

# Age-Friendly Melville Plan Review 2025

## ENGAGEMENT REPORT



FEBRUARY 2026



City of  
**Melville**

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## Executive Summary

The City of Melville is developing the Age Friendly Melville Plan 2026-2030, a roadmap for how we support our community as they age. The plan will build on the foundations of the current Age Friendly Melville Plan 2022-2026 and aims to build a healthier, safer and more inclusive Melville, where people can stay active, connected and keep learning, no matter their age.

Community engagement ran from 27 October to 14 December 2025, with feedback collected through an online survey, hard copy form, over the phone or in person. Engagement was delivered at a *Consult* level of the IAP2 Spectrum, ensuring we sought meaningful input to shape initiatives, events and programs to enhance the quality of life for our older community.

The engagement confirmed that older people living in our city want safe, walkable and accessible neighbourhoods, affordable housing options that support ageing in place, reliable and inclusive transport, and opportunities to stay active, connected and informed. Respondents also highlighted the importance of [social activities](#), [health and fitness programs](#), and clear communication from the City. These insights will directly inform the development of the next Age-Friendly Melville Plan.

This report summarises the engagement methodology, communication channels, detailed responses, and emerging priorities to inform the next steps in developing a plan that reflects what matters most for everyone as we age.

# Key Findings

The engagement highlighted a number of consistent and strongly expressed themes across the community.

## **Safe, walkable and accessible neighbourhoods**

Participants described the importance of well-maintained footpaths, safe crossings, adequate lighting and accessible public spaces. These features were seen as supporting mobility, confidence and opportunities for social interaction as people age.

## **Housing that supports ageing in place**

People spoke about the need for housing options that allow them to remain in their community as their needs change. Affordable, smaller and low-maintenance homes, along with accessible and universal design features, were identified as important in supporting independence and connection.

## **Transport and getting around**

Experiences of transport varied, particularly for people who no longer drive. Limited public transport routes, infrequent services and parking accessibility were commonly raised as affecting people's ability to attend appointments, shop, socialise and participate in community life.

## **Staying active, connected and healthy**

Participants emphasised the value of opportunities to stay physically active and socially connected. Affordable fitness programs, social activities, volunteering and access to health and wellbeing services were described as supporting both physical and mental wellbeing.

## **Clear and accessible communication**

Access to timely and easy-to-find information was seen as an important enabler across all areas. Participants relied on a mix of communication channels, including printed materials, digital platforms and community spaces, reflecting different preferences and levels of digital confidence.

## **Affordability pressures**

Cost was raised as a factor influencing participation across multiple areas, including housing, transport and activities. Affordability was described as affecting people's ability to stay active, connected and engaged.

Overall, what we heard shows that people want to feel safe, included and supported to live independently and stay connected to their community as they age. These themes are explored in more detail throughout the sections that follow.

## Objectives and principles

Our engagement approach was guided by the six core principles aligned with the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) and the City of Melville's Stakeholder Engagement Policy. These principles informed the planning and delivery of engagement activities, with a strong focus on building trust, encouraging participation, and ensuring diverse voices were heard.

The City's engagement approach was also guided by the current Age Friendly Melville Plan core value: *An age-friendly environment benefits everyone: both current and future generations.*

Engagement was delivered at a *Consult* level of the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation. It focused on gathering meaningful feedback from residents aged 55 and over, their carers, and the wider community in ways that met their communication needs.

The City's engagement principles that guided the approach include:

**Integrity:** We will be transparent about the process, clearly outlining what the public can and cannot influence.

**Inclusivity:** We strive to engage in a manner that actively involves affected communities and ensures that stakeholders feel welcomed, making it easy for them to participate.

**Informed:** We will provide timely and relevant information to enable meaningful participation, ensuring communication occurs before, during, and after decisions are made.

**Accountability:** We will consider your feedback and communicate how it has influenced our decisions.

**Flexibility:** We will remain adaptable to the needs of the community, continually refining our processes to ensure they effectively address the diverse perspectives and circumstances of those we serve.

**Excellence:** We will learn from the process and continuously strive for improvement.

# Engagement Methodology and Process

Community engagement ran from 27 October to 14 December 2025, with feedback collected through an online survey, hard copy form, over the phone and in person to maximise reach and participation.

The purpose of the engagement was to review and update the Age Friendly Melville Plan ensuring it continues to reflect the needs, priorities, and aspirations of older residents, their carers, and the broader community. The engagement gathered insights on how well the City is achieving the current goals, confirm whether these focus areas remain relevant, and identify new opportunities to support healthy, connected, and inclusive ageing in Melville.

