

Age –Friendly Communities Study

Final Report

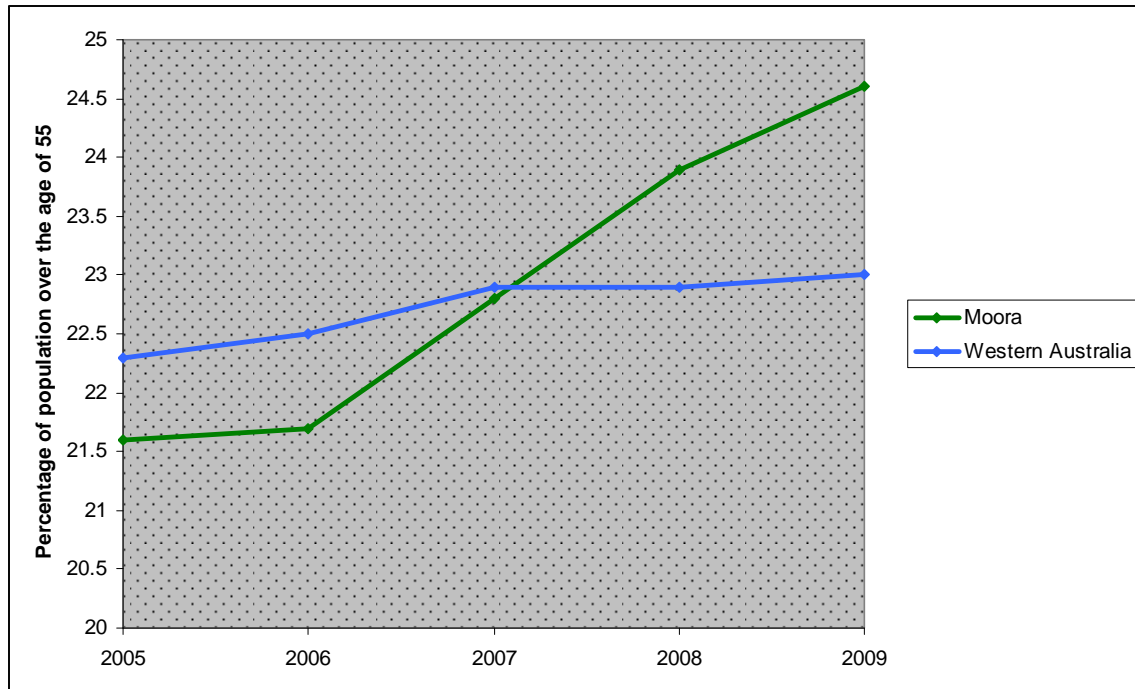
June 2011

The Shire of Moora would like to thank project consultant Natasha Butcher and acknowledge the older residents of the Moora community for their contribution to this report. Their time in participating in the focus groups and completing surveys was invaluable. Thank you also to the service providers who contributed their precious time and knowledge to this project.

The project was funded and coordinated as a result of generous support and guidance from the Department of Communities.

Executive Summary

Population ageing is one of the most significant challenges facing today's Australia. With low levels of fertility combined with increasing life expectancy at birth this trend is expected to continue. In the Shire of Moora the situation is no different.



As you can see from the above chart Western Australia's aged population has seen a steady 0.7% increase from 22.3% to 23% during the 4 year period. The Shire of Moora on the other hand has seen a much more significant 3% jump from 21.6% to 24.6%.

This aging population comes with many additional needs such as an increase in supported housing, higher demands placed on aged services delivery in the community and an increased demand for dementia specific services.

In Moora 15.5%, or approximately 380 people, are between the ages of 45 and 54. This age bracket is the second highest within the community and over the next 5-10 years the people in it will gradually be moving into the 55-64 year old age bracket. The community has identified that in order to be able to meet the needs of this ever ageing rural population, positive steps need to be taken now.

The Shire of Moora has partnered with the Department of Communities to integrate the World Health Organisation's Age Friendly Cities Guide. The Guide identifies that there are 8 key aspects of the makeup of an Age Friendly Community:

- Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
- Transportation
- Housing
- Respect and inclusion
- Social participation

- Communication and information
- Civic participation and employment
- Community support and health services

These aspects and the World Health Organisation's model were used as the basis for collecting data to ascertain whether or not Moora is an 'Age Friendly Community'. The project methodology used by the Shire of Moora was modified from the Western Australian Age-Friendly Communities approach due to a significantly lower population than the original pilot program host cities.

The Age Friendly Community Strategy was developed during 2010-2011 and involved over 60 community members aged over 55, as well as carers and service providers (public, private and non-for-profit). Methods used were surveys, focus groups and consultations with key people involved in the sector. The process was headed by an external consultant and guided by the Shire of Moora's Community and Economic Development team.

Findings from the community and service provider consultations indicate that generally older people are active and enjoy living in Moora and that Moora is an 'Age Friendly Community'. However, pressure is already being felt by older people and it was identified that work must be done now to meet the needs of its ever increasing older population. The main findings from the consultation phase indicate there are issues concerning:

1. **Parking and Pedestrian Crossing at IGA** - 100% of participants indicated that they feel this is a major issue that needs addressing urgently
2. **Housing and Accommodation** – lack thereof
3. **Travel to Specialists** – many do not drive and find it difficult to attend Perth appointments.
4. **Crime and Safety**
5. **Travel to Shops** – very popular suggestion to have a community bus run once a week to help elderly people do their shopping etc.

