

We can create a better CITY:

As we prepare to rebuild Christchurch, it's time to address some important social issues that stand in the way. Making our city more age-friendly will help our city to thrive.

by becoming Age-Friendly

The facts about our aging population

- Older people comprise 14% of the city's population
- The number of older people in the city is projected to double, increasing to 120,100 in 2031 (22% of the total population).
- Older people are increasingly likely to have other specific cultural and social needs, such as access to peer groups or religious facilities
- Most older people are not experiencing particular material hardship. However a minority (5%-10%) experience some hardship and a further 5% experienced marked hardship.
- Poverty levels of older people are likely to grow in future decades. In the next 40 years it is predicted that older people will be over-represented in low income households.
- Older people are more likely than others to own their home.
- By 2050, home ownership is expected to decline and the number of older people in rental dwellings more than double.
- About 45% older people have a disability that impairs their mobility
- 15% of older people said they always, mostly or sometimes felt lonely over the last 12 months
- Social isolation has been exacerbated by the earthquake. A high proportion of callers to our quake line are older people – alone, isolated and lonely

An age-friendly community supports and enable older people to 'age actively', that is, to live in security, enjoy good health and continue to participate fully in society.

It doesn't have to be this way. We can be more age-friendly



Rebuilding Christchurch

Becoming more age-friendly is one crucial part of the wider story about building a great city.

To become age-friendly we need to

Build affordable housing

Our city has lost a large number of social housing units and many old people have lost their homes. We need sufficient, affordable housing in safe areas close to services. We also need to meet the gap in supported rental accommodation for the elderly.

Design age friendly urban environments

We need urban environment where transport, good shops, green spaces, decent toilets, and benches, are consciously planned for people of all ages and conditions in mind.

Build more residential age care facilities

The city has lost approximately 600 (over 12%) rest home and hospital beds. Many of our older people have been moved out of Christchurch. We must provide more age care beds to allow these residents to be close to their friends and families.

Expand range of age care facilities

Demand for residential services is continually growing. Over the last decade much of this growth has been absorbed by home support services. However this alternative will not be able to absorb all of the future demand for aged care services.

Develop a regional employment strategy

Working is generally linked with better income, better quality of life, more active lifestyles and a greater sense of social inclusion. We need a Regional Employment Strategy that ensures older people can continue to work in formal employment, part-time work or as volunteers if they choose.

Provide social activities for older people

The engagement in social activities is absolutely vital for older people's well-being. We need community centres in neighbourhoods offering an excellent range of activities that encourage older people to participate.

Improve public transport

Affordable, reliable and frequent public transport is key to an age-friendly environment because it enables older people to get out and socialise, and to access vital services.

Provide community and health services

We need accessible health and community support services which promote and restore health. We need to ensure that older people get the help they need to remain in their own homes.

THE METHODIST MISSION believes each person has value and dignity. We are committed to creating a community where older persons live in comfort, dignity and with purpose. We are a provider of age care residential services and one of the largest providers of older person social housing in the city.

www.mmsi.org.nz/our-views.html

This information can be used and distributed freely.