

# Age-friendly Banyule Policy Statement

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## Purpose statement

This is a statement of commitment to Banyule’s continual improvement in enhancing the health and quality of life of older people.

## Background

The population in Banyule is ageing, with older residents (aged 60 years and over) making up a relatively high proportion of the total population (21.7%). Older age is characterised by great diversity. “Some 80-year-olds have levels of physical and mental capacity that compare favourably with 20-year-olds. Others of the same age may require extensive care and support for basic activities like dressing and eating. Policy should be framed to improve the functional ability of all older people, whether they are robust, care dependent or in between”.<sup>1</sup>

The proportion of older residents living in Banyule is expected to increase to 24.1% (almost 34,000 residents) by the year 2025. Compared to Greater Melbourne, Banyule has a higher proportion of older lone person households (9.5% compared to 8.0%). Proportions in Banyule range from a low of 5.5% in the suburb of Watsonia North to a high of 12.1% in Rosanna. Between 2011 – 2026, Banyule will experience a 35.4% increase in the population of retirement age.

“Some of the most important barriers to developing good public policy on ageing are pervasive misconceptions, negative attitudes and assumptions about older people. Although there is substantial evidence about the many contributions that older people make to [our community] they are frequently stereotyped as dependent, frail, out of touch, or a burden. These ageist attitudes limit older people’s freedom to live the lives they choose and our capacity to capitalise on the great human capacity that older people represent”.<sup>2</sup>

The World Health Organisation's Age-friendly Cities program is an international network to help cities prepare for the rapid ageing of populations and increasing urbanisation. It targets the environmental, social and economic factors that influence the health and wellbeing of older people.

## Current Status

On 6 October 2014, Council adopted the motion to apply for membership to the World Health Organisations Global Network of Age-friendly Cities. In November 2014, Banyule was accepted by the World Health Organisation. In joining the Global Network, Council made a commitment to a cycle of continual improvement to influencing the health and quality of life of older people. A core aspect to the Age-friendly City approach is to include older people as active participants in the process.

The Age-friendly Advisory Committee was established in December 2014. The Committee membership consists of up to 15 members and is an inclusive representation as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> World Health Organisation (2012) Fighting Stereotypes World Health Day 2012.

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organisation (2015) World Report on Ageing and Health (Ageing and Life Course).

- Two representatives of the Banyule City Council (Cr Mulholland and Cr Langdon).
- Five residents representing the community (individual members).
- Five representatives of community groups or local agencies.
- Three representatives of State and/or Federal government departments or state-wide organisations.

Due to a high level of interest from residents the Age-friendly Champion program was established in February 2015. This volunteer based initiative is open to all residents. Age-friendly Champions are invited to be involved in projects which influence and shape our City to improve the quality of life of older people. To become an Age-friendly Banyule Champion, the resident must undertake a training session which Council conducts in partnership with Council on the Ageing (COTA) Victoria. Once a resident has completed the training they are eligible to participate in the Age-friendly Champion program of activities. There are now 67 trained Age-friendly Banyule Champions, with induction training session scheduled three times per year.

In 2015, Banyule City Council was Australia's only pilot site to work with the World Health Organisation on the establishment of age-friendly indicators. Twelve locations from around the world used the same methodology to collect data on our local communities. Our involvement in this project has allowed Banyule to have a set of age-friendly measures which will assist Council in identifying priority areas requiring change and monitoring the impact of those over time.

## **Policy Context**

### **Global Context**

World Health Organization Age-friendly Cities Guide, 2008.

World Health Organisation Report on Ageing and Health, 2015.

Measuring the Age-friendliness of Cities, A Guide to Using Core Indicators, World Health Organisation, 2015.

### **Australian Government Context**

The Living Longer Living Better (LLL) reforms passed into legislation on 26 June 2013.

An Ageing Australia: preparing for the future, Productivity Commission, 2013.

### **Victorian Government Context**

Commissioner's report *Ageing is everyone's business*, April 2016.

Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2015 – 2019, Department of Health & Human Services, 2015.

Improving Care for Older People: a policy for Health Services and the Home and Community Care Active Service Model, Department of Health & Human Services, 2012.

## Age-friendly Victoria Declaration, April 2016

The Age-friendly Victoria Declaration was signed by the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) together with the Victorian Government in April 2016, it provides a commitment to working together on creating age-friendly communities by:

- promoting an age-friendly Victoria
- supporting state and local planning processes
- providing local government with access to advice, expertise and support
- empowering and encouraging seniors' involvement
- addressing issues listed in the World Health Organization Age Friendly Cities Guide 2008
- valuing stakeholder engagement and collaboration<sup>3</sup>

The MAV is encouraging all local governments to become signatories of the Age-friendly Victoria Declaration. The Declaration supports Banyule commitments with the Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and the Banyule City Plan. Banyule City Council moved the motion to become a signatory of Age-friendly Victoria Declaration at its meeting on 25 July 2016.

## Banyule City Council Context

This policy statement supports all five objectives in the Banyule City Plan, in particular: **People: community strengthening and support.**

In the City Plan 2016-2017 there are 49 actions which have a link to Age-friendly Banyule. With the main focus area being 1.1.3 **Build community capacity to support and create opportunities for all people to live healthy and fulfilling lives.**

Council meeting, 6 October 2014 – adopted motion for the establishment of an Older Persons Advisory Committee that will oversee the development of Banyule's Age-friendly City Plan.

Council meeting, 6 October 2014 – adopted motion for the membership to the World Health Organisation Global Network of Age-friendly Cities.

## Council's Role

Local government in Victoria plays an active and trusted role in maintaining and enhancing the quality of life for all residents as they age. This is achieved through Banyule City Council's role as a:

- Planner
- Funder
- Advocate
- Service provider.

## Scope

This policy statement covers Council's commitment to an Age-friendly Banyule. It will support better planning that will address the needs of Banyule residents, enhancing the quality of life for people as they age.

## Policy Statement

An Age-friendly Banyule enables people to actively participate in their community and treats everyone with respect, regardless of their age. Banyule is a place that enables and encourages older people to stay connected to their community. That is a community which helps people stay healthy and active at all ages and provides support and advocacy for those who require it. Integral to the process is the inclusion of older people as active participants in the process.

## Supporting Partnerships

- Council on the Ageing (COTA) Victoria
- Global Network of Age-friendly Cities, World Health Organisation
- La Trobe University
- Municipal Association of Victoria
- North East Primary Care Partnership
- Yarra Plenty Library Services

As projects are identified further partnerships will be established.

## Planning and the way forward

The Age-friendly Banyule policy statement was adopted by Council on 5 September 2016. This will direct the development of an Age-friendly Banyule Strategy and Action Plan.