

A Respectful, Age-Friendly Island: Older Tasmanians Action Plan 2025 – 2029



Accessibility

If you are deaf, or have a hearing impairment, or complex communication needs, phone the National Relay Service on 13 36 77, or Speech-to-Speech Relay Service on 1300 555 727.

Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and pay respect to Tasmanian Aboriginal people as the traditional owners and continuing custodians of this land, lutruwita/Tasmania.

In particular we acknowledge Elders – those who are deeply respected in their community and recognised as custodians of Aboriginal knowledge and holders of wisdom, who provide guidance and profoundly care about their Country and people.

We also acknowledge all older Tasmanian Aboriginal people. Their lived experiences should never be understated or overlooked in designing contemporary government programs and ensuring workplaces and services funded by the Tasmanian Government are experienced as culturally safe.

Like everyone, older Aboriginal people want to age well. We acknowledge the vital role of extended families, communities, and Aboriginal community-controlled organisations in supporting older Tasmanians.

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ISBN 978-1-925906-52-3
December 2024

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Appreciation

The Tasmanian Government thanks the more than 1,500 Tasmanians who generously shared their concerns, aspirations, and recommendations about ageing well in Tasmania through the *Healthy, Engaged, and Resilient (HEAR) Active Ageing Consultation Outcome Report*.

Your views have shaped the vision, outcomes and priorities outlined in *A Respectful, Age-Friendly Island: Older Tasmanians Action Plan 2025-2029 (the Plan)*.

We thank the Council on the Ageing Tasmania (COTA Tas) for organising the statewide consultations and for the organisation’s continuing support as the peak body representing the interests of older Tasmanians.

The Plan’s development has benefited greatly from the views and expertise provided by two Tasmanian Government Reference Groups. We would like to thank members of the Older Tasmanians Action Plan Reference Group and the State-Wide Elder Abuse Prevention Committee (SEAPAC).

We welcome feedback on the Plan email: olderpersons@dpac.gov.tas.au

Acronyms

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
Advocacy Tas	Advocacy Tasmania
COTA Tas	Council on the Ageing Tasmania
DoH	Department of Health, Tasmanian Government
DoJ	Department of Justice, Tasmanian Government
DPAC	Department of Premier and Cabinet, Tasmanian Government
DSG	Department of State Growth, Tasmanian Government
Homes Tas	Homes Tasmania, Tasmanian Government
LGAT	Local Government Association Tasmania
MRC Tas	Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania
NHT	Neighbourhood Houses Tasmania
NILS	No Interest Loan Scheme
PHT	Primary Health Tasmania
SDAC	Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers
SEAPAC	State-Wide Elder Abuse Prevention Advisory Committee
SSMO	State Service Management Office, Tasmanian Government
Tas Legal Aid	Tasmania Legal Aid
TCCI	Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
TSS	Tasmanian State Service
Welcome	Welcome Cultural Services
WHO	World Health Organisation

Minister's Foreword

Older Tasmanians are immensely important in our community, and we recognise the valuable contributions they make to our society and our economy.

Tasmania has the oldest population and is ageing faster than any other state or territory in the nation.

The Tasmanian Government's vision is a respectful, age-friendly island where older Tasmanians are valued, connected, and supported.

A Respectful, Age-Friendly Island: Older Tasmanians Action Plan 2025-2029 seeks to enable an environment that supports the well-being, potential and value of older Tasmanians and address the unique challenges associated with ageing in Tasmania.

The Plan also incorporates actions to progress *Lifelong Respect: Tasmania's Strategy to end the abuse of older people 2023-2029*.

Recognising, responding to, and preventing the abuse of older Tasmanians is a priority for the Tasmanian Government. Older Tasmanians have the right to be an integral and respected part of the community, living free from abuse.

The Tasmanian Government has committed over \$3 million to deliver key priorities to support older Tasmanians and end the abuse of older people over the next two years. There will be an interim review of progress against the actions to ensure the Plan's relevancy and inform future focus areas to achieve the outcome areas.

I would like to thank our dedicated community sector, particularly COTA Tasmania, for their engagement and contribution in developing the Plan and for partnering with the Tasmanian Government to support the delivery of key initiatives across the state.

Older Tasmanians are integral to the diversity and strength of our communities, and we will continue to work collaboratively across all levels of government and with the community to achieve the vision in our Plan.

Hon Roger Jaensch MP
Minister for Community Services



Introduction

Although there is a global trend towards living longer lives, not everyone ages in the same way.

A longer life should mean more time to enjoy a healthy lifestyle with family and friends and the rewards of wisdom and experience. Increasing longevity, however, can also present challenges for people.

Many older Tasmanians endure ill-health, stigma, isolation, insecurity, neglect and even abuse during their later years.

The factors contributing to these negative experiences and disparities can be prevented or mitigated with targeted interventions within all life domains - social, economic, health and wellbeing, educational, cultural, and technological.

It is vital that older Tasmanians, regardless of their background, are supported to lead healthy, active, safe, connected lives. We have a shared responsibility to value the immeasurable contribution made by older Tasmanians and to respect their human rights and dignity.



Closing the Gap

As a signatory to the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*, the Tasmanian Government is committed to achieving the Closing the Gap outcomes.

