

Ageing in Place Report

Implementation Progress Report 2023/2024

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Executive Summary

An Ageing in Place project was commenced by Gympie Regional Council in August 2020. The project purpose was to investigate Ageing in Place services and infrastructure in the Gympie region with an initial focus on the Western area.

Ageing in place has been defined as “the ability to live in one’s own home and community safely, independently and comfortably, regardless of age, income or level of capacity. Ageing in the right place extends this concept to the ability to live in the place with the closest fit with the person’s needs and preferences – which may or may not be one’s own home” (World Health Organisation. 2015. World report on ageing and health) <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241565042>

The Final Report culminating from this project was presented to Gympie Regional Council’s Ordinary Meeting on 28 June 2022. The Final Report can be accessed on Council’s website at [Gympie Region Ageing-in-Place Final Report \(June 2022\)](#). The report outlines 25 actions for council officers to deliver.

This Implementation Progress Report provides a summary of actions undertaken in 2023/2024.

In 2024/2025, Council Officers will continue to progress actions outlined in the Ageing in Place Report within allocated Council funding and resources, as enhanced by external funding.

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1. Community, health and aged care services		
Sub-topic	Endorsed Council Actions	Progress Report for 2023/2024
Kilkivan Health Centre	1. Continue to advocate for improved and place appropriate health and medical services in Gympie and regional townships.	Council is working with Gympie and District Women’s Health Centre to increase the utilisation of council facilities (e.g. libraries, health centres) to expand the provision of health and wellbeing services to Goomeri, Kilkivan, Imbil and the Cooloola Coast (this will provide more services to elderly people in the subregions).
Access to Online Services	2. Continue to advocate to Telecommunication companies and Federal government to address network black spots and reliability in the region.	Council is working with NBN co and Regional Development Australia Moreton Bay. NBN co is also presenting to Council at a workshop on 12 June 2024.
	3. Facilitate information sessions in Council libraries about on-line services for aged care, carer’s gateways and support services (i.e. partnership with My Aged Care, Nurse Navigators or providers to run programs throughout regional libraries).	Library staff attended Seniors Month and Community Information Days, they also ran a session for Disability Action Week. Library staff present technology sessions at: Oxford Crest, Calgary Gympie Views and QCWA Kilkivan. Gympie Probus members attend technology sessions at Gympie Library on a fortnightly basis. Staff also present Local History talks to residents at Calgary Gympie Views.
	4. Continue to provide and/or increase computer literacy sessions in Council libraries.	In 2023-2024 Gympie Regional Libraries delivered a total of 421 digital literacy sessions (either one-on-one or group) attended by a total of 1245 people. These sessions are assisted through external “Be Connected” grant funding of \$30,000 through the Good Things Foundation. What we do - Good Things Foundation Australia These are in addition to the daily assistance provided by library staff to the public.

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Carers	5. Invite Wellways Carers Gateway and similar Carer Peak bodies to provide information and resources at Seniors Month activities and community gatherings.	Five community delivered events were supported across the region as part of Seniors Month in October 2022 as well as the Seniors Expo with over 30 exhibitors (including Wellways Australia, Home Instead, RangeCare and Blue Care) and 150 attendees.
Outreach Services	6. Within health and human services networks such as Cooloola Human Services Network, Local Level Alliance and Housing Networks, Council staff and elected Councillors to continue advocating for expansion of services and State and Commonwealth Government funding for programs outside of Gympie.	Gympie and District Women's Health Service new outreach program and North Coast Aboriginal Health Corporation new mobile outreach medical van both received funding through PHN Country to Coast, with delivery to be assisted by Council with regard to locations and access to council facilities.
2. Infrastructure/built environment		
Sub-topic	Recommendations for Council Action	Activities
Community Facilities	7. To the greatest extent possible, maintain and enhance community facilities (such as libraries and community halls) to enable older people to participate in and design social activities to increase community connection and reduce the negative health impacts of social isolation.	Asset management planning is being arranged by Infrastructure Services Directorate in 2024/2025.

