

# Ageing Well Background Paper



*An intergenerational Play Street event in Hectorville*

*A safe, sustainable, vibrant Community*

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## Kaurna Acknowledgement



Local elder Ivan-Tiwu Copley (right) and Reconciliation Advisory Committee Chair and local resident Shouwn Oosting (left)

“Campbelltown City Council acknowledges that we meet on the traditional Country of the Kaurna people and respect their physical and spiritual connection to Country. We as Council will act in a way that pays respect to Kaurna Heritage. We also acknowledge elders past, present, and future and the continuing importance of their living culture.”

*"You become an Elder because you have lived your life in a particular fashion giving service to your community. Your wider group will decide that you've reached a milestone and that you are then an Elder."<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Respect for Elders and culture - Creative Spirits, retrieved from <https://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/people/respect-for-elders-and-culture>

## About the Background Paper

Council's Ageing Well Plan Background Paper tells the story of older people living in Campbelltown and their experience of living in the area as told by the individual themselves or organisations and groups who work with them.

This Background Paper was developed based on conversations with residents through interviews, surveys, observations, conversations and local knowledge shared by the Community.

This was achieved through:

- Ageing Well Expo and Celebration
- Morning and afternoon teas, lunches and dinners
- Neighbourhood BBQ's
- Relationships with community members, groups, clubs, churches and organisations
- Formal surveys
- Focus groups
- Projects
- Community consultation processes
- Council volunteers
- Daily interactions between staff and community
- Formal research
- Advice from the Ageing Well Advisory Committee
- Input from Not-for-Profit groups and providers

The Ageing Well Plan and Background Paper support and are informed by the overarching Community Plan and Background Paper.

### 60 or 65?

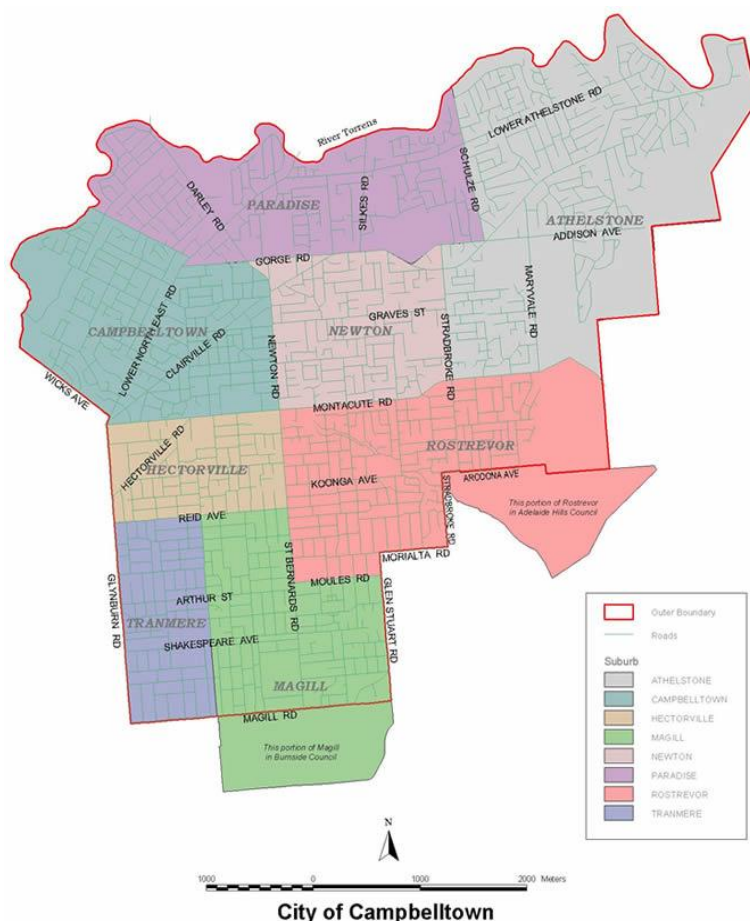
Why do we refer to 60 and 65 when talking about the 'Ageing Well' age? Government agencies, researchers and communities when talking about 'Older People' use both ages. For example, the World Health Organisation refers to people aged 60 and older, whilst the Australian Census breaks down analysis of older people into a 65+ grouping. In this paper, the Ageing Well age we refer to is 60+ but sometimes '65+' data will also be referenced.

## About Campbelltown

The City of Campbelltown is located in Adelaide's inner eastern suburbs - about 6 kilometres from the Adelaide GPO. The city is bounded by the River Torrens and the City of Tea Tree Gully in the north, the District of Adelaide Hills in the east, the City of Burnside in the south, the City of Norwood Payneham St Peters in the west and the City of Port Adelaide Enfield in the north-west.

The city includes the suburbs of Athelstone, Campbelltown, Hectorville, Magill (part), Newton, Paradise, Rostrevor (part) and Tranmere.

In 2021 the population of Campbelltown was 55,475, of which 14,205 were 60+. The population forecast for 2031 is 63,393 residents of which 16,343 will be 60+, and in 2041 a population of 71,039 of which 18,476 residents will be 60+.



Campbelltown Population	2021	2031	2041
Age group (years)	Actual	Projected	Projected
60 to 64	3,015	3,326	3,515
65 to 69	2,591	3,138	3,309
70 to 74	2,563	2,813	3,220
75 to 79	2,209	2,405	2,966
80 to 84	1,898	2,235	2,632
85 and over	1,929	2,426	2,834
<b>Total number of people in Campbelltown</b>	<b>54,814</b>	<b>63,693</b>	<b>71,039</b>

## Ageing Well Plan Focus Areas

All of the conversations have led to the development of the Ageing Well Plan five themes with a number of focus areas within each theme. This paper tells the story of older residents in Campbelltown in the context of these themes and focus areas.

Themes	Focus Areas
<b>My Neighbourhood</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Home and neighbours</li><li>• Transport</li><li>• Public places and spaces</li><li>• Age friendly communities</li></ul>
<b>My Opportunity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Employment, learning and volunteering</li><li>• Leisure and enjoyment</li></ul>
<b>My Health and Wellbeing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wellbeing activities</li><li>• Health and aged care support services</li><li>• End of life choice</li></ul>
<b>My Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Access to information and support</li><li>• Build capacity in using technology</li></ul>
<b>My Value</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Being valued</li><li>• A sense of belonging</li></ul>



## My Neighbourhood

The Neighbourhoods of Campbelltown comprises the collective suburbs of Athelstone, Paradise, Rostrevor, Newton, Campbelltown, Hectorville, Tranmere and Magill. Within each of these suburbs are often smaller neighbourhoods, areas, cul-de-sacs and groups of streets that can have their own culture, 'vibe' and personality, as a natural result of the people residing in this area and the way they choose to live and interact.

### **Who we are & where we are from**

In 2021, 11,190 or 20.4% of the City of Campbelltown's population were aged 65 years or more.

