

COMMUNITY  
*Engagement*  
SUMMARY  
REPORT

AGE  
FRIENDLY  
STRATEGY



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## INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide details of community engagement undertaken in 2014 to inform the development of a new **Age Friendly Strategy** for the City of Unley. This report aims to provide a summary of the engagement findings of the City of Unley Community.

## 1. BACKGROUND

### PROJECT BACKGROUND

The City of Unley is developing a new Age Friendly Strategy to replace the existing Ageing Strategy which expired in 2014. The new Age Friendly Strategy will be focused on creating an Age Friendly City by supporting and encouraging *Positive and Active Ageing*, where the City is accessible for everyone, promotes health and wellbeing, provides opportunities for connection and inclusion including a high sense of belonging, meaning and contribution.

Rather than being a Council specific plan, the Age Friendly Strategy will be undertaken with a whole of City approach. The Age Friendly Strategy will be centred on the Active Ageing policy frameworks of the World Health Organisation (WHO). In 2002, WHO developed the Active Ageing Policy Framework (WHO, 2002) to assist policy makers and program developers in the context of an ageing society. This framework provides an understanding of the social, physical, cultural and economic environments experienced by older adults and provides a guide to support and enable people in communities to age actively.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAN

A comprehensive community engagement program was undertaken in late August - September 2014 to assist in the development of the City of Unley Age Friendly Strategy, which is being created in partnership with UniSA.

The purpose of this engagement was to identify the aspirations, strengths, weaknesses, needs as well as current and future issues related to ageing in the City of Unley. The engagement process also aimed to test research findings and establish priorities for the City of Unley community.

The feedback provided as part of this stage one consultation is informing the development of the draft strategy.

This was the first stage of engagement for this project. A second round of engagement is proposed to be undertaken to test the draft strategy.

## 2. CONSULTATION METHODOLOGY

This community engagement initiative commenced on Monday 25 August and concluded on Monday 15 September 2014.

Feedback was collected using a number of approaches which included:

- A comprehensive survey (online and hard copy)
- Face to face focus groups held at the Unley Community Centre facilitated by the University of SA (2 in total)
- Post it polling at Age Friendly Hub's (AF Hubs) located at Unley Shopping Centre, Unley Library and Unley Community Centre. These hubs were staffed by City of Unley employees who connected and talked with participants, encouraging their feedback.
- Service provider interviews (3 in total)

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All questions were targeted to measure the City of Unley's perceived performance were based WHO's 8 dimension areas of Age Friendly Cities and Communities being:

- Outdoor Spaces & Buildings
- Transport
- Housing
- Social participation
- Respect and social inclusion
- Civic participation and engagement
- Communication and information
- Community support and health services

This engagement opportunity was extensively promoted including via:

- A press release sent to all media partners
- Articles in the local messenger newspaper
- Online via our website, Your Say Unley, and our social media channels
- Display information in all our community service points including the customer centre, community centres, libraries and the Unley Swim Centre.
- Via our Library, Community Centre and Community Service newsletters
- Mail out to our HACC customers and their carers, council's volunteers, Carer's SA database
- Formal invitations to participate to service providers, trader associations, sports clubs, community and religious groups

### 3. FINDINGS & RESULTS

A total of 224 people formally participated in this initiative. Of these: 29 people took part in focus groups; 40 people responded via Your Say Unley and 155 responded using the hard copy feedback form. Additionally, over 150 people visited our Age Friendly Hubs located in the Unley Shopping Centre, Unley Library and the Unley Community Centre. Your Say Unley attracted 1644 page views and 361 visitors over the engagement period. 92% of people, who registered to participate in the online forum and provided written responses, live within the City of Unley.

A comprehensive report on the consultation findings has been provided by the University of South Australia, which outlines both quantitative and qualitative data received as part of this engagement initiative. This supplementary report provides a summary for easy reference and a quick snapshot of the feedback provided.