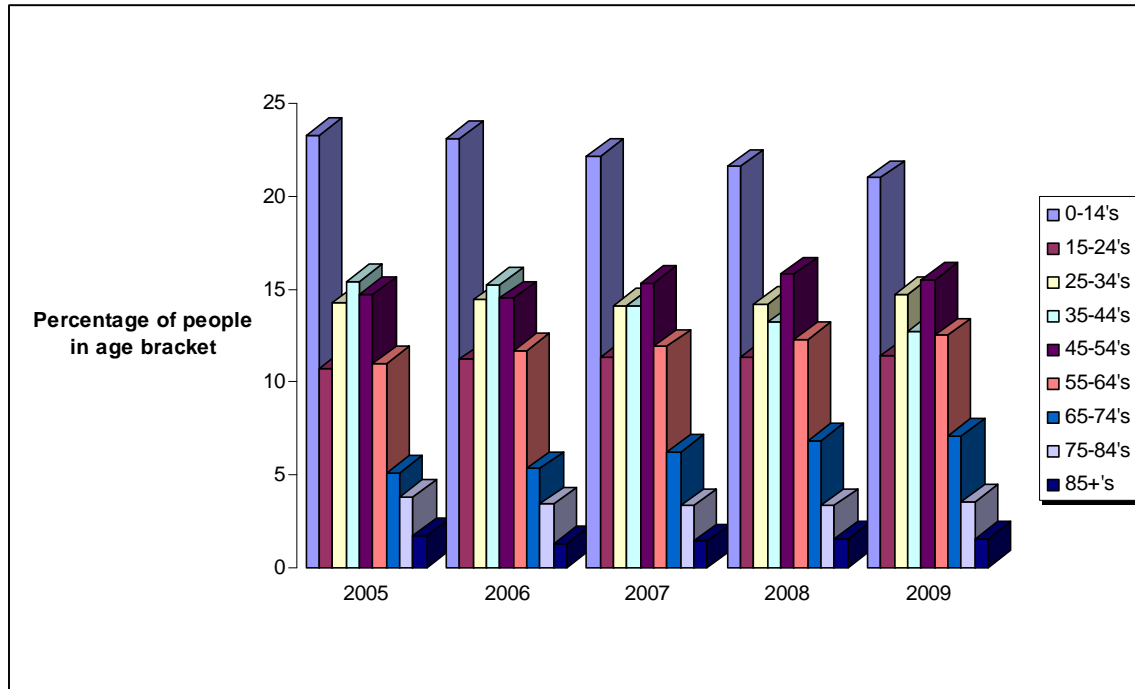
During the development of the Strategy, older people expressed their appreciation of being involved in the Strategy and their interest in being kept informed and where possible involved in Strategy implementation. This is a great opportunity for the Shire to engage with its residents to ensure that Moora remains an 'age friendly community' well into the future.

Community Profile

The Shire of Moora is situated 172km from Perth in the Central Midlands district of Western Australia's Wheatbelt region. The Shire covers 3788km² and consists of 3 main townsites – Moora, Miling and Watheroo. The combined population of the shire is

approximately 2800 people. The Shire of Moora makes up 4% of the Wheatbelt and is one of the largest towns.

Moora's overall population has remained relatively stable since 2005 however there has been some significant movement within the separate age brackets.



The most significant changes to the age groups over the 5 year period have been:

- 2.3% decrease in persons 0-14 years
- 2.7% decrease in persons 35-44 years
- 1.5% increase in persons 55-64 years
- 2.0% increase in persons 65-74 years

The 0-54 age group has overall seen a 3.1% decrease whereas the 55+ age group has seen a 3% increase.

The majority (85%) of Moora's population is Australian born with persons from the United Kingdom and New Zealand also contributing significantly to the Shire's population. Indigenous people make up approximately 11.6% of the overall population (2006) with a large percentage under the age of 30. (63.5% in 2007).

Agriculture is the dominant industry in the Shire of Moora and employs a large percentage of Moora's workforce. Moora's unemployment rate is relatively similar to that of the remainder of the Midlands district and of Western Australia and in June 2008 was at 2.9%.

Results from the 2006 Census indicate that over half of the population in the Shire of Moora didn't finish school and left prior to year 12. The majority of those employed over the age of 15 are earning between \$1-\$399/week and 37.8% are living in a rental property or public housing. Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) are a set of 4 indexes which have been designed to allow ranking of regions in terms of relative social and economic wellbeing. With a score of 982 the Shire of Moora is relatively disadvantaged compared to other Local Government areas in Australia. At the time of the Census the Shire was rated 54 out of 142 Local Governments in Western Australia in terms of its socio-economic disadvantage.

Shire of Moora – Quick Stats

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| Area of Shire | 3788 square kilometres |
| Population | 2800 |
| Rate Assessments | 1750 |
| Number of Dwellings | 1100 |
| Length of Roads | 317km – sealed 669km - unsealed |
| Average Rainfall | 500mm |

Moora Service Providers

Health and community support services in the shire are provided by the government sector apart from private practitioners (medical and allied health).