- The largest ancestry groups were Italian, English and Australian, followed by Chinese and Scottish.
- There were also large groups of residents with Irish, Indian, German and Greek ancestry.
- The majority of people born outside Australia were born in Italy, China, India and United Kingdom; however, the number of people born in Italy has reduced since 2016. In the last 4 years, 4,315 residents of all ages are new arrivals to Australia.
- Campbelltown is a diverse community, having a range of people with various racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, religious and cultural backgrounds and lifestyles.
- Many people who move to Campbelltown from other countries and cultures report feeling welcomed and included.
- Many older people of Italian descent migrated to Campbelltown in the 1950s and 60s when they were children. Their parents came to build a new and better life for their family.
- Many older Italian people speak Italian as their preferred language, and some do not read nor write in Italian nor English. They rely on verbal communication and ask their children to support them in reading literature and documents in English when it is needed.
- Many older people of Mandarin and Cantonese background are very technologically literate and communicate regularly through online platform WeChat. This platform allows them to communicate in their mother tongue with others in Australia who are from their culture, and others in their homeland, and allows them to continue to be part of the Chinese cultural community, maintaining a sense of their Chinese identity.



*“I recall feeling very different from the ‘other children’ but being welcomed. I still feel like Adelaide is home but not fully. Italy is still home to me” – resident of Italian descent, 75.*

*“I moved to Campbelltown from the Yorke Peninsula to be closer to family. I chose the residential village because of its location and my specific unit because it has a lovely garden area and is a good size” – resident of Leabrook Lodge, 65,*

*“I moved here 20 years ago and felt extremely welcomed. It now feels like home” – Older resident of Cantonese descent and member of Tong De Association.*



## Home

- Older people want to age in place and are reluctant to move from their existing networks.
- Some older people find themselves in a position where their mortgage has been paid and the house is owned freehold.
- Older people in Campbelltown primarily live independently in their own homes. This might be the traditional family home, a smaller private house or unit, community housing or a unit in an independent living retirement village.
- Older people living independently in Campbelltown tend to live alone or as a couple in their own home. Intergenerational living is not generally a way of living for most people and can vary by culture and family.
- Older people want to feel safe in their homes. This includes feeling that the street in which they live is safe, their property provides suitable physical supports such as handrails or ramps instead of stairs, they have protection from intruders, from a changing climate, from increasing costs of living and from the financial risk of losing their homes.

- My Aged Care's Commonwealth Home Support Program and Home Care Packages help support older people in providing physical supports and help in maintaining the home.
- Public and social housing, provided by Housing SA and non-government organisations, is available in Campbelltown. However, as in most parts of Australia, stock was significantly reduced in recent decades, leaving a significant shortfall in affordable housing stock and as a result, can often be difficult to obtain, leaving older people, who have limited capacity to earn additional income, at risk of homelessness.
- Nationally, older single women aged over 55 are eight times more likely to be homeless, double the growth rate for people experiencing homelessness in Australia.

### **Independent living and Residential Aged Care**

- Those that require a higher level of care might live in a fully supported Residential Aged Care Home.
- There are 11 independent living villages and 7 aged care homes. Some cater to more than one type of accommodation and care.
- Independent Living Villages vary across the Council area, from very large villages such as ACH's James Evans Court in Magill through to smaller villages such as ECH Marchant Court in Athelstone.
- Warrina Homes at Paradise offers serviced apartments, an option for older people who still want to live independently but do not want a garden and want meals provided.
- Larger villages generally have a dedicated paid staff member onsite to assist residents and deal with village matters. Others have off-site contacts who come to assist when required.
- Often a social coordinator or committee organises village gatherings and activities in communal areas.
- Some have outdoor areas with chairs and tables, BBQs and shaded seating.
- Some villages have found that since Covid, many residents have remained relatively isolated and any momentum for social activities is difficult to establish. Others have bounced back relatively unscathed, and residents are keen to connect and be involved.
- At many villages, there are still residents who do not know other residents; proximity does not ensure neighbourly connection and friendship.

*“We have a great kitchen and communal area. We organise our own morning teas, card games, and this month we are having a movie night with popcorn!”*

*– Village Resident, 70s.*

*“There are about 20 men living in the village, most of which live alone. They seem to keep to themselves and don’t organise activities like the women do”*

*– Village Resident, 70s.*

- There is a genuine desire for Independent Living Village staff to support residents and assist them in improving wellbeing and social connection.
- In some locations, staff working to support these facilities are responsible for more than one site and they are responsible for many residents. Staff turnover can result in a disconnect between management and residents.
- Residential aged care facilities have staff who look after the day-to-day needs of residents, including social activities. Some have social programs that can be used by non-residents.

*“Often, I’m spread so thin across several sites. I can spend hours with one client helping them with My Aged Care or something else that needs sorting out, sometimes because the family aren’t there or can’t help, and it makes it difficult to get to everyone else. I do my best but I never feel like I quite get to everything!”* – Village Manager

## **Downsizing**

- Some people want to remain in the family home until they pass away, whereas others come to find a larger house and garden a burden to maintain, and willingly downsize into a smaller home, often selling a lifetime of memories, including household items, personal effects and furnishings collected through the years.
- On visiting the Community Shed, a Campbelltown resident reminisced that when he had downsized, he had ‘almost given away’ tools and machinery just like he’d seen at the Shed, as there was no room for these things in the new unit.
- When downsizing, some older people, often men, feel that they have lost purpose, not having the shed or garage to potter around. However, others feel a sense of relief that the weight of responsibility is gone and don’t look back.

*“It’s about mindset and how you look at your life. I don’t look back, I look forward and enjoy what I can do now”* – Male, 78.

## **Housing Options Discussion Paper**

- A discussion paper titled 'Housing Options for Older People' was produced by Council in 2020. This paper contains detailed research on housing policy, the role of housing, housing in Campbelltown and rethinking housing in the future.

[https://www.campbelltown.sa.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0020/1101962/Discussion-Paper-Housing-Options-for-Older-People.pdf](https://www.campbelltown.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0020/1101962/Discussion-Paper-Housing-Options-for-Older-People.pdf)

## **Cost of living**

- The cost of living in recent years causes great financial strain. Where due to personal situations, they might have never been able to purchase their own home or have stopped purchasing a home and find themselves unexpectedly renting in later life in a market where rents have significantly increased.
- There are concerns over the rising costs of living, paying utilities and rates, and the cost of groceries in recent years.
- Some live on fixed incomes from retirement savings or the Aged Pension and have concerns over having enough to make ends meet. Situations are often compounded by a lifetime of low wages, gaps in employment, underemployment, and limited accumulated financial resources (as reported in the Council of the Ageing (COTA) SA submission to the Housing and Homelessness Support Strategy).
- Older people want housing to be affordable, whether they own their home, are paying a mortgage, renting or living in a village or in supported accommodation.
- Local support service Vinnies operate out of St Francis of Assisi, providing residents who need support with food with packages to help them. They are also there for a chat and to help refer them to other support services where possible.
- Paradise Garden Village, a retirement home on Lower North East Road, Paradise is one of the only villages in Campbelltown offering retirement accommodation and part board on a rental basis, as a percentage of the aged pension/rental assistance with few other financial conditions.

## **Transport**

*"We need to be people focused rather than just focusing on getting around by car" – Female, 60s.*

- Older people want to easily navigate getting around Campbelltown by all
- forms of transport: by foot, bike, car, gopher and public and community bus.
- Residents without a vehicle use public buses and the Community Bus, taxis and aged care transport services provided by CHSP and Home Care Package providers such as Campbelltown Council and Coordinated Italian Committee Inc (CIC).
- Some older residents decide to stop driving or change their driving behaviours for a range of reasons.