### KEY INSIGHTS: FOCUS GROUPS

**Best things** about growing older in the City of Unley

- Social activities
- Good neighbours
- Volunteering
- Community Bus
- Technology
- Council general
- Community services offered by Council
- Community centres
- Libraries
- Access to communication from Council
- Health and wellbeing opportunities (including walking)

**Improvements** to make the City of Unley a better place to grow old

- Traffic/road safety
- Footpath maintenance
- Volunteering experience
- Personal safety
- Technology
- Planning and development
- Community engagement
- Accessibility to public transport
- Communication
- Convenience of public transport

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**Focus Group: Top Feedback re 8 Dimensions of WHO Active Ageing Policy Framework**

**Outdoor Spaces and Buildings**

**Positives**

Flat and walkable city  
Parks and gardens

**Areas for Improvement**

Footpath quality – access for reduced mobility/trips/hazards  
Navigating busy roads

**Transport**

**Positives**

Community bus  
Number of transport options  
Go zone frequency/reliability

**Areas for Improvement**

Traffic safety  
Limited options when people can no longer drive

**Housing**

**Positives**

Neighbours/Neighbourhood spirit  
Ageing in place – as long as possible

**Areas for Improvement**

Planning & development (heights; high density; loss of character)  
Lack of housing alternatives to downsize in the area other than an aged care facility

**Social Participation**

**Positives**

Range and quality of social activities  
Involvement with local church groups

**Areas for Improvement**

Promotion of social activities – finding out about what's on  
Support to attend social activities

**Respect and Inclusion**

**Positives**

Support for activities to bring generations together  
COU considered inclusive

**Areas for Improvement**

Seats offered on public transport  
“Invisibility” of older people  
More support and help for more isolated members of the community to access social services

**Civic Participation and Employment**

**Positives**

Variety of volunteer activities  
Ability to undertake paid work if wanted  
Improved connection and ability to have a say  
In community consultation

**Areas for Improvement**

Support for volunteers – not appreciated/treated well  
Volunteers treated differently than paid staff  
Council doesn't really listen to feedback as part of engagement  
Times for engagement often unsuitable for older people

**Communication and Information**

**Positives**

Support for digital literacy/technology  
Well informed about what is happening locally  
Library services (noted supportive staff)  
Messenger newspaper a good source of info

**Areas for Improvement**

Technology support when things go wrong (ie help desk)  
Too much emphasis on the internet/online for information  
Difficulty finding information on the website  
Overwhelmed by sheer volume of information  
Messenger newspaper not always delivered

**Community Support and Health Services**

**Positives**

Community services offered by Council  
Variety of health services in the area

**Areas for Improvement**

Quality of gutter cleaning service  
Low awareness of services offered by Council

**KEY INSIGHTS: SURVEYS**

**Outdoor Spaces and Buildings (OSB)**

- Respondee were generally satisfied, rating agree or above for most questions in the OSB dimension, with the exception of footpath obstructions (65% dissatisfied) and footpath accessibility/mobility (46% dissatisfied).
- Lower level of awareness noted in regard to recreation facilities for older people and availability of public toilets.