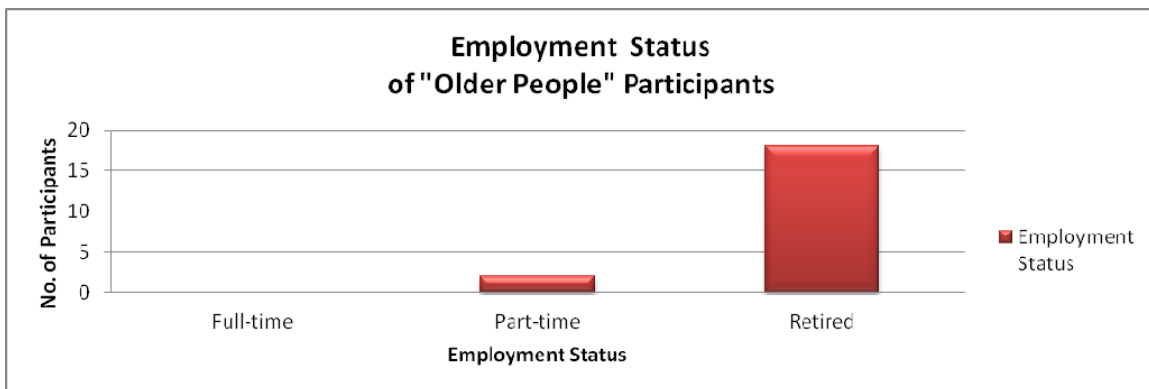
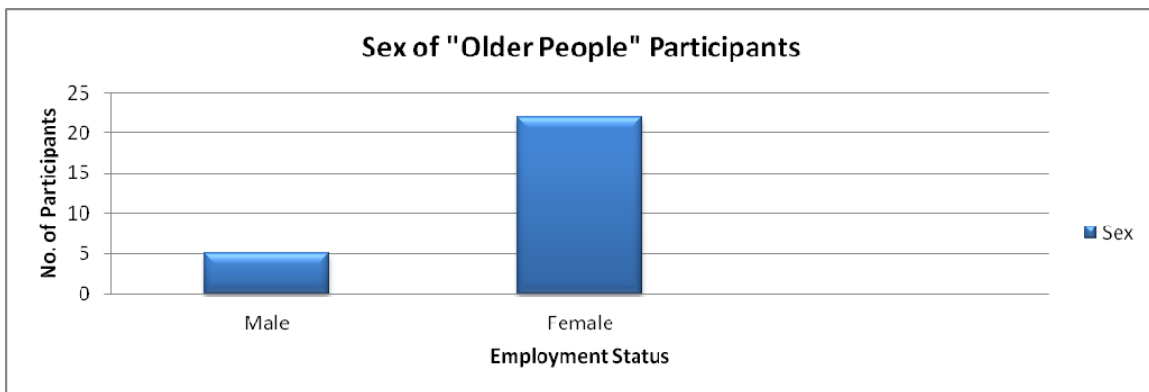
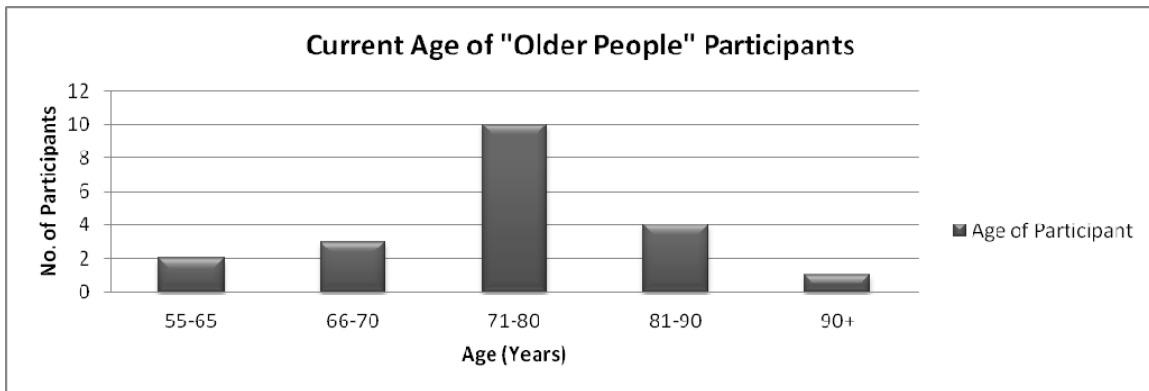
- Local hospital, which is a Multi Purpose Service, provides limited hospital services, limited Surgical Services, Home and Community Care (HACC), extended care nursing and high level (non-secure) residential care (some respite/palliative care if beds available)
- Allied health including Speech Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, Child Health Nurses, Aboriginal Health Officers and visiting Dietician and Mental Health Nurse
- Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) from Northam Health Service
- 5 Resident GPs
- Local police station
- Local volunteer ambulance
- Local police station
- Local volunteer ambulance
- Local dentist
- Various visiting private allied health practitioners including Podiatrist
- Moora Frail Aged Lodge provides low level/hostel residential aged care (10 beds)