What this means in practice is that:

- Initiatives included in this plan will be culturally respectful and inclusive of Aboriginal people, including by acknowledging Aboriginal people are considered 'older' at the age of 50 years, and adjusting policies and practices, including eligibility criteria, accordingly.
- Closing the Gap priority reforms are reflected across actions committed to in this plan, to enable real and sustainable improvements for older Aboriginal people.
- In implementing this plan:
 - o Opportunities to engage with Aboriginal people and organisations will be developed, including to support shared decision making about programs and services for Aboriginal people;
 - o Development of partnerships with Aboriginal community-controlled organisations will be considered for the supply of programs and services to older Aboriginal people;
 - o Opportunities to build the Aboriginal community-controlled sector will be considered;
 - o Workplaces, programs, services, and information funded by the Tasmanian Government will be culturally respectful and work to meet the needs of Aboriginal people; and
 - o Opportunities to provide Aboriginal organisations with access to relevant data will be progressed.

The Tasmanian Government's new Plan builds on *Strong, Liveable Communities – Tasmania's Active Ageing Plan 2017 – 2022*, which prioritised support for older Tasmanians within health, lifelong learning, participation, and security.

It also incorporates actions to achieve the vision in *Lifelong Respect - Tasmania's Strategy to end the abuse of older people* (the Elder Abuse Strategy) for all older Tasmanians to be safe, respected, and live free from abuse.

This Plan will contribute to outcomes in the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*, including that Aboriginal people enjoy long and healthy lives and that Aboriginal people enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing. For older Aboriginal people, this includes supporting participation in family, community, and cultural life for as long as possible.

The development of the Plan has been guided by the extensive feedback from over 1,500 Tasmanians across generations about their concerns, aspirations, and recommendations on ageing well in Tasmania.

These views, along with those of the service providers who work closely with Tasmanian communities, have shaped the Plan's vision, outcomes, priorities, and actions for the next five years.

Consultation feedback requested a shift from 'active ageing' which may reinforce the idea that ageing is a problem rather than celebrating the diversity of experiences and contributions of older Tasmanians. Active ageing can also be viewed as exclusionary, particularly for marginalised groups such as people with disability or those living in poverty.

The Plan focuses on enabling equity, empowerment and self-determination for Aboriginal Tasmanians 50 and over and non-Indigenous Tasmanians 65 and over by focusing on enhancing capabilities and addressing the social, structural, cultural, and environmental determinants of ageing and wellbeing.



Who are Older Tasmanians?

“Tasmania is ageing both structurally and numerically. Around 21 per cent of Tasmanians were aged 65 years and older in 2023.”

Tasmania’s Population Policy: Planning for our Future, Tasmanian Government, 2024

Definition

Older Tasmanians are aged 65 years and over. Older Tasmanians include anyone living in Tasmania, regardless of visa status.

In recognition of historical factors and social determinants of health, Aboriginal Tasmanians 50 years and over are considered older.

Aboriginal people have lived in lutruwita (Tasmania) for over 40,000 years.

Aboriginal Elders are people who are highly respected in their community as custodians of cultural knowledge and for what they do for their community. This status is not bestowed by age.

Older Tasmanians are a diverse group of people at different stages of life with a range of backgrounds, experiences and lifestyles. There are also important similarities.

What does our Older Tasmanian population look like?

Tasmania has the oldest population and the Tasmanian population is ageing faster than any other state or territory in the nation.

↑ **48**

Median age:

- o In 2024 the median age of Tasmanians was **42**, compared to **38** across Australia.
- o The median age of Tasmanians is predicted to increase to **48** by 2041.ⁱ



Older Tasmanian population:

Nearly a **quarter of Tasmanians** (120,921) are older Tasmanians.ⁱⁱ

1 in 5

Older Aboriginal Tasmanians:

7,145 of Tasmania's Aboriginal population of 33,857 are **aged 50 years and over**.ⁱⁱⁱ

1 in 5

Cultural diversity:

One in five older Tasmanians were born overseas.^{iv}



Gender:

62,756 older Tasmanians are **women**, compared to 56,593 men.^v

2 in 5



Disability:

2 in 5 Tasmanians with disability are aged 65 and older.^{vi}



Where is home:

- o Nearly a **quarter** of older Tasmanians live in regional Tasmania.
- o **One in five** older Tasmanians live in greater Hobart.^{vii}

13%

Who we live with:

13 per cent of older Tasmanians (29,827) resided alone.^{ix}



Ageing population:

The number of Tasmanians aged 85 and over is expected to rise from over **14,000 in 2024 to just over 33,000 by 2041**.^x



Older Tasmanians play a key role in:

- o Providing care for others, often another older person.^{xi}
- o Volunteering in their community.^{xii}

1 in 6

The abuse of older people (elder abuse):

- o **1 in 6 older Australians** reported experiencing abuse in the previous 12 months.
- o **Only one third** of older people experiencing abuse sought help.^{xiii}



Who informed the Plan?

The HEAR Active Ageing Consultation

The Tasmanian Government funded COTA Tas to deliver the Healthy, Engaged and Resilient (HEAR) Active Ageing Consultation Report.

Over 1,500 Tasmanians contributed to a state-wide consultation to inform the Plan. COTA Tas received over 1,150 survey responses and held 41 community consultation sessions around the state, reaching a further 449 people.

Participants in the survey and group discussions identified good health, having enough money, having good relationships, and maintaining independence as both positively and negatively impacting on their quality of life and wellbeing.

Concerns about housing, cost of living and access to appropriate healthcare were among the top priorities in all areas COTA Tas visited.

Similarly, access to and confidence with digital technology was frequently cited in the survey and community discussions as impacting people's overall sense of connection and involvement in their communities.

The HEAR Report is available on the COTA Tas website: www.cotatas.org.au

Reference Groups

Building on the HEAR Report, DPAC consulted with the Older Tasmanians Community Reference Group on the direction of the Plan.

The State-wide Elder Abuse Prevention Advisory Committee (SEAPAC) informed *Lifelong respect: Tasmania's Strategy to end the abuse of older people 2023-2029*. Actions under the Strategy have been incorporated into *A Respectful, Age-Friendly Island: Older Tasmanians Action Plan 2025-2029*.

