



Age-friendly Marlborough

Marlborough District Council

August 2021

Disclaimer

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Executive summary

The purpose of the report is to provide the Marlborough District Council with information to inform the implementation of an age-friendly community strategy for Marlborough which replaces the Positive Ageing Accord which expired 30 June 2019.

Council has agreed to the World Health Organisation (WHO) age-friendly community model to update the strategic approach to this issue.

All work under this project aligns with the WHO age-friendly model, which identifies eight domains that contribute to communities becoming age-friendly, these being:

- Housing;
- Social participation;
- Respect and social inclusion;
- Civic participation and employment;
- Communication and information;
- Community support and health services;
- Outdoor spaces and buildings; and
- Transportation.

Definitions of these terms can be found in the appendix.

The scope of this portion of the work was to:

1. Work with the age-friendly governance group to identify the information required and how to source it;
2. Understand what questions should be asked to inform the strategy;
3. Survey the over 55 community in Marlborough;
4. Hold focus groups of open conversations with representative groups; and
5. Collate the insights received from points 3 and 4 above, and identify common themes (this report).

The surveyed group consisted of Marlborough residents over the age of 55 at the time of the survey to align with the 10-year intended use of this information.

The survey, including aligned community focus groups, collected 721 responses in May and June 2021, from those in the age group, and their carers. This equates to 3.8% of the population of Marlborough in the over 55 age group (based on Infometrics population data 2020).

Further work is required to identify applicable work required. Note that the support needed may exist and may not be known by the respondents.

Several key themes were identified in the responses in no particular order:

- There was a clear gap between those who knew what support was out there and who to approach for it and those who did not;
- Housing concerns were raised across the board;
- The people surveyed account for a wide range of ages, with needs changing significantly across the age ranges;
- The move away from physical modes of communication;
- Disability access was identified as a key barrier to access;
- Access to GP and specialist care;
- Access to transport was identified as a key barrier; and
- Loneliness impacts and lack of access to mental health services are seen as areas where improvement is required.
- Barriers to gaining employment

Additional to this report, we have provided a more detailed version of the report with additional appendices, a file of all ideas/suggestions from participants, and a file of anonymous responses to allow data to be cut and collated to answer any specific questions.

The next steps in this programme of work include:

- Sharing the outputs with the council and wider interest groups. Including the 256 participants who asked to be kept informed of the results;
- Developing the 10-year strategy with key stakeholders; and
- Applying to become an Age Friendly Community via WHO Age-Friendly World

Purpose & Scope of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide Marlborough District Council and other organisations whose work impacts or supports the over 55 population in Marlborough with insights into the needs and priorities of this population.

The scope of this portion of the work was to:

- Work with the age-friendly governance group to identify the information required and how to source it;
- Understand – what questions should be asked;
- Survey – collect survey responses – online and paper;
- Run focus groups – open conversations with representative groups; and
- Collate – gather together insights, identify common themes (this report).

The surveyed group consisted of Marlborough residents over the age of 55 at the time of the survey to align with the 10-year intended use of this information.

The survey, including aligned community focus groups, collected responses in May and June 2021, with 721 taking part. This is 3.8% of the population of Marlborough in this age group (based on Infometrics population data 2020)

256 people provided their contact details to be kept informed on the outputs of this work.

This survey captures the views of those in the age groups and their carers. Further work is required to identify applicable work required. Note that the support needed may already exist and may not be known by the respondents.

People Involved

Marlborough District Council

- Lyne Reeves (former Community Development Advisor),
- Dean Heiford, Manager Economic, Community & Support Services,
- Jodie Griffiths and Natalie Lawler, Community Partnerships.

Age-friendly community steering group

The purpose of the age-friendly community steering group has been to provide advice and guidance throughout the process as well as collaborate to develop the Marlborough strategy.

The group will work together to ensure that the actions align with Marlborough's Age Friendly strategy across organisations and the region. Where possible look to utilise existing relationships and new opportunities to meet the aspirations of the strategy and positive outcomes for older people.

The steering group comprises representatives from key stakeholders including Council, NMDHB, MSD, Primary Health, Kainga Ora, ACC, Age Concern, Alzheimer's Marlborough, Greypower, Neighbourhood Support.

Representatives of the Older Persons Forum

The Older Persons Forum has engaged through the process by Jodie Griffiths.

A huge thank you to all those that participated in the survey and focus groups.

Methodology

This data was collated through two main methods:

1. A survey was available online and as a physical document to be completed in the council offices and the Picton and Blenheim library. The survey was shaped using the WHO age-friendly domains, and in consultation with the council, the members of the Marlborough Older Persons forum and insights gathered from the Seniors expo attendees and stallholders.