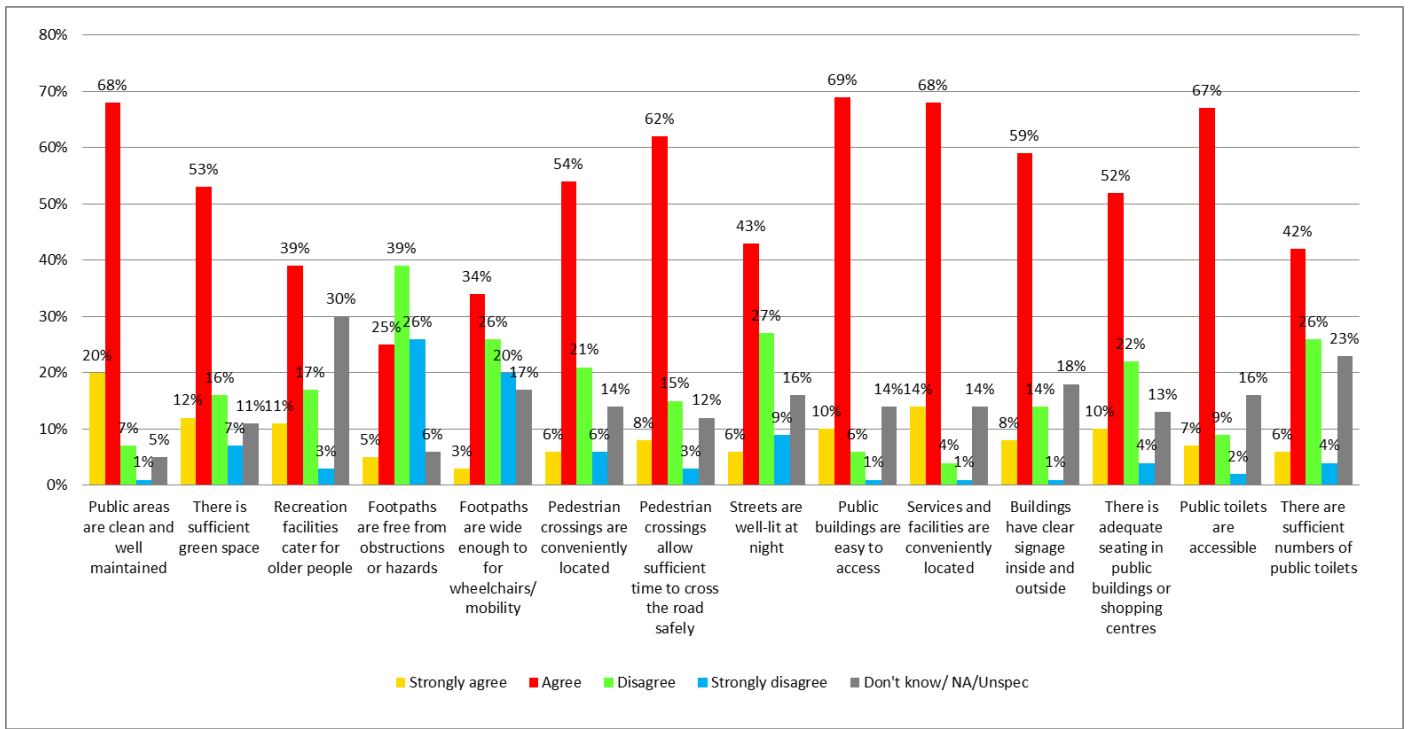


Figure 1: Outdoor Spaces and Buildings

### Transport

- Respondees generally satisfied in the TRANSPORT dimension rating agree or above for most questions.
- Strong response for maintenance of roads; road signs; pick up/drop off zones; and spaces/respected disabled car parks with a high number of respondents strongly agreeing.
- A high disagree rating (72% disagree or below) was given for the statement driver education is available for older drivers
- There seems to be a lower level of awareness regarding community transport services, specialised transport options and taxis services.