What are older Tasmanians' Priorities?

We heard clear messages that the Plan needs to address the social, structural, cultural, and environmental determinants of ageing and wellbeing.

We heard:

- Ageism is inhibiting quality of life, wellbeing, equity, a sense of value and empowerment for older Tasmanians.
- Tasmania needs to continue creating age-friendly or 'liveable' communities to ensure older Tasmanians can live safe, healthy, and respected lives.
- Encouraging intergenerational participation in all areas of life benefits us all.
- Preventing and addressing the abuse of older Tasmanians is a priority to ensure continued self-determination and empowerment as we age.
- Aged care reforms need to deliver appropriate and sufficient services to extend independent living and ageing at home.

We also heard clear messages about programs and services that could promote wellbeing and participation for older Tasmanians:

- Enabling social connection and participation in sporting, social and cultural activities keeps us connected, and both empowers and celebrates older Tasmanians as active contributors in our communities.
- Supporting access to and confidence with digital technology boosts opportunities for participation and access to services and supports.
- Recognising and valuing older Tasmanians' skills and encouraging continuation in the labour force where desired, supports wellbeing and financial security.
- Older Tasmanians require access to healthcare that's timely and close to home, and supports active ageing and independence.
- The lack of affordable, appropriate, and secure housing options is undermining long-term independence and wellbeing.

These priorities have shaped the Tasmanian Government's vision, outcomes, and actions over the next five years of this Plan.





Ageism

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines ageism as:

The stereotypes (how we think), prejudice (how we feel) and discrimination (how we act) directed towards people on the basis of their age. It can be institutional, interpersonal or self-directed.

“Age discrimination is real – people are overlooked as overqualified and not provided opportunities because of their age.” *HEAR report participant*

Ageism has serious and far-reaching consequences for people’s health, wellbeing, and human rights. For older Tasmanians, ageism can be associated with a shorter lifespan, poorer physical and mental health, slower recovery from disability and cognitive decline.

“Ageing – we are all going there, no escaping it! But people make assumptions based upon your age.” *HEAR report participant*

Ageism can drive the abuse and mistreatment of older Tasmanians by creating an environment where they are not valued by the community as equal members and services are not designed with their needs in mind.

We need more age-friendly or ‘liveable’ communities

Age-friendly environments, also called ‘liveable communities’, ensure older Tasmanians are free from age-related barriers that prevent participation and engagement in their communities.

What we currently do:

- COTA Tas offers a **Liveable Communities Toolkit** for local government and communities to support Tasmanians of all ages and circumstances to achieve age-friendly communities.
- Tasmanian Planning Policies are being rolled out across the state. These policies will deliver consistent planning rules across Tasmania and influence strategic land-use activities and physical environments, which in turn can improve the daily life of all Tasmanians, helping to work towards ensuring age-friendly environments.
- Active Tasmania is currently developing *Active 2030* for all Tasmanians, aimed at ensuring everyone has equal access and opportunities to sport and active recreation in the state.

The abuse of older people

“Preventing elder abuse is a priority.” HEAR report participant

Tasmania uses the WHO definition of elder abuse:

A single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person.^{xiv}

Abuse can take many forms and older Tasmanians can experience one form of abuse, or a combination. Types of abuse can include physical abuse, psychological or emotional abuse, financial abuse, sexual abuse, systemic abuse, social abuse, spiritual abuse, cultural abuse and neglect. Coercive control is also recognised as a pattern of behaviour that over time establishes and maintains power and dominance over another person.^{xv}

It can be deliberate or unintentional, subtle or overt. It can occur within family and close personal relationships, such as adult children, grandchildren, spouse or partners, carers, neighbours, or friends, where there is a trusted relationship. It can also occur in service and institutional contexts where there is an expectation of trust or more formal duty of care.

Abuse can destroy an older person’s quality of life, and significantly increase their overall risk of death. It is critical the whole community takes responsibility for safeguarding older Tasmanians so they can live safely and free from any form of abuse.

The National Plan to respond to the Abuse of Older Australians recognises that ageism can contribute to an environment in which individuals who abuse older people fail to recognise that their behaviour constitutes abuse; other members of society fail to notice these negative behaviours or take action to stop them; and older people experiencing elder abuse blame themselves and are too ashamed to seek assistance.^{xvi}

Recognising, responding to, and preventing the abuse of older Tasmanians remains a priority for the Tasmanian Government.

This Plan includes actions to implement priorities outlined within *Lifelong Respect: Tasmanian’s Strategy to end the abuse of older people (Elder Abuse) 2023-2029*, which was launched on 15 June 2023 – World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.



What we currently do:

- The ‘*It’s OK to ask the question*’ Tasmanian elder abuse awareness campaign (the campaign) has been a successful awareness raising tool and has been shared on television, social media, and radio.
- The Tasmanian Government also funds a range of community organisations to support older Tasmanians who may be experiencing abuse. This includes a suite of services to assist older Tasmanians and their families respond to the abuse of older Tasmanians with advice, referrals, counselling and mediation, including the Tasmanian Elder Abuse Helpline and the Relationships Tasmania Elder Relationships Service.
- The Tasmanian Government has also provided funding to COTA Tas, Advocacy Tasmania, Migrant Resource Centre Tasmania and Welcome Cultural Services to raise awareness of the important issue of elder abuse and to advocate on behalf of older Tasmanians.

Intergenerational understanding and engagement

“We need more opportunities for older people and younger people to come together so we can better understand one another. We all have a story.”