Consultation was held with:

- The over 55's community
- The broader City of Melville community
- People living with dementia
- Carers, families and service providers
- Socially isolated older people
- Volunteers
- City staff and stakeholders

The engagement process included:

- Testing five high impact questions for clarity, ease of use and engagement with attendees at a volunteering function to refine survey questions. N=0
- Deployment of community-wide survey (online, in-person, and over the phone) to capture views from the broader community including those who may not attend in-person sessions. N=236
- In-person conversations at dementia cafes with conversation cards to hear the voices of often underrepresented community members. N=54
- Deployment of DIY community hosted sessions called Cuppa Conversations
- Deeper dialogues via activities at the South of the River forums and at Memory Café.
- In total, the engagement received 290 responses across all survey types and activities.

# Communication and Promotion

The engagement was promoted through a mix of traditional and digital communication channels, supported by City staff. This multi-channel approach ensured broad visibility, accessibility, and reach across diverse audiences:

Online presence – A dedicated project page on Melville Talks, which received 2,129 visits

Direct outreach:

- Random community sample of 4,970 households emailed, encouraging recipients to complete the survey
- Direct email to 131 previous participants and stakeholders encouraging participation.
- Direct email to 128 Melville Sounding Board members
- Events and in-person promotion – Five events across key community locations to promote and invite participation
- Media and publications – Features in City newsletters and eNews including Melville Matters, Melville Talks, LeisureFit and Volunteers. Estimated reach over 60,000.
- Social media – a campaign on City-managed platforms targeting over 55's. Estimated reach over 82,000.
- Posters and collateral – Displayed at high-traffic City facilities.

This layered approach provided multiple touchpoints for engagement, raising awareness, and inviting participation in the process.

# Engagement Outcomes

The following sections outline the survey questions and responses, capturing both quantitative results and qualitative insights. These findings provide a comprehensive picture of the priorities, challenges, and opportunities identified by participants.

To ensure we heard from a wide range of older people, their carers, families, and service providers, the City asked several demographic questions. This information helps us check whether our communication and engagement approach was inclusive, reaching different age groups, backgrounds, and circumstances across the community. The data will also inform future engagement planning by identifying under-represented groups and tailoring methods to better reach them. Of the 290 respondents 236 provided demographic details.

Engagement data collected across all platforms and stages has been combined and presented in the engagement outcomes, providing a consolidated view of the feedback received throughout the process.

## Who we heard from

A total of 290 people participated across the survey and three in person Cuppa Conversations. Demographics reflect survey participants only. Conversation-based sessions did not collect demographic information.

### Age of participants

- 40–49 years: 4 (2%)
- 50–54 years: 14 (6%)
- 55–64 years: 66 (29%)
- 65–74 years: 86 (38%)
- 75–84 years: 49 (21%)
- 85+ years: 9 (4%)
- Not provided: 8 (3%)

### Suburb of residence

216 respondents (92%) live in the City of Melville. 15 respondents (6%) live outside the City but visit for services, recreation or family reasons.

Frequently reported suburbs included Applecross, Melville, Mount Pleasant, Attadale, Booragoon, Kardinya, Bull Creek and Alfred Cove.

### Connection to the City of Melville

A total of 236 respondents shared their connection to the City of Melville (noting some participants selected more than one option):

- I am a ratepayer in the City of Melville (owning or paying off a home): 88.56% (209 responses)
- I am a ratepayer and do not live in the City of Melville: 2.12% (5 responses)
- I am renting a home in the City of Melville: 6.36% (15 responses)
- I study in the City of Melville: 0.85% (2 responses)

- I own/operate a business in the City of Melville: 2.12% (5 responses)
- I work or provide a service in the City of Melville: 5.93% (14 responses)
- I am a volunteer in the City of Melville: 11.02% (26 responses)
- I am a visitor to the City of Melville: 2.54% (6 responses)
- I recreate in the City of Melville: 22.46% (53 responses)

This data shows that the majority of participants are ratepayers who live locally with strong recreational ties to the area.

## Gender identity

A total of 236 respondents provided information on gender identity/

- Woman/female: 74.15% (175 responses)
- Man/male: 24.15% (57 responses)
- I use another term: 0.85% (2 responses)
- Prefer not to answer: 0.85% (2 responses)

This breakdown highlights that the majority of participants identified as female with smaller but important representation from male and non-binary gender identities.

