Yarra Plenty Regional Library

Older Adults

Strategic Framework

2011 - 2016

Enriching older adults' lives

May you live all the days of your life

Jonathan Swift (1667 – 1745)

Executive Summary

The vision for this strategy is to improve the quality of life of older adults by providing library services that enrich and engage them. The purpose is to identify trends, examine current library service provision, identify stakeholders and establish key projects that will achieve our goals. These will be facilitated by:
- key stakeholders and strategic partnerships
- community development
- research and development of services and facilities
- marketing
- staffing resources and training.

To ensure that library services are sustainable and relevant into the future we will work towards understanding the needs of an ageing population and provide resources and programs that meet those needs. To achieve our vision *Enriching older adults' lives* we have identified 5 goals to achieve in the next 5 years. These goals are:

1. Fostering and providing opportunities to engage in lifelong learning
2. Meeting needs of older readers including provision of adaptive technologies
3. Providing information resources for healthy ageing
4. Engaging older people through volunteering, programs and activities
5. Providing outreach services through Home Library Services, nursing homes and other assisted living accommodation.

These goals will be achieved by the completion of 11 projects over the next 5 years:

Project 1 – Get Connected - Computer and Internet classes: Develop a suite of classes that can be delivered in groups or individually at branches.

Project 2 – Next Chapters Program: Develop a program of events that can be packaged with keynote speakers and run at each branch.

Project 3 – Community Reads for Older Adults - Conduct a monthly book chat and/ or large print book club at each branch designed for seniors.

Project 4 – Adaptive technology at each branch: Ensure the availability of adaptive technology, including large print library signage, publicity material, technology for low vision and hearing aid loops in meeting rooms.

Project 5 – Website features for Older Adults -Lists on BiblioCommons: Add one list per week that highlights material that would be of interest to older people.

Project 6 – Community service providers' information sessions for caregivers: Develop a program that provides community information for caregivers with speakers, notes and handouts that can be delivered at branches.

Project 7 – Partner with City of Whittlesea's Seniors Resource Centre/Virtual Village Concept: Be an active partner in the Whittlesea Community Futures Ageing Cluster plan.

Project 8 – Seniors' booth: Pilot at one branch the establishment of a booth as a one stop solution for information dissemination, awareness, promotion, community engagement, and outreach and to advocate for ageing communities throughout the regions

Project 9 – Volunteers in branches: Pilot a program at one branch to have a volunteer Meet and Greet contact person.

Project 10 - Develop and enhance Words on Wheels: Expand this valued and popular program to include NESB participants and deliver to more sites by recruiting volunteers with relevant language skills to develop kits and deliver the programs.

Project 11 - Home Library Services for NESB seniors: Develop a read aloud program for NESB seniors who are housebound, in care or who are care givers and who have low literacy in their first language.

Our success will be measured by the actions outlined in this strategic framework. These will all be achieved with the support of staff, volunteers, partnerships with local councils and other key stakeholders and community member contributions.

Enriching older adults' lives

1.   Introduction

Retirees and older adults' have traditionally been an important target market for public libraries and some aspects of service provision are geared quite well to this cohort. There is however a growing awareness of the need to prepare for rapidly increasing numbers of older people. Australia faces an imminent 'age wave' as the baby boomer generation (born 1946 – 1965) move through their life cycle and reach retirement age. The clock is ticking rapidly. In 2006, the leading edge baby boomers turned 60 and in 2011, they turn 65. This heralds a significant change for public libraries, both in demand for services and also in the style of services we promote to older adults. Far from being a homogenous group, the older adults of the future will be a diverse range of library clients with a great variety of needs and priorities. More significant is the anticipated increase in the number of people over 85, and the need to future proof library services for frail aged and housebound community members. (Mylee Joseph – Next Chapters: public libraries for older adults' conference 2009)

Traditionally, library services to the aged have included large print, talking books and home library services. However, the ageing of the baby boomers may herald much higher expectations and demands of library services. Therefore, the impact of a greatly increased proportion of older people in local communities will be an important consideration in library planning, facility design, resourcing, marketing strategies, the development of strategic partnerships and staffing.

This framework document seeks to identify trends, examine current library service provision, identify stakeholders and make recommendations for actions within the Yarra Plenty Regional Library. As the library begins to plan for the shift in the proportions of older patrons there are a variety of issues to be considered.

These include:

- key stakeholders and strategic partnerships
- community development
- research and development of services and facilities
- marketing
- staffing and staff training.

