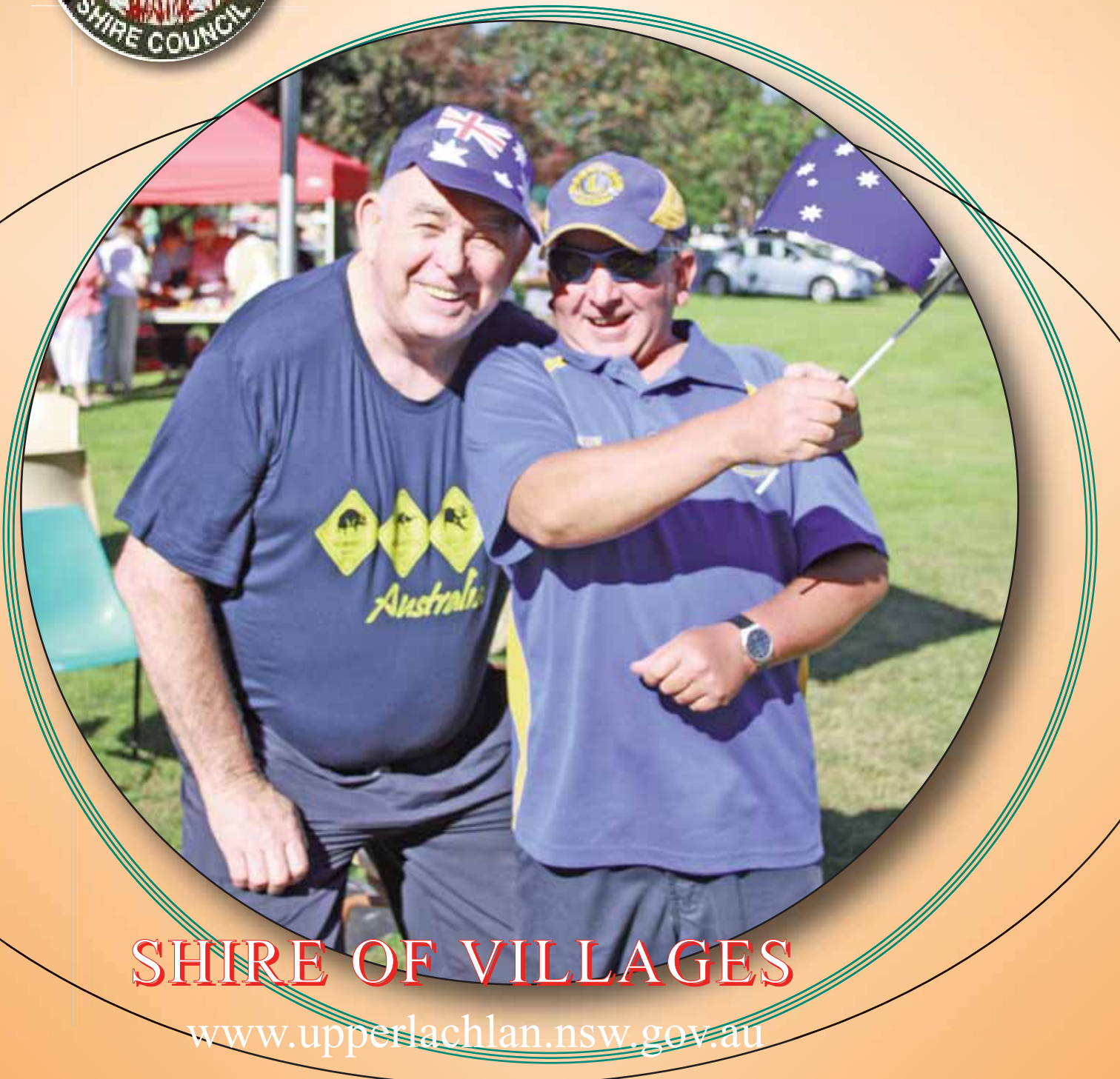


UPPER LACHLAN AGEING STRATEGY 2013



Adopted by Council 20 June 2013
Minute No. 177/13



SHIRE OF VILLAGES

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Disclaimer

This Ageing Strategy has been prepared by Upper Lachlan Shire Council and consultants from AQ Planning P/L and Planning, Environmental & Economic Consulting (PEEC).

The information, views and opinions have been provided in good faith, and have been based on available information including the data and supporting studies detailed within this Strategy.

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Mayoral Message

We are pleased to introduce the Upper Lachlan Shire Council's Ageing Strategy 2013. This primary Strategy has been developed to react to the considerable ageing of the local community.

Upper Lachlan Shire Council has a higher than average proportion of older people compared to other local government areas in New South Wales and projections indicate that the proportion of older people in our community is increasing. This is reinforced in Upper Lachlan Shire Council's role as a popular retirement destination due to its lifestyle advantages.

The Ageing Strategy considers the key issues for older people within the Shire and includes:

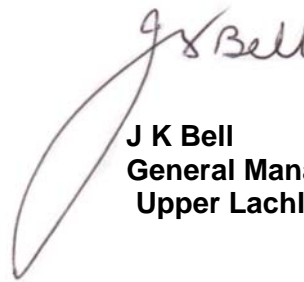
- Outdoor Spaces, Buildings and Infrastructure
- Transport and Mobility
- Housing and Aged Care
- Health and Well-being
- Civic and Social Participation and Inclusion

The Ageing Strategy focuses on issues that Council can have some significant bearing upon, noting that other levels of government, as well as non-government (both private and community based organisations), also have extremely crucial functions in promoting health, well-being and quality of life for older people.

The Ageing Strategy could not have been developed without the substantial contribution of a vast array of people. We wish to offer our thanks to all those who participated in the various consultation processes, the community members, government and non government representatives who offered feedback on the issues raised.



Councillor John Shaw
Mayor
Upper Lachlan Shire Council



J K Bell
General Manager
Upper Lachlan Shire Council

Executive Summary

Why develop an Ageing Strategy ?

Ageing is about developing age-friendly communities, which create opportunities for older people to live active and fulfilling lives now and into the future.

The Strategy seeks to incorporate the values the opinions and contributions of all residents regardless of age, recognising that we all grow older. An age-friendly community encourages participation in a wide range of living opportunities and attempts to remove or reduce barriers to participation, including:

- Physical and environmental;
- Social and cultural; or
- Economic and geographic.