## Diversity and lived experience

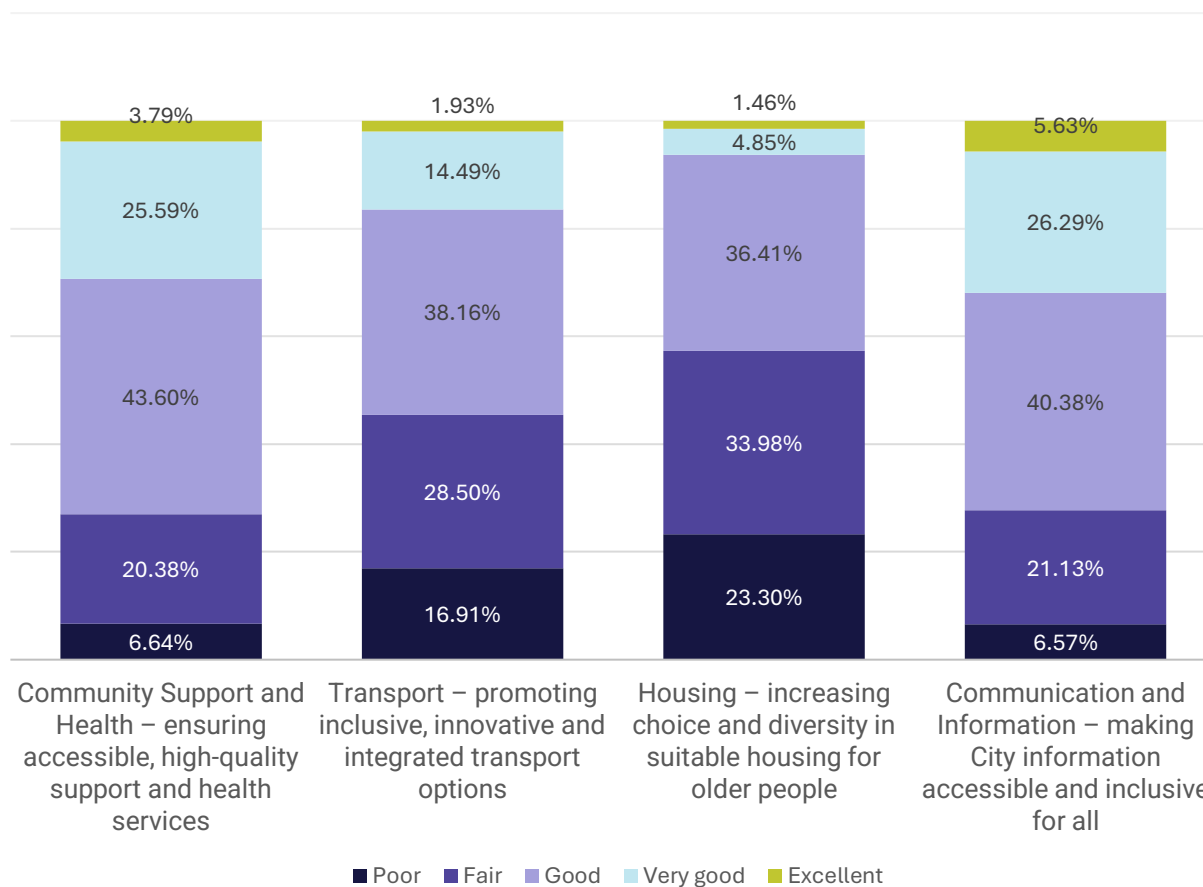
A total of 67 respondents provided information on diversity and lived experience (noting some participants selected more than one option).

- First Nations Person: 1.27% (3 responses)
- From a migrant or refugee background: 16.95% (40 responses)
- Person living with a disability: 9.32% (22 responses)
- LGBTQIA+: 0.85% (2 responses)

These results highlight the diversity within the City of Melville over 55's community, reinforcing the need for services, spaces, and opportunities that are inclusive, supportive, and accessible to all.

## What we heard from you

Overall, how well do you think the City is doing in these areas?



(Figure 1: Overall, how well do you think the City is doing in these areas?)

### Community support and health

We asked participants to share:

- What helps them stay active, connected and feeling good in Melville?
- What kinds of programs, activities or services they would like to see more of...?
- What improvements to community support or health services would make the biggest difference...? What would make life a little easier?

We heard that staying healthy, active and connected was described as essential to ageing well in Melville. Participants spoke about a combination of physical activity, social opportunities and access to local facilities that support wellbeing and independence. Walking, parks, libraries, community centres and LeisureFit were frequently mentioned as places that help people remain active and engaged.

When asked **what helps them stay active and connected**, one survey participant shared, *“I attend classes in Melville which cater to my health issues and keep me active, as well as social activities with family and friends.”* Others highlighted the availability of activities locally, with a survey participant

noting, *"Lots of groups and activities available around Melville. It is easy to keep active and meet people of similar ages."*

Social connection was a strong theme across responses. When asked about **the kinds of programs and activities they would like to see more of**, survey participants commonly requested additional opportunities to exercise and connect, including *"More exercise classes for older people," "More gentle strength and balance classes for seniors,"* and *"More social groups during the week to avoid isolation."* These responses reflect the importance of both physical and social wellbeing in supporting healthy ageing.

Opportunities to contribute and give back were also described as important. When asked **what helps them stay active and connected**, a Cuppa Conversation participant said, *"Being able to give back and volunteer within the community,"* while another shared, *"Friendship club helps me to stay active."*

When asked what improvements to community support or health services would make the biggest difference – or what would make life a little easier – participants spoke about practical supports that help them manage day-to-day life and remain independent.

