



WINTON SHIRE COUNCIL'S STRATEGY FOR **AGEING WELL IN WINTON**

2025 - 2028

Proudly developed by

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PARTNERS 

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For and in partnership with



FOREWORD

Mayor's Message



Welcome to Winton, a place where living well and looking out for each other is simply part of who we are. Our region is known for its resilience, strong community spirit, and true-blue mateship. We're committed to making sure everyone in Winton can enjoy a good life, no matter their age or situation.

While Winton is a popular spot for visitors, as a long-time local, I can say it's an even better place to live. We want to make sure that those who choose to live out their lives here have real options and the support they need.

Ageing Well in Winton is all about working together – locals, businesses, and services – to create a shared vision for our town, both now and into the future. It's about helping each other through life's changes with dignity, respect, and the support to keep growing and enjoying life.

This strategy was built with input from the community. It belongs to all of us. Council can't do it alone, it will take teamwork. But I have no doubt our community will come together to make it happen, just like we always do.

Let's keep building a Winton where the focus on ageing well is at the heart of our community, and where everyone has the chance to live their best life.

Cr Cathy White
Mayor of Winton

*Image:- Through the Winton generations.
Mayor White joined by Winton's eldest and youngest residents, locals and Sean Dillion MP for Gregory.
Source: Winton Shire Council*



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge the various Aboriginal people whose traditional lands are within Winton Shire. We pay our respects to elders, past, present and emerging. We acknowledge those from the defence force who served in the past to preserve our freedoms and those serving today, who continue to protect the country which we all call home.

COUNCILLORS



Cr Cathy White
Mayor



Cr Tina Elliott
Deputy Mayor



Cr Frank Standfast



Cr Adrian Lenton



Cr Jacob Mutton



Cr Julie Dorries

PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY

Ageing Well in Winton brings together Winton Shire Council's existing and planned programs, services, and activities into one unified framework, setting a clear direction and focus on ageing and wellbeing across our community.

This strategy also includes new initiatives reflecting our collective commitment to supporting all individuals - residents and visitors alike - to live well, age with dignity, and remain active, valued participants in community life. These initiatives have been developed through stakeholder and community feedback.

Central to this strategy is the ongoing collaboration and integration with our local stakeholders, including community groups, allied health professionals, the Winton Hospital and Multipurpose Health Service, service organisations, and volunteers. Their dedication and invaluable contributions form the foundation of the support network that helps our community thrive.

By working together, we are building a more connected, inclusive, and resilient Winton - where people of all ages can access the services, facilities, and opportunities they need to navigate life's transitions, embrace personal growth, and experience wellbeing at every stage of life.



*Winton entry sign with 150 addition
Source: Winton Shire Council*



*Resident with Council officer at Winton Country University Centre
Source: Winton Shire Council*

COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS



Leisa Fraser

PRESIDENT, WINTON COMMUNITY AND AGED CARE SERVICES INC

As President of WCACS, I am proud to lead our organisation of passionate local people in championing the Ageing in the Outback Strategy for Winton, providing a continuum of care for the elderly in our community. We've championed the Ageing Strategy, secured funding for Jessamine Place, and work with Council, WQPHN, CWHHS and other stakeholders. We look forward to working the Council on the implementation of this strategy and making Ageing in the Outback a reality for Winton.



Sandy Gillies

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE WESTERN QUEENSLAND PRIMARY HEALTH NETWORK (PHN)

As a First Nations woman, born and bred in Winton, I am a passionate and committed advocate in ensuring that all residents regardless of their postcode have equal access to services and facilities close to home. We have a long way to go to ensure rural, remote and very remote Australia gets its fair share. The need for strategies that are informed and co-designed with the community will help us work together to champion increased access to funding and service provision to support individuals to stay connected and age in the communities they shaped and created.



Andrew Judd

LOCAL PARAMEDIC

My wife and I are still relatively new to Winton but can honestly say it's home. The community has welcomed us with open arms. Successful ageing is so important and being a paramedic, especially in a regional setting, means that there is greater emphasis on proactively looking after ones own health and wellbeing. We welcome the Ageing Well in Winton Strategy as it takes a focus to varying stages of ones health regardless of an age. We look forward to supporting in any way we can.



Jen Williams

DIRECTOR OF NURSING

I am proud to lead a team of exceptional professionals at the Winton Multipurpose Health Service. Our hospital and residential aged care service provides high quality care to all in our community. We welcome this strategy as a wholistic strategy to support positive ageing and promotion of proactive initiatives with a focus of self-care and wellbeing.



Gary and Josie Doak

WINTON DATES BUSINESS OWNERS

We are proud to call Winton home and have done for over 15 years. We founded our business here and have no desire to be anywhere else. For us, Winton, is special. People are its strength and to see this strategy focus on the voice of our community means that it can and will be successful. We look forward to continue to champion the community and encourage others to call this place home.



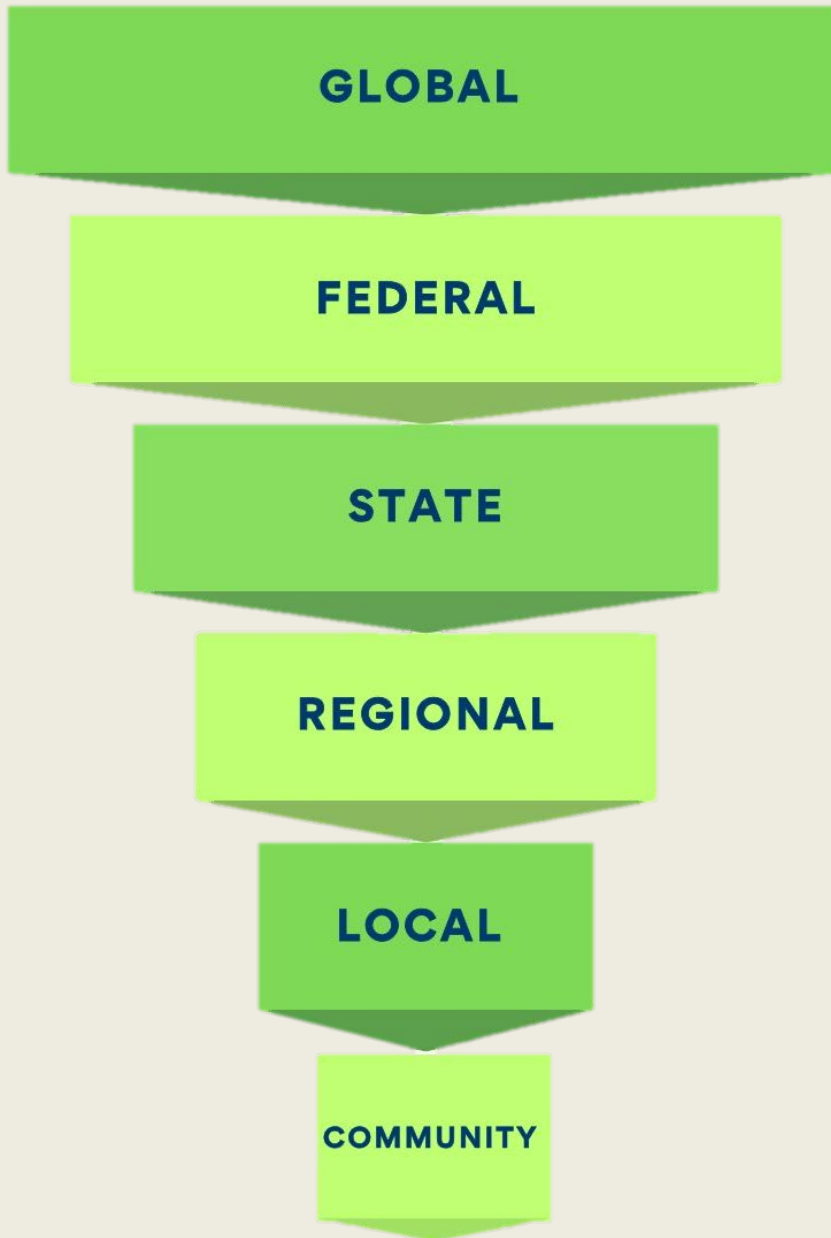
Patto Brotherton

INDIGENOUS CHRONIC DISEASE COORDINATOR

Winton has been home for my family for five decades, to be able to live, work and age in my hometown is a benefit I look forward too. As an older Aboriginal local, the difficult decision to have to leave my community to ageing is something me or my family do not want to have to make. This strategy is more than words on a paper it provides hope for not only me but for all older residents in the town.

BRINGING IT TOGETHER

Ensuring the health, wellbeing, safety, and positive ageing of older people is a shared responsibility across all levels of government. While legislation provides an evolving framework, guidance also comes from global bodies such as the United Nations, through to local volunteers and community organisations. Bringing it all together requires alignment, coordination, and commitment across this broad landscape of influence and care.



GLOBAL - United Nations – Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) – 2002, World Health Organization (WHO) – Global Strategy and Action Plan on Ageing and Health (2016–2030) and the UN Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021–2030)

FEDERAL - Department of Health, *Aged Care Aged Care Act 1997 (Cth)* and National Ageing and Aged Care Strategy including recommendations from the Royal Commission into Aged Quality and Safety 2018.

STATE - Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, Queensland Seniors Strategy 2024–2029, Healthy Ageing: A Strategy for Older Queenslanders, Queensland: An Age-Friendly Community Toolkit

REGIONAL - Department of Health – Central West Hospital and Health Service – Strategic Plan 2025–2029, RAPAD Strategic Plan 2022– 2025

LOCAL – Winton Shire Council Corporate Plan, Economic Development Strategy

COMMUNITY - Winton Community & Aged Care Services Inc, Volunteers and Local Organisations

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VISION FOR WINTON

Winton is a community where genuine collaboration and social cohesion flourishes, enabling all members to gracefully navigate life's transitions with dignity, while fostering personal growth and fulfilment.

Ageing Well in Winton outlines our commitment to an integrated and collaborative approach enhancing services, programs, and facilities. It is about ensuring equitable access to tailored resources that respond to evolving needs of every individual, promoting their full engagement as valued members of our community both now and in the future.



*Nurse with Aged Care Resident
Source: Winton Shire Council*

WINTON SHIRE

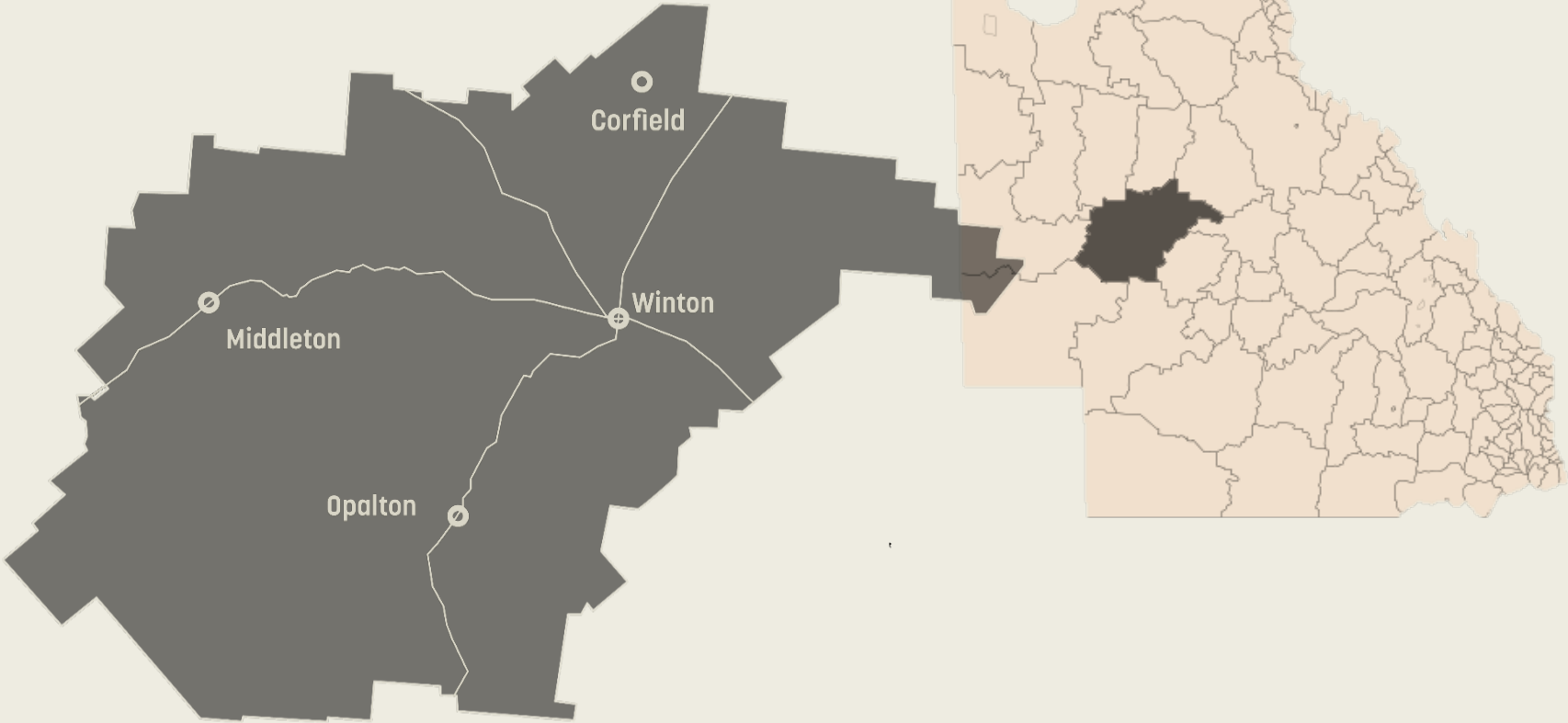
Winton Shire, located in Central Western Queensland along the Landsborough Highway, lies 180 kilometres north-west of Longreach, 472 kilometres south-east of Mount Isa, and approximately 1,500 kilometres from Brisbane. Spanning 53,935 square kilometres—an area roughly the size of Victoria—the shire is home to 1,138 permanent residents, with numbers swelling by more than 600 people per day during peak visitor season.

