

Social Wellbeing Policy

Introduction

One of the purposes of Council as defined in the Local Government Act (2002) is:

‘to promote the social, environmental, economic, and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future’.

LGA (Section 10b)

This Social Wellbeing Policy sets out the way in which Council will achieve this purpose.

This policy uses the Ministry of Social Development’s Social Report, definition of social wellbeing:

“...those aspects of life that society collectively agrees are important for a person’s happiness, quality of life and welfare”.

The Social Report came from the 1988 Royal Commission which undertook a nation-wide public consultation to identify what constitutes ‘wellbeing’ in New Zealand. This work, along with subsequent consultation, has identified a set of social wellbeing areas which collectively are considered key for a person’s happiness, quality of life and welfare, and therefore their overall wellbeing. These are:

- health
- knowledge and skills
- paid work
- economic standard of living
- civil and political rights
- cultural identity
- leisure and recreation
- physical environment
- safety
- social connectedness

The Social Report notes that these areas are linked. Doing well or poorly in one area is often likely to impact on the performance in another. For example if someone is experiencing poor health they may not be in a position to work or be able to participate in recreation or leisure activities. This in turn impacts on their opportunities to connect with other people.

Recent approaches to social wellbeing have noted these links and focused on making improvements in multiple wellbeing areas through neighbourhood or community level initiatives which aim to strengthen existing relationships and build community connections.

This approach to promoting social wellbeing has been reinforced through early consultation with community groups which has told us that Council’s social wellbeing policy should:

- build on and strengthen existing relationships
- build on the resources and strengths that exist
- focus on the positive (potential) results rather than on the negative problems
- provide resources for wellbeing improvement and remove barriers
- empower people to have ownership of their own wellbeing
- set clear, consistent boundaries

The policy will use the social wellbeing areas described above as a framework so that all aspects that make up social wellbeing are considered and Council uses them to build connections between people and groups. Council recognises the importance of social wellbeing in contributing to all six of Nelson's community outcomes.

Vision and outcomes to be achieved for Nelson's residents

The Council's vision for this policy is that Nelson has a happy, healthy community where people have access to necessary services and facilities and feel connected to each other and to the city.

Council will ensure that social wellbeing issues are considered when planning and delivering new services, facilities and activities.

Council's role in promoting Social Wellbeing

Council has a mandate to promote social wellbeing under the Local Government Act 2002. However, many of the wellbeing areas described above are ones where central government, through its agencies and services, takes a lead including health, knowledge and skills, paid work, economic standard of living and safety (particularly relating to crime and safety in the home). In addition many community organisations exist in Nelson and are well placed to provide social support services to the community.

Areas where Council has a key responsibility or role include the physical environment, leisure and recreation, social connectedness, cultural identity, civil and political rights and safety (particularly relating to safety in public spaces). With limited resources available Council needs to focus on areas where it can have a significant impact and rely on partners to take the lead in other areas.

Over and above initiatives that directly aim to improve social wellbeing, most Council activities (such as economic development, transport, water supply, waste collection, environmental planning, parks and community facilities) impact on the wellbeing of the community.

Council's social wellbeing role includes:

- **Leading by example** - looking at Council activities through a social wellbeing 'lens' to improve social wellbeing outcomes for the community

- **Partnering, collaborating and facilitating** – with central government, community organisations and other stakeholders to target initiatives effectively
- **Delivery** – of services and activities (including through grants to community groups) within wellbeing areas where Council has responsibility
- **Advocacy** – at regional and national levels
- **Planning** – ensuring that the development of facilities and services contributes to enhancing wellbeing in the future.

Structure of this document

The first part of document has general social wellbeing policies that apply to the whole of the community. However, Council has also chosen to focus on particular issues surrounding older people, youth and affordable housing in later sections of this policy. These three areas relate to key trends affecting Nelson and have been raised as particular concerns by the community.

Working with the community

Development of this policy involved extensive consultation with community groups and individuals about the range of wellbeing issues in Nelson. Council acknowledges that there are many organisations and agencies in our community that have a role in delivering social wellbeing outcomes. Appendix 1 lists many of these organisations and the contribution that they make towards enhanced social wellbeing in Nelson. The list will continue to be updated as new issues and new organisations appear.

This policy focuses on areas where Council has a key role in planning and delivering services and activities that contribute to enhanced social wellbeing. However, Council also has a role in partnering, collaborating and facilitating with others to achieve social wellbeing goals. The appendix to the Social Wellbeing Policy shows the breadth of community organisations that contribute to social wellbeing in Nelson.

Policies

Further policy information can be found in the youth, positive ageing and affordable housing sections.

