

# Developing the next Age-Friendly City Plan (2025-2035)

## Discussion Paper

This discussion paper is designed to provide you with background information and questions to help you consider your feedback to us.



# Discussion Paper: ACT's next 10-year Age-Friendly City Plan

## Introduction

The ACT Government's vision is for Canberra to be an inclusive, welcoming city, where growing older is celebrated and supported. We want to celebrate and learn from the knowledge and experiences of older Canberrans<sup>1</sup> and ensure our services support their needs.

In 2021, 13.3% of our population was over the age of 65 (62,203 people).<sup>2</sup> By 2060, this group is expected to grow to more than 114,000 people.<sup>3</sup> For more detail on our population profile, see Appendix 1.

We have a long-term commitment to becoming an age-friendly city and became a member of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities in 2011.<sup>4</sup> For more information on our journey, see Appendix 2.

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<sup>1</sup> In Australia, an older person is typically defined as being aged 65 years or older, or 50 years and older for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This is the definition which will be used for the purposes of this paper. However, some data sources referred to in this paper define older people as 50 years and older or 55 years and older. Where this is the case, it will be highlighted.

<sup>2</sup> The ABS census data currently does not provide figures for individuals who are non-binary and/or do not identify as male or female. ACT has recently finalised the *Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics, and Sexual Orientation Variables Data – Common Data Standard*, which will improve future data collection and provide more inclusive data.

<sup>3</sup> ACT Government, [ACT Government population projections 2022-2060](#), Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, [2022](#), accessed 15 March 2024.

<sup>4</sup> The WHO Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities connects cities, communities and organisations around the world which have common vision of making their community a great place to grow old in. The Network focuses on local action to promote healthy and active ageing and to support older people to participate in community life.

## Developing the next Age-Friendly City Plan

The current [Age-Friendly City Plan](#) ends in 2024 so it is time to start developing our next plan. We want to hear from the Canberra community about what is working well and what can be improved to enhance the lives of older Canberrans. We want to recognise the great work the community is doing and acknowledge our shared endeavours to make Canberra a truly age-friendly city.

This discussion paper is designed to provide you with background information and stimulating questions to help you consider your feedback to us. You can choose to answer some or all of the questions contained in this discussion paper.

You can also provide your feedback in other ways. You can:

- complete an on-line survey ([hyperlink to YourSay survey page](#))
- attend a discussion at an ACT Library ([hyperlink to info on ACT Gov – AFCP webpage](#)).
- upload a written submission – this could take any format from a short letter to a detailed multi-page report ([hyperlink to YourSay submission page](#))

This discussion paper has five focus areas:

1. health
2. employment and financial security
3. housing
4. access and connection
5. respect, inclusion and belonging.

These focus areas have been drawn from what we heard from Canberrans in previous consultations. They also align with the focus areas used in the WHO's Age-Friendly Cities Framework<sup>5</sup> and the ACT Wellbeing Framework<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> [The WHO Age-friendly Cities framework](#) includes 8 key areas (domains) which places can address to improve their structures and services to meet the needs of older people. These are: community support and healthcare, transport, housing, social participation, outdoor spaces and buildings, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, and communication and information.

<sup>6</sup> [The ACT Wellbeing Framework](#) includes 12 key factors (domains) which impact on the quality of life of Canberrans. These are: health, safety, living standards, housing and home, environment and climate, social connection, education and life-long learning, time, identity and belonging, governance and institutions, access and connectivity, and economy.

## Health

People in our community want accessible and affordable services which help support their health care needs.

### What the data and research say

- Canberrans have the highest life expectancy in Australia (82.2 years for males and 86.0 years for females).<sup>7</sup>
- Participating in regular exercise, sports, recreation and arts activities benefits the health and wellbeing of older people.<sup>8</sup>
- Although older Canberrans rate their overall quality of life higher than other age groups,<sup>9</sup> many rate their weight, quality of sleep, access to GPs, specialists, dentists, allied health professionals and mental health services more poorly than other age groups.<sup>10</sup>
- Almost 60% of older people in the ACT reported having at least one or more long-term health conditions. The most common being arthritis, followed by diabetes, heart disease, dementia, and cancer.<sup>11</sup>
- More than 16.3% of older people in the ACT need assistance in their day-to-day lives with self-care, mobility and communication because of a long-term health condition, disability, or old age.<sup>12</sup>
- Older Australians are facing increasing barriers to accessing medical services due to long waiting lists and increasing costs.<sup>13</sup>

### Feedback from previous consultations

- Physical health is often prioritised over mental health concerns by healthcare providers.
- Access to specialised services and mental health literacy can be a barrier to seeking support.
- Older people with disability, particularly women, may face additional barriers due to the cost of healthcare services.
- Service gaps exist in My Aged Care and the National Disability Insurance Scheme, particularly for older people with disability.
- Services for older veterans, particularly through the Department of Veterans' Affairs and healthcare providers, are inadequate.

