

Wairoa District Council

OLDER PERSONS POLICY

*Towards a society wholly inclusive of the older generation
He anga oranga kau mō te hunga pakeke*

Adopted 10 October 2006

 *Te Wairoa Hōpūpū Hōnengenenge
Matangirau*





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FOREWORD

- Mayor of Wairoa



I am pleased to be able to contribute the Foreword to this Older Persons Policy. Within the body of the document is this statement:

“Older people are important and valued members of the community”

This is a very good starting point for a comprehensive policy that will take us into the future when dealing with all issues that involve older people.

It is true that throughout the western world people are living longer, are staying healthier longer and are working longer. Even so, they are still a group within our community that require separate consideration so that they can carry on with the very valuable contribution that they still make and when they do get to the stage where they need more attention and special services, we need to be in a position to deliver those services in an efficient and timely manner.

The Policy has been formulated in co-operation with and in consultation with a large number of agencies and organisations. The Wairoa District Council is just one of these groups. The Policy is part of Council’s Long Term Council Community Plan which, when complete, will be a valuable tool to carry us into the future with confidence.

It is my hope that this document will be widely read and acknowledged throughout the District and the issues and statements within are acted upon and become part of the culture of the Wairoa District community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Les Probert". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

His Worship the Mayor - Les Probert
Mayor of Wairoa

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INTRODUCTION

People aged 65 and over make up a large and growing proportion of New Zealand's population. At the time of the 2001 Census of Population and Dwellings, they numbered 450,426 and made up around 12 percent of the total usually resident population. Over the next 25 years, the number of people aged 65 and over is projected to rise significantly to reach 924,400 by 2026. By that time, they will make up around 20 percent of the total usually resident population. This is projected to increase further to 25 percent in 2051.

The key factor allowing us to be reasonably sure of the shape and nature of the older people of the next few decades is that they are largely already part of the population of the country. While some immigration and some mortality will occur, it will only have a minor effect on the composition of these age groups. The major areas of change are expected to occur in internal migration patterns, regional competition for resources and changing work practices, which may modify in fundamental ways the lifestyles and location of older people. These will be linked to changes in care needs, family structures and the relative wealth of the retired population.

As a group, older people are becoming more diverse as their life experiences increasingly deviate from the life paths of their predecessors. For example, increasing numbers of those entering older age will have experienced marital disruption and sole parenthood, some will have remarried, and more women will have worked for large periods of their working life.

The growth of the older population, both in its size and in its diversity will have impacts on policy and programme delivery. The sheer increase in the number of people aged 65 and over will result in increasing expenditure in a range of areas, particularly health care and retirement income. Furthermore, in attempting to meet the needs of an older population, planners and service providers will need to take into account the increasing ethnic and social diversity of this population in the future. There will be higher proportions of Māori, Pacific and Asian peoples with different needs and expectations.

Much of the debate around the increasing size of the older population has focused upon the negative impacts, particularly the capacity of New Zealand's economic, social welfare and health systems to cope with the growth. However, the increasing number of older people has other implications. Most older people are fit and healthy well into their 70s, and can continue to play an active role in society for many years beyond the age of 65.

This growing older population trend is reflected in Wairoa population projections. At the 2001 Census 11.6 percent of people in the Wairoa District were aged 65 years and over compared with 12.1 percent for all of New Zealand. This percentage is expected to grow to 15 percent in 2021.

Other trends in Wairoa include:

- The ethnic and social diversity of the older population increasing
- More older people will be better educated and may seek more work options at age 65

- With a smaller workforce population (aged 25-65) and economic growth there will be additional demands on the labour market and employers may increasingly seek to employ older people
- Gradually increasing numbers of older people who have never owned their own homes
- The gender imbalance decreasing in future years. (At present women live longer than men, and make up the majority of the older population)

In both research and government policy papers, Older Persons tend to be defined as those who are 65 and over. Many people who were consulted and Māori in particular articulated how much older people and kaumātua are valued in the community. They also indicated that they view older people and kaumātua in relation to stages of the life cycle, whānau leadership and the holistic life experiences that have contributed to that person's status, mana and wisdom rather than in relation to a specific age. In addition, some distinctions are made between frail elderly and active older people on the basis of age. Those distinctions also tend to be arbitrary as age is not necessarily a determinant of frailty or level of activity.

The Positive Ageing Strategy:

The Government has responded to the anticipated increased number of older people by developing a Positive Ageing Strategy (2001) which affirms and supports the contribution of older people in society, and sets down ten goals, each with a set of actions that aim to improve opportunities for older people to participate in the community.