Health

Issue	Objective	Policy
<p>Many core Council services are crucial to the health of the community eg water supply, waste removal. A range of other programmes and services also have important health impacts eg Clean Heat, Warm Homes programme or regulations relating to air quality.</p>	<p>Core services that impact on health are maintained.</p> <p>Recognition of importance of other programmes that have a health component.</p>	<p>Continue to provide core services critical to maintaining community health.</p> <p>Consider health impacts of relevant programmes when considering resourcing.</p>
<p>Nelson has a good climate for participation in outdoor activities. There are clear health benefits to residents from maintaining physical activity levels. There are also mental health benefits from being active and involved in the community. Infrastructure needs to be planned to meet the needs of all potential users.</p>	<p>Provide opportunities for all residents to engage in activity.</p>	<p>New community infrastructure will be designed taking into account the range of abilities and needs of all our residents.</p>

Knowledge and skills

Issue	Objective	Policy
Council libraries have a role in facilitating access to information for residents.	Ensure that residents have access to information and resources to support life long learning.	Libraries will continue to be funded to provide lifelong learning opportunities for residents and support for use of new technologies.

Paid Work

Issue	Objective	Policy
Having access to paid work improves social wellbeing outcomes.	Support initiatives that improve employment levels and choices of employment in Nelson.	Continue to support the activities which contribute to a sustainable, innovative and diversified economy. Council to provide essential infrastructure which allows the economy to flourish.

Economic standard of living

Issue	Objective	Policy
Although there is a view that Nelson suffers from "sunshine wages" the data shows we match or slightly exceed the median New Zealand wage. The economy would, however, benefit from a more diverse base.	Promote sustainable economic growth and enhance the vitality of the local economy.	Support agencies/initiatives that develop the local economy and contribute to sustainable economic growth.
Affordability of housing has been identified as a key issue.	See affordable housing section.	See affordable housing section.

Civil and political rights

Issue	Objective	Policy
<p>Council needs to ensure its decisions are made on the basis of a good understanding of community views.</p>	<p>Ensure that Council is informed of the breadth of community views in its decision making.</p>	<p>Keep Council's community engagement processes under continuous review and assessment to improve breadth of input from our community to decision making.</p>
<p>Nelson's population is increasingly diverse. There is a need to ensure that engagement processes are designed to recognise this diversity.</p>	<p>Ensure that all residents have an opportunity to contribute to Council processes.</p>	<p>Increase the variety of forms of engagement to improve input from residents eg reduce the emphasis on written communication, consider the needs of residents for whom English is not their first language.</p>
<p>Good communication is a key part of ensuring residents can play their part in Council decision making.</p>	<p>Ensure Council processes are understood by the community. Work with community organisations to promote Council services.</p>	<p>Council will use effective communication to ensure residents are well informed eg use plain English guidelines. Council will work with community organisations to present information through them in an understandable way.</p>

Cultural identity

Issue	Objective	Policy
<p>Nelson has its own special sense of place and history that contributes to the community's sense of belonging.</p>	<p>To develop a sense of Nelson's distinctive culture.</p>	<p>Support opportunities for Nelson's culture to be expressed eg through art or at events. Actively protect things that are key to the Nelson identity such as special landscapes or values.</p>
<p>Understanding the local heritage and stories helps develop a sense of the Nelson culture and enhances feelings of belonging.</p>	<p>To tell the local stories, recent and past</p>	<p>Council to provide opportunities for local stories to be heard and understood eg through interpretation panels, support for the Provincial Museum.</p>
<p>Maintaining, understanding and valuing Māori culture, tikanga and history.</p>	<p>Ensure that Maori cultural heritage is represented as part of Nelson's cultural heritage (while acknowledging that Maori cultural heritage in the Top of the South does not fit neatly within Council boundaries).</p> <p>Promote and foster an understanding of Maori culture and heritage.</p>	<p>Continue to support initiatives that promote understanding of Māori culture and tikanga.</p> <p>Consider opportunities for Māori art and heritage within public spaces and in events and activities.</p>
<p>Increasing ethnic diversity as more migrants and refugees move to Nelson. Need to ensure people can continue to celebrate their own culture as well as feeling welcomed to Nelson.</p>	<p>To recognise and celebrate ethnic diversity as part of Nelson's culture.</p>	<p>Council will acknowledge and promote Nelson's ethnic diversity through Council publications.</p>

Leisure and recreation

Issue	Objective	Policy
<p>Nelson is experiencing changing recreation and leisure patterns - people are participating in a much wider range of activities from mountainbiking and skateboarding to dance and sculpture.</p> <p>Some activities are funded by Council to a much greater level than others.</p>	<p>To plan and deliver services, facilities and activities that offer opportunity to our diverse population in an equitable manner.</p>	<p>Council will review the way it funds leisure and recreation activities to ensure that it meets the population's needs.</p> <p>Council planning for events and activities will take into account the diversity of our community.</p>