2.   Background

YPRL provides public library services on behalf of the Cities of Banyule and Whittlesea and the Shire of Nillumbik. Service delivery is provided through eight branch libraries located at Diamond Valley, Eltham, Ivanhoe, Rosanna, Watsonia, Lalor, Mill Park and Thomastown. A mobile library services more remote locations across the region as well as places where the community is less likely to access a branch library. A mobile outreach vehicle visits aged and residential care facilities, creating opportunities for residents unable to visit a library independently. Library volunteers visit socially isolated people in their homes, selecting, delivering and collecting library material on their behalf.

3. Links to other Strategic Planning documents

3.1 YPRL Strategic Plan 2008 - 12

The Older Adults' Strategic Framework gains strength from being integrated with other strategic frameworks, business plans and resource plans; and the delivery of older adult activities will be an important means of achieving goals set out for the organisation in the Strategic Plan 2008 – 2012.

Libraries building community capacity:

- Partnering with other agencies to deliver wider agendas and developing co-operative arrangements that will improve and expand services to the community

- Focusing and balancing services according to social justice precept

- Bridging the digital divide and offering equitable access for new technologies

- Identifying opportunities to strengthen communities and recognise leverage in integrated activities

Libraries as community hubs

- Building community connections, facilitating learning opportunities and providing access to informational, educational and recreational resources

Skilled and confident library staff

- Ensuring library staff are comfortable with new ways of engaging library patrons and helping them find information, gather knowledge and create content

3.2 Member Councils' Ageing Strategies

- ❖ Banyule City Council: active ageing … in Banyule Policy & Strategic Plan.
  "Banyule will be a place which celebrates its ageing community, values residents as they grow older and encourages the ongoing community contribution of all older residents."

  Council aims to promote and support the capacity for community participation; the ability to feel safe at home and when out and about; and informed about relevant services, activities and issues. Council will facilitate and extend ongoing planning and coordination of agencies covering complementary areas affecting older people – housing, transport, health, care and support, education, training, recreation, arts and culture, and information, partnering with such organizations as Yarra Plenty Regional Library.

- ❖ City of Whittlesea: Hume Whittlesea PCP – Primary Care Partnership Strategic Plan 2010-2012
  Strategic outcome – We will ensure there are opportunities for life-long learning
  Community plan actions - Support programs that work to improve education and learning outcomes
  Measures - Number of people visiting libraries (including physical and virtual visits) increases and numbers of borrowings increased

- ❖ Shire of Nillumbik:
  The Goal is to ensure that older people are included in community life. This includes initiatives such as Nillumbik's Transport Connections partnership which is piloting a

new door-to-door community transport service for people who live in the rural north east of the Shire who are unable to drive due to frailty or disability; and the *Living well and ageing even better in Nillumbik* calendar of events.

4.   Framework Methodology and Scope

In 2005 the Library Board adopted the Aged Persons' Strategic Framework. This was one of a suite of guiding documents designed to inform and steer the delivery of library programs, services and activities.

In the time since the library's approach to service provision for older adults has developed considerably. There is a far greater awareness of the impact on services of the 'baby boom' generation and recognition that this may herald much higher expectations and demands of library services. As well, there is a better understanding of population demographics and the anticipated increased proportion of older people in local communities.

Such knowledge has influenced not simply the new name of the revised strategy (from 'Aged Persons' to 'Older Adults'), it has also meant a broadening of focus to include active, empowered "younger old" people.

Research for the development of the Framework began in late 2010. This took the form of literature searches and finding examples of national and international library policy and best practice. *Conference Proceedings from the Next Chapters: Public Libraries for Older Adults in Australia and New Zealand* held in 2009 and the *2010 Australasian Retreat for Advanced Volunteer Management* have informed this strategy.

Surveys were also conducted, seeking information about how older adults structure their day, what services they value most from the library and what they would like to see added or changed. Respondents were asked to imagine their library "in an ideal world" and describe the kinds of services, programs and activities that would be available. Surveys were developed for each of the following groups:

- Individual community members, with provision in the survey to be identified by gender and age
- Residential aged care facilities across the three member municipalities
- Banyule, Whittlesea and Nillumbik Council staff, including Managers and Supervisors in health and aged care teams, HACC workers and Planned Activity Group Co-ordinators
- Community based agencies operating in the three member municipalities

In all, approximately 500 surveys were returned, providing a rich source of primary information.

The major findings from the surveys were:

1. The majority of respondents were actively engaged in the community and were regular library users.

2. Many older adults were committed to volunteering, grandchild minding, looking after an aged parent, U3A, writing memoirs etc.