This can include:

- not wanting to drive at night or in unfamiliar places but being happy to drive locally in daylight.
- Not wanting to complete the annual self-assessment to renew a driver's licence annually.
- Not wanting to engage a medical practitioner to complete the self-assessment if there is a medical condition.
- Not passing the self-assessment process.
- Experiencing a vehicle accident and no longer wanting to drive or being pressured by family to give up driving.
- Feeling that it might no longer be safe to operate a motor vehicle.
- The loss of owning and operating a motor vehicle can impact an older person's independence and engagement in community life. It is imperative that other transport options for undertaking daily activities such as shopping, socialising and maintaining independence are available.
- Some older people use gophers to move around the community locally. Adequate parking spaces are necessary for these vehicles. Sometimes gophers need to go on to the road because of damaged footpaths, and permapine fencing often restricts access to streets and laneways.

## Community Bus



*“I take the Community Bus to the shops each week. I see friendly faces and have a chat on the bus, and I can do my own shopping and get home myself”-  
Female, 75.*

- Campbelltown Council’s Community Bus runs on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings. The bus drives in loops around Campbelltown’s suburbs, picking up and dropping off residents at local shopping centres and back home.
- The Community Bus operates with a volunteer driver and helper. Often these volunteers provide support to passengers in being a friendly face, supporting them in getting on and off the bus, and helping with bags of groceries.
- Some people find the bus to be a key part of their weekly social interaction, seeing the same faces each week and connecting with the volunteers. It provides a way of Council connecting with older residents who might live alone and a way to identify if they need extra support, through conversations with volunteers and requests for help.



## **Public Transport**

- Residents find that taking a public bus can be convenient for getting to the city or to Paradise Interchange, but not commuting across Campbelltown to get to appointments or social activities, so often must rely on other services or miss out.
- Some older people find navigating public transport confusing or overwhelming. Whilst paper timetables are still available, buses require pre-paid tickets to be purchased from local stores, but this information, in addition to most information relating to public transport is mainly online.
- If older people don't use the Internet or have a smartphone, they are often excluded from this information and are less likely to use this service.
- Bus stops with seating and shelter are desirable as they allow a rest between walking to the stop and boarding the bus. They also serve a helpful purpose for older people going for a walk who need to take a rest during their outing.

## **Limitations of Current Transport Options**

- Often services provided by My Aged Care and Council transport providers only operate on weekdays during the day. At weekends, people relying on these services are unable to get around Campbelltown unless they use taxi services. Half-price taxi vouchers are available to some older people but the qualification criteria are very high (only those who cannot walk more than 100 metres qualify).
- It is acknowledged that whilst the Community Bus is well used and useful to many, it has limitations in the hours and locations in which it runs, and as it is a heavy vehicle it can only be driven by volunteers with a heavy vehicle licence.
- A review of Council provided transport would identify where improvements could be made to better service older residents.

## **Public places**

- Many older residents frequent Campbelltown's public places such as the Library and the ARC, and open spaces including Thorndon Park, River Torrens Linear Park / Karrawirra Parri, local parks and creek walking tracks, and outdoor exercise equipment.
- Shopping centres, cafés and restaurants are key places to connect with others. These places often form part of older people's regular routines where they see familiar faces and exchange conversation.



*“When I go to Mercatos, for example, you’re remembered, you’re known. If I’m feeling like a coffee I can go anywhere and have a coffee, but I’ll go there because there’s this sense of belonging and someone will know my face” - Female, 57.*

*“The library is always busy. If you’re feeling lonely, it’s a good place to go, because people are all around you: - Female, 70.*

- Older people want Campbelltown to have nearby, attractive, safe and communal public spaces that encourage interactions and engagement with all people within the community, not just other older people.
- When navigating public spaces, older people want safety from inclement weather and from the darkness in the evenings and night-time. They need appropriate seating including seating with back and arm rests, safe and well-lit pathways without trip hazards.
- Many people, including many older people want new and upgraded public places and spaces to be designed using a people-centric approach rather than prioritising vehicles.
- Older people want to see themselves represented in advertising, print and media in public places. They want to see a representation of all older people, not just those who are fit, mobile and active.

*“I love the green trees and hills. They make me feel alive” Female, 70.*

*“I enjoy exercising in the non-threatening and pleasant surroundings of Thorndon Park” – Female, 70s.*

*“I want a place to sit when I’m out, where I can stop and chat to someone, to face them and enjoy being outside with company” – Female, 70s.*

## **Neighbourhood Connection**

- Most older people want to connect to a neighbour, and to feel part of their neighbourhood. This provides a sense of safety, belonging and feeling part of a community.
- Safety and belonging are often one motivating factor in the decision to move into an Independent Living Village where residents feel they are safe walking around the Village, especially at night or in the early hours when insomnia strikes, and if a medical incident was to occur a neighbour could be sought for assistance and support.

*“Knowing your neighbours makes you feel more connected and feel safer” – Female, 75.*

*“One of the reasons I feel that I belong is because I have a very good relationship with my neighbours. We’re all independent, but the common thing we have, is that there’s that caring attitude toward each other, and the helpfulness” - Female 63.*

## **Age Friendly Communities**

Age-friendly communities enable people of all ages to actively participate in community life. They ensure older people are free from age-related barriers that prevent their participation in the community in which they live.

A recent self-assessment was undertaken by Council to view Campbelltown through an age-friendly lens, to identify areas where we are doing well and areas where improvements can be made. It identified that Campbelltown is a great age-friendly community in opportunities for:

- participation for older people
- sharing information
- providing great age-friendly services including the Library and Campbelltown Home Support Program
- supporting age-friendly service, social and interest groups within the area.

Areas where improvement can be made include the built environment, employment opportunities and opening the conversation on the impacts of ageism on older people.

## My Opportunity

Opportunities for older people to engage in community life is the gateway that opens doors to connecting with others, learning, personal development, creating a rich and interesting life in the later years of life. Often when people have left the permanent workforce or become empty nesters, their purpose and meaning, and connections with others. Opportunities such as employment, volunteering and social engagement and pursuing interests help build confident and contribute to greater wellbeing and sense of purpose.

### Employment

- Many older people want to continue working past the prescribed retirement age.
- Work provides a sense of capability, purpose and meaning, income and brings opportunities for social interaction with others.
- Experience, reliability, patience, strong work ethic and mentoring skills are just some of the great benefits older workers bring to an organisation.
- Some organisations actively recruit and support older workers to continue working, particularly as the population is ageing. They need to ensure they offer an age-friendly workplace and understand the needs of workers as they age.
- Some workers are subject to aged-related workplace discrimination and are not able to continue working until they are ready to retire. Employers need to be supported in awareness of aged-based discrimination and to understand the value that older worker brings to their organisation.
- It is important that older workers promote themselves in a contemporary employment market, including the use of electronic applications, resumes and online interviews.

*“How does someone who has lost their work-related social connections as a result of retirement, find new ones” – Male, 68*

*“When I retired, I felt out of it” – Male, 70s*

### Volunteering

- In Campbelltown there are many ways older people volunteer. Campbelltown Council’s Volunteering Program currently attracts 221 volunteers of which:
  - 71% are over 60.
  - 22% or 48 are 60 – 66.