A copy of the survey is held by the Council.

2. In-person focus groups – 6 focus groups were held, based around 3 open questions:
 - a. What is working well in Marlborough for the over 55 age group?
 - b. What is not working well?
 - c. What could opportunities for improvements be made in Marlborough for this age group?

The forums focused on these questions to ensure the survey did not miss any key themes that are important to Marlborough's older residents.

Care was taken to ensure representation across ages, employment, living situations, geography and ethnic groups were captured.

In total, 721 people took part in the survey and focus groups across various social, geographic, and age groups. The number of participants surveyed (3.8% of the population in these age groups) provides a 95% confidence level in the data received, with a 3.7% margin of error.

While the survey data holds identifying information where participants asked to be kept informed of the survey outputs, this has been removed from the survey detail provided to the council to ensure confidentiality of participants. Instead, a separate contact list of those who wish to be advised of the outputs has been supplied to the council.

Findings

When asked in general what they liked about living in Marlborough, 97% of the people who answered the survey had something positive to say, with the majority of positive responses focused on the climate and community (including the smaller size of the population).

The focus groups had similar themes and responses to questions that were asked in the survey, confirming that the right questions were asked in the survey.

There were very clear delineations between the older and younger ends of the ages surveyed, with younger respondent's (65 and under) more likely to be still in work and looking for activity-based engagement in the community.

The older age group was more likely to have concerns regarding mobility and transportation, a need for physical communication methods and access to health services.

Three other patterns came out through the data:

1. The respondents who live outside of the main Blenheim area have a very different perspective on the quality of the services, activities, and facilities;
2. The ethnic and rural groups had a different approach to ageing than the urban population; and
3. All focus groups had the next generations needs in mind in their responses.

Across the 40 questions asked in the survey and the 6 focus groups, some key themes came through across the board in no particular order:

- Housing – in particular, stock of smaller houses to downsize into;
- Cost and affordability affecting peoples ability to access services and take part in the community;
- Access to GP and specialist care, as well as concern regarding wait times;
- Transport and mobility;
- The impact of loneliness and anxiety, including living alone and access to mental health services;
- Discrimination and ageism in the workplace, or the ability to gain employment;
- The need for flexibility in employment; and

- While there is a strong sense of community among locals, newcomers find it challenging to integrate.

Participants

Of those that completed the survey, 97% completed it on their own behalf, with the remaining 3% of responses being from carers.

While we do not have the ages of those who took part in the focus groups, there was a very even spread of ages in the survey, as shown in the table below.

Age Group	Number of responses	% of Marlborough population in this age group*
55 – 64	222	3%
65 – 74	274	4.1%
75 +	180	3.8%
TOTAL	676	3.8%

* Based on 2020 Infometrics data.

The location of survey participants provided a balanced view of the population of Marlborough, with:

- 56% in Blenheim
- 15% in Picton
- 2% in Renwick
- 1% in Seddon
- 11% in Marlborough Sounds
- 14% living elsewhere in Marlborough, including
 - Havelock
 - Rarangi
 - Wairau Valley
 - Rai Valley
 - Spring Creak
 - Fairhall
 - Rural; and

- Rapaura

The sections below include a more detailed analysis of the results split into the WHO 8 domains of community wellbeing.

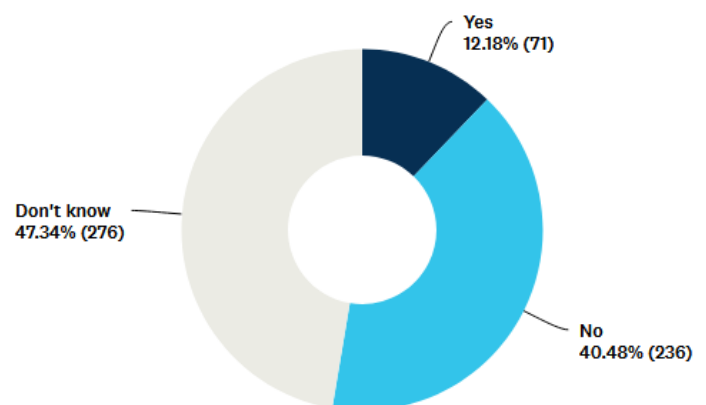
The complete survey responses, and more detailed summaries of data have been provided to the council.

Housing

The general feedback to the questions asked around housing is that there is a lack of compact, modern, energy-efficient housing for older community members. The continued drive by property developers to place covenants on new development areas is seen as keeping our older population in homes that are too large for their requirements as they can't sell to families and downsize to a smaller option because these are not available.