3. Key issues include financial concerns, active mind/body, technology gaps, transport for older borrowers, aged care options etc.

4. When asked what a dream library looked like, there were many requests for a coffee shop, comfortable arm chairs, quiet room, out of print books access, no charge for ILL, more attractive use of outdoor areas with gardens, native plants etc, information booth for seniors manned by friendly volunteers, more seniors community groups, increased range of large print material, musical events.

At the same time, consultation interviews were conducted with staff from key service providers – mainly residential aged care facilities and each of the Councils, as well as locally based community agencies.

Staff consultation consisted of a workshop that explored the issues of population changes and the effects of the baby-boomer 'age-wave' and the adequacy of current service delivery. Staff were also asked to reflect on their vision for a 'library of the future' that caters for the needs of older adults.

All of the material gathered through the surveys, interviews and staff workshop have been considered in this revised framework document.

5.   Review of Aged Persons' Strategic Framework 2005 -2009

The goals and priorities of the Framework were:

1. To provide quality library services to older people in libraries.
    This is being achieved by:
    - Provision of books, large print, audio books, CDs, DVDs, newspapers, magazines
    - Regular Reminiscence programs
    - Local history and genealogy groups
    - Reading clubs, book discussion groups
    - Internet training
    - Seniors Week events
    - Techno playgroups

2. To provide quality services to older NESB people.
    This is being achieved by:
    - Hosting Seniors groups that attract many people from different cultures
    - Conducting Internet classes, food festivals and new book launches in community languages
    - Collections in community languages are available at many branches

3. To provide quality services to people in supported living accommodation.
    This is being achieved by:
    - Outreach vehicle delivers library materials to over 30 assisted living facilities on a 3 week cycle
    - Library staff visit and talk about new books, authors, poetry and short stories
    - Volunteers deliver to facilities not visited by the outreach vehicle
    - Volunteers deliver interactive storytelling sessions through the Words On Wheels (WOW) program

4. To provide quality library services to housebound people.
    This is being achieved by:
    - Developing the Home Library Service so that volunteers select materials as well as deliver to people who are housebound.

6.   Environmental Scan

6.1   Demographics

Australia faces a pronounced ageing of its population over the next forty years. Around 9% of the population (some 2 million people) is aged 70 years or older. This is expected to rise to 13% by 2021 and to 20% (around 5.7 million people) in 2051, roughly double the present proportion. The proportion of the 'oldest old' will increase even more. People aged 80 years and over currently make up around 4% of the population and this proportion is expected to increase to 10% by 2051. These changes are caused by two factors: longer life expectancy and decreasing birth rates. It is important that the library plans its service delivery for this increasingly important demographic. (Next Chapters: Public Libraries for Older Adults in Australia and New Zealand 2009).

The age make-up of Victoria's population is gradually changing. While the population as a whole will continue to grow over the decades to come, growth in the number of older Victorians will outpace it. The number of Victorians aged over 60 years is expected to grow from one million in 2010 (19% of the population) to 1.4 million in 2020 (23% of the population) to 2.4 million in 2050 (29%).

The proportion of older people living alone and at increased risk of social isolation will also grow markedly. More women in our community will be very old and living alone; more men and women will have some level of disability. At the same time there will be a smaller working-age population to deliver the higher levels of support needed. Today, there are five working Victorians for each Victorian over 65 years. By 2050, this is projected to fall to just over two and a half working Victorians for each Victorian over 65 years.

Over 30 % of older Victorians come from a culturally and linguistically diverse background. Most are from post-war migrant communities (especially Greek and Italian backgrounds) and are older than later migration groups. Language needs are therefore significant: 40 % of people over 65 from a non-English speaking background speak English 'not well' or 'not at all'. Population groups with younger profiles, such as Indigenous Victorians, will require sensitive and culturally appropriate services. The time to prepare for these demographic challenges is now.

6.2 Challenges of ageing that impact on provision of library services

As people age they may move into supported living arrangements and aged care facilities, while others will remain in their own homes with support services like home care and Meals on Wheels supporting their independence. Frail age is characterised by higher dependency, increased disability and a greater need for support services to maintain independence and quality of life. The impact on the library will be an increased demand for many of the services currently provided for seniors and clients with disabilities; including home library services, book delivery, large print, technology for low vision, hearing aid loops in meeting rooms and talking books. The challenge of the digital divide will continue to be addressed by library services and activities.

Library services suitable for the active aged are quite diverse, while more dependent, frail aged clients will place greater demands almost exclusively on home library services. The volunteer model used by the library will ensure the sustainability of this service into the future.