The Strategy supports the rights of individuals to make choices about the way they live their lives, and provides direction on the services and infrastructure, and other means to support them.

The Upper Lachlan Ageing Strategy has been developed to respond to the significant ageing of our local and broader community. The aim of the Strategy is to improve the quality of life, promote active participation and social recognition for older people living in and interacting in our Shire.

The Strategy provides direction to Council, community and other stakeholders, including other levels of Government and business by identifying the priority issues, needs and actions for our ageing community.



Acknowledgements

Many thanks go to those who have contributed to the preparation of Upper Lachlan's Ageing Strategy. Valuable input that has been provided by the community, government agencies and stakeholders that makes up the Upper Lachlan community.

Special mention is also made acknowledging all of the residents in the Upper Lachlan Shire who contributed to the development of this Strategy.



Introduction

What is an Ageing Strategy ?

Ageing embraces the notion that individuals have opportunities and choices enabling them to maximise independence and control over their lives. The Ageing approach focuses on an individual's quality of life and encourages continuing participation in all aspects of community life.

Upper Lachlan's Ageing Strategy will, amongst other things:

- Explores the Shire's population profile and trends as they specifically relate to ageing;
- Identify priority areas for action;
- Contains proactive plans for managing the impacts of population ageing;
- Contains whole-of-community strategies together with an action and implementation strategy;
- Provide a strategy that builds on positive outcomes and living, but also recognises the specific service and infrastructure needs of an ageing community.

To ensure consistency in approach the Strategy has been developed based on current best practice, together with adopting core principles and directions that have been developed both in Australia and internationally.

These include those based on the *World Health Organisation (WHO) Global 'Age-Friendly' Cities and Places policy*, which provides five key priority areas for consideration, being:

- Outdoor spaces and buildings (& infrastructure)
- Transportation and mobility
- Housing (& aged care facilities)
- Health and wellbeing
- Civic and social participation and inclusion (including economic participation)

Note: These have been slightly modified to meet the needs of Upper Lachlan Shire.

Our Strategy is also supported by a set of principles developed from research that are in line with a number of key international, national and state strategic documents. These principles are:

- Equitable access for all;
- Dignity and respect with positive attitudes;
- Diversity;
- Safety;
- Community participation and connectedness;
- Opportunities for all to live an independent lifestyle;
- Collaborative partnerships;
- Positive attitudes and image;
- Sustainable service delivery; and
- Access to employment and volunteerism across the community.

Links to the Upper Lachlan Social and Community Plan

Council has prepared a Social and Community Plan 2013-2018 which addresses the interests of the following target groups:

- Children
- Young people
- Women
- Older people
- People with disabilities
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds
- Men
- Rural/Farming community

Whilst the Social and Community Plan includes consideration of some of the issues that are common for an ageing community, the development of a specific Ageing Strategy gives much more focus.

Whilst the two plans can be read in isolation, the approach will develop over time into an integrated approach to community and social development, as well as Ageing. This recognises that to achieve community and social development, and Ageing, a holistic approach needs to be taken.

As such, the demographic data and supporting information, together with action and implementation strategies for both components, have been developed and presented in a manner that seeks to:

- Promote and maintain physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Support lifelong learning
- Build supportive communities
- Value, respect and care for all ages
- Provide a safe, secure living environment
- Support the provision of all age-inclusive social infrastructure

How this Strategy relates to other Strategies including the NSW Ageing Strategy

The NSW Ageing Strategy (prepared by NSW State Government) brings together contributions from the consultations held to date, as well as the input of a wide range of community groups, agencies, departments and the private sector. The aim of the Strategy is that it be a living document – one that is refreshed and renewed on a regular basis.

There are a number of principles that underpin the Strategy:

- **Local decision making and partnerships.** Local decision-making is likely to generate the best responses to ageing in communities, particularly when it involves those people most affected by these decisions.
- **Older people's rights and autonomy.** Older people know what is best for their own lives and have the right to make decisions on their own behalf.
- **Personal responsibility.** Supporting people who take personal responsibility for their own ageing will contribute to long-term wellbeing and independence.
- **High-quality, timely and equitable services.** Older people deserve high-quality services when they need them. Services should be focused on customers and help people be as independent as possible.
- **Engagement and accountability.** The community should be actively involved in ageing issues and government should be accountable for delivering its work.

The Upper Lachlan Ageing Strategy adopts these themes and seeks to build on them throughout this document, however this Strategy aims to provide the local content and connections that can be built upon over time to provide a Strategy that is monitored, reviewed and updated regularly.



Local Strategic Context

The Council's Community Strategic Plan and Upper Lachlan Strategy Plan – 2020 Vision identify the actions Council will take over the next five to ten year periods to achieve the community's visions and aspirations. The Social and Community Plan specifically identifies the social outcomes for the Shire and also informs this Ageing Strategy. These documents then inform Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework as shown below:



Council's Role in Ageing

Upper Lachlan Council's role in Ageing can be defined as:

Leadership and Advocacy

The community and others, including stakeholders and agencies, look to the Council as a key driver for outcomes in the community, and the issues and opportunities where the Council can use its voice to advocate for outcomes or community needs.

Management and Information

Council has a key role in the strategic planning, development and management of land, infrastructure and facilities in order to benefit the community.

The Council also has access to a vast array of information, and source of information for the community, and has a pivotal role in improving awareness.

Connection and Communication

Council has a significant lead role in bringing the community, local organisations and agencies together fostering relationships in order to achieve community outcomes

Facilitation

Council is in a unique position of being able to provide a broad range of support to facilitate innovative community-based initiatives that respond to local need.

This may include assistance in applying for grants, delivery of services, or as a partner assisting others in the development and delivery of services and programs.



Ongoing Consultation, Monitoring and Review

The ongoing consultation and review and development process for this plan should consider issues such as:

- Social isolation
- The diversity of the older population
- The importance of being valued, listened to and empowered
- Ageing opportunities
- Lack of knowledge of what is available
- Access to flexible and affordable transport

In terms of monitoring the Council's performance in the delivery of its Ageing Strategy, a number of approaches will be utilised:

- Regular reporting to the Council
- Regular consultation through:
 - Older Persons' Reference Group. This group provides advice and opinion to Council on a range of issues, including those that specifically relate to older people. The group comprises individual representatives from the community who have an interest in the issues which face older people and are keen to ensure the voice of older people is heard as part of the Council decision making process.
 - Community sector forums, which may be held in partnership with Council will provide an opportunity for Council to seek feedback on its performance in terms of the Ageing Strategy, as well as a source of information for the Council to identify emerging issues and trends. They will also provide the opportunity for working collaboratively to develop solutions and appropriate responses.