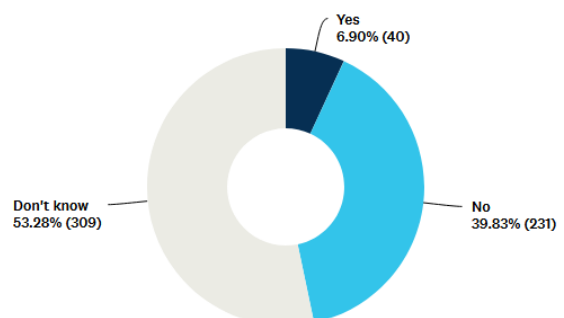
Range of housing

When asked if there is a good range of housing suitable for older people, 583 people answered, with approximately half unsure of the answer.



Location of housing

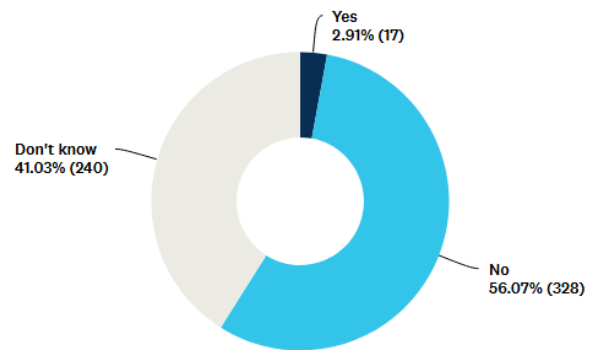
This pattern of answers for the range of housing is repeated when asked if there is enough housing in the locations that older people want to live. Of the 580 people who answered, 53% did not know. What is not clear from the data at this point is whether this answer was given by those who have not had to look for housing recently. If that is the case, approximately 80% of the remaining respondent's felt that there is not enough housing in the locations they want to live in.



Within the focus groups and the survey, multiple mentions were made of CBD housing being beneficial to the businesses in the area and providing a community within walking distance for older people.

Affordable housing

Almost half of the respondents were also unsure when asked about housing affordability for older people. Of the 585 people who answered, just 3% felt that there is enough affordable housing for this age group.



Social participation

Events and activities

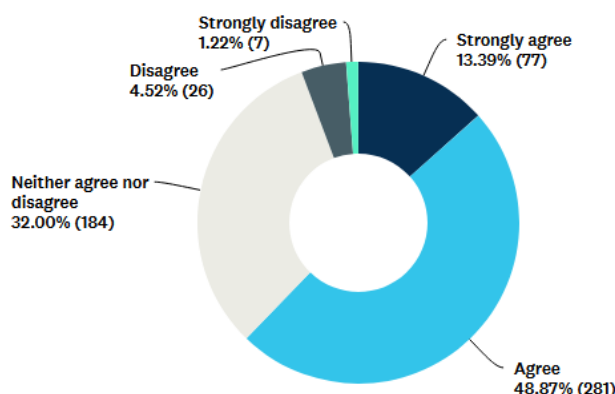
Across all the questions asked in the survey and the focus groups, approximately 50% of respondents were happy with the events and activities and the venues provided. When asked in the survey what could be done to improve, 279 people answered, with 48 people unsure what could be done, and 20 people happy with the current offerings, with comments including:

- You are doing well
- There is plenty of choice here in Marlborough
- I am well catered for; and
- It's all available.

The full details of potential improvements can be found in the appendix, with key themes mentioned in the section below.

Variety

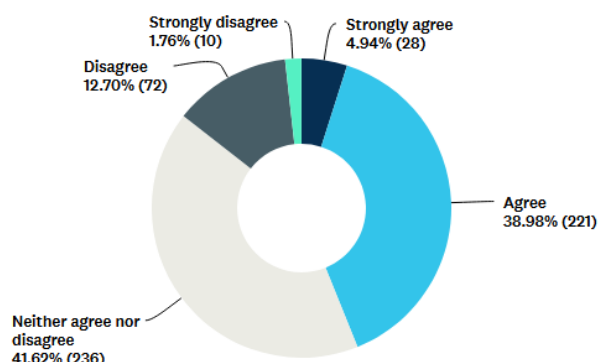
Over 60% of the 575 people who answered this question agreed or strongly agreeing that there are a wide variety of events and activities available in Marlborough.



However, a need for a variety of times of events to allow those who were not comfortable out after dark (and a lack of transport after dark) was the third most mentioned potential improvement. Mention was also made (from those still in employment) of a need for events outside of work hours.

