

SHIRE OF
MERREDIN
INNOVATING THE WHEATBELT

March 2016

Age Friendly Community Plan

CMRef 81749

CONTENTS

Message from the President	1
Message from the Chief Executive Officer	2
Key Points of the Plan	3
What is an “Age Friendly Community Plan”?	4
Regional Context	5
Demographic Trends	5
Residential Care	6
Transport	7
Older Persons Housing	7
Community Profile	8
How this Plan was Developed	9
Overview	9
Grant Funding	9
Partnership with Bruce Rock	9
Audit	9
Reference Group	10
Consultation	10
Links to Other Plans and Policies	11
Strategic Community Plan	11
Corporate Business Plan	11
Findings	12
Summary of Audit Findings	12
Summary of Engagement Report	13
The Plan	15
Implementation and Monitoring	19
Annex 1: Age Friendly Community Audit Report	20
Annex 2: Engagement Report: Towards an Age Friendly Community Plan	67

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am very pleased to present the completed Shire of Merredin's *Age Friendly Community Plan*. This is a very important plan for several reasons. Firstly, this plan outlines all the measures and actions that the Shire of Merredin has enacted over the years to create an Age Friendly Community. This is also a plan that outlines the goals of the Shire and the community members to create the most inclusive regional council in the Wheatbelt.

This plan has been created in close consultation and discussion with key community members. There have been focus groups and surveys dedicated to uncovering the most pressing issues facing the successful adaptation of an age friendly community. The Shire of Merredin has created this plan in order to meet the needs of our resident and community members, both old and young.

The *Age Friendly Community Plan* promotes active ageing, recognises the great diversity among older people in our Shire, respects their decisions and lifestyle choices, and anticipates and responds flexibly to ageing-related needs and preferences. I hope that the Shire of Merredin uses this plan to work towards becoming an even more age-friendly community with a culture of inclusion shared by people of all ages and ability levels.

Our Council strives to encourage a vibrant community in the Wheatbelt. The Shire of Merredin is rapidly changing and growing to meet the dynamic needs of our community members. I strongly believe this Age Friendly Community Plan will provide a foundation and guidance for future planning for community.

Cr Ken Hooper

Shire President, Shire of Merredin

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

As Chief Executive Officer, it is my pleasure to present this completed *Age Friendly Community Plan* for the Shire of Merredin. Over many months of intense consultation with community members and key stakeholders, the Shire has created a comprehensive document to assess the ever changing needs of our dynamic Shire.

This plan promotes the health and wellbeing of not only our elderly residents, but of all community members living in the Shire of Merredin. The Plan will provide direction for the Shire to identify opportunities to enhance and promote the wellbeing of an ageing population and to guide effective planning, partnership development and community participation.

The proportion of people 70+ is projected to increase from 10.4% in 2011 to 17% in 2027. Planning for this increase in population is vital to maintaining the viability of services offered and quality of life for older residents. The growth of our ageing population will bring a number of impacts to our community and the responsibility for addressing these impacts needs to be shared amongst all key stakeholders within the Shire. The Shire is already working collaboratively with its partners to address the needs of our current and future older residents, and will continue to identify new opportunities for partnerships over the life the Plan.

This plan was developed in several distinct stages. After a community profile was assessed, a reference group was created along with a focus group and community survey. Council's highly valuable input was given to the creation of this plan and it has been a true partnership in the formation of the final document that you will soon read.

Although we live in challenging times I am positive that Merredin will continue to prosper as the regional centre of the Eastern Wheatbelt. With dedicated staff, a committed Council and an engaging community the Shire of Merredin will create an even brighter future for its ageing population and residents.

Mr Greg Powell

Chief Executive Officer, Shire of Merredin

KEY POINTS OF THE PLAN

The engagement activities undertaken as part of the development of this Plan found that those who participated enjoy living in the Shire of Merredin. They value the strong sense of community they feel in the Shire of Merredin and the recreation facilities offered. The critical issues, as identified by the community are:

- There is no public and/or community transport services to Perth and other Regional Centres
- Lack of aged care accommodation and the need to plan for diverse housing options
- Need for health and medical services, particularly a high quality and consistent GP service

The Shire of Merredin is committed to developing an Age Friendly Community and this plan identifies a number of actions in response to the findings of the community engagement. The high priority actions identified include:

- Proactive approach to increase the quality and availability of medical services across the Shire
- Advocacy on regional transport issues
- Working toward increasing the provision of aged care accommodation across the Shire

This plan sits under the Shire of Merredin Strategic Community Plan, and the Corporate Business Plan. It is not intended to directly reallocate resources in a significant manner. However, it will be used as an informing strategy, providing direction and a framework for assessing expenditure proposals in future strategic and corporate planning by the Shire of Merredin.

A range of key indicators will be used to monitor the success of the Plan.

WHAT IS AN “AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY PLAN”?

Age Friendly Communities are those that encourage “active ageing by optimising opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance the quality of life as people age” (World Health Organisation)¹. An Age Friendly Community is one which:

- recognises the great diversity among older people;
- promotes their inclusion and contribution in all areas of community life;
- respects their decisions and lifestyle choices; and
- anticipates and responds to ageing-related needs and preferences.

A community that exhibits these qualities is not only an Age-Friendly Community it tends to better cater for the whole population, where a wider range of abilities and needs are met.

The Shire of Merredin considers age-friendly community planning vital to undertake for the following reasons:

- By 2027, the Wheatbelt population over 70 will have increased by 75.3%
- The proportion of people 70+ will have increased from 10.4% in 2011 to 17% in 2027²

In addition to this, older adults generally prefer to remain in their own home and continue to be part of their community. Older adults feel safe, valued and respected in their own community and local governments have a key role in ensuring this can occur.

An Age Friendly Community Plan identifies the priorities and actions discovered in the resulting process. It identifies the age-friendly barriers and suggestions for improvements that have been acknowledged by the survey respondents, focus group participants and Council as being important areas of note. In addition to this, the plan contains the key findings of the plan itself, as well as individual results of the audit and engagement report. An Age Friendly Community Plan also incorporates the Shire’s Informing Strategy (IPR).

¹ Note that the Western Australia State Government has adopted the World Health Organisation’s model (see <http://www.communities.wa.gov.au/communities-in-focus/seniors/Pages/Age-Friendly-WA-.aspx>).

² Verso Consulting 2013, Wheatbelt Integrated Aged Care Plan.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

This section on the Central East Aged Care Alliance (CEACA) sub-region has been extracted from the Wheatbelt Aged Support and Care Solutions (WASCS) Report³, with a focus on the following sub-sections.

Demographic Trends

The Eastern Wheatbelt CEACA sub-region (a combination of the WEROC and NEWROC sub-regions) is the largest in area and in the number of shires. The 70+ population will increase from 1,019 (10.3% of total area population) in 2011, to 1,196 (11.5%) by 2017, and to 1,616 (15.9%) by 2027. The Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) scores localities within the CEACA area which indicate Moderate Accessibility and Remote areas, indicating “significantly” to “very” restricted access as defined by the ARIA. All local government areas will qualify for the viability supplement. In 2011 there were 105 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons aged 45+ recorded in the CEACA local government areas, representing 13.4% of this cohort in Wheatbelt as whole.

The data indicates that there are six unpaid carers aged 85+ living in the CEACA sub-region, although there were a reported 67 aged 70+. The need for dementia specific care for older residents of the CEACA sub-region is likely to increase over the projected period from an estimated 90 persons aged 70+ in 2006 to 156 persons by 2027. This represents an increase of 66 people (a 73.3% increase).

All CEACA local government areas are relatively disadvantaged (i.e. Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas [SEIFA] score less than 1000) the most disadvantaged is Kellerberrin (ranked 134 of 142 in WA).

CEACA Aged Care Support and Solutions Summary				
Age Friendly Communities	Home Support and Care			Residential Care
	HACC	Home Care	Respite Care	
All shires to start/progress action in line with WA Seniors Planning Framework (SPF)	Ensure multi-purpose service (MPS) HACC delivered according to benchmark levels/standards	Monitor extent of coverage & raise community awareness as alternative to residential care	Coordinate and plan for wider availability of in home respite and better public awareness	WA Country Heath Service (WACHS) to consider how to provide suitable care in very dispersed MPS sites.

³ <http://www.wheatbelt.wa.gov.au/our-projects/aged-care/>

Current CEACA Service Levels and Provider Summary				
HACC	Home Care	Residential Care	Respite Care	Providers
Patchy	Patchy but improving	Formally adequate but many unsuitable facilities	Some residential respite but shortage of in-home plus low awareness	Mainly WACHS plus not for profit (NFP) residential (Dryandra Lodge) and NFP home care ex Merredin

CEACA (excl. Narembreen) Residential beds summary and growth estimate		
Currently available	2011 planning ratio target	2027 planning ratio target
71	76	112

Residential Care

The CEACA sub-region is distinguished as one of the few sub-regions heavily dependent on WACHS for Residential Care. Apart from Dryandra Lodge at Kellerberrin, all Residential Care is provided by WACHS via multiple sites of the Eastern Wheatbelt MPS based at Merredin and the Bruce Rock Memorial Hospital/MPS. Until recently the sub-region has also depended on the MPS facilities to provide Home Care. However, a non-profit provider has recently established at Merredin and there is also some evidence of providers from outside the sub-region providing Home Care services. The issues for the CEACA sub-region is its small and dispersed population, the unviable scale of facilities (their fabric, economics and skills maintenance) and the logistical challenges in providing HACC and Home Care to more isolated places. There is no evidence of a major formal shortage in Residential Care but many of the small MPS facilities are not built for purpose and would not meet Commonwealth standards. The built form and staffing profile does not allow the implementation of properly developed aged care programs. As a result, there is a major issue with older people having to move far away to obtain the required care. There is a projected demand for a small number of additional beds in the next 15 years, taking into account the 21 additional beds awarded to Dryandra Lodge, but not on a scale ever likely to encourage private/non-profit providers. The challenge for the CEACA sub-region is to establish capacity for high standard aged care facilities at selected locations to enable those older people who need Residential Care to receive it at the proper standard and as near to home as possible.

Transport

Significant transport issues across the sub-region include:

- Over reliance on voluntary ambulance services
- Disengagement from services if transport is not available
- Limited public transport
- Overnight stays are often necessary if travelling to Perth
- Underutilised Shire buses.

Older Persons Housing

Identified need to deliver housing options under a range of ownership options that can assist older people to down size or to move to more appropriate housing that facilitates the maintenance of independence.

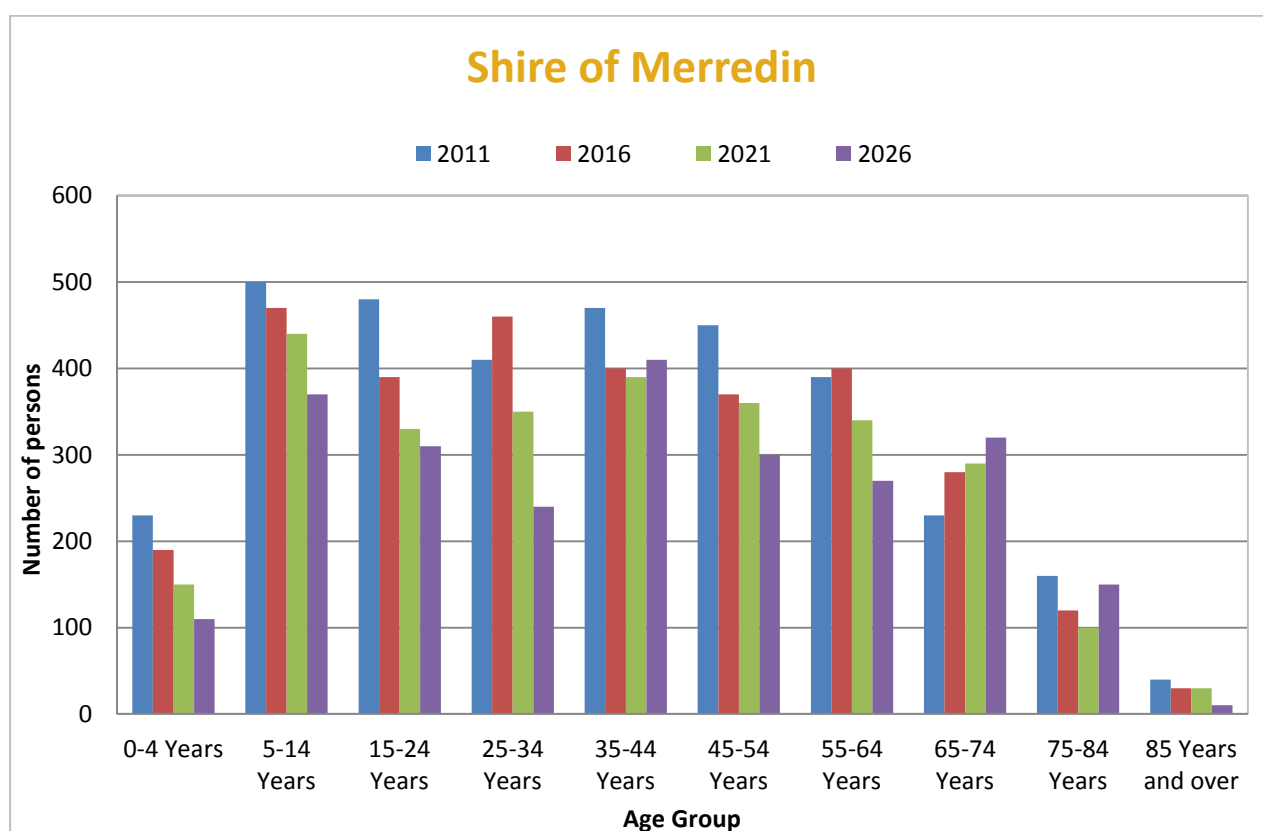
There is acknowledgement that additional affordable older persons housing is required, particularly in the WEROC local government areas.

COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Shire of Merredin includes the towns of Hines Hill, Burracoppin, South Burracoppin, Goomarin, Korbel, Merredin, Muntadgin, Nangeenan, Nokanning, Tangedin, Nukarni and Norpa. It has a population of 3,630 people and covers an area of 3,372 square kilometres. The Shire is approximately 260 kilometres east of Perth.

Figure 1, below, is indicative of the Shire's projected age profiles from 2011 to 2026. The graph illustrates a noticeable increase in the age cohorts from 55 to 85 years of age and older. The largest difference is expected to occur in the cohort of 65 to 74 years of age. The number of persons in 2011 was recorded as 230 and this number is expected to rise to 320 in 2026. This accounts for a 39% increase in the amount of persons in this cohort. The amount of 75 to 84 year olds was 160 in 2011 and is projected to only slightly decrease to 150 in 2026, or a 6.25% decrease in the population size. This aging population will place a significant amount of pressure on existing services in the Shire of Merredin unless they are accounted for.

Figure 1: Projected age profiles for the Shire of Merredin from 2011 to 2026⁴.



⁴ <http://www.planning.wa.gov.au/publications/6196.asp>

HOW THIS PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

Overview

The planning model used in this Plan consists of a four step solution-focused process. It has ultimately produced an Informing Strategy consistent with and complementary to the Shire of Merredin's Strategic Community Plan. The first step is to gain an understanding of each unique local community. A collaborative process involving service providers and seniors themselves is then used to develop a three to five-year plan. Each stage naturally progressed into the next, with the first three steps providing the essential information for understanding the current and longer term needs and preferences, as the basis for strategic planning and action.

Grant Funding

The Shire of Merredin applied for the 2014–2015 Age-Friendly Communities Regional Local Government Strategic Planning Grants Program. This program, run by the Department of Local Government and Communities, seeks to “optimise opportunities for health, participation, and security by establishing policies, services and structures that improve the quality of life of community members as they age.” The grant funding itself is to assist local governments in regional Western Australia to collect and analyse given findings in respect of the Age-Friendly Communities Framework. Funding was awarded at up to a rate of \$10,000 per project.

Partnership with Bruce Rock

In order to reap the most benefit from the Age-Friendly Communities grants, Shires were encouraged to team up with another, similarly geographically located Shire in order to ensure funding of both projects. As the Shires of Merredin and Bruce Rock are part of the Central East Aged Care Alliance, they agreed to collaborate on completing their Age Friendly Community Plans, in order to take advantage of the regional perspective and economies of scale.

The two Shires decided to follow the WDC's Age Friendly Community Planning Guide. They have a strong shared commitment to becoming age friendly communities and a common view of how the planning will benefit their communities, the approach, project outcomes and how the objectives will be met.