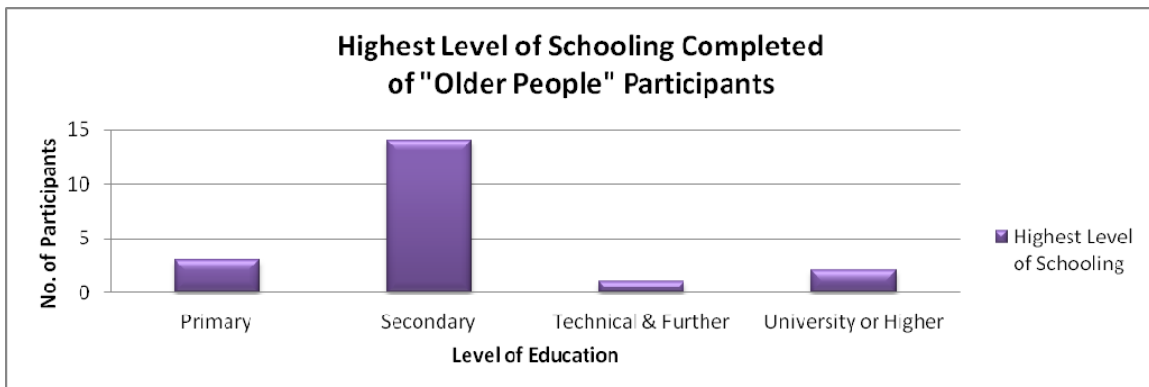
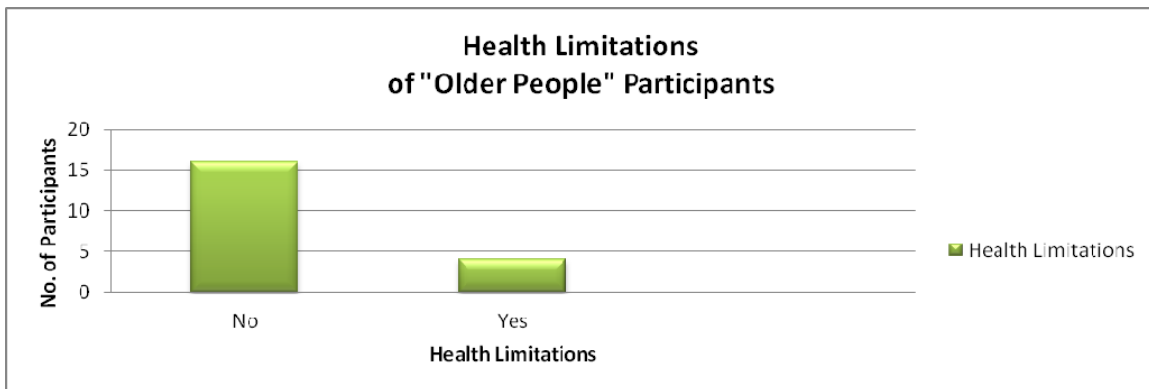
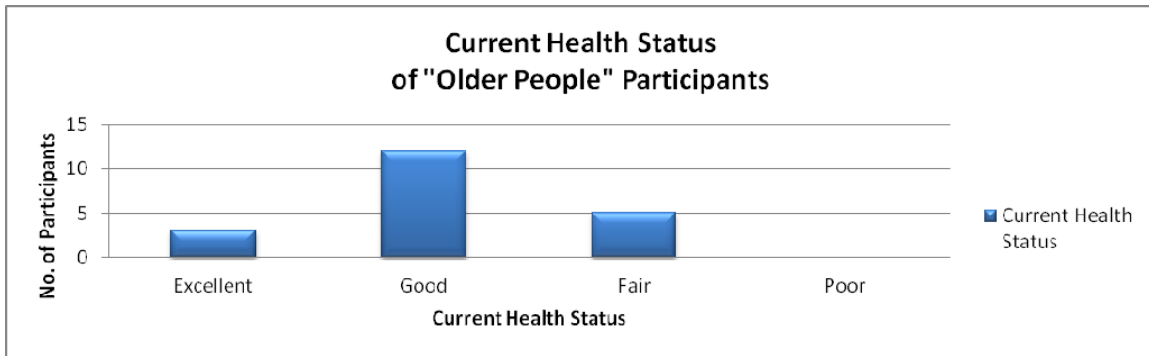
There are many volunteer organisations such as church groups, Country Womens Association (CWA), Moora Lions Club, Meals on Wheels, sporting clubs etc who provide social and some volunteer support services to older people. Interestingly most of these

organisations are run by older people themselves. They participated in the focus groups as individual older people and raised issues relating to volunteering at these forums. They are included in the findings from the focus groups.

Focus Group and Survey Respondent Characteristics

24.6% of Moora's population or approximately 633 people are over the age of 55 years (ABS NRP 2009). A total of 49 older people and service providers (including 3 Indigenous people) participated in this project through focus groups and surveys. As you can see from the charts below the majority of participants were retired females, in good health between the ages of 71 and 80.





Methodology

The methodology for the Shire of Moora's Age Friendly Communities Project was based on the Western Australian Communities approach to the original World Health Organisations Age-Friendly Cities Project Framework. Due to a significantly lower population than the original pilot program host cities the Shire of Moora identified the need to modify the approach used.

In order to gain a good representation from across the Shire participants for the focus groups and surveys were recruited through a variety of mediums including:

- Advertisements and newspaper articles within the Central Midlands and Coastal Advocate
- Posters – distributed to Shire offices, local businesses, Moora Lifestyle Village, Community Centres and local noticeboards.
- Information distributed via email networks
- Information distributed via existing community networks and word-of-mouth
- Shire of Moora Website
- Shire of Moora Facebook page
- Liaison with the Health Services Manager, HACC and other service providers
- Direct invitation and networking with service providers, seniors, carers and other interested parties.

Two methods of gaining the information were employed:

- Focus groups
- Survey forms

Focus Group #1 was conducted with various Service Providers including employees of the Health Services, the local Shire and various volunteer groups including the Moora Rotary Club. There were 12 participants including 2 Indigenous service providers.

Focus Group #2 was conducted with Older People and Carers. There were 27 participants (1 Indigenous) ranging in age from 62-93 years of age.

Note: Some of the Carers who took part in the Focus Groups identified themselves as an 'older person participant' and felt that this covered their needs as carers also.

Survey forms were posted/emailed on request to those who were unable to attend the focus groups and also to those who it was identified may be interested in providing input but, for various reasons, had not been able to attend the Focus Groups. A total of 21 surveys were sent out however only 10 were returned.