The Shire comprises four main communities: Opalton, Middleton, Corfield, and the primary service centre and population hub, Winton.

Before colonial settlement, the land now known as Winton was home to the Koa People. The Shire also encompasses the lands of six other Indigenous nations. We acknowledge their enduring culture and deep knowledge of Country.

Winton has a rich and varied history, known for its connections to Waltzing Matilda, as the birthplace of Qantas, and as a region rich in opals. In more recent years, Winton has gained international attention for something far more ancient—its significant dinosaur fossil discoveries. Historically a centre for wool production, the region has seen many graziers transition to beef production.

As with many regional areas in Queensland, Winton is experiencing an ageing population, with more residents expressing the desire to remain in the region as they age.



1,138 population



45 mean age



52% female population



**959
SEIFA* index**



**38.7% lone persons
household**



264 businesses

**Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Australia - SEIFA combines Census data such as income, education, employment, occupation, housing and family structure to summarise the socio-economic characteristics of an area. The mean average is 1000.*

Source :- ABS and Qld Government Statistician's Office data.

WHY IS THIS STRATEGY NEEDED?

The Winton Shire is not dissimilar to other remote and very remote areas in Australia in terms of the ageing population trend.

The remoteness of the region, combined with the relatively small population base and general overall decline in population in recent years, will increase the challenges locally in terms of planning and implementing strategies and actions that focus on improving outcomes in the aged care space. The need for an integrated focus and continual evaluation to our wellbeing and aged care continuum is vital to ensuring that Winton becomes an exemplar for ageing in the outback.

Winton Shire Council is committed to seeing a comprehensive ageing and wellbeing strategy for the region that will guide future actions and ensure that challenges can be met, and results achieved. Through an open Expression of Interest process an experienced consultant team was engaged to deliver this body of work and engage with stakeholders and the community. They included:

- **Infinitum Partners** – Trusted advisors to local government with a planning foundation
- **Booming** – Ageing and Wellness Specialists
- **National Property Research Co** – Property Economists and Market Experts

This strategy creates a blueprint representing realistic, fit-for-purpose and exciting opportunity to showcase how positive ageing can be embraced no matter the location or size of a region.



*Outdoor recreation area for the Residential Aged Care Facility
Winton Hospital and Multipurpose Health Service
Image taken by Author*

APPROACH

The development of *Ageing Well in Winton* progressed through three key phases, each designed to ensure meaningful community engagement and a strong evidence base.

Phase 1 – Research and Context

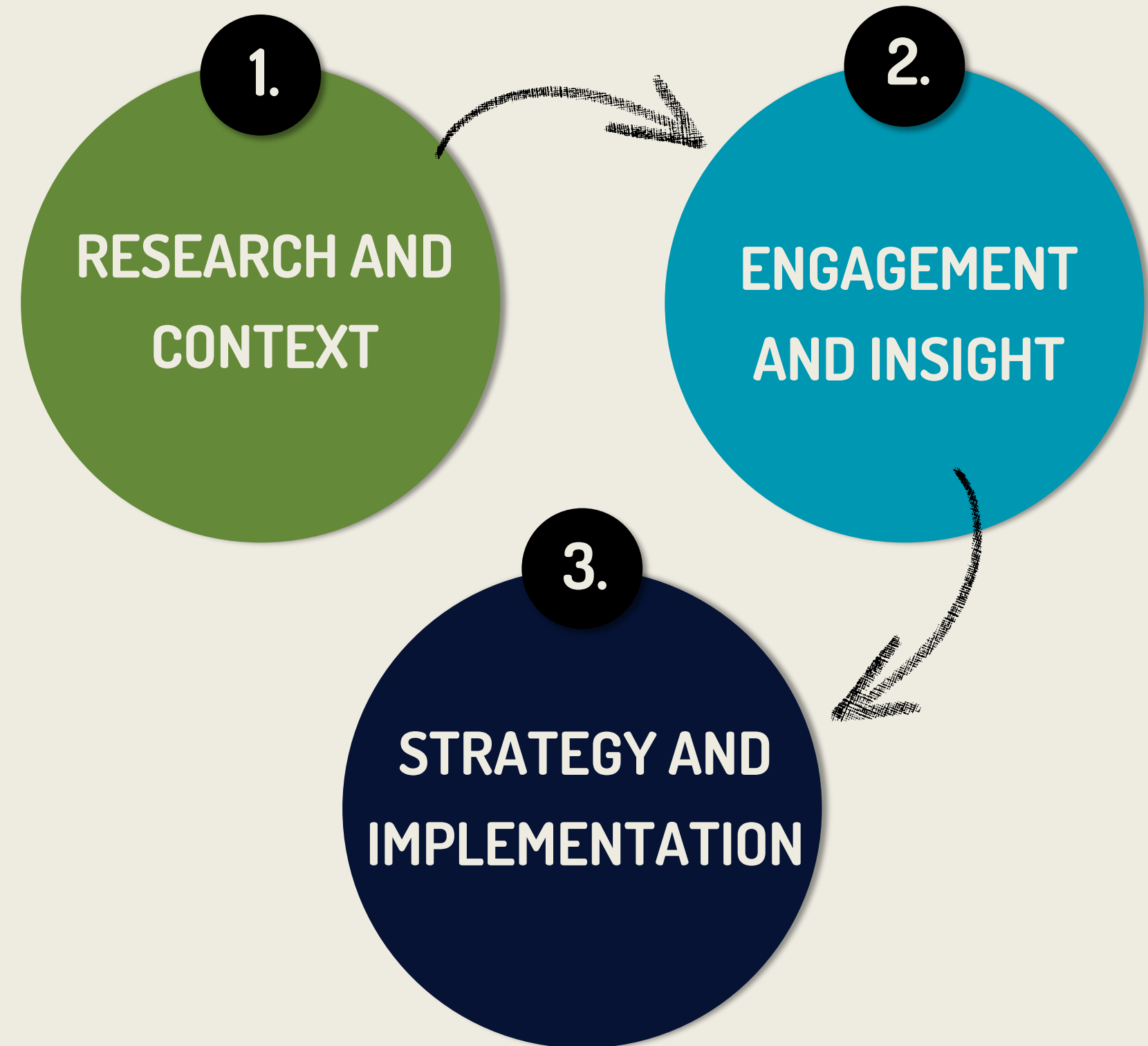
The first phase involved a thorough review of existing research and data, including demographic trends and current service provision. This foundational work established a clear picture of the local context and helped identify critical gaps and challenges within the ageing support system in Winton.

Phase 2 – Engagement and Insight

This pivotal phase centred on validating and deepening the findings from Phase 1 through direct engagement with the Winton community. Based on the principle that local knowledge is expert knowledge, this stage involved open, honest conversations with a wide range of stakeholders. These included service providers, individuals receiving support, and broader community members. Site visits to key facilities—such as the Multipurpose Health Service, the Neighbourhood Centre, and existing accommodation—offered valuable, on-the-ground insights into service delivery and community dynamics. One-on-one discussions with groups like Winton Community and Aged Care Services Inc. further enriched the understanding of local needs and aspirations.

Phase 3 – Strategy and Implementation

The final phase focused on translating the insights and evidence gathered into a practical and achievable roadmap for action. Grounded in the realities of the Winton context, this stage prioritised the development of strategies and goals that are both fit-for-purpose and realistically implementable, setting the foundation for meaningful, locally driven change.



STRATEGY FINDINGS

Throughout the development of the strategy, engagement was undertaken with stakeholders including care providers, council, community and other relevant stakeholders. The insights gained from the engagement resulted in the following six findings that shape the strategy's direction -

- i) the lack of integration across different service types;
- ii) the absence of certainty and accurate understanding in the community as to services, support and funding that are accessible;
- iii) concern for people living at risk at home;
- iv) the challenge in maintaining stable workforces to deliver health and care services;
- v) identified gap in suitable accommodation for people who require supported-living type accommodation,
- vi) specialist services are in limited supply, and the demand for allied health services remains uncertain due to a restricted market.

Despite these challenges, the overwhelming focus felt across all stakeholders including council, service providers and the community was that there is a commitment to do better and for Winton to receive equitable and accessible services, programs and accommodation. There is an alignment to enhance the social cohesion that exists and deliver a bright future for the region and to ensure the voice of the older person is heard.

**LACK OF
INTEGRATION**

**COMMUNITY
UNDERSTANDING**

**CONCERN FOR
PEOPLE LIVING
WITH RISK**

**WORKFORCE
INSTABILITY**

**GAP IN FIT-FOR-
PURPOSE
ACCOMMODATION**

**LIMITED
AVAILABILITY OF
SPECIALIST /ALLIED
HEALTH SERVICES**

RESEARCH AND CONTEXT

“

“Ageing and longevity is one of humanity’s greatest triumphs and yet the overall perception of getting older remains predominantly negative and widely feared. Changing this perception is a great opportunity for Winton.”

Marcus Riley, Positive Ageing Advocate, Author Booming

”

REIMAGINING AGEING

People are living longer, and this presents many new opportunities for both individuals and communities.

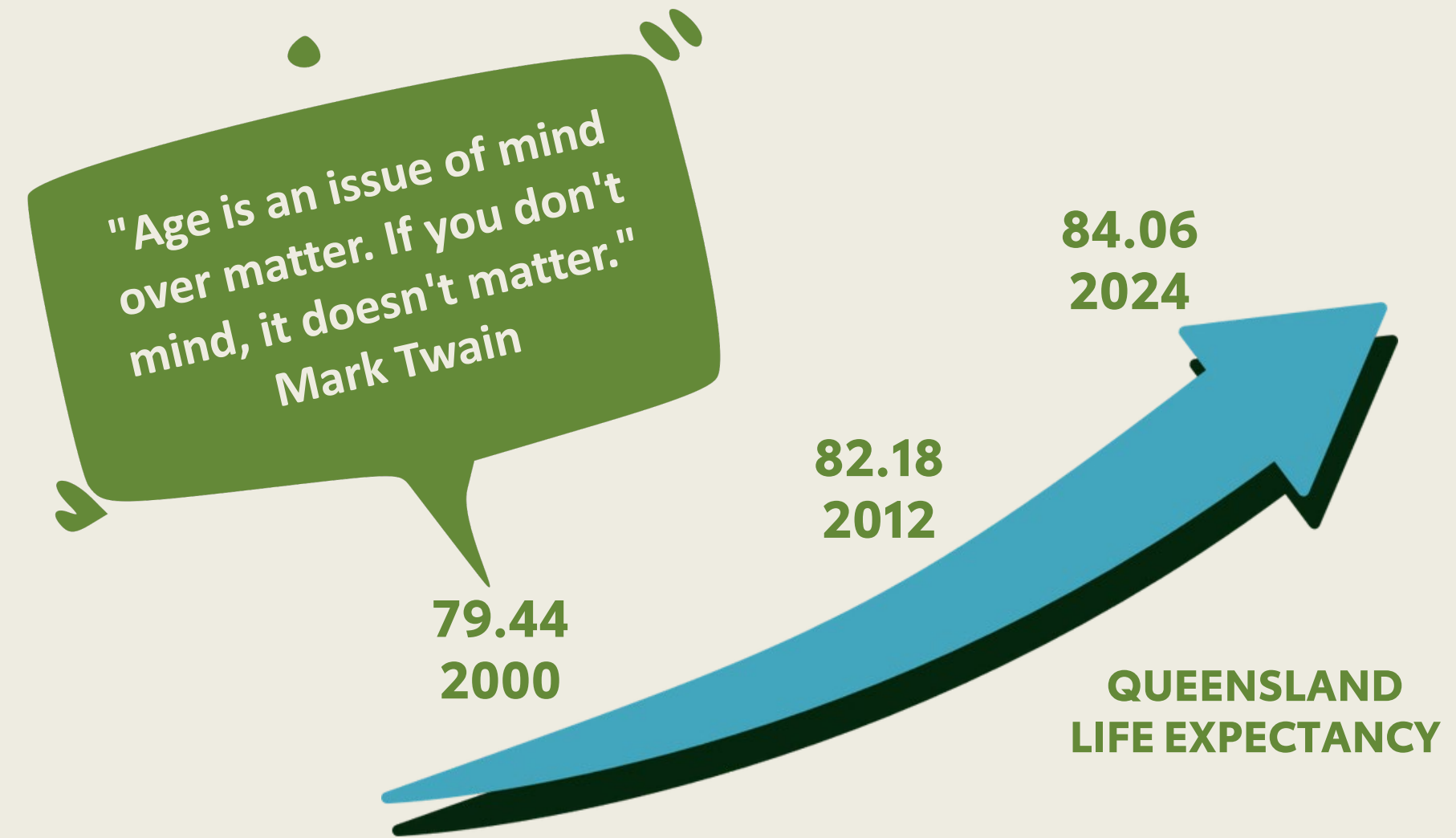
Together, our challenge is to foster healthy ageing across the lifespan and enable people to successfully maintain their physical, cognitive and social functional abilities as they age.

