers to use may include elevators, ramps, adequate signage, non-slip flooring, stairs that are not too high or steep, rest areas and accessible public toilets. In large shopping areas, the provision of wheelchairs enables greater mobility in the retail space.

Opportunities

One of the advantages of living in Whakatū Nelson is the ready access to green space. For older residents, the importance of smaller green areas within neighbourhoods increases as they become less mobile.

Currently 99% of residential properties are within 800m of a neighbourhood park. There are opportunities to encourage greater use of these neighbourhood resources.

Actions



Investigate greater use of facilities for older adult exercise classes. (Council)



Increase provision of seating along the walkways at Saxton Field. (Council)



Implement 'Use our loos' project to provide access to toilets in businesses to support older adults with continence issues. (Council)



Meet Marianne

Marianne is a cheerful, positive person who is determined to make the most of life despite the challenges she is facing. Marianne has been living with dementia for approximately seven years. This has not been easy for Marianne or for her husband, who helps to take care of her, especially as their family doesn't live nearby.

Some years ago, Marianne gave up driving, but she takes the bus to town for shopping and to attend activities. Marianne describes the bus service as a lifeline that allows her to maintain her independence and continue doing the things she enjoys. One of the activities Marianne attends every week is the dementia friendly reading group, 'Tea and Tales' at the Elma Turner Library.

Dementia friendly reading groups are adapted to work well for people with dementia, by having shorter texts with larger print, poems that may be well known, and a shorter running time. The reading group provides a relaxed atmosphere, totally free from judgement, where people can connect with a story or poem and

with each other and explore their thoughts about the reading. The sessions are run by trained facilitators who gently encourage participants to engage with the reading and to share in reading aloud.

Shared reading groups can have a significant effect on wellbeing, with participants saying they feel calmer, clearer, and more relaxed afterwards. Many people with dementia also feel like they are losing their identity. The readings trigger all sorts of personal reflections and memories that remind people of who they are, while the social aspect and inclusive nature of the group bolsters confidence and self-esteem.

Marianne says "I need things that focus my mind. The reading group does that for me. I'm part of the group and my opinion is valued. It's a safe space where I can be myself and I don't have to worry"

For more information about the dementia friendly reading group, 'Tea and Tales', please contact library staff at library@ncc.govt.nz or (03) 546 8100.

Strategy Development

The Strategy development was guided by the World Health Organisation's work on age-friendly communities. This started with its 2007 Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide and has evolved into an international network which connects communities to share ideas and promote local action to encourage full participation by older people in community life. The New Zealand Government is a network affiliate, which means it has made a commitment to working to promote age-friendly environments in New Zealand.

In New Zealand the Age Friendly Aotearoa New Zealand programme is led by the Office for Seniors. The Office has an excellent Age Friendly toolkit which has helped guide the development of this strategy and it has also provided funding support for the Steering Group's work through a Community Connects grant.

Useful as the tools are, the driving force behind the Strategy has been the hard work and ongoing commitment of our Community Steering Group members who have given many volunteer hours to the project.

Members of the Steering Group are:

Paul Steere (Chair)
Chris Allison
Caroline Budge
Lovey Geiger
Betty van Rooyen
Nanai Naseri
Ian Catto
Sarah Brown
Jenni Bancroft



Rārangi Pukapuka

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