During the Focus groups and, where possible, in the survey forms, respondents were asked to prioritise issues (by placing a tick next to an issue) and then vote for the key issues. Each participant in the focus groups was given three votes in order to identify the issues that they felt were most important.

The raw data was collated after the focus groups with all participants being encouraged to contact the facilitator if there were any further issues they felt that they had missed or were not represented correctly.

It was not possible to separate the age groups into separate focus groups due to the low group numbers.

The facilitation of the focus groups and surveys were conducted by local consultant, Natasha Butcher with administrative support from the Shire of Moora.

The report was collated by Bridget Waterhouse (Community and Economic Development Officer – Shire of Moora) and Natasha Butcher (Project Consultant).

Findings

I. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

In general it was felt that the streetscape in the CBD was always kept clean and well presented. Participants were proud of the general cleanliness of Moora's streets and green spaces although it was felt that there are areas that are not respected by some residents. Several participants indicated that they felt that there needed to be a few improvements to Apex Park:-

- Better lighting
- Improved Seating
- Improved Shelter
- Cleaner BBQs
- Improved access between the Lodge/Riverside Units and the park

In regards to outdoor seating it was felt by all that while Moora does have some decent seating in our town, we need more. In particular it was pointed out that there was not enough seating in Dandaragan Street from the Hospital, Lodge and Riverside Units to the CBD, and also that there was very little seating available on the east side of town. It was also pointed out that the seating needed to be shaded to be of more use to our aged community.

Some participants from both groups felt there was a need for more street lighting although they did not indicate where.

Participants advised that they felt there was an urgent need for more public toilets to be constructed throughout the town.

Participants indicated that they felt that not all drivers are giving way to pedestrians but that it is quite a common occurrence all over the country.

Both groups felt that the pedestrian crossing from the Doctors' Surgery to the Lodge needed upgrading to give better access to people in walkers and wheelchairs etc.

It was pointed out by several people that the local Post Office, located on the corner of Dandaragan and Padbury Streets, does not have a ramp and is therefore inaccessible to many of the elderly and disabled and this was felt to be inappropriate.

Whilst it was noted that a lot of business now have ramps and disabled access it was felt that there needs to be more. Participants indicated that they would like to see more businesses with railings at their entrances to assist them with entering and exiting the building and that some of the entrance doors at these premises were too heavy for them to open unaided.

It was also suggested that improvements were needed in access to buildings, footpaths and roadway curbing for gophers etc.

The most major concern identified in this topic, which **every** participant (both attendees at the focus groups and the respondents to the surveys) indicated as an issue, was the parking and pedestrian crossing situation on Roberts Street, in front of the IGA Supermarket.

Roberts Street is a major road in the town and has heavy traffic almost all day. The parking bay in front of IGA houses approximately 6 general parking bays and 1 disabled parking bay. Due to the limited number of parks available and also the limited space available within this car park to manoeuvre a vehicle, the majority of people park on the opposite side of the road in the Swimming Pool Car park or on Roberts Street. This means that the pedestrian traffic crossing the road is also very heavy most of the day. The Older People and Carers Group indicated that they felt they were "taking their lives in their hands every time they cross this road" in these circumstances.

It was felt by both groups that there needs to be several things happen **urgently** to alleviate this danger:-

- Upgrade the Pedestrian Crossing and possibly install crosswalk lights
- No parking should be allowed on the street in this area
- Swimming Pool Car park needs painted bays including "Seniors Bays"

It was also pointed out that business operators and their employees are taking up much needed parking bays in busy areas such as Dandaragan Street. In particular it seemed that this was the case for Bankwest, Bird Cameron, Rabobank and the Moora Pharmacy. Participants felt that it would be fairer for these businesses to use other parking available to them (such as the rear of their buildings) as their cars were generally parked there all

day which sometimes prevented the elderly from finding suitable parking to attend either the Bank, Post Office, Butchers or Pharmacy.

Both the Service Providers and the Older People and Carers' Focus Groups felt that the walkways and paths within our town needed improving. Both groups pointed out that there were a lot of areas throughout the town which did not have paths/walkways, especially on the east side of town. They also indicated that the paths that are in existence are quite uneven and possibly in need of repair. It was suggested by the Older People and Carer's Focus Group that they should be constructed from concrete and not paving bricks as some have been in the past.

The Older People and Carers Group also felt quite strongly that cycle paths would be beneficial, particularly in high traffic areas such as Dandaragan Street between the School and the Riverside Units, in order to reduce the likelihood of collisions between cyclists (generally children) and pedestrians. A suggestion was made at the Focus Group that signs could be displayed in this area to remind everyone that the areas were "Shared Pathways".

Some participants pointed out that there is a "River Walkway" which was constructed recently. Most did not know what it was or where it was so the suggestion was made that there needs to be better advertising and signage in regards to the existing walk ways in Moora.

A suggestion made in regards to "customer service arrangements for older people" was that the local supermarket could look into providing deliveries to the elderly.

Most felt that more seating within businesses would be beneficial.

"The road outside IGA is a disaster area for everyone-not just old people. Sooner or later someone is going to get run down. It is busy and congested and needs a major revamp to make it safe for everyone-especially the oldies." Local GP

2. Transportation

Public transport, in the form of Trans WA buses, is currently available to Perth 4 days per week which was generally felt to be adequate although it was pointed out that there is

currently no “same-day service” available which adds the cost of accommodation for most people.

No public transport is available within the town i.e. no Taxis or buses. A community bus is owned by the Shire which is available for community groups to hire although, apart from one participant, most considered this was too expensive for most community groups to utilize.