Audit

The Shire of Merredin undertook an Age Friendly Community Planning Audit in February 2015 and then again in November 2015. This audit was designed to capture information for the purposes of identifying whether the community is an Age Friendly Community across eight “domains” that are particularly relevant to the wellbeing of seniors. Each domain contains a number of components, sometimes divided into sub-domains. This information enables the Shire and the community to assess where improvements are needed and assist in informing the wider age friendly community planning that will guide future activities and investments. The Report was prepared using the WDC's Age Friendly Community Planning Audit Tool.

Reference Group

As part of the conditions of fulfilment for the grant, the Shire of Merredin established a reference group that guided and supported the project, liaised with the Department of Local Government and Communities and reviewed the draft reports.

Consultation

The Shire conducted both focus groups and a survey in order to consult with community members. The Shire of Merredin's focus groups were aimed at both seniors and service providers. They were structured around the eight WHO AFC domains with participants involved in assessing these features in their own communities. A survey was developed and posed a standard set of questions structured around the eight WHO domains. It was promoted to persons within the Shire of Merredin in both electronic and hardcopy forms.

In addition to this, Council was consulted through an issues and options workshop. They were given the results of the Engagement Report and prioritised various community member concerns that were then used to inform the creation of this Plan.

LINKS TO OTHER PLANS AND POLICIES

Strategic Community Plan

The Shire of Merredin Strategic Community Plan (2012) describes the community priorities for the ten year horizon and the key strategies the Shire will focus on to achieve the community aspirations. The Strategic Community Plan presents a suite of strategic priorities in ten categories. A number of the priorities identified in the Strategic Community Plan are also identified in this plan, particularly those related to aged accommodation and health and medical services.

Corporate Business Plan

The Shire of Merredin Corporate Business Plan (2013) translates the community aspirations outlined in the Strategic Community Plan into an implementable work program. The Corporate Business Plan identifies several aspects related to ensuring an age friendly community with a particular short term focus on aged care accommodation.

Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) 2015 - 2020

The Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP) is required under The Disability Services Act 1993 with the aim of planning and implementing improvements across seven outcome areas. These plans benefit people with disability, older people, young parents and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The Shire of Merredin DAIP identifies a range of access improvement opportunities that will have a particular benefit to older people in the community. Some of these actions are very closely related or a duplicate of the priority actions identified within this Plan. This correlation reinforces the importance of this Plan and the broader community outcomes beyond older people.

FINDINGS

Summary of Audit Findings

Contained below is a summary of the extensive findings compiled in an Audit report. The complete Audit can be found in Annex 1.

Health and community services

- There are two GP/health centres in Merredin and one hospital within the Shire of Merredin.
- A dental service is also available in the Shire along with allied health services. Allied health services provided include:
 - Aboriginal health;
 - dietician;
 - social worker;
 - child health;
 - speech;
 - occupational health;
 - physio therapy; and a
 - podiatrist.
- There is a shopping complex located in the Merredin CBD replete with disability access into shops and disability parking.
- There are no Health and Community Care Services provided by the Shire; all services are provided by WACHS.

Outdoor spaces

- There were several parks and open spaces surveyed within the Shire for the audit. Full details of these specific places can be found in the report. Several paths and walkways in these spaces are not accessible for wheelchairs, gophers or walking frames.

Public buildings

- Public buildings surveyed in the audit are comprised of the administration centre, leisure centre, library and many others. The front counter and reception desks of some buildings were often higher than the suggested maximum.
- Disability access is available in a majority of the public buildings surveyed.

Transport and movement

- Pedestrian crossings are generally adequately provided for and are available on key access routes.
- Footpaths around the central areas of Merredin are of high quality. There are significant gaps, however, in the footpath network around the Merrittville Retirement Village and North Merredin Primary School site and sections of old and poor quality footpaths in those areas as well. Footpaths are also generally well-lit and adequate seating is provided along major routes.
- Traffic signs are generally well placed and visible.

-
- Public transport is not available within the Shire but regional trains do service Merredin.

Housing

- There is not sufficient suitable housing to meet the needs of the ageing population in the future.
- There is a retirement village located in Merredin.

Information regarding the following areas is available in the Engagement Report, found in Annex 2:

- Sport and recreation
- Social participation
- Respect and social inclusion
- Communication and information

Summary of Engagement Report

It is clear from the results of the engagement activities that both survey respondents and focus group participants enjoy living in the Shire of Merredin. However, the research also shows that the community feel that there are some opportunities for improvement regarding the provision of key services in order to create a more age friendly community.

The key findings are:

- A total of 15 service providers and 21 community members participated in two targeted focus groups. 38 individuals partook in the community survey.
- Of those seniors who participated, 74% of survey respondents and 100% of focus group participants are retired.
- The majority of both survey and focus group respondents believe that improved provision of health care and community services will foster a greater age friendly experience of living in the Shire of Merredin.
- Service provider focus group participants believe the most important issues for aged persons in the Shire of Merredin are:
 - Increased health and community care
 - Maintenance and accessibility of outdoor spaces.
- Senior focus group participants believe the most important issues for aged persons in the Shire of Merredin are:
 - Health care improved to meet community needs
 - Doctor on call at all times
 - Central “drop in” space like a seniors centre
 - Lack of aged accommodation in the hospital which causes people to leave town
 - Increased organised transport to Perth and Northam
 - Increase of affordable residential accommodation
 - Provision of a community Registered Nurse
 - Increased footpath and road maintenance.

-
- Survey respondents believe the most important issues for aged persons in the Shire of Merredin are:
 - Healthcare and medical issues
 - Aged care accommodation
 - Transport for those without vehicle access.

THE PLAN

The Plan is based on the eight domains of an age friendly community, each with a number of associated actions as listed in the following table. These are designed to allow Council to respond to changing needs and ensure support for the wellbeing of the Shire of Merredin's ageing population.

Health and Community Services				
Objective	Actions	Priority	Within existing resources?	Others involved
Ensure older people have access to quality and reliable health and community services allowing them to age in place and keep travel at a minimum.	Advocate for more and better quality health services across the Shire.	High	Yes	Service Providers Department of Health WA Country Health Service Local Member of Parliament
	Continue to work with local GP services to ensure a consistent and secure service is accessible to older people.	Medium	Yes	Local GP Services (existing and potential providers) Department of Health WA Country Health Service
	Continue to support and promote local shops.	Low	Yes	Private developers Existing and new business owners Wheatbelt Business Network

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings				
Objective	Actions	Priority	Within existing resources?	Others involved
Create outdoor spaces and buildings that promote mobility, independence and quality of life for older people.	Continue to undertake well planned maintenance of Council infrastructure (infrastructure, roads and footpaths) that contributes to safe access for all.	Medium	Yes	Private developers Service providers Government Agencies and Funders
	Seek opportunities to refresh and upgrade existing buildings where possible.	Low	Yes	Private developers Service providers Government Agencies and Funders
	Investigate opportunities to open railway station waiting room to the public.	Low	Yes	Public Transport Authority Transwa

Transport and Movement				
Objective	Actions	Priority	Within existing resources?	Others involved
Ensure seniors have access to safe and consistent transport options.	Investigate opportunities to develop more and improved footpaths and cycle paths across the Shire.	Medium	Yes	Private Developers Wheatbelt Development Commission Government Agencies and Funders
	Continue to investigate and advocate on regional transport issues that impact on the ability of people to age in place.	High	Yes	Wheatbelt Development Commission Neighbouring Local Government Authorities Department of Transport Department of Health WA Country Health Service

Housing				
Objective	Actions	Priority	Within existing resources?	Others involved
Investigate and advocate for accessible, affordable and diverse housing options that contribute to the ability of people to stay in their community.	Facilitate opportunities for affordable housing developments and the provision of small lots.	Medium	Yes	State Government Private Developers
	Continue to advocate for the increased provision of residential aged care accommodation across the Shire.	High	Yes	Service Providers Department of Health WA Country Health Service
	Facilitate improved communication from all parties around housing options that are available and how to apply.	Medium	Yes	State Government (Department of Housing) Private developers Businesses

Sport and Recreation				
Objective	Actions	Priority	Within existing resources?	Others involved
Provide facilities and recreation services that contribute to the social and physical wellbeing of older community members.	Facilitate more senior activities across the Shire with a particular focus on the Recreation Centre.	Medium	Yes	Sport clubs Community groups Community Resource Centre WA Country Health
	Seek opportunities to improve access to the swimming pool and hydro pool.	Medium	Yes	Community groups/clubs

Social Participation/ Respect and Social Inclusion				
Objective	Actions	Priority	Within existing resources?	Others involved
Facilitate opportunities for community members to engage with each other and ensure respect for our older community members is encouraged.	Support initiatives that bring generations together with a strong focus on connecting youth and older persons.	Medium	Yes	Community groups Service providers Businesses Government Agencies and funders St Mary's School
	Facilitate and conduct senior-specific event(s).	Low	Yes	Community Resource Centre Community groups and clubs Service providers
	Actively seek greater community participation across Shire activities.	Medium	Yes	

Communication and Information				
Objective	Actions	Priority	Within existing resources?	Others involved
Ensure high quality, reliable and up to date information is made available to older people in the community.	Seek opportunities to improve all aspects of Shire communication.	Low	Yes	Government Agencies Clubs Community groups Businesses Community Resource Centre
	Ensure older people have access to necessary Shire information in suitable formats.	Medium	Yes	Clubs Community Groups Community Resource Centre

IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

Implementation of this plan will occur through ongoing corporate planning. Resourcing of any new or expanded initiatives will need to be considered through the due process of the Shire's Integrated Planning and Reporting.

This Age Friendly Community Plan reflects the Shire's strong commitment to optimising opportunities for health, participation and security for ageing community members. This commitment is aligned to the Western Australia State Government an Age Friendly WA: The Seniors Strategic Planning Framework. The Shire is not the only agency with responsibility for ensuring an age friendly community and the exact contribution it makes is difficult to measure. A large number of other factors influence how the ageing population experience community life across the eight domains of an Age Friendly Community. However, the Shire will monitor a set of key indicators as outlined below to track the progress of the sector in terms of the overall goal of the Plan.

Indicators
Health and Community Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Community satisfaction with availability and access to health and medical services
Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Community satisfaction with Shire owned buildings
Transport and Movement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Community satisfaction with footpaths and roads
Housing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Increase in the aged housing availableCommunication strategy implemented around housing options in the Shire
Sport and Recreation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Community satisfaction with the provision of sport and recreation activitiesCommunity satisfaction with access to the swimming pool and hydro pool
Social Participation/Respect and Social Inclusion
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Number of intergenerational events and activities conductedNumber of senior-specific events conducted
Communication and Information
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Community satisfaction with the provision of Shire information

ANNEX 1: AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY AUDIT REPORT



Shire of Merredin Age Friendly Community Audit

Version 2.0

Audit Title

Shire of Merredin Age Friendly Community Audit

Conducted on

15/03/2015 12:24 pm

30/11/2015 1:05 pm

Prepared by

Localise

Personnel

Mark Dacombe, Director, Localise

Jen Perry, Project Officer, Localise

Vanessa Green, Executive Assistant to the CEO, Shire of Merredin



Table of Contents


INTRODUCTION	24
HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES	24
GP/Health Centre	24
Hospital	26
Dental	26
Allied health services	27
Pharmacy.....	28
Shopping.....	29
Health and Community Care Services (HACC)	29
Home Care.....	30
Residential Aged Care/Multi-purpose Service	30
OUTDOOR SPACES.....	30
Apex Park.....	30
Roy Little Park.....	31
Pioneer Park	32
Tamma Parkland.....	33
Merredin Peak.....	34
Merredin Recreation Ground	35
PUBLIC BUILDINGS	36
Shire Administration Centre	36
Regional Community Leisure Centre	36
Cummins Theatre	38
Merredin Regional Library.....	39
Merredin District Pool	40
Merredin Senior Centre.....	41
Avon Youth	42
Merredin District Hall	43
Community Resource Centre (and Centrelink).....	43
Disability Services Commission.....	44
Department of Child Protection and Family Support	45
Department of Housing.....	46
Central Wheatbelt Visitors Centre.....	46
Merredin Bowling Club.....	48
North Merredin Primary School Site Project	48
Churches.....	49
TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT	50
Pedestrian Movement.....	50
Road Signage	52
Public and Community Transport.....	52
HOUSING.....	52
Housing Stock.....	52
Maintenance and adaptation services	53
Housing security	53
Retirement Village/Seniors Housing.....	53

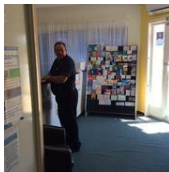



SPORT AND RECREATION	53
Facilities.....	53
Clubs.....	54
SOCIAL PARTICIPATION	54
Volunteering.....	54
Community events and activities	54
Employment	54
Grandparents/older care givers of young children.....	54
RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION	54
Respect and Social Inclusion.....	54
COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION	55
Communication and Information	55
Computers and Internet.....	55
Health Promotion	55
PHOTOGRAPHS.....	56



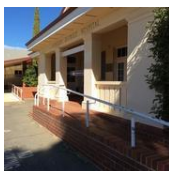


INTRODUCTION



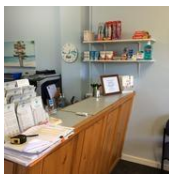
Introduction
<p>The Age Friendly Community Audit Report is designed to capture information for the purposes of identifying whether the community is an Age Friendly Community across eight “domains” that are particularly relevant to the wellbeing of seniors. Each domain contains a number of components, sometimes divided into sub-domains.</p> <p>This information enables the Shire and the community to assess where improvements are needed and assist in informing the wider age friendly community planning that will guide future activities and investments.</p> <p>The Report has been prepared using the Wheatbelt Development Commission’s Age Friendly Community Planning Audit Tool.</p> <p>Document History</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Version 2.0 is a comprehensive version of the document. All effort has been made to fill existing gaps left in Version 1.0. Completed 30/11/2015 at 1:05 pm by Jen Perry. - Version 1.0 is a preliminary version, focusing on the physical site audit, existing knowledge and seniors’ feedback where available to robustly identify small improvement projects that can make a difference to seniors’ wellbeing in the short term. A shortlist of suitable projects will be prioritised through the Wheatbelt Development Commission’s prioritisation tool, and the highest ranking projects will be submitted for grant funding. Completed 15/03/2015 at 12:24 pm by Mark Dacombe and Vanessa Green.





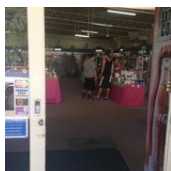


HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES





Question	Response	Details
GP/Health Centre		
Name of GP	Karis Medical Group	
What is the address of the GP?	35 Bates Street, Merredin WA 6415	
		
Appendix 1		
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	Disability access requires a patient to go to the rear of the building and wait in the kitchen until the Doctor is ready to see them
Is disability parking available?	No	No designated car park but there is street parking and the surgery is located in a quiet area
Is the GP accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Are people with seniors' cards bulk billed or provided with a discount?	No	As per seniors' cards entitlements. The practice bulk bills
Are at home visits available?	Yes	Available on request
When is the GP open?	Five to seven days per week	

Question	Response	Details
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	No	Counter standard height
 Appendix 2		
Name of GP	Merredin Medical Centre	
What is the address of the GP?	91 Todd St, Merredin WA	
 Appendix 3		
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	At grade through sliding automatic doors
 Appendix 4		
Is disability parking available?	Yes	
 Appendix 5		
Is the GP accessible by public or community transport?	No	No. Merredin does not have public transport. People who have transport issues rely on family, friends and neighbours. HACC clients may have access to transport.
Are people with seniors' cards bulk billed or provided with a discount?	Yes	Bulk bill
Are at home visits available?	Yes	
When is the GP open?	Five to seven days per week	
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	Yes	There is a low section of the counter which could be used for a person in a wheelchair

Question	Response	Details
		
Appendix 6		
Hospital		
Is there a hospital within 60 minutes from the town?	Yes	
Does the hospital have an Emergency service?	Yes	
		
Appendix 7		
Is the hospital in your local government area?	Yes	
What is the address of the hospital?	Kitchener Road, Merredin WA 6415	
		
Appendix 8		
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	
		
Appendix 9		
Is disability parking available?	Yes	
		
Appendix 10		
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	N/A	
Are seniors satisfied with the provision of GP/Health Centre services?	See <i>Engagement Report: Towards an Age Friendly Community Plan (2015)</i>	
Dental		
Is there a dental service within 60 minutes from the town?	Yes	AIM Dental



Question	Response	Details
Is the dental service in your local government area?	Yes	
What is the address of the dental service?	32 Bates Street, Merredin WA 6415	
		
Appendix 11		
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	Access at grade from the footpath. Manual push/pull door that is wide enough for a wheelchair. The non-public areas of the dental surgery are not constructed to an accessible standard and this does provide challenges if a wheelchair bound person requires treatment
Is disability parking available?	Yes	Available at the door
		
Appendix 12		
Is the dental service accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Are people with seniors' cards provided with a discount?	No	Seniors are provided with any concessions their cards entitle them to.
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	No	Counter is higher than the maximum suggested but the environment is friendly and staff will come out into the waiting room to assist as required
		
Appendix 13		
Allied health services		
Are there allied health services (physiotherapy, occupational therapy, podiatry, physiologist, dietitian etc.) within 60 minutes from the town or visiting services available?	Yes	Aboriginal Health, Dietitian, Social Worker, Child health, Speech, Occupational Health, Physio Therapy, Podiatrist
Name of allied health service	Primary Health Eastern	
Address of service location.	Merredin	




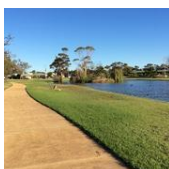
Question	Response	Details
		
Appendix 14		
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	
Is disability parking available?	Yes	
Is the service accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Are people with seniors' cards provided a discount?	Yes	Only what they are entitled to with their cards
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	Yes	
Are seniors satisfied with the provision of Allied health services?	See <i>Engagement Report: Towards an Age Friendly Community Plan (2015)</i>	
Pharmacy		
Is there a pharmacy?	Yes	Soul Pattinson Chemist
		
Appendix 15		
Address of pharmacy	102 Barrack Street, Merredin	
		
Appendix 16		
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	Access at grade off the street. Easy to move around once inside. Low counter providing easy interaction.
		