Access to health services, particularly the ability to attend medical appointments, was a recurring concern. When explaining what would make life easier, one survey participant said it can be *"Hard to get to exact medical appointments."* This reflects how access challenges can affect people's ability to look after their health, especially when transport options are limited.

People also described the importance of ongoing community and care services in supporting wellbeing and connection. In a Cuppa Conversation, one participant highlighted the value of existing supports by saying, *"Melville cares,"* while another shared that *"Aged care facilities keep us connected."* These comments point to the role that support services play in helping people stay engaged and supported in their community.

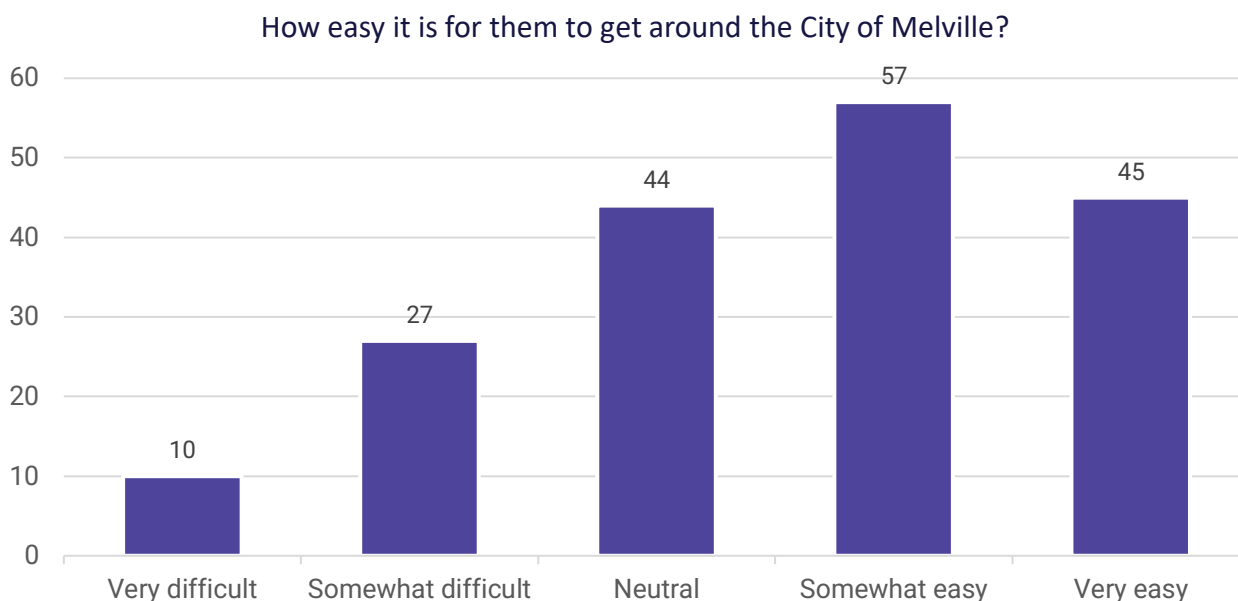
Affordability and suitability of services were also raised in responses. Some people described the need for services that better align with their health needs and circumstances. One Cuppa Conversation participant noted the importance of appropriate options, saying, *"Food that is diabetic friendly, senior portions,"* highlighting how tailored supports can make daily life easier.

## Transport

We asked participants to tell us:

- How easy it is for them to get around the City of Melville
- What barriers, if any, make it difficult to get around or use transport
- What would make transport and travel smoother for people aged 55+

Most participants said it is generally easy for them to get around the City of Melville with around half describing it as either “somewhat easy” or “very easy”.