Demographic Context

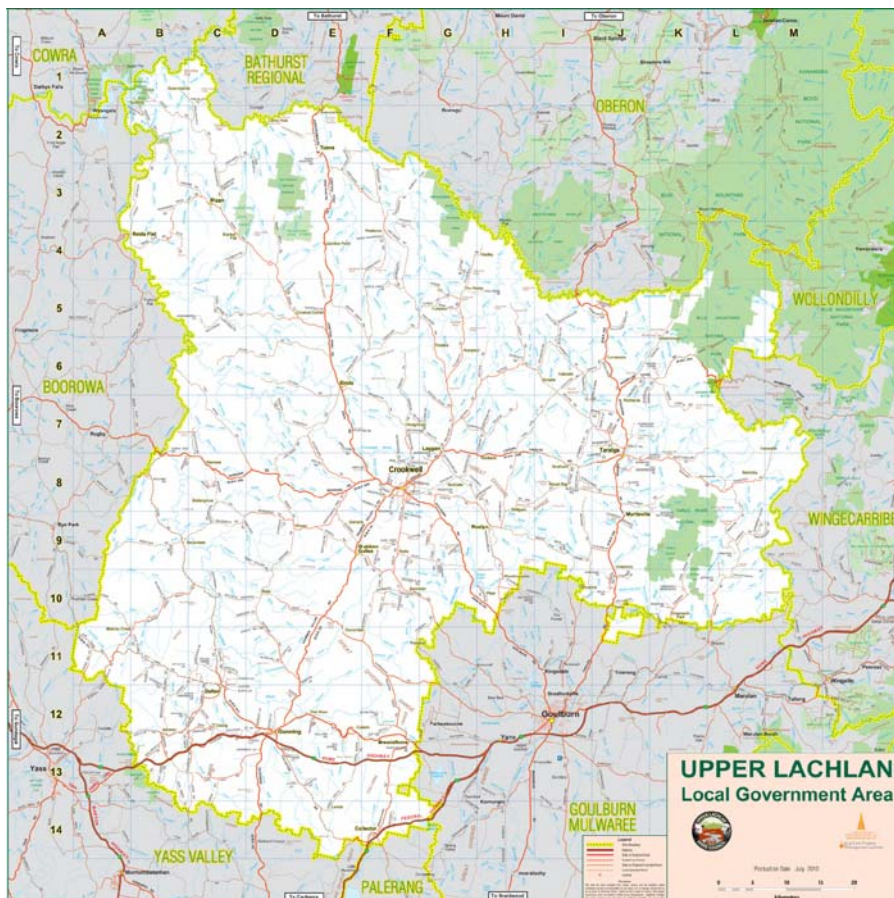
General

Upper Lachlan LGA covers an area of some 7,200 square kilometres, and is characterised by its rural and regional character, however its close proximity to the regional centre of Goulburn (45 km), and relative proximity to other major centres like Canberra (60km), Bathurst (130km) and Sydney (240km).

The Shire has three main centres: Crookwell, Gunning and Taralga and nine smaller centres, Bigga, Binda, Breadalbane, Collector, Dalton, Grabben Gullen, Jerrawa, Laggan, and Tuena. The Shire was proclaimed on the 11th February 2004 following local government boundary changes and includes part of the former Gunning Shire, part of the former Mulwaree Shire and all of the former Crookwell Shire. A map of the Shire is provided below.

At the time of the 2011 Census, Upper Lachlan LGA had a total resident population of 7,193 persons. The median age was 46 and there were 3,589 females and 3,604 males. As a general observation the ratio of females tends to rise in the over 80 age groups, reflecting the tendency for women to live longer.

One key observation is the lower numbers in the 'birthing age of 25-39' with 928 persons or 12.9% of total population, which is significantly lower (7.8%) than the NSW State average (20.7%). This has a number of implications, including capacity for population renewal and ongoing decline in younger age groups.



Map of
Upper Lachlan Shire

Population Growth Trends

Given the changes to local government boundaries in 2004, the use of pre-2006 ABS data to establish projections is likely to create issues with the compatibility and comparability of data.

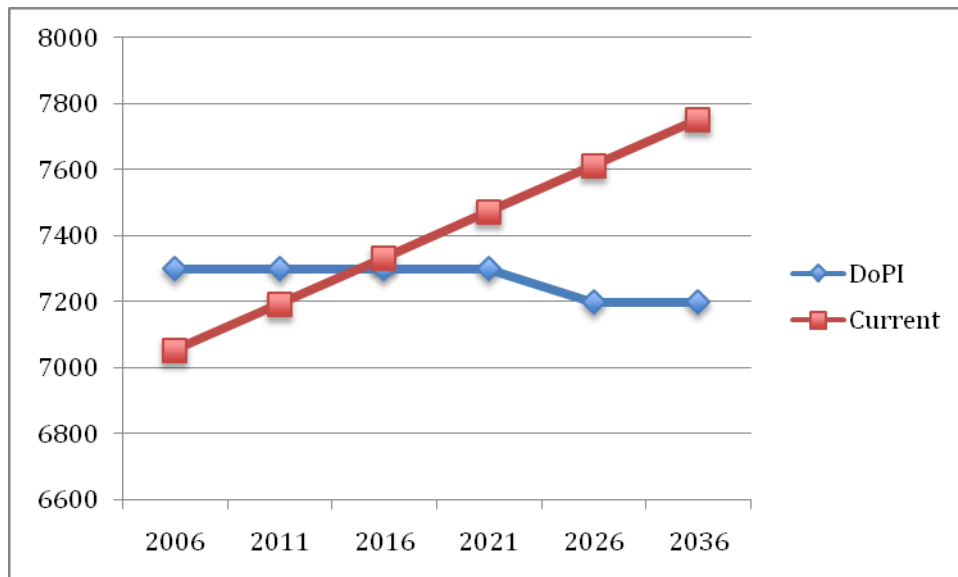
The following tables provide an overview of both actual ABS census data, in addition to projections prepared for Upper Lachlan LGA by the NSW Department of Planning (DoPI).