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<sup>7</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), [Life expectancy, 2020-2022](#), ABS website, 2023, accessed 15 March 2024.

<sup>8</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), [Physical activity, 2022](#), ABS website, 2023, accessed 15 March 2024.

<sup>9</sup> ACT Government, [Personal wellbeing – ACT Wellbeing Framework \[website\]](#), Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, 2023, accessed 15 March 2024; According to ACT Wellbeing Framework, 'Quality of life' or 'personal wellbeing' is measured by considering standard of living, health, level of achievement in life, relationships, safety, community-connectedness, and future security.

<sup>10</sup> ACT Government, [Health – ACT Wellbeing Framework \[website\]](#), Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, 2023, accessed 15 March 2024.

<sup>11</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), [Australian Capital Territory 2021 census community profiles](#), ABS website, 2021, accessed 5 December 2023.

<sup>12</sup> ABS, [Australian Capital Territory 2021 census community profiles](#).

<sup>13</sup> Council on the Ageing (COTA), [State of the \(older\) nation](#), COTA, 2023, accessed 5 December 2023.

- A range of services are needed for older LGBTIQ+ people, including trans healthcare and medicine, services which are accepting and aware of LGBTIQ+ experiences, and LGBTIQ+ specific and specialised services.

### What the ACT Government is already doing

- Implementing the [Re-envisioning Older Person's Mental Health and Wellbeing in the ACT Strategy \(the Strategy\) 2022-2026](#), which includes actions to promote good mental health, prevent mental illness and strengthen workforce skills.
- Implementing the [ACT Health Services Plan 2022-2030](#), which includes specific actions to:
  - reduce the length of hospital stays and assist older people to stay at home.
  - establish a Centre of Excellence for Care of Older Canberrans with an initial focus on improving outcomes for people living with dementia and their carers.
  - deliver workforce education and training to improve the care of patients with dementia.
- Identifying a site for a dementia village (the former North Curtin Primary School). The community, people with lived experience of dementia and dementia care experts will be consulted before releasing the site for sale.
- Funding initiatives to support the health and wellbeing of older Canberrans through the ACT Seniors Grants Program, including promotion of good nutrition and healthy eating.
- Promoting participation in arts and cultural events. For example, the Seniors Grants Program supported a local exhibition of *The National Centenarian Portrait Project*. The ACT Government is also piloting a Seniors Arts Festival.
- Providing enhanced opportunities for older Canberrans to participate in outdoor activities through the [Better Places to Play: ACT Playspace Strategy](#).

### What the ACT Government would like to know:

1. What change/s would most improve health outcomes for older people?
2. How can we improve mental health supports for older Canberrans?
3. How can we promote better understanding of mental health among older people and their carers?
4. How can we improve access to affordable health care?
5. How can we improve access to health care via digital platforms?

## Employment and financial security

An age-friendly city provides opportunities for older people to contribute their knowledge and skills and share their life experience through voluntary or paid employment.

### What the data and research say

- Older workers bring valuable ideas, experience, and skills to the workforce.<sup>14</sup>
- In the ACT, 8,371 people or 13.5% of older people were employed either part time or full time, and 0.4% were looking for work in 2021. Men were more likely to be working (57.8%) as well as more likely to be looking for work (70%).<sup>15</sup>
- Most employed older women earned between \$400-499 per week whereas the most common income bracket for men above 65 was \$1,000-1,249.<sup>16</sup>
- Older men were significantly more likely to be in full-time work than older women. Women were more likely to be doing volunteer work, unpaid domestic work, providing unpaid childcare, and assisting a person with disability or with other health conditions.<sup>17</sup>
- 24% of older Australians have experienced discrimination in the workplace or when seeking employment.<sup>18</sup>
- The average age of retirement is increasing. According to a national study, 1 in 4 older workers feel they will never retire due to lack of financial security.<sup>19</sup> Others are willingly returning to work to find meaning and identity.<sup>20</sup>