As we reimagine ageing it is vital we look beyond just chronological age and embrace the opportunity to influence how we age through managing our biological and psychological ages.

- **Chronological Age** – number of days or years lived
- **Biological Age** – how we feel physically
- **Psychological Age** – how we feel emotionally and mentally

Ageing Well in Winton is focused on reimagining ageing and looking at the well-being of all those in region not just those who may be in their later years.

The Strategy recognises that residents within Outback Qld will require a greater emphasis on proactive and preventative services.



Median age for Females
85 years

80 years for Outback Qld

Median age for Males
80 years

76 years for Outback Qld

Source :- ABS and
Department of
Health

NEW STAGES OF AGEING

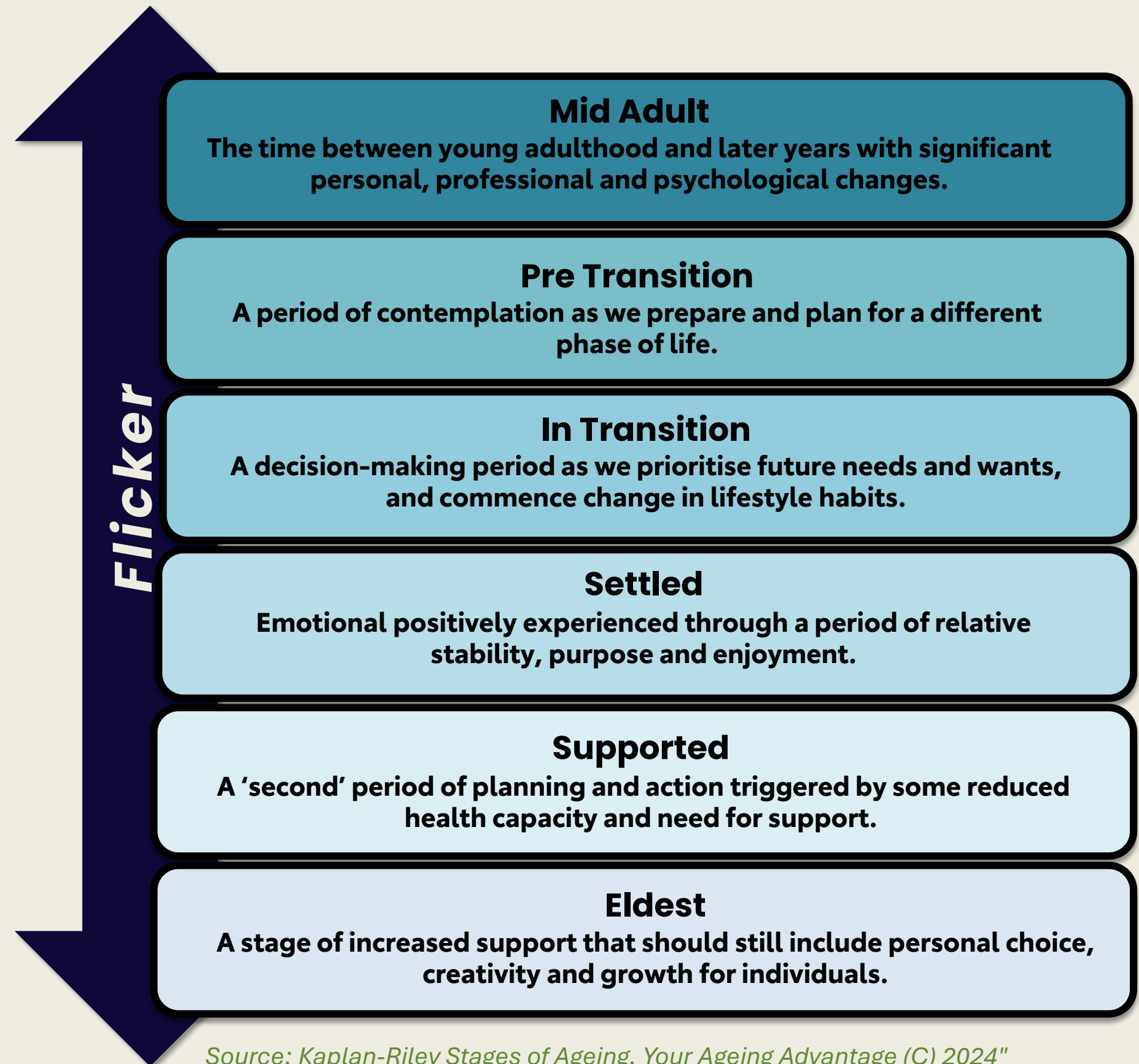
As we embrace our longer lives, we need to define and understand the New Stages of Ageing. These stages are not simply defined by our chronological age, how we have lived and how we are living will influence when we move into particular *New Stages of Ageing* and the duration of each stage.

These *New Stages of Ageing* include:

- Mid Adult
- Pre Transition
- In Transition
- Settled
- Supported
- Eldest

The New Stages of Ageing also recognise a *flicker stage* which represents the fluidity of life and the impact of circumstances that may play into the progression of our ageing. We may therefore *flicker* through the various stages ie. *Mid Adult* straight to *Supported* due to a health circumstance and even then return to *Pre-Transition*.

Our community is made up of all people in each of these New Stages of Ageing. It is essential that the *Ageing Well in Winton* strategy offers inclusive opportunities and choices that cater to the diverse needs of people at various stages. This approach empowers individuals to pursue their priorities, preferences, and passions, fostering a supportive environment for all community members.



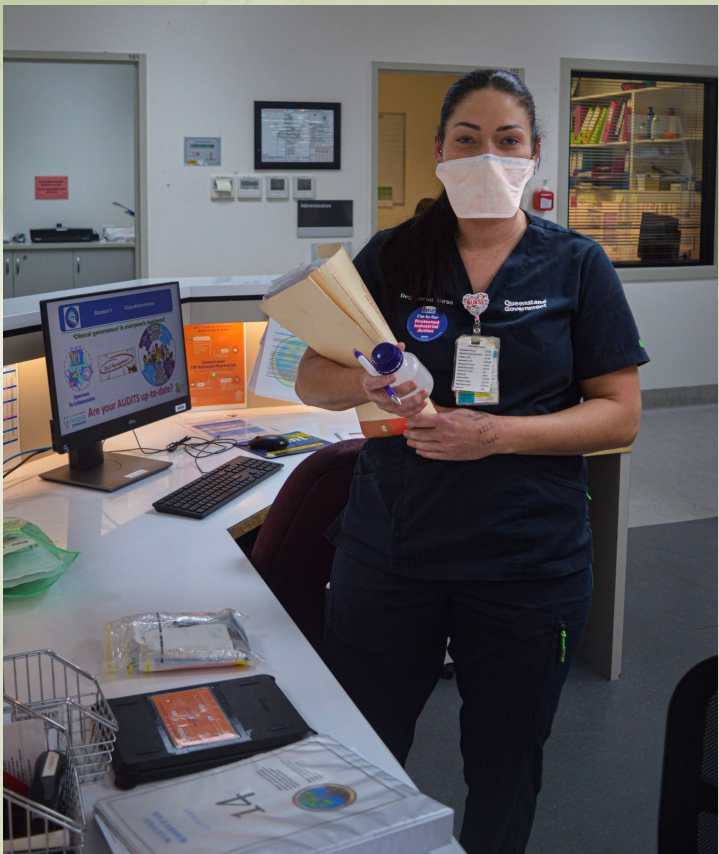
CURRENT STATE

Phase 1 of the Strategy began with extensive research and analysis, diving deep into demographic trends, existing service provisions, and a thorough review of the region's economic conditions. This included benchmarking against neighbouring Longreach and the broader Central West region to understand comparative economic activities, employment trends, income levels, and projected economic growth. This contextual understanding was crucial for identifying gaps in services and potential resources available for future initiatives.

Additionally, this phase involved a comprehensive assessment of the types of dwellings and structures within Winton. This review extended to considerations of housing affordability, accessibility for elderly residents, and the availability of supportive living environments. Understanding the local housing stock and infrastructure helped pinpoint opportunities to improve living conditions and support aging in place for residents.

Furthermore, Phase 1 included reviewing a number of existing reports and studies as well as existing services in region. The review has also considered both the evidence and the opportunities identified in the *Final Report from the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety*. Insights gathered from these sources provided a baseline on past challenges and areas needing further attention.

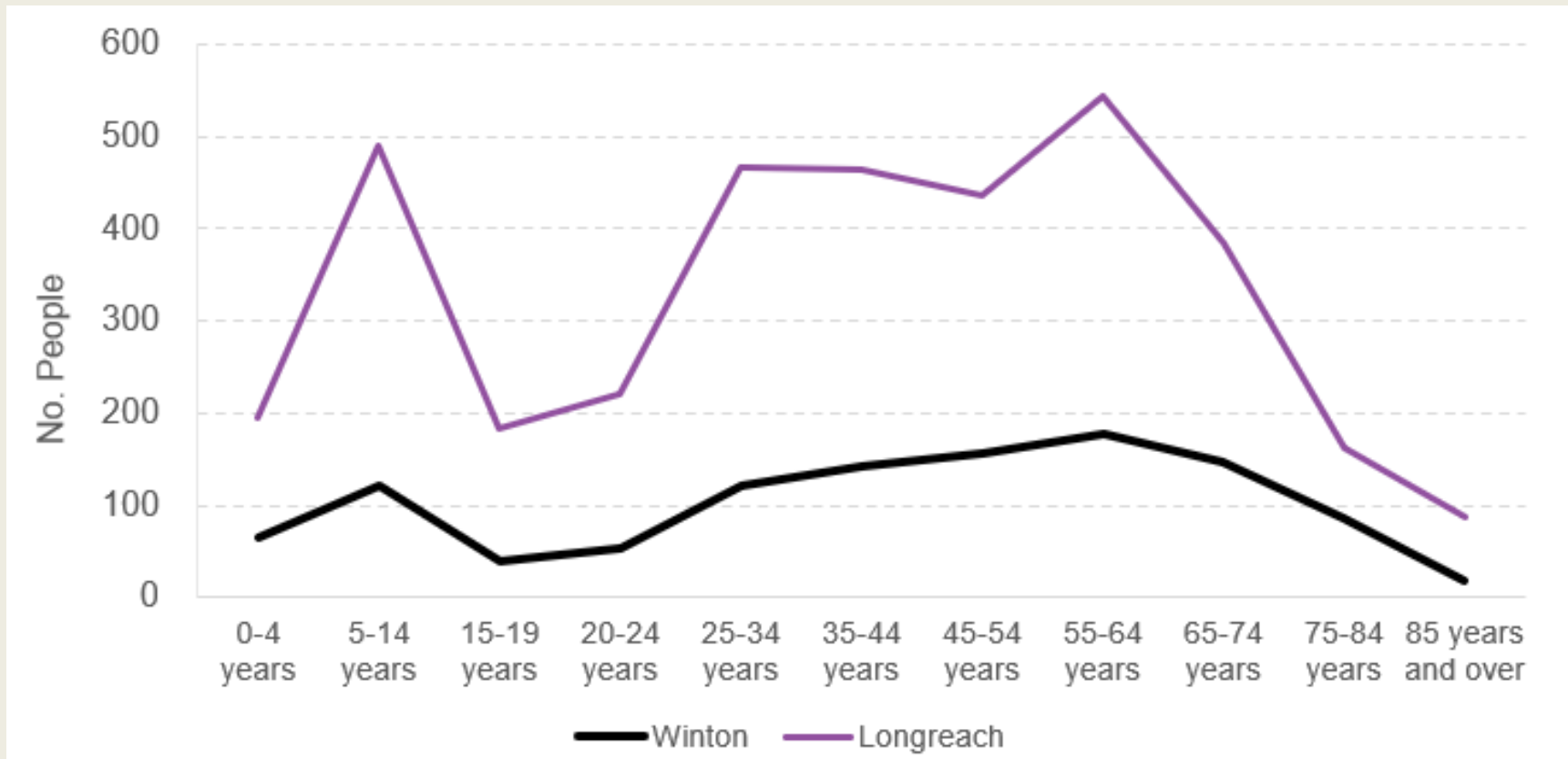
By grounding the strategy in demographic analysis, economic benchmarking, and insights from existing reports and services, Phase 1 provided the foundation to then test and confirm in region as part of Phase 2.