50% or 156 are 67+

- Campbelltown Council's volunteers often comment that they get more out of volunteering than they give, they enjoy meeting new people and making connections within the community, and having volunteering as part of their regular schedule gives them a sense of purpose and structure.
- Volunteering is good for people as helps improve mental and physical health outcomes, and for the community it contributes significantly to the quality and vibrancy of our society.
- Older people, who might find themselves with more time having been relieved of work or family pressures, can find themselves at a loose end, looking for meaning and purpose in their lives.
- Volunteering plays a valuable role in providing opportunities for focusing on and connecting with others, working towards a cause or area of interest, pursuing a passion, learning new skills, building confidence and self-esteem, making new friends and feeling needed and valued.
- Volunteering opportunities that are flexible and interesting are highly sought
- Volunteering can also lead to new connections and paid opportunities.

*“Volunteering can lead to employment” – Male, 68*

- Other local organisations and volunteer initiatives include:
  - Meals on Wheels
  - CFS
  - SES
  - Scouts Australia
  - Service Clubs
  - Sporting Clubs
  - Committees
  - Schools

*“It was lovely to help out today. and I will look out for another opportunity to “give an hour”” – Female, 70s.*

## Learning



- Continuing lifelong learning into retirement years is an important part of life as we age.
- It improves mental wellbeing, strengthens physical health and helps

forge new social connections.

- Lifelong learning sits at the heart of local organisations such as the University of the Third Age (U3A). U3A make use of people's existing skills sets, which can be utilised for training and group activities. These skills are shared amongst others who in turn learn and can be used in their lives and shared with others.

*“I feel happy to be learning about new things” – Female, 70s in response to feedback regarding the Expo 2021*

- Local learning opportunities come from the Campbelltown Library where there are Digital Literacy classes, Annual events such as Adelaide Writers Week and Campbelltown Writers Festival.
- Campbelltown is fortunate to have a great variety of regular and one-off activities that connect older people with learning and skill development.

This includes:

- sewing and embroidery
  - movie screenings
  - information talks
  - quilting
  - gardening
  - knitting
  - music and singing.
- The Community Shed also provides an avenue for handywork, using and learning new skills.
  - Older people also get involved in research initiatives with University of South Australia in Magill where they contribute to the research but also benefit from the learning that comes with the exercise.

*“The talk on tea was very informative and the tea tasting opened my eyes to new things” – Male, 60s*

*“On attending the 2021 Ageing Well Expo and Celebration information talk, I was surprised to find out the nutritional needs of the average 70 year old was higher than the average 30 year old “– Male, 70s.*

*“People appeared to be keen to know ways to improve bone & muscle skeletal health in practical, cost-conscious ways. The small space gardening guy was a hit!” – Expo Volunteer, 60s.*

## **Participation**

- Participating in community life, whether in service to others, by exploring creating talents and sharing knowledge with others, or simply enjoying the company of another is an extremely important part of life for older people.
- Often providing a sense of purpose and feelings of being needed, these activities are more than just an activity or date in the diary. They can be the difference between an older person wondering what the point of their life now is and someone that loves and embraces life.
- Campbelltown has a wide range of social, creative, exercise, service club and group activities. Often at low cost, these activities are generally open to all and are welcoming environments for new members.
- Community Cafes such as the Community Connections Café, run by the Rotary Club of Campbelltown and supported by Council is an initiative that has been running since 2021. Tailored to older people, they welcome all people into the café for conversation, connection, exercise, a shared lunch, information talks and companionship.
- Café Connect, operating out of Rostrevor Baptist Church and supported by Council is another community café, targeted to people living with disability and older people.
- Participation in groups and activities is a great way to begin the new journey of forging new connections and friendships.
- People’s need for social interaction and connection are different. For some, they seek out many activities and connection with others to keep at bay feelings of loneliness and boredom; for others, they like to have time alone and peace and quiet. It is important that older people have connection with others that meets their individual needs – one size definitely doesn’t fit everybody.
- Some people that embark on their retirement journey find it difficult to make new social connections, particularly when their work life provided most of their social connection, purpose, meaning and used up much of their time.

- Campbelltown Council produces two booklets containing the details of many programs. The Staying Active and Staying Connected in Campbelltown Guides are produced by Council and distributed freely at Council offices and venues. Individuals contact the group directly and participate in the group session or activity independently.

*“You contribute as well as receive. I think you need to get involved with things to belong, to feel at home in a place. It’s not going to happen unless you make the effort yourself” - Female, 76.*

*“ACH organised a big dinner and 90 residents attended. A couple of the ladies danced and danced all night, they had so much fun! I think their hips were sore the next day, but it was worth it” – Village Manager, James Evans Court.*

*“Our village used to have a social group committee who met and arranged activities for residents, but this committee fell apart some time ago due to Covid and internal politics. Since this time there has been little going on. We are hoping to change this soon” – Village Resident, 60s.*

*“One of our residents was keeping to herself, reading in her room most days and not attending the regular coffee mornings and activities we provide. Checking in on her, she told me that she had spent 40 years running a business, raising a family and being run off her feet. She never had the time to read and always wanted to. Now she is free from responsibility, she gets great pleasure from sitting alone reading. She now attends the occasional get together but really enjoys the solitude of reading in peace and quiet” – Village Manager*

- When working, many people have been used to operating in an intergenerational environment with colleagues of all ages and find that in retirement they tend to socialise with older people almost exclusively, and they miss out on natural intergenerational connectedness.

*“It was great to chat with somebody new. What a great idea” – female, 70s (on attending a CommuniTEA group activity)*

- Bus trips are a popular activity for older people to participate and socialise, as they remove the stress of driving or taking transport to visit another place. Campbelltown Council offer private bus subsidies to help community clubs and groups fund these trips to keep costs low for attendees.



## Leisure



- With retirement comes a great opportunity to explore new passions, to reignite a lost talent or finally pursue a dream that has been held for many years.
- Leisure can mean different things to different people. It can include creativity including exploring creative arts, including visual arts, handicraft, dance, music, theatre, and literature.
- Others might pursue physical activity such as sports, cycling, bushwalking, gardening, DIY and travelling.
- Some activities extend beyond the creative or physical activity, with purpose and meaning for the wider community. An example is local knitting group Knit and Natter. The group meets to knit and share conversation and a cuppa, but produces knitted goods for a range of domestic and international charities including the Royal Adelaide Hospital's neonatal unit, Dementia Australia, and AKWAK (Australian Knitting for War Affected Kids).
- Whatever passion older people pursue, if there is interest and motivation to participate, the benefits to health and wellbeing are evident.

## Enjoyment

- Feelings of happiness and enjoyment are directly linked to living a long life and reduced health conditions.
- Some older people find that with older age comes a decline in physical and mental health that can impact their enjoyment. It is important to find ways to experience happiness and enjoyment, even in small ways. For example, watching the birds in the trees, watching a sunset.

*“I am truly thankful to have come this morning. I was apprehensive that I would find it difficult, but you have made it so easy as we are all encouraged to speak and share” – Female, 70s (on attending a CommuniTEA group activity).*

## My Health and Wellbeing

- Maintaining good health is core to ageing well. Health impacts on how people feel, connect with the community and relationships with family and friends.
- Physical decline associated with ageing can be due to a lack of physical activity. Without regular exercise, people over the age of 50 years can experience a range of health problems including reduced muscle mass, strength and physical endurance.
- Exercise has been shown to prevent disease, lower the risk of falls, improve mental health and well-being, strengthen social ties, and improve cognitive function.