The Wairoa District Council recognises the following statements taken from the Governments Positive Ageing Strategy as the definition of positive ageing:

“The concept of ‘positive ageing’ embraces a number of factors, including health, financial security, independence, self-fulfilment, community attitudes, personal safety and security, and the physical environment. The underpinning is that the years of ‘old age’ should be both viewed and experienced positively. The focus is therefore not only on the experience of older individuals, but also on the younger generation’s attitude, expectations and actions regarding ageing and older people.”

Our vision is for society where people can age positively, where older people are highly valued and where they are recognised as an integral part of families and communities. New Zealand will be a positive place in which to age when older people can say that they live in a society that values them, acknowledges their contributions and encourages their participation.

The strategy has an overarching aim to improve opportunities for older people to participate in the community in the ways that they choose. As part of that Strategy, a Positive Ageing Action Plan is developed each year and monitored by the Ministry of Social Development.

Central government is responsible for the implementation of the Positive Ageing Strategy and takes the lead in terms of meeting its goals. However territorial local authorities are encouraged to contribute to the Strategy. This Policy articulates the



contribution that the Wairoa District Council can make to those goals while acknowledging the leadership role that central government agencies have. In many areas the Council's role is one of advocacy based on its close relationship to the community.

The New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy aims to improve opportunities for older people to participate in the community in ways they choose. The principles of the Strategy were developed with input from a wide range of individuals, groups and organisations throughout New Zealand and formed the basis of the consultation process for this policy. The ten principles are:

1. Empower older people to make choices that enable them to live a satisfying life and lead a healthy lifestyle.
2. Provide opportunities for older people to participate in and contribute to family, whānau and community.
3. Reflect positive attitudes to older people.
4. Recognise the diversity of older people and ageing as a normal part of the lifecycle.
5. Affirm the values and strengthen the capabilities of older Māori and their whānau.
6. Recognise the diversity and strengthen the capabilities of older Pacific people.
7. Appreciate the diversity of cultural identity of older people living in New Zealand.
8. Recognise the different issues facing men and women.
9. Ensure older people, in both rural and urban areas, live with confidence in a secure environment and receive the services they require to do so.
10. Enable older people to take responsibility for their personal growth and development through changing circumstances.

The Positive Ageing Strategy includes ten goals each with action points. The goals are concerned with income, health, housing, transport, ageing in place, cultural diversity, rural, attitudes, employment and opportunities. This policy contributes directly to all of these goals except for that concerned with income.

This policy articulates how the Wairoa District Council will contribute to those remaining goals. Specifically the goals are:

1. **Housing:** *Affordable and appropriate housing options for older people.*
2. **Transport:** *Affordable and accessible transport options for older people.*
3. **Opportunities and Information:** *Increasing opportunities for personal growth and community participation.*

4. **Health:** *Equitable, timely, affordable and accessible health services for older people.*
5. **Ageing in Place (safety):** *Older people feel safe and secure and can “age in place”.*
6. **Attitudes:** *People of all ages have positive attitudes to ageing and older people.*
7. **Cultural diversity:** *A range of culturally appropriate services allows choices for older people.*
8. **Employment:** *Elimination of ageism and the promotion of flexible work options.*
9. **Rural:** *Older people living in rural communities are not disadvantaged when accessing services.*

The positive Ageing Policy aims to improve the quality of life of those over 65 and to be successful it will engage with all groups within the community.

Positive ageing is achieved when:

- Society respects older people, values their knowledge, wisdom and skills, and acknowledges the considerable contributions they make to family, whānau and the community;
- We have created communities where people of all ages can enjoy a satisfying life;
- Ageing is a positive experience, regardless of gender, age, culture, or ability;
- Older people can participate in the community in the ways they choose and their participation is valued and respected by others;
- The community works together to provide an environment where people can age positively;
- Partnerships that support positive ageing are developed between local and central government, communities and support agencies;
- Older people are welcomed as mentors for younger generations;
- Ageing provides opportunities for opening new doors and offering new experiences;
- Society recognises the potential and talent of a steadily growing number of older people;
- Older people are able to continue to learn and make the most of their talents;
- Ageism is eliminated from all sectors of society and everyone is valued for who they are regardless of age;
- Flexible employment practices support older people in the workforce;
- The importance of a healthy lifestyle, leisure and recreation is recognised throughout life;
- Health promotion supports a wellness model of ageing;
- Older people are able to live in a safe and secure environment and receive the necessary support when they can no longer live independently;
- New Zealanders have access to a continuum of health services;
- There is security and stability in retirement income policies that provide a reasonable standard of living in older age;
- Accessible transport supports community participation;
- Adequate housing is available to ensure people can live with dignity;
- A wide range of services supports ageing in place;

- Older people living in isolated and sparsely populated rural communities are not disadvantaged when accessing services;
- New Zealanders have positive attitudes to ageing and older people; and
- The concept and importance of positive ageing is widely understood.