Year	DoPI Projections*	Strategy Projections**
2006	7300	7053
2011	7300	7193
2016	7300	7333
2021	7300	7473
2026	7200	7613
2036	7200	7753

* NSW Department of Planning & Infrastructure projections (2010) (projections will be reviewed in 2013)

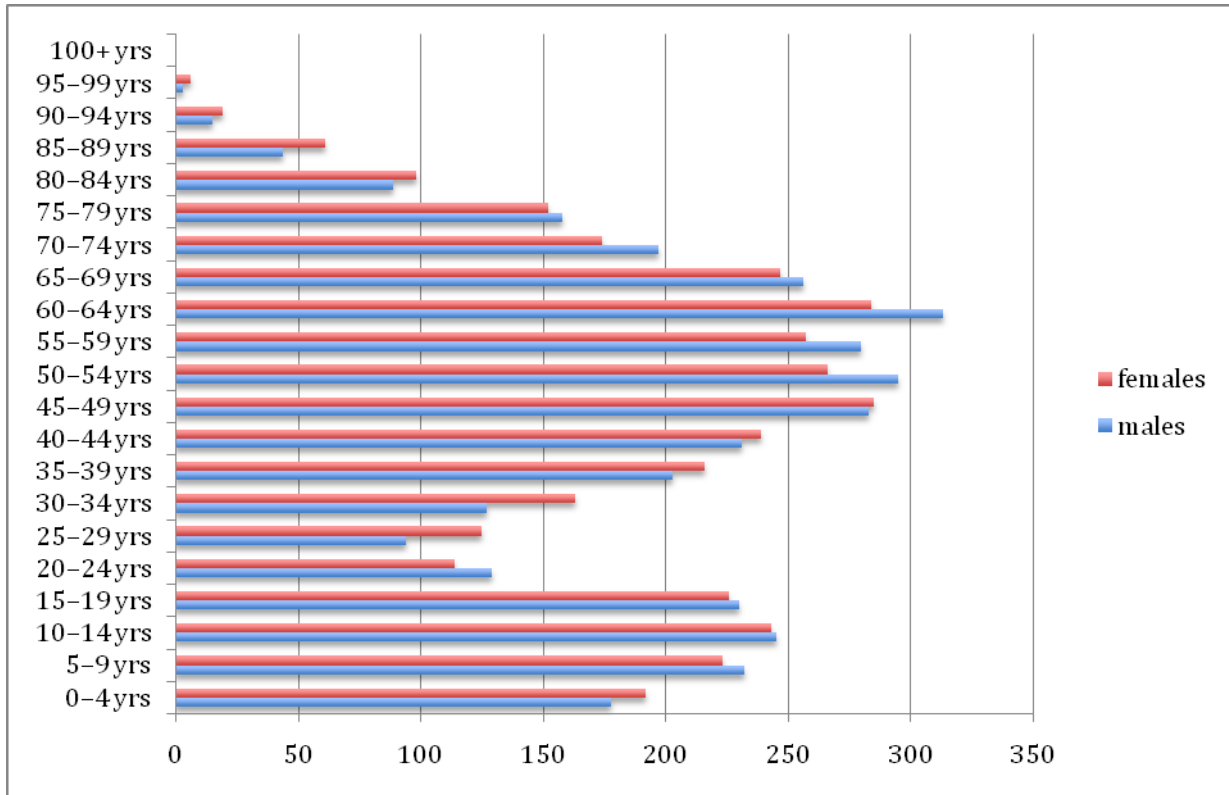
** Projections based on maintenance of at least the current growth path based on actual population from 2006 and 2011 ABS Census.

Comparison of Current Growth Path and DoPI Projections



Age Structure

The following graph shows the age structure for Upper Lachlan LGA as at the 2011 ABS Census.

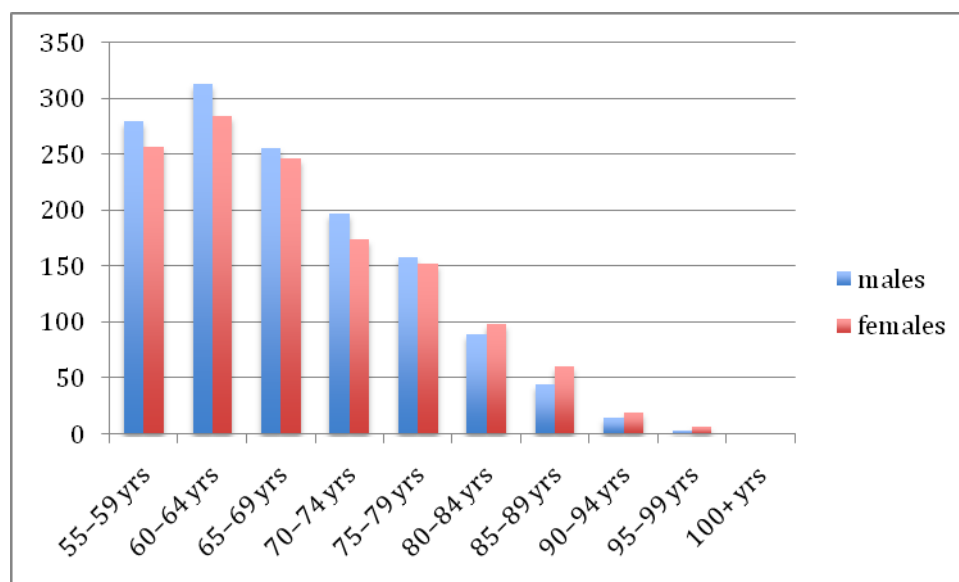


Source: ABS 2011 Census Data

As can be seen in the above graph, Upper Lachlan Shire is currently undergoing noticeable generational change with Generation X (aged 35–49) and the Baby-boomers (aged 50–64) increasing their share of the population, mostly at the cost of Generation Y (aged 20–34) and to a lesser extent, Wartime (aged 65+ in 2011).