### Feedback from previous consultations

- Age-related workforce discrimination is common.
- The cost of living is impacting older Canberrans, particularly their ability to pay for utilities.
- Financial literacy is needed to enhance the financial wellbeing of older Canberrans.
- Financial security can be impacted by complex life circumstances. For example, the death of a partner, separation, domestic and family violence, and other forms of abuse. This is particularly true for women, people with disability, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women, and those already in financially vulnerable situations.
- The eligibility criteria for Seniors Card benefits can disadvantage older Canberrans who want or need to remain employed.

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<sup>14</sup> P Brough et al., [Multigenerational workplaces research: Final report](#), Griffith University: Brisbane, Australia, 2023, accessed 15 March 2024.

<sup>15</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), [Australian Capital Territory 2021 census community profiles](#), ABS website, 2021, accessed 5 December 2023.

<sup>16</sup> ABS, [Australian Capital Territory 2021 census community profiles](#).

<sup>17</sup> ABS, [Australian Capital Territory 2021 census community profiles](#).

<sup>18</sup> Council on the Ageing (COTA), [State of the \(older\) nation](#), COTA, 2023, accessed 5 December 2023.

<sup>19</sup> COTA, [State of the \(older\) nation](#).

<sup>20</sup> Z Ferguson et al., [Why the great unretirement movement has been on the rise in Australia in the past three years](#), ABC, 5 May 2023, accessed 5 December 2023.

- The eligibility age for older Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people to access concessions through the ACT Seniors Card is too high.

### **What the ACT Government is already doing**

- Supporting flexible work and employment opportunities in the ACT Public Service for older Canberrans.
- Changing the ACT's discrimination laws so all ACT Government workplaces must now take steps to eliminate age-based discrimination.
- Enhancing the ACT Seniors Card Program following an independent review.
- Delivering energy efficiency and support programs such as the [Low-Income Energy Efficiency Program](#) and the [Renters Home Energy Program](#) to provide free in-home energy assessments and education on energy efficiency to help lower energy bills.
- Offering a range of discounts, rebates and subsidies for older Canberrans through [Cost of Living Support](#).

### **What the ACT Government would like to know:**

6. How can we better recognise, celebrate and value the skills, contribution and experience of older people in workplaces?
7. How can we support older people to remain in or re-enter the workforce?
8. What safeguards can be put in place to prevent age discrimination in the workplace?
9. How can we support older Canberrans facing financial difficulties?



## Housing

Secure, suitable and affordable housing supports older people to age independently and remain active in their community.

### What the data and research say

- Canberra is among the most expensive cities in which to rent in Australia and Canberrans on low incomes are experiencing high levels of rental stress (paying more than 30% of their income on rent).<sup>21</sup>
- An increasing number of older people in Australia live in private rental.<sup>22</sup>
- Homelessness is a serious concern for many older Australians with certain groups more at risk due to existing barriers and discrimination.<sup>23</sup> For example:
  - Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander men aged 55 and over have 8 times the rate of homelessness compared to other men in the same age group. Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women aged 55 and over have over 14 times the rate of homelessness compared to other women in the same age group.
  - In 2022-23, 189 older woman (aged 55 years and over) received support from specialist homelessness services in the ACT.

### Feedback from previous consultations

- Canberrans want more affordable, appropriate housing to help them live safely, independently, and comfortably, in the place they want, for as long as possible (ageing in place). This includes more medium scale housing, town houses, separate titles, access to backyards, and more ground level living rather than apartment living. Support to age in place reduces premature entry to aged care facilities.
- The rental market does not support ageing in place and more social housing options are required for older people who do not own their own home.
- Older women face additional challenges in securing housing. This has also been reported as an issue for trans and gender diverse older people.
- Moving into retirement villages and age care facilities can be challenging. This is due to costs, complex contracts requiring legal and financial expertise, power imbalances between residents and village operators, and access to dispute resolution. In addition, retirement villages may not meet the needs of LGBTIQ+ Canberrans, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, and culturally and linguistically diverse people.

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<sup>21</sup> ACT Council of Social Service Inc. (ACTCOSS), [2023 Cost of living report: the gendered nature of cost of living for low-income households in Canberra](#), ACTCOSS, 2023, accessed 5 December 2023.