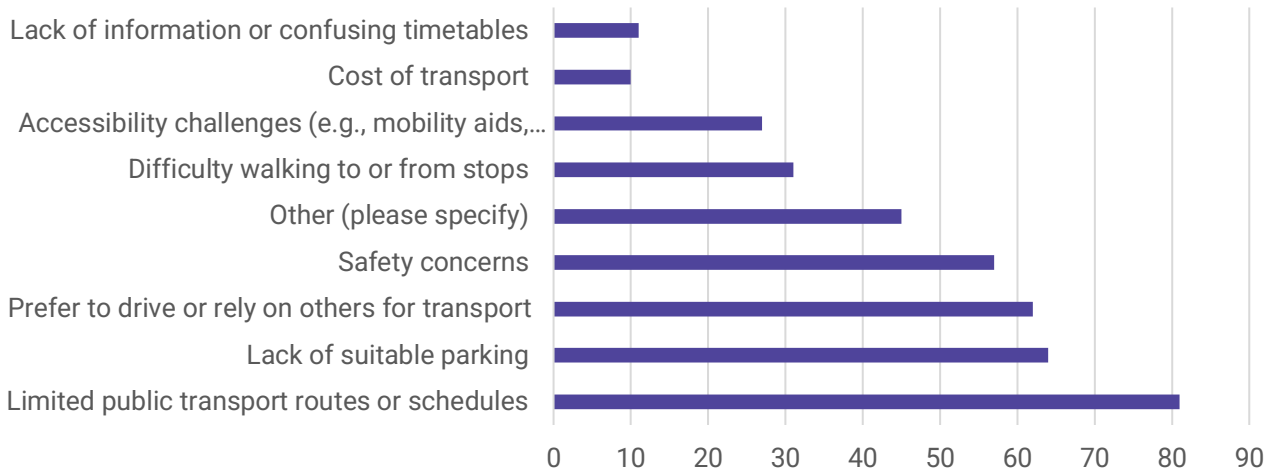


(Figure 2: How easy is it to get around? Bar chart showing distribution across: Very difficult, Somewhat difficult, Neutral, Somewhat easy, Very easy.)

When asked **what makes it difficult to get around or use transport in their local area**, most participants selected limited public transport routes or schedules (Figure 2). Lack of suitable parking, preferring to drive or relying on others for transport, and safety concerns were also frequently mentioned.

These results show that barriers are not only about one mode of transport. They include the reliability and reach of bus services, the availability of parking, the walkability and accessibility of local streets, personal safety, and the extent to which people can continue driving or depend on others.

### What barriers, if any, make it difficult to get around or use transport?



(Figure 3: What barriers, if any, make it difficult to get around or use transport? Horizontal bar chart of barriers, sorted by frequency.)

**When asked what would make transport and travel smoother**, people described changes that would make every day journeys easier, reduce reliance on others and improve access to key destinations as they age.

For many, smoother travel was closely linked to having reliable transport options when they are no longer able or confident to drive. Survey participants described relying on others to get around, with one person explaining they *“prefer to drive or rely on others for transport.”* Another survey participant highlighted the impact of access on daily life, saying it can be *“hard to get to exact medical appointments.”* These responses show how smoother travel is connected to being able to reach health services and essential activities without difficulty.

Direct and efficient public transport was also described as important for reducing effort and travel time. In a Cuppa Conversation, one participant explained that *“Willagee very slow bus route and not often enough. Not direct,”* highlighting how indirect or infrequent services can make trips more difficult and less appealing.

Access at destinations was another factor influencing how smooth travel feels. Parking distance and ease of access were raised as affecting confidence and comfort once people arrive. One participant noted, *“Parking is an issue in a lot of areas, walking too far. Tradies parking in the way,”* illustrating how challenges do not end once a journey is complete.

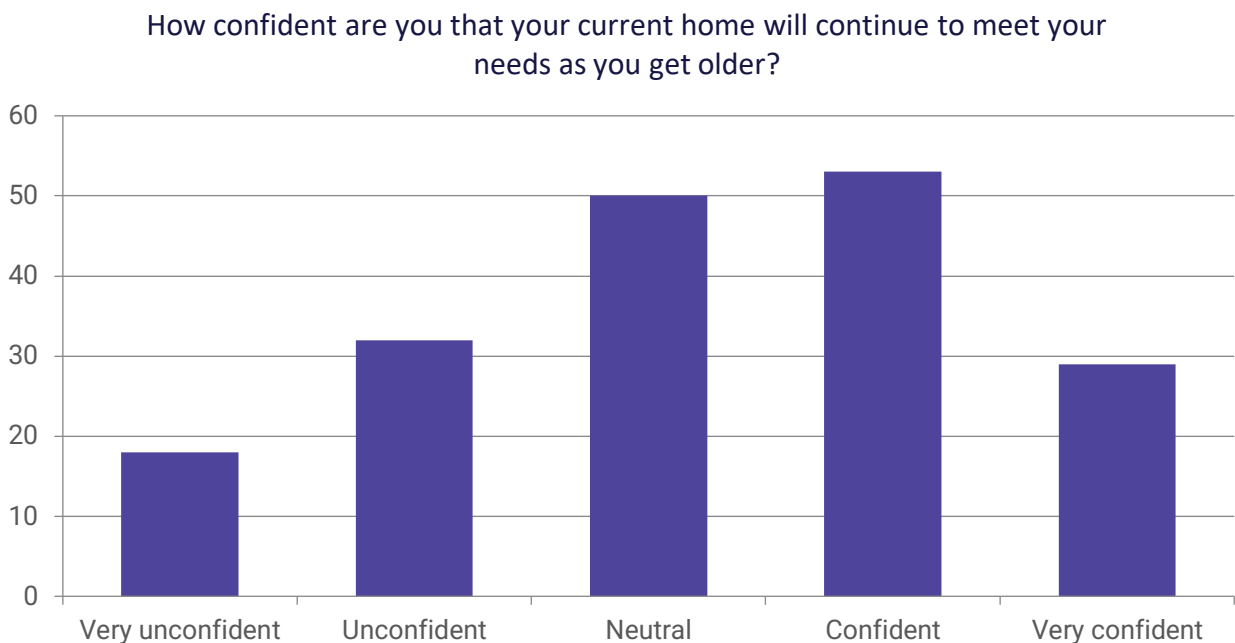
Overall, what we heard shows that transport and travel feel smoother when people can access direct and reliable services, reach appointments and activities without relying heavily on others, and move easily at their destination. These factors were consistently linked to maintaining independence and staying connected to the community as people age.