It was suggested within the Service Providers Group that the Community Bus could be utilized on a set day to cover a set route to collect older people and take them to the major shops and home again at either low or no cost. This was also raised within the Older People and Carers’ Group as a vital service which needs to be made available, especially to the elderly who are not currently receiving HACC services.

Another popular suggestion was that funding should be sort to purchase a vehicle, to be driven by volunteers, to provide transport for the elderly to attend specialist appointments etc in Perth. Some participants indicted that finding the volunteer drivers would present a bigger problem than funding the vehicle however others indicated that several community groups such as Lions and Rotary would be happy to help out in that way if they were asked and maybe there were others around also who do not realise that this is required. It was suggested that an advertising campaign may be helpful to raise awareness within the community of the need for these types of volunteers.

It was indicated that there was a small volunteer group available to transport people to Perth however it was not advertised and therefore people were unaware of it. (It is thought that this is an informal arrangement carried out by a very small number of people).

Some participants indicated that there needed to be a diversion route set up for heavy transport i.e. trucks, particularly in areas such as Dandaragan Street which houses the hospital, the lodge and the Riverside Units.

In regards to parking it was felt that with the additional disabled parking bays designated recently by the shire that this area was adequate. However the IGA parking issues were once again raised as a major issue of concern for everyone.

Many indicated that the Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS) needed to be better advertised as many were unaware of it until after they’d attended their appointments and therefore were unable to lodge a claim.

Participants in both groups suggested a Community Bus service from Moora to Perth each week or fortnight however the majority of people felt that this would not be fair to local shop owners/operators.

Some participants also indicated that they felt it was unfair that self-funded retirees of pension age did not qualify for fuel vouchers as did other pensioners.

3. Housing

There was an overwhelming response in regards to this topic that more housing for the aged and infirmed is urgently needed within Moora. Generally the type of housing required is purpose-built for older people so that it supports independent living with some community support services.

The housing facilities currently available in Moora include:

- Moora Homes for the Aged – 16 units provided on land vested to the Shire of Moora and administered by a volunteer committee
- Moora Lifestyle Village – A recently completed development where over 50's can relocate a park home or construct a new one onto a lot within the village.
- Harry Leaver Cottages - 8 strata title properties with ownership restricted to over 55's
- Department of Housing and Works – Housing for Seniors – 8 duplex units for seniors.
- Home and Community Care (HACC) - Includes the provision of services and support that enables the aged to live in their own (privately owned or rented) homes.
- The Lodge (Low Care Beds) – 8 low care rooms and 1 respite room all with ensuites. There is also a staff room that has been converted to a resident's room

(with ensuite). This resident's room does not meet standards with regards to size. Currently there are no residential respite beds at the lodge as the one allocated bed for respite it being used for a permanent low care bed.

Moora's catchment is currently assessed as eligible for 21 low care beds. The occupancy rate for these units is 100% with a significant waiting list.

- Moora Hospital (High Care Beds) – 8 beds.
Moora's catchment has been allocated 19 high care beds. Currently there are 8 beds available. The occupancy rate is 100%.
- The Delmoor Centre – Community facility offering a Day Care Respite service.

Currently there are at least 35 people on the waiting list for Aged housing (as quoted by R.Stephens, Secretary of Moora Homes for the Aged Committee) which is considered a clear indication that there are not enough independent living units to meet the demand. Each participant was able to prioritise 3 issues they considered to be most important and of the 27 attendees in the Older People and Carers Group, 22 indicated that this was one of those areas urgently needing attention.

Most participants felt that considering the current global market, housing within the community is generally affordable although they felt the cost of tradespeople within the community was not.

Both groups also indicated that it was difficult to engage the services of a local tradesperson due to the fact they were so busy and that it would be beneficial for the elderly within the community to have access to a handyman to complete tasks considered reasonable, to enable them to stay in their homes.

Service providers indicated that wheelchair access is limited in some houses, included some purpose-built housing (particularly bathrooms). They also indicated that many older homes within the community don't meet the current needs of the elderly. It was then pointed out that there are subsidies available for some home modifications but as most people were unaware of this, maybe there needs to be more advertising about this to increase people's awareness.

Some participants felt that crime within our community is a major problem while others felt that it was a reasonably safe community to live in "most of the time". Some indicated that they lived in government housing which did not have security screens installed and therefore they felt very vulnerable. Recent violence within the town has increased which has led to many of the elderly being quite frightened, particularly at night.

A popular suggestion within both groups was that a checklist be developed for people to utilise when planning for over 55's living units and also that information sessions be conducted where this information can be given to community members.

Amongst the Older People and Carers Group there was a general concern as to what housing options would be available for them if/when they have to leave their homes as there are not enough units available within the community already.

4. Respect and Inclusion

It was felt that the Shire of Moora was generally a respectful, friendly and inclusive place to live. That generally the ages mix well together, young people were helpful and polite, and that the community included older people as part of the wider community in most activities. They felt 'part of the community' and valued.

In regards to respect and inclusion for the elderly within the community it was felt that there are many different opportunities provided for them to get involved within the local community and that community events are generally open to all age groups.

Senior Citizen of the Year is awarded annually by the Shire in recognition of outstanding service by an elderly person within the community.

Most participants within the Older People and Carers Group felt that older people were not always consulted about how to serve them better while a few participants disagreed.

Generally it was felt that service staff are courteous and helpful within the community and that older people are depicted positively within our local media. Several people also indicated that most younger people within the community treated them with respect.

There are many activity groups currently operating within the community such as Bingo, Tai Chi, Stay on Your Feet, Men's Group etc however most felt that these were not widely advertised.