Main:- Winton Multipurpose Health Service
Source: Winton Shire Council
Top:- Nurse at Winton Multipurpose Health Service
Source:- Winton Shire Council
Below:- Wayfinding for the Winton Neighbourhood Centre
Source: Winton Shire Council

DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

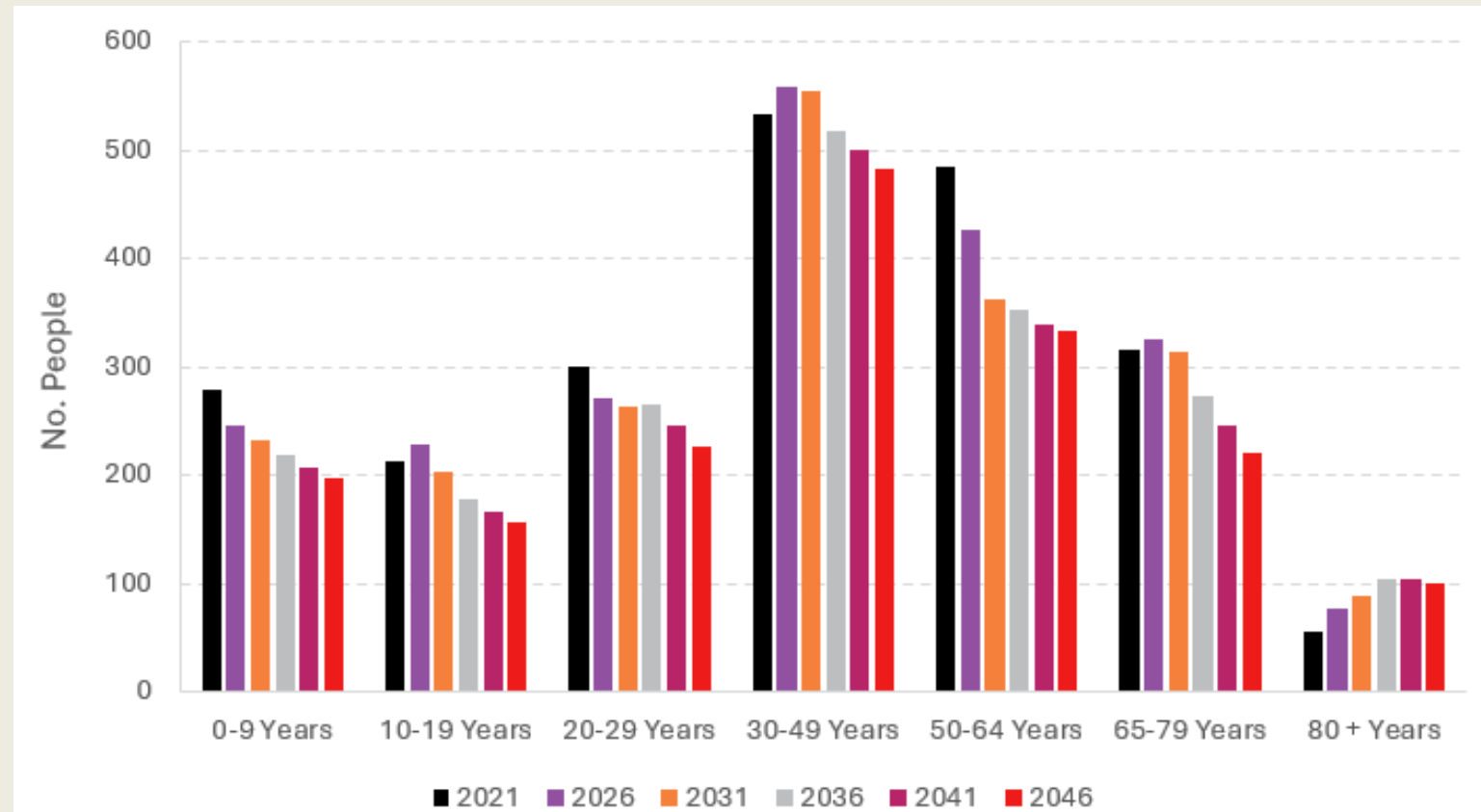
Winton & Longreach Population Profile



Winton is missing the “**middle generation**” largely as these “family formation” cohorts are moving to other locations.

This was particularly noticeable during the pandemic with an expectation that mining affiliated centres benefitted from the continued employment opportunities.

Far Central West (SA2) Population Forecasts

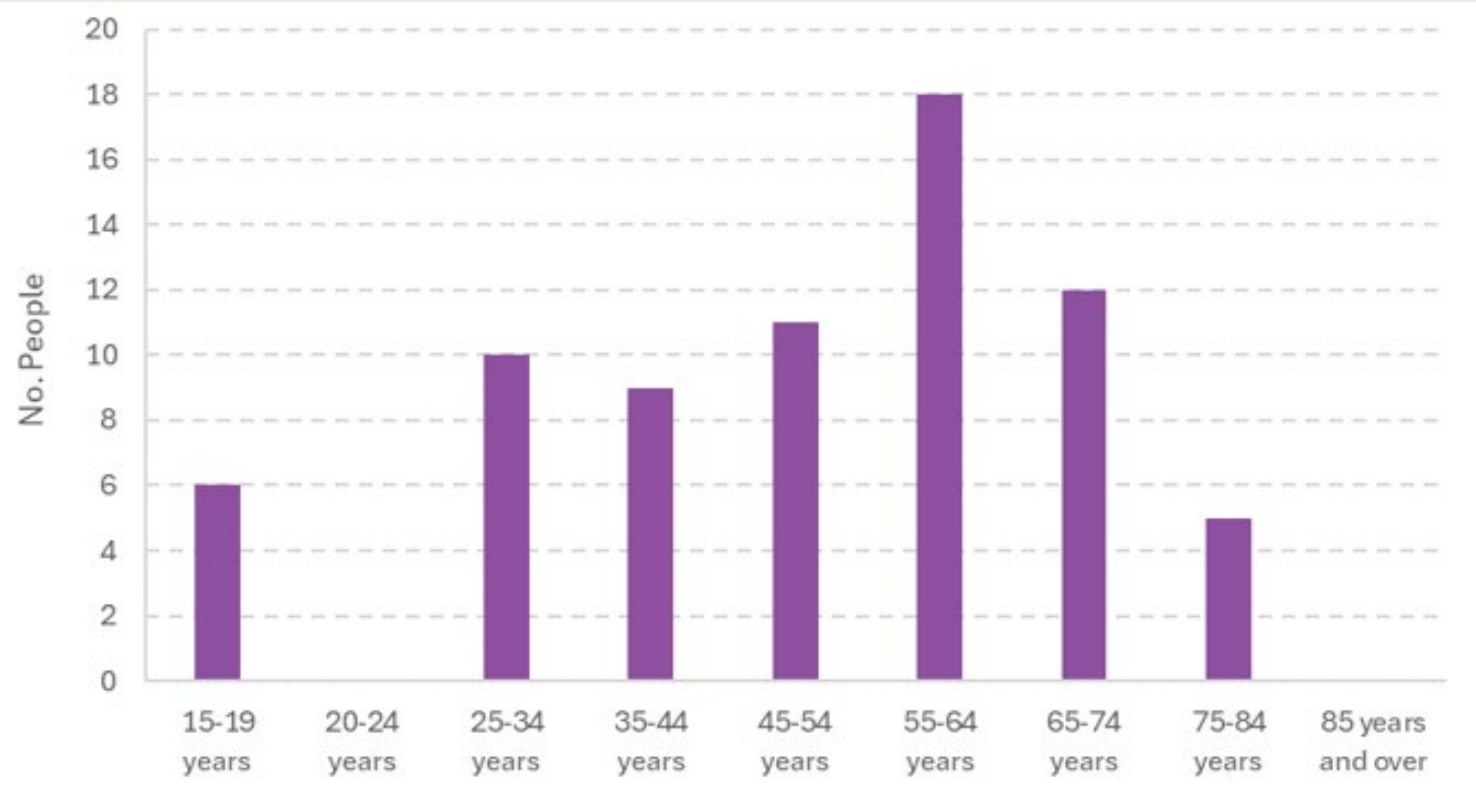


Forecast data does not go down to a level where Winton can be identified individually.

The only demographic cohort expected to grow is the 80 year old plus age groups.

DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

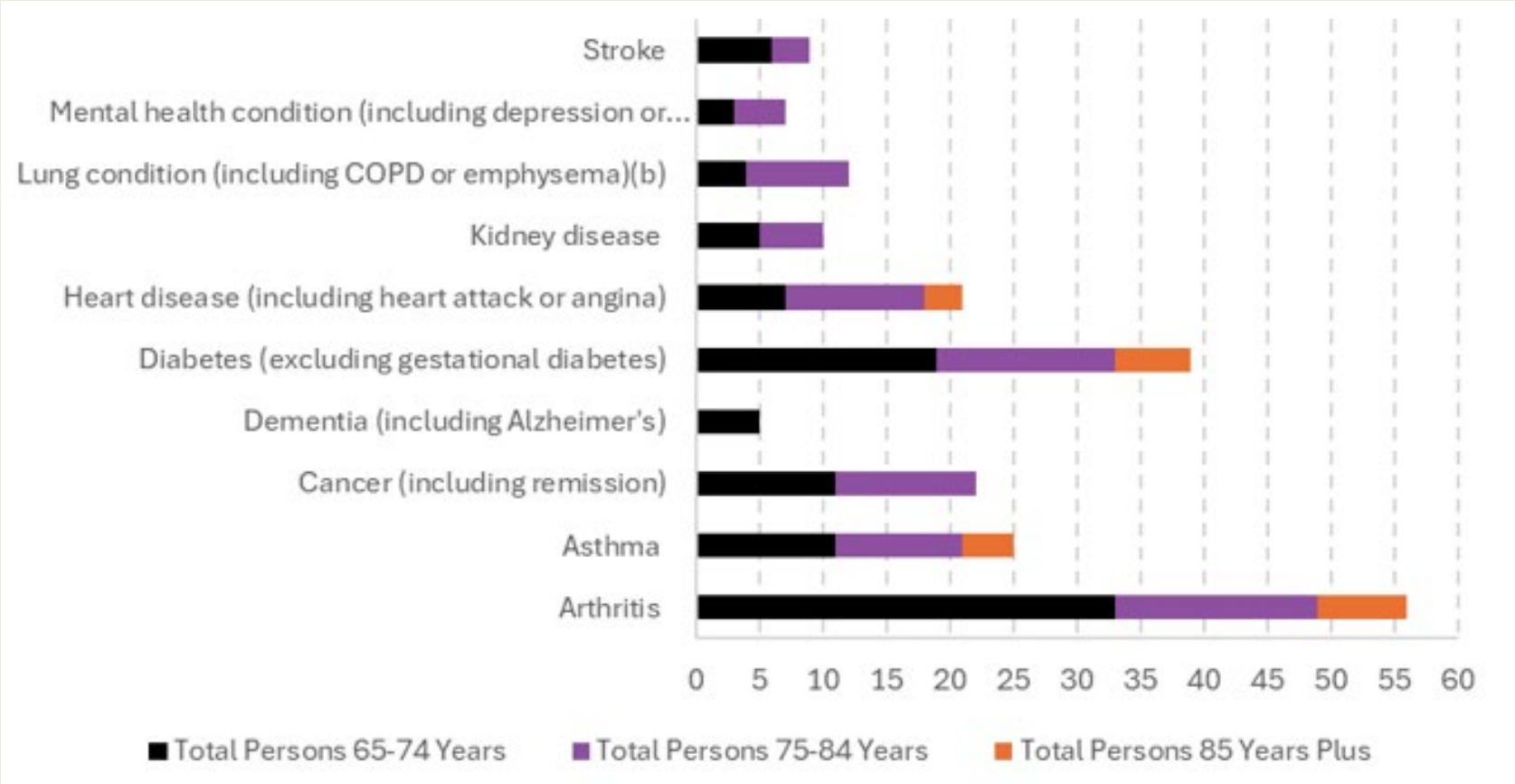
Voluntary Care in Winton



Voluntary assistance is typically children looking after parents, hence the 55-64 year old cohort.

The rate of single person households also has consequences for the provision of care requirements. Where households have a married couple, typically one person will care for the other.

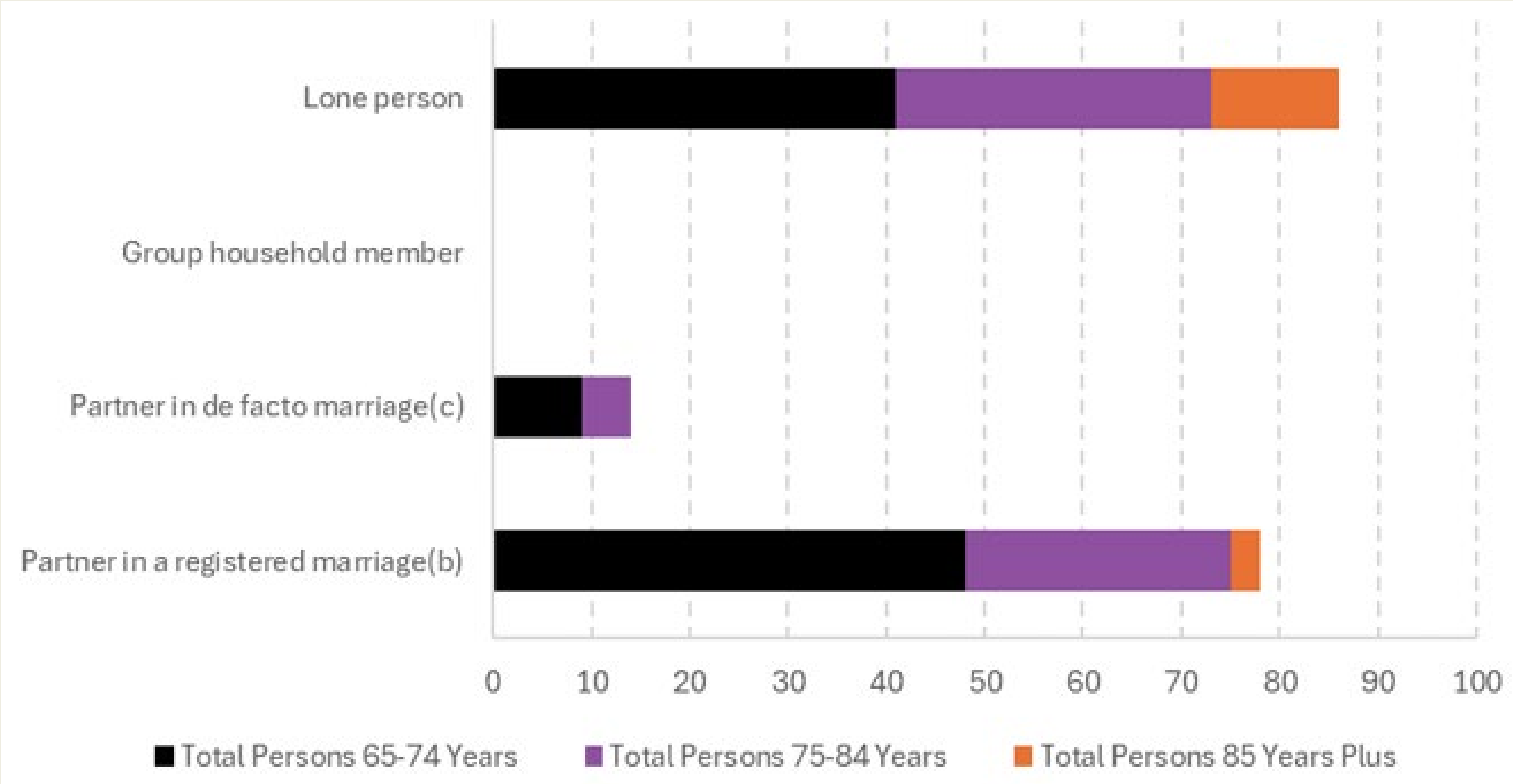
Long Term Health Conditions of Winton's Older Population



Arthritis and diabetes remain the dominant health issues which is representative of most of the population, irrespective of location. Many of the listed health issues are manageable but do require assistance.

DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

Winton's Household Type by Age



Lone person households are the largest household formation for Winton's elderly (65+) which 75% are women. Across all age structures lone persons represents 39% of the population (Qld average is 24%).

The dominant Dwelling Structure is a Separate House at 85% with the breakdown as follows:

- 12% - 1 bedroom
- 18.5% - 2 bedroom
- 39.1% - 3 bedrooms
- 25.2% - 4+ bedrooms
- 5% not stated

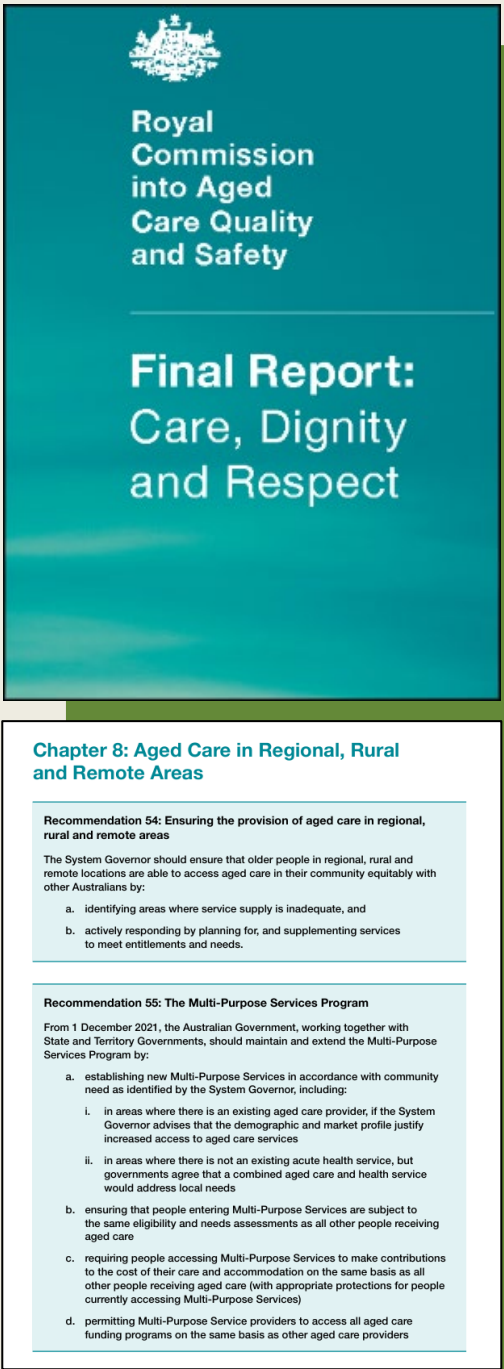
This means that we have a large portion of the Lone Persons especially elderly living in homes 3+ bedroom plus.

AGED CARE REFORM

The **Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety** was established to address systemic issues and ensure that older Australians receive high-quality, safe, and dignified care. Announced in September 2018, the Royal Commission investigated a wide range of concerns within the aged care sector, including neglect, abuse, and poor standards of care. The findings culminated in a comprehensive report in 2021 that highlighted significant shortcomings and made numerous recommendations aimed at reforming the sector to improve outcomes for elderly individuals.

In the context of rural and remote areas in Queensland, the Royal Commission's findings are particularly relevant due to the unique challenges faced by these regions. Access to aged care services in rural and remote areas is often limited by geographical isolation, workforce shortages, and inadequate infrastructure. These challenges can result in lower quality care and increased difficulties in meeting the needs of elderly residents. The Commission's recommendations underscore the necessity for targeted strategies to enhance accessibility, improve service delivery, and ensure that residents in these areas receive the same standard of care as their urban counterparts.

The Commission's final report acknowledged that addressing the specific needs of rural and remote Queensland communities requires a multifaceted approach, including investing in infrastructure, incentivising skilled professionals to work in these regions, and leveraging technology to bridge gaps in service provision. By implementing these recommendations, there is potential to significantly improve the quality of aged care and ensure that elderly Australians, regardless of their location, can enjoy a higher standard of care and support. This Strategy has been developed as a fit-for-purpose targeted strategy addressing the Commission's findings.



Key recommendations from the Royal Commission relevant to rural and remote Queensland and therefore crucial to the Wise and Well Winton strategy.

- 1. Increased Funding and Support for Rural and Remote Services** - The Commission recommended significant increases in funding to support aged care services in rural and remote areas. This includes providing targeted financial incentives to help address the higher costs of delivering care in isolated regions and to support the development of infrastructure and resources necessary for high-quality care.
- 2. Workforce Development and Attraction** - To tackle workforce shortages in rural and remote areas, the Commission proposed strategies to attract and retain skilled aged care professionals. This includes offering financial incentives, professional development opportunities, and creating pathways for career progression. Additionally, there was a focus on developing training programs tailored to the specific needs of rural and remote communities.
- 3. Innovative Service Delivery Models** - The Royal Commission emphasised the need for innovative approaches to service delivery in remote areas, such as telehealth and mobile care units. These models can help bridge the gap between urban-based services and remote communities by providing remote consultations, support, and monitoring. Implementing these technologies can enhance the accessibility of care and reduce the reliance on physical infrastructure.

TYPES OF AGED CARE SERVICES

HOME CARE SERVICES

Home Care Packages (HCPs): These provide a range of services to help people stay in their own homes. They are categorized into four levels, based on the amount of care needed:

- **Level 1:** Basic care needs.
- **Level 2:** Low-level care needs.
- **Level 3:** Intermediate care needs.
- **Level 4:** High-level care needs.

Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP): Provides entry-level support services to help older people remain independent in their homes, including assistance with cleaning, meal preparation, and personal care.

WINTON: HCPs and CHSPs are provided predominantly via Council’s own Community Care Services Team. Some other providers are in region.

PALLIATIVE CARE

Focuses on providing comfort and support to individuals with serious, life-limiting illnesses. It can be delivered at home, in a residential facility, or in a hospice.

WINTON: Palliative Support and Care is provided through the hospital.

SHORT-TERM CARE

Respite Care: Provides temporary relief for primary caregivers by offering short-term accommodation and care, either at home or in a residential facility.

Transition Care: Supports older people who are recovering from illness or surgery, helping them to regain independence before returning home or moving into more permanent care.

WINTON: Respite and transition care are utilised in the Multipurpose Health Service under flexible care funding. Bed pressure and time limits do apply to transition care.

COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Day Therapy Centres: Offer various health services, such as physiotherapy and occupational therapy, in a group setting.

Social Support Programs: Include activities and programs designed to reduce social isolation and promote well-being among older adults.

WINTON: 60 and Better Program is provided and facilitated through Council. Allied Health is provided through Central West HHS.

RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE

Offer accommodation and personal care services to older individuals who cannot live independently. They include various levels of care:

Low-Level Care: For individuals with fewer health needs.

High-Level Care: For those with more complex health issues or severe disability.

WINTON: High-level care is provided within the Winton Multipurpose Health Service.

AGED CARE ADVOCACY AND INFORMATION SERVICES

Aged Care Advocacy: Provides support and representation for individuals in navigating the aged care system and ensuring their rights are upheld.

Information Services: Offer guidance on accessing aged care services, eligibility, and entitlements.

WINTON: The Neighbourhood Centre provides information services and can support those on navigating My Aged Care.

SPECIALIST AGED CARE SERVICES

Dementia Care: Specialised support for individuals living with dementia, including tailored activities and environments that cater to their specific needs.

Mental Health Services: For older adults experiencing mental health issues, such as depression or anxiety, which may be compounded by aging.

WINTON: The Central West HHS engages a telehealth geriatrician hosted by the Primary Health Care Team mental health services are provided through Central West HHS.

ALLIED HEALTH/OTHER

Allied health like Physiotherapy, Podiatry, Occupational Therapy, Nutrition and Dietetics are all available through the Multipurpose Health Service.

SERVICES REVIEW

Winton is a remote, rural community with a significant ageing population, presenting unique challenges in accessing adequate aged care and health services.

Key findings of this review include gaps in service provision, challenges related to accessibility, and opportunities for improving integration and coordination across services. A major issue to highlight is the knowledge gap that exists for people in the community as to exactly the types of health-related services, assistance and funding they could be accessing.

Aged Care Services Overview: The primary option for residential aged care in Winton is the Winton Hospital and Multipurpose Health Service inclusive of its dedicated aged care wing.

This environment was assessed as appropriate with knowledgeable key personnel and options for enhancement of this facility. It is acknowledged that residents of Winton often have to access residential aged care facilities in other regional towns such as the Pioneers facility in Longreach due to lack of availability and/or inadequate options in Winton. It is noted this is an unsatisfactory solution for people of Winton.

Home care services inclusive of Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) and Home Care Packages (HCPs) are primarily offered through the Community Care Services (operated by Winton Council), providing support with daily activities, personal care, and social support for older people living in their own homes in the community.

It is noted that Winton residents may choose to seek home based care services from other aged care providers. Anecdotal reports indicated this was not occurring frequently due to either complexity of process or unavailability of workforce.

*Main – Winton Medical Practice
Source: Winton Shire Council*

*Inset – Aged care resident and nurse holding hands
Source: Winton Shire Council*



SERVICES REVIEW

Community support programs, such as Meals on Wheels, 60 and Better and social clubs, offer additional assistance and engagement opportunities for people in the community. Participants in these programs were limited in number but expressed satisfaction. Non-participants expressed their desire for alternative options.

Winton Multipurpose Health Service: The professional capability of hospital management and facilities available are acknowledged as a resource to be factored into broader planning options notwithstanding ongoing challenges such as workforce.

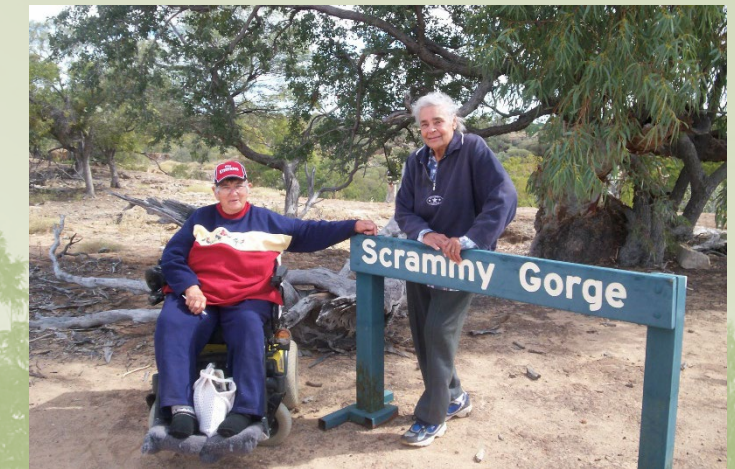
Allied Health Services: Allied health services in Winton include physiotherapy, occupational therapy, and speech therapy, provided by local practitioners and visiting specialists from regional centres.

Access to allied health services can be limited through high demand particularly for specialised services, and challenges in coordinating appropriate space and access.

Primary Health Services: Primary health services in Winton are provided through the Winton Medical Practice, staffed by general practitioners and practice nurses. Visiting specialists from regional hospitals provide additional services, including cardiology, orthopedics, and mental health counseling.

Chronic disease management programs are available through the medical centre, offering support for conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and respiratory diseases.

The common need to travel to other towns and indeed other regions in the State for specialist services is problematic for Winton residents. The coordination of such appointments as well as potential forms of assistance for residents are identified as areas to address.



*Various images all showcasing 60 and Better Program and Activities
Source: Winton Shire Council*

Engagement and Community Insights

TECHNIQUES

To ensure the strategy truly reflects local needs and aspirations, a multi-faceted stakeholder and community engagement process was undertaken. This approach was grounded through active listening, inclusivity, and direct dialogue with those who both deliver and rely on aged care services in Winton.

Listening to the Community

At the heart of the engagement process was a resident survey, designed to capture the lived experiences, concerns, and preferences of older Winton residents and visitors. Importantly, the survey also included the perspectives of family members—offering a broader, intergenerational view of how aged care is experienced and perceived within the community. Workshops were also held focussing on Positive Ageing to explore ideas, voice concerns and shape priorities.

