

Welcoming and Age Friendly Groups project



Project overview

The Latrobe City Council's Welcoming and Age Friendly project supports clubs and groups to provide safe and inclusive environments. The project uses a peer-audited self-assessment process to ensure clubs and activities are welcoming and age friendly.

The project included the development of a Welcoming and Age Friendly brand that groups could use to show they had passed accreditation.

Project description

The project aims to provide older people in the region with information about local clubs, groups and activities, and ensure their experience as a new member or participant is a positive one.

People who are at risk of social isolation are identified and connected to groups and activities. Participating groups receive support to grow their membership and ensure they provided a vibrant and welcoming atmosphere for new members.

Project model

The project leadership group was supported by a part-time project officer.

The leadership group engaged key local clubs and several individual community members to advise and champion the project.

The project officer met with isolated individuals and more than 30 groups to establish what makes a welcoming, age-friendly group, and to discuss the effects of loneliness and isolation.

The leadership group used the principles of codesign to develop the project, including consulting with groups to create resources and self-auditing tools, and to help groups work with peer organisations to cross-check the accessibility of another group.

The Welcoming and Age Friendly branding/logo can only be used by entering a memorandum of understanding with Latrobe City Council.

Requirements under the memorandum of understanding include clubs/groups undertaking an accreditation process to ensure ongoing integrity of the brand.

Budget

Grant funding	\$80,000
Council funding	\$2,957
Council in-kind contribution	\$18,975
Total project cost	\$101,932

Project challenges

Personalised interaction with groups allows greater motivation and understanding of the benefits of the project.

No two groups are the same – each group offers something different, on top of the activities they provide.

Community members recognise that community involvement is important, even if they are currently disconnected

Project outcomes

The project raised awareness of community groups and activities, and provided an opportunity for isolated people to re-connect with community life.

The project ran training with 54 well-established groups, and 24 groups participated in the first round of self-assessments.

A network of groups and clubs was developed to support isolated older people to re-engage with the community. Groups undertook collaborative work and shared best practice.

A brand and promotional tools enhanced recognition and awareness. Accredited clubs were celebrated at an award ceremony hosted by the mayor.

Clubs and groups have responded very well to the peer-evaluation model.

Project sustainability

The success of the project led to new council processes, and now all aged care assessments include an option for referral to the Welcoming and Age Friendly contact person, who then refers participants to clubs.

In turn, clubs and groups gain ongoing promotion and support from the council.

For more information about the accreditation process and use of the Welcoming and Age Friendly branding/logo please email Helen Taylor, Manager Aged and Disability Services, Latrobe City Council, Helen.Taylor@latrobe.vic.gov.au

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