



**Creating a better
Mosman for over 55s**
What you told us

Mosman
COUNCIL

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At 8,842, approximately 31% of Mosman's population is aged 55 years and over, and this is forecast to increase to 33.3% or a third by 2036. This brings opportunities and challenges for Council in supporting older residents in leading active, healthy and engaged lives.

In February to April 2020, Council engaged with community members to find out their views about how we can create a better Mosman for people 55 years and over. Through local media and networks, we reached older residents; carers; family members; volunteers; service providers and other interested community members through:

- a Survey which was undertaken by 199 respondents (online and hard copy)
- three workshops, specific to community members (28 participants), service providers (15 participants) and the Mosman Carers Group (13 participants)
- nine engagement events undertaken with Peer Volunteer Consultants, including focus groups and stalls at Bridgepoint Shopping Centre and Mosman markets.

To guide our consultation, we used the Age-Friendly Cities and Communities framework of the World Health Organisation, which highlights that:

An age-friendly city encourages active ageing by optimising opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age.¹

The Framework addresses eight domains and the key feedback provided by community members across all forms of consultation with indicative quotes follows. There was a positive response across all the consultation to Council engaging with older people in the community. Overall, the feedback confirmed that Mosman has much to celebrate in the quality of life enjoyed by older residents but there is room for improvement. The majority of survey respondents felt that Mosman was age-friendly across most domains but were less certain about the age-friendliness of the two domains of Housing and Civic Participation and Employment where results were more equivocal. The overall feedback from the workshops and engagement events undertaken by the Peer Volunteer Consultants was very consistent with the survey results and is included where this adds further insights to the survey results.

¹World Health Organisation, *Global Age-Friendly Cities: A Guide*, 2007, p1 www.who.int/ageing/projects/age-friendly-cities-communities/en/

1.

Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

'Ensure footpaths are well maintained and clutter around shopping precincts is reduced to prevent falls'

Most survey respondents (86.6%) felt Mosman was age-friendly for outdoor spaces and buildings, particularly the green spaces and civic spaces such as Mosman Seniors Centre. At 97.3%, the overwhelming majority rated this domain as important to them (highest rating).

While we did not obtain specific reasons for their selected response, comments suggest that this may be due to viewing outdoor spaces and buildings as integral to active and positive ageing in place in the Mosman community and in their homes.

The most commonly cited areas for improvement were:

- fixing uneven footpaths and paving
- provision of outdoor seats and shelters
- needing additional accessible public toilets
- better street lighting; more pedestrian-friendly crossings and traffic calming.

2.

Transportation

'Accessible, frequent and cheap – very impressive'

At 75.9%, most survey respondents felt that Mosman was age-friendly for transportation, pointing to the relatively good public bus and ferry network to key locations, and 88.1% indicated this domain was important to them

The most commonly cited areas for improvement were:

- the need to retain the existing bus and ferry services and have more frequent services on weekends and evenings
- increased parking and parking times and drop off/pick up bays to allow for shopping, medical and other appointments
- expanded community transport within and outside of Mosman.

3.

Housing

'Housing needs to be close to other family and facilities especially when not driving'

At 49.9%, approximately half of all survey respondents felt Mosman was age-friendly for housing, which was significantly less than for other domains of the Age-Friendly framework. Respondents seemed less certain of their opinions on the age-friendliness of housing in Mosman, with 28.1% or more than a quarter responding they were 'unsure' and 77.1% indicating this domain was important to them. While we did not obtain their specific reasons for responding so, comments suggest that many respondents felt existing housing stock per se did not incorporate 'age-friendly design or did not feel they had sufficient information of housing stock in Mosman.

The most commonly cited areas for improvement were:

- inclusion of accessible and universal design in new & renovated developments
- well-designed seniors housing located near facilities and transport
- increased affordable housing
- enhanced home maintenance and modification services for people living at home

4.

Social Participation

'I don't believe older people need to be treated as a separate group. Let's find more ways to bring all residents together on a regular basis'

At 74.3%, most survey respondents felt Mosman was age friendly for social participation and 82.1% indicated it was important to them.

Positive comments were provided on Council services, including Mosman Seniors Centre, in facilitating social participation as well as of the myriad community-based clubs and groups.