Voices from the Front Line

To complement community input, targeted interviews were conducted with key regional stakeholders. These included representatives from:

- Winton Community and Aged Care Services Inc.
- Multipurpose Health Service
- Community Care Services Team
- Queensland Ambulance Service
- Central West Queensland Primary Health Network

These conversations provided a clear-eyed view of the current service landscape and identified both strengths and critical gaps.

Learning On the Ground

In-person visits were a core part of the process. The team engaged with recipients of the 60 and Better Program, toured local facilities, and observed day-to-day operations. These firsthand experiences enriched our understanding of how services are being delivered—and where improvements are needed.

Collaborating with Council and Stakeholders

Follow-up workshops and interviews with Winton Shire Council and key service partners helped refine the strategic direction and ensure alignment with broader community goals. Their input was essential in shaping a strategy that is both visionary and practical.



SURVEY SNAPSHOT

THE PEOPLE

104 RESPONSES

(WITH 96% WINTON RESIDENTS 3% FAMILY MEMBER
1% FROM BROADER WINTON LGA)

40%
RESPONDENTS
55 OR UNDER
14% ARE 75+

50% HAVE
LIVED IN
WINTON
WHOLE LIFE,
25% MOVED IN
LAST 5 YEARS

66% HAVE
FAMILY IN
WINTON
although 30%
OF THOSE ARE
NOT INVOLVED
AT ALL IN
DECISION
MAKING

86% OF
RESPONDERS
LIVE
INDEPENDENTLY
IN THEIR OWN
HOME EITHER
RENTED/
MORTGAGED OR
OWNED

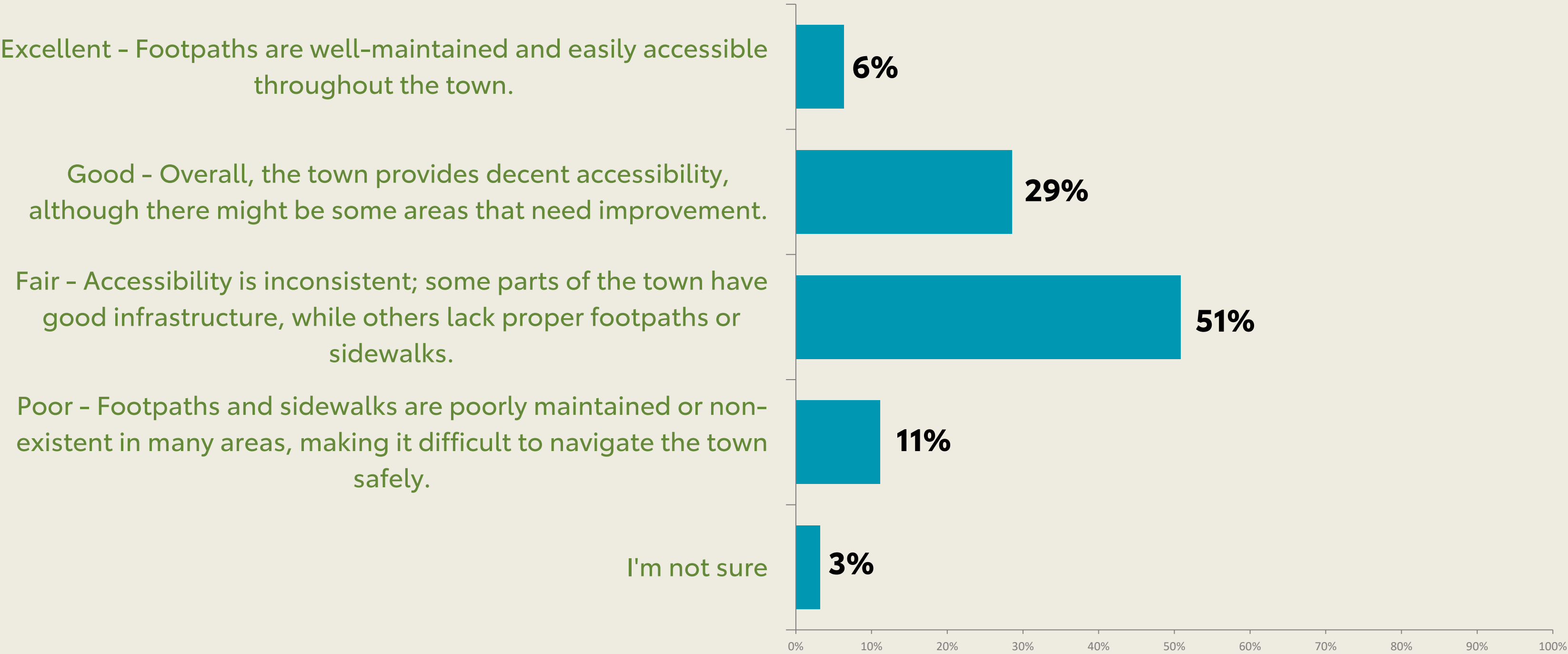
84% ARE
SELF-
SUFFICIENT,
AND WOULD
LIKE TO STAY
AT HOME

Over 77% of respondents drove their own vehicle to access services such as shop, post office, library around town.

Over 50% of respondents rated the physical infrastructure and mobility around town as inconsistent, with some parts having good infrastructure and others lacking proper footpaths or sidewalks. Therefore, investing in better footpaths to enhance pedestrian safety and accessibility should be a top priority.

SURVEY SNAPSHOT

How do you find the physical infrastructure and mobility around town?



SURVEY SNAPSHOT

TOP PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVING MOBILITY AROUND WINTON?

- 1. Investing in better footpaths to enhance pedestrian safety and accessibility.**
- 2. Introducing a taxi service to provide on-demand transportation.**
- 3. Implementing a daily bus service to connect the town.**

Comments from survey respondents:

"Dogs are an issue and preventing walkability of the town."

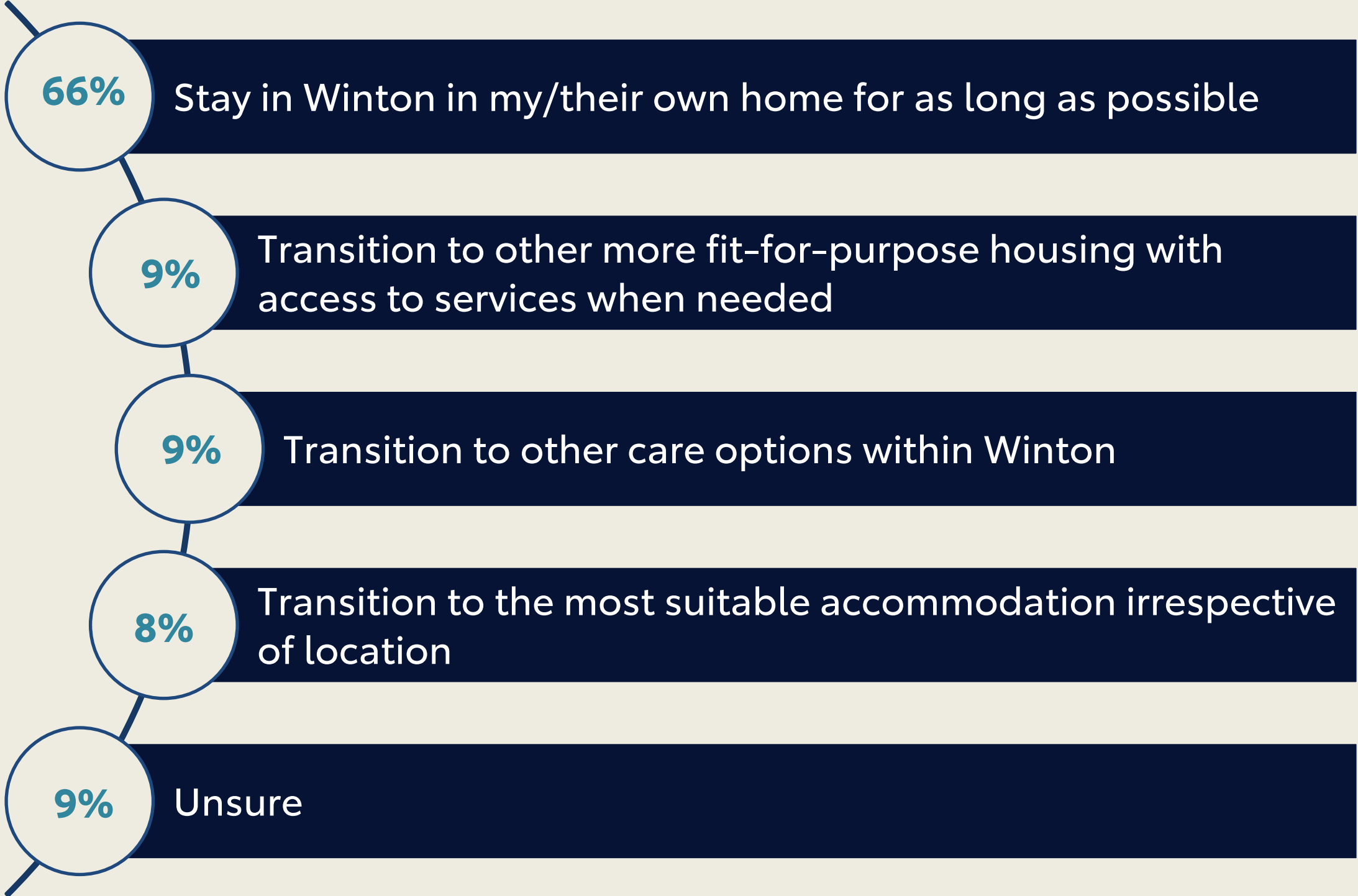
"Bus service especially in Summer would be well utilised. "

"Footpaths especially along Manuka Street to the shops, Vindex (where not already provided), Blomfield (connecting to Hospital) "

SURVEY SNAPSHOT

THE PEOPLE

In the future, I would mostly like for me/my resident family member to:



SURVEY SNAPSHOT

SERVICES

In terms of ACAT assessment:

- 4% of respondents say they have been assessed and are accessing Aged Care services.
- 9% have been assessed but are not accessing
- 20% have NOT been assessed but aware of ACAT
- 57% have not had an assessment
- 8% have no idea what ACAT is.

83% of respondents said they are not accessing any programs or aged care services in Winton.

12% said they are accessing

5% said other ie. getting home care maintenance / house cleaning but paying themselves

5 people are accessing NDIS

6 respondents were accessing Commonwealth Home Support Programme / Home Care Packages.

Other programs being accessed included 60 & Better and Meals and Wheels or other activities that are put on by community and or council throughout the year.

Respondents participate in a range of activities from

Exercise classes / programs to grouped based exercises and health information sessions.

Over 20 respondents state that they walk daily as part of their exercise and keeping good health.

The most common health services sought outside of Winton.

**Dental
Eye
Ultrasound
Cancer Treatment**

These numbers reflect those who responded to the survey. In region we know that council has 36 clients accessing CHSP/HCP. We also know that more residents are accessing NDIS.

SURVEY SNAPSHOT

TECHNOLOGY

65% haven't experienced any significant issues with mobile or internet connectivity.

32% state the service is unreliable or struggle with dropping out.

Devices in order of most benefit

- 1. Smartphone**
- 2. Computer / laptop**
- 3. Tablet/ iPad**
- 4. Smartwatch**
- 5. Home device (voice assistant)**

87% ARE VERY FAMILIAR OR SOMEWHAT FAMILIAR WITH TECHNOLOGY INCLUDING USE OF SMART DEVICES

6 RESPONDENTS STATED NOT FAMILIAR AT ALL

Most popular apps used:

**Facebook / Google
Maps / Youtube /
Instagram**

Reasons for using smart device

- 1. Keeping in contact with family members**
- 2. Email**
- 3. Camera / Photos**
- 4. Banking / Paying Bills**
- 5. Clock for Alarm**
- 6. Music**
- 7. Searching Internet**
- 8. Shopping**
- 9. News**
- 10. Watching Shows**