Other impacts that will affect library services to older adults include the increase in the number of people with dementia and the number of people actively engaged in caring for a family member with some type of disability is likely to increase in proportion to the ageing

community. Many carers will also be part of the ageing cohort themselves and this may place some increased demands on the library, for example:

- disseminating community information about support groups and services
- providing information resources to support carers
- YPRL libraries may be well situated to provide venues for support group meetings
- housebound library services will continue to support carers
- online access to library services may be of great benefit to carers who are confined to their homes for much of the time

A number of older people in the community are primary carers raising their grandchildren. This family situation can arise for a variety of reasons including parental disability or death, imprisonment, substance abuse and child neglect. Additionally, as women return to the paid workforce within, on average, one year of having given birth, grandparents are often an essential component of the child-care 'mix' chosen by families.

7. Current Service Provision

Across the network, the library typically delivers the following services of particular interest to older patrons:

- Recreational reading - fiction, hobbies and interests
- Genealogy / family history resources
- Local history information
- Computer classes, reminiscence sessions, book groups, social get togethers
- Library services to housebound residents
- Library outreach services to residents of aged care facilities
- Reminiscence and engagement programs(WOW) to residents of aged care facilities
- Large print material
- Spoken word books
- Community language materials
- Newspapers and magazines
- Reader assistance - personalised assistance in locating information and resources, providing support to community members.
- Information - including Council information, health and legal information in plain English
- Community information - directories and databases highlighting services available in the local community, many of these are available online

In dealing with the changing ageing population, an increased demand for public library facilities, collections, technologies (including Daisy Players to people with vision impairment) and programs is anticipated. The library is already experiencing some pressure in key areas of service delivery to older clients.

8. Opportunities

Developing Communities

With a focus on accessible, equitable services, YPRL is ideally positioned to contribute to the development of social capital in local communities. For many older people, particularly those left single after the death of a partner, through divorce or by choice, the library staff may be vital points of human contact in an otherwise lonely week. For people on low

incomes, libraries provide access to information and resources that significantly improve their quality of life.

With almost 300 registered volunteers, there will be increased opportunities for their skills to be utilised in many different ways. YPRL has great opportunities with skilled volunteers and advocates and a high demand for its library services.

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities

Once retired, people from non-English-speaking countries are more likely to be dependent on government pensions or benefits. In general, people born overseas aged 55 and over are not healthier than Australian-born and people born overseas make less use of residential aged care facilities – a trend which cannot be entirely explained by the younger age structure of older overseas-born people in comparison to the Australian-born.

Members of the community who come from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds have particular needs which YPRL may struggle to address. For example, large print and audio books are available in some community languages; however, they can be more difficult to source.

Providing home library services to a variety of language groups may place particular strain on volunteer staff skill sets, while low literacy levels in their first language may also place CALD community members at a greater disadvantage. Whilst Nillumbik and Banyule home library users are predominantly from an Anglo Saxon background, 65% of our Whittlesea clients are from CALD backgrounds.

Findings from the Older Adults' Community Consultation conducted by YPRL in 2011 suggest that for people from CALD backgrounds, reading newspapers (English and LOTE) and photocopying were by far the most popular services provided, followed by access to computers and information about English conversation classes. Another finding of the survey was the importance placed on easy access to parking – clearly an issue for a cohort with diminishing physical mobility and visual acuity.

9.   Goals and priorities

Older people read more and are more frequent visitors to the library, with people over 65 visiting libraries five times more a year than younger people. Some of the key roles that libraries will fill in the life of older community members require particular attention. These include being centres of life-long learning, providing the technology required to "maintain a place in the wired world", providing resources to support healthy ageing, opportunities for volunteering and home library services for people who, because of their frailty, are no longer able to leave their homes.

9.1.   Fostering and providing opportunities to engage in lifelong learning

Lifelong learning makes a key contribution to the capacity to remain active and independent. Library programming includes book clubs, author talks and other presentations of interest to older people. As the trend for older people to enjoy better health and longer life expectancy continues, opportunities to engage in lifelong learning will be in great demand and consequently increase demand on library services and programs.

Project 1 – Get Connected Computer and Internet classes

Aim: Develop a suite of classes that can be delivered in groups or individually at branches.

Description: A set of 4 topics initially will be developed with class notes and handouts. They will cover the following: Where to from Here? – Retirement options and opportunities; Stay in Touch - set up and use social networking and Skype; the 'How To' of new generation technology; Computer Classes for Italian speakers.