The New Zealand Disability Strategy

Older people are highly represented among people with disabilities, especially sensory and physical disabilities. Released in 2001 the Disability Strategy aims to achieve the vision of an inclusive society (Ministry of Health, 2001).

New Zealand will be inclusive when people with impairments can say they live in a society that highly values our lives and continually enhances our full participation.

The strategy addresses attitudinal, policy and service issues. It also outlines barriers that occur at various points in a person's life, and those that are constant over a lifetime, that may act to create social and economic isolation for disabled people.

Health of Older People Strategy

In May 2002 the Health of Older People Strategy was launched, setting out the Government's policy for the future direction of health and disability support services for older people (Ministry of Health, 2002).

The vision of the strategy is:

Older people participate to their fullest ability in decisions about their health and wellbeing and in family, whānau and community life. They are supported in this by coordinated and responsive health and disability support programmes.

Long Term Council Community Plan 2006-2016 (LTCCP)

An LTCCP (Long Term Council Community Plan) is a wide-ranging document prepared by Council, which sets out the Council's priorities over the medium to longer term.

The Plan provides the foundation for economic, environmental, cultural and social activity within the Wairoa District. It describes all activities managed by Wairoa District Council over the life of the plan, with evidence of cost, current function, and service levels.

The Long Term Plan is a key mechanism for Wairoa District Council to work with the Community. It will take into account Community Outcomes, which will guide the

development of the Wairoa District for the next 10 years. It will also be invaluable as a baseline for monitoring progress towards these Community Outcomes.

Community Outcomes are goals that the community believes are important for its present and future economic, social, cultural and environmental well-being.

It is important to remember that these outcomes belong to the community – they are not Council outcomes. The role of the Council is to give the community an opportunity to have their say in the future direction and well-being of the Wairoa District.

The Wairoa Community Outcomes are listed below in order of priority:

1. A strong prosperous and thriving economy.
2. A safe and secure community.
3. A lifetime of good health and wellbeing.
4. An environment that is appreciated, protected and sustained for future generations.
5. Supportive, caring and valued communities.
6. A safe and integrated transport system.
7. Strong district leadership and a sense of belonging.
8. Safe and accessible recreational facilities.
9. A community that values and promotes its culture and heritage.

Purpose of the Wairoa District Council Older Persons Policy:

This policy has six key purposes:

1. To document and summarise the identified concerns and needs of the older community within the Wairoa District.
2. To outline the goals that have been identified as the key priorities to respond to these concerns and needs and to therefore achieve positive ageing.
3. To summarise in the form of an Annual Action Plan the initiatives that have been developed in order to begin moving towards these goals.
4. To expand on the commitment of the Wairoa District Council to older people enshrined in the Long Term Council Community Plan 2006-2016. This commitment states that:
 - a. “Older people are important and valued members of the community”

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5. To provide a mechanism through which the National Positive Ageing Strategy can become a reality for the local community within the Wairoa District.
 6. To provide a frame work that:
 - a. Enables all members of the community to understand how positive Ageing will be achieved.
 - b. Enables new partnerships to be developed to contribute to achieving positive ageing.
 - c. Ensures that positive ageing is a living process that changes and updates in order to meet the future needs of new generations.

This Older Persons Policy is intended to address the current needs of older people within the Wairoa District and ensures that they experience positive ageing. It has also been created with the flexibility to adapt and develop so that future needs can be met. The policy will therefore ensure that Wairoa District remains a place in which older people can achieve and enjoy positive ageing.

Implementation and Monitoring:

Associated with the goals are actions for the Wairoa District Council to implement the Older Persons Policy.

This policy is premised on the basis of partnership with the community. Effective implementation requires strong relationships with representative groups such as Age Concern and Grey Power and also with the older community more generally.

Along with the actions associated with the goals, opportunities will be sought for discussions/forum on specific issues, encouraging the participation of older people, to finding solutions.