Others – Calendar / Puzzles

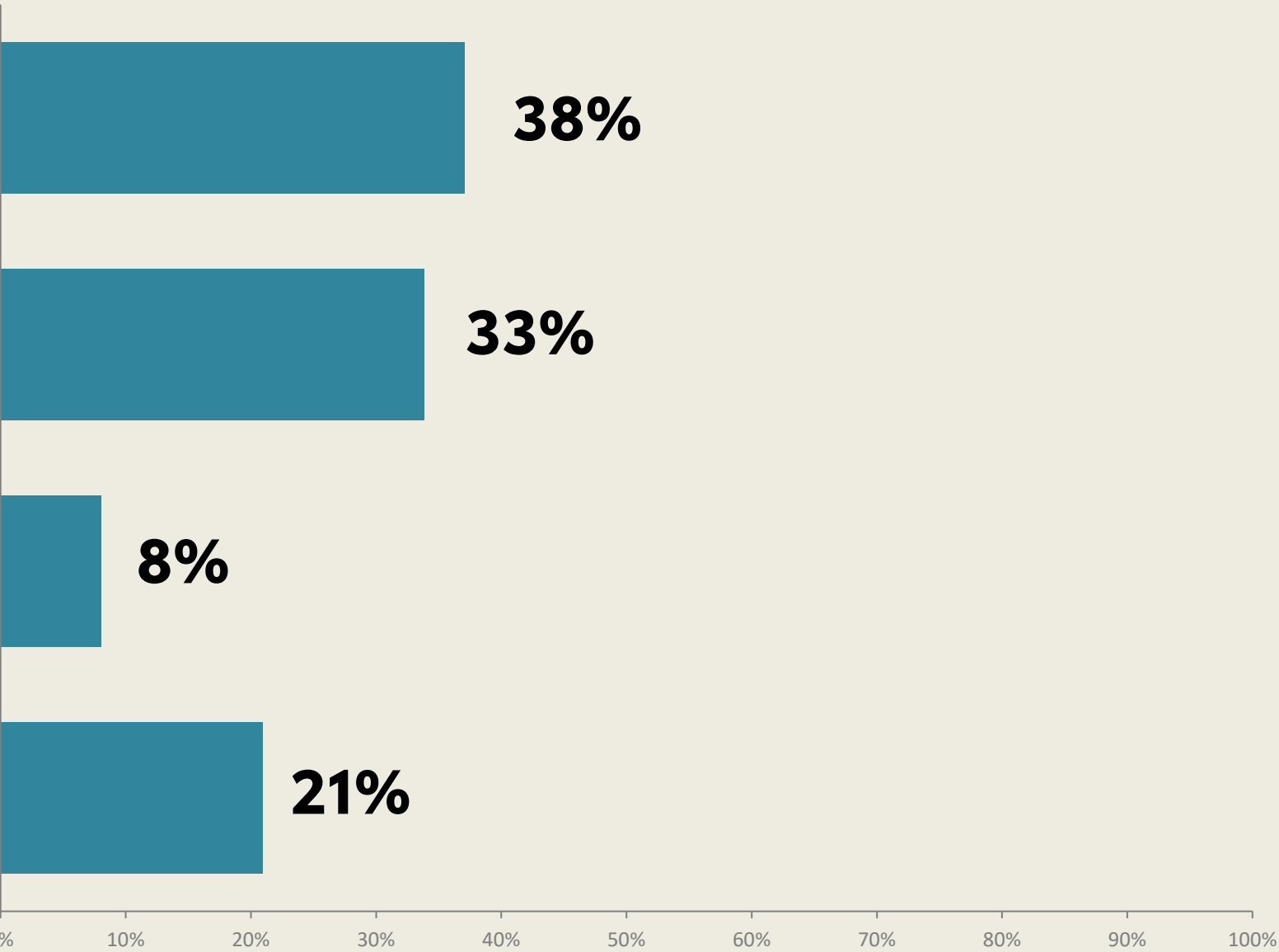
32% have consulted with healthcare provider via video call / teleconferencing

20% have never explored telehealth options

SURVEY SNAPSHOT

How satisfied are you with the accessibility of wellness and aged care services in Winton?

For a small community, I think the access to programs and facilities are fair and reasonable.



I think there is room for improvement.

I am not really sure.

Significant change is needed including increase in services and purpose-built amenities.

SURVEY SNAPSHOT

THE FUTURE

What improvements would you like to see in aged care services available in Winton?

Ranked responses in priority

- 1. Better education and understanding on what programs are available and how I can access them**
- 2. Better access to services provided in home**
- 3. A dedicated facility that provides for medium to high care needs**
- 4. More fit-for-purpose housing**
- 5. Improved opportunities for Telehealth**

SURVEY SNAPSHOT

Which statement do you most agree with?

Investment in services and programs in the home should be prioritised over the building of new facilities.

13.85%

As a small community I understand that building a big new Multipurpose Health Service comes at a significant cost. I would therefore like to see Winton explore opportunities for additional facilities to be established in region such as more diversity of housing, increase in programs, re-use of buildings for service hubs and allied health in region.

24.62%

Regardless of our size, Winton deserves to have quality facilities and services that will ensure all residents have an opportunity to choose the right care for them.

47.69%

COMMENTS RECEIVED

Sometimes change is not always the answer. The elderly are hard to change, home is home. To get services accepted by them it's difficult and to take the next step and move out of their home to another facility is sometimes impossible.

Extend the aged-care at hospital.

Money better spent expanding hospital for residential aged care and building more assisted living elsewhere.

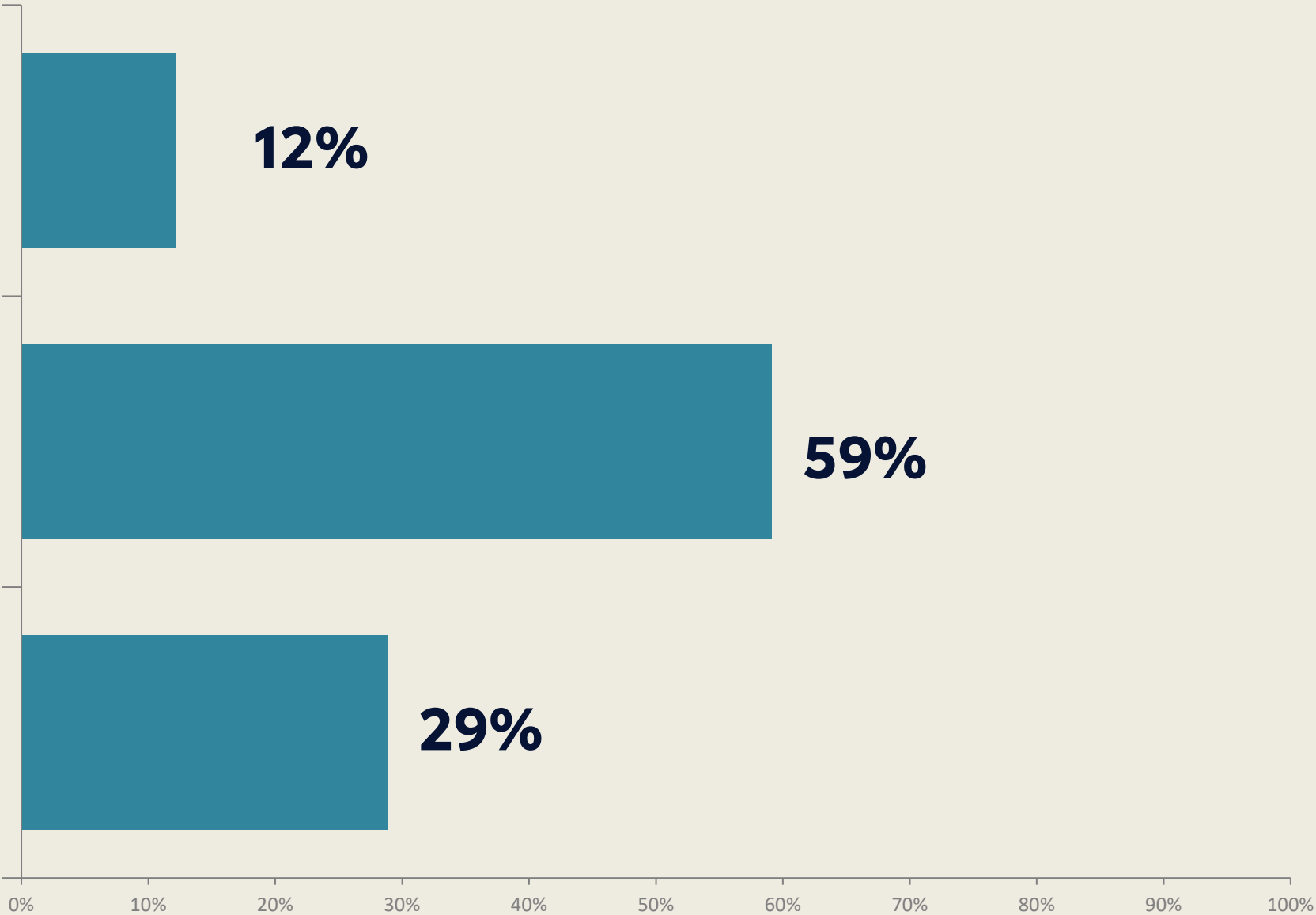
SURVEY SNAPSHOT

Do you agree with this statement?
Winton Shire Council should be responsible for investing in and providing aged care services and wellness programs for its senior residents.

No, Council should not be responsible but has been providing the service in the absence of other providers.

Somewhat, there are some services that Council should and can provide but Council should move away from being the registered Aged Care Provider in region should alternative providers be found.

Yes, Council should continue to provide, invest and increase the aged care and health services.



VISITOR SURVEY RESULTS

- Most of the respondents have visited Winton more than once. The majority of respondents are aged between 65-74 and are usually traveling as a couple.
- Most respondents are from Southeast Queensland and New South Wales. The primary way they heard about Winton was from previous visits or word of mouth.
- The main purpose of their visit to Winton was tourism/sightseeing, and most of them were staying in caravan parks or camping.
- 6 out of 8 respondents booked their accommodation on the same day of the visit. They were generally very satisfied with the tourist attractions and activities in Winton, as well as the accommodation.
- Most respondents rated their experience in Winton as about the same as other towns in Queensland.
- Access to healthcare services in Winton is important to them and it's good to know it's there if needed. However, most have not needed to access these services.
- Majority of respondents consider Winton an 'age-friendly' destination.

IN-REGION SESSIONS

Beyond the survey, a three-day in region (7-9 May) visit was undertaken that included a range of meetings, site-visits, information gathering and importantly community workshops.

These community workshops held at Council's Supper Room, included over 40 residents. Residents were prompted to think differently around ageing and the whole-of ageing approach. They were asked questions around their own approach, what positive ageing looks like to them, what will they contribute to both individually and as a community. They were asked about improvements that could be made in the region and the town to embrace and enhance positive ageing.

Key Takeaways:

1. **Focus on whole of person**
2. **Embrace Openness (to every individual)**
3. **Foster the voice of the older person**

What is our feels like age?

What Stage of Ageing are we in?

What can I do to better manage my stage?

*In-region sessions held with community
8 May 2024 Image:- Taken by Author*

Street Improvements

WINTON SHIRE COUNCIL WALKING NETWORK PLAN - IMPLEMENTATION MAP


WSC identifies locations where improvements on footpaths and accessibility could be made throughout the township.

PRIMARY ROUTES

existing: 


proposed improvements: 


SECONDARY ROUTES

existing: 

proposed improvements: 



 Supermarkets

 New directional signage to town centre

Roadmap for the Future

THREE-STEP ROAD MAP

At the heart of our Strategy is a clear three-step roadmap.

Step 1 emphasises the adoption of a 'whole of ageing' approach - a pivotal mindset that we champion to ensure every facet of ageing is addressed comprehensively.

Step 2 focuses on enhancing and optimising our existing services and programs, ensuring they meet the evolving needs of our community. This Step also focuses on the social cohesion that exists and can be enhanced across the region.

Step 3 introduces the Winton Wellness Community, a comprehensive initiative bringing together all essential services, programs, accommodation and facilities.

The success of the Winton Wellness Community and the implementation of the roadmap hinges on adequate workforce planning, sustainable funding, and long-term financial support to ensure its continued effectiveness and benefit to our community.



Step One – Whole of Ageing Approach

The Whole of Ageing approach is the essential underpinning component to drive a broader focus beyond simply 'aged care'.

It acknowledges that ageing involves more than just health care; it encompasses social, economic, and environmental factors that significantly impact quality of life. By adopting this holistic perspective, we can develop integrated policies and services that promote active and healthy ageing, support independence, and enhance overall wellbeing for all in our community.

This approach will avoid a fragmented methodology to planning and delivery of potential solutions, harnessing resources and maximising value.

It will also ensure due recognition of the various new stages of ageing and foster the engagement with, and opportunities for, people at different stages.

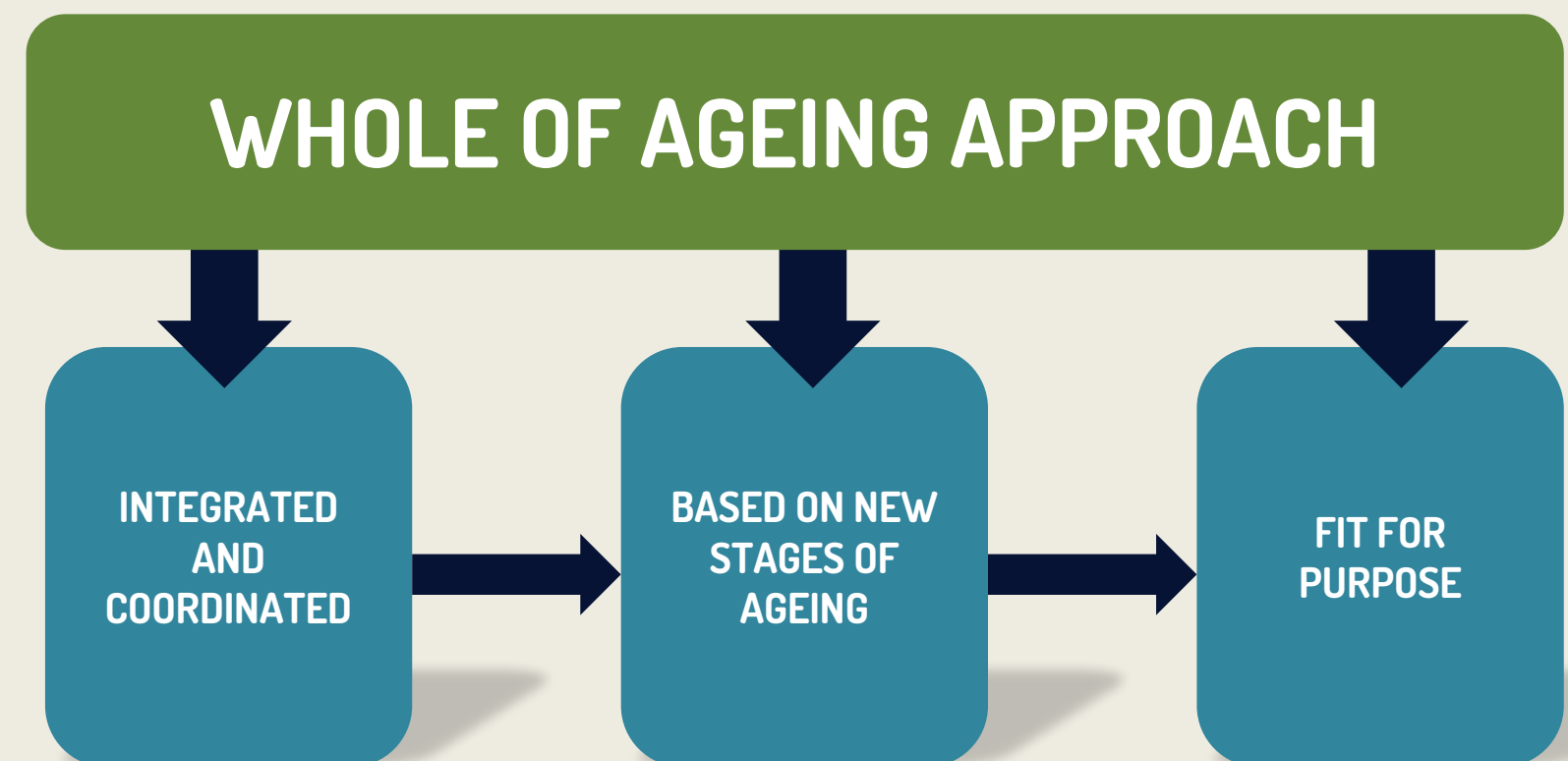
For example, providing adequate options for people requiring care and support but also those at earlier stages who seek to engage with preventative and wellness type services and activities.