<sup>22</sup> W Stone et al., [Ageing in a housing crisis: older people's insecurity and homelessness in Australia](#), Swinburne University of Technology, 2023, accessed 5 December 2023.

<sup>23</sup> W Stone et al., [Ageing in a housing crisis: older people's insecurity and homelessness in Australia](#); There is a lack of the ACT specific data on housing and homelessness particularly for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of people.



## What the ACT Government is already doing

- Implementing the ACT Housing Strategy to:
  - ensure there is an equitable, diverse, and sustainable supply of housing.
  - reduce homelessness.
  - strengthen social housing assistance.
  - increase affordable rental and home ownership.
  - Funding a free Housing Options Advisory Service through the Council of Ageing ACT (COTA ACT). This service assists older Canberrans plan for retirement, downsize, move to a retirement village or aged care home, or access supports in their own home.
  - Offering [mortgage relief](#) and [rates assistance](#) to support eligible older people to stay in their homes if they are in financial difficulty.
  - Delivering an [Affordable Rental Scheme](#) for older people on low incomes.
  - Reducing and deferring conveyancing fees through the [Pensioner Duty Concession Scheme](#) and the [Pensioner Duty Deferral Scheme](#) so pensioners can move into housing more suited to their needs.
  - Designing and developing dedicated, long-term public housing for older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in collaboration with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body. Fifteen homes have been built across the ACT.
  - Providing Tenant Participation Grants (TPG) of up to \$400 to tenants and their families to support participation in a range of activities for physical, social and personal development. Of the 211 recipients in 2023, 10 were older Canberrans.

## What ACT Government would like to know:

10. How can we make housing in Canberra more suitable for older Canberrans?
11. What are some alternative housing models for older people?
12. What are some of the ways we can support people at higher risk of homelessness?
13. Are there any other issues or concerns we should be considering in relation to housing for older people in Canberra?

## Access and connection

### Active ageing is supported by:

- public transport which is affordable and enables older people to get around easily, connect with their community and access places, activities, services and facilities.
- clean, well-maintained and secure environments with recreational areas, rest areas, well-developed and safe pedestrian and building infrastructure.
- information which helps people stay connected with events, news and activities.

### What the data and research say

- More than 90% of older Canberrans rate Canberra as a good place to live with good quality facilities, services and access.<sup>24</sup>
- Older Canberrans are also more likely than younger people to report they find it easy to get to places.<sup>25</sup>
- Being able to access, afford, and effectively use digital technologies is increasingly important to participate fully in society.<sup>26</sup>

### Feedback from previous consultations

- More public transport options are needed to support inclusion and access, including expansion of the flexible bus service.
- Older people want more opportunities to contribute to the design of Canberra's town centres and suburbs.
- There is need to address long waiting lists to access services such as health, housing, and aged care.
- Services need to be more visible and include language support and options for face-to-face contact rather than relying solely on the internet or phone.
- Older Canberrans want access to more domestic assistance services and want improved aged care services, particularly through staff training.
- Some older people find it difficult to access digital services and are concerned about privacy, data leaks, and safe storage of personal information.

### What the ACT Government is already doing

- Improving engagement and communication with older Canberrans through targeted resources, feedback panels (e.g. YourSay) and by featuring more older Canberrans in government advertising.

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<sup>24</sup> ACT Government, [Connection to Canberra – ACT Wellbeing Framework \[website\]](#), Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, 2023, accessed 15 March 2024.

<sup>25</sup> ACT Government, [Transport use and access – ACT Wellbeing Framework \[website\]](#), Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, 2023, accessed 15 March 2024.

<sup>26</sup> J Thomas et al., [Measuring Australia's Digital Divide: Australian Digital Inclusion Index: 2023](#), ARC Centre of Excellence for Automated Decision-Making and Society, RMIT University, Swinburne University of Technology, and Telstra, 2023, accessed 5 December 2023.

- Consulting with older Canberrans on the design and development of suburbs and urban renewal projects.
- Implementing the [Age Friendly Suburbs Program](#) which focuses on improving access to neighbourhoods by older people and people with specific mobility needs. Since the program began in 2015-16, improvements have been made in 12 suburbs. Works are underway in an additional 4 suburbs. This program has improved footpaths and lighting and upgraded shopping centres and public toilets.
- Promoting the benefits of the Seniors Card, particularly public transport concessions, to encourage increased uptake.
- Piloting dementia-friendly spaces in ACT Government shopfronts and supporting dementia-friendly audits for ACT Government events, such as the National Multicultural Festival.