There are two key monitoring mechanisms:

- Monitoring through the Positive Ageing Strategy Action Plan whereby the Council's planned actions that support the Strategy are included in the annual action plan prepared by the Office for Senior Citizens. That office on an annual basis then prepares a report on progress.
- The business plan of the unit responsible for implementation of the policy. The plan will include performance indicators and measures.

1. TRANSPORT:

Goals /Objectives

Affordable and accessible transport options for older people. (Positive Ageing Strategy 2001)

*A safe and integrated transport system
(WDC LTCCP 2006-2016)*

Transport is identified as a barrier to older people's participation and access to services and resources and the cost of transport can act as a barrier to accessing services (in particular health services).

Wairoa District Council can contribute to ensuring affordable and accessible transport for older people through its provision of parking, control of roads and advocacy to other transportation providers for effective transport networks and services.

Up to 35% of people over 65 years report some disability and currently 80% of mobility parking cardholders are over 65 (approximately 102 of the 128 Wairoa district residents with mobility cards). There is a need for an increased number of mobility car parks provided in strategic locations and for greater enforcement in relation to use of mobility car parks in general.

For older people to have ease of access, pedestrian crossings need to be in safe places and footpaths need to be accessible by mobility scooters. The Council can use its community networks to promote community based transport options for older people and it also has an advocacy role in provision of public transport.

Actions: Council will support affordable and accessible transport by:

- 1.1 Researching and reporting on options for community based transport.
- 1.2 Promoting "giving a lift" amongst all community NGOs, including churches, social and recreational groups, and health support.
- 1.3 Reviewing mobility car parks - their distance apart, closeness to key facilities/services, and seating/shelter.
- 1.4 Enforcing mobility car parks.
- 1.5 Encouraging friends/family to drive older people to facilities.
- 1.6 Auditing pedestrian access to key town buildings.
- 1.7 Ensuring road signage is clear throughout the town.
- 1.8 Continuing to ensure all footpaths are safe and mobility scooter access friendly. Keep surfaces even and free of obstructions and where possible paint guidance lines on footpaths.
- 1.9 Identifying places where handrails would make public places/ roads/crossings safer; and install as appropriate.

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- 1.10** Encouraging the expansion of the provision of mobility scooters.
 - 1.11** Advocating for the provision of adequate transportation to health care services, in particular the nature of vehicles (i.e. whether vehicles have wheelchair lifts etc) and appropriate travel times to and from health care services.
 - 1.12** Reviewing public seating - distance apart, amount, closeness to key facilities/services, and signage associated with their use and ensure that design does not create obstacles for vision impaired people.
 - 1.13** Liaise with kaumātua bus operators to ascertain their needs and issues.
 - 1.14** Continue to support the Wairoa Disability Transport Service to the benefit of older people.

2. HOUSING:

Goals /Objectives

Affordable and appropriate housing options for older people. (Positive Ageing Strategy 2001)

To provide accommodation for those who are unable to access private sector rental properties (WDC LTCCP 2006-2016)

Most older New Zealanders “age in place” so housing is critical to their well-being. Older people in New Zealand have at this stage a high rate of home ownership, but there are limited options for those who want or need supported housing. As the older population increases in both size and diversity, an increasing range of housing options is required.

Older people, particularly those with limited financial means, often require housing which the market does not provide, such as smaller units requiring minimal upkeep.

Council has a long-standing commitment to providing housing for older people and currently manages pensioner-housing units. Council acknowledges the importance of pensioner housing to those in the community, who through personal circumstances, are unable to rent accommodation in the private market.

The medium term focus for Council is to manage and maintain pensioner housing to a standard and at a cost that is acceptable to the community and tenants. (WDC LTCCP 2006-2016)

The critical issue for older people is the cost of accommodation, including, rent, rates and maintenance.

To meet the needs of an increasing number of older people it would seem that Council needs to ensure the social housing stock continues to be made available to older people at least at the current rate. Criteria for Council housing eligibility will be kept under review to ensure Council housing is available to older people who face barriers to accessing housing.

At present the Wairoa District Council does not have a Rates Postponement Policy. A Rates Postponement Policy would recognise that for some older people on fixed incomes, rates can be a barrier to ageing in place. This type of policy provides for rates to be postponed until the house changes ownership or the property is sold.

Actions: Council actively addresses the housing needs of an ageing population by:

- 2.1 Continuing to provide housing for older people as detailed in the Long Term Council Community Plan 2006-2016.
- 2.2 Actively promoting “ageing in place” tactics so that older people can stay in their own homes: for example, care services and supporting the provision of accessible information on appropriate services that support ageing in place, for example, maintenance, cleaning and gardening.

