



Report into Residential Aged Care

Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes

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The consideration of the current and projected population over the age of 70 from 2015 to 2025 compared to the number of residential places available within the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes over the same period to assess whether further development is required to fulfil community need.

Contents

Executive Summary.....	2
Aged Care Summary.....	2
Impact on Local Government.....	2
The Ageing Population - Australia.....	4
Ageing Population – Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes	5
Bridgetown- Greenbushes Residential Aged Care	6
Projected Residential Place Requirements – Bridgetown & Greenbushes	7
Conclusion.....	8

Executive Summary

The Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes has long been a destination for tree-changers looking to retire in the beautiful and scenic surrounds of the Blackwood Valley region. This has meant the population of this Shire has a distinct demographic trend toward an ageing population greater than both state and national averages. Although Council is not involved directly in the aged care sector, nor is it likely that aged care would become core business of the Shire, Council is aware of the need to be aware of relevant issues impacting the community. This includes the impacts of a rapidly ageing community and a need to plan and advocate for the necessary infrastructure and services to adequately accommodate the needs of residents into the future.

Aged Care Summary

Federal and State Government

The Australian Federal Government is the government body responsible for overseeing and regulating the provision of aged care services for residential care, home care, home support and flexible care to those approved to receive support. The Federal Government also provides capital grants to assist in the establishment of new services and the expansion or upgrade of existing aged care services where providers are unable to meet these costs through other sources.

The *Age Care Act (1997)* and associated Age Care Principles provide the legislative framework for aged care services in Australia. In 2013, major legislative changes to the Act and associated principles were passed by Parliament and became law. These changes to the Act were designed to further encourage diverse flexible and responsive aged care services and to promote ageing in place through the linking of care and support services to the places where older people live.

Many of the costs of ageing will fall to the Australian Federal and State governments. The Australian Government is the main provider of funding of health and aged care services in Australia, with their cost doubling to about 4% of GDP in the last 30 years. State governments will also make a significant contribution to meeting the costs of an ageing community through public hospitals, policing and public transport.

Impact on Local Government

The ageing of the population is likely to vary significantly by locality and this means the impact on local governments will vary. There are two trends at work here, first a movement of younger people to the Central Business Districts and the outer metropolitan suburbs of major cities. Secondly the consolidation of older people in metropolitan inner suburbs and

inland country towns and their movement to the coastal fringes. Many coastal communities within two or three hour drive from a major city (such as the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast and Hervey Bay in Queensland, Victor Harbour in South Australia, Forster and Port Macquarie in New South Wales, Bairnsdale and Queenscliff in Victoria, Mandurah in Western Australia and Devonport in Tasmania) have already experienced a rapid growth in their ageing population.

Land use planning and streamlining of development applications will be crucial to the capacity of Councils to deal with this growth. In the inland regional towns existing facilities will face capacity constraints as demand for aged care services grows.

Challenges for local government

It is too early for the impact of an ageing population on local government to be known with a high degree of certainty. However, from available information it seems likely that the ageing of the population will pose five challenges for local government. These challenges are in:

1. planning for strong growth in ageing populations in certain localities
2. providing an adequate standard of basic infrastructure
3. providing an adequate and appropriate range of local government services
4. managing the financial impact of the growing number of retirees
5. harnessing the skills, wealth and business acumen of older people.

The purpose of this report is to essentially provide information in relation to the first of these five challenges. The remaining points are predominantly addressed by Council in the Age Friendlies Community Plan.

Planning for an ageing population

The first major challenge will be planning for an ageing population. Local government has a significant role in determining the location of aged care facilities. At present it appears that the growth in older populations will be concentrated in inner metropolitan areas, inland country towns and in urban and rural areas on the coastal fringe (Productivity Commission 2004b, p. 12.4). The location, choice, affordability and design of housing for the elderly (such as self-contained units) and their carers (nurses, allied health professionals, domestic staff) and their proximity to support services and infrastructure in these areas will be major issues. Older people will look for housing which is smaller, safer, more secure and closer to services, transport and family (Costello and Minchin 2002, p. 27). Aged care developments will need to be planned in closer collaboration with aged care and service providers to ensure these factors are taken into account when choices are made about accommodation.