HEAR report participant

Intergenerational programs promote social inclusion by creating opportunities for interaction between generations. Research suggests bringing people of different ages together in an intergenerational program can provide benefits for all involved.

These benefits can include providing stimulation and learning for older and younger Tasmanians, and increased awareness and understanding between generations.

Aged care reforms

Aged care provides support and care for older Tasmanians to meet their everyday needs and help them live active, self-determined and meaningful lives. This support can be delivered in people’s homes or in residential facilities.

“[We] need more information and guidance on planning for later years.”

HEAR report participant

Over 25,000 Tasmanians aged 65 and over accessed aged care services in 2022, primarily through the Commonwealth Home Support Program, which reflects a growing preference for Tasmanians to receive care at home.

The aged care system, administered by the Australian Government, is in the process of significant reform following the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

The focus of reforms is to ensure a better standard of care for older Tasmanians including greater choice and independence, better access to services that respect and meet their needs, and support Tasmanians to stay independent as they age.

“The impact of past trauma is not well understood in aged care settings.”

HEAR report participant



“Everyone deserves access to high quality care and support as they age.”

HEAR report participant

What we currently do

- The Tasmanian Government is working with the Australian Government to improve aged care services in Tasmania and ensure that older Tasmanians can get the care and support they need as they age.
- This includes initiatives to improve pathways between health services and aged care services while enhancing home-based support to promote independence and reduce hospitalisations.

Framework

The plan sets out the Tasmanian Government’s vision, outcomes and actions for the next five years with a focus on the wellbeing, potential and value of older Tasmanians, addressing the unique challenges associated with ageing in Tasmania.



What we want to see	Our vision		
	A respectful, age-friendly island where older Tasmanians are valued, connected and supported.		
	Our priority themes		
	We feel valued and respected	We are connected and engaged	We are enabled and supported
How will we know we’re achieving our vision?	Our outcomes		
	Ageism in all forms is reduced.	Older Tasmanians feel their potential is nurtured and harnessed to contribute and achieve.	Older Tasmanians feel they are recognised and their needs are met.
	Older Tasmanians feel valued, safe, respected and free from abuse.		
What should we do to achieve this?	Our focus areas		
	Addressing ageism and fostering lifelong respect	Social connection, cultural, civic and active participation	Healthcare, mental health and wellbeing
	Advancing older Tasmanians’ rights	Education and learning	Housing, transport, cost of living
	Recognising, responding and preventing the abuse of older Tasmanians	Economic participation	
What will help us to achieve this?	Our enablers		
	Governance: Community-led design, implementation and review.		
	Consultation: Strong understanding of our communities’ needs.		
	Strategic alignment: Responsive policies, programs and services across levels of government.		
	Data and evaluation: Strong understanding of impacts through relevant data, monitoring, reporting, planning.		
	Inclusion and equity: An intersectional lens for programs, services and workforce development.		
	Partnerships: Design, delivery and review of policy, programs and services across levels of government and with service providers.		
	Resourcing: Actions are planned and timed to enable adequate resourcing.		



Our Vision

A respectful, age-friendly island where older Tasmanians are valued, connected and supported.

Outcomes

Our priority themes, outcomes and focus areas have been informed by what we heard Tasmanians need to age well.

Our themes	We feel valued and respected	We are connected and engaged	We are enabled and supported
Our outcomes	OUTCOME 1: Ageism in all forms is reduced.	OUTCOME 3: Older Tasmanians feel their potential is nurtured and harnessed to contribute and achieve.	OUTCOME 4: Older Tasmanians feel they are recognised, and their needs are met.
	OUTCOME 2: Older Tasmanians feel valued, safe, respected, and free from abuse.		

Enablers: to help us achieve our vision

There are a number of enablers that will help us deliver our actions and achieve our outcomes. These are summarised here and described throughout the Plan.

Enabler	Action
Governance	Establish a Governance Group to contribute to the oversight implementation of the Older Tasmanian Action Plan and advise on new and emerging issues.
Consultation	Continue to seek the views of older Tasmanians to inform policies and programs.
Strategic alignment	Ensure older Tasmanians needs are considered across Tasmanian Government policies.
Data and evaluation	Explore age-related outcomes data for the Tasmanian Government’s Wellbeing Framework.
Inclusion	Continue to celebrate and showcase the successes of older Tasmanians.
	Consider diversity within the needs of older Tasmanians.
Partnerships	Expand partnerships across tiers of government, with Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and service delivery to meet the needs of older Tasmanians.
Resourcing	Adequate resourcing to deliver actions and achieve outcomes.

“Community attitude towards ageing process needs to change – should be celebrated not feared.” *HEAR report participant*



Actions

Summary

Our priority actions for the next five years will contribute to outcomes across all three of our themes.

Under each theme, we have summarised our actions, described how we will undertake each action and over what period, and indicated the lead Tasmanian Government Agency.

Short-term actions

Short term actions will be delivered in year one and two of the Plan.

Medium-term actions

Medium-term actions will commence from year three of the Plan and will be informed by progress in the first two years.

Refreshing actions

There will be an interim review of progress against the actions to ensure the Plan’s relevancy and inform future focus areas.

We feel valued and respected

This priority focuses on the structural and behavioural inhibitors older Tasmanians told us need to be addressed to create an age-friendly island and for them to feel valued and respected. This will include fostering respect across generations.

Outcomes and focus areas

Our outcomes	Ageism in all forms is reduced.		
	Older Tasmanians feel valued, safe, respected, and free from abuse.		
Our focus areas	Addressing ageism and fostering lifelong respect.	Advancing older Tasmanians' rights.	Recognising, responding, and preventing the abuse of older Tasmanians.