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- 2.3 Regularly consulting with older people to keep abreast of housing issues and solutions for older people.
 - 2.4 Design housing stock to ensure it is safe and accessible for vision impaired people.
 - 2.5 Council will liaise with tenants regularly to ensure that housing is satisfactory and that tenants' needs are being met. Council will also provide referral to certain services that can meet tenants' needs.
 - 2.6 Ensuring the criteria for eligibility for Council housing takes account of the demographic trend of an increasing population of older people.
 - 2.7 Where appropriate encourage older people to locate close to essential facilities in retirement.
 - 2.8 Encourage older people to remain in Wairoa as a place of choice.
 - 2.9 Continuing to provide and upgrade social housing units and taking account of older people's needs when allocating housing (access needs, safety and social satisfaction) to older people.
 - 2.10 Actively researching the need for a Rates Postponement Policy and establishing networks with other Council Rates Departments with a view to developing and implementing a Wairoa District Council Rates Postponement Policy, in 2006/07. Once in place Council staff would actively support older people and their families in making applications for rates postponement.

3. OPPORTUNITIES AND INFORMATION:

Goals /Objectives

*Increasing opportunities for personal growth and community participation
(Positive Ageing Strategy 2001)*

“Opportunities for personal growth and community participation may take many forms, including lifelong learning, physical activity and volunteering. There are many factors that influence whether an older person can participate in activities, including income and cost, health and disability, transport, living situation and attitudes.”
(Positive ageing in New Zealand, 2001)

It is important to bear in mind that retirement from paid work provides opportunities to remain active in a range of roles, such as volunteers, caregivers, committee and trust members, kaumātua, and business mentors and advisors.

Information about opportunities is a critical component to maximising the ability of older people to take advantage of opportunities and remain active within the Wairoa community. The Council can influence this goal by facilitating information provision about available services and resources.

Where possible, published information affecting older people should be made available at appropriate venues, for example Health Organisations, Marae and other cultural venues, the Citizen Advice Bureau, the Visitor Information Centre and the Public Library.

An increasing number of older people use the Internet and other electronic media to access information and maintain relationships. Council should explore these avenues when considering the publication of information that affects older people.

Actions: Council will focus on increasing opportunities for personal growth and community participation for older people and ensure a two-way flow of information between older people and the Council by:

- 3.1 Improving educational opportunities for older people within the Wairoa community.
- 3.2 Encouraging utilisation of the experience and skills of older people.
- 3.3 Regularly consulting with older people to keep abreast issues and solutions for older people.
- 3.4 Promoting and supporting volunteer organisations.
- 3.5 Actively consulting with older people and interest groups about their needs, priorities and barriers to accessing information and opportunities.
- 3.6 Actively seeking the views of older people when developing policies.
- 3.7 Reporting on and implementing strategies to enhance information services in libraries and community centres, e.g. enhancing access to health services,



job opportunities, community functions, the public library, recreation, discounts etc.

- 3.8** Supporting older peoples access to and training on information and communication technologies.
- 3.9** Taking account of the information needs of people caring for older people.
- 3.10** Monitoring and advising on consultation carried out by the Council with older people.

4. HEALTH:

Goals /Objectives

Equitable, timely, affordable and accessible health services for older people (Positive Ageing Strategy 2001)

A Life Time Of Good Health And Wellbeing: An environment in which all people are able to achieve a lifetime of good health and wellbeing. They are protected from the negative effects of pollution, drug and alcohol abuse and illness. They have confidence in and access to health care provided in our region (WDC LTCCP 2006-2016)

Health issues are particularly important to older people, as health often deteriorates with age. Most people aged 65 or over are fit and healthy. A minority are frail and vulnerable and require high levels of care and disability support.

The World health Organisation (WHO) defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

Life expectancy is increasing and, since the mid-1980s, has been increasing more for males than for females. However, women can still expect to live longer than men, with life expectancy at birth currently 80.4 years for females and 75.2 years for males. Life expectancy for Māori and Pacific peoples is still lower than for the general population, due to higher mortality rates at younger ages, particularly from cardiovascular conditions and cancer. Life expectancy for Māori and Pacific peoples is, however, increasing.

Older people are significant users of both health and disability support services. The New Zealand Government Budget 2005/06 commits \$9.68 billion to health. Around 39 percent of that expenditure will be for the 12 percent of the population aged 65 and over.