The most commonly cited areas for improvement were:

- provision of information and promotion of local activities
- greater recognition of the diverse needs of people 55 years+
- expansion of intergenerational social activities.

At the pop-up consultation events undertaken with the Volunteer Peer Consultants, there was significant support by participants for more informal, less structured social opportunities and for those that catered for people who were more active as well as frail older people.

5.

Respect and Inclusion

'Although I have experienced ageism elsewhere, I find Mosman to be very tolerant, inclusive and inventive'

At 75.2%, most respondents felt Mosman was age-friendly in respect and inclusion of people 55 years and over. It was telling that at 92.7%, the overwhelming majority of respondents rated respect and inclusion as important, the second highest rating for any of the domains.

The most commonly cited areas for improvement were:

- community education to challenge ageism and promote positive community attitudes
- expanded intergenerational activities to promote respect and inclusion
- extension of opportunities for consultation and engagement with older people.

6.

Civic Participation and Employment

'Should be more effort to engage older residents and younger people in joint activities to share skills'

At 56.9%, just over half of respondents felt that Mosman was age-friendly for civic participation and employment and at 27.7% or just over one-quarter being 'unsure'. While we did not obtain their specific reasons for responding so, comments indicate it may be as much about lack of information as well as perceived limited opportunities, particularly for employment. At 85.8%, this domain was considered by the majority to be important to them.

The most commonly cited areas for improvement were:

- further communication on ways for older people to participate in civic life and Council engagement processes
- promotion of volunteering opportunities (Council and non-Council)
- creation of new volunteering roles that utilise the skills and expertise of older people

7.

Communication and Information

'Keep up the conversation. Keep communication channels open'

At 74%, almost three quarters of respondents felt that communication and information in Mosman was age-friendly, and 89.5% felt this was important to them. Positive comments pointed to Council communication through various mediums, and that Council's Customer Service, Library and Seniors Centre provided helpful information.

The most commonly cited areas for improvement were:

- significantly enhanced digital literacy education for older residents
- continuation of printed, phone and face-to-face communication
- provision of printed and home-delivered regular local newspapers & newsletters
- offer a 'one-stop shop' for information for older residents

8.

Community and Health Services

'Pretty hard to find a bulk billing doctor... I go to a doctor out of the area'

At 67.6%, approximately two-thirds of the respondents felt that community and health services in Mosman were age-friendly and 21.5% were 'unsure'. While we did not obtain the reasons they responded so, from comments provided it may be at least partly due to a lack of knowledge of available services and limited affordable community and health services. There were positive comments about the breadth and quality of community services offered through Mosman Community Care.

At 91.6%, this domain was also rated by the majority of survey respondents as important, the third highest rating, with comments indicating possible concern about being able to access appropriate community and health care for current and future needs.

The most commonly cited areas for improvement were:

- affordable primary, specialist and allied health services, including GP bulk billing
- increased provision of affordable and flexible community care services (non-Council and Council) that can support people with temporary and permanent impairments
- outreach and support services for older people who are isolated and vulnerable eg. people with mental health issues or dementia or with a limited social support network.

Feedback through the consultation workshops raised similar issues.

The Carers Group consultation workshop raised specific concerns with the lack of information and complexity in accessing publicly funded or subsidised health and community care services and dementia care and support. Carers highlighted the limited availability of respite services (including overnight, day and in-home services) and support for male carers.

At the workshops for community members and service providers, there was consistent feedback on the need for more targeted services and programs for men, people with dementia, and people at risk of isolation; and to encourage people in their 50's and 60's to undertake life planning to better meet their financial, social, legal, housing and care needs as they age. There was also significant support for Council continuing to promote information on available services, programs, activities, and lifelong learning.

Summary

The feedback provided by older residents and other stakeholders has provided valuable information for Council on ways to improve the wellbeing and quality of life for people 55 years and over.

These results will inform Council service, program and strategic planning and the ongoing development of Council's Positive Ageing framework.

Council thanks the many older residents, carers, family members, volunteers, service providers and other interested community members for their participation and support in sharing their views and ideas to make Mosman even more age-friendly.