## Housing

We asked participants to share:

- How confident they feel that their current home will continue to meet their needs as they get older
- What changes or supports would help their home meet their needs as they age
- What kinds of housing options would help people over 55 live comfortably and stay connected
- What would help them feel safer at home as they get older

Many people reported feeling confident or very confident that their home would continue to suit them, while others expressed uncertainty or lower confidence. This variation reflects the way housing suitability can change over time.



(Figure 4: How confident are you that your current home will continue to meet your needs as you get older?)

When asked **what changes or supports would help their home meet their needs as they age**, people spoke about housing that is easier to manage, better designed for mobility, and located close to everyday services.

Survey responses highlighted the importance of low-maintenance homes and thoughtful design. One survey participant described the value of *“Housing close to services and amenities, housing that is low maintenance, better design standards for buildings and housing.”* Others reflected on whether their current home would continue to suit them, with comments such as *“Still live at home and still fit your lifestyle and my needs,”* while another noted they were *“Thinking about downsizing.”*

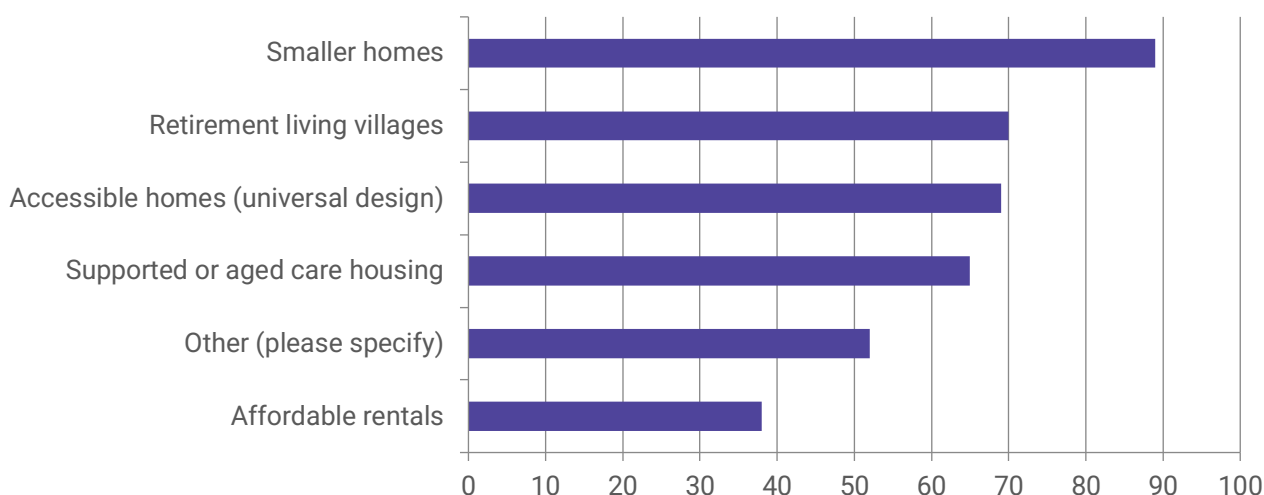
The need for more suitable housing options as needs change also emerged. In a Cuppa Conversation, one participant shared, *“Need more options to downsizing need more options. Different planning options. Granny flat options. Multi generational living.”* This reflected broader survey

feedback about the importance of having local housing choices that allow people to remain in their community as they age.

Together responses show that housing which supports ageing well is closely linked to ease of maintenance, accessibility, location and having appropriate options available when circumstances change.

This sentiment was reflected in the preferred housing options shared by survey participants.

What kind of housing options would help people over 55 live comfortably and stay connected?



(Figure 5: What kind of housing options would help people over 55 live comfortably and stay connected?)

We also asked **what would help them feel safer at home as they get older**, people described safety in practical and personal terms, closely connected to housing design, layout and suitability.

Feeling safe was often linked to having a home that supports mobility and reduces physical risk. One Cuppa Conversation participant described what helps them feel secure, saying, *“Single-story and living with dogs.”* This highlights how housing design and everyday living arrangements contribute to confidence and safety at home.

Survey responses also reflected that feeling safe is connected to familiarity and stability. Some people expressed confidence in their current living situation, with comments such as *“I’m happy where I live.”* Others implied that safety and confidence may change over time as needs evolve, reinforcing the importance of having housing that can adapt as people age.