Medical health care is primarily the role of central government rather than local government, but the Wairoa District Council can advocate for the concerns of older people through submissions to central government and other organisations on important health issues that affect the older generation.

A recent survey undertaken by National Research Bureau Ltd indicated that 70% of Wairoa residents aged 60+ years are 'very satisfied/satisfied' with health services provided in Wairoa. (Communitrak™ Survey: Public Perceptions And Interpretations Of Council Services & Representation: Prepared As Part Of The Public Feedback Programme For: Wairoa District Council, July 2005)

Wairoa's older people considered accessing health services to be a priority issue. The Council can facilitate the provision of information and act as an advocate for older people on health issues.

Actions: Council will support access to equitable, timely and affordable health services by:

- 4.1 Council advocating on behalf of older people on relevant health issues, to agencies and organisations responsible for health care and public health.

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- 4.2 Regularly consulting with older people to keep abreast of issues, taking on a coordination/facilitation role as required, and advocating with central government/ Hawke's Bay District Health Board to address older people's concerns.
 - 4.3 Working with NGOs to ensure older people are contacted and encouraged to participate in recreational activity.
 - 4.4 Continue to provide support for recreational facilities such as the Community Centre, the proposed Wairoa Walkway and various Parks and Reserves to the benefit of older people.
 - 4.5 Assist the Hawke's Bay District Health Board where necessary to develop the policy to support an integrated continuum of care for older people.
 - 4.6 Improving co-ordination across the health sector, including central and local government, to ensure that the range of health services are accessible and appropriate for older people.
 - 4.7 Developing collaborative national and regional relationships over public health services, provide intersectoral leadership and co-funding with other agencies, (for example, other government agencies, non-government agencies, local authorities), and become involved in planning services with providers.
 - 4.8 Continue to support the Wairoa Disability Transport Service to the benefit of older people.

5. AGEING IN PLACE (SAFETY):

Goals /Objectives

Older people feel safe and secure and can “age in place” (Positive Ageing Strategy 2001)

Safe Living Environment: Council’s aim is to provide services and facilities, which contribute to community health and safety and ensure that the natural and physical resources of the district are preserved for future generations (WDC LTCCP 2006-2016)

“Ageing in place” is the term used to describe the principle of older people residing at home for as long as possible and is concerned with the provision of support and services that facilitates this process. This requires that people have the resources they need to live in the setting they choose and can be greatly assisted by community planning initiatives (e.g. planning communities that foster social engagement and facilitate access to key services such as doctors, food outlets etc). A critical issue for older people in deciding to stay or move is feeling safe. Facilitating support and services to contribute to ageing in place is traversed throughout this policy, so this section focuses on the safety aspect.

Safety is a priority for Wairoa District Council and there is an increasing emphasis on safety in the home and in the neighbourhood. Safety is concerned with both injury prevention and crime reduction. In respect of the latter the Neighbourhood Support Group works with Police and Community groups to help reduce and prevent crime in the Wairoa District. Moreover Council employs a staff member to deliver the Crime Prevention Unit’s ABC (Anti Burglary Crime) Project, which is designed to reduce crime and create safer communities. For many older people, the choice to age in place depends on whether they feel safe and secure at home and in their communities. Moreover

A recent survey of the ‘perceptions of safety’ within the Wairoa District undertaken by National Research Bureau Ltd indicated that 28% of residents feel that generally Wairoa District is definitely a safe place to live (42% in 2004), 54% say it is mostly (45% in 2004). 13% of residents think the District is not really a safe place to live (10% in 2004) with 4% saying it is definitely not (1% in 2004). 1% are unable to comment. (Communitrak™ Survey: Public Perceptions And Interpretations Of Council Services & Representation: Prepared As Part Of The Public Feedback Programme For: Wairoa District Council, July 2005)

Actions: Wairoa District Council will support ageing in place by:

- 5.1 Extending work with NGOs to ensure older people living alone are contacted on a regular basis.
- 5.2 Promote and implement safety awareness programmes in collaboration with organisations such as the Police and Neighbourhood Support Groups for older people.
- 5.3 Develop as wide a range of services as possible within the Wairoa district that support ageing in place.

- 
- 5.4** Improve the development and delivery of information about provisions and services that enable older people to age in place.
 - 5.5** Work with organisations such as the Police and Neighbourhood Support Groups to actively encourage a greater sense of community and looking out for one's neighbour.
 - 5.6** Ensuring that the Hawke's Bay Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Plan considers the needs of older people in a crisis.