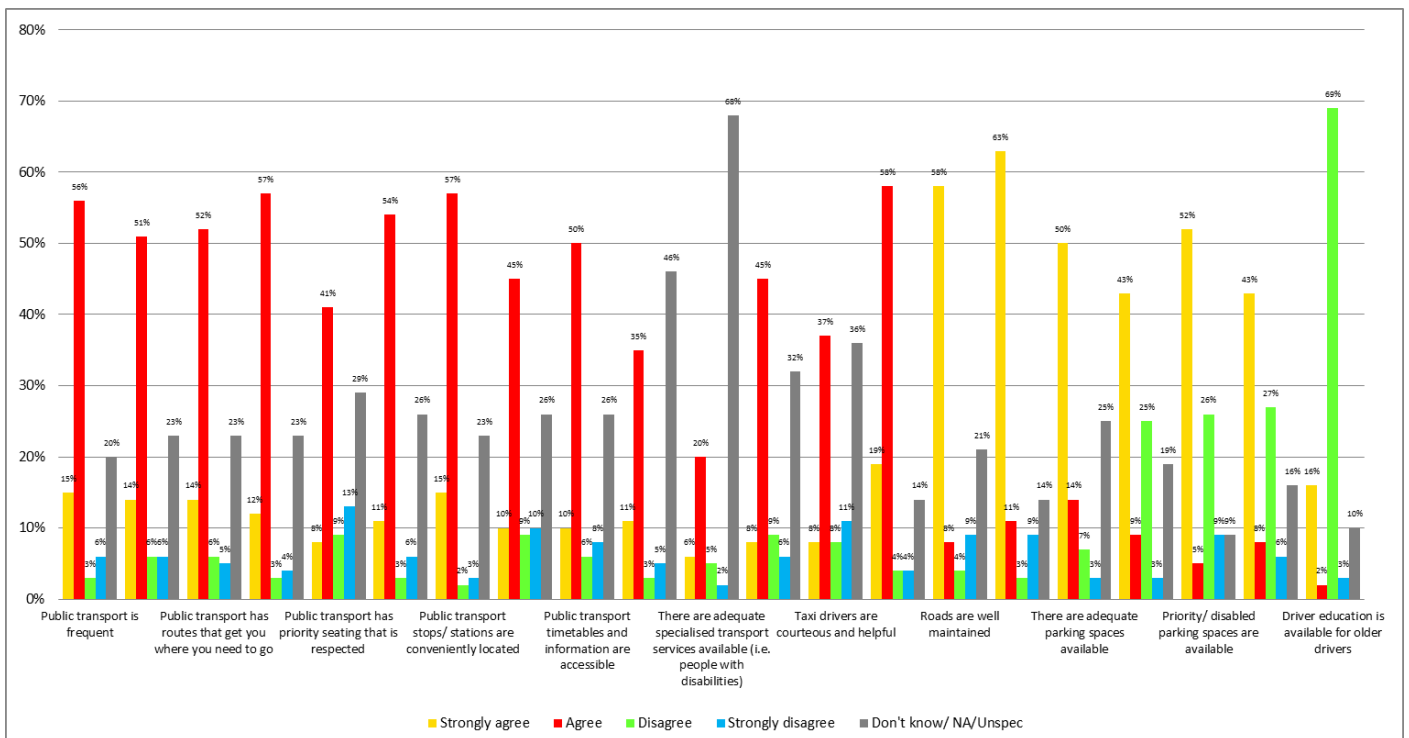


Figure 2: Transport

## Housing

- Mixed responses to the statements in the HOUSING dimension.
- Respondees rating agree or above for moving around home without aids (77%); assistance with home maintenance (65%); feeling safe within own home
- Very strong response rating agree and above with respondents wishing to age in place (in current place of residence) (90%); perceptions of safety – in own home (89%) and in neighbourhood (88%); and good relationships with neighbours (87%)
- The appears to be a lower level of awareness regarding assistance with home modifications, access to suitable alternative housing in the area and housing design catering to older people.