#### **What the ACT Government would like to know:**

14. How can we make public transport easier to access?
15. How can we make it easier for you to navigate digital and/or online services and platforms?  
Please tell us more about your experiences.
16. How can we design spaces to support you to be active members of your community?

## Respect, inclusion and belonging

Most people want and need to feel respected, included, and socially connected. Being able to participate in community activities and to live free from discrimination or abuse promotes active ageing.

Respecting and celebrating the contribution older Canberrans make to the socio-cultural fabric of our city benefits people of all ages. It is an opportunity for us to value people's stories and their life experiences, to help us collectively grow. It facilitates relationships across generations and improves inclusion and belonging.<sup>27</sup>

### What the data and research say

- Older Canberrans report highest levels of inclusion and belonging.<sup>28</sup>
- Older Canberrans report the highest levels of volunteering (41% of 65+ year olds and 40.5% of 50-64 year olds compared to 26.6% of those under 50), and the strongest sense of social connection. However, they are less likely to participate in community events and activities.<sup>29</sup>
- Volunteering can benefit older people by improving life satisfaction, and bringing a new sense of purpose, identity and sense of belonging.<sup>30</sup>

### Feedback from previous consultations

- Some older people experience stigma and shame when asking for help.
- More dementia-friendly communities and services are needed to build social connection.
- Activities and outreach need to be tailored for harder to reach communities, including for isolated LGBTIQ+ people, culturally and linguistically diverse people, and people with disability.
- Prioritise community safety so older people feel safe and welcome when participating in activities outside their homes.
- Create more opportunities for leadership, representation and community participation.
- Actively address ageism and other forms of discrimination.
- Fund services to address abuse and mistreatment of older people including community education about existing support services.
- Many organisations in the ACT rely on older volunteers who are often retired. However, this pool of volunteers is decreasing. There is a need to better support existing older volunteers, so they remain, and to attract new volunteers.

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<sup>27</sup> World Health Organisation, [Creating age-friendly cities and communities \[website\]](#), accessed 21 March 2024.

<sup>28</sup> ACT Government, [Sense of belonging and inclusion - ACT Wellbeing Framework \[website\]](#), Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, 2023, accessed 20 March 2024.

<sup>29</sup> ACT Government, [Social connection - ACT Wellbeing Framework \[website\]](#), Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate, 2023, accessed 7 March 2024.

<sup>30</sup> J Stuart et al., [The impacts of volunteering on the subjective wellbeing of volunteers: A rapid evidence assessment](#), What Works Wellbeing, 2020, accessed 15 March 2024.

## What the ACT Government is already doing

- Promoting volunteering opportunities, intergenerational initiatives, and more age-friendly communication and information through the Age-Friendly City Plan.
- Promoting the achievements of older Canberrans through the Canberra Citizen of the Year, Canberra Gold Awards, ACT Senior Australian of the Year and Australian Honours' awards.
- Funding a range of initiatives to promote social participation through the ACT Seniors Grant Program.
- Delivering dementia training to all staff working in Access Canberra Service Centres. This will be part of the regular service centre training program.
- Introducing a new complaints function for abuse, neglect or exploitation of vulnerable people (ACT Human Rights Commission). The Commission has also developed a print media and radio campaign to promote the rights of older people, including those relating to abuse, mistreatment and age discrimination.
- Introducing new laws to make abuse of older people a criminal offence.
- Implementing actions for the ACT under the first *National Plan to Respond to Abuse of Older People 2019-2023* and supporting development of the Second National Plan.
- Implementing the first Capital of Equality Strategy in 2019-2023 which outlines the long-term vision for Canberra to be the most LGBTIQ+ welcoming and inclusive city in Australia. Currently developing the second Capital of Equality Strategy.
- Developing an ACT Disability Strategy in support of people with disability of all ages.

## What the ACT Government would like to know:

17. How can we better celebrate the contribution older Canberrans make to the fabric of our city?
18. What are some of the ways we can address social isolation and enhance connection and a sense of belonging for older people from all backgrounds in Canberra?
19. How can we support you to participate in community events and activities?
20. What other ideas do you have for how we can make Canberra a more Age-Friendly City?