6. ATTITUDES:

Goals /Objectives

People of all ages have positive attitudes to ageing and older people (Positive Ageing Strategy 2001)

Underpinning this policy is the move to change people's perceptions of the older generation in our community. What is more, this policy is designed to steer positive attitudes about ageing and to reaffirm the value of older people in the Wairoa community.

This document is the start of encouraging all Wairoa citizens to celebrate older people, and to celebrate ageing. The policy articulates Wairoa District Council's commitment to positive ageing as well as reinforcing the value we place on older people in our society.

"Attitudes to older age and older people vary in New Zealand. On the one hand, older people are valued for their knowledge, wisdom and experience; on the other, their contributions are often invisible and their value to the community unrecognised... Ideas and attitudes about ageing and the role of older people differ across time and across generations." (Positive Ageing in New Zealand 2001)

Positive ageing is as much about attitude as it is about empowering older people to make choices that enable them to live satisfying, healthy lives. It's about valuing and respecting their contribution, and ensuring they have continuing opportunities to participate in society in the ways they choose. It is also about changing the attitudes of the whole of society towards older people and to the process of ageing itself.

Actions: Wairoa District Council supports positive attitudes to ageing and older people by:

- 6.1 Celebrating October 1st, International Day for Older People, by promotion of the older person in the community as an active, contributing and valuable member of society.
- 6.2 Ensuring that positive images of older people are part of the district's promotional material.
- 6.3 Working collaboratively with NGOs to foster positive attitudes towards older people and ageing in general.
- 6.4 Working to challenge negative opinions, attitudes and images of older people within the community.

7. CULTURAL DIVERSITY:

Goals /Objectives

A range of culturally appropriate services allows choices for older people (Positive Ageing Strategy 2001)

Communities recognising, achieving and promoting their cultural goals. Acknowledging and protecting places of significance to pass to future generations. Communities respecting and embracing the cultural environment of all cultures represented in our community (WDC LTCCP 2006-2016)

Wairoa is a unique part of New Zealand. The Wairoa district has the highest proportion of Māori of any local authority in the country, 55% in 2001 (4,935 out of 8,916 total population).

Central Government's Positive Ageing Strategy outlines in respect of cultural diversity the needs to increase the number of quality services provided by and for Māori and Pacific peoples, and identifying issues of specific concern to older people from ethnic communities and developing options for addressing these.

Council believes that our unique culture and heritage must be encouraged and supported at all times and will work closely with the following organisations to achieve this outcome:

- Tangata Whenua including various Māori organisations and groups
- NZ Historic Places Trust
- Other Hawke's Bay Councils
- Council has a funding partnership for the support of the Wairoa Museum Trust, which operates the Wairoa Museum
- Local and Regional Tourism Operators

Actions: Wairoa District Council encourages and promotes a range of culturally appropriate services by:

- 7.1 Continuing to maintain and strengthen relationships and partnerships with Tangata Whenua including various Māori organisations and groups throughout the District. The Māori Liaison Officer and the Council Māori Committee (a full standing committee of Council) also provide opportunities for relationship building and dialogue.
- 7.2 Promoting participation of the older generation within our cultural communities.
- 7.3 Ensuring that when consulting with Māori, Pacific people and ethnic minorities in the town that older people are included and heard.
- 7.4 Actively ensuring that all cultures are recognised and embraced throughout our region, and that policy development reflects this.
- 7.5 Encouraging correct pronunciation of the Māori language, and a greater understanding of Māori customs and heritage with a view to better working relationships.

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- 7.6** Identifying the physical assets and heritage of our communities, and encouraging the development and preservation of places of significant character, for the enjoyment and benefit of all residents. In this regard noting the importance of striking a balance between protecting significant sites and interpreting and facilitating public access to them.

8. EMPLOYMENT:

Goals /Objectives

Elimination of ageism and the promotion of flexible work options (Positive Ageing Strategy 2001)

The number of people aged 65 years and over in paid employment has more than doubled since 1991, with 49,935 people or 11 percent of people in that age group in paid employment in the week preceding the 2001 Census. People in this age group were also involved in unpaid activities both inside and outside their household. In the four weeks preceding the 2001 Census, 73 percent of older New Zealanders reported they had done housework for their own household and 17 percent had done voluntary work such as for an organisation, group or marae.