Fundamentally the Whole of Ageing approach will create greater choice and access to services for people of Winton.

By formally adopting *Ageing Well in Winton* the Council commits to progressing the focus areas as identified in this strategy through an interagency governance group established to drive forward the next steps in this strategy and as part of the broader focus for positive well-being and ageing for our region.

We have a pivotal opportunity to enhance the collaborative efforts, advocacy and services already thriving within our community.
By setting up an interagency governance framework, we can unite key stakeholders to ensure the successful delivery of this strategy. Bringing together the relevant agencies into an interagency group will build on the excellent work already in place, upholding accountability, transparency, and integrity in serving our community today and in the future.

Mayor Cathy White



Step Two – Enhance Existing Services

The 'quick wins' of Compliance, Integration & Coordination and Community Engagement & Education afford Council the opportunity to deliver a positive impact for the community in the short-term without major investment and enhancing existing arrangements. This step is around enhancing existing services, programs and resources to better deliver and respond to the needs of the community now and into the future. These would be delivered across three areas:

COMPLIANCE & RISK:

As an approved provider of aged care services, a focus on compliance is essential from Council to ensure relevant regulatory requirements are being met and client satisfaction achieved.

Good governance, appropriate management practices and quality service standards will help uplift community confidence in the Council's home care services.

FOCUS:
Ensure Council's obligations and requirements as an approved provider are met.

INTEGRATION & COORDINATION:

The opportunity exists to enhance the value to the community of existing services through strengthening coordination mechanisms between community, aged care, and health service entities. A more integrated approach will better optimise existing resources in support of delivering improved outcomes for people in the community and gaining efficiencies for service providers and workforce. Aspects to encompass in this approach could include transport, use of amenities, social activities, allied health services, visiting medical services.

FOCUS:
Appropriate resourcing and capacity through the Interagency governance framework.

**COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT & EDUCATION:**

The current knowledge gap within the community as to what services, assistance and funding is potentially available to them presents a significant opportunity to introduce an impactful change in the short term.

The level of uncertainty and confusion (notwithstanding current communication efforts) is evident, resulting in people not availing themselves of all that is on offer and seeing under utilisation of resources and reduced participation across the community.

FOCUS:
Engaging content, materials, programs and events to support well-being.

Step Three – Winton Wellness Community

There are a range of existing facilities, services and programs providing care and support to residents across Winton. This includes facilities providing health-care, accommodation options, support centres providing access to services and programs.

Step Three on the roadmap is the formal recognition of the Winton Wellness Community (see next page) that brings together all the existing and future services and facilities needed within region to provide the needed care now and into the future. The community insight gathered reinforced the need to improve the knowledge and awareness of the services and programs already available through the network. Whilst part of this will be addressed in Step Two ensuring this philosophy is embedded in a documented network will also be critical to understand the network intricacy and stakeholder roles and responsibilities.

Step Three will include a more focused effort for the establishment of a new fit-for-purpose accommodation within region. This accommodation will be an evolution of the Jessamine Place concept which has been led by the Winton Community and Aged Care Services Inc.

Three components are crucial across this step being the Winton Wellness Network, Workforce Plan, Funding & Finance. Each will be imperative to the execution of the Strategy and will be developed on the back of the progress of the initiatives from Step One and Step Two.

- **Winton Wellness Community:** Development of the broader network plan and documentation of the directory of existing services and programs available to the residents of Winton. Further a place-based precinct plan with the Winton Wellness Precinct that also evolves the business case for a purpose-built facility incorporating suitable and sustainable offerings for people that deliver flexibility, choice and connection to the community. This new accommodation will evolve the work undertaken in the proposed Jessamine Place facility. This new facility will include a range of services, amenities and assisted living accommodation options with the aim of connecting seamlessly with other services and providers in a “wrap-around” person-centred approach.
- **Workforce Plan:** A critical factor in delivering any solution for Winton will be the provision of a capable workforce. The challenges pertaining to recruitment and retention of staff are well recognized hence an innovative workforce plan for the short and long term must be developed. The plan is to incorporate all workforce components including informal support/care volunteering, Council workforce, agency workforce, visiting/locums and staff accommodation options.
- **Funding & Finance:** Funding options are to be assessed and pursued tactically with relevant stakeholders in accordance with the overall strategy and aligned to commercial planning.

Winton Wellness Community

1. Winton Multipurpose Health Service
2. Diamantina Gardens
3. Winton 60 & Better
4. Winton Medical Practice
5. Ambulance
6. Pharmacy
7. Winton Meals on Wheels
8. Supermarket (Shoprite)
9. Supermarket (SPAR)
10. Newsagency
11. Australia Post
12. Library
13. Neighbourhood Centre
14. QWCA Committee
15. Winton Men's Shed
16. The Winton Club Inc
17. Council Administration Centre
18. State Emergency Services
19. Winton Pool
20. Eric Lenton Memorial Recreation Grounds (Gym)
21. Winton Creative Arts

It is recognised that there are many social hubs, shops, connection points across the town that bring community together. The new interagency advisory group will therefore review this plan and evolve as needed.



Current Winton Health Precinct

1. Winton Hospital Multipurpose Health Service
2. Diamantina Gardens
3. Winton 60 & Better
4. Winton Medical Practice
5. Ambulance
6. Winton Meals on Wheels
7. Doctor's Residence
8. Director of Nursing Residence
9. Nurses Quarters
10. Old housing (to be demolish) – additional housing to be built to the north of 9.
11. Neighbourhood Centre

— Lot 2 SP159872 –
Reserve for Aged Peoples Home
(Council as Trustee)

— Lot 2 SP197815 –
Reserve for Hospital Purposes



Looking forward

The development of this strategy has highlighted a range of opportunities to support the positive ageing and wellbeing of our residents—both now and into the future. Many of these opportunities will require a coordinated approach, along with time and resources, to bring them to life. However, they are acknowledged within the strategy as being central to our community’s future success and our aspiration to be recognised as a leading example of ageing well in the outback.



FIT-PURPOSE-HOUSING

It is widely recognised and reaffirmed through the resident survey and on-ground engagement, that Winton requires additional housing to support its ageing population. In fact, a more diverse array of housing choice across the town would benefit many from our essential workforce through to couples, families looking to downsize and our visitors.

Smaller houses, smaller lots, duplexes and more unit style developments should be encouraged across the town. It is recognised that constructing new does come with its challenges however modern methods of construction and other innovations and incentives should be considered.



ADDITIONAL CARE FACILITIES

There is strong consensus among the community, stakeholders, and the council that more assisted living accommodation is necessary. Currently, Diamantina Gardens offers independent living with some residents receiving in-home care services, while the Winton Multipurpose Health Service includes a dedicated aged care wing with six beds and opportunity to expand with a further wing on-site.

The Winton Community and Aged Care Services (WCACS) have been instrumental in advocating for the community and advancing proposals for new care facilities in the region, including Jessamine Place. Council itself has financially committed more than \$1million towards a new facility and funds have also been raised via WCACS to also support a new facility in region.



PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

There is a growing opportunity in Winton to strengthen social cohesion and create more inclusive spaces for older residents. Building on the success of the *Better at 60* program, which celebrates ageing and encourages active participation in community life, the region can further enhance its support for older adults. Initiatives such as hosting regular Ageing Well Expos, promoting intergenerational activities, and expanding local volunteering opportunities can help foster meaningful connections and reduce social isolation. Equally important is raising awareness of the services and supports already available, ensuring older residents and their families are well informed and confident in accessing what they need.



UNIVERSAL DESIGN

Embracing universal design means creating a town that is accessible, inclusive, and welcoming for everyone. Recent and planned improvements, including upgraded footpaths that support safer and smoother mobility for all ages, as well as enhanced disability friendly access at council facilities, will help to ensure residents and visitors can move through the town with ease and dignity. These changes will support people with disabilities and also improve everyday wellbeing for families, older residents, and the wider community.



Jessamine Place

*Artist's perspectives
Source: Winton Community and Aged Care Services Inc*



Pillars for Success & Focus Areas

Pillars for Success

At the core of our vision for the strategy lies six pivotal pillars: compliance, integration and coordination, education and engagement, the Winton Wellness Community, funding and advocacy, and workforce development.

These pillars are not just components they are the foundation upon which we build a thriving community committed to the holistic wellbeing of every individual. By upholding compliance standards, fostering seamless integration and coordination across services, and leveraging the strength of the Winton Wellness Community, we ensure comprehensive support for all residents now and into the future. There are improvements that can be made now for the betterment of all in community and these should take priority.

New and expanded services will take further investigation to ensure they are not only fit-for-purpose but have long-term financial stability. Sustainable funding guarantees long-term viability, while education and engagement empower our community with knowledge and participation.

Finally, whether existing or new roles, talent attraction and retention is complex even more so in a rural community. This is why a strategic workforce development plan is needed to attract and secure the skilled professionals needed to deliver quality care and services and for the service to be sustainable and reliable over time.



Pillars for Success

Bringing the six pillars together with the priority actions is demonstrated in the following framework. Importantly, each pillar has also identified guiding values to ensure that the desired outputs from each action are based on these values and the values are upheld throughout the roadmap journey.

Focus areas are also identified for each pillar which will help guide a more detailed priority action list through the local governance arrangements who will take lead in progressing this strategy and broader focus forward.

This is an exciting opportunity for all stakeholders and the community to collaborate, embrace and continue to champion for positive ageing in region that will include improved services, programs and accommodation within Winton.

PILLARS FOR SUCCESS						
	COMPLIANCE AND GOVERNANCE	INTEGRATION AND COORDINATION	EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT	WINTON WELLNESS COMMUNITY	FUNDING AND ADVOCACY	WORKFORCE
INPUTS	Risk Audit Council as a provider Governance Procedures and Policy Local Government Structure for Strategic Implementation	60 & Better Existing Providers Neighbourhood Centre Transportation /community bus Meals on Wheels Men's Shed	Communication Preventive Health Chronic Health Literacy (network / resources) Neighbourhood Centre	Diamantina Gardens Hospital/ Multipurpose Health Service Jessamine Place Neighbourhood Centre Respite Allied Health In-home care and support	Federal State Local Block vs Activity Private Community	Informal support /care Volunteering Council workforce Agency workforce Visiting / locums Accommodation
VALUES	Accountability Integrity Transparency	Unity Adaptability Efficiency	Empowerment Inclusion Collaboration	Compassion Equity Patient-centred	Sustainability Flexibility Innovation	Diversity Respect Recognition/ Appreciation
FOCUS AREAS	Ensure Council's obligations and requirements as an approved provider are met. Form interagency group for strategy implementation, evaluation and reporting.	Appropriate resourcing and capacity. Advocacy for fair-share of funding to ensure programs remain active and support our community needs.	Engaging content, materials, programs and events to support well-being.	Support Jessamine Place together with review of other opportunities to diversify the housing and dwelling types in region and connectedness of services .	Advocate for funding and pursue investment options that supports the strategy and broader regional focus.	Development of workforce attraction and retention strategy

Strategy for Implementation

This is an exciting opportunity for all stakeholders and the community to collaborate, embrace and continue to champion for positive ageing in region that will include improved services, programs and accommodation within Winton.

Following adoption of the Strategy by Winton Shire Council an Implementation Plan will be developed based around the Pillars for Success. The values articulated with each Pillar are integral to the focus areas and development of priority actions.

Success and responsibility for implementation of the Strategy cannot rest with Council; it is a shared responsibility. The Strategy clearly outlines the whole of community approach to achieving the Vision and this will be achieved through the establishment of an Inter-Agency Governance Group (IAGG) which will have appropriate governance arrangements in place.

The IAGG will be self-governing through the shared commitment embodied in *Ageing Well in Winton* making Winton a place that enables all community members to gracefully navigate life's transitions with dignity, while fostering personal growth and fulfilment.

*Residents enjoying activities at the Men's Shed
Source: Winton Shire Council.*





Image:- Residents at the 150 Year Grand Parade
Source: Winton Shire Council