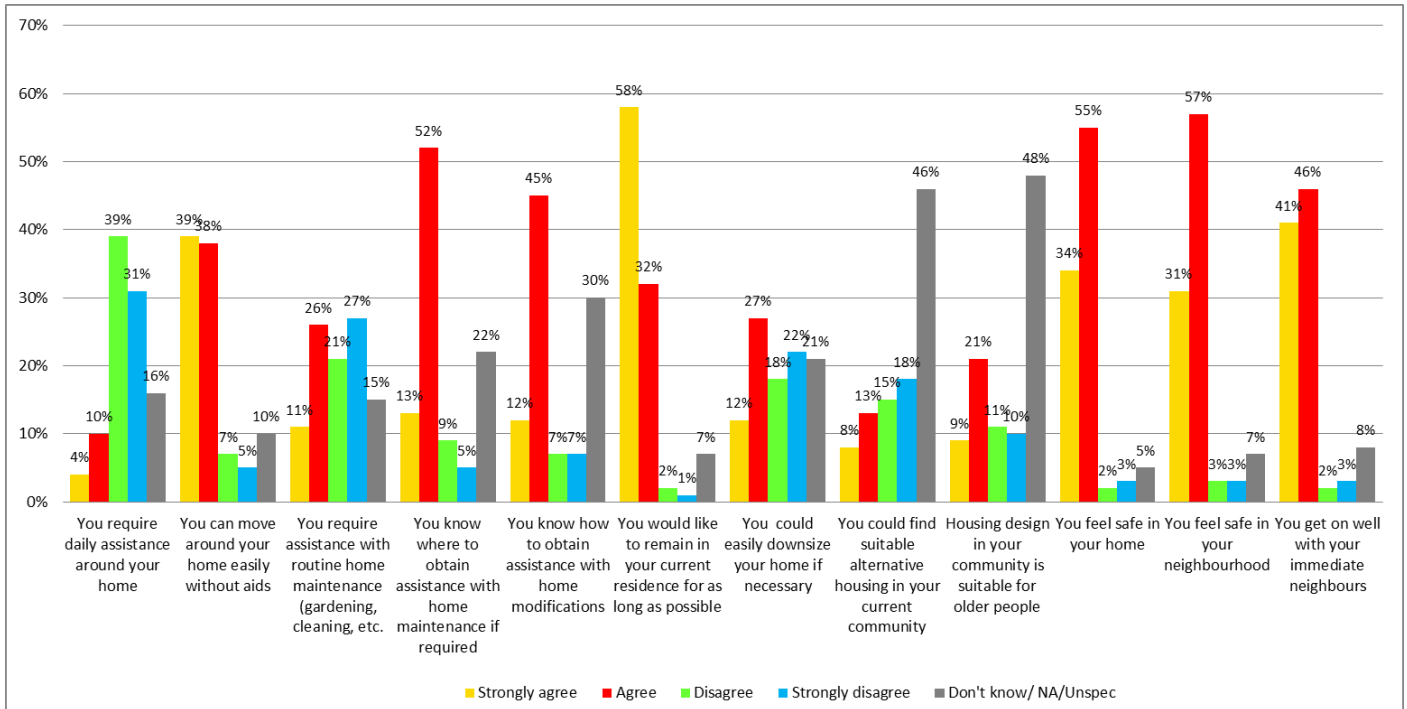


Figure 3: Housing

## Social Participation (SP)

- Respondees very satisfied in the SP dimension rating strongly for most questions, indicating this is a focus area that is working well.
- The highest disagree rating was for inclusiveness of events and attractions for older people with 40% rating disagree or below), however 47% rated agree or above to the same question.
- Also of note, 44% of respondents attend weekly social activities, 21% attend monthly and 22% don't participate in any social activity.