Local governments, particularly those in rural and regional areas will also need to plan for the mobility needs of older people. Mobility will be important in building and town design, in facilitating access to medical services, shops and other facilities and to enable older people to socialise. Single and two-person households make up half of all households and over 40 per cent of single-person households 65 years and over do not own a motor vehicle (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2001, p. 184). Local government can use its public places, such as libraries, art galleries and parklands to bring people together and overcome the social isolation faced by many retirees. Buildings, dwellings and toilets will need to be readily accessible for people with a disability or frailty and they will need to be designed to minimise slips and falls, which are a leading cause of hospitalisation (Baum & Jackson 2004, p. 73). Remote access to library and information services will be important. Community transport will become more important in regional areas.

The Ageing Population - Australia

Median Age

The median age (the age at which half the population is older and half is younger) of the Australian population has increased by 4.0 years over the last two decades, from 33.4 years at 30 June 1994 to 37.3 years at 30 June 2014. Between 30 June 2013 and 30 June 2014 the median age remained steady at 37.3 years.

People 65 Years and Over

Over the next several decades, population ageing is projected to have implications for Australia, including; health, size of the working-age population, housing and demand for skilled labour.

Like most developed countries, Australia's population is ageing as a result of sustained low fertility and increasing life expectancy. This has resulted in proportionally fewer children (under 15 years of age) in the population and a proportionally larger increase in those aged 65 and over. Between 1994 and 2014, the proportion of Australia's population aged 15-64 years remained fairly stable, decreasing from 66.6% to 66.5% of the total population. During the same period, the proportion of people aged 65 years and over increased from 11.8% to 14.7% and the proportion of people aged 85 years and over almost doubled from 1.0% of the total population in 1994 to 1.9% in 2014. Conversely, the proportion aged under 15 years decreased from 21.6% to 18.8%. Over the 20 years between 1994 and 2014, the proportion of the population aged 65 years and over increased from 11.8% to 14.7%. This group is projected to increase more rapidly over the next decade, as further cohorts of baby boomers turn 65 (there are currently only four years of baby boomers aged 65 years and over).

In the 12 months to 30 June 2014, the number of people aged 65 years and over increased by 118,700 people, representing a 3.6% increase. All states and territories experienced growth in people aged 65 years and over in the year ended 30 June 2014. The largest increase in this group was in the Northern Territory (7.0%), followed by the Australian Capital Territory (4.6%), Western Australia (4.2%) and Queensland (4.1%).

People Aged 85 Years and Over

Over the past two decades, the number of persons aged 85 years and over increased by 153%, compared with a total population growth of 32% over the same period.

In the year ending 30 June 2014, the number of people aged 85 years and over increased by 19,200 people (4.4%) to reach 456,500. There were almost twice as many females (291,600) as males (164,900) in this age group which reflects the higher life expectancy for females.

Over the same period, the largest percentage increases of people aged 85 years and over occurred in the Northern Territory (13.5%), followed by the Australian Capital Territory (5.3%), Western Australia (5.0%), Queensland (4.8%), New South Wales and Victoria (both 4.4%), South Australia (3.4%) and Tasmania (2.4%).

People Aged 100 Years and Over

Over the past two decades, the number of centenarians increased by 263%, reflecting an increase in life expectancy for both males and females during the period.

In the 12 months to 30 June 2014, the number of centenarians increased by 490 people (13.8%) to reach 4,000. There were almost four times as many females (3,200) as males (880) in this age group which reflects the higher life expectancy for females.

Ageing Population – Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes

Bridgetown-Greenbushes has a community of 4,517, with an annual average population increase of 1.5% per year. The percentage of the population 65 years and over, as of the census in 2011, was 18.7% or 845 people (national average population 65 years and over is 14.7%). The percentage of people 55 years and over, as of the census in 2011, was 36.1% or 1630 people. This sector of the population will be included in the 65 and over age range and drastically increase the residential age care requirements for the Shire over the next 10 years.

This Shire is well above the national average for people over the age of 65 with the aged population percentage growing in line with the national increased annually. The number of people 70 years and over at the time of the 2011 census was 560 people or 12.4% of the population of Bridgetown-Greenbushes.

Bridgetown- Greenbushes Residential Aged Care

The Needs Based Planning Framework

The needs based planning framework aims to ensure the supply of residential and home care places by ensuring that the growth in the number of aged care places matches the growth in the aged population. Under the framework, the Government seeks to achieve and maintain a specified national provision level of 125 residential and home care places for every 1,000 people aged 70 years or over, to be achieved by 2021-22. Within this provision ratio the number of home care packages will be 45, leaving 80 residential care places for every 1, 000 people 70 years and over. This is known as the aged care provision ratio. This ratio can be used as a guideline to assist in projecting aged care needs within a given community.