We feel valued and respected - actions summary

Focus Area	No#	Action	Lead Agency
Addressing ageism and fostering lifelong respect.	1	Develop and deliver an ageism awareness campaign.	DPAC
	2	Develop an Age Friendly Language guide contributing to a cultural change in how we view the ageing process.	DPAC
Advancing older Tasmanians' rights.	3	Raise community awareness about supporting, respecting, and valuing older Tasmanians' decisions, and their legal and ethical rights to self-determination.	DPAC, DoJ
	4	Raise awareness of the importance of planning ahead for decision making in later years and rights and obligations in relation to enduring instruments.	DPAC, DoJ
Recognising, responding, and preventing the abuse of older Tasmanians.	5	Raising awareness: Promote a whole-of-community response in recognising, responding to, and preventing elder abuse through state-wide awareness activities including on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.	DPAC
	6	Raising awareness: Explore new and existing initiatives that focus on younger people, raising awareness of abuse, promoting intergenerational value and the harm of stigmatising language and attitudes.	DPAC
	7	Raising awareness: Increase awareness and develop responses that recognise that older Tasmanians may experience abuse in different ways (including cultural and language differences), and experience additional forms of discrimination, making them more vulnerable.	DPAC

Focus Area	No#	Action	Lead Agency
Recognising, responding, and preventing the abuse of older Tasmanians.	8	Raising awareness: Work with intergovernmental partners to review government standards for language in communication materials and policies around elder abuse.	DPAC
	9	Preventing and Responding: Strengthen the capability of services and staff that directly interact with older Tasmanians to recognise, respond to, and prevent abuse.	DPAC
	10	Preventing and Responding: The Department of Health will develop a departmental policy on the abuse of older Tasmanians and support this with the delivery of clinical education.	DoH
	11	Preventing and Responding: Explore further opportunities to support frontline Tasmanian Government staff with awareness and information around referral pathways.	DPAC
	12	Preventing and Responding: Engage and educate services and businesses interfacing with older Tasmanians so they can recognise the underlying drivers of the abuse and respond to and prevent the abuse of older Tasmanians.	DPAC
	13	Safeguarding: Strengthen existing and develop new initiatives to safeguard older Tasmanians against abuse.	DPAC, DoJ
	14	Safeguarding: Promote the improved safeguards to Tasmania's communities with a focus on empowering community members to recognise, respond to and prevent abuse, and to counteract its underlying drivers.	DoJ

We feel valued and respected - actions

Addressing ageism and fostering lifelong respect

Action 1: Develop and deliver an ageism awareness campaign.

Following on from the success of the Tasmanian elder abuse awareness campaign *‘It’s OK to ask the question’*, consideration will be given to the development of an ageism awareness campaign across multiple mediums and target audiences.

DPAC will work with the Governance Group and COTA Tas to develop campaign strategies and deliver them over the five years of the Plan.

Timeframe: short to medium-term

Action 2: Develop an Age Friendly Language guide.

An Age-friendly language guide will be developed and available on the DPAC website for use by Tasmanian Government agencies, local government, community organisations, businesses, media, volunteer organisations and the wider community. The guide will contribute to a cultural change in how we view the ageing process.

Timeframe: medium-term

Advancing older Tasmanians’ rights

Action 3: Raise community awareness about supporting, respecting, and valuing older Tasmanians’ decisions, and their legal and ethical rights to self-determination.

DPAC and DoJ will work with key partners and the Governance Group to design and deliver initiatives that are tailored to the needs of specific audiences.

Timeframe: short-term

Action 4: Raise awareness of the importance of planning ahead for decision making in later years and rights and obligations in relation to enduring instruments.

DPAC will work with the Older Tasmanians Governance Group to ensure older Tasmanians have access to materials, resources and information about individual advocacy and legal representation that support informed decision-making on all aspects of their life.

Timeframe: short-term

Recognising, responding, and preventing the abuse of older Tasmanians

Action 5: Promote a whole-of-community response in recognising, responding to, and preventing elder abuse through state-wide awareness activities including on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

DPAC will work with COTA Tas and other key stakeholders to continue state-wide awareness activities including on World Elder Abuse Awareness Day.

This may include exploring opportunities with sectors such as Neighbourhood Houses, Local Government Association Tasmania (LGAT) and the Tasmanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (TCCI) to:

- a) promote and raise the awareness of abuse of older Tasmanians, the drivers, how to prevent it and how to respond appropriately when encountering it.
- b) support community services to provide awareness of service availability to older Tasmanians.

Timeframe: short-term

Action 6: Explore new and existing initiatives that focus on younger people, raising awareness of abuse, promoting intergenerational value and the harm of stigmatising language and attitudes.

DPAC will work with COTA Tas and other key stakeholders to consider how new and existing initiatives may better focus on young people to positively shift their understanding of abuse and the harm of stigmatising language and attitudes and increase the sense of intergenerational value.

Timeframe: short to medium-term



Action 7: Increase awareness and develop responses that recognise that older Tasmanians may experience abuse in different ways (including cultural and language differences), and experience additional forms of discrimination, making them more vulnerable.

Support Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and non-indigenous Tasmanian communities to self-determine how best to raise awareness in their communities, including needs and education materials.

Timeframe: short to medium-term

Action 8: Work with intergovernmental partners to review government standards for language in communication materials and policies around elder abuse.

DPAC will liaise with Tasmanian Government agencies to refresh policies and resources that guide language and behaviour towards the prevention of abuse.

Timeframe: short to medium-term



Action 9: Strengthen the capability of services and staff that directly interact with older Tasmanians to recognise, respond to, and prevent abuse.

