

# Ageing Plan 2018-2022

## Consultation Snapshot



**Between February and May 2017 we asked people 65 and over, and Aboriginal people aged 50 and over, about ageing in Wollongong. Here's a snapshot of what they had to say.**

**Involved Connected Valued**

## How did people have their say?

**561**  
people had  
their say:

**389** completed surveys

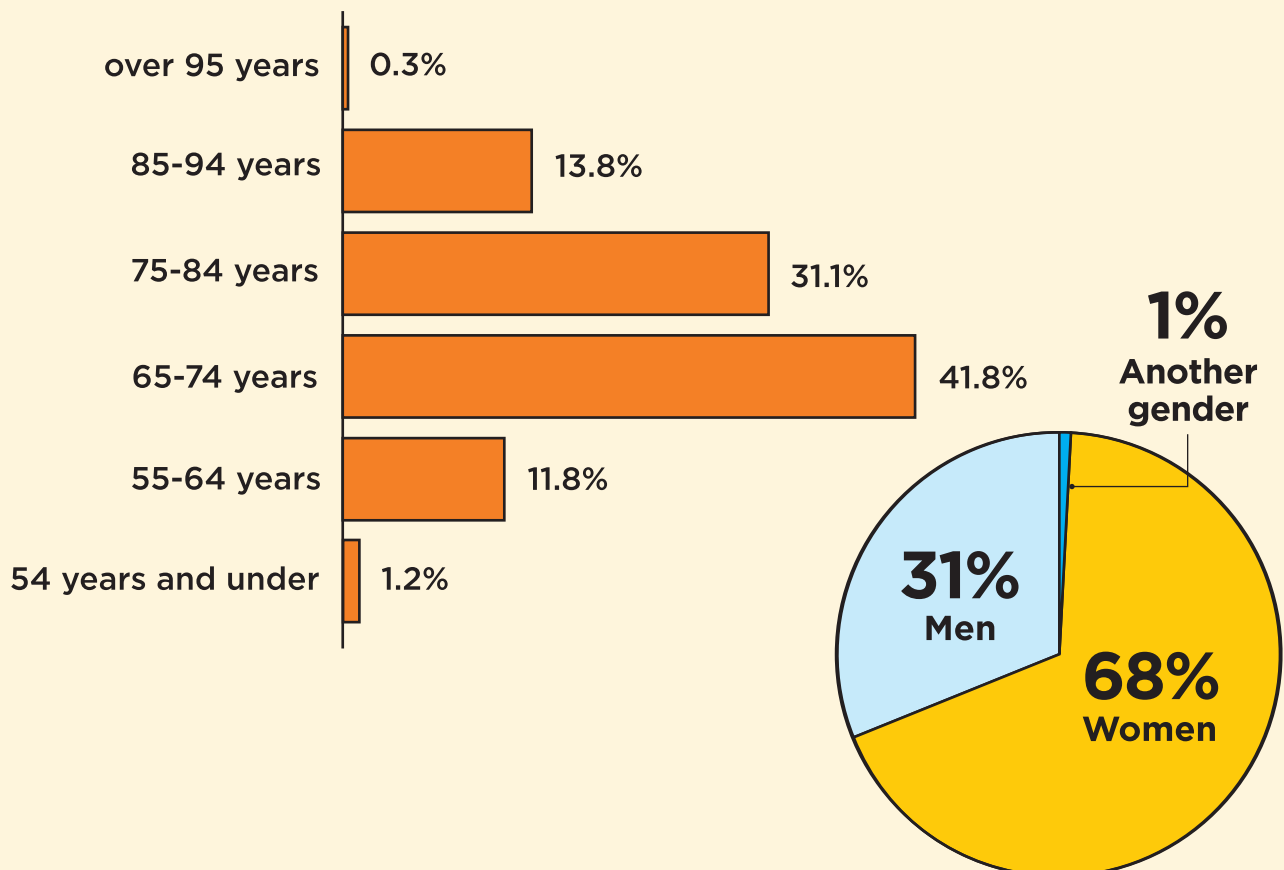
**93** participated in 1 community conversation