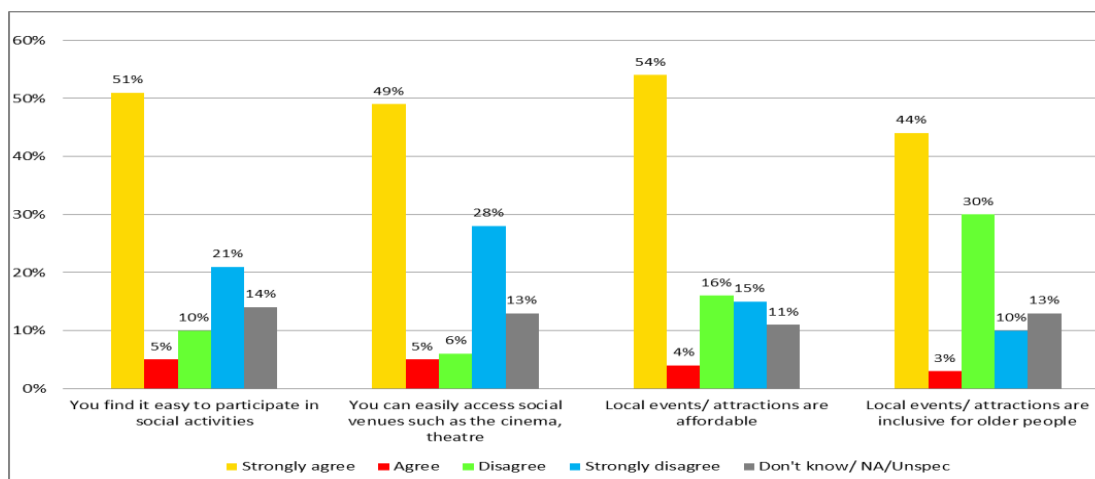


Figure 4A: Social Participation



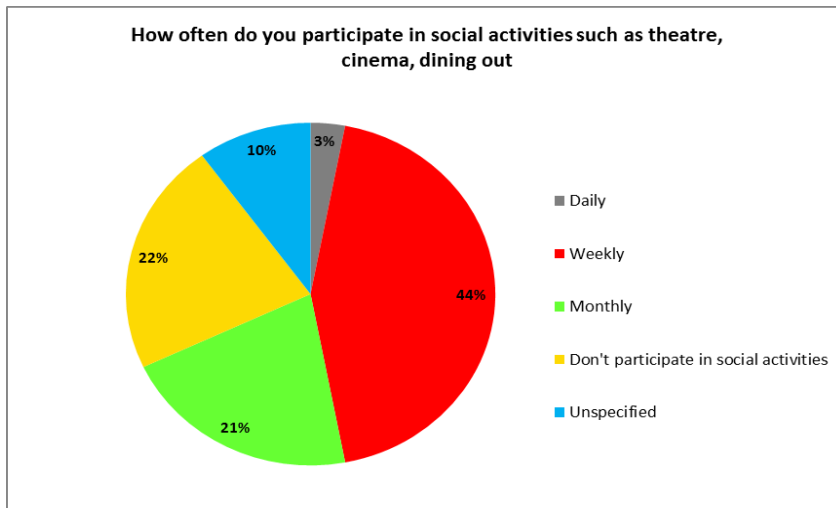


Figure 4B: Social Participation

### Respect and Inclusion (R&I)

- Respondees generally satisfied in the R&I dimension rating agree or above for most questions, indicating this is a focus area that is working well.
- Split within the statement regarding difficulty being included within activities with 51% rating they do not find it difficult and 24% do find it more challenging.
- There appears a lower level of awareness about support available for difficult decisions and opportunities to be consulted on local issues.