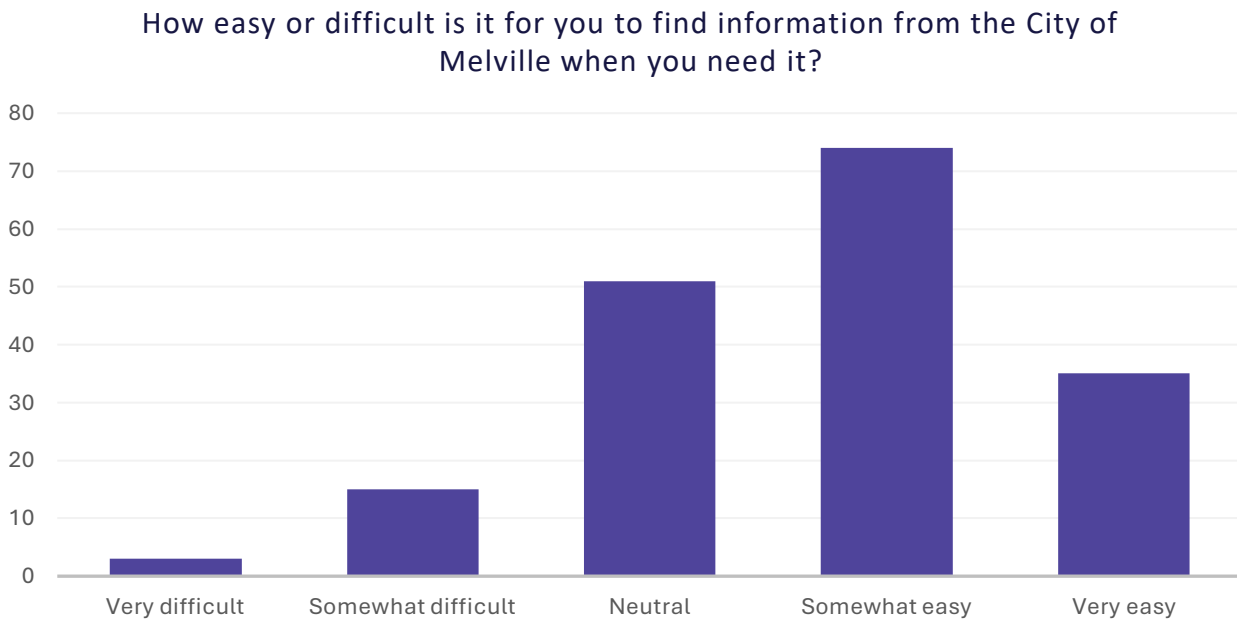
Overall, what we heard shows that feeling safe at home is not only about the physical structure of a house, but also about how well it supports independence, mobility and confidence in daily life.

## Communication and information

We asked participants to tell us:

- How easy or difficult it is to find information from the City of Melville when they need it
- Why they selected that response and what their experience has been
- How they prefer to receive information from the City
- What would make City information clearer or easier to access

Participants were first asked how easy or difficult it is to find information from the City of Melville when they need it and responses showed a mix of experiences.



(Figure 6: How easy or difficult it is to find information from the City of Melville when they need it?)

When asked to explain why they selected their response about how easy or difficult it is to find information from the City, people described a range of experiences shaped by familiarity, access and confidence with different information sources.

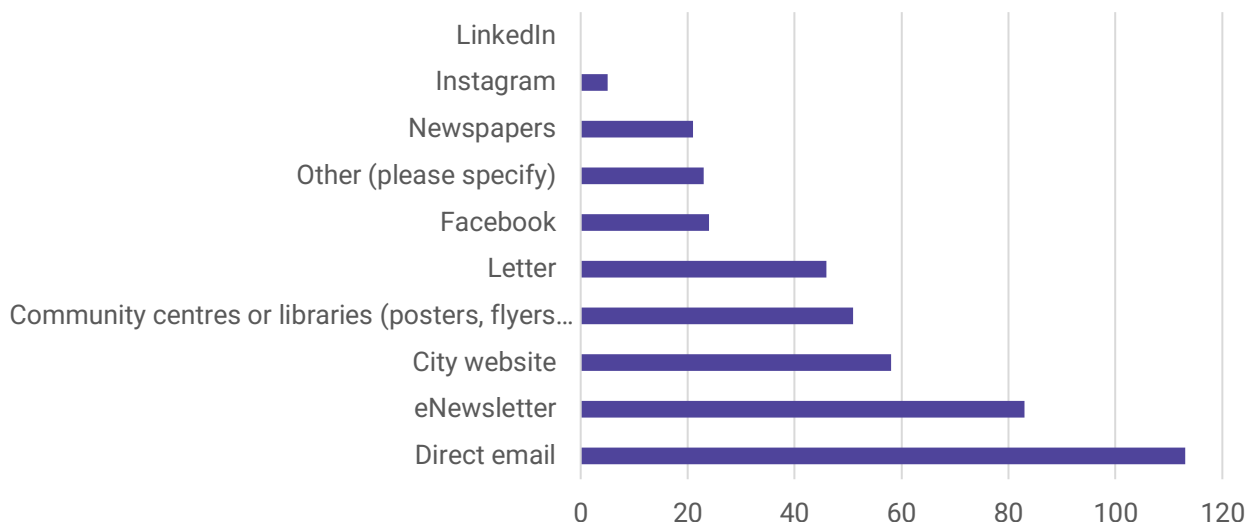
Some survey participants shared positive experiences, indicating that they generally know where to look or feel supported by existing channels. For others, finding information required relying on familiar or trusted sources rather than searching independently. One survey participant explained their experience simply by saying, *“Family take care of that,”* highlighting how informal networks play a role in staying informed.