Physical environment

Issue	Objective	Policy
<p>The design of the city is crucial to a range of social wellbeing areas, particularly safety and social connectedness and also particularly affects people with disabilities, families with young children and older adults.</p> <p>It is important that development is sustainable so consider changing demographics, changing physical environment (eg climate change) and changing community needs and design for these.</p> <p>Accessibility is an important wellbeing issue, particularly for families with young children and people with impaired mobility or without access to a private vehicle.</p>	<p>Ensure that Council in its own developments and its planning functions promotes good urban design, the consideration of accessibility and an awareness of our changing demographics and physical environment.</p>	<p>The planning for any facilities needs, as part of the planning process, concept and scoping documents, to demonstrate how they meet the changing requirements of the community and the environment over the lifetime of the facility.</p> <p>All developments will consider Safer by Design (CPTED) Guidelines and national standards for accessibility (i.e. <i>NZS 4121: 2001 Design for Access and Mobility</i>).</p> <p>Continue to evolve planning tools to promote good urban design and associated social wellbeing benefits.</p> <p>Staff involved in the commissioning and design of new facilities will receive training from an accredited barrier free training provider.</p>

Nelson's limited public transport system has a major impact on social wellbeing and can particularly impact on those on low incomes, the disabled, youth and older adults. Funding remains the key issue.	To build a public transport network in Nelson that meets the needs of residents.	Continue to explore ways of improving Nelson's public transport system to meet the needs of residents.
---	--	--

Safety

Issue	Objective	Policy
Safety in public places has been identified as a key issue for Nelson. Much of the focus is on the Central Business District and alcohol related incidents.	Work to improve safety in the Central Business District. Reduce the incidence of alcohol related violence.	Continue with Heart of Nelson actions utilising CPTED principles. Continue to work with partners to implement the Alcohol Strategy. Use other regulatory measures to control alcohol related violence such as bylaws and policies under new government alcohol legislation (pending).
Investing resources in wider safety issues such as road safety and emergency management is also important for the safety of residents.	Improve the safety and preparedness of the Nelson community.	Continue to invest resources in road safety and emergency preparedness, with a focus on improving community resilience.
Safety for people of all ethnicities.	Zero tolerance for racism. All people, regardless of race, religion or culture, feel welcome and safe in Nelson.	Support initiatives that deal with challenging and preventing racism.

Social Connectedness

Issue	Objective	Policy
City design and facilities are fundamental for connecting people.	To ensure that city development enhances social wellbeing outcomes	Continue to provide a range of community facilities and spaces that are accessible and encourage residents meet and socialise.

<p>Nelson has an increasing migrant and refugee population. Most are families of working age with children and will be important for balancing Nelson's ageing population in the future. There is a need to ensure that they feel welcomed, can access services and support and feel connected to the Nelson community.</p>	<p>New migrants settle successfully in Nelson.</p>	<p>Council will support initiatives that assist new migrants and refugees to settle into Nelson.</p> <p>Planning for Council events and activities will be inclusive of migrants and refugees.</p>
<p>Intergenerational connectedness has been identified as a key issue for Nelson.</p>	<p>Provide shared spaces for different groups of people to interact.</p>	<p>To continue to develop the libraries as shared spaces that are welcoming to all residents and enable people to connect with their wider community.</p> <p>To provide events and activities that bring together diverse participation from the community.</p> <p>To develop Council facilities and open space in a way that allows different generations to comfortably interact.</p>