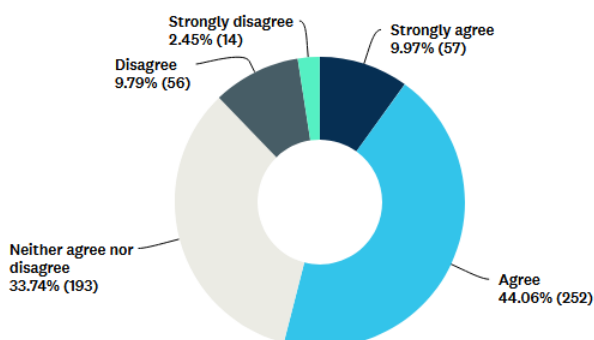
Affordability of Events

44% of the 567 respondent's feel that the events and activities available are affordable, with 41% unsure and only 14% feel that they are too expensive. However, when asked what could be done to improve events and activities in the region, 16 people suggested more free events or lower cost events, and 37 people mentioning cost as a space for improvement. Transport costs, including parking, were also mentioned multiple times.



Physical Activities

Physical activities were important across the age spectrum, with 54% of people (572 answered) agreeing that there are enough opportunities for physical activities for older people.



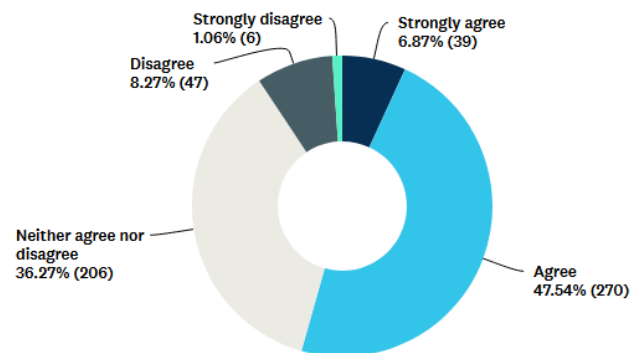
When asked what could be done to improve access to activities, 11 people stated that physical activities which promote strong bodies and balance, such as tai chi and yoga, are (or will be) outside of their price range

when retired. Respondents who live in Blenheim were much more likely to be happy with the opportunities available than those outside the main centre.

Survey respondents asked for more activities outside of aqua aerobics and more non-traditional methods of movement ageing activities, i.e. dance.

Venues

568 people responded to a question around the suitability of council and community venues for older people. Just over 54% of people agreed that they are. When asked what could be done to improve venues, the top two key themes were transport (26 responses) and disability/elderly access (23 responses).



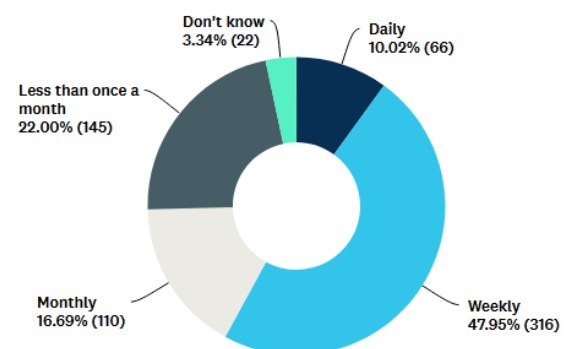
The need for transport to and from events, particularly in the evening, was a theme in the feedback on venues and events.

Respect and social inclusion

Social Activity

Frequency of Participation

57% of the 659 people who answered the survey question about their frequency of participation in social activities participate in one or more activities weekly or daily.



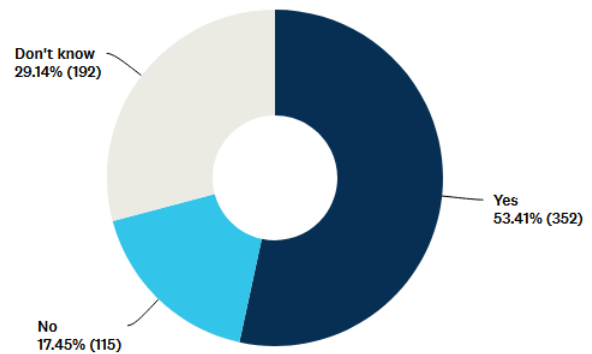
Civic participation and employment

Employment

Number of Opportunities

659 people answered whether there are enough opportunities for older people to keep working, either in paid employment or volunteering. 53% said yes.

However, in the opportunities for improvement to employment, the top suggestions included:



- Clarity on where to find volunteer and paid opportunities
- A concern that there was too much reliance on volunteer labour (for example, in transporting people to hospital appointments)
- A concern that ageism is reducing the opportunities available to older workers, and
- A need to encourage more shared, part-time or flexible work. The focus groups mention how older workers could support the wine industry if the shifts were shorter.