### ARC Campbelltown

- The ARC Campbelltown is a key facility in the area for engaging in physical activity. Older people are often seen in the pool the gym, in exercise classes, on the courts playing badminton and bowls, and in the squash courts.
- 34% of ARC members are aged 60+.
- The Fit for Life membership offers discounted access to the facility during off-peak times, but some older people prefer the flexibility of accessing activities at all hours with a standard membership.
- Exercise and aqua classes and the gym provide opportunities for older people to maintain physical fitness and also connect with others of all ages.
- A badminton 'group' has formed over the years from people turning up and playing regularly, getting to know one another.
- A similar story is seen with the ARC bowls group.
- In the Health Centre, fit older people have connected over exercise with members of a youth sports group, at times engaging in friendly competition over skills and abilities.
- Whilst the ARC offers a great service to older residents there are suggestions to make it even better including around the design of exercise programs, booking systems and programming timetables.
- It has been suggested that the ARC needs to consider the employment of middle-aged and older people to reflect the membership and broader community.

*"In the squash courts, where over the years men have connected with other squash players and now get together regularly to play socially and later to enjoy a cuppa in the café."*

*In the pool at a recent aqua class, a new mother who had previously attended the class during her pregnancy, return with her newborn in arms to share her good news with those still attending the Sunday morning class, much to the delight of many older people who had worked out with her when she was pregnant. What great intergenerational connectedness!*

## **Exercise: Dance and Movement**

### **Outdoor Exercise**

- Many older people use Council's outdoor gym equipment at a range of parks and reserves across Campbelltown. This provides an opportunity for free outdoor exercise that can be done alone or with a friend or group. Community members tell us that these facilities provide the opportunity for exercise outside of scheduled group sessions and they can do what they want, when they want and at no cost.
- There are a range of other forms of exercise that older people in Campbelltown enjoy. This includes dancing groups such as Moving to Music in Newton, Zumba Gold and Veraflow classes with Fitness with Annette in Magill, Active Life – Tonic Rehab in Newton, and Praise4Health who meet at Thorndon Park, just to name a few.
- Structured exercise classes at a reasonable cost, such as chair yoga, chi ball, stretching and balancing and low intensity fitness classes are also found in many parts of Campbelltown.
- Whilst the purpose of these groups is exercise, often the benefits far exceed the outcomes of the scheduled activity in terms of social connection and support.
- Many groups are organised and run by a volunteer community member who saw a need for the activity and donated their time in organising and running the group.

*"I love the social chats with ladies my own age with similar interests" –  
Female, 70s.*

- There are four Heart Foundation Walking Groups in Campbelltown: two on River Torrens Linear Park / Karrawirra Parri, one in Magill and one at Thorndon Park. Run by volunteers, these groups bring people together to exercise, share company and accountability to one another, support each other, whilst building and maintaining fitness.
- Attendees of many groups regularly report feeling welcome and supported, connecting with others in friendship, and relying on these connections

during periods of loss, poor health and other challenges they face. They each become an integral part of many people's lives.

*"The walking group gives me a reason to get out and exercise, but also have a chat and get to know people. It helped me recently when my husband was unwell and I needed an outlet from my caring role, to look after myself" – Walking group member.*

*"I find looking forward to seeing all the happy faces in the morning is a great incentive to getting up and starting the day with some exercise. I love walking around the Thorndon Park lake and have noticed a big improvement in my fitness... The social dinners and coffee mornings are a nice bonus" – Walking group member.*

*"I have benefitted not only physically but also mentally through exchange of ideas, conversation, lots of laughs and great coffee mornings" – Walking group member.*

### **Social Isolation**

- Social isolation is a public health issue with negative consequences for those who experience it
- Some people are unable to participate in ways that they may have once liked to. For many reasons including health, being physically incapacitated or extremely frail, some older people need to exclude themselves from connecting with others and participating in group activities.
- This was recently seen during Covid when many older people isolated from community life to avoid contracting the virus, but for some this is an ongoing way of life.
- Services such as Meals on Wheels provide a critical service to people in this situation. Often being the only person, an older person sees in the week, Meals on Wheels food delivery and social support connect with some of the most isolated older people in Campbelltown.
- The Campbelltown Library provide a similar service, delivering books to residents who are not able to leave their home.

*"I now really understand what it's like for older people who need to adjust to living a restricted "new normal" as the ageing body deteriorates. How to keep such people involved in the life of our community is a challenge!" – Community member on having been unwell and isolated for an extended period of time*

## **Information and Control over Physical and Mental Health**

- All people want control over their physical and mental health. These are equally important components of overall health.
- As people age into their later years, sometimes they are perceived as becoming too frail and incapable to make their own decisions when they are still able, and others such as family members, carers or medical professionals make decisions for them with the best of intentions. Taking away decision making reduces their control, agency and confidence.
- We know that older people want to be in control of their decisions for as long as they can. They need to ensure that mechanism such as advanced care directives and wills are in place, that they are empowered with knowledge about end-of-life care and options, and where possible have these important conversations with family and carers whilst they are able.

## **Access to Medical and Allied Health Professionals**

- Older people want access to local, good quality medical and allied health professionals to help them maintain good health and wellbeing into older age.
- Older adults can have an increased risk of developing multiple chronic illnesses, with some developing cognitive and mood disorders, including dementia and depression, which can negatively impact their physical health<sup>2</sup>. It is important to have a qualified, understanding professional who can support each person manage their health and wellbeing in the best way.
- Health and wellbeing information is most often available online, and some older people who lack the technology and skills to access this information can be excluded from accessing this information. Information relating to medical and allied health professionals and treatments needs to be available in a variety of formats to allow access for all.
- Campbelltown has a range of medical centres and clinics, with some continuing to bulk bill for those who are on the Aged Pension.

## Medical Centres

Campbelltown Family Medical Centre	CAMPBELLTOWN
Dr Rignanese HML	CAMPBELLTOWN
East Adelaide Healthcare	NEWTON
Firle Medical Centre	FIRLE
Giordano Family Medical Practice	TRANMERE
GP Surgery	CAMPBELLTOWN
Health Alliance	CAMPBELLTOWN
Health at Campbelltown	CAMPBELLTOWN
Health at Newton	NEWTON
Medical HQ Athelstone	ATHELSTONE
Mignone F & Associates	CAMPBELLTOWN
North East Clinic	ATHELSTONE
Paramount Health Services Pty Ltd	CAMPBELLTOWN
The Murray Clinic	MAGILL
Tranmere Village Medical Centre	TRANMERE

- The North Eastern Community Hospital in Campbelltown offers General Surgery, Medical, Orthopaedics, Gastroenterology, Laparoscopic Surgery, Gynaecology, Ophthalmology, Plastic Surgery and Aged Care with 84 licensed beds.
- Many older people still need to travel into the city to obtain medical treatment at the Royal Adelaide Hospital and to see specialists. Campbelltown is 20 minutes from the city, compared to outer suburbs and rural communities, and can be accessed by private vehicle, bus and taxi.
- Many older people with transport services can obtain transport to these appointments at subsidised rates.