		
		
		
Appendix 17	Appendix 18	Appendix 19
Appendix 20		
Is disability parking available?	Yes	There is a disability car park outside the Chemist
Is the service accessible by public or community transport?	No	No public transport in Merredin






Question	Response	Details
Are people with a seniors card provided with a discount?	Yes	Seniors are provided with concessions their seniors card entitles them to
Does the pharmacy offer a delivery service?	Yes	
Shopping		
Is there a shopping complex or precinct?	Yes	Merredin CBD strip shopping
 Appendix 21		
Address of shopping complex or precinct	Barrack, Mitchell and Bates Streets (Photo shows Barrack Street)	
 Appendix 22		
 Appendix 23		
Is there disability access into the shops?	Yes	Most shops have access at grade from the footpath.
Is disability parking available?	Yes	Disability bays at intervals in Barrack Street and at selected locations in other streets
 Appendix 24		
Is the shopping complex or precinct accessible by public or community transport?	No	No public transport in Merredin
Are seniors satisfied with the provision of shopping?	See <i>Engagement Report: Towards an Age Friendly Community Plan (2015)</i>	
Health and Community Care Services (HACC)		
Is a Home and Community Care (HACC) service provided?	No	All HACC services provided by the hospital.







Question	Response	Details
Home Care		
Are there any critical gaps in the home care services provided?	Yes	Financial support to providers is not consistent. Uncertainty of their ability to provide a service to clients creates insecurity/mistrust between provider and clients. Services are provided for a period of time and then are no longer supported/available. Home care clients are required to always rethink their position at times when they may not be able to make an informed decision for themselves. Respite care is very limited in Merredin. Dealing with extreme weather conditions in Merredin is critical for most aged people, some having very limited heating in winter and cooling systems in summer.
If respite care has been identified as a critical gap, identify which type/s of respite care are not available.	Respite care for those with disabilities, spouse/carer respite, transport to respite care for aged people, overnight/weekend respite care	
Residential Aged Care/Multi-purpose Service		
Is there a Residential Aged Care/Multi-purpose Service?	No	
Other seniors care services		
Is there any other seniors care services? (e.g. community health clinics, day care centre etc.)	No	






OUTDOOR SPACES





Question	Response	Details
Apex Park		
Address	Barrack Street, Merredin	
		
Appendix 25		
Is there disability access?	Yes	Access at grade from the car park and from the footpath
		
Appendix 26		

Question	Response	Details
Is disability parking available?	No	Not specifically designated. Ample general car parking available
Is the park accessible by public or community transport?	No	No public transport in Merredin
Is the park well shaded?	Yes	Well shaded with trees and shade structures
<div></div> <div>Appendix 27Appendix 28</div>		
Are there well scattered benches or seating?	Yes	There is seating located near the playground and a covered structure to provide shade for skate park users
<div></div> <div>Appendix 29</div>		
Is the park well lit?	Yes	Not observed at night but there appear to be lights directed onto the park
Are there footpaths within the park?	No	To move through the park it is necessary to walk on grass. Linked up paths would enhance mobility
Is the footpath wide enough for wheelchairs/gophers/walking frames?	Adequate for one wheelchair/gopher (1.0m - 1.49m)	
Are pedestrian and cycle access separated?	No	
Are footpaths well maintained and free of obstructions?	N/A	
Roy Little Park		
Address	Barrack Street/Nungarrin Road, Merredin	
<div></div> <div>Appendix 30Appendix 31</div>		
Is there disability access?	Yes	There is a wide path right through the park linking the residential area at one end with the main shopping area



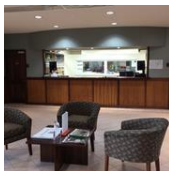
Question	Response	Details
 <p>Appendix 32</p>		
Is disability parking available?	No	None designated but ample general parking
 <p>Appendix 33</p>		
Is the park accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Is the park well shaded?	No	There are shaded areas but the majority of the park is in the open.
 <p>Appendix 34</p>		
Are there well scattered benches or seating?	Yes	
 <p>Appendix 35</p>		
Is the park well lit?	N/A	Not observed at night. It appears to be lit in parts.
Are there footpaths within the park?	Yes	
 <p>Appendix 36</p>		
Is the footpath wide enough for wheelchairs/gophers/walking frames?	Adequate for two wheelchairs/gophers (1.5m or above)	
Are pedestrian and cycle access separated?	No	
Are footpaths well maintained and free of obstructions?	Yes	
Pioneer Park		
Address	Great Eastern Highway, Merredin	






Question	Response	Details
  		
Appendix 37	Appendix 38	Appendix 39
Is there disability access?	Yes	Access off grade.
		
Appendix 40		
Is disability parking available?	No	None designated but parking alongside the Great Eastern Highway and on the opposite site of the railway line off Barrack Street
		
Appendix 41		
Is the park accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Is the park well shaded?	Yes	
Are there well scattered benches or seating?	No	
Is the park well lit?	Yes	
Are there footpaths within the park?	Yes	
Is the footpath wide enough for wheelchairs/gophers/walking frames?	Adequate for two wheelchairs/gophers (1.5m or above)	
Are pedestrian and cycle access separated?	No	
Are footpaths well maintained and free of obstructions?	Yes	
Tamma Parkland		
Address	Snell Street, Merredin, WA 6415	
		
Appendix 42		
Is there disability access?	No	The terrain is flat. The paths were not walked as part of the audit. At the car park the tracks are wide and reasonable well formed.
Is disability parking available?	No	General car parking on gravel





Question	Response	Details
Is the park accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Is the park well shaded?	Yes	It is bushland
<div></div> <div>Appendix 43</div>		
Are there well scattered benches or seating?	N/A	There is seating at the entrance to the parkland
<div></div> <div>Appendix 44</div>		
Is the park well lit?	No	
Are there footpaths within the park?	N/A	Observed at the entrance to the park. The paths are gravel and sand not accessible to a gopher and probably not wheelchairs. They are tracks rather than footpaths
Merredin Peak		
Address	Benson Street, Merredin	
<div></div> <div>Appendix 45</div>		
Is there disability access?	No	The areas through the old hospital site etc. are flat and accessible through gravel tracks. The Merredin trail which incorporates the dam and the rock are not accessible to significantly mobility impaired people.
<div><div></div><div></div></div> <div>Appendix 46 Appendix 47</div>		
Is disability parking available?	No	Not specifically marked but ample general car parking
Is the park accessible by public or community transport?	No	

Question	Response	Details
Is the park well shaded?	Yes	
 Appendix 48		
Are there well scattered benches or seating?	No	
Is the park well lit?	No	
Are there footpaths within the park?	Yes	Wide gravel paths but probably not accessible to gophers and wheelchairs
Merredin Recreation Ground		
Address	63 Bates Street Merredin	
 Appendix 49		
Is there disability access?	Yes	Access to park via ramps
 Appendix 50		
Is disability parking available?	Yes	
 Appendix 51		
Is the park accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Is the park well shaded?	No	Park is a football oval and so is open
Are there well scattered benches or seating?	No	
Is the park well lit?	Yes	
Are there footpaths within the park?	No	
Are seniors satisfied with the provision of parks and open spaces generally?	See <i>Engagement Report: Towards an Age Friendly Community Plan (2015)</i>	






PUBLIC BUILDINGS



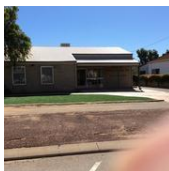

Question	Response	Details
Are seniors satisfied with the provision of public buildings generally?	See <i>Engagement Report: Towards an Age Friendly Community Plan (2015)</i>	
Shire Administration Centre		
Address	King Street, Merredin WA 6415	
		
Appendix 52		
Is there clearly visible directional and identification signage?	Yes	
Is there clearly visible navigational signage within the building?	N/A	Small reception area with not a lot of need for directional signage
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	
		
Appendix 53		
Is disability parking available?	Yes	
Is the building accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	No	Counter is higher than suggested maximum but comfortable seating in the public area enables staff to sit with anyone who can't stand at the counter.
		
Appendix 54		
Is it easy to get around the public areas of the building? (This may include lift access, ramps, wheelchair access doors etc.)	Yes	
Are the floors non-slip?	Yes	
Are there unisex disability accessible toilets?	No	
Regional Community Leisure Centre		
Address	Bates Street, Merredin	




Question	Response	Details
 <p>Appendix 55</p>		
Is there clearly visible directional and identification signage?	Yes	
 <p>Appendix 56</p>		
Is there clearly visible navigational signage within the building?	Yes	
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	
 <p>Appendix 57</p>		
Is disability parking available?	Yes	
 <p>Appendix 58</p>		
Is the building accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	No	
Is it easy to get around the public areas of the building? (This may include lift access, ramps, wheelchair access doors etc.)	Yes	
 <p>Appendix 59</p>		
Are the floors non-slip?	Yes	
Are there unisex disability accessible toilets?	Yes	




Question	Response	Details
 <p>Appendix 60</p>		
Cummins Theatre		
Address	31 Bates St, Merredin WA 6415	
 <p>Appendix 61</p>		
Is there clearly visible directional and identification signage?	Yes	
Is there clearly visible navigational signage within the building?	Yes	
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	Disability access into the theatre and also into the back stage area from the rear. The ticket office, which is the area accessed on a daily basis, does not have disability access. There is a door with a small step up. The person on duty will come out and bring a person in through an alternative entrance.
Is disability parking available?	No	Not specifically designated for the theatre but there is disability parking close by.
Is the building accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	Yes	Ticket office is well set up with a low counter and low desk. A marvelous ticket booth is located at the main entrance which is higher than the maximum recommended but is now not generally used.
  <p>Appendix 62 Appendix 63</p>		
Is it easy to get around the public areas of the building? (This may include lift access, ramps, wheelchair access doors etc.)	Yes	
Are the floors non-slip?	Yes	
Are there unisex disability accessible toilets?	Yes	There is currently no mirror in the disability toilets and a lock replacement required.




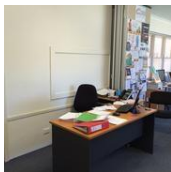


Question	Response	Details
  <p>Appendix 64 Appendix 65</p>		
Merredin Regional Library		
Address	Queen Street, Merredin.	
 <p>Appendix 66</p>		
Is there clearly visible directional and identification signage?	Yes	
Is there clearly visible navigational signage within the building?	Yes	
 <p>Appendix 67</p>		
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	The gap between the door and the counter sometimes makes it hard for people to enter. Staff work around that by providing assistance where needed.
 <p>Appendix 68</p>		
Is disability parking available?	No	Library is located in a quiet street where there is plenty of general parking.
Is the building accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	No	Counter standard height with a lower desk beside it

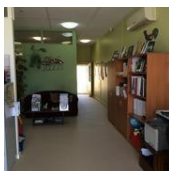



Question	Response	Details
 <p>Appendix 69</p>		
Is it easy to get around the public areas of the building? (This may include lift access, ramps, wheelchair access doors etc.)	Yes	
 <p>Appendix 70</p>		
Are the floors non-slip?	Yes	
Are there unisex disability accessible toilets?	No	
Merredin District Pool		
Address	Cnr Throssell Road and Pool Street, Merredin	
 <p>Appendix 71</p>		
Is there clearly visible directional and identification signage?	Yes	
Is there clearly visible navigational signage within the building?	Yes	
 <p>Appendix 72</p>		
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	At grade from footpath into facility
 <p>Appendix 73</p>		
Is disability parking available?	No	No specific parking however plenty of general parking on a quiet street
Is the building accessible by public or community transport?	No	




Question	Response	Details
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	No	
Is it easy to get around the public areas of the building? (This may include lift access, ramps, wheelchair access doors etc.)	Yes	Well set up with ramps between the levels
<div></div> <div>Appendix 74</div>		
Are the floors non-slip?	Yes	
Are there unisex disability accessible toilets?	Yes	
<div></div> <div>Appendix 75</div>		
Merredin Senior Centre		
Address	15 French Avenue, Merredin WA 6415	
<div></div> <div>Appendix 76</div>		
Is there clearly visible directional and identification signage?	Yes	
Is there clearly visible navigational signage within the building?	N/A	The building was observed from the outside
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	
<div></div> <div>Appendix 77</div>		
Is disability parking available?	No	No specific disability parking. There is a large gravel general car park adjacent to the Centre


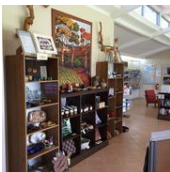




Question	Response	Details
		
Appendix 78		
Is the building accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	N/A	
Is it easy to get around the public areas of the building? (This may include lift access, ramps, wheelchair access doors etc.)	N/A	Building was not entered
Are the floors non-slip?	N/A	Building was not entered
Are there unisex disability accessible toilets?	N/A	Building was not entered
Avon Youth		
Address	18 Throssell Street, Merredin	
		
Appendix 79		
Is there clearly visible directional and identification signage?	Yes	
Is there clearly visible navigational signage within the building?	N/A	Only two main rooms
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	
		
Appendix 80		
Is disability parking available?	No	
Is the building accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	N/A	
Is it easy to get around the public areas of the building? (This may include lift access, ramps, wheelchair access doors etc.)	Yes	
Are the floors non-slip?	Yes	
Are there unisex disability accessible toilets?	No	



Question	Response	Details
Merredin District Hall		
Address	Mitchell Street Merredin WA 6415	
		
Appendix 81		
Is there clearly visible directional and identification signage?	Yes	
Is there clearly visible navigational signage within the building?	N/A	
Is there disability access into the building?	No	There is access through a rear door but the current occupants do not allow it to be used for security reasons.
Is disability parking available?	No	
Is the building accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	No	
Is it easy to get around the public areas of the building? (This may include lift access, ramps, wheelchair access doors etc.)	Yes	
Are the floors non-slip?	Yes	
Are there unisex disability accessible toilets?	No	
Community Resource Centre (and Centrelink)		
Address	108 Barrack Street, Merredin WA 6415	
		
Appendix 82		
Is there clearly visible directional and identification signage?	Yes	Very good signage
		
Appendix 83		
Is there clearly visible navigational signage within the building?	N/A	Very small office












Question	Response	Details
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	It is intended to move the CRC to building next door. A possible project for future funding would be automatic sliding doors to enhance accessibility.
<div></div> <div>Appendix 84Appendix 85</div>		
Is disability parking available?	Yes	Right out front
<div></div> <div>Appendix 86</div>		
Is the building accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	No	Standard reception desk with an office desk located nearby for seated consultations
<div></div> <div>Appendix 87Appendix 88</div>		
Is it easy to get around the public areas of the building? (This may include lift access, ramps, wheelchair access doors etc.)	Yes	
Are the floors non-slip?	Yes	
Are there unisex disability accessible toilets?	No	
Disability Services Commission		
Address	26 Bates St, Merredin WA 6415	
<div></div> <div>Appendix 89</div>		
Is there clearly visible directional and identification signage?	Yes	
Is there clearly visible navigational signage within the building?	N/A	Very homely atmosphere created in this office

Question	Response	Details
		
Appendix 90		
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	
Is disability parking available?	Yes	
Is the building accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	N/A	No counter.
		