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Aged Care facility	8. As part of future economic development and/or planning initiatives, include investment attraction for small-scale respite and residential aged care centres in areas out of Gympie.	<p>Council is finalising an investment prospectus which includes medical and allied health investment opportunities due to a growing and aging population.</p> <p>The GRC Planning Scheme encourages residential care facilities in the Specialised Centre Zone (Gympie Medical Centre) by making the development applications code assessable development, rather than impact assessable.</p>
Council "Pensioner Units"	9. Explore future tenure arrangements and opportunities for Council owned "pensioner units" across the region to enable more low care, accessible and affordable accommodation for older persons.	Council is liaising with the current Head Lessee and Department of Housing in relation to tenure and site options.
Group home/units - affordable, accessible rental accommodation for older persons not requiring high levels of medical or supported care	10. Explore opportunities for a small-scale accommodation centre in the Western district of Gympie Region/Kilkivan when a confirmed Business Case and Feasibility Study is submitted to Council outlining the upfront capital costs, ongoing operating model and funding plan.	<p>At its Ordinary Meeting on 22 November 2023, Council resolved to set aside vacant council land in Church Street, Kilkivan for the purposes of future ageing in place initiatives.</p> <p>Financial support through Council's Community Grants Program (Round 2) was provided to Kilkivan & District Community Care Association to undertake a feasibility study for the Rise and Shine accommodation project for the land at Church Street, Kilkivan.</p>
Day Respite	11. Undertake an Expression of Interest to establish a trial respite service from Kilkivan Hall premises.	Not commenced.

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Land Use Planning and Housing Stock	<p>12. Ensure that strategic land use planning, policy and regulatory instruments within Gympie Regional Council's scope:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. enable increased universal design and accessibility for future development; b. enable a more diverse range of housing types within the Gympie Region to provide more choice for older people; and c. in particular, during the development of the new Local Planning Scheme for Gympie Region, ensure ageing population forecasts, research and consultation is undertaken to plan for the housing needs and liveability of older people (i.e. housing mix, housing land and supply, future demand for retirement villages and aged care facilities, proximity to services and transport infrastructure, subdivision, neighbourhood design and development of public spaces such as footpaths/older people car parking). 	<p>The needs of our ageing population are continuing to be considered as part of the development of the new Planning Scheme in regard to housing type and density, liveable communities with access to services and community connection.</p>
	<p>13. Explore any impediments under the State Planning Act to increasing housing type, density and innovative age-appropriate housing for the region.</p> <p>As outlined in action 8 above, as part of future economic development and/or planning initiatives, include investment attraction for small-scale respite and residential aged care centres in areas out of Gympie.</p>	<p>Planning Scheme program revised and discussed with councillors on 6 December 2023. Drafting continuing and to be discussed with councillors in further workshops in 2024. Looking for Council adoption in Q1 2024-2025.</p>
<p>3. Social connection and wellbeing</p>		
Sub-topic	Recommendations for Council Action	Activities
Senior's activities to increase social connection and	14. Continue to provide Community Grants Programs that community groups can access to deliver activities and events across the region.	2023 Grandparents Day/Senior Citizen of the Year Awards Ceremony in Memorial Park in October 2023, which included live music. Other funded

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Physical and Mental Health		<p>2023 Seniors Month events included: #Gympie Lions Seniors Morning Tea #Kilkivan Seniors Morning Tea #Tin Can Bay RSL Seniors BBQ</p> <p>Seniors specific projects funded through the 23/24 Grants program included: # Old’s Cool – Health Matters # Gympie Medical Transport – replacement vehicles # QCWA Gympie – Centenary Luncheon # U3A – 2024 Seniors Information extravaganza #Probus Club of Gympie – computer purchase # Kilkivan and District Community Care Association Incorporated – Feasibility Study #Multiple hall committee grants – halls host various activities which are frequented by seniors</p>
	15. Continue to provide community groups with low-cost hire charges for Kilkivan and Goomeri Halls to host community activities.	Goomeri Seniors Group utilises the Hall on the fourth Wednesday of each month and Kilkivan Seniors Group on second Wednesday of each month. The halls are also hired by art/craft groups and exercise providers.
	16. Continue to provide affordable arts and cultural programs through the Gympie Regional Gallery, Community Halls and Libraries to enable seniors to enrich their cultural wellbeing, increase mental health outcomes, social connections and community pride.	<p>GRC Libraries provided the following Leisure and Lifestyle programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sustainability programs - Page Turners Author Talks - Weekly Trivia Mornings - Monthly Armchair Travellers - Local History Talks - Book Clubs <p>The Gympie Regional Gallery hosts a wide range of events and weekly</p>