## Aged Care Support Services

- With the onset of chronic illness and the slowing down of physical health, some older people require support services to maintain independence.
- My Aged Care provides government-funded aged care services for people who are 65 years of age or older (50 years or older if you identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person).
- Campbelltown City Council is a Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) provider to residents in Campbelltown, providing transport, social support and home maintenance services under the My Aged Care program.
- There is often confusion within the community about this program, as some older people see their friends doing all sorts of activities and trips, yet they



are excluded because they do not qualify under new My Aged Care guidelines for Social Support, or there is no capacity within the program to take in new clients.

- There is a need to ensure that sufficient social opportunities are available to all older residents of Campbelltown.

## **Wellbeing Activities**

- Wellbeing activities are the things that people enjoy doing, that they look forward to doing, that bring them joy and bring them together with others who share these passions and interests. This can include physical, social and intellectual interests that could relate to the arts, hobbies, sport, spirituality and faith, learning and education, travel, cooking, music and singing, gardening, service to community, and family, friends and neighbours just to name a few.
- Council's Staying Active and Staying Connected Guides list many opportunities for older people to access wellbeing activities in Campbelltown.

*"We have grown as a group of people who share a love of nature, gardening, enjoy visiting gardens and group activities. We've shared many gardening stories, personal experiences as well as plants and seeds.*

*It's been encouraging and a privilege to be part of a group who are willing to engage, participate, support and learn from each other and special guests."* –  
Gardening Group

*"I see a lot of clients who think they're 'too old' to do anything like that (dancing, chair exercise), and yet those wonderful women were up there proving everyone wrong" – Expo Attendee, 60s.*

*"I started walk at a time in my life when I just felt so lost. I had been caring for my elderly parents and growing family and for seven or eight years it became very hard as they became quite ill, and I was their only child living here. I was very down. I started walking in 2016 and never looked back. I've reconnected with people I knew and made new friends. Over the years I've missed walks due to travel and illness (and sometimes just plain laziness), but I always look forward to the chats catch-ups and just knowing the walking group is always there" –Walking group member*

## **Community Workshop**

The Campbelltown Community Workshop is a unique and valued part of the community. Attended by both men and women, the workshop provides place for older people to come together and work on a project, to learn new skills, sharing experiences, and building new friendships. It caters to retired members of the community who no longer have the facilities at home to use their skills, and also a shared learning experience to those involved.

## **Men**

Many activities within the community lend themselves to groups of women, and for some men, they find it difficult to connect with others as they age. If activities such as the Community Workshop are not the right fit, some men might look to activities such as golf, bowls, badminton, and squash and perhaps fishing as an activity that can be enjoyed together or autonomously. Men often connect with others less as they age and focus needs to be given to this cohort to ensure the community supports the needs of men as they age, as a way to protect mental health and wellbeing.

## **Physical Health**

- The 2021 Census collected population data long-term health conditions. Nationally Over two million people of all ages reported having at least one of the following most common long-term health conditions –  
Mental health - 2,231,543 Arthritis - 2,150,396 Asthma - 2,068,020
- The proportion of those with a long-term health condition increased with age. More than three out of every five (62.9 per cent) people aged 65+ reported having at least one long-term health condition compared with one out of every five (22.1 per cent) 15–34-year-olds<sup>3</sup>.

The 2021 Census reported that:

- 42.1 per cent of SA respondents reporting at least one long-term medical condition. This was above the national average of 39.8 per cent and higher than any other mainland state.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.abs.gov.au/media-centre/media-releases/2021-census-data-over-8-million-australians-have-long-term-health-condition>

<sup>4</sup> <https://indaily.com.au/news/2022/06/28/growing-ageing-sa-revealed-in-new-report/>

## **Decline in Physical Health**

- With age often comes a decline in physical health and a reduction in participation in the independence and activities once enjoyed.
- An older person commented on the impact having a medical condition that restricted her from leaving the house for many months. Previously used to being involved in groups and with friends, she found it challenging to get used to the 'new normal' with restrictions and limitations as the body no longer keeps up with the mind. For her, she would recover from this condition and resume an almost 'normal' life, but she noted that the experience opened her eyes to the challenges some people face on a permanent basis.

## **Mental Health**

- Mental health challenges can be experienced throughout the journey of life, from childhood and teenage years through to the later stages of life.
- In addition to mental health challenges that can be carried throughout the course of a person's life, mental health issues, such as anxiety or depression, which are often caused by triggers such as grief, loss or illness in older people.
- Depression is common throughout the Australian population, and older people are more likely to experience contributing factors such as physical illness or personal loss.
- It is thought that between 10 and 15% of older people experience depression and about 10 % experience anxiety. Rates of depression among people living in residential aged care are believed to be much higher, at around 35 per cent.
- Unfortunately, many people over 65 still seem to feel there is a stigma attached to depression and anxiety, viewing them as weaknesses or character flaws rather than a genuine health condition.
- Older people are also more hesitant to share their experiences of anxiety and depression with others, often ignoring symptoms over long periods of time and only seeking professional help when things reach a crisis point.
- Dementia is not a specific disease but is rather a general term for the impaired ability to remember, think, or make decisions that interferes with doing everyday activities. Alzheimer's disease is the most common type of dementia. Though dementia mostly affects older adults, it is not a part of normal aging.
- Carers SA support local carers through outreach at the Campbelltown Library and a monthly support group

- Anecdotally, there is a shortage of local dementia beds for when this level of support is needed. This can mean partners have to travel further to be with their partner once they are no longer at home.
- Council is working with the support of Dementia Australia at making the Campbelltown Library 'Dementia Friendly' and other opportunities

## **Suicide**

Whilst not specifically raised as part of conversations with Community, research shows that Australian men aged 85 and over have the highest rate of suicide yet are less likely to use specialty mental health services. This is an area within our Ageing Well community where Council can take a role in opening the conversation and identify where supports and services can help.

## **End of Life Choice**

Reaching the end of one's life is a most important part of Ageing Well. To close off a lifetime of life, love, connections, achievements, regrets, and satisfaction is a massive accomplishment in life and often people need to put matters to rest, to get their 'house in order' and feel that they can leave this world as they hope to, with dignity, closure and love.

This subject rarely arises in community conversations, but most people hope to address this sensitive subject and can find it a difficult conversation with loved ones.

The reality of coming to the end of one's life is something that many struggle to talk about, for families of an older person to come to terms with, but it is something that many older people actually want and need to address well before the time comes.

People often look back on their life and decide if they're happy with what they contributed to the world and consider the things they left unsaid or not done.

End of life choice considers all matters of the end of life, including:

- Relationships
- What needs to be said?
- What needs to be done?
- Practical matters
- Financial arrangements

End-of-life care is the term used to describe the support and medical care given during the time surrounding death. This type of care does not happen only in the moments before breathing ceases and the heart stops beating. Older people often live with one or more chronic illness and need significant care for days, weeks, and even months before death.

People who are dying need care in four areas:

- physical comfort
- mental and emotional needs
- spiritual needs
- practical tasks.

As we age, often illness is the cause of poor health and decline, and it is vital that that people with life-limiting or terminal illness can live their lives fully and as comfortably as possible.

We know that Advance care planning improves the quality-of-care people receive at the end of their lives. Decisions now about the health care a person would or would not like to receive if they were to become seriously ill and unable to communicate preferences or make treatment decisions can be documented.