Communication and information

Where information on activities is sourced

476 people answered where they look for information on activities, with the question allowing multiple responses.

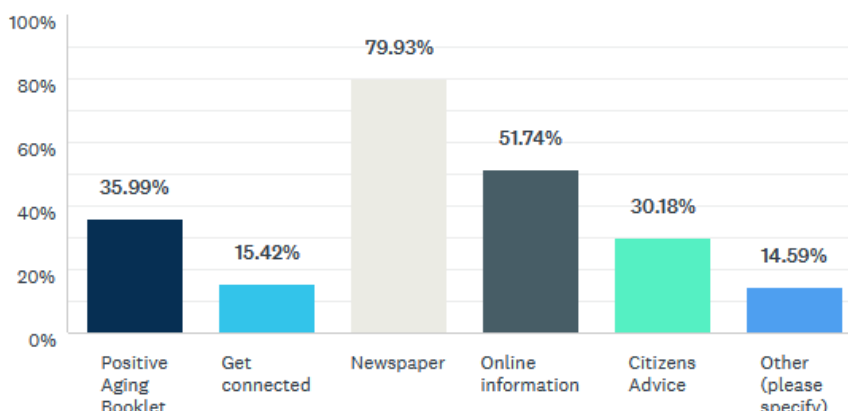
The most popular source of information are Google and the MDC website, as approximately 50% of the responses.

Source of information	Number of responses	Includes:
Google/Web browser	165	
MDC	122	
Social Media	43	- Facebook
Stuff	68	
Marlborough App	34	
Events guide	12	
Library	11	
Various	116	
Other	12	- Blenheim i-Site - CAB - Grey power - Picton happenings - Marlborough express

When asked what could be done to improve community engagement, 111 people provided answers around the need for more information about events and activities, with a need for information to be in physical and online formats. In focus groups and in the survey, there was a suggestion to use supermarket and café notice boards to communicate with older members of the community.

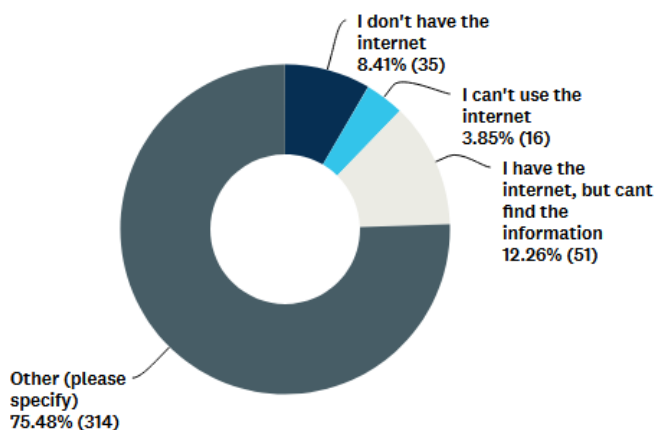
Information sources used

The survey allowed respondents to check all sources of information that applied to them. 603 people answered this question. A large percentage (over 70% of respondent's use the local papers as a source of information, with online information coming in at 51%. Two common information themes in the "other" sources of information are shop notice boards and the library in Picton and Blenheim.



Digital information

When asked about the barriers to accessing or using digital information, 416 people answered, and 256 people skipped the question. Of those who responded, 53% said that there was no barrier to accessing digital information (included in the 'Other' section). Of those that identified barriers, 12% can't find the information they need, and 8% don't have the internet.



Detail of "Other" 75%

Barrier	Percentage of "Other"
Affordability	2.2%
Don't use	1.9%
Internet Coverage	2.5%
Learning/need to learn	4.1%
No barriers	71.6%
Unrelated comments	17.8%

Community newsletters

447 people answered the question in the survey around whether they used community newsletters, and if so, which ones. 226 people skipped this question, and 46 of those who answered the question stated it was not applicable for them. Further investigation would be required to identify whether those who said the question was not relevant lived in an area that does not receive the papers.

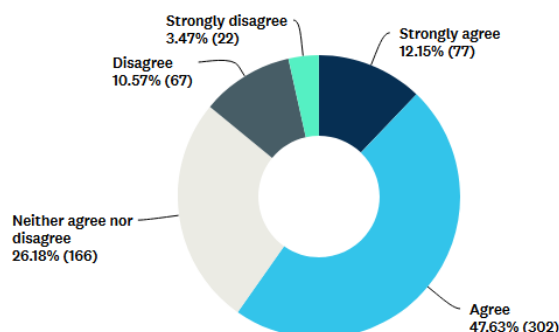
As this was a free text question, multiple answers may refer to the same thing – for example, "free newspapers", "Marlborough Express", "Delivered to Mailbox", etc

Newsletter	Number of people
Free Newspapers	222
Newsletters	36
Marlborough Express	31
Delivered to Mailbox	26
MDC	26
School newsletter	25
Picton Happenings	23
“Local”	21
Community	19
Age Concern	11
Church	11
Grey Power	10
News	10
Club	9

Community support and health services

Range of support

Asked how they felt about the statement "There is a good range of health and community support services available", 634 people responded, with just under 60% agreeing or strongly agreeing there are. However, 14% of people disagreed or strongly disagreed.