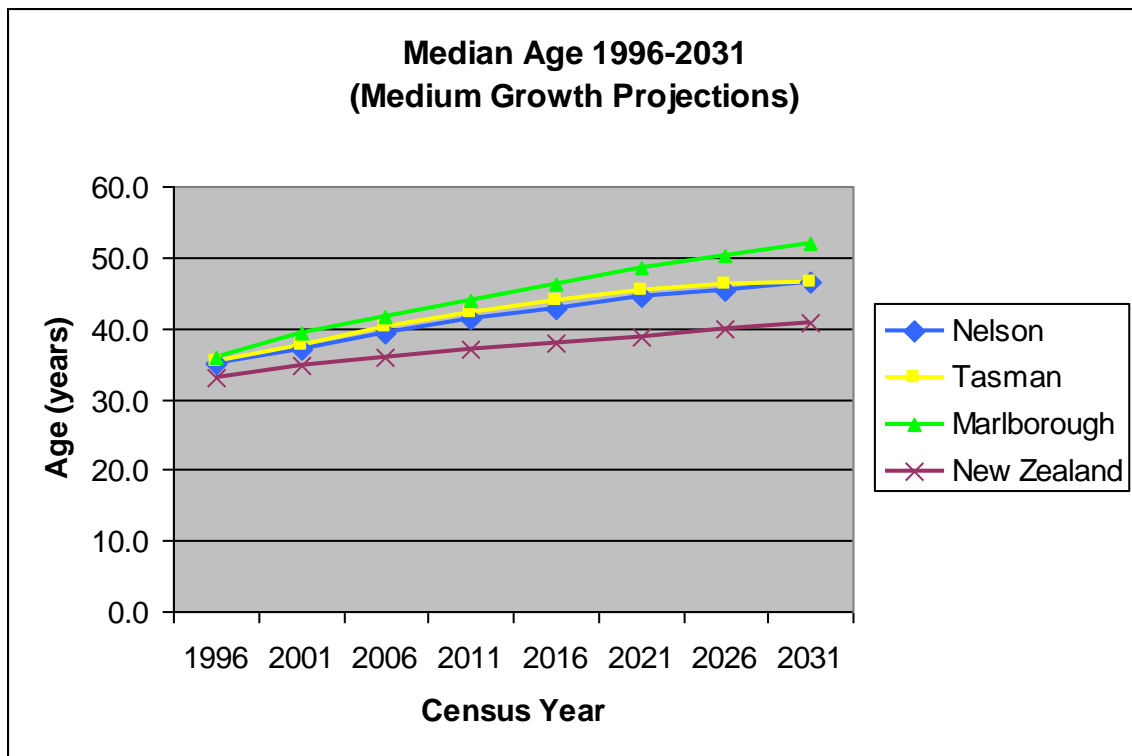
Positive Ageing

Introduction

The world is currently undergoing an unprecedented change in population demographics which will impact on every aspect of our local Nelson community. Population ageing, due to falling rates of fertility¹ and increased longevity, is proceeding at a pace which will see by 2050, the number of older persons in the world exceed the number of young for the first time in history.

Nelson's population of older people (aged 65+) is set to more than double, from 6400 (13.5% of total population) in 2006 to 13,400 (26% of total population) in 2031.²

Fig 1



This ageing demographic will impact on economic growth, savings, investment and consumption, labour markets, pensions, taxation and intergenerational transfers. In the social sphere, population ageing affects health and health care, family composition and living arrangements, housing and migration. In the political arena, population ageing can influence voting patterns and representation. The trend towards older populations is largely irreversible, with the young populations of the past unlikely to occur again.³

¹ Fertility rate = the ratio of live births to the population.

² NZ Population indicators website: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/tables/population-indicators.htm> accessed 27th July 2009

³ United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs, 2002
1052440

Table 1: New Zealand Population Projections – 2051

Percent surviving to age 65	92% (males)	94% (females)
Life expectancy at age 65	22.5 yrs	25 yrs

The ageing demographic will have an impact on Nelson’s future workforce. Nelson has consistently featured as the region with the lowest labour force participation rates for over 65s in New Zealand.

‘Over the next couple of decades nothing will impact OECD economies more profoundly than demographic trends and, chief among them, ageing’.

Jean-Philippe Cotis, OECD, March 2005

This ageing population will place particular demands on the Council for services and facilities that meet its needs, interests and capabilities. The challenge for the Council is to balance these demands against the services provided to the wider community and also to anticipate the changing make-up and needs of the older population over time as different generations age. There is also a need to address the likely impacts of this demographic change on our region’s economic growth.

Vision and outcomes to be achieved for older residents

The Council’s vision for this policy is that Nelson is recognised as a place where the contribution that older residents make to the city is valued and they are supported to play a full and active role in community life.

The Council will ensure that the specific needs of older adults are taken into account in the way it:

- Plans community facilities and infrastructure
- Allows development to take place
- Delivers services to the community
- Communicates with residents

The desired outcomes that this policy can contribute to are that older people:

- Feel that they are an important, valued and respected part of the Nelson community
- Contribute to and participate in the Nelson lifestyle
- Feel that Nelson is a safe place to live and grow old in
- Are recognised as a diverse group physically, culturally and economically
- Have equitable access to Council services and resources

- Have their views listened to and respected when Council makes decisions

Structure of this section

This section of the Social Wellbeing Policy deals with issues which impact more on older people's sense of wellbeing. However the general policies above also address issues of importance to older residents.

Council acknowledges that there are many organisations and agencies in our community that have a role in delivering social wellbeing outcomes and that central government has provided a framework for action through its National Positive Ageing Strategy 2001. This policy focuses on areas where Council has a key role in planning and delivering services and activities that contribute to enhanced social wellbeing.

Council also has a role in partnering, collaborating and facilitating with others to achieve social wellbeing goals. The appendix to the Social Wellbeing Policy shows the breadth of community organisations that contribute to Social Wellbeing in Nelson.

Health

Issue	Objective	Policy
<p>There is a recognised link between levels of physical activity and the wellbeing of older adults. There are also links between the degree of participation in the community and mental health.</p>	<p>Provide a range of active transport options for older people.</p> <p>Provide age-friendly events and activities.</p> <p>Ensure that older adults are able to access information on activities that support good health in older age.</p>	<p>Council will continue to implement its Cycling and Walking Strategies with an emphasis on active transport and connecting reserves and facilities to the existing network.</p> <p>Council events and activities will be planned and delivered giving due consideration to the needs and diversity of older residents.</p>