Older people are valued as important members of society and have the right to dignity and security in their senior years. They have opportunities to use their skills, knowledge and experience to contribute to society. Participation in employment by older workers brings social and financial benefits to society, to industry and business, and to older people themselves. In New Zealand, older workers are indicating they want to work longer, either because they want to or feel they need to.

Predictions are that older people will be more educated and may seek work options at age 65. Concurrently it is expected that there will be a smaller workforce population aged between 25 and 65 years. Economic growth will mean there are additional demands on the labour market and employers may increasingly seek to employ older people. As such, both employers and older people themselves are likely to demand more work opportunities for the older generation of our community. The Council may have a role in provision of information to both employers and older people about work opportunities.

Actions: Council supports the elimination of ageism and encourages employment opportunities for older people by:

- 8.1 Facilitating access to information about appropriate job opportunities for older people, for example, in the Public Library and via the NGOs, for example Age Concern and government departments specifically Work and Income New Zealand – Wairoa Branch.
- 8.2 Actively promoting skills sharing/mentoring schemes using the skills of abilities of older people.
- 8.3 Promoting employment policies in the Wairoa business community that recognise and acknowledge the value of older workers.
- 8.4 Actively encouraging older people to update their knowledge and skills, as needed, to enhance their employability if labour force participation is desired.
- 8.5 Actively promote and encourage flexible employment practices to support older people in the workforce.

9. RURAL DISADVANTAGE:

Goals /Objectives

Older people living in rural communities are not disadvantaged when accessing services (Positive Ageing Strategy 2001)

Community Representation: Council's long-term leadership focus is to work with the community to assist them to achieve their vision for the future. Council believes the quality of representation, and the sustainability of the District, as critical outcomes to be achieved. (WDC LTCCP 2006-2016)

The Wairoa District is a largely rural area, with substantial areas of rural hill country mostly used for sheep/cattle farming and forestry, and flat land along the coast and in river valleys.

Like the rest of New Zealanders, older people are highly urbanised. Over two-thirds of older people live in the main urban areas (i.e. areas with 30,000 or more residents). However, significantly more live in secondary and minor urban areas than the general population (22 percent compared with 16 percent). Another notable feature of the rural-urban distribution of older people is the variation by age. For example, around two in every three people aged 65–74 years lived in main urban areas in 2001. At ages 85 years and over, three in every four people were living in main urban areas.

The reasons for the higher concentration of older people in main urban areas are presumably related to the more fragile health status of this group and consequently the need to be near care facilities. At the 2001 Census, about a third of all women aged 85 years and over living in urban areas were living in institutions. The proportion for men was much lower at about a fifth, reflecting the fact that men are more likely to have younger partners at home to care for them. This contrasts with rural centres and other rural areas, where there are fewer institutions; and people who are sufficiently well tend to remain at home, either living alone or with family.

At the 2001 Census 41 percent of people in Wairoa aged 65 years and over lived in rural areas (423 of the 1,033 people in Wairoa aged 65 years and over; Wairoa Districts total population = 8,913). This is about 7 percent higher than the national average.

Overall, older people living in rural areas are much more likely to be employed than their urban counterparts. The employment rates for people aged 65 and over who usually live in main, secondary and minor urban areas sit in a range between 9 and 10 percent, whereas the rate in rural centres is 13.3 percent. Nearly a third (30.7 percent) of older people living in 'other rural' areas were employed in 2001, meaning that this group was three times more likely to be employed than their peers living in urban areas. Noteworthy for the Wairoa district is the fact that a large number of older employed people were farmers.

People aged 65 and over in rural areas were more likely than those in other areas to work full time, with 60.1 percent of those employed in other rural areas working 30 hours or more per week in 2001, compared with just 43.4 percent of those living in main urban areas.



One of the ongoing challenges of Council is the need to focus on seeking to understand the needs of our diverse rural and urban communities so that Council can provide good representation aimed at achieving the community's vision for the future.

Actions: Council actively works to ensure older people living in rural communities are not disadvantaged when accessing services by:

- 9.1 Actively promoting and supporting policies that encourage opportunities for growth and development for older people living in rural communities.
- 9.2 Improving service delivery to rural areas.
- 9.3 Ensuring policies address the additional costs associated with providing services to sparsely populated and rural communities.
- 9.4 Supporting equity of access to health services for people in rural areas.
- 9.5 Developing options to address the transport needs of rural older people accessing services and activities in urban areas.
- 9.6 Ensuring needs of the diverse rural and urban communities within the Wairoa District are met by providing effective representation and careful management of resources.