Geegeelup Retirement Village

The Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes has 16 residential beds within the Shire located at Geegeelup Retirement Village. Geegeelup Retirement village consists of independent living apartments, supported living and residential beds. It is one of only a few retirement villages in WA that is a not for profit, incorporated, community directed retirement village. Geegeelup Village are currently in the process of applying for funding to increase the number of residential beds to 32 over the next 5 years. Geegeelup Village has successfully applied for funding from the South West Development Commission to cover costs associated with consultant fees to undertake a feasibility study/business plan and concept designs (2015)

Stinton Gardens

Stinton Gardens is an independent living retirement village located in Greenbushes. Stinton Gardens also operated as a not-for-profit, community directed concern. Stinton Gardens are looking into extending the number of units available to resident of Greenbushes, however, the committee do not intend to consider residential care at any point in the future.

Residential Care

Residential care provides a range of supported accommodation services for older people who are unable to continue living independently in their own homes.

In 2013-2014 there were two main types of residential care in Australia, low level and high level care, this distinction in residential care was removed as of 1 July 2014. This change was implemented to allow for flexible funding of places on a case by case basis and was a

response to changes in the expectations and needs of the ageing population. The system places the onus on the provider to distinguish the capabilities of their facility and staff to provide adequate care for the varying needs of each assessment.

Residential is provided on a permanent or respite basis. Residential respite provides short term care on a planned or emergency basis in aged care homes for people who have been assessed and approved to receive care.

Projected Residential Place Requirements – Bridgetown & Greenbushes

Assumptions

There are several assumptions upon which the results in the table below are based.

- The projected population increase of 1.5% per annum is based on the Department of Planning prediction figures.
- The increase in community members aged 70 and over is based on the per population annual percentage rate increases, purported by the Australian Government Data Sets.
- The rate at which the number of residential beds will be required is based on the Governments needs based planning framework. Under the framework the Government seeks to achieve and maintain a specified national provision level of subsidised operational aged care places for every 1,000 people 70 years and over. This is known as the aged care provision ratio. The provision ratio is planned to increase to 125 operational aged care places per 1,000 people aged 70 years and over by 2021-2022. Within this provision ratio the number of home care packages will be increased to 45, leaving 80 residential bed places for long term residential and respite care (2013-2014 Report on the Operation of the Aged Care Act 1997).
- Although it is understood that the 80:1 000 ratio is the optimum level of residential beds per capita of 70 years and over, it is suggested that this should be the ratio to work toward and is the ratio these projections are based upon.

Table 1 Residential Beds for Aged Care – Ratio Projections

Year	Population	Population % increase of 70+ per capita	Number of Residents 70+	Number of operational Residential/ Respite Places
2015	4,682	10.70%	575	46
2016	4,752	12.30%	598	47
2017	4,823	13.30%	641	51
2018	4,896	13.90%	680	54
2019	4,969	14.20%	705	56
2020	5,043	14.70%	741	59
2021	5,119	15.00%	767	61
2022	5,196	15.40%	800	64
2023	5,274	15.80%	833	66
2024	2,353	16.30%	872	69
2025	5,433	16.80%	912	72

It should be noted that, as of the Stocktake data 2014, published by the Department of Social Services on an annual basis at the end of each financial year, the aged care provision ratio of proposed residential places (places that are operational and planned) was 86.4:1000 and the ratio of home care packages was 35.7:1000 people 70+. The actual operation provision ratio for residential places was 74.4:1000 people 70+.

The Shire of Bridgetown Greenbushes is currently operating at a ratio of 27.6:1000 residential places, which is well under the recommended ratio.

Conclusion

Interestingly, the proposed provision ratio for 2021-2022 is reducing the number of funded residential places per 1000 persons 70+, suggested as an optimum provision over time and increasing the number of home care packages from 35.7:1000 to 45:1000. This trend is in line with ageing in place which has been a reported preference for government and the ageing population.

As this community is above the national average in relation to the percentage of people 55+ (approximately 37% of the current population demographic) the need for an increase in the availability of in-community residential care places is considered essential. The negative effects associated with removing an ageing person from access to spouse, family and community have been well documented and need to be considered when planning for the aged care requirements of individuals in the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes community.

If the projections are correct the number of residential places required by the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes in 2025 will be 72. The Shire currently has 16 residential care places with a view to increasing the number of places to 32 over the next 5 years. This should be considered as insufficient in the planned development of residential places required and further consideration should be given to the options for increased residential care development.