## Examples of other age friendly initiatives

<p>Location: Akita, Japan</p> <p><b>Age-friendly partners:</b> private organisations register as age-friendly partners to make Akita City a better place to grow older. Working with government bodies, they have installed more public benches, promoted the employment of older people, and placed automated external defibrillators in offices and neighbourhoods.</p>
<p>Location: Clarence, Tasmania, Australia</p> <p><b>Live Well Live Long Program:</b> provides a free, informative, interactive, and educational program at the Clarence Integrated Care Health Centre (ICC) to support health and wellness. It focuses on maintaining independence and making positive lifestyle changes. Three, 12-week programs are held each year at the ICC and are free to participants.</p>
<p>Location: Kiama, Australia</p> <p><b>Health Moves:</b> provides a fun, friendly and supportive environment for people with chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart problems, high cholesterol, blood pressure or osteoarthritis, to get their health back on track.</p> <p>The 12-week program includes exercise and education sessions on healthy living. Eligible participants can access subsidised membership of the gym for three months.</p>
<p>Location: Melville, Australia</p> <p><b>Melville Age Friendly Accessible Business (MAFAB) Network:</b> works with local businesses to implement age-friendly and accessible initiatives to support the older population, including those living with dementia and people with disabilities.</p>
<p>Location: Stargard, Poland</p> <p><b>Handyperson for older citizens:</b> offers free help with basic home maintenance for older people over 75 with a Seniors Card.</p>
<p>Location: Central and Western District, China</p> <p><b>“Sunshine Action” Neighbourhood Caring Project 2021-2022:</b> volunteers ran activities for older people living alone or with limited social connection. These included home visits,</p>

education sessions on how to use smartphones, YouTube video tours of Hong Kong, and functions to celebrate festivals and events.

More information about these initiatives is available in the [Global Database of Age-friendly Practices](#).

## Next Steps

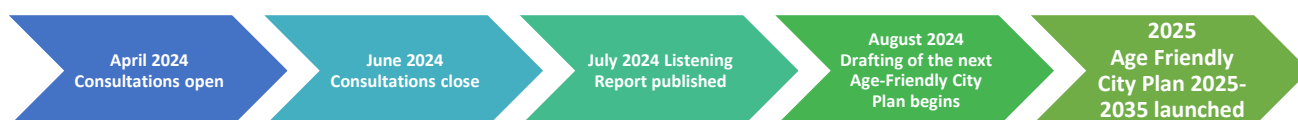
Please send us your feedback by 28 June 2024.

You can provide your feedback by:

- completing an [on-line survey](#)
- attending an [in-person discussion at an ACT Library](#)
- [uploading a written submission](#) – this could be everything from a short letter to a detailed multi-page report

**Don't forget you can choose to answer some or all of the questions contained in this discussion paper.**

Once we have considered all feedback provided through the consultation process, we will create a listening report which summarises the key themes, current problems and new opportunities. Then, we will draft the next 10-year Age-Friendly City Plan for launch in 2025.





## Appendix 1 - Demographics<sup>31</sup>

Canberra has the fastest growing population in Australia. Our community is increasingly diverse and ageing.

In 2021, there were 62,203 people over the age of 65 living in the ACT, which is approximately 13.3% of the total population. Of these, 45.5% were men and 54.5% were women.<sup>32</sup> By 2060, there are expected to be over 114,000 people over the age of 65 living in Canberra. The 65+ years age group across all genders is expected to increase from 13.3% of the population in June 2021 to 14.6% in June 2060.

More than 41.7% of the people over the age of 65 living in the ACT were born overseas (46% men and 54% women).

There are 388 people over the age of 65 (49.2% men and 50.8% women) who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in the ACT. Overall, 4.3% of people who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander are above the age of 65, which is significantly lower than the 13.7% for the wider ACT population. When we include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over the age of 55 and 50, the percentage increases to 10.8% and 15.4% respectively.

There are 5,595 people over the age of 65 who have served in the Australian Defence Force (approximately 9% of the total population over the age of 65).