Appendix 91		
Is it easy to get around the public areas of the building? (This may include lift access, ramps, wheelchair access doors etc.)	Yes	
Are the floors non-slip?	Yes	
Are there unisex disability accessible toilets?	Yes	
Department of Child Protection and Family Support		
Address	113 Great Eastern Highway, Merredin WA 6415	
		
Appendix 92		
Is there clearly visible directional and identification signage?	Yes	
Is there clearly visible navigational signage within the building?	N/A	Small office consisting of a secure counter with interview rooms to each side
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	
Is disability parking available?	Yes	
		
Appendix 93		
Is the building accessible by public or community transport?	No	

Question	Response	Details
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	No	
Is it easy to get around the public areas of the building? (This may include lift access, ramps, wheelchair access doors etc.)	Yes	
Are the floors non-slip?	Yes	
Are there unisex disability accessible toilets?	No	
Department of Housing		
Address	27 Mitchell St, Merredin WA 6415	
		
Appendix 94		
Is there clearly visible directional and identification signage?	Yes	
Is there clearly visible navigational signage within the building?	N/A	Small office not required
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	
		
Appendix 95		
Is disability parking available?	No	Not specifically designated
Is the building accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	No	
Is it easy to get around the public areas of the building? (This may include lift access, ramps, wheelchair access doors etc.)	Yes	
Are the floors non-slip?	Yes	
Are there unisex disability accessible toilets?	No	
Central Wheatbelt Visitors Centre		
Address	85 Barrack Street, Merredin WA 6415	
		
Appendix 96		



Question	Response	Details
Is there clearly visible directional and identification signage?	Yes	Good signage
 <p>Appendix 97</p>		
Is there clearly visible navigational signage within the building?	N/A	Navigational signage not required in this small office
 <p>Appendix 98</p>		
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	
 <p>Appendix 99</p>		
Is disability parking available?	No	Not specifically designated.
Is the building accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	No	There is a lower counter but that is currently used to display pamphlets
 <p>Appendix 100</p>		
Is it easy to get around the public areas of the building? (This may include lift access, ramps, wheelchair access doors etc.)	Yes	
Are the floors non-slip?	Yes	
Are there unisex disability accessible toilets?	Yes	Disability toilet in the block adjacent
  <p>Appendix 101 Appendix 102</p>		





Question	Response	Details
Merredin Bowling Club		
Address	21 Coronation St, Merredin WA 6415	
<div></div> <div>Appendix 103</div>		
Is there clearly visible directional and identification signage?	Yes	
Is there clearly visible navigational signage within the building?	N/A	Building not accessed
Is there disability access into the building?	No	The front entrances are not disability accessible. There is a door at the rear of the building with ramp that may provide access.
<div><div></div><div></div></div> <div>Appendix 104 Appendix 105</div>		
Is disability parking available?	No	None designated. A large general car park at the rear
<div></div> <div>Appendix 106</div>		
Is the building accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	N/A	
Is it easy to get around the public areas of the building? (This may include lift access, ramps, wheelchair access doors etc.)	N/A	Building not accessed
Are the floors non-slip?	N/A	Building not accessed
Are there unisex disability accessible toilets?	N/A	Building not accessed
North Merredin Primary School Site Project		
Address	22-26 Coronation St, Merredin, WA, 6415	





Question		Response	Details
<div></div> <div>Appendix 107Appendix 108Appendix 109Appendix 110</div>			
Is there clearly visible directional and identification signage?		N/A	This site is currently unused. The Shire will develop the property to incorporate facilities such as the regional library and will build a number of independent living units for older people.
Is there clearly visible navigational signage within the building?		N/A	Development project
Is there disability access into the building?		N/A	The new complex will be built to the required standards of disability access
Is disability parking available?		N/A	This will be incorporated into the new development
Is the building accessible by public or community transport?		No	
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?		N/A	
Is it easy to get around the public areas of the building? (This may include lift access, ramps, wheelchair access doors etc.)		N/A	Ease of movement will be incorporated into the development. Adjacent footpaths will require to be constructed.
<div></div> <div>Appendix 111Appendix 112</div>			
Are the floors non-slip?		N/A	
Are there unisex disability accessible toilets?		N/A	Will be incorporated into the new development
Churches			
Address		The following churches were observed from the outside: Seventh Day Adventist Church Merredin Church of Christ St Mary's Catholic Church Uniting Church	
<div></div> <div>Appendix 113Appendix 114Appendix 115Appendix 116Appendix 117</div>			

Question	Response	Details
Is there clearly visible directional and identification signage?	Yes	
Is there clearly visible navigational signage within the building?	N/A	Only the Uniting Church was accessed
Is there disability access into the building?	Yes	All of the churches had disability access
Is disability parking available?	N/A	There was ample parking at all of the churches. Only the Church of Christ had a dedicated disability bay.
Is the building accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Is the front counter/reception desk no higher than 870mm with 800mm knee and toe plate clearances?	N/A	
Is it easy to get around the public areas of the building? (This may include lift access, ramps, wheelchair access doors etc.)	N/A	Only the Uniting Church was accessed and that was easy to navigate
Are the floors non-slip?	N/A	Only the Uniting Church was accessed and that had non slip floors
Are there unisex disability accessible toilets?	N/A	Only the Uniting Church was accessed. It was not obvious from the outside that the Churches had unisex disability toilets

TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT



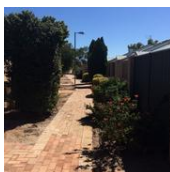
Question	Response	Details
Pedestrian Movement		
Are pedestrian crossings adequately provided generally?	Yes	
 <p>Appendix 118</p>		
Are there pedestrian crossings on key access routes? (e.g. To community services and public facilities)	Yes	
Are there accessible, sloping curbs at pedestrian crossings?	Yes	Yes, see example of crossing to the Westpac Bank
 <p>Appendix 119</p>		

Question	Response	Details
Are there any pedestrian crossings that require attention?	Yes	None observed. Disabled Bay on Barrack Street requires attention
Identify the location/s and describe the issue/s	On Barrack Street outside the post office. Bins are located against the disability parking bay restricting access. The bins should be relocated.	
Are the footpaths wide enough for wheelchairs/gophers/walking frames generally?	Adequate for two wheelchairs/gophers (1.5m or above)	
Are pedestrian and cycle access separated generally?	No	
Are footpaths well maintained and free of obstructions generally?	Mixed	Footpaths around the central area are of high quality (example Bates St outside Cummins Theatre, Barrack Street outside the Post Office, Barrack Street adjacent to the Visitor's Centre). However, as noted elsewhere, there are significant gaps in the footpath network around the Merrittville Retirement Village and North Merredin Primary School site and sections of old and poor quality footpaths in those areas also.
<div>    </div> <div> Appendix 120 Appendix 121 Appendix 122 </div>		
Are footpaths well lit generally?	Yes	
Is there adequate seating along major pedestrian routes?	Yes	Seating along Barrack Street opposite the shops
<div>  </div> <div> Appendix 123 </div>		
Are there adequate footpaths provided on key access routes generally (e.g. Residential to facilities etc.)	Mixed	Footpaths on key access routes are generally adequate, apart from the routes relating to the Merrittville Retirement Village and North Merredin Primary School
Are there any footpaths that require attention?	Yes	Footpaths around the Merrittville Retirement Village and North Merredin Primary School
Are seniors satisfied with the provision of footpaths generally?	See <i>Engagement Report: Towards an Age Friendly Community Plan (2015)</i>	

Question	Response	Details
Road Signage		
Are seniors satisfied with the provision of road signage generally?	See <i>Engagement Report: Towards an Age Friendly Community Plan (2015)</i>	
Are traffic signs visible and well placed generally?	Yes	Example of these signs on the Great Eastern Highway
		
Appendix 124		
Public and Community Transport		
Is public transport available?	Yes	Regional trains serve Merredin
Is the pick up at a convenient location?	Yes	Railway Station in the centre of town. Disability access to the train is not ideal. Outbound from Perth there is a ramp to board the train. In bound to Perth boarding takes place via steps. If someone needs disabled access advance notice has to be given and the train will come in on the line that enables ramp boarding.
  		
Appendix 125 Appendix 126 Appendix 127		
Address of pick up location.	Merredin Railway Station, Merredin WA 6415, Australia	
Is sheltered seating available at the pick up location?	Yes	Shelter at the Railway Station
Is there any other form of community transportation available? (e.g. Community bus, HACC transport)	No	
Is a taxi service available?	No	
Are seniors satisfied with the provision of public and community transport?	See <i>Engagement Report: Towards an Age Friendly Community Plan (2015)</i>	

HOUSING

Question	Response	Details
Housing Stock		
Is there sufficient suitable housing to meet the needs of the ageing population in the future? (e.g. Smaller homes, 2-3 bedroom, single story, wider entrances, located close to services)	No	

Question	Response	Details
Maintenance and adaptation services		
Are sufficient and affordable home maintenance and adaptation services available?	No	There are several service providers but people living on a pension alone cannot afford maintenance costs to their property (inside and out). Paying for adaption costs is often not an option.
Housing security		
What is the population with insecure tenancy arrangements aged over 70?	N/A	
Retirement Village/Seniors Housing		
Are seniors satisfied with the provision of Retirement Village/Senior Housing services?	See Engagement Report: Towards an Age Friendly Community Plan (2015)	
Is there a Retirement Village/Seniors Housing precinct?	Yes	Merrittville Retirement Village
Address of Retirement Village	63 Bates Street	
		
Appendix 128		
Is there disability access into the village/precinct?	Yes	
Is disability parking available?	Yes	Not specifically designated. Units have car parks and some garages
Is the village/precinct accessible by public or community transport?	No	
Is the village/precinct close to services and the community?	Yes	Approximately 1.4 kms from the main shopping area. A group of new units has been completed recently. A footpath is required to service the units (see photograph)
 		
Appendix 129 Appendix 130		

SPORT AND RECREATION

Question	Response	Details
Facilities		
Is there an adequate range of sporting and recreation facilities that cater for people across a range of abilities?	Yes	

Are the sport and recreation facilities accessible?	Yes	
Are seniors satisfied with the provision of sport and recreation facilities?	See <i>Engagement Report: Towards an Age Friendly Community Plan (2015)</i>	
Clubs		
Are seniors satisfied with the provision of sport and recreation clubs?	See <i>Engagement Report: Towards an Age Friendly Community Plan (2015)</i>	

SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

Question	Response	Details
Volunteering		
Are senior volunteers recognised through awards and special events?	Yes	Annual seniors event, individual community groups usually have annual/six monthly social events, award ceremonies at special events.
Are seniors satisfied with the provision of volunteering opportunities?	See <i>Engagement Report: Towards an Age Friendly Community Plan (2015)</i>	
Community events and activities		
Are seniors satisfied with the provision of community events and activities?	See <i>Engagement Report: Towards an Age Friendly Community Plan (2015)</i>	
Are activities free or low cost?	Yes	Most community events are held during each calendar year that are either free or low cost. E.g. Destination Merredin, agricultural show, health and wellbeing classes, fitness activities, seniors annual event, sporting fixtures/clubs, social outdoor luncheons/morning teas, art exhibitions, theatrical shows
Are activities accessible by community or public transport?	No	
Are activities at night well lit?	Yes	Most evening activities are held indoors apart from our Gala Night in December but extra lighting is used on these occasions.
Grandparents/older care givers of young children		
Identify any critical gaps.	Ability to support the children in their extracurricular activities, supporting homework activities and in some cases the financial burden of caring for young children	

RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

Question	Response	Details
Respect and Social Inclusion		
Do seniors feel included in the community?	See <i>Engagement Report: Towards an Age Friendly Community Plan (2015)</i>	
Do seniors feel well respected by younger people?	See <i>Engagement Report: Towards an Age Friendly Community Plan (2015)</i>	

COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

Question	Response	Details
Communication and Information		
Are seniors satisfied with the provision of information about services and activities in their community?	See <i>Engagement Report: Towards an Age Friendly Community Plan (2015)</i>	
Computers and Internet		
Do seniors have home computers?	Yes	60-70 year olds are more likely to have home computers than 80-90 year olds
Do seniors have access to the internet?	Yes	The Merredin regional library and the Merredin CRC both offer access to computers and internet to the community
Can seniors obtain assistance to access computers and the internet?	Yes	The Merredin regional library and the Merredin CRC both offer assistance services to access computers and internet to the community
Health Promotion		
Are there any Health Promotion activities aimed at Seniors?	Yes	Eg seniors gym, healthy eating classes, Keep on Your Feet activities, seniors craft club, card club, art society, sports, senior games held annually are supported by Merredin teams
Identify any critical gaps.	Supporting terminal patients, diabetic health support and challenges, transportation to get to activities	