DPAC will work with the Governance Group to design and develop proposals for information, education and training initiatives designed to strengthen the capability of Tasmanians to recognise, respond to and prevent abuse across a wide range of frontline services regularly interacting with older Tasmanians.

Timeframe: medium-term

Action 10: The Department of Health will develop a departmental policy on the abuse of older Tasmanians and support this with the delivery of clinical education.

In line with *Lifelong Respect: Tasmania's Strategy to end the abuse of older people 2023–2029*, DoH will work with stakeholders to develop a departmental policy on the abuse of older Tasmanians which will be supported with the delivery of clinical education.

Timeframe: short-term

Action 11: Explore further opportunities to support frontline Tasmanian Government staff with awareness, and information around referral pathways.

DPAC will liaise across the Tasmanian State Service and the Governance Group to explore further opportunities to boost awareness raising and referral responses.

Timeframe: medium-term

Action 12: Engage and educate services and businesses interfacing with older Tasmanians so they can recognise the underlying drivers of the abuse and respond to and prevent the abuse of older Tasmanians.

DPAC will work with the Governance Group to develop proposals for information, education and training initiatives that strengthen the capability of Tasmanians to recognise, respond to and prevent abuse across a wide range of businesses and services that may encounter older Tasmanians.

Timeframe: medium-term

Action 13: Strengthen existing and develop new initiatives to safeguard older Tasmanians against abuse.

DPAC, with support from DoJ, will map what initiatives are already in place to safeguard older Tasmanians against abuse and explore ways to share relevant findings.

DoJ will continue to progress initiatives to safeguard all older Tasmanians against abuse.

DPAC and DoJ will continue to support current community education for communities and targeted professionals about planning for the future, including how to support older Tasmanians to manage family expectations.

Timeframe: short to medium-term

Action 14: Promote the improved safeguards to Tasmania’s communities with a focus on empowering community members to recognise, respond to and prevent abuse, and to counteract its underlying drivers.

Ensure that any resources developed include culturally appropriate materials and specific resources for Aboriginal Tasmanians, culturally and linguistically diverse Tasmanians, LGBTIQ+ Tasmanians and Tasmanians living with disability.

Timeframe: ongoing

We are connected and engaged

This priority focusses on strengthening and expanding social connections for all older Tasmanians.

This includes through enhancing digital literacy to expand opportunities to participate in social, cultural and civic and learning activities, as well as enable access to information and services.

It also includes expanding empowerment and financial security through continued participation in the labour force for those who would like to.

This priority addresses critical cultural change by encouraging age-friendly environments that make participation in social, economic and learning easier.

Creating cultural change will also be achieved by encouraging intergenerational understanding and engagement to promote wellbeing for all Tasmanians.

Outcomes and focus areas

Our outcomes	Older Tasmanians feel their potential is nurtured and harnessed to contribute and achieve.		
Our focus areas	Social connection, cultural, civic and active participation.	Education and learning.	Economic participation.

We are connected and engaged - actions summary

Focus Area	No #	Action	Lead Agency
Social connection, cultural, civic, and active participation	15	Explore opportunities to strengthen Tasmania's Age Friendly environment.	DPAC
	16	Encourage and support intergenerational programs to foster better understanding and relationships between generations.	DPAC
	17	Trial a Ticket to Wellbeing program for the health and wellbeing of older Tasmanians.	DSG
	18	Expand services to increase social engagement activities for clients of Older Persons Mental Health Services, particularly clients who are socially isolated.	DoH
Education and learning	19	Improve the digital literacy of older Tasmanians.	DPAC
Economic participation	20	Evaluate the Mature Aged Workers Program to inform future supports for older Tasmanians who wish to remain engaged in the workforce.	DPAC
	21	The Tasmanian State Service will nurture and harness the skills and experience of our older workforce by exploring further initiatives that enhance their retention.	DPAC/SSMO

We are connected and engaged - actions

Social connection, cultural, civic, and active participation

Action 15: Explore opportunities to strengthen Tasmania's Age-Friendly environment.

DPAC will map existing initiatives across the Tasmanian State Service targeted at creating liveable communities with a focus on work undertaken by DSG.

Timeframe: short to medium-term

Action 16: Encourage and support intergenerational programs to foster better understanding and relationships between generations.

DPAC will continue to support COTA Tas to deliver intergenerational opportunities through initiatives such as Seniors Week and community connection programs.

DPAC will liaise across the Tasmanian State Service, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and with the Governance Group to design and deliver new opportunities to embed intergenerational initiatives across social and cultural activities, volunteering opportunities, within the education curriculum and through employment and training.

Timeframe: short to medium-term

Action 17: Trial a Ticket to Wellbeing program for the health and wellbeing of older Tasmanians.

The new *Ticket to Wellbeing* program for seniors will be based on the successful *Ticket to Play* voucher system that has been successful in encouraging children and young people to be active and participate in community life.

Two vouchers worth up to \$100 each will be available to those listed on a Services Australia Health Care or Pensioner Concession Card. This will provide real savings and help older Tasmanians stay active and engaged in their communities.

Timeframe: short-term



Action 18: Expand services to increase social engagement activities for clients of Older Persons Mental Health Services, particularly clients who are socially isolated.

The Older Persons Mental Health Services (OPMHS) will enable clients to maximise their mental health and wellbeing by expanding opportunities to connect with social activities. For example, a new Operational Service Model (OSM) is being developed for the Roy Fagan Day Centre (RFDC) as part of the ongoing reform implementation in OPMHS. The OSM incorporates programs such as the Men’s Bus Trip and the Men’s Shed collaboration tailored for this client group.

The RFDC is a program designed to develop, maintain, or support independent living and social interaction and reduce isolation and loneliness.