Outcome: Individuals will be equipped with up-to-date skills and competencies and have the choice to work in later life or remain actively involved in the community.

Project 2 – Next Chapters Program

Aim: Develop a program of events that can be packaged with keynote speakers and run at each branch

Description: A program of events and activities for older adults in conjunction with delivery partners will be developed over the next 5 years with the following themes:

Health and Wellbeing
: Do You Take Care of a Person with a Memory Problem?
: Caregivers Workshop
: Stay Well – exercise and relaxation
: Introduction to Chair Yoga

Leisure and Recreation
: Chess and Scrabble Club
: Grandparents and Books - Story time
: Unfinished Craft Projects Club
: Afternoon at the Movies

Arts and Culture
: Writers Workshop
: Jazz Tribute Concert
: Language Exchange
: Learn Calligraphy

: Live Art (this is when artist come in and paint/draw/or create in the library whilst community watch and maybe sell the piece at the end of the day or period of development

Outcome: Packaged programs will reduce the resource requirements at branches while delivering quality programs that will provide stimulating and interesting programs.

9.2.   Meeting needs of older readers including provision of adaptive technologies

Older readers have a wide range of materials and formats to choose from at their local library. Fiction and non fiction titles are available in print, ebook format, large print, eaudio and cds as well as Daisy format for the visually impaired. Sourcing large print materials in languages other than English is an issue; however with the increasing availability of ebooks, fonts can be adjusted to suit individuals, thus providing much more variety for readers.

Project 3 – Community Reads for Older Adults

Aim: Conduct monthly Book chats and/ or Large Print book clubs at each branch designed for seniors.

Description: Book chats are informal discussions that do not rely on each participant having read the same book. Depending on demand this format may be preferred over a more formal format. Tea and coffee will be provided. Comfortable arm chairs (a request on page 7 for the ideal library

Outcome: Foster friendship and connection through reading and lessen the feeling of isolation therefore improving the health and wellbeing of our older adult community.

Project 4 – Adaptive technology at each branch

Aim: Ensure the availability of adaptive technology, including large print library signage, publicity material etc; technology for low vision; and hearing aid loops in meeting rooms

Description: Increasing vision impairment is often a characteristic of ageing and the demand for various adaptive technologies in libraries will increase. While this may be driven by a need to meet the needs of greater numbers of older clients, younger clients with vision impairment will also benefit from the services. Clients who experience reduced mobility due to strokes and other disabilities will also require adaptive technology. Adaptive technologies include:

- voice output
- screen enlargement software
- document reading software
- equipment to assist clients with a physical disability (e.g. modified keyboards for stroke victims)

Outcome: More inclusive library services and facilities.

9.3   Providing information resources for healthy ageing

There are many web pages targeted at older people offering information on library programs for seniors, reading lists and gateway links to external programs, healthy information, and leisure and travel news as well as government information. However older adults may not be aware of or have access to these services – we need to market and promote our services more widely and find ways of working with the community and umbrella groups who work

with older people to get the message across. Older adults traditionally use library resources more for recreational use than for health advice.

Project 5 – Website features for older adults

Aim: Add one list per week to Bibliocommons that highlights material that would be of interest to older people.

Description: Bibliocommons, the Library's discovery layer, offers the ability to create lists of titles on particular topics. People can then follow these lists and so be made aware of library resources and easily place holds on titles.

Outcome: Greater awareness of library resources by older people.

Project 6 – Community information sessions for caregivers

Aim: Develop a program that provides community information for caregivers with speakers, notes and handouts that can be delivered at branches.

Description: As part of the YPRL program of activities for older adults, community information sessions will be developed relating to the care of a person with reduced cognitive and memory function in relevant community languages as appropriate e.g. 'Do You Take Care of a Person with a Memory Problem?' and 'Caregivers Workshop'.

Outcome: More informed caregivers in the community, thus reducing stress and improving well being of carers. Increase access to information by providing a central point.

Project 7 – Partner with Whittlesea's Senior Resource Centre/Virtual village

Aim: Be an active partner in the Whittlesea Community Futures Ageing Cluster plan

Description: One of the key projects in the WCFAC Action Plan is to develop a "Virtual Village/senior resource centre concept as a one stop solution for information dissemination, awareness, promotion, community engagement, outreach and to advocate for ageing communities through extensive involvement of libraries …."

Outcome: More informed and connected older adults.