Challenges were also described, particularly when navigating online information. When explaining their experience of finding information from the City, a Cuppa Conversation participant said, *“Websites are hard to find.”* This reflects how digital information can be difficult to locate or navigate for some people, even when it is available.

Community spaces were described as important sources of information and connection. In a Cuppa Conversation, one participant noted that *“Libraries are a huge connectors,”* pointing to the role of libraries as trusted places to access information and support.

The responses show that experiences of finding information vary widely. While some people feel confident and supported, others rely on family, community spaces or familiar channels to help them stay informed.

How do you prefer to receive information from the City?



(Figure 7: How do you prefer to receive information from the City??)

When asked **what would make City information clearer or easier to access**, people emphasised clarity, accessibility and having information delivered in ways that suit different needs and preferences.

Survey participants highlighted the continued importance of clear, tangible communication. Preferences for printed and direct information were common, with responses such as *“Letters in the mail,” “Would like to receive the council new paper,”* and *“Physical flyers, printed media around shopping centers, GPs, places that older people frequently go to.”* These responses show that clear, visible information in familiar places helps people feel informed and included.

Some people also expressed a preference for very direct communication. In a Cuppa Conversation, one participant said, *“Come knock on the door,”* illustrating the value placed on personal and straightforward approaches.

Overall, what we heard shows that City information is easier to access when it is clear, easy to find and shared through multiple channels. People value having options that reflect different levels of digital confidence, access and personal preference, helping them stay informed in ways that feel comfortable and reliable.

## Looking towards the future

We asked participants:

- Thinking about the next five years, what is the single most important thing the City should focus on to support people aged 55+?
- Are there any new ideas or opportunities you'd like the City to explore to make Melville more aged-friendly in the future?
- Would you like to share any final thoughts or ideas to help shape the next Age-Friendly Melville Plan?

When asked **what the single most important thing the City should focus on over the next five years to better support people aged 55+**, responses reflected the same priorities raised throughout the engagement, particularly around access, inclusion and everyday independence.

Survey participants emphasised the importance of continuing to support people to stay connected and access essential services. One survey participant said the City should focus on "*Housing for the aged*," while another highlighted the importance of connection, sharing that "*Community activities during the week*" were a priority. Others reflected positively on existing supports, with one participant noting, "*Very happy with support provided from the City.*"

Transport and access to everyday destinations were also raised again when people looked ahead. One survey participant described the need for "*Easier access to the shops. I have to rely on family*," highlighting how transport and walkability remain central to independence over time.

We then asked about **new ideas or opportunities to make Melville more age-friendly in the future**, people spoke about creating environments and services that better support inclusion, safety and connection as needs change.

Survey responses pointed to the importance of age-friendly spaces and services, with one participant suggesting a focus on "*Shopping precincts more age friendly*," while another highlighted the value of local amenities, saying "*Need a local pub to walk to*." The importance of the physical environment was also raised, with comments such as "*Keep the trees shade needed*," reflecting how comfort and usability of public spaces affect everyday experience.

Support for connection and understanding as people age was also mentioned. One survey participant emphasised the need to "*Be more dementia friendly*," pointing to opportunities to improve awareness and inclusivity across the community.

In the final question, we invited participants to share any additional thoughts to help shape the next Age-Friendly Melville Plan. Some responses reflected appreciation for existing efforts. One survey participant shared, "*Melville is doing a great job compared to other shires, Great council, keep it up.*"

Others used the opportunity to reinforce the importance of social connection. One participant reflected on long-term involvement in local programs, saying, "*I have been going to the friendship club for 16 years and it is very important for me to socialise and stay connected with my community.*" Another highlighted opportunities to strengthen connection across ages, sharing, "*Would love more intergenerational activities.*"

These responses show that when people look to the future, they want Melville to continue supporting independence, connection and inclusion. What we heard reinforces the value of focusing on everyday access, welcoming spaces, social connection and age-friendly environments as the City plans for the years ahead.