Timeframe: short-term

Education and learning

Action 19: Improve the digital literacy of older Tasmanians.

DPAC will partner with COTA Tas to develop and deliver digital inclusion initiatives for older Tasmanians.

This will include implementing a digital inclusion peer worker model of one-on-one support for older Tasmanians.

Timeframe: short-term

Economic participation

Action 20: Evaluate the Mature Age Workers Program to inform future supports for older Tasmanians who wish to remain engaged in the workforce.

DPAC will liaise with the Governance Group to review and refresh initiatives to break down barriers between older job seekers and employers in recruitment and retention in the labour force.

Timeframe: medium-term

Action 21: The Tasmanian State Service will nurture and harness the skills and experience of our older employees by exploring further initiatives that enhance the benefit of a multigenerational workforce.

The Tasmanian State Service is one of the State’s largest employers and values the skills, knowledge, and experience of older employees. SSMO within DPAC will review current strategies to ensure Tasmania’s older workforce is valued.

Timeframe: short-term

We are enabled and supported

This priority focuses on developing accessible and appropriate services for older Tasmanians, regardless of the range and complexity of their needs. It builds on actions in the previous themes.

It also focuses on key service areas identified by older Tasmanians including independent living with or without the need for aged care supports, mental health and preventative healthcare.

Outcomes and focus areas

Our outcomes	Older Tasmanians feel they are recognised, and their needs are met.	
Our focus areas	Healthcare, mental health and wellbeing.	Housing, transport, cost of living.

We are enabled and supported - actions summary

Focus Area	No#	Action	Lead Agency
Healthcare, mental health and wellbeing	22	Continue to monitor and respond to Australia's Aged Care Reforms.	DPAC
	23	Implement peer workers into Older Persons Mental Health Services, including in community teams.	DoH
	24	Continue addressing the challenges of frailty and improve patient outcomes through Tasmania's Frailty Network.	DoH
Housing, transport and cost-of-living	25	Deliver more accessible dwellings that enable older Tasmanians to age in place.	Homes Tas
	26	Help Tasmanians on low incomes with 2,000 more No Interest Loans available each year and ongoing funding to the Energy Saver Subsidy.	DPAC/ DSG
	27	Half price bus and ferry fares.	DSG

We are enabled - actions

Healthcare, mental health and wellbeing

Action 22: Continue to monitor and respond to Australia's Aged Care Reforms.

This action will ensure Tasmanians are enabled and supported to age well at home and within residential care through complementary supports.

Timeframe: ongoing

Action 23: Implement peer workers into Older Persons Mental Health Services, including in community teams.

Under this action, DoH will implement peer workers into the Department's Older Persons Mental Health Services (OPMHS), which provides care to older adults with severe and complex mental health problems. The role of new Peer Carer Workers will be to maintain connected relationships with family and friends and be a point of contact and source of information and support for families and friends.

Peer workers use the skills and knowledge acquired from their own lived experience of mental illness to support other people currently accessing mental health services. These workers therefore play an important role in building recovery-oriented approaches to care, provide meaningful support to people by modelling positive outcomes, and are integral to contemporary practice in mental health care.

Timeframe: short-term

Action 24: Continue addressing the challenges of frailty and improve patient outcomes through Tasmania's Frailty Network.

The Tasmanian Frailty Network (the Network) is a multidisciplinary group focussed on supporting the integration of frailty-aware care across the care continuum in Tasmania. The Network comprises representatives from the aged care sector and DoH.

The Network provides education and advice, whilst supporting research and quality improvement strategies that aim to improve the care of persons with frailty. In order to address the challenge of frailty and its impact on health outcomes for older Tasmanians, through the Network, DoH will continue to support the clinical led statewide integration of best practice models of frailty assessment and care.

Timeframe: short-term

Housing, transport, cost-of-living

Action 25: Deliver more accessible dwellings that enable older Tasmanians to age in place.

The *Tasmanian Housing Strategy: Action Plan 2023-2027* acknowledges that older Tasmanians can be particularly vulnerable to homelessness.

To enable older Tasmanians to age in place, Homes Tasmania will deliver more two-bedroom dwellings that are accessible and adaptable. These homes are counted towards the Government's commitment of 10,000 more social and affordable homes by 2032. Progress towards this commitment is reported on Homes Tasmania's Dashboard.

Timeframe: short to medium-term

Action 26: Help Tasmanians on low incomes with 2,000 more No Interest Loans available each year and ongoing funding to the Energy Saver Subsidy.

The Tasmanian Government will work with the No Interest Loans Scheme Network of Tasmania (NILS Tasmania) towards offering 2,000 more loans per year to Tasmanians by 2026-27. Funding to 2027-28 will be provided to NILS to continue to fund the Energy Saver Subsidy, which offers a 50 per cent subsidy on the cost of an energy-efficient appliance, such as a fridge, freezer, or washing machine when combined with a NILS loan.

Timeframe: short to medium-term

Action 27: Half price bus and ferry fares.

The Tasmanian Government is halving the cost of general access buses and ferries across all fare types: adult, concession, and students, delivering thousands of dollars daily in immediate relief to Tasmanians.

Half price fares will be implemented from 1 June 2024 until 30 June 2025, connecting Tasmanians right across the State.

Timeframe: short-term



Governance

Community-led governance

A community-led Governance Group will be established to monitor and support the implementation of the Plan and advise on new and emerging issues.

Establishing the Governance Group will be one of the initial actions undertaken by DPAC and will involve consultation with COTA Tas, other SEAPAC members and other members of the Older Tasmanians Community Reference Group who supported the development of this Plan.