Older People (55+)

At the time of the 2011 Census there were 2653 persons over the age of 55 in Upper Lachlan Shire, comprising of 1355 males and 1298 females. This represents approximately 37% of the total population in the Shire. The age and sex distribution is shown in the following diagram:



The median age for the Shire, at the time of the 2011 Census, was 46. This was 8 years older than the NSW median age in 2011 and two years older than the median age for Upper Lachlan in 2006, which was 44. In comparison, the 2006 median age for NSW was 37 (38 in 2011). The ratio of females to males generally rises past the age of 80, as women tend to live longer than men. In Upper Lachlan Shire the ratio peaks in the 95-99 age group with 2 women per man. The largest age groups in the Shire in 2011 were people aged 60-64, 45-49 and 50-54 years old.

The percentage of persons compared to overall population in the Shire was greater than the NSW State average across all groups from 55 up to 90 years of age. The 60 through to 79 years brackets were significantly higher than the State average as shown below:

Age Bracket	Persons	% ULSC	% NSW	Difference to NSW
55-59 yrs	537	7.50%	6.10%	1.4% more
60-64 yrs	597	8.30%	5.60%	2.7% more
65-69 yrs	503	7.00%	4.40%	2.6% more
70-74 yrs	371	5.20%	3.40%	1.7% more
75-79 yrs	310	4.30%	2.70%	1.6% more
80-84 yrs	187	2.60%	2.20%	0.4% more
85-89 yrs	105	1.50%	1.40%	0.1% more
90-94 yrs	34	0.50%	0.50%	same
95-99 yrs	9	0.10%	0.10%	same
100+ yrs	0	0.00%	0.00%	same

Source: ABS 2011 Census

The population structure and characteristics for Upper Lachlan suggest that the proportion of older people living in the Shire will continue to grow, particularly if development activity or capacity to attract new residents declines or remains relatively low.

Socio-Economic Characteristics

Workforce Participation

Ageing of the population also has implications for workforce participation. Retaining older workers for longer or providing transition for active, work-force participation whilst moving to retirement are just some of the challenges.

The table below outlines the Labour Force by Age for Upper Lachlan Shire 2001-2011. As shown in the table the labour force participation in age groups 55-59, 60-64, 65-69, 70-74 and 75+ has been steadily increasing from 2001 with only a reduction in 2006 for the 70-74 age group. For the same 2001-2011 period, unemployment decreased within those age categories, excluding the 70-74 age category, which increased.

Labour Force by Age for Upper Lachlan Shire 2001-2011

Age Category	Labour Force Participation			Unemployment		
	2001	2006	2011	2001	2006	2011
15-19	0.45	0.46	0.46	0.12	0.10	0.11
20-24	0.82	0.87	0.83	0.08	0.07	0.07
25-29	0.80	0.78	0.78	0.04	0.05	0.02
30-34	0.78	0.81	0.83	0.06	0.05	0.03
35-39	0.81	0.84	0.85	0.05	0.04	0.03
40-44	0.81	0.82	0.86	0.03	0.03	0.02
45-49	0.82	0.83	0.85	0.01	0.02	0.03
50-54	0.77	0.79	0.82	0.04	0.02	0.03
55-59	0.66	0.70	0.74	0.02	0.03	0.01
60-64	0.51	0.54	0.60	0.05	0.03	0.03
65-69	0.39	0.39	0.40	0.02	0.03	0.00
70-74	0.27	0.23	0.30	0.00	0.00	0.03
75 +	0.15	0.17	0.18	0.00	0.00	0.00

Health

The 2011-2012 Australian Health Survey (AHS) conducted throughout Australia, was designed to collect a range of information from Australians about health related issues, including health status, risk factors, actions and socio-economic circumstances. Older Australians generally rated themselves as having poorer health than younger people with persons aged 75 years + recording the highest proportion of poor health. Men and women showed no differences in the way they assessed their overall health in 2011-2012.

Of the National Health Priority Areas, the top long term health conditions experienced in Australia in 2011-2012 were:

- Arthritis – 3.3 million people (14.8%)
- Mental and behavioural conditions – 3 million people (13.6%)
- Asthma – 2.3 million people (10.2%)
- Heart disease – 1 million people (4.7%)

Further detailed demographic information can be obtained from Council or through the website <http://upperlachlan.local-e.nsw.gov.au>. There is a range of useful documents available including Council's Social and Community Plan, Upper Lachlan Shire Community Portrait and Socio-Economic Portrait.

Future Direction Statement

In 2025 Upper Lachlan Shire will be an age-friendly community which provides opportunities for older people to live active and fulfilling lives. It will be a place that is a destination of choice for older persons, encourages participation in a wide range of living opportunities and reflects a spirit of community and tolerance that will ensure a way of life that facilitates ageing.



Priority Area 1 – Outdoor spaces, buildings, and infrastructure

Key Aim

Providing healthy spaces, places and infrastructure to enable all ages to live happy, healthy, independent lives and maintain their connections to the community.

Key Issues and Opportunities

Ageing is a lifestyle that individuals, government and the community need to promote so that, as people age, they are able to live their lives to the full. Older persons should have the opportunity to live happy, healthy, independent lives and maintain their connections to the community.

The built environment has a critical impact on the mobility, independence and quality of life for older people – being able to get around and do the things they want to do, with the people they want to share their time with, is fundamental not only to physical health but also mental wellbeing and social equity.

Infrastructure such as a post office, street lighting and libraries are key items in creating a good quality of life for older people.

Outdoor spaces, buildings and infrastructure that would enable aged Upper Lachlan Shire Residents to live happy, healthy, independent lives and maintain their connections to the community should meet the following principles:

- Public areas to be clean and pleasant
- Green spaces and outdoor seating are sufficient in number, well-maintained and safe
- Pavements are well-maintained, free of obstructions and reserved for pedestrians
- Pavements are non-slip, are wide enough for wheelchairs and have dropped curbs to road level
- Pedestrian crossings are sufficient in number and safe for people with different levels and types of disability
- Cycle paths are separate from pavements and other pedestrian walkways
- Outdoor safety is promoted by good street lighting, police patrols and community education
- Services are situated together and are accessible
- Buildings are well-signed outside and inside, with sufficient seating and toilets, accessible elevators, ramps, railings and stairs, and non-slip floors
- Appropriate bus infrastructure to be provided
- Public toilets outdoors and indoors are sufficient in number, clean, well-maintained and accessible.