**45** participated in 5 targeted focus groups

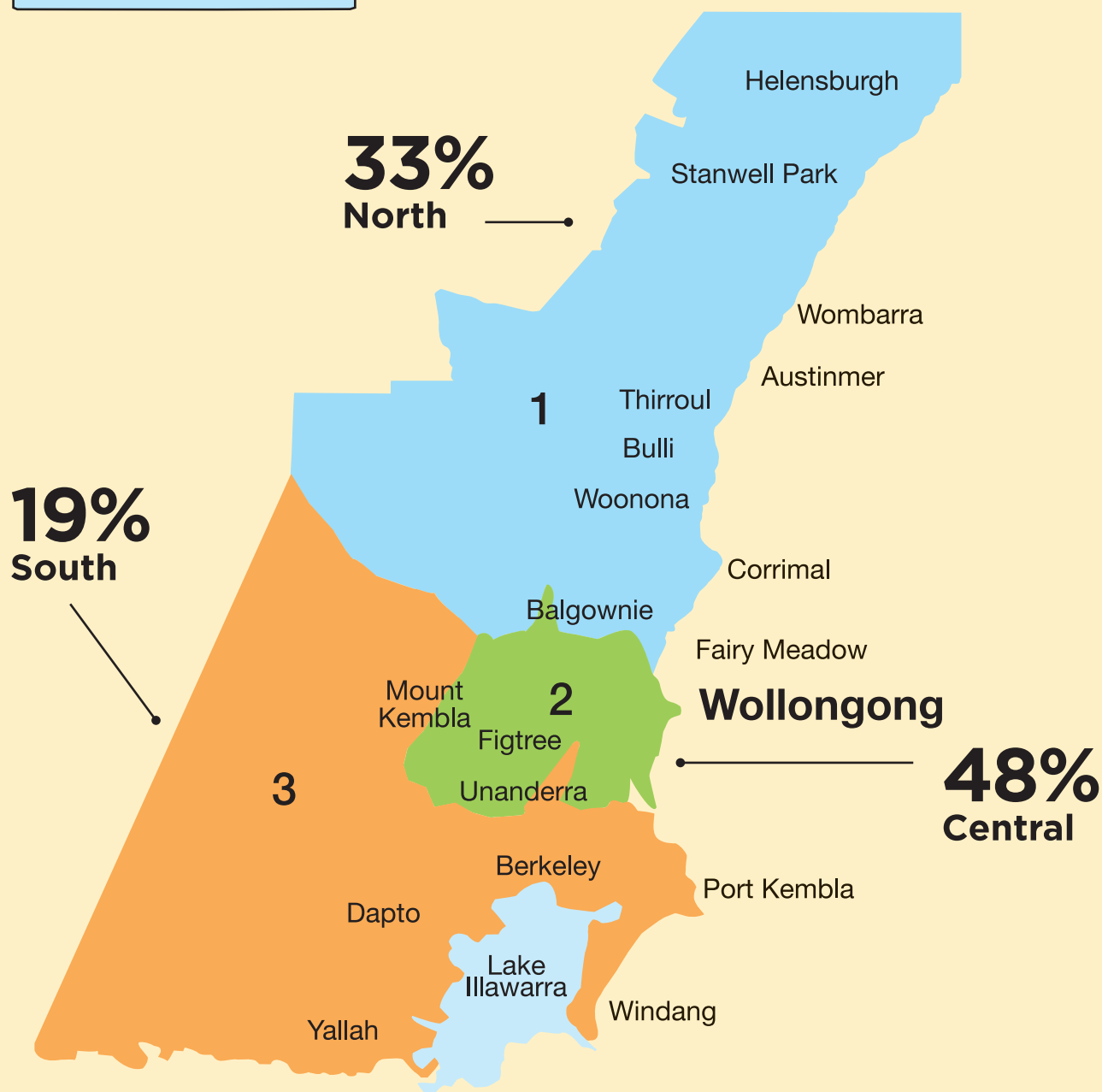
**34** participated in 2 workshops

## Survey Results

### Who were the survey respondents?



## Where they live



**1%** live outside the Wollongong Local Government Area

**13%** spoke a language other than English

**25%** were carers. Of these carers;

**33%** cared for grandchildren

**37%** cared for a spouse/partner

**79%** have lived in Wollongong for more than 20 years

**82%** said “Wollongong is a good place for older people to live”

**Why:**

- Close to the beach, mountains and Sydney
- Access to many services
- Lots of opportunities to meet with family and friends

**What would make it better?**

- Better public transport
- Better footpaths
- More public toilets
- More accessible buildings
- Older people to be valued and respected

**76%** said they “feel part of their local community”

**Why:**

- They give back to the community by volunteering
- There are lots of places to meet and talk to people

**What would make it better?**

- More accessible and cheaper events
- More information about activities and events
- Transport to get to activities and events

“I would like more publicity about volunteering opportunities and activities for older people to get more involved in the local community” Female, 65-74



**93%** said they “feel safe in their neighbourhood during the day”

**71%** said they “feel safe in their neighbourhood at night”

**Why:**

- They know their neighbours
- They connect with other people out and about
- They choose not to go out at night

**What would make it better?**

- More police
- More street lights



## Physical Activity

**85%** were physically active either daily or more than once a week

**34%** of women found it hard to access age-friendly health and fitness programs compared to **6%** of men



### Top activities:

- Walking
- Swimming and aquaerobics
- Gardening
- Cycling

Many people do more than one of these activities weekly.