PHOTOGRAPHS



Appendix 1



Appendix 2



Appendix 3



Appendix 4



Appendix 5



Appendix 6



Appendix 7



Appendix 8



Appendix 9



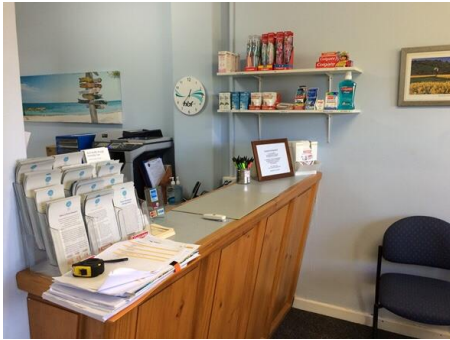
Appendix 10



Appendix 11



Appendix 12



Appendix 13



Appendix 14



Appendix 15



Appendix 16



Appendix 17



Appendix 18



Appendix 19



Appendix 20



Appendix 21



Appendix 22



Appendix 23



Appendix 24



Appendix 25



Appendix 26



Appendix 27



Appendix 28



Appendix 29



Appendix 30



Appendix 31



Appendix 32



Appendix 33



Appendix 34



Appendix 35



Appendix 36



Appendix 37



Appendix 38



Appendix 39



Appendix 40



Appendix 41



Appendix 42



Appendix 43



Appendix 44



Appendix 45



Appendix 46



Appendix 47



Appendix 48



Appendix 49



Appendix 50



Appendix 51



Appendix 52



Appendix 53



Appendix 54



Appendix 55



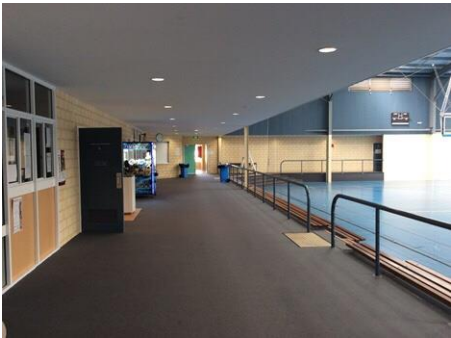
Appendix 56



Appendix 57



Appendix 58



Appendix 59



Appendix 60



Appendix 61



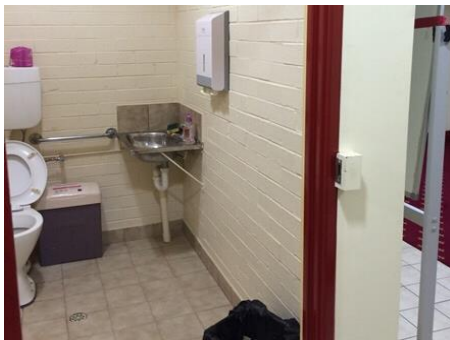
Appendix 62



Appendix 63



Appendix 64



Appendix 65



Appendix 66



Appendix 67



Appendix 68



Appendix 69



Appendix 70



Appendix 71



Appendix 72



Appendix 73



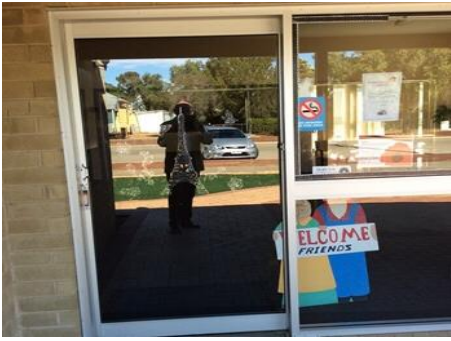
Appendix 74



Appendix 75



Appendix 76



Appendix 77



Appendix 78



Appendix 79



Appendix 80



Appendix 81



Appendix 82



Appendix 83



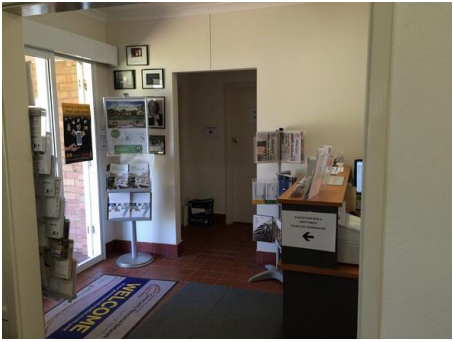
Appendix 84



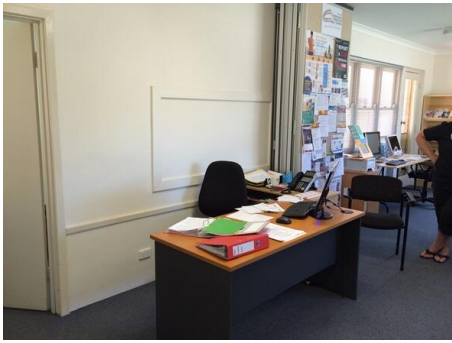
Appendix 85



Appendix 86



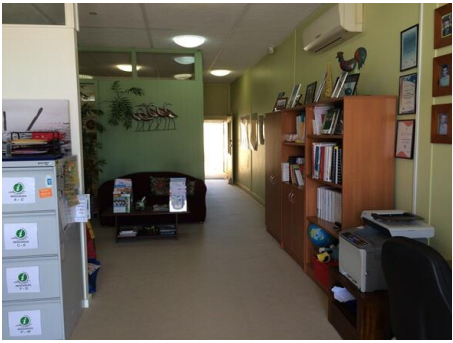
Appendix 87



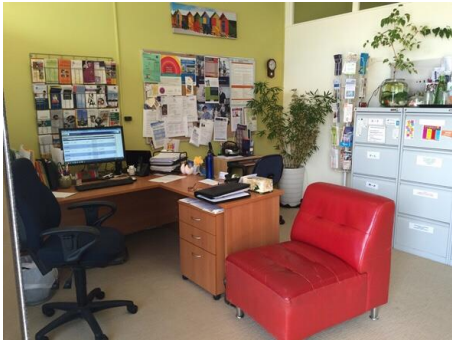
Appendix 88



Appendix 89



Appendix 90



Appendix 91



Appendix 92



Appendix 93



Appendix 94



Appendix 95



Appendix 96



Appendix 97



Appendix 98



Appendix 99



Appendix 100



Appendix 101



Appendix 102



Appendix 103



Appendix 104



Appendix 105



Appendix 106



Appendix 107



Appendix 108



Appendix 109



Appendix 110



Appendix 111



Appendix 112



Appendix 113



Appendix 114



Appendix 115



Appendix 116



Appendix 117



Appendix 118



Appendix 119



Appendix 120



Appendix 121



Appendix 122



Appendix 123



Appendix 124



Appendix 125



Appendix 126



Appendix 127



Appendix 128

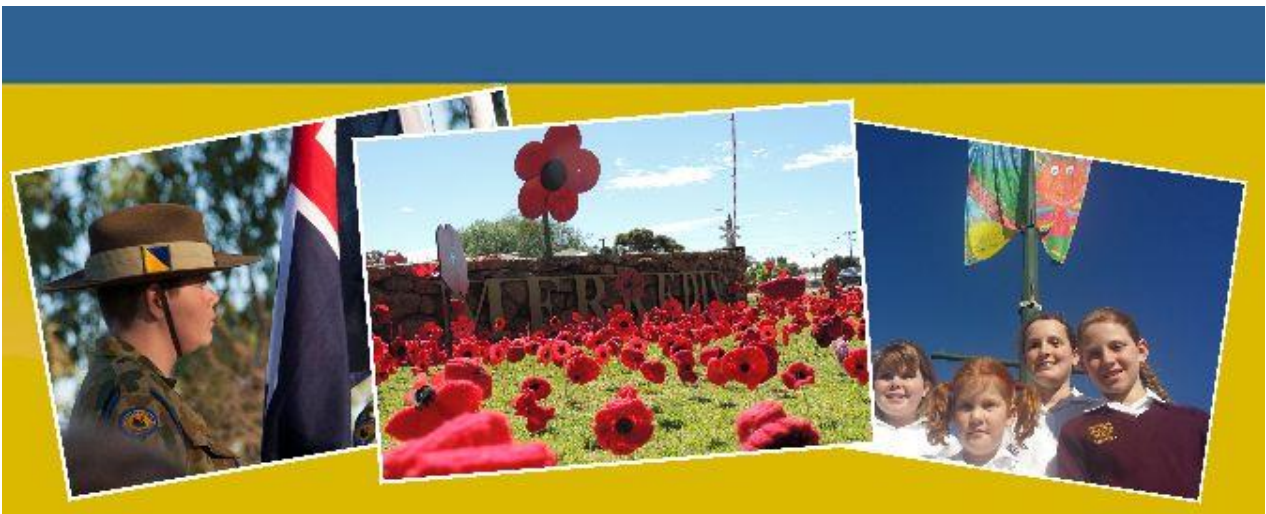


Appendix 129



Appendix 130

ANNEX 2: ENGAGEMENT REPORT: TOWARDS AN AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY PLAN



Dec 2015

Towards an Age Friendly Community Plan



CONTENTS

Key Findings	71
Introduction	72
Background	72
Community Engagement Methodology	73
Purpose	74
Focus Group Respondents	75
Service Providers	75
Seniors	75
Survey Respondents	79
Focus Group Results – Service providers	80
Health and Community Services	80
Outdoor Spaces and Buildings	80
Transport and Movement	80
Housing	80
Respect and Social Inclusion	80
Focus Group Results - Seniors	81
Health and Community Services	81
Outdoor Spaces and Buildings	81
Transport and Movement	81
Housing	81
Sport and Recreation	81
Social Participation	81
Respect and Social Inclusion	82
Communication and Information	82
Priorities	82
Survey Results	83
Health and Community Services	83
Outdoor Spaces and Buildings	83
Transport and Movement	84
Housing	85
Sport and Recreation	86
Social Participation	87

Respect and Social Inclusion	87
Communication and Information	88
Priorities	89
Next steps	90
Annex 1: Focus Group Promotional Flyer	91
Annex 2: Community Survey	93
Annex 3: Participant Information Forms	100

KEY FINDINGS

It is clear from the results of the engagement activities that both survey respondents and focus group participants enjoy living in the Shire of Merredin. However, the research also shows that the community feel that there are some opportunities for improvement regarding the provision of key services in order to create a more age friendly community.

The key findings are:

- A total of 15 service providers and 21 community members participated in two targeted focus groups. 38 individuals partook in the community survey.
- Of those seniors who participated, 74% of survey respondents and 100% of focus group participants are retired.
- The majority of both survey and focus group respondents believe that improved provision of health care and community services will foster a greater age friendly experience of living in the Shire of Merredin.
- Service provider focus group participants believe the most important issues for aged persons in the Shire of Merredin are:
 - Increased health and community care
 - Maintenance and accessibility of outdoor spaces.
- Senior focus group participants believe the most important issues for aged persons in the Shire of Merredin are:
 - Health care improved to meet community needs
 - Doctor on call at all times
 - Central “drop in” space like a seniors centre
 - Lack of aged accommodation in the hospital which causes people to leave town
 - Increased organised transport to Perth and Northam
 - Increase of affordable residential accommodation
 - Provision of a community Registered Nurse
 - Increased footpath and road maintenance.
- Survey respondents believe the most important issues for aged persons in the Shire of Merredin are:
 - Healthcare and medical issues
 - Aged care accommodation
 - Transport for those without vehicle access.

INTRODUCTION

Background

Age-friendly communities are those that encourage “active aging by optimizing opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance the quality of life as people age” (World Health Org). An Age Friendly Community is one which:

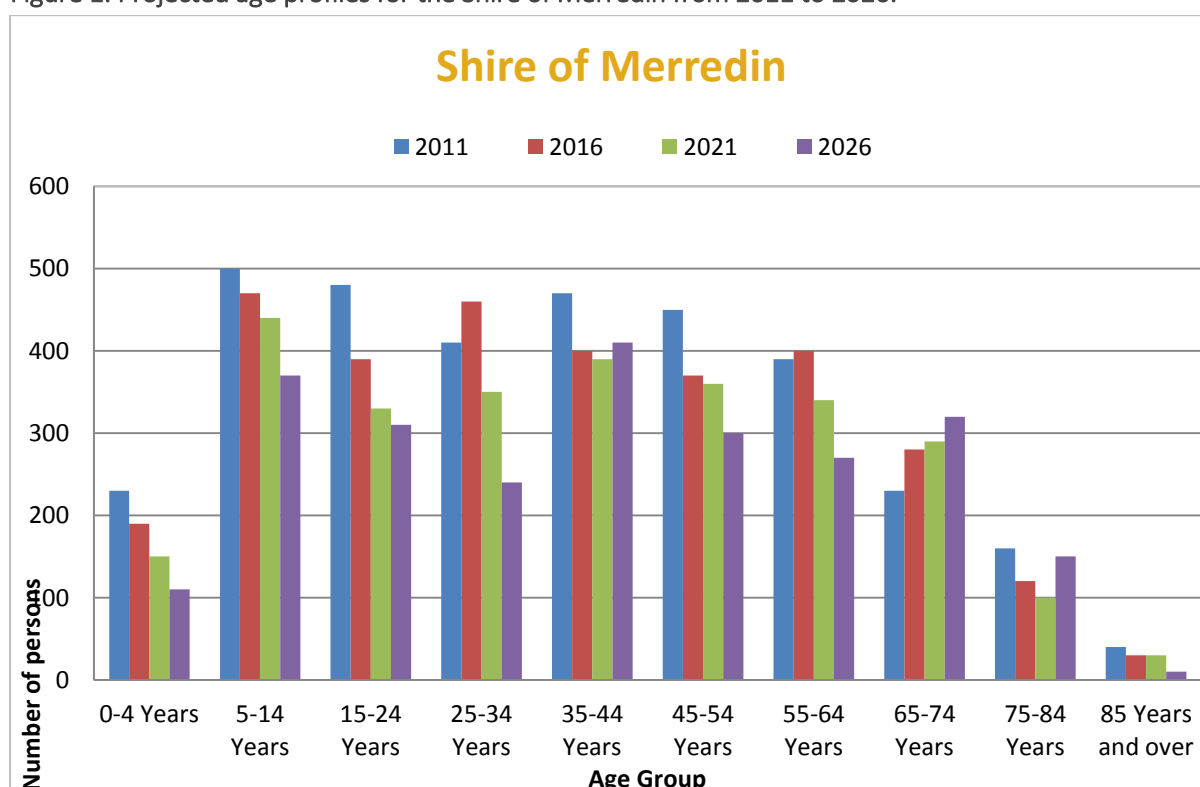
- recognises the great diversity among older people;
- promotes their inclusion and contribution in all areas of community life;
- respects their decisions and lifestyle choices; and
- anticipates and responds to ageing-related needs and preference

The Shire of Merredin considers Age-friendly community planning is vital to undertake for the following reasons:

- By 2027, Wheatbelt population over 70 will have increased by 75.3%
- The proportion of people 70+ will have increased from 10.4% in 2011 to 17% in 2027

In addition to this, older adults generally prefer to remain in their own home and continue to be part of their community. Older adults feel safe, valued and respected in their own community and local governments have a key role in ensuring this can occur.

Figure 1: Projected age profiles for the Shire of Merredin from 2011 to 2026.



<http://www.planning.wa.gov.au/publications/6196.asp>

Age-friendly community planning is also a state and regional issue. In 2012 the State Government adopted “An Age-friendly WA: The Seniors Strategic Planning Framework 2012-17.” The following actions have also been undertaken:

- 2013 the Wheatbelt Integrated Aged Care Plan was published
- 2014 the Wheatbelt Development Commission (WDC) published a guide for Age-Friendly Community Planning
- 2015 WDC provided a small value grants program for minor improvement works targeted at improving age-friendliness (The Shire of Merredin was successful in getting funding for four improvement projects)
- 2015 Department of Local Government and Communities grant program to prepare age-friendly plans (The Shire of Merredin was again successful in obtaining funding).

Community Engagement Methodology

The approach consists of a four step solution-focused process to produce a strategy that will be consistent with and complementary to the Shire’s Strategic Community Plan:

Figure 2: Age friendly planning community process



The third step of the process concerns engagement. As part of the Age Friendly Planning process, and to obtain the knowledge and views of seniors and those who care for them, a Community Reference Group has been established. This group guides and supports the project, liaises with the Department of Local Government and Communities, reviews draft reports and will endorse the final plan. In addition to this, the group has provided input into the design of a community survey and focus groups. Both the survey and the focus group sessions were structured around the eight WHO domains with participants involved in assessing these features in their own communities.

The Shire of Merredin conducted two Focus Groups that targeted both service providers and community members. The Shire advertised the Focus Groups and Community Survey (available in hard copy and online) using the following channels:

- Hand delivering flyers to various places around town which are attended by seniors
- Putting flyers up at Merrittville Retirement Village, the senior's centre and on noticeboards
- Hand delivering the survey to various places and handing them out at their aged/seniors IPR sessions.

See Annex 1 for a copy of the Focus Group promotional flyer. Annex 2 contains a copy of the Community Survey.

Purpose

The purpose of the Engagement Report is to present the results of the Focus Groups and Community Survey. It will be used to inform and guide the next steps in the development of the Shire's Age Friendly Community Plan.

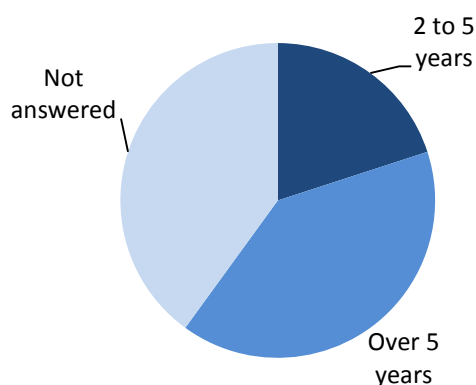
FOCUS GROUP RESPONDENTS

The Shire of Merredin conducted two Focus Groups as part of the development of the Age Friendly Community Plan – one targeted at seniors and carers and a second targeted at service providers. The Focus Groups were designed and conducted in line with the Department for Communities' Age Friendly Toolkit and the Wheatbelt Development Commission's Age Friendly Community Planning Guide. See Annex 3 for a copy of the Participant Information Form used to collect the data presented below.

Service Providers

A total of 15 service providers attended the focus group representing the voluntary (not for profit), public and private sector. 80% of respondents are female and 20% are male. 40% of the participants at the Focus Group have been employed with the Service Provider for over five years, 20% have been employed for two to five years and 40% did not answer the question (refer to Figure 3).

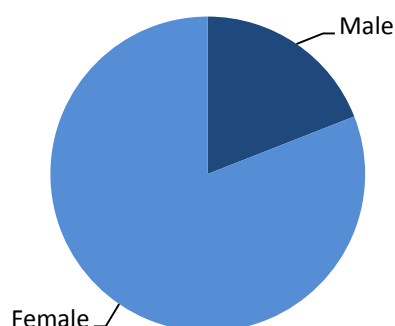
Figure 3: Service provider employment length



Seniors

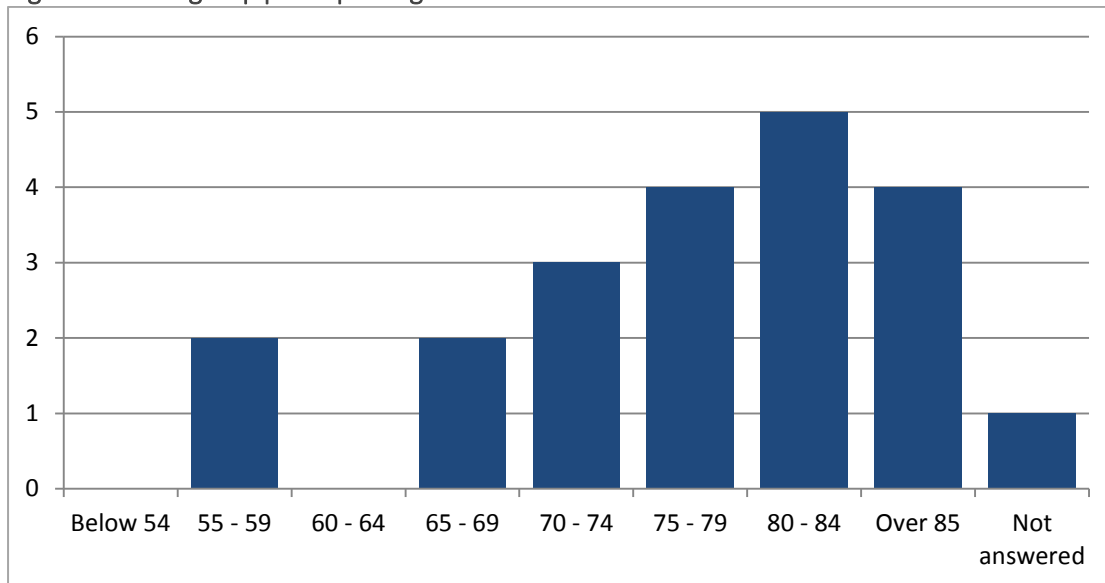
21 people attended the community focus group. Of those, 19% or four are male and 81% or 17 are female (refer to Figure 4).

