

How do we become a Liveable Community?

Local Councils need to take the lead to create and promote a Liveable Community with input from community members.

Councils can use the following steps to do this^{1,2,3}.

- 1** Assess your community's baseline 'liveability'
- 2** Get your local government on board
- 3** Partner and connect to thoroughly assess liveability
- 4** Develop and implement an action plan
- 5** Evaluate



1 Building Age-Friendly Communities: A Guide for Local Action (2012) Government of Alberta

2 Queensland an Age-friendly Community: 5 Steps to Being Age-friendly (2020) Queensland Government: <https://www.communities.qld.gov.au/seniors/queensland-age-friendly-community/age-friendly-toolkit/5-steps-being-age-friendly>

3 Age-friendly Neighbourhoods Guidelines and Toolkit for Local Government (2012) Government of South Australia: <https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/e373ac0042a5706fa978edd8cec31b16/Age-friendlyGuidelinesLocalGovernment2012-PC-OFTA-20131218.pdf>

1. Assess your community's baseline 'liveability'.

- Develop a community profile
- Use a checklist to identify liveability strengths, weaknesses and opportunities
- Survey community members to understand their challenges and opportunities

The first step to creating a Liveable Community is to make sure you understand your community profile and possible needs to be considered. Use available data to report on the age, socio-economic status, culture, health and other population measures⁴, as well as unique geographic, social and economic characteristics.

You can use checklists and surveys to assess your community's liveability strengths, weaknesses and opportunities.

- Checklist of Essential Features of Age-friendly Cities (WHO): www.who.int/ageing/age_friendly_cities_material/en/
- Eight Domains Assessment Checklist (Queensland Government): <https://www.communities.qld.gov.au/seniors/queensland-age-friendly-community/age-friendly-toolkit/tools-resources/eight-domains-assessment-checklist>

- Building Age-friendly Communities: Age-friendly checklist (Government of Alberta): www.seniors-housing.alberta.ca/documents/AgeFriendly-Checklist-2012.pdf

People in your community know what works, what doesn't, and what they need from their community. Engaging with them is essential to successfully developing and implementing a Liveable Community. You can provide surveys to people to assess liveable features in your community. A sample survey is available from the Queensland Government [here](#). Aim to reach people from a range of ages, backgrounds, and circumstances to make sure you identify different barriers, opportunities, and examples of good practice in your community.

For more information about engaging with the community, including vulnerable community members, see the *Communicating and Engaging with Your Community* document.



2. Get your local government on board

- Have a liveability resolution passed by your local government
- Establish a Liveability (or Age-Friendly) Committee

Passing a resolution to be a Liveable Community formalises Council and community commitment, and recognises the importance of Council's responsibility in making sure their community is Liveable.

The baseline liveability data you collect in Step 1 is crucial to provide evidence of the need and opportunities of adopting liveable community principles.

COTA Tasmania can present the principles and some examples of Liveable Communities to Council to support resolution development and approval.

Once you have Council support, a **Liveability Committee** can be established. This Committee is made up of people with a range of backgrounds from council, community, government and business who have a passion for Liveable Communities. All members commit to planning, co-ordinating, promoting, and realising a Liveable Community for the long-term.



3. Partner and connect to thoroughly assess liveability

- Identify key stakeholders
- Consult broadly with the community
- Publish and share assessment

A more thorough assessment of liveability is conducted to confirm and build on findings from the baseline assessment in Step 1. This is a broader consultation that identifies what is working and where improvements could be made.

It's important to have a good idea of the people that you want to engage with, including groups that may be difficult to reach. Identifying key partners to collaborate with during consultation is key to reaching a large, diverse and relevant population to consult with. Partners are likely to include community organisations, government, community members with broad networks, and businesses.

Several methods should be used to consult and identify the barriers and opportunities of liveability specific to your community in each of the liveability domains (see the *Communicating and Engaging with Your Community* document).

Once consultation is complete, findings need to be assessed and reported. Key barriers, challenges, opportunities, needs and ideas should be identified. Share this assessment with the community, other organisations, government and business to raise awareness about your community's liveability and mobilise additional support.

4. Develop and implement an action plan

An action plan should be developed with the Liveability Committee (Step 2) and community to make sure the community is behind it. The plan must include actions that are:

- Relevant to liveability
- Specific
- Achievable in time and resources
- Short, medium and long term

- Small and large projects
- Measurable

It is useful to prioritise these actions and include mechanisms to monitor progress of the plan.

The action plan should be grounded in guiding principles that emphasise the importance of engaging with the community and acknowledging diversity⁵.

⁵ Queensland an Age-friendly Community: 5 Steps to Being Age-friendly (2020) Queensland Government

5. Evaluate

Evaluation should be considered when beginning to plan and develop the liveable community action plan as it needs to be conducted at the start, during and after action plan development. Evaluation allows council to:

- Monitor progress
- Identify barriers, enablers and improvements needed
- Demonstrate results
- Justify the use of resources
- Celebrate successes
- Drive future work

One framework for evaluation includes (see *Queensland an Age-friendly Community: 5 Steps to Being Age-friendly* for full details):

1. **Defining indicators:** identify and define key dimensions of liveability used in setting and measuring goals, outcomes and impact
2. **Identifying evaluation approaches:** determine how you will evaluate and measure indicators e.g. Surveys, forums
3. **Conducting baseline assessment:** evaluate current position and identify measures and goals that can be compared after the action plan has been implemented to determine success

4. **Monitoring progress:** monitor timelines, activities and key events to evaluate progress during implementation
5. **Undertaking impact evaluation:** repeat baseline assessment to identify if goals were met
6. **Repeating:** continue to drive and build liveable communities, address areas of improvement

WHO Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities

Councils committed to be Liveable Communities can be part of the World Health Organisation's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities to share information about Age-Friendly and Liveable Communities. By completing the above steps, most Councils should be eligible for this Network.

Burnie City Council and Clarence City Council are both members of this Network.

Resources

Queensland an Age-friendly Community: 5 Steps to Being Age-friendly (Queensland Government): <https://www.communities.qld.gov.au/seniors/queensland-age-friendly-community/age-friendly-toolkit/5-steps-being-age-friendly>

Age-friendly Neighbourhoods Guidelines and Toolkit for Local Government (Government of South Australia): <https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/e373ac0042a5706fa978edd8cec31b16/Age-friendlyGuidelinesLocalGovernment2012-PC-OFTA-20131218.pdf>

Roadmaps to Liveability (AARP): www.aarp.org/livable-communities/tool-kits-resources/info-2017/roadmap-to-livability-collection.html

Building Age-Friendly Communities: A guide for local action (Government of Alberta): www.seniors-housing.alberta.ca/documents/AgeFriendly-Guide-2012.pdf

Age-Friendly Communities in Canada: Community Implementation Guide Toolbox (Government of Canada): www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/age-friendly-communities-canada-community-implementation-guide-toolbox.html