Both groups indicated the urgent need for a "Men's Shed" to operate within the community. At each session others indicated that there was currently a "men's shed" in operation however there seemed to be some confusion as to where it was and when it ran etc. It also seemed that there may be some duplication as at least 3 different "men's sheds" were mentioned. It was also suggested that the Men's Shed in existence at the new Moora Lifestyle Village should be made available to the whole community and not just to the residents of the village.

There is a general concern in regards to the lack of volunteers within the community. Many are worried about what may happen to certain groups in the future as most of the volunteers are elderly themselves.

Both groups indicated that they would like to see a better relationship fostered between the old and the young. It was suggested that both the primary schools and the high school need to become more involved with the elderly and that perhaps invitations could be extended to the elderly to certain events which they are holding.

By and large participants indicated that they thought the community was a great place to live.

5. Social Participation

For the most part participants suggested that our community has a wide range of social activities on offer which makes it an easy place to socialize.

Participants indicated that activities and events were generally affordable and some even provided transport although not all which could be helpful.

Many participants within the Older People and Carers Group indicated that they did not regularly patronize evening events on offer as they were reluctant to leave their homes at night. They suggested that maybe Matinee shows at the Performing Arts Centre or movie afternoons conducted at the Delmoor Centre could be offered to Seniors. There was also a suggestion made that either the HACC bus or the Community Bus may be able to transport older people to evening events to make them more accessible.

The community is well catered for when it comes to social and sporting groups including:

- Lawn Bowls
- Golf
- Darts
- Tai Chi Group

- Cards Group
- Bingo
- Men's Group
- Arts & Craft Group
- CWA
- Red Cross
- Stay on Your Feet Group
- Lions
- Rotary
- Fine Arts Society
- Historical Society
- Church groups
- Gym

Participants from the Seniors'/Carers' group felt that it was extremely important for elderly people to join an interest group but acknowledged that some people needed an invitation to do so as they may feel a little timid about initiating their attendance.

In regards to the gym it was pointed out that many elderly have stopped using the gym as it is unattended now and they are not comfortable going alone.

Some participants suggested that a volunteer phone link such as that conducted by the Red Cross may be helpful for the elderly who live alone.

6. Communication and information

It was felt that whilst there was a lot of advertising on community noticeboards etc, that there is room for improvement.

Suggestions were made that there needs to be a dedicated community noticeboard available in the centre of town which is not located within a shop or up any steps (eg post office). A possible location suggested was outside the old telephone exchange on Dandaragan Street as most people would walk past this area whilst attending the Pharmacy, Post Office or Supermarket etc.

It was suggested that a "Seniors Corner" could be added into the local newspaper which could contain all the relevant upcoming events available to the elderly.

In general, participants felt that most written media was worded appropriately for the elderly and that the print was large enough and bold enough.

The question of internet access for Seniors was raised however it was pointed out that there are currently 2 computers available for Seniors to use free of charge at the Moora Community Resource Centre (formally Moora Telecentre).

It was suggested that Information Packs could be distributed to the elderly detailing what to do in the case of an emergency. These packs could also include a large “important information” fridge magnet on which the elderly can indicate a next of kin and possibly current medications etc so that if something is to happen to them, an ambulance or police officer may ascertain relevant information about them as necessary.

Participants expressed concern about various other issues briefly in regards to this area:

- Limited access to Centrelink Information as the office is only open from 9-12 each day.
- Residents in outlying towns often do not know about things happening within the community.
- Most seniors indicated that they had trouble understanding service providers etc on the phone and on the radio as they often have very strong accents.

7. Civic participation and employment

It was generally felt by all that the community has a good range of volunteer groups eg.. St John Ambulance, FESA, Meals on Wheels etc. however there is concern that a lot of the volunteers involved with these groups are elderly themselves.

It was suggested and supported by participants that a fresh advertising campaign should be undertaken to encourage and enlist more volunteers to the different groups in the community.

As to whether volunteers were provided with compensation or not, several attendees indicated that most volunteers aren't necessarily looking for compensation.

A suggestion was made that it may be worthwhile seeking volunteers to join a volunteer gardening group for some town gardens.

Training is available in the area through C.Y. O'Connor College of TAFE and there is no discrimination in age for the courses however, courses offered are number driven which is sometimes difficult in a small community such as ours.

The Older People and Carers Group felt that there were opportunities to be consulted on how they feel about these things at different times such as the focus group they were attending. They also felt that there was no discrimination within the community when it came to employment or volunteering opportunities.

Almost all of the participants in the Older People and Carers Group felt that this section did not have a lot of relevance to them as most of them were retired through choice and would not be actively seeking employment in any case.

8. Community support and Health services

Health and community support services in the shire are provided by the government sector apart from private practitioners (medical and allied health).

- Local hospital which is a MPS. Provides:
 - 8 High Care Beds (non-secure)
 - 12 Acute Care Beds (non-secure)
 - Some respite/palliative care is provided if beds are available
 - Accident/Emergency Facility – 2 bay
 - Limited Radiology
 - Morgue
 - Operating Theatre – minor procedures
 - 24/7 Medical Cover by GP's
 - Home and Community Care (HACC)
 - Extended Care nursing

Allied health including Speech Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Physiotherapist, Child Health Nurses, Aboriginal Health Officers and visiting Dietician and Mental Health Nurse

- Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) from Northam Health Service
- Moora Community Health Centre – 3-4 doctors 5 days/week
- Local police station
- Local volunteer ambulance
- Local police station
- Local volunteer ambulance and RAC helicopter
- Local dentist
- Pharmacy – full time pharmacist operating 5 ½ days/week
- Various visiting private allied health practitioners including Podiatrist
- Moora Frail Aged Lodge provides low level/hostel residential aged care (10 beds)

It was agreed by all participants in both groups that our community has excellent medical services available. All agreed that the Doctors are outstanding as is the Hospital and the Allied Health Services provided however, it was noted that there does seem to be a difficulty in retaining some health professionals in the town. In particular Physiotherapists, who are in high demand, seem to have a high turnover and often, there is not one available at all.

