

SUMMARY – Positive Ageing Priorities Community Conversations 2023

The following is a list of priorities from the Positive Ageing Community Conversations held in Rye, Hastings, and Mornington in November 2023. Whilst there were many areas that contributed to ageing well on the Mornington Peninsula, there was some helpful ideas and discussions about how the Peninsula could be a more age-friendly place.

- 1. Accessible health care services.** There is a lack of allied health professionals, bulk billing services and there are long wait times. There is a need for more culturally specific care. Support for mental health issues for older people and an integrated preventative community health program for older people. There are long wait times for elective surgery and specialist care. A lack of access to appropriate/tailored health and aged care services. Stretched emergency services. Mental health care required for carers. Practical support and respite for carers
- 2. Home care and navigating aged care.** The recent transition to private providers of home and community care has meant many services have been difficult to get or are no longer available. Difficult to secure continuity of care. Support with securing and navigating aged care assessment and services. Education on when/how to transition or change services as we age.
- 3. Garden maintenance and home repairs** - Support needed to find services for finding cleaning, odd jobs, and home repairs. Volunteer or community-based garden maintenance programs needed. Could link home repairs to Men's Sheds and create Women's Sheds. Or form partnerships with TAFE for home help, gardening, and care services. Consumer advice needed for finding reputable home help, aged care, gardening services. Promotion of local and affordable home maintenance services, builders, etc. Women to learn skills through the men's sheds or establish women's shed. Increase the opportunities for and engagement of men in volunteering.
- 4. Community activities – accessibility.** There can be wait lists for community programs such as those offered by U3A, the Libraries, Hydrotherapy and other YAWA programs. The scheduling of programs, activities, or classes can be unsuitable. More concession options. Demand on access as the population grows and during peak seasons. Offer separate spaces in public facilities for seniors to exercise.
- 5. Technical support.** More frequent technical support at the libraries. One on one support, troubleshooting, computer literacy classes and understanding scams. Support to book into group activities and events and bill paying. Talks on online security and scams. A volunteer run hub with information and support to book into activities and events. Special slower understanding of computer technology.
- 6. Footpaths, bike paths and crossings.** Safe, accessible, well maintained, well lit, public spaces, walk-ways, and bike paths. Visible signage. More footpaths to deter people from walking along roadsides. Wider footpaths and ramps. Linking existing pathways and walking trails to extend routes. Pedestrian crossings at key areas. Improved access to the foreshore.
- 7. Public spaces** - Availability of well-maintained public toilets with easy to open doors. Car congestion. Vandalism, parking issues and rubbish solutions. Improved signage re dog rules and enforcement. More water stations, seating on fishing piers and accessible parking. More

playgrounds and exercise parks for all ages. More seating in public buildings. Shire offices, post offices, Centrelink etc. Perceptions of safety and social issues.

8. **The ARTS** – cinema and an arts and culture precinct/centre
9. **Social Isolation.** Support to attend activities and to connect with people who have shared interests. Support after break ups, divorce, or grief experience. Mental Health support. Social connection is disrupted by safety and security issues- perceptions of safety in public spaces. Find ways to have incidental catch ups (loss of banks and Post offices as places to meet). Opportunities for intergenerational social interaction. Night-time activities for older people. Provide transport. Social opportunities for men.
10. **Local Business.** Slow lanes and quiet times at supermarkets, supportive and friendly staff. Community education for local businesses to increase awareness around dementia and other complex behaviours for older people. Support local businesses to employ older workers.
11. **Accessible Information** about what is on or what is available. In different formats (online, posters and hard copy, resident run notice boards and Facebook pages.). Expos and events Meet and greet event for local groups.
12. **Transport.** Dial a bus, Peninsula Transport Assist and other community transport options are essential to support social participation and access to community programs and health services. Support to use public and community transport. Seating and shade at transport stops and stations. Accessible platforms and all ability information for using PT services, times, and requirements. Available community and public transport on weekends and nights. Direct routes connecting east and west. Accessible transport and driver training to support people with mobility issues. Low-cost or free transport or free off-peak transport. Options of female drivers. Safety on public transport. Accessible transport schedules.
13. **Natural Environment.** Need to preserve beach frontages, green wedges, and the natural environment. No jet skis or limit the spaces for them. Information for disaster risk reduction and emergency services.
14. **End of Life Planning.** Normalising death and dying. Counselling and support for grief and loss Information, options, and choice for death and dying. Planning for death. Funerals, dying at home, advanced care planning, dementia. Legal education workshops. Services for financial advice including banking and legal support regarding wills and probate.
15. **Retirement Planning.** Opportunities pre- and post-retirement to improve people's preparation and planning for ageing well. Finding information, trying new activities, volunteering, being socially connected to fill that gap work has had.
16. **Social Issues** - Food insecurity, rental costs. Stigma around financial hardship and insecure housing. Education for seniors' rights. Gambling harm from too many pokies. Support for senility, depression, and anxiety. Support for people with dementia and their carers. Rental crisis is impacting older community members. Homelessness is creating safety and security issues for older people in the community. Rental affordability. Holiday rentals. Older

residents are being priced out of the Peninsula. Airbnb's are impacting on opportunities for affordable rentals and sense of community.

17. **Climate action and Emergency Preparedness.** Preparedness for extreme temperatures and climate events. Retirement homes and residential aged care homes are not fit for extreme temperatures. Education around smoke alarms. What to do in an emergency.
18. **Cultural Safety.** Diversity inclusion, equitable access to services on the Peninsula. Culturally specific support needed. Addressing discrimination and racism. Advocacy for health literacy/brochures in plain language, translated into multi languages and in a reasonably sized font.
19. **Ageism.** Campaign to address discrimination based on age. Understanding ageism and older people's needs in customer service and local businesses. Business and Government Services need training in ageism. Buddy up with school and retirement facility. Intergenerational connections. Support services for elder abuse. Emotional abuse. Advocacy for elder abuse in care service/with carers.
20. **Housing Options.** Opportunities to downsize. Appropriate low maintenance 'minimalist' homes for older people. More development of smaller and accessible homes. Also, options for large blocks for rural lifestyle, and open space. Preserve the green belt and large land areas and low-density housing. Support for home modifications for tenants with disabilities in rental housing. Appropriate housing for people with disabilities. Community-minded planners to allow greater density that is integrated and well planned. More housing options and living options and (support with) transition to smaller homes. Shared housing options. intergenerational house sharing and opportunities for students and older people to share housing safely and securely.
21. **Paid work and Volunteering.** An improved database for available volunteer opportunities. Support for over 55s to change careers, job search and upskilling. Support needed for potential volunteers to understand requirements, complete Working with Children Checks etc. More mentoring and worker support needed. Support building confidence to volunteer again. Perception that retirement means that a person does not want paid work or isn't entitled to paid work. More information on how to become a volunteer, sessions run at the library.