



# **POLICY FOR OLDER PEOPLE 2003**

## Policy for Older People

The Policy for Older People provides a framework and broad principles to guide the development of 'Positive Ageing' policies within the Kapiti Coast District Council that impact on, or have implications, for older people.

The Policy also aims to encourage opportunities for older people to participate in the community in the ways that they choose. By identifying barriers to participation and working with all sectors to develop actions to address these, the needs of older people can be balanced with the needs of younger and future generations.

The seven categories, links to the New Zealand Positive Ageing Strategy (NZPAS) listed in the attached Policy for Older People and potential local partnerships are as follows:

Access to Information: This was identified as a major issue for future consideration across all areas. While there is a significant amount of information in the community there appears to be a lack of knowledge on how to access it. As information is a key to ensuring people are informed about, and engage with, their community this is an important category. The Council has an obligation to ensure the community has access to its information and organisations such as the Disability Information and Equipment Centre – Kapiti (DIEC-K) and the Otaki and Kapiti Citizens Advice Bureau disseminate information to the local community.

This category takes account of the all the NZPAS principles and specifically Numbers: 1, 2, 9 and 10.

Advocacy: Health, Housing, Disability, Transport and Personal Choice issues are identified as areas that required ongoing or increased advocacy. The Council has role to act as an advocate for its community with a number of the issues identified currently part of ongoing work both within Council and with other agencies such as the Kapiti Community Health Group Trust (KCHGT), Sport Kapiti, DIEC-K and Greater Wellington. Community based agencies such as Age Concern and Grey Power have a role in bringing community concerns to Council.

This category takes account of the NZPAS principles Numbers: 1, 4, 7, 8 and 9.

Accessibility: Access to Health, Disability, Transport and Recreation services, both locally and regionally, are seen as issues. Much of this may be related to concerns regarding access to information

This category takes account of the NZPAS principles Numbers: 1, 2 and 9.

Support: Support services in the areas of Health, Housing and Disability were seen as key to allowing individuals to make choices especially related to staying in their own homes. Council is not an actual service provider but does have a role in maintaining relationships with agencies such as the KCHGT and DIEC-K.

This category takes account of the NZPAS principles Numbers: 1 and 9.

Safety: Health, Disability, Transport and Recreation were identified as having safety issues. These related to physical safety within the community (footpaths, roads) and in their own homes, perceptions of personal safety and the increasing safety precautions that are required in order for older people to be involved in all areas of community life. The Kapiti Safer Community Trust is currently undertaking a Community Safety Survey to gauge community perceptions of levels of safety. The Trust could be expected to take a lead in any response with Council and other agencies playing a support role. Physical safety relating to local roading and footpaths is the responsibility of Council.

This category takes account of the NZPAS principles Numbers: 1 and 9.

Planning: forward planning issues related to Health, Housing and Transport were identified. Having appropriate transport options and a good range of local health services would address concerns about decreasing mobility and the ability for older people to access current services. As most people wish to stay in their own homes planning needs to be done to provide appropriate housing options.

This category takes account of the NZPAS principles Numbers: 1 and 9.

Affordability: Concerns were expressed related to the affordability to the individual of Health services and Housing.

This category takes account of the NZPAS principles Numbers: 1 and 9.

## **Philosophy and Values**

The Kapiti Coast District Council's policy adopts the New Zealand Positive Ageing Principles. This promotes the value and participation of older people in the community and recognises the skills, knowledge and experience that they have to contribute to our society.

The concept of 'Positive Ageing' includes all aspects of wellbeing – social, economic, environmental and cultural plus the promotion of positive attitudes to ageing. The concept is aligned to the ability to age in place in a healthy life style.

The Kapiti Coast District Council recognises that the population is ageing and that this will have implications for the Kapiti Coast District.

## **Mission Statement**

For the Kapiti Coast to be a community that values the contribution and involvement of the older people within the district and is a great place for them to live.