It is important for older people to have information on the options available to them and the things they need to know to improve end of life care.

## My Information

### Access to Information

- The Ageing Well News and Information newsletter came from an identified need for information in a range of formats.
- This has stemmed from the closure of the Messenger newspaper and the transfer of a majority of information moving to electronic formats including website, social media and email.

*‘I really appreciate the newsletter. There are things I didn’t know about, and I can now get more involved’ – Female, 70s*

*“Campbelltown is certainly a busy place! It is certainly worthwhile for our walkers to know about these activities so I will forward this on to them. Thank you for keeping us in the loop.” – Walking Group Leader*

- Services Australia wants to engage with community in a post-Covid world, to share information on government services for people, particularly those who have less access to technology. They have Community Engagement Officers in key specialist areas of Indigenous, Multicultural, Aged Care Services and Complex/vulnerable areas. Whilst the nearest office is Norwood, officers are actively working with agencies, social workers and Local Government to connect to community.
- In 2021, Council ran an Ageing Well Expo and Celebration, celebrated ageing and showcased information and opportunities for people over 60 who live and play in Campbelltown. The Expo included demonstrations, information stalls, information sessions a hosted CommuniTEA, tea and conversation experience, a free BBQ lunch and café, concluding with a fashion show. The event identified that within Campbelltown, there is a desire and need for information, social connection, and ways to come together to celebrate ageing in our community.
- The Ageing Well community is hungry for information on relevant topics. Council, in conjunction with other partners and organisations, hold free information talks for community to attend to help share knowledge.

*“I was surprised to find out the nutritional needs of the average 70-year-old was higher than the average 30 year old. People appeared to be keen to know ways to improve bone & muscle skeletal health in practical, cost-conscious ways. The small space gardening guy was a hit.” – Attendee of Small Space Gardening session*

## Technology

- As digital technology continues to evolve, many older people want support to build their confidence and capability with it.
- Older people want to access information and understanding how to navigate complex systems such as My Aged Care, which allows them to maintain control over their lives.
- Older people want support in understanding how to safely use their technology. This is provided through Digital Help sessions at the library, and information talks provided to larger groups.

## Social Media

- Whilst social media is known as being most popular with younger generations, many older people use these applications, particularly Facebook, Messenger and WhatsApp to connect with family and friends, share photos and chat online.
- Other sites that are regularly used by many older people include LinkedIn, YouTube and Google services.
- As generations that have used technology as a part of their daily life age, they will take these skills, habits and preferences into older age.
- For older people who have not had the opportunity to use technology in their earlier years, some now feel that they cannot adapt and learn these new skills or have no interest in doing so.
- Some might have traded in their home 'landline' telephone for a cheaper, more convenient mobile 'smartphone' but are not confident in using this device in ways other than making a call or sending a text.
- Many older people are wary of being scammed and are fearful of doing something wrong on their phone or computer and being caught out.
- Online banking for some comes with a level of fear that they might open themselves to fraud, viruses and scammers.

## Online Bookings

- Often in modern life, booking a session to an activity requires an online booking using a site such as 'Eventbrite' or 'Ticketek'. Without having access to these apps, many older people miss out on opportunities to participate when they would have liked to.

*"I didn't book", I thought it was full".  
"I had trouble booking."*



## Getting Help

- Often friends and family of older people attempt to help with technical challenges. This can be successful but at times, frustration by the helper that the older person 'isn't getting it' or doesn't remember can be a cause of frustration and giving up.
- Many older people speak about the phone that they were given, that sits dormant in the drawer because they've given up trying.
- For some older people, the touch technology can prove difficult, as they have not learned the technique to tap or swipe across the screen. Using a stylus is one way to address this challenge, as it removes the need to touch 'just right' to make the device respond and can reduce frustration.
- Services such as the Campbelltown Library's Digital Help Drop-In, and introduction to technology sessions seek to breach this gap in knowledge. Aimed at older people who want to learn how to use more of the features of their device, they can help in learning how to navigate systems using apps such as the Federal Government's 'MyGov', and other sites that open up the technical world to them such as 'Eventbrite', Google, Apple, and apps for entertainment.
- These sessions aim to upskill the older person, to give them confidence to use their device confidently yet safely. Some older people are keen to learn these new skills but for others, the modern world is either too daunting or not of interest.

## Navigating Life's Transitions

- People begin the process of planning for retirement often from a very early age, considering finances and how they will fund their later life. The reality of retirement from social, emotional and lifespan perspective generally begins much later, either as retirement is looming or often in the years post-retirement.
- Employment often provides a sense of purpose, meaning and social interaction. When it comes to an end, many people feel lost and disconnected.

*“When I gave up my job that was when I gave up belonging anywhere. Because I did feel that I belonged there, and I had something in common with most of the people I worked with. I have never felt that I’ve belonged anywhere since” - Male, 81.*

*“I think that’s why they warn people about retirement. They say, don’t wait for it to happen. Plan ahead otherwise you fall in a bit of a heap” - Female, 72.*

- The Mindset for Life program uses a peer model to help people reflect on their lives and what they hope to achieve in the future, and decide what and how they will approach their future.

*“The course helped confirm that my feelings were normal, it affirmed that I am where I want to be at this stage of my life” - Attendee of Campbelltown’s 2022 Mindset for Life course.*

*“The contribution of others made me stop and think, to think about having a growth mindset, to be open to new things, to consider my social networks and reflect on my life journey and what I want for the future” - Attendee of Campbelltown’s 2022 Mindset for Life course.*

## My Value

- Older people want to feel included, respected and heard. They want to feel that they have independence and autonomy, to contribute to the community and to not be a burden, without experiencing discrimination because of their age, background or the stage and state of their life.
- Being an active part of community life is an important part of being valued and having a sense of purpose and meaning.
- Being connected to others within the community, being accepted and needed can result in significant improvements in health and wellbeing, and happiness as they age.

## Belonging

- When asked about their views on 'belonging', participants of a recent research initiative described it as:
  - having a sense of connection to others and to their local community.
  - the importance to be known and valued; and
  - to experience a sense of acceptance from friends and family.

*"I think it just means you've got somewhere you call home. You belong into a certain Community" - Male, 70.*

*"Belonging is being valued and recognised, being able to fit in, feeling safe, secure and being able to participate" - Female, 57.*

*"You feel known, you feel seen, you feel heard. All those things" -Female, 58.*

*"To belong is to feel that you're in the place you'd like to be in, with the person you'd like to be with" -Female, 81.*

*"Having someone, one or two friends you can go to and feel like, you can just call them anytime. That you can rely on and know that they'll sit and listen to you.....and they would come to you, if they needed a shoulder to cry on" -Female, 72.*

## Loneliness

- Older people in Campbelltown experience loneliness as a lack of quality relationships, a lack of meaningful relationship with a significant other, or a deep feeling of aloneness within the universe.
- The range of experiences that can heighten vulnerability and loneliness include:

- Death of parent and/or significant other
- Lack of family and friends
- Separated from children and grandchildren
- Loss of transport
- Moving
- Retirement
- Poor neighbourhood walkability
- Having a home, they can't invite others to
- Gender and sexual identity
- Lack of cultural connection
- Mental illness
- Being a carer/cared for
- Digital literacy
- Health/diagnosis
- Divorce

### **Experiences of Loneliness**

Local research found that some people experience chronic loneliness in their life.