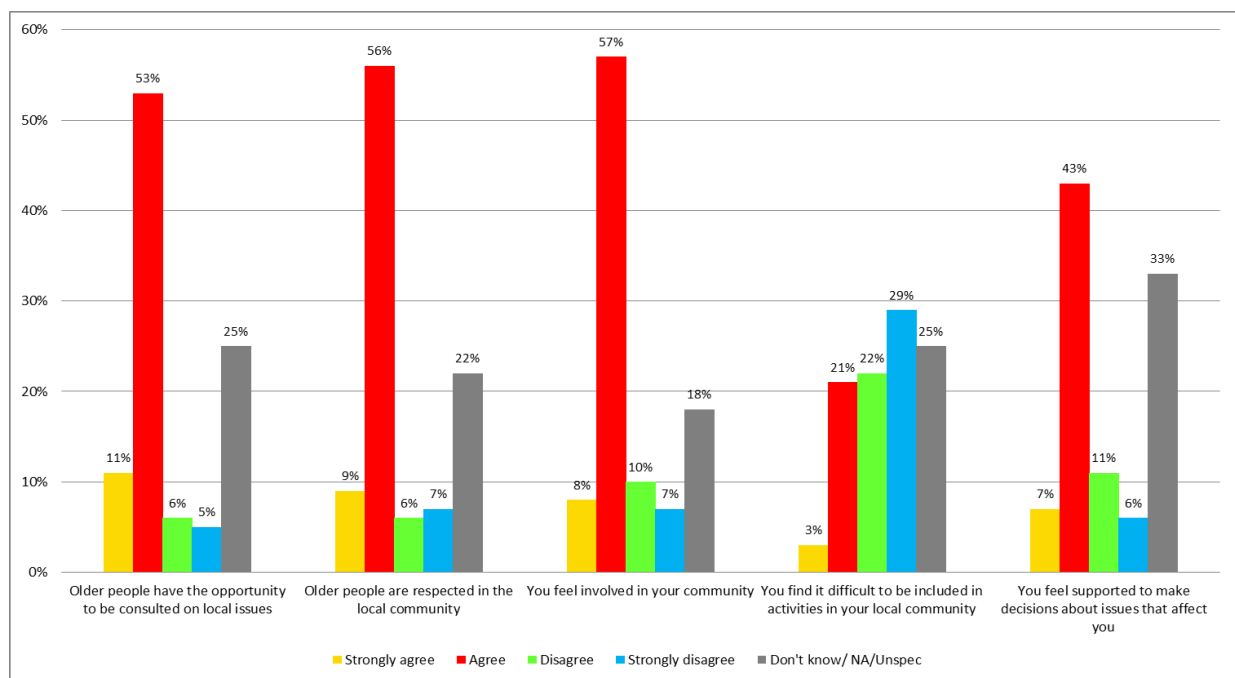


Figure 5: Respect and Inclusion

### Civic Participation and Employment (CP&E)

- Low level of awareness recorded for majority of statements in the CP&E dimension with high ratings of “Don't know/NA/Unspecified” for information regarding volunteer opportunities (33% unspec); willingness to volunteer (45% unspec); opportunities for paid work (59% unspec); employer willingness to employ older people (55% unspec); self-employment opportunities (71% unspec); access to training and education (52% unspec); involvement in decision making (42% unspec) and representation in community and public affairs (53% unspec).
- Highest satisfaction areas rating agree or above were in regard to information re volunteer opportunities (62%); training and education opportunities (32%) and involvement in decision making (43%)