Priority Area 2 – Transportation and mobility

Key Aim

To increase types and availability of transport and encourage use of current services

Key Issues and Opportunities

Social isolation is of major significance to many older people and those providing services for the older population. Many older people feel a loss of connectedness with their community. After retirement many people, particularly men, lose their sense of place within their community and a sense of purpose in their lives. Other people have limited access to transport and may have physical impairments which limit their ability to access their community. Others may have a lack of confidence and initiative to join new activities or social networks and become increasingly withdrawn and homebound, especially if they lose their partner.

The difficulty of running a car on a fixed income, particularly in rural areas is an important issue. There is a need for accessible public transport, expanded evening and weekend services and flexible and doorstopper type services, and volunteer driver and community transport programs.

In smaller or isolated communities, lack of personal and community transport prevents people getting out of their home and joining in the social life of their town. Loss of a driver's licence is one of the key social issues. The cost of fuel, registration and car ownership can be prohibitive for retirees.

Transport in the Shire is predominantly by private motor vehicles, with ownership rates of motor cars in Upper Lachlan in 2011 averaging 2.06 vehicles per household, which equates to 29% higher than the NSW average. In 2011, 4% of households said they did not have a vehicle which is 7% lower than NSW averages. Gunning is the only town within the Shire with a serviced rail station on the Sydney – Melbourne route.

These figures are significant because there are no other public transport services in the Shire and no taxi service. Those without private transportation are less able to access important services. It is therefore important that Council and service providers explore options to increase types and availability of transport, particularly taxi service and bus services.

Both the cost and limited availability of transport to health services were consistently raised as issues affecting the local community's access to services. This was particularly noted for aged and chronically ill residents who require care or hospitalisation in other towns and for families with no vehicles wishing to access out of school activities. Access to transport also affects a person's ability to connect with their community socially, which in itself is an important factor in community wellbeing.

The community has also identified a need to promote transport options to residents, with the potential to create a transport advocacy group in partnership with local government to improve access to services for Upper Lachlan Shire residents.

There are two forms of community transport available in the Upper Lachlan Shire being Health and Community transport.

Health related transport

Emergency transport for medical emergencies is provided through the Ambulance Service. There are four permanent ambulance officers in Crookwell, they provide 24 hours, 7 day a week service to the Upper Lachlan Shire boundary. In addition, the Southern Local Health District provides the Transport for Health Program, which provides non-emergency health related transport for people who are ill or injured that are not eligible for transport services by ambulance and for those whom traditional public or private transport is not available. There are also a number of hospital vehicles that are able to assist in transporting people to and from the Activity Centre and other health related activities.

While SLHD budget makes allowances for emergency transport there is an acknowledgement that non-urgent transport is a community concern. This issue requires agency collaboration to develop strategies that broaden the range and choice of affordable transport options for the frail elderly and chronically ill population and those without access to private transport of their own.

Community transport

Community transport is available for people identified through the HACC program or the Community Transport program (CTP). HACC targets all frail aged people, people with a permanent and functional disability and the carers of these groups. CTP targets groups who are rurally and socially isolated and spare seating is available to people outside the target groups at commercial rates. This Service is under a temporary contract with Homecare and is to be reviewed in March 2014. Securing longer term funding for operation of the Community bus service to Goulburn is a key consideration.

Promotion of the use of community transport and the development of strategies that broaden the range and choice of affordable transport options for the most vulnerable members of the Upper Lachlan Shire community that do not have access to private transport are also important goals for Council.

A wheelchair accessible bus is available fortnightly from Taralga, Gunning and Crookwell to Goulburn. One Monday per month the vehicle is made available to the Gunning and District Community Health Service. Weekly wheelchair accessible services from Crookwell service Tuena, Grabben Gullen, Taralga, Gunning, Bigga and Binda and each Monday a wheelchair accessible vehicle picks up and returns people in Jerrawa and Dalton for transport to the Gunning and District Community Health Service.

Volunteers in the Council area provide transport in their own vehicles for people identified as within the HACC or CTP programs target groups.

Intersectoral collaboration is needed in order to develop strategies that broaden the range and choice of affordable transport options for the most vulnerable members of the Upper Lachlan Shire community that do not have access to private transport.

Access

Council has successfully operated an Access Committee over the past planning period that has provided information and input into planning and development and infrastructure matters, as well as advocacy for those with access and disability issues.

Priority Area 3 – Housing & Aged Care

Key Aim

To ensure sufficient Aged Housing and Care options are available for the aged within Upper Lachlan Shire

Key Issues and Opportunities

Housing options for the aged within NSW include: Retirement Villages, Private rental, Community Housing, Public Housing, Shared Supported Accommodation and Transitional Housing. A brief outline of the various housing and aged care options is provided below followed by an overview of the issues faced by Upper Lachlan Shire Residents.

Retirement Villages

A retirement village is a residential complex specifically for older people – most residents are aged over 55 and retired. The aim is for people of a similar age, and who are likely to have some similar interests, to live in a community with some services available close by. Older people can either move in as a single person or as a couple. There is usually some form of on-site centre where residents can share meals and activities (if they want to).

Often, a village will include services such as podiatry, access to medical support and hairdressing (although residents are under no obligation to use these on-site services). Many villages also offer transport for group trips and shopping. Each unit has a call button to summon help in an emergency.

Retirement villages can consist of free-standing villas, townhouse style homes or blocks of flats. The units may be either “self-care” or “serviced” apartments.

- **Self-care units** are designed for older people who do not need assistance with day-to-day activities. They are generally self-contained and have their own kitchen and laundry. Some units may also be wheelchair accessible.
- **Serviced apartments** have fewer facilities than self-care units. Residents sleep in their own unit, and have help with their laundry and cleaning, and preparing meals. Meals are served in a communal dining room. Residents usually have access to personal and/or nursing care, sometimes on a fee-for-service basis.

Community Housing

Community housing is provided by non-government not-for-profit organisations, with funding assistance provided by the NSW Department of Housing. Community housing can include short and medium term transitional housing for people who are homeless and in crisis, rental housing for people with support needs, and rental housing similar to public housing.

To apply for community housing, persons must first apply to the NSW Department of Housing and be assessed against the eligibility criteria. Once the Department has approved the application, persons can then approach a community housing provider. Once accepted they will be put on the organisation’s waiting list (each organisation has its own list). The waiting times vary between community housing organisations but are about the same as for public housing in the same area.

There are three main types of providers of community housing – housing associations, co-operatives and churches.