Figure 4: Focus group respondent sex



Participants range from age 55 to over 85 (refer to Figure 5). The majority of focus group participants (62%) are between 75 to over 85 years of age.

Figure 5: Focus group participant age



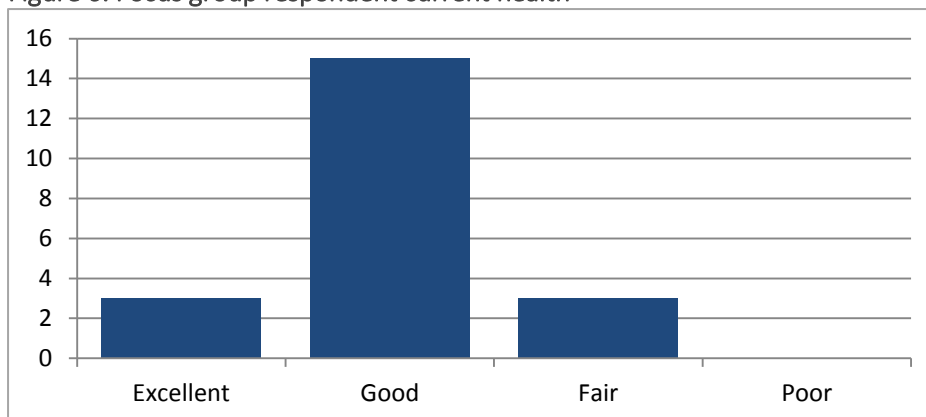
All focus group participants are retired.

Table 1: Focus group respondent present employment status

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
Retired	21	100%
Work Full-time	0	0%
Work Part-time	0	0%
Unemployed	0	0%
Total	21	100%

A majority of respondents indicated their health as being good, with only 14% indicating their health as fair.

Figure 6: Focus group respondent current health



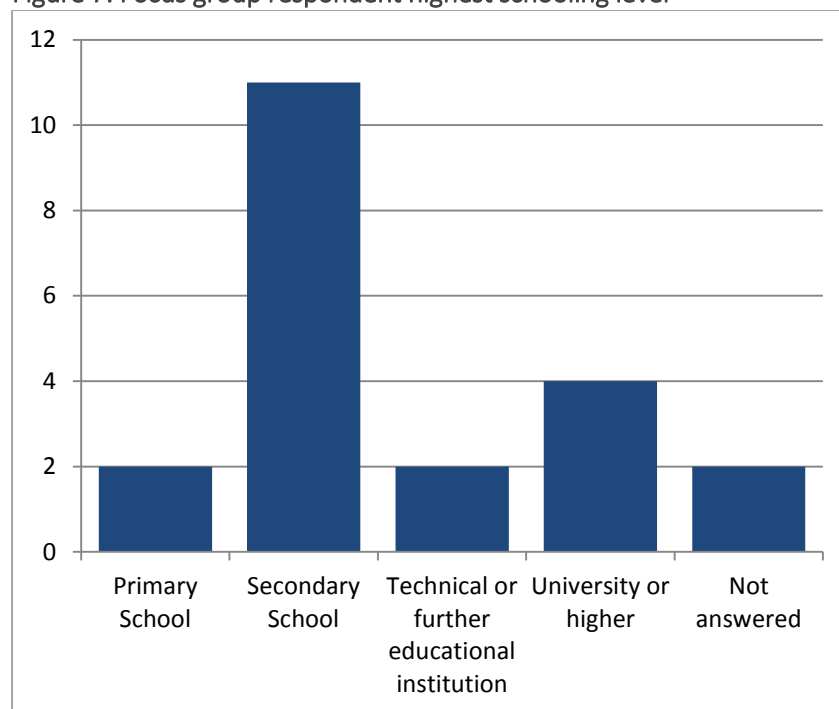
Six out of 14 respondents reported that they have health problems that limit their ability to do normal daily activities.

Table 2: Focus group respondent limiting health problems

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
Yes	6	29%
No	14	67%
Not answered	1	5%
Total	21	100%

Exactly half of respondents have completed secondary school, 10% have completed primary school, and 19% have completed university or higher (refer to Figure 7).

Figure 7: Focus group respondent highest schooling level



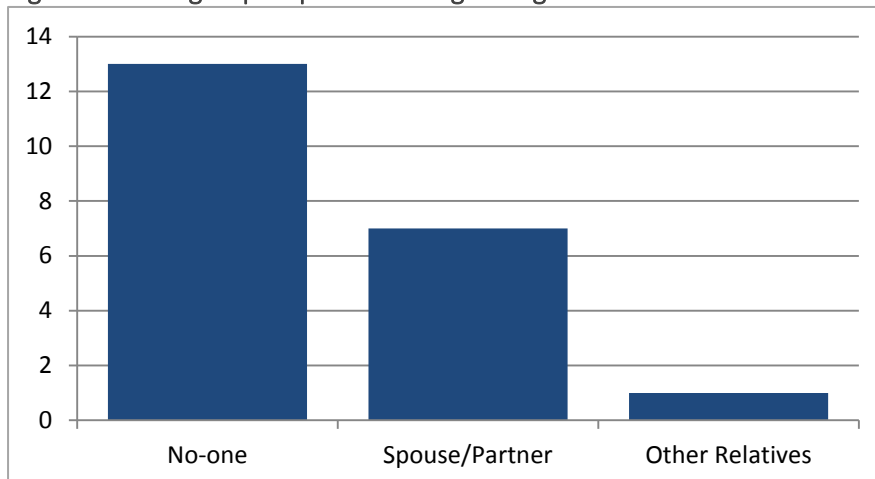
90% of focus group participants are home owners. 10% have indicated that they rent.

Table 3: Focus group respondent home ownership

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
Home Owner	14	100%
Renter	0	0%
Total	14	100%

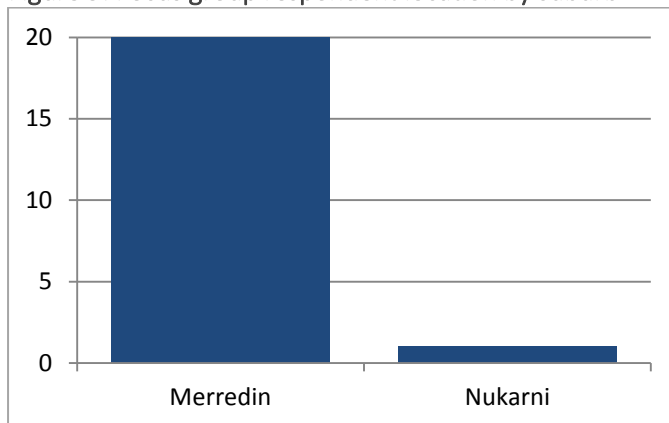
The majority of the respondents indicated they live with no one, 33% reported they live with their spouse or partner and 5% live with other relatives.

Figure 8: Focus group respondent living arrangements



Almost all of the focus group participants indicated they live in Merredin. One participant indicated they live in Nukarni.

Figure 9: Focus group respondent location by suburb



SURVEY RESPONDENTS

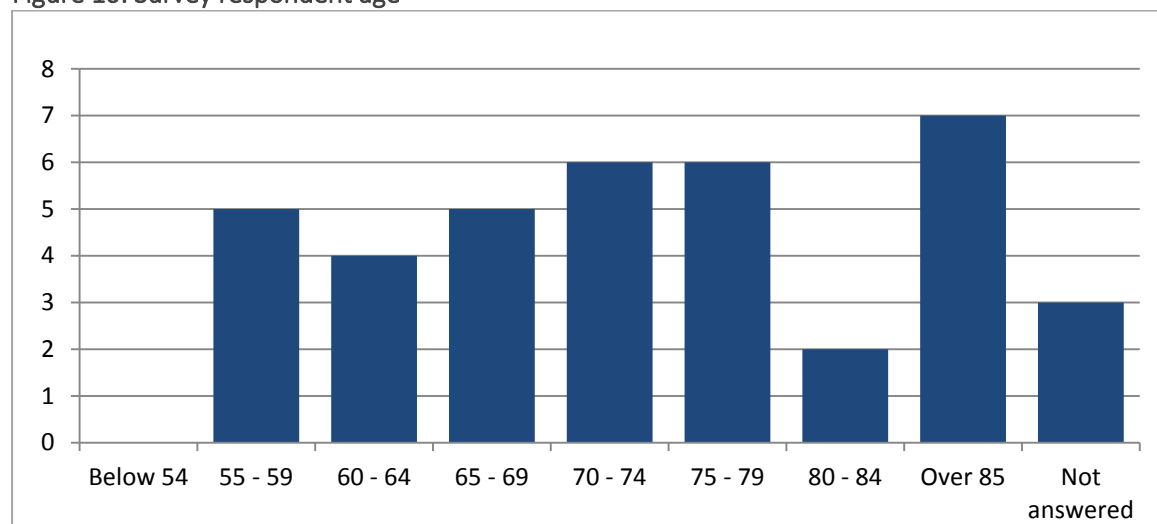
38 respondents in the Shire of Merredin filled out the provided survey. Approximately 66% of respondents are female and 16% are male. 18% of respondents did not answer (see Table 4).

Table 4: Survey respondent sex

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
Male	6	16%
Female	25	66%
Not Answered	7	18%
Total	38	100%

Respondents range from 55 to over 85 years of age, with the largest cohort of respondents over 85 years of age. The spectrum of respondent ages varies somewhat proportionately according to each four year given category range. 8% of respondents did not provide an age.

Figure 10: Survey respondent age



74% of respondents are retired and a further 16% work either full or part-time. As indicated in Table 5 below, 3% of respondents are unemployed and 8% have not answered.

Table 5: Survey respondent present employment status

Answer Options	Response Count	Response Percent
Retired	28	74%
Work Full-time	4	11%
Work Part-time	2	5%
Unemployed	1	3%
Not Answered	3	8%
Total	38	100%

FOCUS GROUP RESULTS – SERVICE PROVIDERS

Health and Community Services

Service provider focus group respondents indicated that the current level of health and community care is not adequate for the increasingly ageing population of the Shire of Merredin. Suggestions for improvements in the current system are noted below:

- Priority one state register
- Home medication reviews
- Chronic disease self-management.

Service providers also noted the changes in service packages and funding for chosen services.

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Comments regarding outdoor spaces and buildings ranged from keeping gophers off of the roads and onto properly maintained footpaths, to providing proper lighting so as to increase the safety and comfort of older people who currently do not like going out at night. Respondents also noted the need for exercise stations in parks and community areas like the Recreation Centre, Roy Little Park and Upper French Park. Improvements to public buildings are noted in the following:

- Greater provision of disabled toilets
- Greater provision of automatic doors
- Increased provision of pedestrian crossings.

Transport and Movement

Respondents noted the possibility of a local-only senior's bus for shopping, excursions, appointments and other areas of social support. It was also suggested that a possible solution to the lack of transport options for residents is the improvement of services from Fiona Stanley hospital and the provision of Telehealth, specialist online video conferencing.

Housing

Respondents commented on greater provision of housing, noting an independent living 55+ facility as well as self-funding lifestyle housing. They also noted how low-care housing provision was currently in transit.

Respect and Social Inclusion

Service providers reported on several instances of respect and social inclusion of seniors in the Shire of Merredin. They include the following:

- Home community care
- Partnerships between schools and seniors to revitalise intergenerational contact
- Events and programmes that promote good experiences with young people
- Adoptive grandparents programme.

FOCUS GROUP RESULTS - SENIORS

Health and Community Services

Senior focus group respondents have several areas of concern with the provision of health and community services in the Shire of Merredin. They include:

- Lack of medical staff
- Need to extend doctor service to weekends, etc.
- Lack of aged housing and residential care
- Loss of local shops resulting in the need to travel to Perth and Northam
- Lack of awareness regarding planned hospital upgrade
- Availability of access to non-emergency services.

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

Respondents mention the need for the train station waiting room to be opened as well as a toilet provided, in addition to the Visitors Centre not being open on weekends to the detriment of the Shire. The Shire's parks are praised but it is noted that there is a lack of parks on the south side of town. While participants note the Recreation Centre is often over used, there is an opportunity to reuse the women's rest centre.

Transport and Movement

Respondents are particularly concerned with the lack of maintenance of footpaths and roads that pose a safety use for those who share the paths including scooters, gophers and bicycles. Comments note that signage for disability parking could be improved but that overall, road signage around the Shire has improved for the better. Participants also note that a community bus is needed.

Housing

Participants made the following comments about housing in the Shire of Merredin:

- General lack of awareness regarding demand on senior housing
- Need for more small-scale senior housing
- More assistance needed to keep people in their homes.

Respondents also noted the need for consultation between seniors and the community when planning new housing developments.

Sport and Recreation

Participants commented there are many choices for sport and recreation in the Shire of Merredin but they would like to see more senior's activities at the gym. They also noted that while the pools are great resources, the hydro pool in particular is difficult to access as use requires a referral and payment. Participants also suggested the addition of more computer and community courses.

Social Participation

There is a general consensus amongst participants that there is a need to encourage more community involvement and social participation given the multitude of opportunities available in the Shire of

Merredin. There is a provision from one commentator, however, on the limited paid employment available.

Respect and Social Inclusion

Focus group respondents feel a strong sense of community in the Shire of Merredin and seniors are generally respected. Of note, is the “Tales of time passed” program between seniors and schools as well as the wildflowers program with primary schools.

Communication and Information

Respondents noted that there is soon going to be no local newspaper and that this was a great source of information. Participants commented on the possibility of a booklet of services available for seniors as well as the community newsletter.

Priorities

Priorities accorded by the senior focus group respondent are as follows:

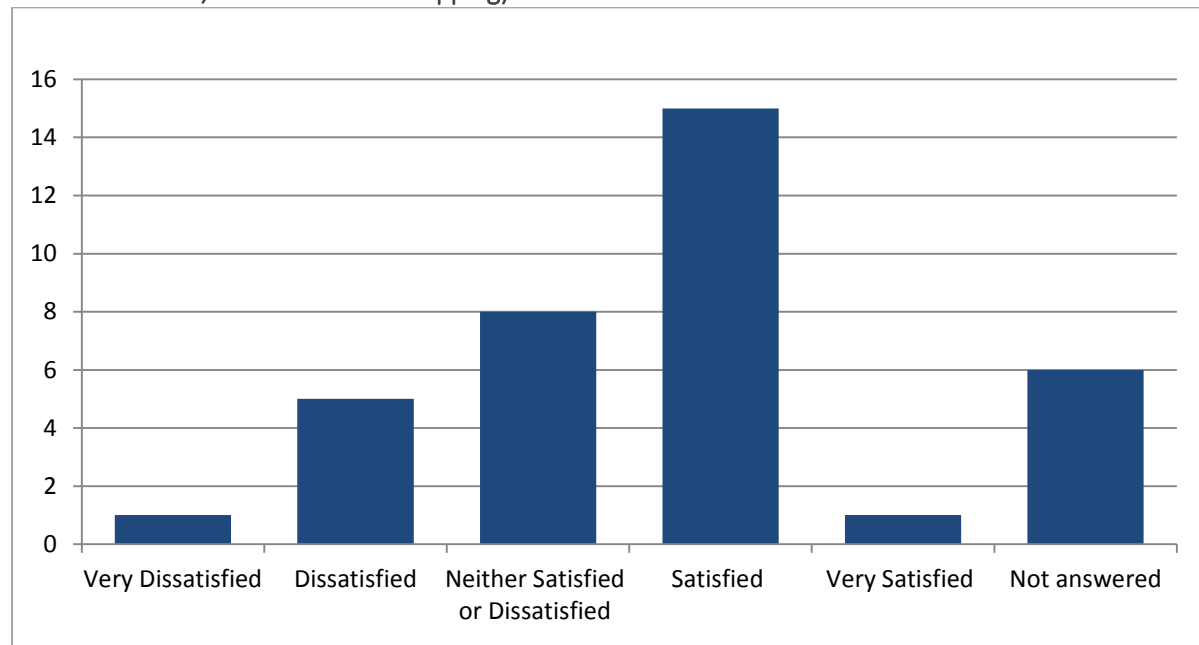
- Health care improved to meet community needs
- Doctor on call at all times
- Central “drop in” space like a seniors centre
- Lack of aged accommodation in the hospital which causes people to leave town
- Increased organised transport to Perth and Northam
- Increase of affordable residential accommodation
- Provision of a community Registered Nurse
- Increased footpath and road maintenance.