Knowledge and skills

Issue	Objective	Policy
<p>The current cohort of older people are less likely to have or choose internet access and more likely to have impairments which affect their ability to access information.</p> <p>The Council is seen as a central information point in the community by older people.</p> <p>During life transition points, older people may need supported access to information that was not previously relevant to them.</p> <p>Older adults hold a great resource of knowledge and experience which can be valuable to the community.</p>	<p>Ensure that older residents have access to information in a format that they can access.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for life long learning. To ensure libraries are welcoming places for older people.</p> <p>Ensure that opportunities to reach older people with information are maximised.</p> <p>Ensure that older adult's skills and experience are able to be accessed by the community.</p>	<p>Communication with residents will take into account appropriate formats for different groups eg hard copies, large print for older adults.</p> <p>Libraries' strategic planning will consider and address older people's issues.</p> <p>Council will use existing community networks to communicate information to older residents.</p> <p>Opportunities for transference of skills will be promoted eg youth mentoring.</p>

Paid Work

Issue	Objective	Policy
<p>There is a perception that employers are less inclined to employ older workers.</p>	<p>Model a positive approach to older workers by developing guidelines for the retention and recruitment of older employees.</p>	<p>Council will develop a policy for retaining and utilising the skills of its older workers.</p>

Economic standard of living

Issue	Objective	Policy
Housing affordability is an issue for older people particularly those who are unable to supplement income by working.	Raise awareness of schemes aimed at reducing costs for older residents.	Council will promote the rates postponement scheme and entitlements to rates rebates.

Leisure and recreation

Issue	Objective	Policy
Increasing diversity of older people will result in increased demands for a diverse range of appropriate activities and events.	Provide age-friendly events and activities. Provide a range of events that reflect the cultural diversity of our older residents.	Council events and activities will be planned and delivered giving due consideration to the needs and diversity of older residents.

Physical environment

Issue	Objective	Policy
Accessibility issues are barriers to many older people's enjoyment of outdoors recreation. Loss of driver's licence can be socially isolating.	Ensure appropriate access to Council parks and facilities. Ensure there are alternatives to private car use.	Accessibility issues will be specifically considered when planning documents are reviewed. The specific needs of older people will be considered when planning and designing new infrastructure. Continue to explore ways of improving the public transport system to meet the needs of older residents.

Safety

Issue	Objective	Policy
<p>Older people can be more vulnerable to accidents, in their own home, on the roads and on paths and cycleways.</p> <p>Mobility scooter users share paths and cycleways with other transport modes, with the potential for accidents growing as numbers increase.</p>	<p>Ensure that hazards under the responsibility of Council are identified and addressed.</p> <p>Promote road safety amongst older drivers.</p> <p>Raise awareness about good practice use of mobility scooters.</p>	<p>Promote the Customer Service Centre's role in addressing safety issues identified by residents in the community.</p> <p>Continue to support road safety training for older drivers and mobility scooter users.</p>

Social Connectedness

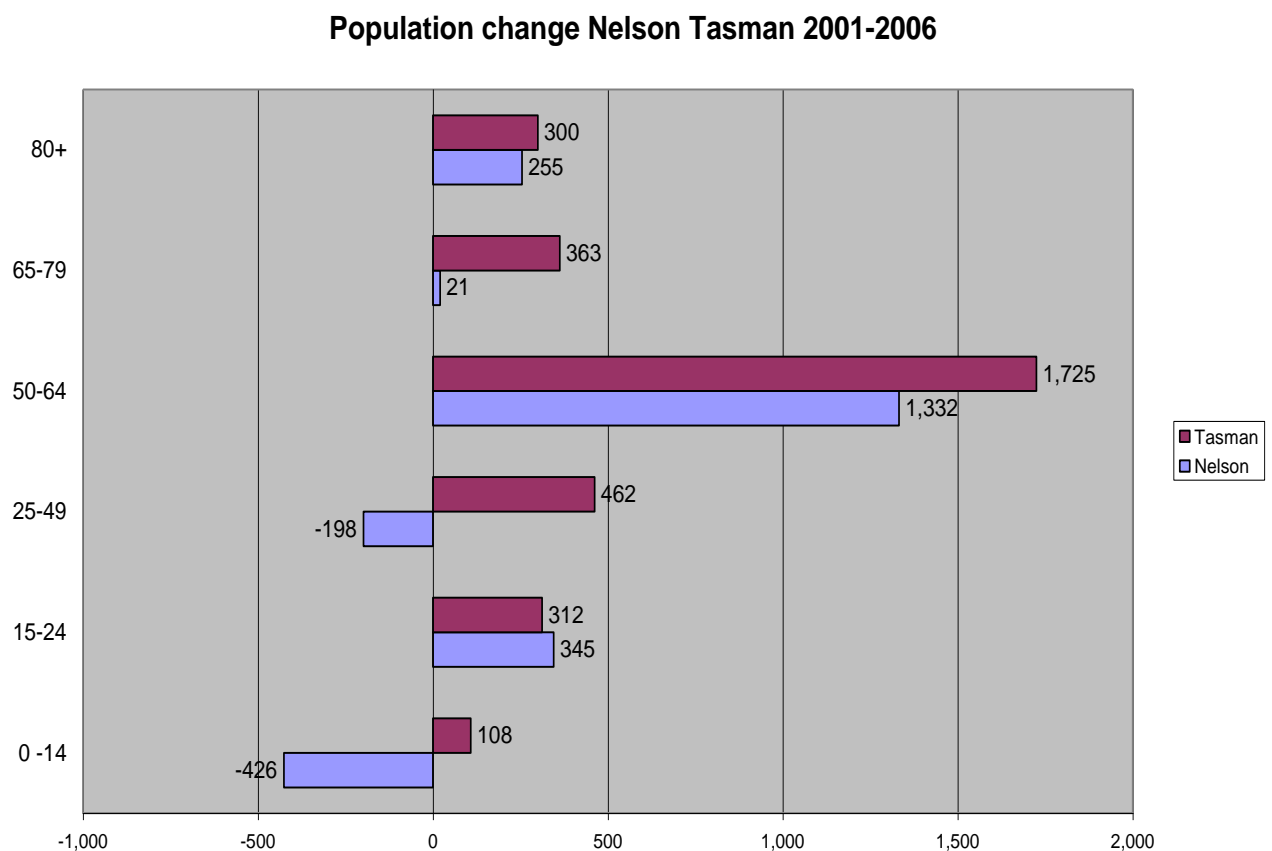
Issue	Objective	Policy
<p>Isolation can result from loss of a partner, loss of mobility, loss of employment.</p> <p>Negative perceptions of older people impact on their sense of self worth, which impacts on their ability to participate in community activities.</p> <p>Older people want opportunities to interact with each other and with younger generations. Libraries have a key role to play in delivering these opportunities.</p>	<p>Provide opportunities for peer and intergenerational interactions.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for older and younger residents to interact.</p>	<p>Review the charging mechanisms for the use of community halls.</p> <p>Ensure Council facilities and services encourage multigenerational use eg appropriate seating areas at playgrounds and parks.</p> <p>Council will take opportunities to positively profile the contribution of older adults to the community.</p>