- Housing associations are community-based organisations that provide affordable rental housing to low and moderate income earners. There are more than 40 housing associations in NSW.
- Co-operative housing is housing where members of the cooperative select tenants and manage and maintain the housing themselves. The government provides funds to buy or build housing which the co-operative then manages. There are about 50 co-operatives in NSW, in both city and rural locations.
- A number of churches also provide housing.

Public Housing

Public housing is affordable rental housing for people on low incomes who are unable to afford to rent privately. It is provided by the NSW Department of Housing. To receive Public Housing persons must meet criteria such as being on a low income, being able to live independently or show you have access to adequate support services, and not owning or part owning a residential property in Australia. People aged 80 and over (55 and older for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people) will be given priority for vacancies as they arise. Waiting times for housing vary considerably according to the popularity of an area.

Emergency temporary accommodation

The NSW Department of Housing provides emergency temporary accommodation for people who are not eligible for public housing who are experiencing a short-term housing crisis. For more information contact the NSW Department of Housing (see end for details).

The NSW Department of Housing also provides Temporary Accommodation in low-cost hotels, motels, caravan parks and similar accommodation for people who are in housing crisis, or homeless while they make longer-term arrangements. Accommodation is provided for one, or a small number of nights. This service is suitable for people whose main or only problem is accommodation. Clients are expected to find more permanent housing while they are in Temporary Accommodation.

Assistance with Care and Housing for the Aged (ACHA)

ACHA helps people 65 years and older who are financially disadvantaged and are homeless or about to become homeless to find a place to live. The main forms of financial assistance for people renting in the private sector are:

- **Rent assistance** is a non-taxable income supplement payment provided by the Commonwealth Government which is added on to the pension, allowance or benefit of eligible income support customers who rent in the private rental market.
- **Rentstart** is provided by the NSW Department of Housing and provides financial assistance to help persons move to new private rental accommodation. Persons must find a home themselves and then apply for Rentstart. To be eligible for Rentstart persons must be eligible for public housing, have limited cash assets and be able to sustain a tenancy in the private rental market. Also provided by the NSW Department of Housing, SAS assists people with a disability or who are HIV positive and renting privately to tide you over while you wait for a place to become available in public or community housing. In some situations you may be able to apply for this subsidy in the longer term to enable you to continue renting on the private market. You must be eligible for public housing before you will be considered for a SAS subsidy.

Caravan parks and manufactured housing estates

Caravan parks are an alternative to living in houses and flats, and they are usually cheaper than traditional housing. However in the longer term persons can be vulnerable living in a caravan park if the park closes or changes hands (which may happen in desirable holiday locations).

Manufactured villages and housing estates are another form of affordable accommodation. Many estates have comprehensive facilities and amenities and are situated on rivers, bays or on the coast.

Other Affordable Housing options

- ***Abbeyfield Australia***

Abbeyfield Australia is a not for profit organisation that provides affordable, supportive accommodation for older people. A housekeeper prepares two meals each day, and residents prepare their own breakfast. To be eligible persons must be 55 years or older, be on a low income, and require some support to enable them to continue living in the community.

- ***Housing for people with a disability***

People with a disability can access all of the housing types and assistance outlined above if they meet the requirements. In addition, the Special Assistance Subsidy – Disability (SAS-D) is paid to people with a disability who are approved for Priority Housing in public housing, or who have reached their turn on the public housing waiting list while they wait for a suitable place. Clients pay the same amount of rent as they would if they were living in public housing.

- ***Housing for Aboriginal People and Torres Strait Islander people***

Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders can access all of the housing types and assistance outlined above if they meet the requirements. In addition, if persons meet the eligibility criteria for public housing they may be approved for housing assistance as an elderly client if they are confirmed to be an Aboriginal person or Torres Strait Islander and are aged 55 years and over.

Aged Care Housing or Support within Upper Lachlan Shire

Within the Upper Lachlan Shire the following aged care housing or support is available:

Crookwell

View Haven Lodge: 44 beds Principally high care (Nursing Home)
Self care units
Clifton Village (Uniting Care)
Nura Village

Taralga

Sunset Lodge: 23 beds. Ageing facility with high and low care.
Self care units

Gunning

Self care units (Lions Club)

Shire wide

Service providers such as BCS Care Centres offer a variety of in-home care and respite services to the local community, based on Local Government Areas. In-home care options include low and high care services, as well as dementia care, disability care and respite care. The BCS Care Centre – Goulburn offers the following care options

- Home and Community Care Programs (HACC)
- Personal Care
- Domestic Assistance
- Flexible Respite
- Community Options
- Community Aged Care Packages (CACP)
- Extended Aged Care in the Home (EACH)
- Veterans Home Care (VHC)
- National Respite for Carers Program (NRCP)
- ComPacks Post Acute Care (six week program)

Council, the Housing NSW and community groups/private providers, will continue to investigate options for an increase in the supply of various forms of housing within the Upper Lachlan Shire including the key areas of:

- Aged Care Homes and Retirement Villages, and
- Community Housing and Public Housing



Priority Area 4 – Health and wellbeing

Key Aim

To support successful ageing by assisting persons to maintain a low risk of disease or disability, to maintain an active body and mind and to maintain a meaningful engagement with life.

Key Issues and Opportunities

The Shire has a low density populace, dispersed over a relatively large geographical area. This presents not only challenges for service providers in delivering services to those in need, but also to residents who may be isolated both socially and geographically from larger centres. The limited range of public transport options is likely to compound the problem.

The older population is significantly diverse in their needs, capabilities and interests. The majority of older people are active and independent, however many become increasingly frail as they age and require additional support to access their community.

Elderly age groups are likely to require a range of more intensive services ranging from home care support through to acute nursing home and hospital care. These varying health needs across the older age groups are significant given that regional areas may be unable to offer a full range of such services to the appropriate residents at the appropriate time.

Older people living in their homes needed the most assistance with property management and health care due to disability or ageing. Other common areas of need were transport, housework, mobility and self-care. Around 10% of people aged 60 years and over live alone with some level of disability (ABS, 2004).

At the community consultation sessions, residents raised various issues in relation to people with disabilities. They stated that as the numbers are low, they are often an ignored group in terms of service delivery. It was stated that the numbers of people with disabilities will increase as the population ages.