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		<p>programs that are attended by a high percentage of seniors.</p> <p>Council funded a range of activities in community halls through the Grants Program including the Kandanga Hall Jive classes, Wolvi and Pie Creek festive season events.</p>
	<p>17. Expand the Heart Foundation Walking Group program in the region through increased promotion, and community development support for volunteer walk organisers.</p>	<p>\$2,000 grant received from Heart Foundation Walking to promote walking groups. Current groups are located in Cooloola Cove, Tin Can Bay and two in Gympie.</p>
	<p>18. Facilitate and/or seek funding to deliver active and healthy programs for seniors across the region.</p>	<p>Active Women and Girls grant successfully applied for in Q3, delivery in FY24/25 - \$25,000.</p> <p>Senior members (aged 60years+) at Gympie Aquatic Recreation Centre represented 35.47% of the adult membership base in 2023/2024, with almost half choosing to have "Full Access" swim and gym membership rather than just aquatic. All aqua and land sessions are designed to be inclusive and cater to a broad demographic including seniors. In the month of April 2024, 1235 attendees participated at these ARC sessions, with approximately 83% of participants over sixty years old. Community groups such as Bravo and Gympie RSL also host group sessions at ARC. Seniors also often organise social gatherings and meet ups around the programming, increasing mental and social wellbeing. Seniors seasonal membership at the regional pools is higher with 41.03% at Kandanga, 54.55% at Tin Can Bay and 50% at Goomeri.</p>

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Volunteering	<p>19. Continue to provide Community Grants Programs that support volunteering and volunteer operated groups, with ability for grant funding to cover project coordinator work to decrease volunteer burnout and financial burden.</p>	<p>2023/2024 Community Grants Program allocated \$630,000 in funding to community organisations throughout the region in two competitive and one rolling round. All projects awarded grants had a strong volunteering component or volunteering involvement.</p> <p>2023/2024 Community Grants Programs extended eligible expenses to include Project Coordinator costs which goes some way to relieve the volunteering burden on community organisations delivering projects.</p> <p>A series of video resources were created to support and promote volunteering in the Gympie region. The groups featured include The Salvation Army, SES, Cooloola Coast Care and Heart Foundation Walking Group.</p> <p>In June 2024 GRC hosted the Gympie Community Expo with over 30 exhibitors, many of which were community volunteer organisations. The event assisted to raise the profile of the groups and encourage volunteering.</p>
Interpersonal Relationships	<p>20. Partner with funded services, local community groups and other levels of governments to create community awareness about stereotypes, biases and social issues relating to older people.</p>	<p>More focused activities are planned in 2024/2025 - particularly during Seniors Month.</p>

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	21. Promote activities and events for seniors and newcomers to the region to encourage personalised, face-to-face, relationship-based interactions.	The following online communications avenues are currently used to promote Senior's activities in the region. #Community InfoShare newsletter #Gallery Newsletter #Arts and Culture Newsletter #Library Newsletter #GRC social media and website #GRC arranged radio promotion
Dementia Friendly Communities	22. Continue to provide Council Community Grants programs to support community led projects that improve social outcomes (e.g. community workshops and projects relating to dementia friendly communities).	2023/2024 Community Grants Program was allocated \$630,000, however no applications were received in relation to Dementia Friendly Communities.
4. Transport		
Sub-topic	Recommendations for Council Action	Activities
Transport from regional townships to and from Gympie	23. Advocate to the State Government to establish Translink services across the region to provide residents with better access to public transport services	To be explored in 2024/2025.
Up to date information on Transport Options in Gympie Region	24. Collaborate with Translink to update the Transport Information on Council's website including information about transport for seniors and community operated transport providers.	Completed Public Transport – Gympie Regional Council
5. Career pathways for aged care and services that support seniors		
Sub-topic	Recommendations for Council Action	Activities
Informal volunteers and unpaid carer workforce	25. Collaborate with industry and tertiary institutes (including USC Healthy Ageing Hub-Gympie) to develop models that deliver more respite services across the region in community facilities to reduce the reliance on unpaid carers and volunteers.	In Q3, a research partnership agreement was established between Council and UniSC for Healthy Ageing in Place. In Q4, recruitment commenced for the PhD candidate to undertake the research project.

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		In Q4, Council met with Gympie TAFE to identify potential collaboration to increase promotion of Aged Care as a career pathway in the region.
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