Youth

Introduction

This section of the policy covers young people from ages 12 to 24, based on the definition used in the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa. While the actual number of young people in Nelson is predicted to decline only slowly over time, with an ageing demographic the proportion of young people as a percentage of the total population will decline significantly (Fig 2 shows 2006 population changes by age group). The challenge for Council is to retain and attract young people recognising their energy, talents and potential are of great value to our community.

Fig 2



There were 7,380 persons aged 12 to 24 in Nelson in 2006⁴ or 17% of residents. The majority (approximately 76.5%) of young people in Nelson were classified as European New Zealanders and approximately 13% of Maori decent. In 2006 the Asian youth population made up approximately 3.5% of the youth population in Nelson, and Pacific youth accounted for approximately 2.5%.

A 2009 survey of 879 young people in Nelson, undertaken by the Nelson Youth Council, showed that 82% were proud to live here. The main issues

⁴ 2006 Census figures

for youth raised by those surveyed were a lack of things to do and places to go, poor public transport, graffiti and the transition from school into work.

Older youth tend to be relatively mobile and statistics from Nelson Tasman Connections show that 30% of 16 to 19 year olds leave Nelson to study and work in other places when they have completed secondary education. Attracting and retaining young people to live and work in Nelson is flagged as an important issue in the Economic Development Agency's Regional Work Force Development Strategy.

Council receives advice on youth-related issues from many sources including the Nelson Youth Council, established in 1998, and funded and supported by Council.

Vision and outcomes to be achieved for youth

Council's vision is that Nelson's youth will be supported to be optimistic, connected, respected, healthy and resilient.

Council will ensure that the specific needs of youth are taken into account in the way it:

- Plans community facilities and infrastructure
- Delivers services and activities to the community
- Communicates with the community

The desired outcomes that this policy can contribute to are that youth:

- Feel that they are an important, valued and respected part of the Nelson community
- Contribute to and participate in the Nelson lifestyle
- Feel that Nelson is a safe place to live and develop
- Are recognised as a diverse group physically, culturally and economically
- Have access to Council services and resources
- Have their views listened to and respected when Council makes decisions
- Have economic opportunities within the region

Structure of this section

This section of the Social Wellbeing Policy deals with issues which impact more on young people's sense of wellbeing. However the general policies above also address issues of importance to youth.

Council recognises that other government agencies and community organisations have an important part to play in contributing towards the social wellbeing of young people. The Council is committed to working in

partnership with these organisations to promote positive youth development in Nelson.

This policy focuses on those areas where Council can take an active role in improving youth wellbeing, and therefore does not consider issues that are more effectively addressed through other agencies or at a national level. Similarly, issues that have relevance to a wider section of the community than youth are dealt with in the general policies.

Civil and Political Rights

Young people can be marginalised from the political system. Making it easy for young people to participate in community decision making and providing young people and organisations representing them with access to people in positions of authority can help young people feel connected and empowered.