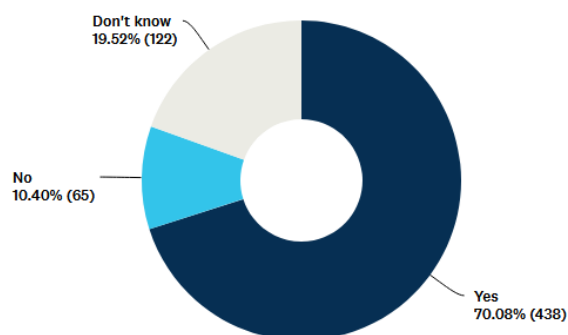


In the suggestions for improvements to the services offered, access to GP's, specialists and surgeons, and a desire to have prompt access to services in Marlborough without having to travel to Nelson were mentioned.

The focus groups also mentioned a desire for police and council support focused on supporting older residents.

Accessibility

70% of the 625 people who answered the question around the accessibility of services felt that they could access the services they need, with only 10% answering no.

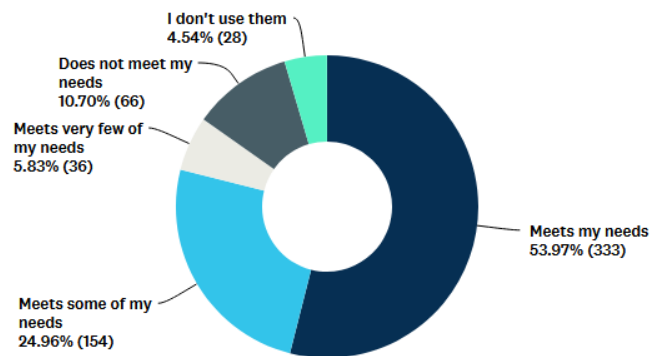


In the open questions in the survey and the focus groups, concerns were raised about the move to technology as a method of communication in the medical community and what this meant for older people who did not have, or were not able to use the internet or mobile phones.

Outdoor spaces and buildings

Footpaths

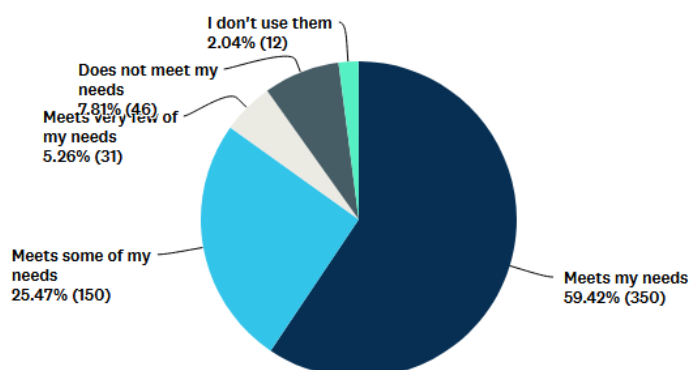
Footpaths and concerns about their slippery surface and lumps in the path were mentioned throughout the survey and the focus groups. However, in a question specifically around footpaths, 54% of the 617 respondents said that the paths meet their needs, with just over 41% of people stating that the paths meet some to none of their needs.



Concerns were raised in the Picton focus group, with some paths barked to beautify them, making them difficult for those with mobility issues.

Pedestrian crossings

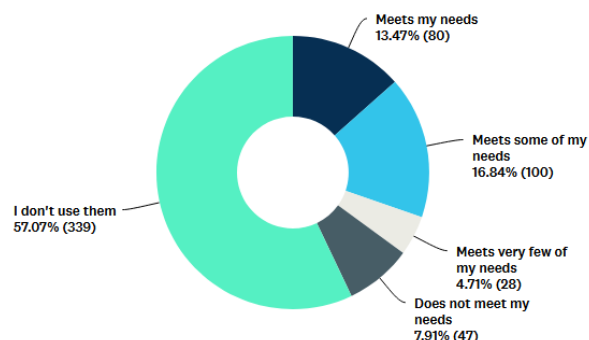
Like footpaths, pedestrian crossings were a popular topic in both the surveys and the focus groups with concerns about the type of crossings (courtesy vs pedestrian crossings), placement of crossings near roundabouts, and the lack of crossings, especially in some townships mentioned.