This will ensure the voices of older Tasmanians continue to inform and drive the Tasmanian Government's priorities for a respectful, age-friendly island where older Tasmanians are connected, supported, and valued.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We need to maintain a strong understanding of our older populations. This means we need ongoing meaningful data on who older Tasmanians are and the impacts of policies and programs designed to enable ageing well. This includes intersectional data on older Tasmanians – by sex, gender, culture and ethnicity, disability, and key needs.

DPAC is leading the development of Tasmania’s Wellbeing Framework which will provide a common language and coordinated way for the Tasmanian Government and communities to measure, assess, and prioritise policies and interventions.

The Wellbeing Framework aims to enhance the quality of life of Tasmanians and reduce inequities.

This will include monitoring the longitudinal wellbeing of older Tasmanians.

On-going Consultation

Given the diversity and changing nature of Tasmania’s older population, it is critical for the Tasmanian Government to remain informed about older Tasmanians’ experiences through many mechanisms.

The Tasmanian Government will work with COTA Tas as Tasmania’s peak body representing the concerns of older Tasmanians, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and other key organisations that understand the diversity of our older population to develop and maintain ongoing mechanisms that understand emerging needs and ensure policies and programs remain relevant and agile to emerging issues and grounded in evidence-based practice.



Monitoring and Reporting

DPAC will liaise with Tasmanian Government Agencies and the Older Tasmanians Governance Group to develop an evaluation framework that monitors the progress of actions.

DPAC will liaise with the Older Tasmanians Governance Group to review priorities to ensure actions remain relevant to the emerging needs of older Tasmanians.

There will be an interim and final report on progress against the actions and outcomes.

“[We’re] treated with respect in the community, don’t feel treated differently due to age. Younger generations look after old folk.” HEAR report participant

Strategic Alignment

Globally

This Plan aligns with the United Nations *Decade of Healthy Ageing 2021–2030* which sets out the vision ‘for a world in which all people can live long and healthy lives.’ WHO is leading the implementation of this vision through a focus on age-friendly environments, combatting ageism and integrated and long-term care for older people.

Nationally and in Tasmania

This Plan focuses on addressing priorities identified by older Tasmanians to support them to age well. However, there is a wide range of strategic policies and initiatives that impact on the lives and trajectories of older Tasmanians, due to other elements of their personal and family identities, or more broadly, as service users and community members.

Tasmania's *Population Policy: Planning for our Future* addresses Tasmania's age-related demographic change.

Intersectional strategies that seek to improve and address issues in the lives of older Tasmanians include:

- *National Agreement on Closing the Gap* and the *Tasmanian Implementation Plan 2024-27*;
- *National Gender Equality Statement* and *Equal Means Equal: Tasmanian Women's Strategy 2022-2027*;
- *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031* and Tasmania's *Disability Strategy* (forthcoming);
- *Supporting Tasmanian Carers: Tasmanian Carer Action Plan 2021-25* and the *National Carer Strategy 2024-2034*;
- Tasmania's *Multicultural Action Plan* (forthcoming), and
- Tasmania's *LGBTIQA+ Action Plan* (forthcoming).

Other strategies and reforms directly impacting on older Tasmanians include:

- **Aged Care:** *Australian Government Aged Care Reform Road Map 2022-2025*.
- **Prevention and Addressing Elder Abuse:** *National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians 2019-2023* and *National Plan to End the Abuse and Mistreatment of Older People* (forthcoming), *Lifelong Respect: Tasmania's strategy to end the abuse of older people (Elder Abuse) 2023-2029*.
- **Lifelong learning and economic participation:** *26TEN Tasmania: Tasmania's strategy for adult literacy and numeracy 2016-2025*, *Tasmanian Veterans Employment Strategy 2023-2027* and the *Tasmanian Government Digital Inclusion Strategy* (forthcoming).
- **Health and wellbeing:** *Long-Term Plan for Healthcare in Tasmania 2040*, *Healthy Tasmania Five-Year Strategic Plan 2022-2026*, *Healthy Active Tasmania: Discussion Paper: 20-Year Preventative Health Strategy*, *Rethink 2020: Implementation Plan 2023-2024*, the *Health Literacy Action Plan 2019 – 2024*, and the *Tasmanian Volunteering Strategy and Action Plan* (forthcoming).
- **Housing, Cost of Living, Transport:** *Food Relief to Food Resilience: Tasmanian Food Security Strategy 2021-2024 and Action Plan 2023-2025*, and the *Tasmanian Housing Strategy 2023-2043*.



Endnotes

Comments from older Tasmanians were sourced from the COTA Tasmania 'Healthy, Engaged and Resilient' Active Ageing Consultation – Supplementary Data Report 2022.

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- iv Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Census of Population and Housing, 2016 and 2021 - Change in Ancestry, Tasmania*.
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- vi Health Data, Primary Health Tasmania - accessed at: <https://www.primaryhealthtas.com.au/what-we-do/understanding-tasmanias-health-needs/health-data/#section-2>
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- x Population Dashboard, *Population Projections, State Overview 2023-2053*, Department of Treasury and Finance, Tasmania. - accessed at: <https://www.population.tas.gov.au/dashboard>
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- xiii Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2021, *National Elder Abuse Prevalence Study: Final Report*
- xiv World Health Organisation, *A Global Response to Elder Abuse and Neglect: Building Primary Health Care Capacity to Deal with the Problem Worldwide*. Geneva, Switzerland, 2008
- xv Tasmanian Government, *Lifelong Respect: Tasmania's strategy to end the abuse of older people (Elder Abuse) 2023-2029*
- xvi Australian Government, *National Plan to Respond to the Abuse of Older Australians (Elder Abuse) 2019-2023* (ag.gov.au)