Issue	Objective	Policy
Youth often do not participate in decision making about issues that affect them.	Ensure youth have access to information about decisions that affect them, opportunities to easily provide input to the decision making process, and feel their input is listened to and respected.	Ensure that information relevant to young people is provided in ways that are youth-friendly Actively seek young people's views on issues that affect them. Council will act as an advocate to represent the views and needs of Nelson's youth to decision makers in key issues affecting our young people.

Leisure and Recreation

The Council has a role in providing safe recreation and leisure opportunities for youth. It is important to have suitable facilities and opportunities to attract and retain youth in the region. The provision of recreation and leisure opportunities has links with social connectedness through facilitating connections between youth and between youth and older generations.

Issue	Objective	Policy
Youth report a lack of 'things to do' and 'places to hang out'.	Youth have a variety of recreation and leisure opportunities	Provide and support recreation and leisure opportunities and events for youth in Nelson

Physical Environment

Transport is a prerequisite for participation in community activities, and young Nelsonians ranked transport as the third most important issue for youth in Nelson (Youth Council Survey 2009). Council can support walking

and cycling as transport choices through continuing to develop its network of cycle/walkways and this is covered in other sections of this policy.

Young people need their own spaces but also need to feel at home in a range of settings within the community. The more environments within the community which welcome and value young people, the more young people can be involved and have positive connections. Council has a role in developing facilities, spaces and events which encourage positive interactions between generations.

Issue	Objective	Policy
Youth need to feel comfortable in public spaces and areas dedicated to young people.	Ensure the design and development of facilities and public spaces in the city create youth friendly environments	Develop facilities and spaces that are youth-friendly and encourage positive interactions between generations.

Safety

Safety was a key issue for residents in the 2009 Residents Survey. While Nelson generally provides a safe environment for young people to grow into adulthood Council recognises that is not always so and that it has a role in improving youth safety.

Transport related injuries are the leading cause of death and a major cause of hospital admissions in young people under 25 years of age in Nelson Marlborough. These crashes have significant associated social costs. Council partners in a number of initiatives that aim to make young people safer on our roads.

Young people, particularly young adult males, have a greater chance of being involved in alcohol related accidents, disorderly conduct and criminal activities. Young people also report that there are times when they do not feel safe in the central city at night. In particular young people who display signs of being different from mainstream youth can be at risk of anti-social behaviour such as bullying or racist attacks. Council has a range of initiatives working to make the city a safe place for all residents.

Issue	Objective	Policy
Youth are disproportionately represented in road crash statistics.	Provide youth with access to information and support to make safe choices on the road.	Support the provision of road safety education targeted at youth.

The city centre is not perceived to be a safe place for youth at night.	Improve safety for young people in the inner city at night.	Support initiatives that improve safety in the city.
---	---	--

Social Connectedness

A small minority of youth are not well integrated into the community and are at risk of becoming disenfranchised. Council has partnerships with agencies that can work with such youth and help them integrate successfully into society. Some current partners include the New Hub, which provides recreational and social services for young people, and Connections, a programme which focuses on the transition from schooling to further training or employment. In addition, to be socially connected youth need to feel respected by the community.

Issue	Objective	Policy
Some young people are not well integrated into the community	Youth have access to a range of environments, activities and facilities that encourage positive social interaction amongst youth and with the wider community.	Support activities that encourage and assist youth to participate in the community
Some people in the community have a poor opinion of young people.	The wider community values young people	Recognise and celebrate the achievements of youth in our community. Promote the value of young people to the community.

Affordable Housing

Introduction

Housing is recognised as one of the key elements supporting the social wellbeing of any community. Consultation for the Social Wellbeing Policy review has identified housing affordability as an issue affecting all ages, social and ethnic groups in the low to medium household income brackets.

There are many definitions of housing affordability, but for the purposes of this discussion, the following definition (Housing New Zealand, 2005) has been used.

“Affordability typically becomes a concern where the housing costs of households in the lower 40% of the income distribution exceed 25% to 30% of their income.”

Housing affordability has been a major issue in Nelson since the 1990s, with house prices rising 70% between 2002 and 2004. Nelson regularly features in the top three least affordable housing regions of New Zealand. In March 2010 Central Otago Lakes remained the least affordable region with an index of 131.6% of the national average. Next was the Auckland region at 122.0% followed by Nelson/Marlborough at 105.2%.

There is a strong rental market in Nelson, with increasing numbers of residents renting rather than buying. Home ownership levels dropped from 72.3% of all private households in 1996 to 68.6% in 2006. The rental market in Nelson is made up of ownership by a private person or business 85.3%, Housing New Zealand Corporation 10.7%, Local Authority or City Council 2.8% and other state landlord(3)1.0%⁵. Some of the lowest cost rental properties in Nelson are acknowledged to be substandard.