SURVEY RESULTS

Health and Community Services

Approximately 19% of survey respondents indicated that they are either very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the provision of health and community services in the Shire of Merredin. 21% of respondents indicated they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the Shire's provision of services and 45% indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied (see Figure 11). 16% did not answer.

Figure 11: How satisfied are you with the provision of Health and Community Services (including GP, medical services, home care and shopping) in the Shire of Merredin?



Comments regarding health and community services featured heavily on doctor availability in the Shire of Merredin. Several respondents find GP services “very good and helpful” but concede there is a need for more permanent doctors in the Shire overall. In addition to an increase in the number of permanent doctors, respondents mention the need for a medical professional to be on call 24/7. One respondent mentioned their concern that “highly qualified and long term nursing staff who are locally born and live here, feel that it is not pleasant working at our own hospital and are working in other hospitals.” Another respondent repeated this sentiment, adding that due to the lack of “care” being taken with the hospital and nursing home, “most of [the] top nurses” are leaving. Respondents are looking forward to the hospital upgrade, which one person has termed “very necessary.”

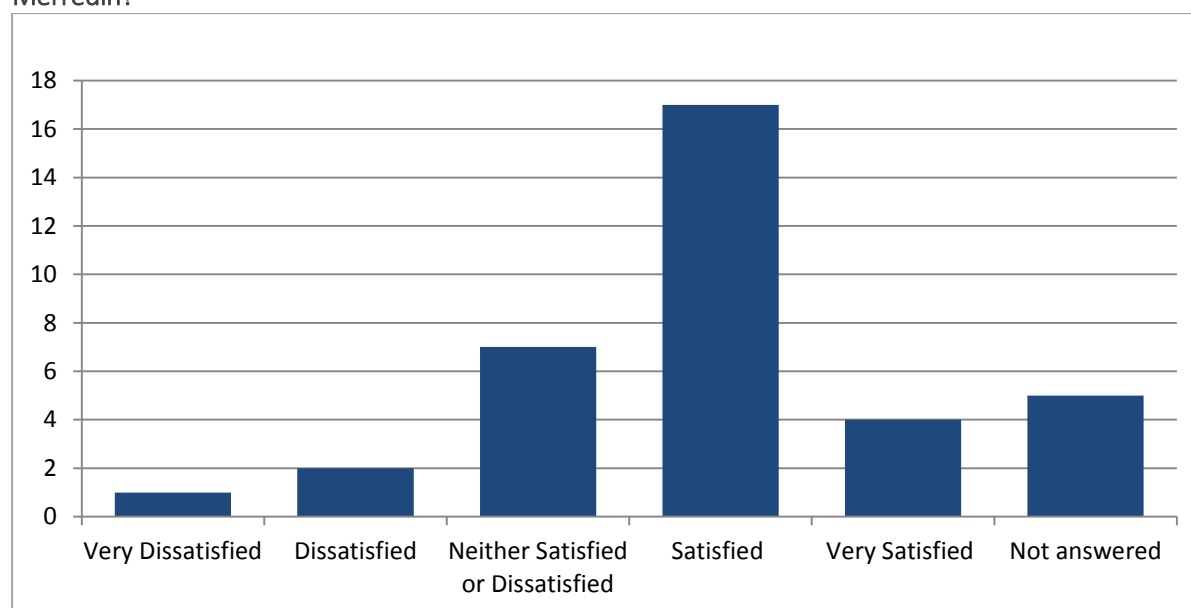
Respondents have also noted the lack of variety in local shops, particularly the omission of an electrical goods and shoe shop. Several respondents have also noted the difficulty in reaching appointments due to lack of car access as well as the general lack of transport to Perth and Northam. Other respondents note that they would like to see a permanent Registered Nurse on staff.

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

58% of survey respondents have indicated that they are either very satisfied or satisfied with the Shire's provision of outdoor spaces and buildings. Only 8% of respondents are currently very

dissatisfied or satisfied. Approximately 21% or 8 respondents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with outdoor spaces and buildings and 13% have provided no answer at all (see Figure 12).

Figure 12: How satisfied are you with the provision of Outdoor Spaces and Buildings in the Shire of Merredin?

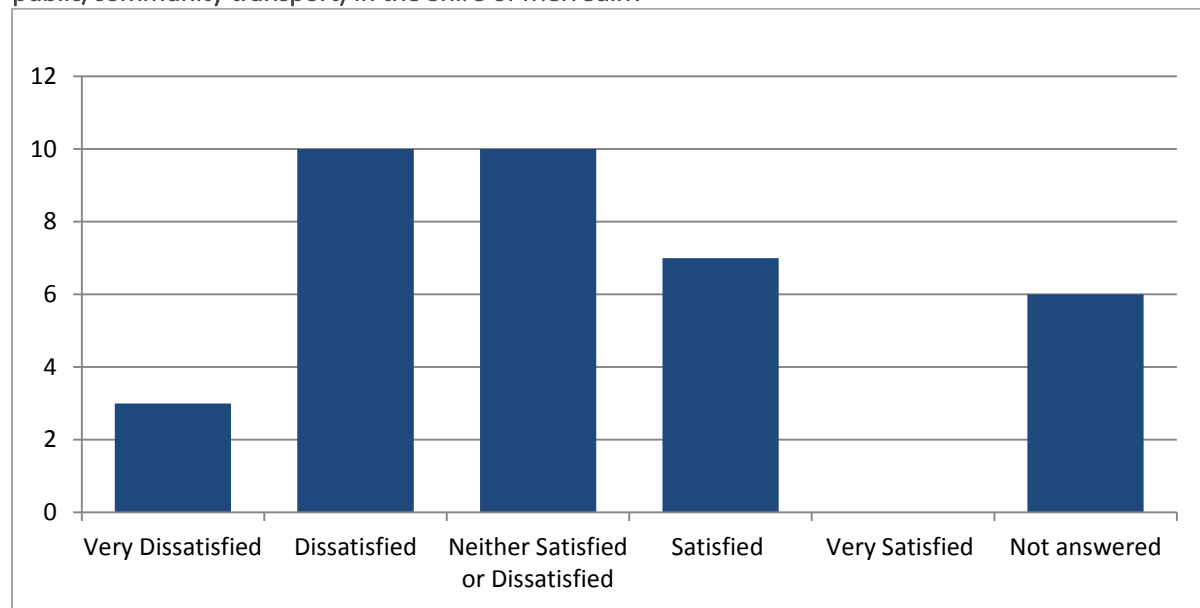


Several respondents noted that Apex Park and the Recreation Centre “are great” but that some of the buildings on the “main street need freshening up.” Respondents are also “very satisfied” with the location of the Visitors Centre. A consensus amongst several respondents is the underutilisation of buildings and public spaces. Most frequently mentioned are Apex Park, Roy Little Park, the Senior’s Centre and the building recently vacated by the Community Resource Centre (known as the Women’s Rest Centre). Several individuals would also like to see the “railway station open its waiting room” for travellers. A different respondent noted the lack of accessibility to the train for those who use wheelchairs or are otherwise unable to navigate stairs. Another participant noted that the footpath access along Coronation Street to Karis Medical Group is “very dangerous” due to uneven gravel.

Transport and Movement

37% of respondents answered they were either very dissatisfied or dissatisfied with transport and movement in the Shire (see Figure 13). 26% of respondents were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 21% were satisfied. Only 16% of respondents did not answer.

Figure 13: How satisfied are you with Transport and Movement (including roads, footpaths and public/community transport) in the Shire of Merredin?



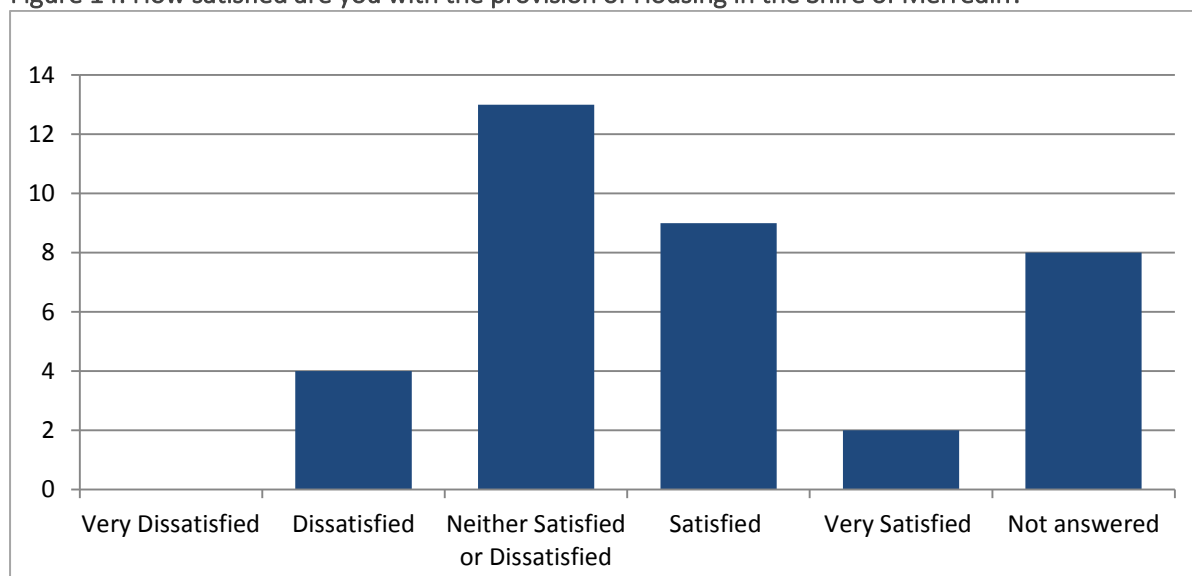
Many survey respondents noted their desire to see a community bus in the Shire of Merredin. One individual noted that a bus “would be put to good use transporting people to town for shopping, medical appointments, [and] social activities.” Other participants commented regarding the lack of a taxi service and its possible viability in the Shire.

Of particular note, are several respondents’ feelings regarding the lack of maintenance of footpaths and roads in the Shire of Merredin. Conversely, one respondent indicated that “the Shire are to be commended for new concrete footpaths, particularly the last 12 months.” In addition to this, several respondents reported on the difficulty being a pedestrian with scooters and bicycles being ridden on footpaths. One participant called for “more footpaths, with access for gophers from the road” and “more footpaths for walkers.”

Housing

34% of respondents noted they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the provision of housing in the Shire, as indicated in Figure 14. While 13% were dissatisfied, 32% were either satisfied or very satisfied. 21% of respondents did not answer.

Figure 14: How satisfied are you with the provision of Housing in the Shire of Merredin?

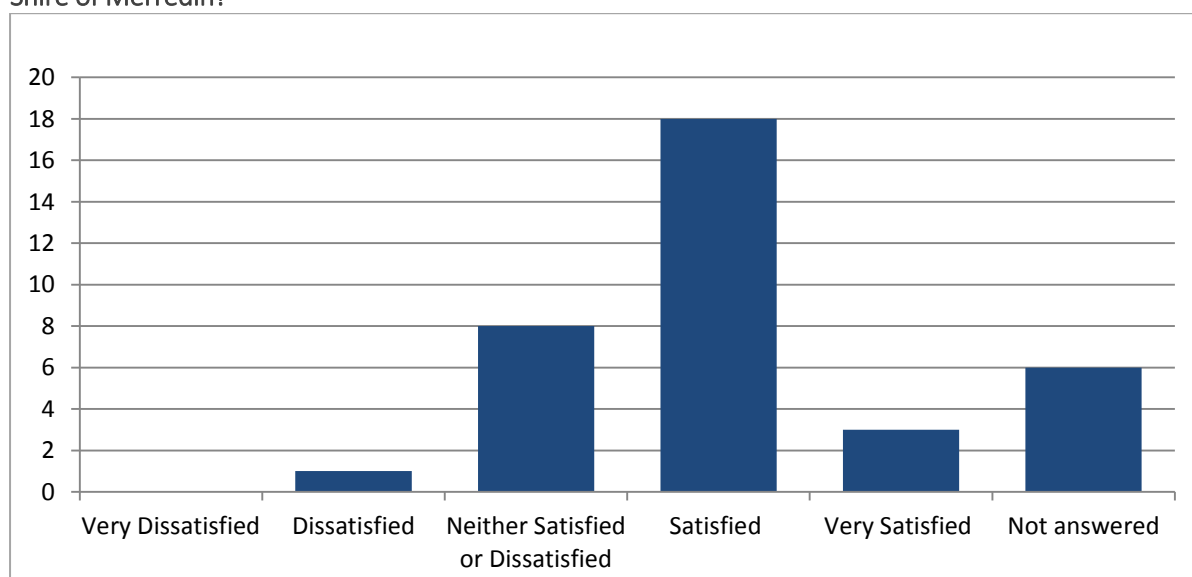


Several respondents note the need for more availability of housing (purchased or rented), whether that be “low cost,” smaller for “downsizing” purposes or simply “senior suitable.” A couple of participants also raised the need for “care housing” in order to maintain seniors’ residence in Merredin rather than Perth.

Sport and Recreation

58% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the Shire’s provision of sport and recreation facilities, and only 3% or 1 person is dissatisfied (refer to Figure 15). While 24% of respondents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 16% of respondents did not answer.

Figure 15: How satisfied are you with the provision of Sport and Recreation facilities and services in the Shire of Merredin?



Comments regarding the pool were largely satisfactory, with one respondent noting the “hydro pool is the most important facility you have.” Another participant remarked on their desire for an “easy access into the pool, sloping and also a handrail” at the larger pool. Several respondents have also

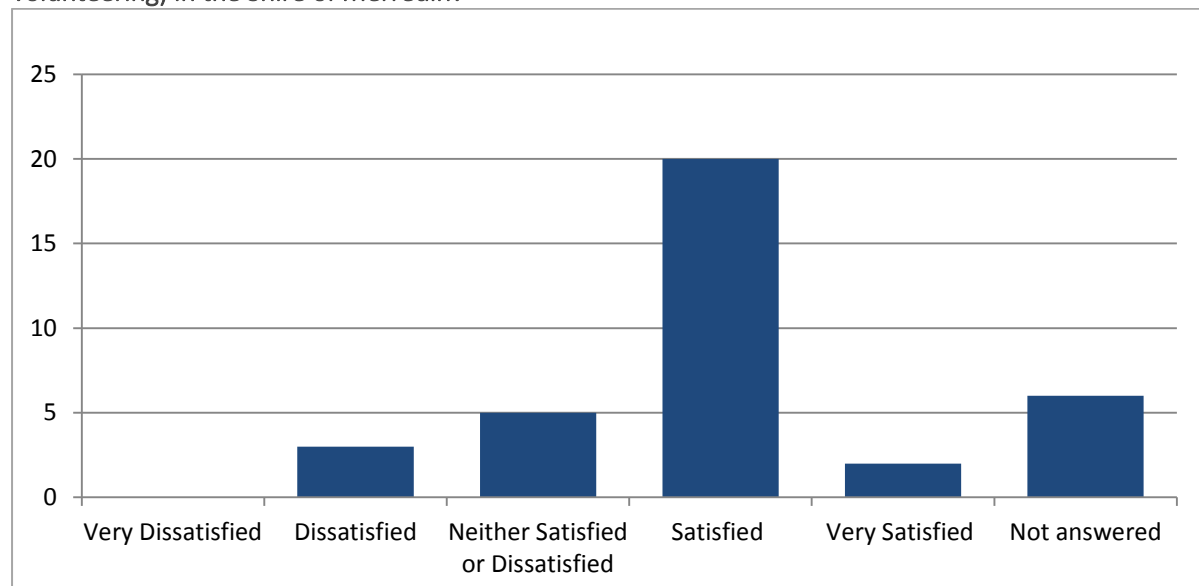
commented on their desire to see children's access to the hydro pool limited in favour of seniors or those with medical necessity.

Regarding other sports and recreation, one participant noted these facilities "are very good for our sized populations." This same respondent also commented the "completion of the Men's Shed has enhanced the opportunities for older [men] who don't play sport because of age or infirmity." Another participant has asserted that "there appears to be no facility for senior recreation e.g. carpet bowls and golf putting rink." Others suggest that "recreational activities for the elderly" could be increased.

Social Participation

Approximately 58% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the social participation opportunities available in the Shire. Only 11% of respondents cited they were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with provision of social participation opportunities, 16% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 16% did not answer.

Figure 16: How satisfied are you with Social Participation opportunities (including events, activities and volunteering) in the Shire of Merredin?