Disability support services are available across the Shire from a range of providers. The Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) assess needs and services required for older people and provide referrals to other services. Assistance with household duties, personal care and respite is available through Baptist Community Services, Home Care, Anglicare, with in home nursing services accessible through the Department of Veterans Affairs and SLHD.

The Upper Lachlan Access Committee has been working towards improving access to services for all people, in particular, people with disabilities.

Other options which may be easily provided in urban areas (eg. meals on wheels or home help) may be much more difficult in regional areas because of the dispersed population, availability of appropriate staff or volunteers, and higher per capita cost of providing such services in areas of dispersed settlement. Despite the interest and support for mobile servicing regimes in elderly care, there will still be a need for elderly accommodation facilities and, as the numbers of elderly increase over the coming decades.

Nursing homes form an important feature of most regional centres. Many of these are attached to small local hospitals and fulfil an important role in community life, allowing older residents to remain in the township or district in which they have lived.

All levels of government have a key role to play in supporting successful ageing by working together to build age-friendly communities, through attention to the physical environment (transport, urban infrastructure, housing and accommodation) and the social environment (education, recreation, technology, safety and security, work and retirement).

Physical activity ranks second only to tobacco control among the most important factors in disease prevention in Australia, and the evidence for the positive links between physical activity and mental health are also growing

Healthier eating and greater levels of physical activity, and the social engagement this often brings, will play a key role in addressing all of Australia's designated National Health Priority Areas.

The wellbeing of older persons in rural areas who experience social isolation due to a range of factors such as household location, limited access to transport, bereavement and family members moving away from the district is an important consideration. Social networking groups such as local bowling clubs, Rotary, Lions clubs and Menshed all provide a key role in preventing social isolation.



Priority Area 5 – Civic and social participation and inclusion (including economic participation)

Key Aim

To enable increased social interaction and participation within the local community by aged persons

Key Issues and Opportunities

The Queensland Cross Government Project *To Reduce the Social Isolation of Older People* found that:

Social isolation can be described as a low level of interaction with others combined with the experience of loneliness. It is a serious issue for seniors because of the detrimental impact it can have on health and wellbeing. Although the majority of older people are not socially isolated, the number of people at risk of social isolation is expected to increase with the ageing of the population. (Office for Seniors, Dept of Communities, 2009)

Ensuring that older people enjoy an active role in their community not only improves their quality of life, it also contributes to the social and economic wellbeing of the Shire. Social Participation is a key indicator of the overall health and vibrancy of a community.

Although a large Shire does present challenges for Council in service delivery, there are current activities which can be built on and expanded. Other inter-shire activities, such as day trips, social outings and the like could also be investigated.

Access to information that enables aged persons to make informed choices and to be included in making decisions about their lives is critical. Community newsletters have been raised in Binda and Taralga as potential solutions for communication to the aged population. In Gunning, there is a successful newsletter produced by the Lions Club. Communication of local events through the Council newsletter 'The Voice' and on noticeboards in suitable locations in villages across the Shire may also enable better communication of events occurring in local areas.

When planning activities and programs, Council departments need to be aware of the scope of diversity of the older population. It is also important to encourage older people to volunteer, promote accessible and affordable lifelong learning opportunities and other peer education programs that use the knowledge and skills of older people.

Council will continue to work with key stakeholders to develop a better understanding of the issues relating to mature age employment and support innovative responses.

Action Plan – Ageing Strategy 2013

Key Actions for all Priority Areas

Priority Area 1 – Outdoor spaces, buildings, and infrastructure

Key Action or Deliverable	Lead Agency & Partners	Priority	Status & Monitoring Comments
Ensure green spaces and outdoor seating are sufficient in number, well-maintained and safe	ULSC & Community Groups	July 2013-2018	
Investigate feasibility of a heated therapeutic indoor swimming pool, including setup and ongoing costs and possible funding opportunities	ULSC & SPARC	July 2013-2014	
Investigate footpath improvements required to ensure pavements are well-maintained, non-slip, are wide enough for wheelchairs and have dropped curbs to road level free of obstructions and reserved for pedestrians	ULSC	July 2013-2018	
Assess pedestrian crossings, public seating, ramps, handrails and improved street lighting	ULSC	July 2013-2018	

Action Plan – Ageing Strategy 2013

Priority Area 2 – Transportation and mobility

Key Action or Deliverable	Lead Agency & Partners	Priority	Status & Monitoring Comments
Work with key stakeholders to plan appropriately for the needs of the ageing population	ULSC & Providers	July 2013-2018	
Encourage use of current services.	ULSC	Ongoing	
Continue operation of Access Committee	ULSC	July 2013 - as required	
Ensure a high level of accessibility to the road and footpath network for older people through an annual budgetary allocation for specific access improvements	ULSC	July 2013-2018	

Priority Area 3 – Housing & Aged Care

Key Action or Deliverable	Lead Agency & Partners	Priority	Status & Monitoring Comments
Work with key stakeholders to plan appropriately for the needs of the ageing population	ULSC, Community groups and SLHD	July 2013-2018	
Investigate opportunities to promote Crookwell as retirement destination	ULSC	July 2013-2018	

Action Plan – Ageing Strategy 2013

Priority Area 4 – Health and wellbeing

Key Action or Deliverable	Lead Agency & Partners	Priority	Status & Monitoring Comments
Work with key stakeholders to plan appropriately for the needs of the ageing population	ULSC	July 2013-2018	
Promote community development/health promotion activities which target mental health and wellbeing. Participate in 'Beyond Blue' and similar programs	SLHD	Ongoing	
Promote existing mental health services throughout the Shire	SLHD	Ongoing	
Promote support community groups and volunteers and increase recreation options for older people	ULSC & Community groups	July 2013-2018	
Ensure budgetary allocation for specific access improvements	ULSC	July 2013-2018	

Priority Area 5 – Civic and social participation and inclusion (including economic participation)

Key Action or Deliverable	Lead Agency & Partners	Priority	Status & Monitoring Comments
Increase opportunities for effective communication across the Shire	ULSC	July 2013-2018	
Work with key stakeholders to plan appropriately for the needs of the ageing population	ULSC, Community groups & SLHD	July 2013-2018	
Encourage participation by older people as volunteers in particular programs – as peer educators	ULSC & Community groups	Ongoing	
Encourage the use of current services.	ULSC & Community groups	Ongoing	
Ensure accessibility issues for older people are considered as part of the Council's Strategy documents	ULSC	Ongoing	