Consultation on affordable housing with key stakeholders and providers suggests there is also an attitudinal issue regarding housing in Nelson. Several agencies interviewed cited instances of people “needing” turn-key properties and a move away from the idea of starting at the bottom in a lower quartile home and working your way up. It is also becoming more common for several individuals or families to come together to rent or buy a better standard of home. Increasingly parents are giving their children a step up by paying the deposit on a first home.

How Nelson is profiled was also stated as playing a role in housing affordability. Nelson is not currently portrayed as urban dwelling in a recreational area, but as ‘a lifestyle’ region and many of those moving to the region have an expectation of large properties on large sections and are not satisfied with the range of properties that fit their budget.

⁵ Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census of Population and Dwellings

The ageing population will also affect housing needs, with declining numbers expected in all age groups except those 65 yrs and over. Average household size is projected to drop from 2.4 in 2006 to 2.1 by 2031 with a projected increase in one person households. (3.2% increase between 1996 and 2006⁶) More housing will be needed with projections ranging from a low estimate of 1800 to a high estimate of 7300 by 2031.⁷

House size also has a bearing on housing affordability. There are currently more, larger dwellings being built, with average values of new consented dwellings rising sharply. In addition fewer smaller (more affordable) houses are being built with prices of smaller houses remaining higher as a consequence⁸.

In addition to playing an important part in social wellbeing, housing also affects the city's economic wellbeing, particularly if it can no longer attract or keep the workforce needed due to a lack of affordable accommodation options.

The face of community based Affordable Housing initiatives in Nelson has changed over the years, from being dominated by central government, Council and religious institutions, to include a number of other service providers. Council is still recognised as playing an important role through its direct provision of community housing units to older residents and indirect support to third party providers and ratepayers.

Council is currently involved in the direct provision of affordable housing as landlord for 142 community/ pensioner housing units administered by a contractor on Council's behalf. These units were built using low interest loans provided by central government (between the 1950s and 1990s) for the purpose of providing housing for people on low or limited incomes. Up until 2004 the units were self-funding. In 2004 rents were reduced to 25% of New Zealand Superannuation and since that time the rental income from the units has not covered the costs of maintenance and administration. In community consultation the question of the future of these units, the level of provision, the equity of current cost-recovery and Council's role as landlord have all been questioned.

Council has a range of less direct involvement in housing including:

- facilitating the Nelson Tasman Housing Forum
- assisting (including through land provision) Nelson Tasman Housing Trust and Abbeyfield developments
- funding Habitat for Humanity
- running the Clean Heat Warm Homes scheme
- subsidising solar hot water system installation
- providing rate rebates
- issuing building consents
- zoning land
- setting development levies and rates

⁶ Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census of Population and Dwellings

⁷ Source: Statistics New Zealand, Census of Population and Dwellings

⁸ CHRANZ 'A report for the *Affordable Housing in the Nelson, Tasman and Marlborough Regions: A Solutions Study*'

Vision and outcomes for Affordable Housing

Council's vision for affordable housing is that the housing needs of all Nelson residents are met in a way that is appropriate, sustainable and enhances wellbeing.

The desired outcomes that this policy can contribute to are that residents:

- An improved range of affordable housing options
- More healthy and sustainable housing stock

Affordable Housing

Issue	Objective	Policy
<p>Housing is recognised as critical to the wellbeing of all ages and socio-economic groups.</p> <p>Accessing affordable housing is considered to be a difficulty for many Nelson residents with lower to middle incomes.</p> <p>Many of the factors affecting affordability are outside the influence of local government.</p> <p>A related issue is the need for emergency housing options to temporarily provide accommodation for residents in need.</p>	<p>Ensure central government is aware of affordable housing needs in Nelson.</p> <p>Use a range of approaches to address affordability in recognition of the complexity of the problem and the fact that Council alone cannot meet the current or future needs of residents in this area.</p>	<p>Council will engage with central government on the provision of direct and indirect initiatives to address affordable housing issues in Nelson.</p> <p>Further work will be undertaken to consider options for the future ownership and funding of Council's community housing units with the aim of finding the most effective and fair way to deliver affordable options.</p> <p>Seek opportunities to work with partners to find affordable housing solutions, including considering housing on a regional basis with Tasman District Council.</p> <p>Council's planning documents will be developed in a way that encourages the provision of affordable housing.</p> <p>Support initiatives to increase stock of sustainable and healthy affordable housing.</p> <p>Support provision of</p>

		emergency temporary accommodation in the city.
--	--	--

Implementation and monitoring of this policy

This policy is a high level document that sets out the broad principles that Council will follow when considering Social Wellbeing issues. These principles will be implemented through the development of projects and work programmes.

Monitoring of this policy will be incorporated into Council's Long Term Plan, which will include levels of service for Council's delivery of Social Wellbeing activities.

Nelson City Council

PO Box 645 Nelson 7040

Civic House 110 Trafalgar Street, Nelson

Phone 03 546 0200

Fax 03 546 0239

Email enquiries@ncc.govt.nz

www.nelsoncitycouncil.co.nz