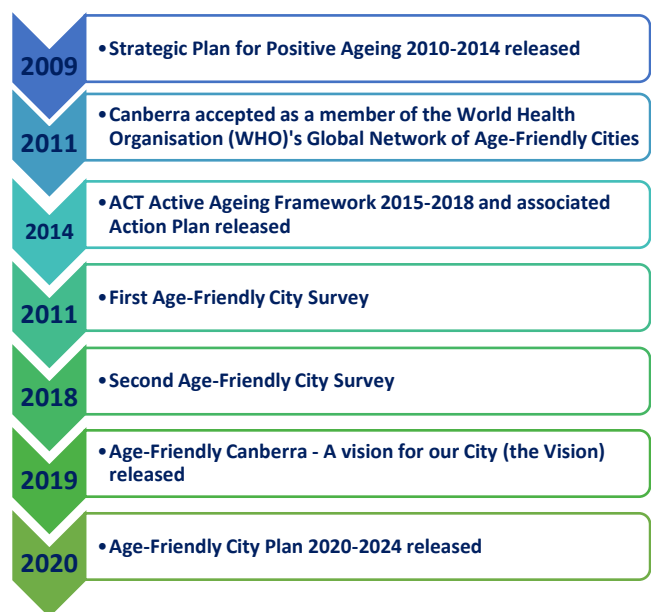
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<sup>31</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), [Australian Capital Territory 2021 census community profiles](#), ABS website, 2021, accessed 5 December 2023.

<sup>32</sup> The ABS census data currently does not provide figures for individuals who are non-binary and/or do not identify as male or female. ACT has recently finalised the *Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics, and Sexual Orientation Variables Data – Common Data Standard*, which will improve future data collection and provide more inclusive data.

## Appendix 2 - Our journey to becoming an Age-Friendly City

Since 2009, the ACT Government, with input from its Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing, has been actively working to drive better support, connections, and initiatives for older Canberrans.



In December 2009, the ACT Government launched the ACT Strategic Plan for Positive Ageing 2010-2014: Towards an Age-Friendly City.

In 2011, Canberra was accepted as a member of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities (the Network). The Network was established in 2010 to connect cities, communities, and organisations worldwide with the common vision of making their community a great place in which to grow old. Membership of the Network reflects cities' commitment to listen to the needs of their ageing population and work collaboratively across sectors to create age-friendly physical and social environments.

The ACT ran its first Age-Friendly City survey in 2011 and had 1,972 responses. The survey found there was overall satisfaction with Canberra's infrastructure, amenities, and facilities and Canberra was moving towards being an Age-Friendly City. However, there was room for improvement, particularly in relation to transport and mobility.

In 2015, the *ACT Active Ageing Framework 2015-2018* was developed following extensive community consultation. It required ACT Government directorates to incorporate active ageing principles into mainstream policies such as health, transport, employment, housing, and social inclusion. The associated Action Plan set out practical initiatives to encourage Canberrans to remain active, healthy, and independent as they aged.

In 2018, 768 older Canberrans participated in the next Age-Friendly City Survey. Most indicated they were involved in the community, were active and healthy, and could access the information and services they needed. However, the results highlighted there was still a need to address age-based discrimination, provide a better mix of housing options, and improve the city's infrastructure to make it more accessible. The insights gained from the survey guided the development of the 2019 [Age-Friendly Canberra- A Vision for Our City](#) (the Vision). The Vision identified 12 principles under four focus areas which provided a foundation for the current *Age-Friendly City Plan 2020-2024*.

Development of the 2025-35 Age-Friendly City Plan will consider other ACT and Australian Government plans and strategies which include priorities and activities for older people, including:

- [ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028](#)
- [ACT Housing Strategy 2018-2028](#)
- [Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-31](#)

- [ACT Disability Strategy \(currently under development\)](#)
- [ACT Disability Health Strategy \(currently under development\)](#)
- [ACT Women's Plan 2016-2026](#)
- [ACT Multiculturalism Act 2023](#)
- [ACT Wellbeing Framework 2020](#)
- [Healthy Canberra: ACT Preventive Health Plan 2020-2025](#)
- [Towards our Vision: Re-envisioning Older Persons Mental Health and Wellbeing in the ACT Strategy 2022-2026](#)
- [Capital of Equality Strategy 2019-2023](#)
- [ACT Transport Strategy 2020](#)
- [National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians \(Elder Abuse\) 2019-2023](#), with specific actions for the ACT incorporated in the ACT Government's [Age-Friendly City Plan 2020-2024](#).