9.4   Engaging older people through volunteering, programs and activities

In semi or full retirement, older people have the time, energy and skills to participate in volunteering and recreational pursuits. It is anticipated that baby boomers will seek to contribute to their communities through volunteering. Volunteers provide a valuable resource and add value to library services and their roles are many and varied, ranging from branch support; home library delivery; tutoring; researching and storytelling in the WOW program; to teaching computer skills to seniors in their own homes.

Project 8 – Seniors' booth

Aim: At one branch pilot the establishment of a booth as a one stop solution for information dissemination, awareness, promotion, community engagement, and outreach and to advocate for ageing communities throughout the region.

Description: A Seniors booth would be set up in one branch, manned by a volunteer crew. The information contained will pertain to this demographic, including up to date and relevant

materials on aged care options, transport options, seniors groups in the municipality and medical access.

Outcome: Targeted easy to find information for older adults.

Project 9 – Volunteers in branches

Aim: Pilot a program at one branch to have volunteer Meet and Greet contact person

Description: Meet and Greet volunteers in branches to act as a first point of contact (in the recently conducted survey, the comment was made that more friendly, non-technical staff would be a bonus) and to aid with directions, suggestions which would enhance the library experience for older visitors.

Outcome: The pilot will establish what outcomes are achieved by this initiative.

9.5   Providing outreach services through Home Library Services, nursing homes and other assisted living accommodation.

YPRL's home library service is for people who have illnesses or disabilities that prevent them from accessing their library, as well as for their carers. These conditions may be temporary, recurring or permanent. As well, people who are able to visit a library, but because of frailty or disability are unable to carry items home, are able to access the service. The service is also arranged for people who live in residential care nursing homes.

As the number of people in the community who are eligible for home library services increases with the age wave, the resourcing of the home library service may become a challenge for the library.

Project 10 - Develop and enhance Words on Wheels

Aim: Expand this valued and popular program to include more participants and more sites by recruiting volunteers with relevant language skills to develop kits and deliver the programs.

Description: Utilise volunteers to develop kits that includes material specific to the needs of migrants and people from CALD backgrounds and people with reduced cognitive and memory function

Outcome: A more inclusive program that delights and stimulates participants and a wider engaged community.

Project 11 - Home Library Services for NESB seniors

Aim: To develop a program for NESB seniors who are housebound, in care or who are care givers and who have low literacy in their first language.

Description: Volunteers will read aloud in their first language to people who are at home, in residential facilities, and caregivers who may be confined to their home for much of the time.

Outcome: Inclusive service that will enhance the quality of life of the reader and the person being read to.

10.   Partners and Advocacy

10.1   Partnership opportunities

There are a variety of agencies in the community serving an ageing population which offers many opportunities for strategic partnerships. University of the Third Age (U3A), volunteer agencies and social clubs such as Probus and Rotary, for example, are active across the region. Some of these groups use libraries or community rooms as meeting places.

COTA National Seniors

COTA National Seniors is the largest senior's organisation in Australia with more than 280,000 individual members and over 1,500 seniors' organisations under its umbrella. COTA National Seniors have a National Policy document that outlines their key areas of advocacy and research. This policy includes statements and strategies that directly affect public libraries in information provision and information and communication technologies. Other consumers driven senior's agencies in the community are important advocates and potential partners for YPRL.

University of the Third Age (U3A)

The University of the Third Age is an international movement that encourages retired people to take part in life-long learning activities for pleasure. U3A groups allow people to study in a relaxed environment at low cost. There are no prior qualifications, no exams and no degrees awarded. In recent years U3A has also offered online learning opportunities via U3A Online, expanding to meet the needs of older members of the community who are isolated either geographically, through physical or social circumstances, or constrained by responsibilities as a carer.

The impacts of increased U3A participation are being felt in a variety of ways in the library. Online services are in demand by U3A students who are undertaking online learning opportunities; meeting rooms at the library are sought as venues for classes; information and resources on specific topics are in demand due to course curricula; and information about U3A courses are included in community information resources.

Vision Australia Foundation

It is estimated there are currently approximately 380,000 people living in Australia with legal blindness or low vision. By 2030, this number is expected to double, with the baby boomer generation ageing coupled with the fact that people are living longer. Vision Australia Foundation services are designed to help people make the most of their remaining sight, to continue living independently and to lead fulfilling lives.

Vision Australia provides library services through the National Information and Library Service (NILS) to clients and public library clients may access these resources. Vision Australia can also provide expert information on adaptive technology for visual impairment. Vision Australia is in partnership with YPRL to provide daisy players to library members with vision impairment, as well as supporting these readers to access audio material.