### They would be more active if:

- There were better walking tracks
- More even footpaths
- It was cheaper to go to the pool
- More affordable programs
- More outdoor exercise equipment

## Employment

**85%** were retired

**“I am very happy being retired”** Male, 65-74

### Top 5 challenges for people wanting or needing to work:

- Age discrimination
- Poor health, injury or disability
- Cannot afford to retire
- Computer technology challenges
- Demands of physical work are too challenging





## Services

**69%** face challenges when accessing or using services

### Top 3 services that were hard to access:

- Public transport
- Government services e.g. Centrelink, Australian Tax Office, Service NSW etc.
- Health and fitness programs

### Top 3 challenges people faced when accessing services:

- Cost
- Lack of transport options
- Computer and technology challenges

### Government services were hard to access because:

- No offices in northern and southern Wollongong close to where people live
- They have to be accessed online
- Long queues when calling these services

“Waiting times can be lengthy when accessing some agencies by phone”  
Female, 65-74

### Find it hard to access aged care services:

12%  
74 years & under

24%  
75-84 years

50%  
aged 85 years & over

### Find it hard to access services because of computer technology challenges:

14%  
74 years & under

24%  
75-84 years

23%  
85 years & over

### Not aware of where to get information about services:

10%  
74 years & under

7%  
75-84 years

20%  
85 years & over

# Technology

**73%** would like to learn more about using technology

## They would like to learn more about:

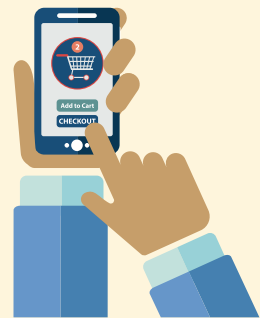
- Mobile phones
- Tablets
- Computers
- The internet
- Skype, Facebook, Twitter

## They would like access to a variety of free courses:

- One on one to develop the skills they want to learn
- Group sessions targeted at developing beginner, intermediate and advanced skills



**“One on one face to face computer courses work best”**  
Male, 65-74



## Use the internet daily to find information:

**63%**  
74 years & under

**34%**  
75-84 years

**37%**  
85 years & over

## Use the internet daily to stay in touch with family and friends:

**43%**  
74 years & under

**25%**  
75-84 years

**26%**  
85 years & over

## Use the internet daily to book services, shop online and pay bills:

**31%**  
74 years & under

**24%**  
75-84 years

**15%**  
85 years & over



## Information

**81%** said “more accessible, user friendly information” was a priority

### Challenges getting information:

- The internet is confusing
- Having a computer is expensive
- Having to go online to get information or services

### What would make it better:

- Information in plain English
- Information printed on paper – in the newspaper or as a flyer/poster



## Housing

**78%** said “more age friendly, affordable housing options” was a priority

**25%** of people aged 74 and under found it hard to get housing that is age friendly and affordable

### What would make it better:

- More affordable housing
- More over 55's living
- More independent living close to transport
- Public housing to feel safer



## Built Environment

**78%** said “upgraded community facilities and spaces that are more accessible and age friendly” was a priority

**What would make it better:**

- Parking spaces for seniors
- More monitoring of Mobility Parking Permits
- Better footpaths for people with mobility aids such as walking frames and wheelchairs
- More ramps and less steps
- Regular seating along footpaths



“Having a disability walker is not easy. Need more easy paths”  
Female, 85-94

## Community Attitudes

**84%** said “positive community attitudes towards older people” was a priority

We ran a community conversation around the topic of ageism. When asked to share local examples of ageism, people told us that as they get older they

- Feel invisible
- Feel less valued
- Become vulnerable to elder abuse

When asked what would make it better they said:

- Being noticed and treated with respect
- More opportunities to share skills and knowledge with younger people
- Their diversity celebrated and respected