### **Aims**

- To promote the concepts of 'Positive Ageing' within the Kapiti Coast District and encourage all ages to recognise these
- To especially promote the following New Zealand Positive Ageing Principles
  - 1 Reflect positive attitudes to older people

- 2 Affirm the values and strengthen the capabilities of older Maori and their whanau
  - 3 Recognise the diversity and strengthen the capabilities of older Pacific people
- To encourage older people to participate in the Kapiti Coast District community
  - To work in a cooperative and collaborative way with other agencies to provide programmes that benefit all older people
  - To make sure that all older people have access to the information and resources required to meet their current and future needs in the areas of:
    - health, safety and wellbeing
    - physical environment
    - entertainment and recreation
    - education and training
    - employment and community involvement
    - family, neighbourhood, community networking
  - To ensure that older people are able to live and move safely and in a secure environment
  - To create opportunities for older people to access to and input into the decision making process

## **Demographic Profile**

The 2001 census data shows that the Kapiti Coast District population comprises 22.3% of people over the age of 65 years in comparison to 12.1% nationally, 11.1% in Wellington Region and 6.9% in Porirua City. This is a significant proportion of the Kapiti Coast District population and there are a number of implications.

## **Implications of the ageing population**

New Zealand has an ageing population as birth and migration levels are no longer sufficient to offset the large numbers of people entering the older age groups. The ageing of New Zealand's population is expected to accelerate as life expectancy continues to improve and the large baby-boom generation advances through the mid-age groups and into old age (Statistics New Zealand).

As noted in the paper 'Population Ageing in New Zealand' (Mansoor Khawaja, 1999) *The ageing process is neither a new demographic phenomenon nor is it unique to New Zealand. In fact, population ageing in New Zealand, as in other developed countries, began over a century ago with the onset of transition in fertility from relatively large to relatively small families.*

*At the regional and local levels there are planning implications for health related issues, for housing and accommodation, and for the provision of aged-care, transport, and community support services.*

*While the elderly are highly urbanised significantly more elderly live in secondary and minor urban areas than the general population - 22 percent versus 16 percent. Therefore, policy solutions developed for larger urban centres may not be suitable for smaller centres or rural areas. For example, there are fewer public transport options available in smaller areas compared to the larger urban areas, and in some rural areas there may be none. Consequently services such as meals on wheels, or home help may be more difficult and more costly to provide in rural and remote areas (McKenzie, 1999).*

These concerns apply to the Kapiti Coast District.

### **Links with other policies**

The Policy for Older People forms an integral part of the Kapiti Coast District Council Social Policy Framework and the principles established apply equally to the Policy for Older People.

These are:

1. responding to the needs of our communities
2. creating consultative opportunities
3. honouring our obligation under the Treaty of Waitangi
4. achieving equity in all our actions
5. striving to ensure environmentally sustainable outcomes in all areas of operation

### **New Zealand Disability Strategy**

The New Zealand Disability Strategy (April 2001) presents a long-term plan for changing New Zealand from a disabling to an inclusive society. It was developed in consultation with disabled people and the wider disability sector.

Underpinning the Strategy is a vision of a fully inclusive society. It provides a framework, including fifteen objectives, to ensure that disabled people are considered before making decisions.

The Kapiti Coast District Council acknowledges New Zealand Disability Strategy and the following statement from the Strategy: “A society that highly values the lives and continually enhances our full participation”.

### **New Zealand Positive Ageing Principles:**

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, whanau 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 Maori and their whanau
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

### **Application**

Underpinning this policy is the recognition that the Kapiti Coast District Council can only fulfill its goals by cooperating, consulting and coordinating with residents, commercial and voluntary sectors and central government.

The Kapiti Coast District Council has a role in advocating for the development and maintenance of local services for older people.

### **Implementation of the Policy Older People**

A strategy for the implementation of the Policy for Older People will be developed and reviewed annually and considered for inclusion in the Annual / Community Plan.

### **Reference Group**

The Reference Group, supported by Council staff, will develop the annual Strategy for Implementation, review progress and report annually to Council.

This group, to meet up to three times a year, will include representatives from iwi, Age Concern Kapiti Coast, Kapiti Coast Grey Power, the disability and health sectors, the retirement sector and the Kapiti Coast District Council.