There is also concern that the mental health services within the community are very limited.

More respite care is needed along with the need for more housing as discussed in earlier topics.

Many indicated that they felt people were unaware of the types of health services available within our community and that perhaps a list could be added to the Shire “Welcome Packs”.

The Older People and Carers Group indicated that although they felt HACC was affordable, there needs to be more HACC workers available to service the needs of the elderly.

Both groups indicated that the Gym facilities that are available are very good but that a heated pool would be very beneficial for the elderly, especially for those recovering from operations.

It was pointed out by many of the participants within the Older People and Carers Group that our community has excellent Occupational Therapist Services available.

There is great concern amongst the elderly females that the Breastscreen van no longer notifies them of their upcoming visits once they turn 70. Once the van arrives in town and they try and make appointments it is already full.

One participant who attended the Older People and Carers Focus group advised that Red Cross Carers attend Moora once a month to support people within our community who are carers and this is thought to be a very valuable exercise.

It was suggested and supported by several participants that a “Bulk Rubbish Roadside Collection” should be available to residents within the Shire twice a year as it is in other shires. It was felt that this would be particularly useful to the elderly as many of them don’t drive or have access to a trailer to dispose of large items.

There are many volunteer organisations such as church groups, CWA, Lions, Meals on Wheels, sporting clubs etc who provide social and some volunteer support services to older people. Interestingly most of these organisations are run by older people themselves. They participated in the focus groups as individual older people and raised issues relating to volunteering at these forums. They are included in the findings from the focus groups.

Limitations

In any such project there are limitations to the interpretation of the data. The sample size needs to be placed in context. It represents the views of those who participated and while this can be viewed as a representative sample of older people, carers and service providers, it does not represent the views of all these people within the shire.

Overall, despite the various mediums used to target them only 3 members of the Indigenous community participated in the project which equates to just 1% representation.

Given these limitations this project does reveal some of the key issues in the shire and provides a framework for future planning for an aged-friendly community within it.

Strategies

The information gathered as part of the Age Friendly Communities Study has been utilised to generate 4 strategies. Funding will be sought to facilitate the implementation of the strategies over the next 12 months to enable the Shire of Moora to develop the: **Shire of Moora Aged Friendly Community Plan 2013-18.**

Strategy I: Aged Friendly Access Audit

- Streetscaping and Parking
- Pathways and Footpaths
- Community Buildings
- Business Houses
- Parks and Reserves

Methodology: Focus groups
Surveys
Data collection

Stakeholders: Shire of Moora

Moora Chamber of Commerce
Seniors

Time frame: Complete by June 2012

Strategy 2: Aged Friendly Accommodation Needs Assessment

- Requirements
 - a. Development of Aged Friendly Building Checklist
Resource for builders/developers to refer to ensure aged friendly features are incorporated into the build
 - b. Department of Housing and Works
Initiate discussions to address senior housing needs:
 - More senior housing required
 - Installation of security
 - Disability access – door widths, rails, ramps and wheel chair access
 - Landscaping – raised garden beds higher so aged do not need to bend
- Current
 - a. Moora Aged Care Steering Committee
Lobbying government for additional aged care services to include respite care, low care and dementia care
 - b. Extension of the Moora Frail Aged Lodge
Community lobbying government for the necessary \$1.4million to extend the MFAL to accommodate 1 respite bed and 5 additional low care beds
 - c. Moora Lifestyle Village
Independent living for over 50's

Methodology: Focus groups
Face to face interviews
Data collection

Stakeholders: Shire of Moora
Moora Chamber of Commerce
Department of Housing & Works
Moora Frail Aged Lodge
Moora Homes for the Aged
Moora Hospital
Seniors

Timeframe: Complete by June 2012

Strategy 3: Aged Friendly Services Audit

- Develop audit of existing services and identifying any gaps
- Advertising existing services through the development of a Aged Friendly Information Pack
- Development of Volunteer Coordination Centre

Methodology: Focus Groups
Face to Face Meetings
Data Collection

Stakeholders: Shire of Moora,
Moora Chamber of Commerce
Department of Housing & Works
Moora Frail Aged Lodge
Moora Homes for the Aged
Moora Hospital
Department of Communities
Silver Chain
Meals on Wheels
Moora Hospital Auxillary
Community Health Services
Disability Services Commission
Moora Lifestyle Village
HACC
Moora Health Centre
Seniors

Timeframe: Complete by June 2012

Strategy 4: Community Health Services Audit

- Develop audit of existing health services and identifying any gaps
- Implementing plan to attract and retain professional health services

Methodology: Focus Groups
Face to Face Meetings
Data Collection

Stakeholders: Shire of Moora
Moora Chamber of Commerce
Moora Health Centre
Moora Hospital
Moora Dentist
Department of Communities

Timeframe: Complete by June 2012

Outcome: *Development of the Shire of Moora Aged Friendly Community Plan 2013-18*

Draft structure to incorporate

1. Aged Friendly Access Plan
2. Aged Friendly Accommodation Needs Plan
3. Aged Friendly Services Plan
4. Aged Friendly Health Service Plan