WCF Ageing Cluster Action Plan

Whittlesea Community Futures Ageing Cluster Action Plan 2011-2016 was created to give adequate and appropriate care and support services to older residents in the City of Whittlesea, with the support of partner members, including YPRL. Their goal is to:

1. Develop a comprehensive guide on the existing services available for ageing communities.
2. Develop and implement a strategy to promote and disseminate information on existing services, remove pockets of un-awareness of existing services and to connect and engage communities to get the maximum benefit out of existing services.

10.2 Advocacy and partnerships - Actions

Follow up outcomes and recommendations from the Victorian State Parliamentary Joint Investigatory Committee on Family and Community Development.

Initiate discussions with key Council Aged Care Services staff (including HACC and PAG workers) with a view to capitalising on synergies between Council and library services and programs.

Strengthen relationships with key Council Leisure, Recreation and Culture staff with a view to jointly developing and delivering a cohesive program of events and activities to library users.

Initiate partnership arrangements with Vision Australia Foundation with a view to

: early trial and adoption of developments in adaptive technology

: joint marketing of services to an older adult cohort

: advocating to funding bodies for increased access to adaptive technology.

With reference to their National Policy, develop partnership arrangements with COTA that strengthen advocacy efforts around information provision and information and communication technologies in libraries.

Initiate discussions with FECCA that will enable YPRL to
: better understand the issues of ageing as they affect migrants and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

: deliver services, programs and activities culturally and linguistically appropriate for this group of older adults.

Continue to participate in Whittlesea Community Futures (Older Adults) forums, with a particular focus on the role YPRL can play in community strengthening initiatives.

Work in partnership with U3A across the member LGAs to support and enhance delivery of online and other learning opportunities for older adults.

11. Marketing to seniors

The intrinsic appeal of free library services has attracted seniors with available leisure time and fixed incomes for many years. Seniors come in search of recreational reading, activities and materials in special formats without any major marketing efforts on the part of the library.

The baby boomers, however, present new challenges as they are an advertising aware client group and many will have sufficient disposable income to allow them a wider variety of choices for their recreational activities and leisure time. In addition, if baby boomers have not been active library users in recent years they may have a very out-dated view of what their local public library has on offer.

A marketing plan needs to be developed that identifies active seniors and the frail aged as key target audiences. Older people are not a homogenous group; however, there are many common issues and needs that can be addressed in a library-marketing plan. Some examples include:

- the effective promotion of community information resources for older people to health and community workers engaged in working with older people
- the effective marketing of home library services to housebound members of the community
- raising awareness in the wider community of the services offered by the library in order to develop community advocates for the library
- ensuring that the library style guide gives consideration to the 'readability' of fonts, colours and styles with reference to the international standard for large print in publications and promotional material targeting seniors.

12.   Staff training

Age awareness training for staff will be scheduled and will include the specialised information needs of older people, anti-discrimination training and cross training with aged care workers. Another training requirement is the management of volunteers.

13.   Conclusion

Older people have traditionally formed a substantial user group for public libraries. Their ability to access library services is affected by access to transport, familiarity with technology, computer skills and awareness of available services. Rather than waiting for the inevitable age wave to hit, YPRL is taking the opportunity to position itself as a focal point for older people, providing:

- community meeting places
- information for life matters and leisure
- recreational reading
- internet access and skill development
- stimulating and appealing programs

The library also fulfils a vital role in building social capital in the community by providing meaningful volunteer roles, opportunities to engage in community consultation and breaking down some of the barriers of social exclusion. As a vital link enabling people to maintain their place in the wired world and as a social hub, the future holds many opportunities for the library as an avenue for meeting the needs of older people in the community.

We need to be a hub in the community, a place to have ready access to information, a warm inviting space where individuals can feel free to come and go. We need to be many things to many people.

The challenge is to take the initiative and find out what it is, where it is and how to go about it; how to attract the "new age" older adults to our branches. Lifelong learning is what we are about; we want to encourage and facilitate the journey for as many as we can. We have the resources and staff to achieve much, to travel into the future - a future filled with many experiences and much learning.