*"I would say at the present time, [loneliness is something that I experience] pretty.*

*Constantly" - Female, 81.*

*"Days and days go by that I don't speak to anybody. Phone doesn't ring. And I guess that's a problem with my loneliness is that since my wife died, people no longer phone" - Male, 80.*

- Other people experience loneliness, not as a chronic experience, but more as 'a call to action' to look at the ways in which they can change their situation.

*"I've never really felt isolated or cut off....because as soon as I begin to feel that way, it's a case of okay, what can I do to stop that? Even if at times, it's messaging a friend, I'm feeling a bit lonely today, can we chat?" - Female, 70.*

- Many who experienced levels of loneliness felt they were unprepared for the major life transitions they encountered. For example, retirement, caring role, loss of partner, loss of driving licence. This change in circumstances exacerbated a sense of loneliness.

- The significance of regular contact with children and grandchildren was raised as a factor that impacted on the lives of older people.

*“My children have got their own lives, which is as the circle of life goes. And they’ve got their lives and their children I really feel a bit lonely at times, and I wish I saw more of them” - Female, 80.*

## **Inclusion**

- Social inclusion gives older adults a sense of purpose, of accomplishment and of belonging to the community. It allows older people to stay active and to continue to contribute to the development of society based on their needs, preferences and abilities.

## **Diversity**

### **Multicultural Community**

- Campbelltown Council is a multicultural community. With over a third of its residents born overseas it is now the second most multicultural LGA (Local Government Area) in South Australia.
- 34% of Campbelltown Council’s population was born overseas and 34.6% speak a language other than English at home.
- The top languages spoken are: Italian, Mandarin, Greek, Cantonese, Punjabi, Arabic, Hindi, Korean, Persian/Dari/Hazaraghi and Sinhalese.
- Many older Italian residents who migrated in the 50s and 60s, speak some English but did not have the opportunity to learn to read English or Italian, given they left school to work at an early age. They rely on family members or the help of service providers to interpret informational and help them with completing forms and documentation. These older retired Italian residents now enjoy the company of others, including celebrating their cultural and religious heritage, with each other, at church and at community centres such as the Coordinating Italian Community centre.
- The Move to Music dance group is a very diverse group of women, with members from many different cultures and backgrounds. They actively acknowledge and celebrate what each person brings to the group.

*Right after we moved in the council invited us to the neighbour day event. The flyer for the event mentioned halal food. This is something really great, especially the fact that we felt immediately included. We felt our differences are acknowledged, but at the same time we are being accepted despite our differences” - Female, 57*

## **LGBTQI Community**

- A COTA Rainbow Hub group meet each month at a city location for lunch, discussion and information talks. This group includes a broad range of members of the LGBTQI community from across Adelaide, with just one or two members living in Campbelltown. There seems to be no pressing need to establish a LGBTQI group in Campbelltown currently.
- Campbelltown put out a call to meet with members of the LGBTQI community and four individuals reached out to Council, and two attended a round table discussion.
- One lesbian woman had lived in Campbelltown since the 1950s. She has been a publicly proud lesbian who has often fought for acceptance and the rights of the lesbian community. She feels a lack of acceptance living in an independent living village, with many of the others in the village not accepting her because of her sexuality. She feels there are not a lot of lesbian people living in Campbelltown or if there are, there is a lack of visibility of this community.
- Another woman living in Campbelltown 'figured out' that she was a lesbian in her 40s. She feels very isolated as a lesbian woman in Campbelltown and regularly socialises and attends a church in the south of Adelaide as this is where she feels accepted and part of the community. She is not openly 'out' in Campbelltown.
- In contrast, a gay man living in Campbelltown was openly living in partnership with his husband and enjoyed interacting as a couple with the local community. They felt accepted and he continue to work as a professional and could openly express his sexuality at work and in his personal life. He felt no need to connect specifically or exclusively to the LGBTQI community as he could connect more generally to the wider community.
- Both women lit up when they described being in love. They had both met someone that they had fallen in love with, and this provided a great deal of meaning and connection in their lives. These relationships were complex but very meaningful, describing this special person as the 'light in their life'.
- Support for this community is important to ensure feelings of inclusion and acceptance.

## **Intergenerational Connection**

- Campbelltown is an intergenerational community, with residents across the age spectrum from newly born babies to more than a dozen centenarians, and everyone in between.

- Intergenerational connectedness allows the sharing of stories, knowledge, identity and traditions that can be carried through the generations, as well as feelings of being acknowledged, valued and needed, for both sides of the generational spectrum.
- In Campbelltown there is interest and energy intergenerational connectedness from individual community members (older people and younger people), aged care service providers, churches, schools, childcare services, community groups and service providers.
- Some great intergenerational initiatives that exist in Campbelltown include:
  - Charles Campbell's Mentor Program. Adults are volunteer mentors to students at the school, particularly children who need extra support and kindness in their life.
  - ACH (Milpara and Independent Living) Social Program have already trialled a partnership with a local kindy (in 2022) at their Residential Aged Care facility on St Bernards Road and are looking to recommence this later in 2023. They also have a 'Be Connected' tech program that blends older people from their 50s through to 90s+, teaching them tech skills.
  - They are also very keen to start other programs including an intergenerational mothers' group and other intergenerational initiatives.
  - Intergenerational Play Group Partnership with NE Salvos and Resthaven.
  - Magill Church of Christ Playgroup has grown and is regularly attended by some grandparents and their grandchildren, along with parents of young children. There is some potential in the future to include some local older people looking to become involved in a playgroup, to expand their social interactions and reduce loneliness.

## **Wisdom**

- With age and the opportunity of living through life's experiences and milestones can come emotional maturity, knowing one's self, decision making skills and having compassion and empathy towards others.
- Council sought the 'Pearls of Wisdom' the reflections and thoughts of what older people would tell their younger selves with the benefit of hindsight.



### Campbelltown's Pearls of Wisdom

- α *Listen to your intuition.*
- α *School isn't the end of your education.*
- α *Don't let being in a relationship make you forget yourself.*
- α *You're beautiful the way you are.*
- α *One bad decision will not ruin your life (even if it feels like at the time)*
- α *Make exercise a priority.*
- α *Start saving for your retirement as early as you can.*
- α *Be kinder to yourself.*
- α *Always know your worth*
- α *The world is bigger than you think it is and your worries aren't as important as you think they are, just be you.*
- α *Don't worry if you look different, or feel you look different, from most other people. There is much more to you than what others see on the surface.*
- α *Don't get so caught up in the difficulties of the moment since they are only temporary.*
- α *Don't dwell on the past. Just because it was that way doesn't mean it will be that way again.*

### Respect

- One of the hallmarks of a fair society is how individuals and communities treat, value and support older people, including those who are most vulnerable.
- Many older people contribute immeasurably to their families and communities, commonly sacrificing their own wellbeing to care for others, including helping with children and grandchildren.
- In respecting them, older people should not be treated as invisible, passive and powerless but recognized for their diverse experiences and the multiple ways in which they have and continue to contribute.

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Conversations and connection with older people will continue and this Background Paper will be updated regularly to reflect the new and emerging or changing view of older people.