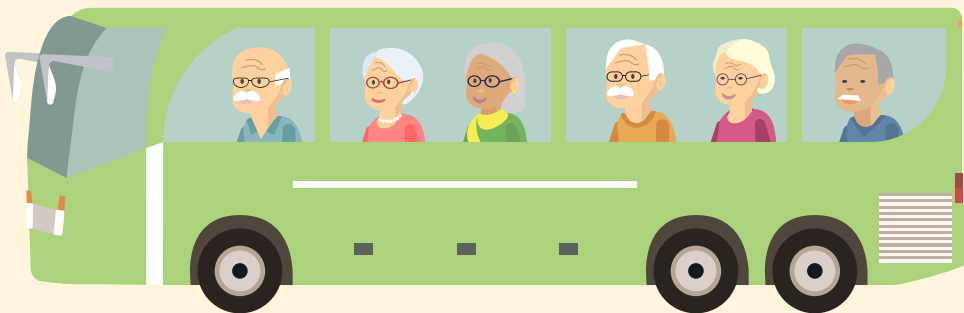
“Age is only a number” Female, 75-84

# Transport

**77%** said “better public transport” was a priority

## What would make it better:

- Faster trains to Sydney
- More frequent trains and buses, especially in southern Wollongong
- Printed timetables
- Buses and trains that accommodate people with mobility aids such as walking frames and wheelchairs
- More seats at bus stops and train stations
- Free green shuttle bus in southern Wollongong
- Taxi and Uber discounts for seniors
- More community transport to get to shopping, appointments and events



“There is so much to do socially if you can get there  
- we need better public transport”  
Female, 64-74

“The free shuttle is a star” Female, 75-84



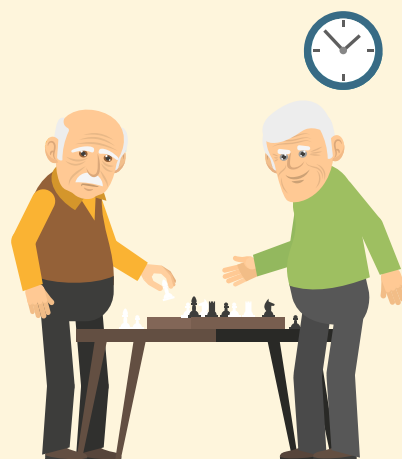
## Social Activities

**64%** said “more social activities” was a priority

### What would make it better:

- More social activities in central and northern Wollongong
- Free movie screenings
- Places where groups can meet for free
- More community gardens
- More opportunities to volunteer

“I like to go to a small group with people I trust - we need to have a place to meet”  
Female, 65-74



### Find it hard to access social activities:

20%  
74 years & under

8%  
75-84 years

22%  
85 years & over

## Community Decision Making

**77%** said “more involvement by older people in community decision making” was a priority

“Involve us in decisions about services we want” Female, 75-84



## Focus Groups

**We held five targeted focus groups with older people we don't often hear from. Below is a summary of what they told us:**

### Aboriginal Women

- More information about affordable community transport options
- Better footpaths and more accessible parking close to services and the hospital
- More information about services that can support with caring for grandchildren
- Someone to come to their group to teach them how to use mobile phones, internet and Facebook
- Council to report back to the group about the progress of the Ageing Plan

### Aboriginal Men

- Better public and community transport to get to community events and services
- More support with accessing My Aged Care and more affordable services
- More toilets across Wollongong that are wheelchair friendly
- To acknowledge the history of racism towards Aboriginal people and promote positive community attitudes towards older Aboriginal people

## **Lesbians and Women who Identify with the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex (LGBTI) Community**

- More services that are LGBTI friendly and sensitive to their identity and needs
- To be recognised and respected as both a woman and a lesbian
- Women only housing that is affordable and age friendly
- Creation of a social support group that connects older lesbians

## **Men who Identify with the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex (LGBTI) Community**

- To improve community attitudes so they can feel more connected to the wider community
- Development of an information directory of general practitioners and allied health professionals that are LGBTI friendly
- Council facilities to become LGBTI 'Safe Place', so they feel acknowledged, welcome and safe

## **Older Men**

- More affordable internet packages so they can use the internet and find information
- More flexible work arrangements
- Services to be located in one place and connected to transport
- Better promotion of volunteering opportunities



## Workshops

We held two workshops with local aged care service providers and Council Officers.

### Dementia-Friendly Communities Workshop

Council Officers participated in a workshop about 'Dementia-Friendly Communities' to look at how the principles could be included in their work.

Some ideas included:

- Raising community awareness about dementia
- Creating spaces that are dementia-friendly
- Include dementia-friendly principles in the design of public spaces and facilities
- Provide dementia awareness training to Council Officers

### Wollongong Home and Community Support Network Workshop

Local service providers and Council Officers participated in a workshop to discuss how their services could better support older people.

Some ideas included:

- Provide more information to older people and their carers seeking aged care services
- Training in how to deliver service to older people from diverse backgrounds
- Assist and support clients wanting to learn more about information technology





## **What next?**

We will use this information to develop the Draft Ageing Plan.

## **Thank you**

Wollongong City Council would like to thank everyone who shared their thoughts and experiences about ageing in Wollongong.

**Involved Connected Valued**