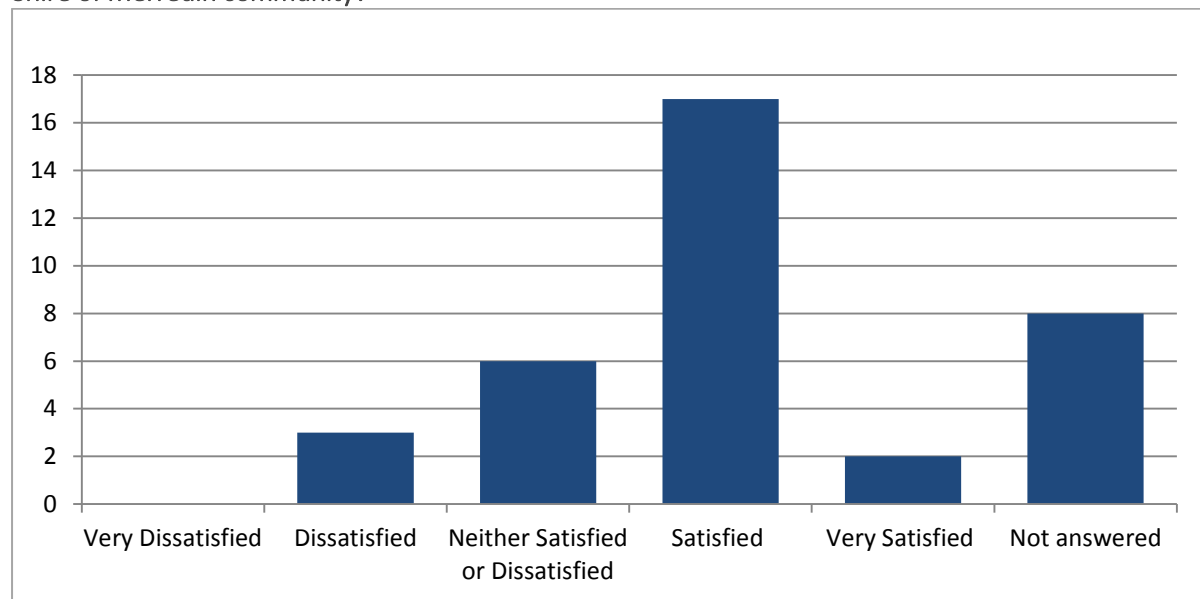


Comments regarding social participation range from one respondent's opinion that "everybody has the opportunity to participate" to "most activities are oriented to young people." While one participant noted there is plenty of opportunity to become involved in volunteering, "long term residents can be 'clique-y.'" Conversely, another participant noted the "Shire does not support volunteering." One comment specified that "if people are prepared to get out and about there are more than enough opportunities through volunteering every walk of life in Merredin".

Respect and Social Inclusion

52% of respondents indicated they are either satisfied or very satisfied with the level of respect and social inclusion seniors experience in the Shire. 16% indicated they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 11% noted they were dissatisfied (see Figure 17). 21% of respondents did not answer.

Figure 17: How satisfied are you with the level of Respect and Social Inclusion seniors experience in the Shire of Merredin community?

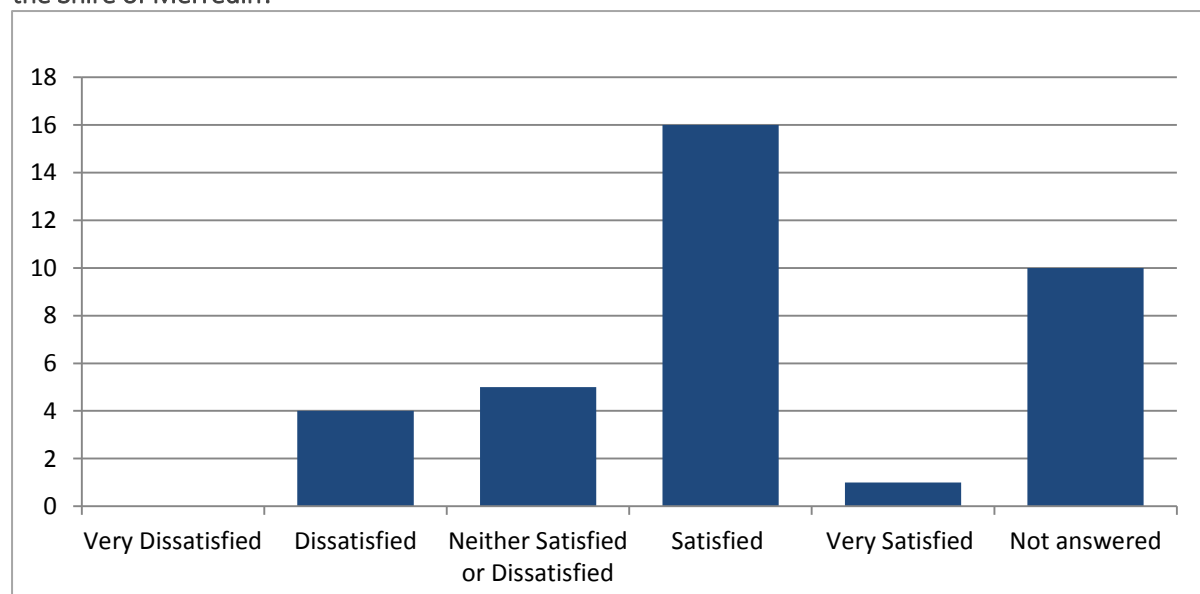


There is a large consensus that most seniors are generally satisfied with the respect they are shown in the Shire of Merredin. One comment noted that “one of the main reasons we retired here” is that “people are so so friendly.” Another respondent commented they are “shown respect and if I ask for assistance, it is given.”

Communication and Information

48% of respondents are satisfied or very satisfied with the Shire’s provision of communication and information services and activities. 11% of respondents indicated they are either very dissatisfied or dissatisfied and 16% are neither dissatisfied nor satisfied. 26% did not answer.

Figure 18: How satisfied are you with Communication and Information (about services and activities) in the Shire of Merredin?



While respondents feel that “pamphlets and leaflets displayed on various shop windows” and buildings are positive, “a local newsletter would keep the town informed.” Yet another respondent

suggested an “annual booklet highlighting all: services, volunteer groups, sports and recreational activities, educational/community courses, tourist parks/sites in region, medical services/hospital” etc. One comment noted that “communication is not always comprehensive” and it appears “like we are only given bits of information at a time, whereas it would be better to know everything from the beginning.” Respondents have also noted the “Wheatbelt Mercury” has provided good information and are concerned that it will cease to exist. Only one respondent commented they learn about Shire events and services from its Facebook page.

Priorities

Respondents were asked to comment on the following question: “In light of all of the previous questions, what would you say is the single most important issue for aged persons in your community?” Responses collectively indicated that the priority focus groups are healthcare and medical issues, aged care accommodation, and transport for those without vehicle access.

General comments

Respondents were asked to comment on the following: “Do you have any other general comments that may assist the Shire of Merredin in the preparation of the Age Friendly Community Plan?” Several respondents noted the need for increased communication with residents. Other general comments have already been covered in the prior sections.

NEXT STEPS

The Engagement Report will inform the development of the Shire of Merredin Age Friendly Community Plan. The development of the plan will involve:

- Ongoing liaison with and input from the Community Reference Group
- An “Issues and Options” Workshop with Council to identify:
 - possible quick wins
 - strategic fit and resource implications of larger scale improvements in light of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Suite
 - potential gains from targeted advocacy and partnerships
 - regional and sub-regional implications
- Preparation of a Draft Age Friendly Community Plan
- Council adoption.

The process and output has been designed to dovetail into the Shires Integrated Planning and Reporting processes on an ongoing basis. It is intended to build the Shires capacity (and the capacity of our seniors) and embed seniors’ engagement and age friendly community considerations as a vital part of strategic and corporate planning.

ANNEX 1: FOCUS GROUP PROMOTIONAL FLYER

Age Friendly
Community
Plan (AFCP)

AFCP Focus Group Invitation

The Shire has been successful in obtaining funding from the Department of Local Government and Communities, to assist us to prepare an Age Friendly Community Plan that will identify the age-friendly features, barriers, and suggestions for improvement, against each of the following essential features of an age friendly community:

- outdoor spaces and building
- transport
- housing
- social participation
- respect and social inclusion
- civic participation and employment
- communication and information
- community support and health services.



Department of
Local Government
and Communities



Seniors' participation in the Shire's consultation process is essential to an age friendly approach to community planning. The Shire therefore invites community input to the following focus group meeting.

Retirees/Soon to be Retired Focus Group

Wednesday 30 September 2015
1pm to 4pm
Merredin Recreation Centre, Bates St



REGISTRATIONS OF INTEREST

Please contact Marilyn Sayers, Community Liaison Officer
by 4.30pm on Friday 25 September 2015
Phone: 90411611
Email: project1@merredin.wa.gov.au



All Shire information is available in alternative formats upon request



Age Friendly Community Plan (AFCP)

AFCP Focus Group Invitation

The Shire has been successful in obtaining funding from the Department of Local Government and Communities, to assist us to prepare an Age Friendly Community Plan that will identify the age-friendly features, barriers, and suggestions for improvement, against each of the following essential features of an age friendly community:

- outdoor spaces and building
- transport
- housing
- social participation
- respect and social inclusion
- civic participation and employment
- communication and information
- community support and health services.



Department of
Local Government
and Communities



Seniors' participation in the Shire's consultation process is essential to an age friendly approach to community planning. The Shire therefore invites aged care service input to the following focus group meeting.



Age Care Service Providers Focus Group

Monday 21 September 2015

12noon - 2.30pm

Tivoli Room, Bates Street

REGISTRATIONS OF INTEREST

Please contact Marilyn Sayers, Community Liaison Officer
with any queries

Phone: 90411611

Email: project1@merredin.wa.gov.au



All Shire information is available in alternative formats upon request

ANNEX 2: COMMUNITY SURVEY

Shire of Merredin Age Friendly Community Plan Seniors Survey

The Shire of Merredin is preparing an Age Friendly Community Plan that will identify the age-friendly features, barriers, and suggestions for improvement. We would appreciate your input on the future needs of seniors living in the Shire of Merredin.

Please select your age category:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Below 54 | <input type="checkbox"/> 55 - 59 | <input type="checkbox"/> 60 - 64 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 65 - 69 | <input type="checkbox"/> 70 - 74 | <input type="checkbox"/> 75 - 79 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 80 - 84 | <input type="checkbox"/> 85 and over | |

Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female

Present employment status:

- ☐ Retired ☐ Work Full-time ☐ Work Part-time ☐ Unemployed

1. Health and Community Services

Are you satisfied with the provision of Health and Community Services (including GP, medical services, home care and shopping) in the Shire of Merredin?

- ☐ 1 – Very Dissatisfied
- ☐ 2 – Dissatisfied
- ☐ 3 – Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied
- ☐ 4 – Satisfied
- ☐ 5 – Very Satisfied

Comments about Health and Community Services (including GP, medical services, home care and shopping) in the Shire of Merredin:

2. **Outdoor Spaces and Buildings**

Are you satisfied with the provision of Outdoor Spaces and Buildings in the Shire of Merredin?

- ☐ 1 – Very Dissatisfied
- ☐ 2 – Dissatisfied
- ☐ 3 – Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied
- ☐ 4 – Satisfied
- ☐ 5 – Very Satisfied

Comments about Outdoor Spaces and Buildings in the Shire of Merredin:

3. **Transport and Movement**

Are you satisfied with Transport and Movement (including roads, footpaths and public/community transport) in the Shire of Merredin?

- ☐ 1 – Very Dissatisfied
- ☐ 2 – Dissatisfied
- ☐ 3 – Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied
- ☐ 4 – Satisfied
- ☐ 5 – Very Satisfied

Comments about Transport and Movement (including roads, footpaths and public/community transport) in the Shire of Merredin:

4. Housing

Are you satisfied with the provision of Housing in the Shire of Merredin?

- ☐ 1 – Very Dissatisfied
- ☐ 2 – Dissatisfied
- ☐ 3 – Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied
- ☐ 4 – Satisfied
- ☐ 5 – Very Satisfied

Comments about Housing in the Shire of Merredin:

5. Sport and Recreation

Are you satisfied with the provision of Sport and Recreation facilities and services in the Shire of Merredin?

- ☐ 1 – Very Dissatisfied
- ☐ 2 – Dissatisfied
- ☐ 3 – Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied
- ☐ 4 – Satisfied
- ☐ 5 – Very Satisfied

Comments about Sport and Recreation facilities and services in the Shire of Merredin:

6. Social Participation

Are you satisfied with Social Participation opportunities (including events, activities and volunteering) in the Shire of Merredin?

- ☐ 1 – Very Dissatisfied
- ☐ 2 – Dissatisfied
- ☐ 3 – Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied
- ☐ 4 – Satisfied
- ☐ 5 – Very Satisfied

Comments about Social Participation opportunities (including events, activities and volunteering) in the Shire of Merredin:

7. Respect and Social Inclusion

Are you satisfied with the level of Respect and Social Inclusion seniors experience in the Shire of Merredin community?

- ☐ 1 – Very Dissatisfied
- ☐ 2 – Dissatisfied
- ☐ 3 – Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied
- ☐ 4 – Satisfied
- ☐ 5 – Very Satisfied

Comments about Respect and Social Inclusion in the Shire of Merredin:

8. Communication and Information

Are you satisfied with Communication and Information (about services and activities) in the Shire of Merredin?

- ☐ 1 – Very Dissatisfied
- ☐ 2 – Dissatisfied
- ☐ 3 – Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied
- ☐ 4 – Satisfied
- ☐ 5 – Very Satisfied

Comments about Communication and Information in the Shire of Merredin:

In light of all of the previous questions, what would you say is the single most critical issue for aged persons in your community?

Do you have any other general comments that may assist the Shire of Merredin in the preparation of the Age Friendly Community Plan?

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this survey, the information collected will guide the Shire of Merredin in identifying the age-friendly features, barriers, and suggestions for improvement.

ANNEX 3: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORMS

AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM

Older People

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Postcode: _____

Please complete this Information Sheet by ticking the appropriate box or writing in your answer. We need this information so we can describe the characteristics of the people who took part in this age friendly planning consultation.

1. Age at last birthday: _____

2. Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female

3. Present employment status:

☐ Retired ☐ Work Full-time ☐ Work Part-time ☐ Unemployed

4. Present occupation or last major occupation: _____

5. How would you describe your current health?

☐ Excellent ☐ Good ☐ Fair ☐ Poor

6. Do you have any health problem that limits your ability to do your normal daily activities?

☐ Yes ☐ No

7. What is the highest level of schooling you completed?

☐ Primary School ☐ Secondary School ☐ Technical or further educational institution (e.g. TAFE) ☐ University or higher

8. Do you rent, or own the home where you live?

☐ Renter ☐ Home owner

9. Who lives in your home with you? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ No-one else but me ☐ Other relatives (Number _____)
- ☐ Spouse/partner ☐ Non-relatives (Number _____)
- ☐ Children (Number _____)

10. What suburb do you live in? _____

Please return this form to a Shire representative before the end of the focus group.

AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM

Carers of Older People

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Postcode: _____

Please complete this Information Sheet by ticking the appropriate box or writing in your answer. We need this information so we can describe the characteristics of the people who took part in this age friendly planning consultation.

1. Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Present employment status:

☐ Retired ☐ Work Full-time ☐ Work Part-time ☐ Unemployed (looking for work)

3. Present occupation or last major occupation: _____

4. What is the highest level of schooling you completed?

☐ Primary School ☐ Secondary School ☐ Technical or further educational institution (e.g. TAFE) ☐ University or higher

5. Are you currently providing support or care to an older person(s) who (check all that apply):

☐ Is physically disabled ☐ Is visually impaired

☐ Has difficulty moving or walking ☐ Has dementia

☐ Is hearing impaired

6. What is your relationship to the older person(s) you care for?

☐ Parent/Parent in-law ☐ Other relative ☐ Non-relative

7. Does the person(s) you care for live in your home?

☐ Yes

☐ No

8. In which suburb does the older person you care for live? _____

Please return this form to a Shire representative before the end of the focus group.

AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION FORM

Service Providers

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____ Postcode: _____

Please complete this Information Sheet by ticking the appropriate box or writing in your answer. We need this information so we can describe the characteristics of the people who took part in this age friendly planning consultation.

1. Sex: ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Present occupation: _____

3. In what sector of the community are you employed?

☐ Public sector (e.g. local government)

☐ Private sector

☐ Voluntary sector (non-profit)

4. How long have you been employed in this occupation in the local community?

☐ Less than 2 years

☐ 2 to 5 years

☐ Over 5 years

5. How much experience do you have with older people in your work?

☐

A lot

☐

A moderate amount

☐

A little

☐

None

Please return this form to a Shire representative before the end of the focus group.