Of the 589 people who answered the question in the survey about whether the crossings meet their needs, 59% said yes, with just over 38% of people stating that they meet some to none of their needs.

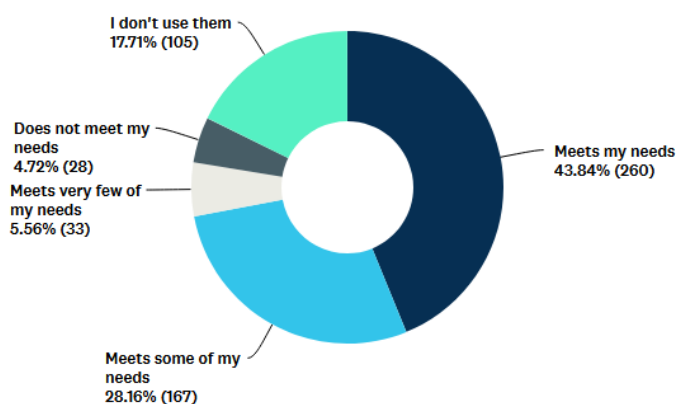
Cycleways

Over 57% of the 594 people who answered the question about cycleways said they do not use them. Of the 43% who use the cycleways, 180 people said they meet some or all of their needs, and 75 people said they meet very few or none of their needs.



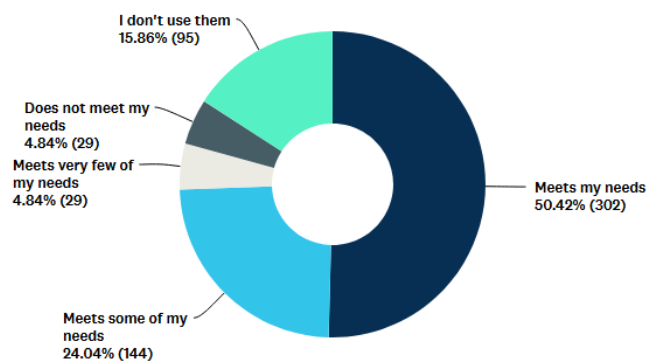
Seating In public places

In the opportunities for improvement questions through the survey and the forums, the need for more strategically placed seating (for example between parking and venues) was mentioned. Of the 593 answered the survey question about seating 43% felt that it meets their needs.



Public toilets

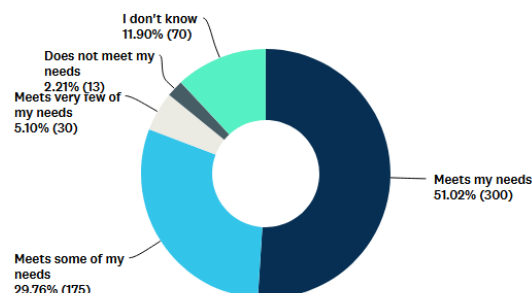
599 people answered the survey question about public toilets, with 50% feeling that they meet their needs and 33% stating they meet some to none of their needs. However, in the opportunities for improvement, the community raised concerns about the cleanliness of the toilets, the number of toilets at venues, and their accessibility for those with disabilities or mobility issues.



Several people in the survey and focus groups suggested that there should be toilets available on walkways such as the Taylor river to make them more accessible to older people.

Signage in public places

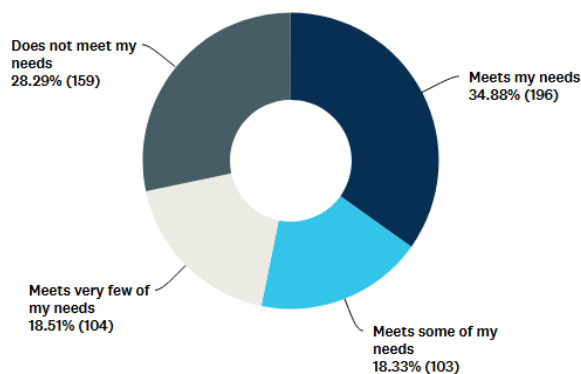
588 people answered the question around signage in public places, with a similar 51% stating that it meets their needs as other outdoor spaces questions. Suggested improvements to signage included signage at courtesy crossings.