14.   Action Plan

THEME	AGENCY	ACTION	TIMING	PERSON RESPONSIBLE

Lifelong learning	YPRL
	
	and
	
	YPRL with partner agencies
		• Develop a suite of Computer and Internet Classes that can be delivered in groups or individually at branches
		
		• Next Chapters: expand the program of events and activities for older adults (in conjunction with delivery partners where possible) to include sessions around
		    o Health and Wellbeing
		    o Leisure and Recreation
		    o Arts and Culture
			July 2012
			
			Annually until completion
			
			July 2014
				Seniors and Volunteers Coordinator
				
				Community Liaison officers
				
				New Technologies Coordinator

Meeting needs of older readers	YPRL	• Establish regular Book chats and Large Print Book Clubs for seniors	July 2013	Community Liaison Librarians Seniors and Volunteers coordinator Reading and literacy coordinator

THEME	AGENCY	ACTION	TIMING	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
		• Adaptive technology at each branch	July 2014	Seniors and Volunteers coordinator Branch Managers Manager Resources
Providing information resources		• Produce weekly lists for publishing on Bibliocommons • Care givers workshops: Initiate delivery of community information sessions relating to the care of a person with reduced cognitive and memory function; in relevant community languages as appropriate; e.g. 'Do You Take Care of a Person with a Memory Problem?' and 'Caregivers Workshop' • Partner with WCF's Virtual Village	Dec 2011 Dec 2012 October 2011 -	Volunteers Interested staff Seniors and Volunteers coordinator Partners Manager Community Engagement Seniors and Volunteers coordinator
Engaging older people		• Pilot Seniors booth at one branch	July 2013	Manager Community

THEME	AGENCY	ACTION	TIMING	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
		• Volunteers in branches – Meet and Greet – pilot at one branch		Engagement Branch Manager
Outreach services		• Develop and enhance Words on Wheels across the member LGAs and consider the inclusion of material specific to the needs of migrants and people from CALD backgrounds and people with reduced cognitive and memory function • Develop a read aloud program for NESB seniors who are housebound or in residential accommodation.	July 2014	Seniors and Volunteers coordinator

Marketing	YPRL	• Develop a YPRL Marketing Framework that incorporates
		   : the effective promotion of community information resources for older people to health and community workers engaged in working with older people
		   : the effective marketing of home library services members of the community
		   : raising awareness in the wider community of the services offered by the library in order to develop community advocates for the library
		   : ensuring that the library style guide gives consideration to the 'readability' of fonts, colours and styles with reference to the international standard for large
		   print in publications and promotional material targeting seniors
		
		• Market existing children's services to grandparents in the community
			July 2013
			
			July 2012
				Community Engagement Manager
				
				Media and Marketing Coordinator
				
				Seniors and Volunteers Coordinator

THEME	AGENCY	ACTION	TIMING	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
Staffing and age-awareness training	YPRL	• Design, develop and implement 'sensitivity training' for library staff dealing with seniors, including information about the specialised information needs of older people, anti-discrimination training and cross training with aged care workers. • At Branches with higher populations of older adults, identify senior advocate positions amongst the library staff.		Branch Managers Seniors and Volunteers Coordinator HR Coordinator

Key stakeholders and strategic partnerships	State Parliamentary Joint Investigatory Committee
	
	Banyule, Nillumbik and Whittlesea Councils
	
	Vision Australia Foundation
	
	COTA National Seniors
		• Follow up outcomes and recommendations from the Victorian State Parliamentary Joint Investigatory Committee on Family and Community Development
		
		• Initiate discussions with key Council Aged Care Services staff (including HACC and PAG workers) with a view to capitalising on synergies between Council and library services and programs
		
		• Strengthen relationships with key Council Leisure, Recreation and Culture staff with a view to jointly developing and delivering a cohesive program of events and activities to library users
		
		• Initiate partnership arrangements with Vision Australia Foundation with a view to
		     : early trial and adoption of developments in adaptive technology
		     : joint marketing of services to an older adult cohort
		     : advocating to funding bodies for increased access to adaptive technology
		
		• With reference to their National Policy, develop partnership arrangements with COTA that strengthen advocacy efforts around
			July 2012
			
			Ongoing
			
			Ongoing
			
			July 2013
			
			Ongoing
				Media and Marketing Coordinator
				
				Community Engagement Manager
				
				Seniors and Volunteers Coordinator
				
				Branch Managers

THEME	AGENCY	ACTION	TIMING	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
		information provision and information and communication technologies in libraries		
	Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA)	• Initiate discussions with FECCA that will enable YPRL to : better understand the issues of ageing as they affect migrants and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds : deliver services, programs and activities culturally and linguistically appropriate for this group of older adults		
	Whittlesea Council	• Continue to participate in Whittlesea Community Futures (Older Adults) forums, with a particular focus on the role YPRL can play in community strengthening initiatives		
	U3A	• Work in partnership with U3A across the member LGAs to support and enhance delivery of online and other learning opportunities for older adults		