Transportation

Buses/Taxis

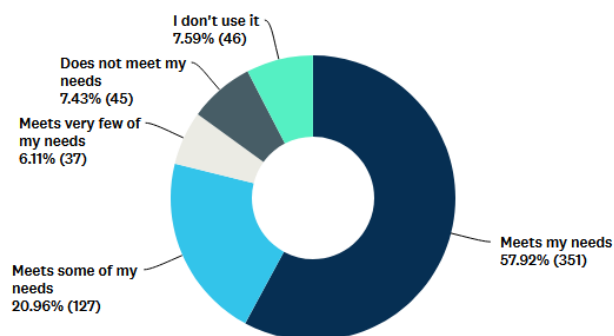
The survey asked how transport (buses, taxis etc.) met people's needs. 562 people answered this question while 110 people skipped it. 34% of people said that the services meet their needs. Transport – frequency, cost and type were common suggestions through the survey and the focus groups of areas where improvements could be made.



Access to the bus timetables, including having them available at the bus stops, was also suggested as an improvement.

Parking

Parking was another topic that received significant conversation in the improvements on the survey and the focus groups. Topics of improvement included the cost of parking, the distance of parking from venues, the need for more disability parking and covered parking. In addition, 606 people answered the parking survey question, with 57% saying that it meets their needs.



Several people mentioned that fear of the new parking metres had stopped them parking in town as well as improvement through education on how to use.

Other suggestions

330 people took the opportunity in the survey to share other things that should be considered in making Marlborough age friendly.

Similar themes were seen from other questions in the survey, with footpaths, transport, housing, and cycleways mentioned. Two new topics mentioned are dog issues (calls to allow people to have their companion dogs with them in town and to keep dogs out of town, river walkways etc.) and youth (opportunities for the generations to mix through events, living arrangements, education and work, and teaching of respect).

A key concern of the participants was the pace of technological change, for example:

- Access to pay bills, i.e. at the Post shop;
- The loss of banks in Picton – removing the ability for older people to speak to someone face to face;
- The move away from face to face service;
- The loss of cheque books; and
- Security of elderly needing to learn to internet bank.

Other topics raised in the focus groups included:

- Booking appointments online, i.e. WINZ support;
- Representation, and the need or want for the elderly to have representation within/ at the council, that and communication back to the community from the council lacked at times;
- The focus group attendees felt like they were heard and thought the consultation process we did was a great initiative from the council;
- There are many excellent services, community groups and support in Marlborough. Information or groups lacking cohesion for our elderly community- cohesion and communication between groups and services available etc., could be improved;

- Clear gap between those that know what's available and take part or access and those that do not; and
- Discrimination concerns are faced by some older people and their families.

Appendices

Glossary

Abbreviation	Definition
ACC	Accident Compensation Corporation
CAB	Citizens Advice Bureau
DHB	District Health Board
EV	Electric Vehicle
GP	General Practitioner - Doctor
MDC	Marlborough District Council
MSD	Ministry of Social Development
NMDHB	Nelson Marlborough District Health Board
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PF&C	Planning Finance and Community committee
PHO	Primary Health Organisation
WHO	World Health Organisation

Age-friendly domains

<https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/age-friendly-cities-framework/>

Domain	Definition
Housing	Affordable, well-designed, and safe housing
Social Participation	A range of accessible and affordable activities Encouraging participation and intergenerational integration
Respect and Social inclusion	Respect for seniors Social and economic inclusion
Civic participation and employment	Volunteerism and employment opportunities Encouraging civic participation
Communication and information	Appropriate and age-friendly distribution of information
Community support and health services	A wide range of accessible and affordable health services
Outdoor spaces and buildings	A pleasant and clean environment with green spaces Age-friendly buildings, pavements and walkways, safe pedestrian crossings and adequate rest areas A secure environment
Transportation	Accessible, affordable, and safe public transport

Sources

The following sources were used to inform this report.

WHO age-friendly

<https://extranet.who.int/agefriendlyworld/>

Infometrics population data

<https://ecoprofile.infometrics.co.nz/Marlborough%2BRegion/Population/AgeComposition>

MSD Positive Aging

<https://www.superseniors.msd.govt.nz/about-superseniors/office-for-seniors/positive-ageing-strategy.html>

<https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/eligibility/seniors/index.html>

PFC update - Feb 2021

https://www.marlborough.govt.nz/repository/libraries/id:1w1mpsoir17q9sgxanf9/hierarchy/Documents/Your%20Council/Meetings/2021/Planning%20Finance%20%26%20Community%202021%20list/PFCC_11_February_2021_Agenda.pdf

Survey detailed outputs

A copy of the survey has been shared with the council and is held by Jodie Griffiths

The total survey outputs have been exported to an excel file to allow the data to be used to answer any specific question which has not been focused on in this output—for example, understanding the feedback to a specific question from a specific segment, i.e. age group or place of residence. This file is held by Jodie Griffiths.