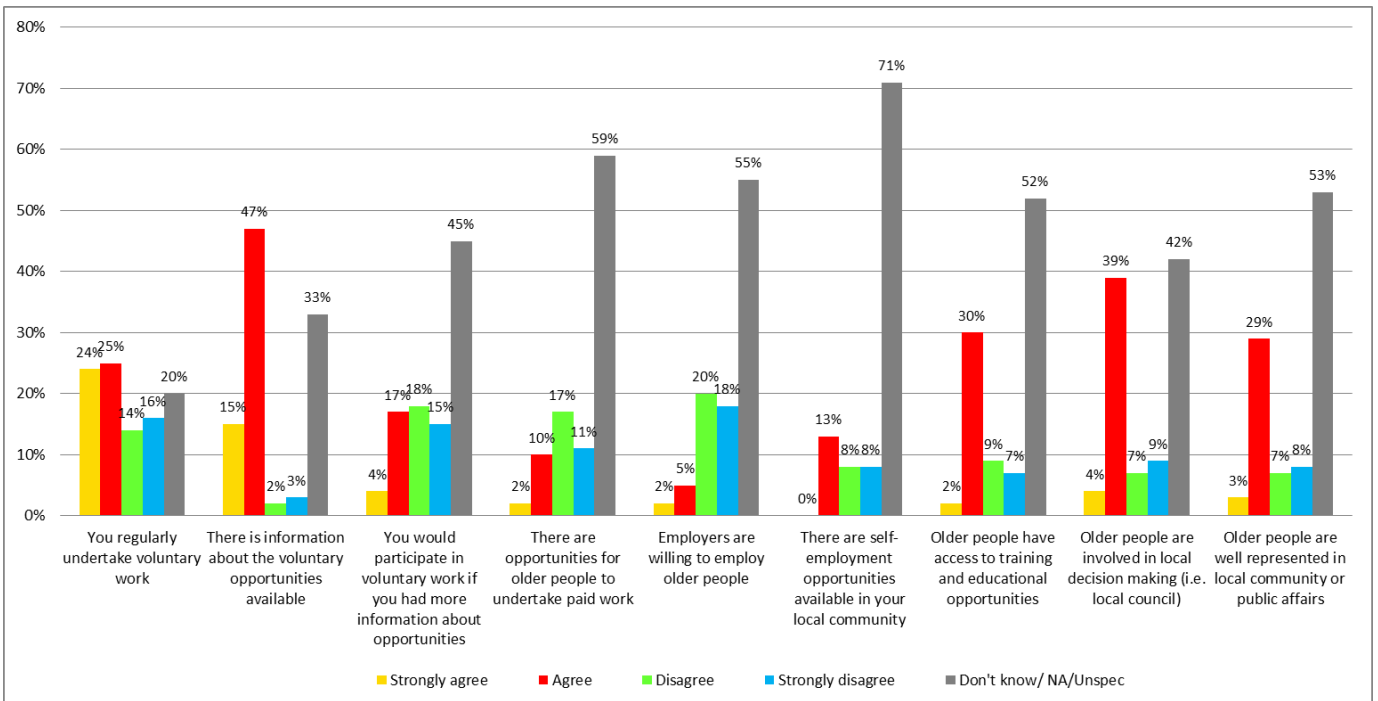


Figure 6: Civic Participation and Employment

### Communication and Information (C&I)

- Respondee generally satisfied in the C&I dimension rating agree or above for most questions. Highest ratings were for easy access local services (71%); understandable formats of information (67%) and ability to access information (62%).
- Lower scoring provided for information from utility companies (45%) and ease of use of automated customer service systems (42%).

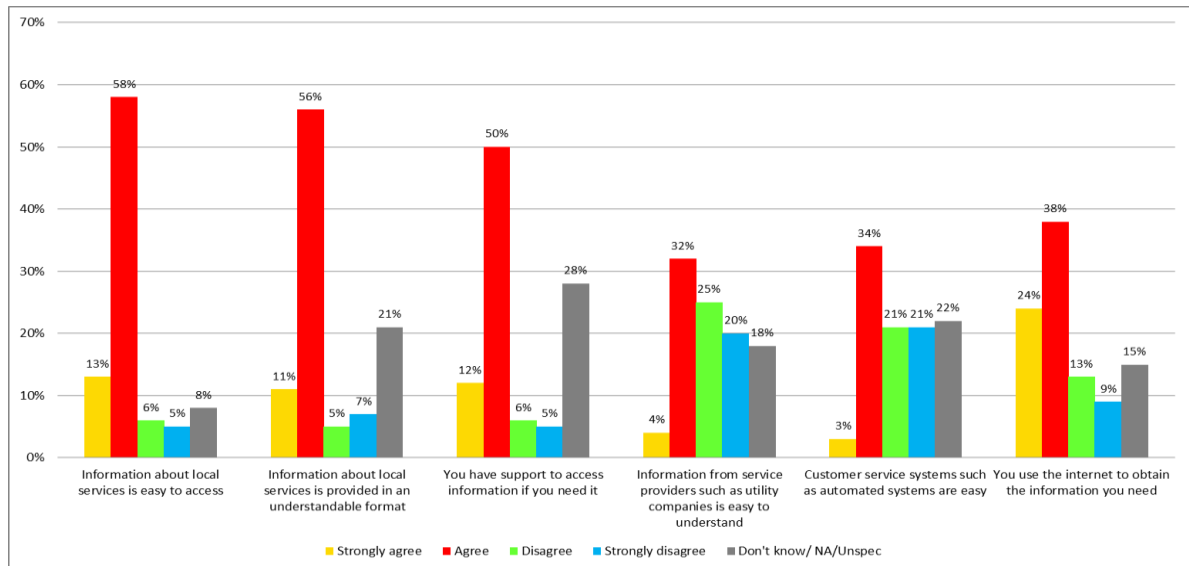


Figure 7: Communication and Information

### Community Support and Health Services (CS&HS)

- Respondee are very satisfied in the CS&HS dimension rating agree or above for all questions, indicating this is an area of strength.
- There was a lower indication of awareness indicated for training of service staff in working with older people (43%) and respectfulness of service staff towards older people (33%).

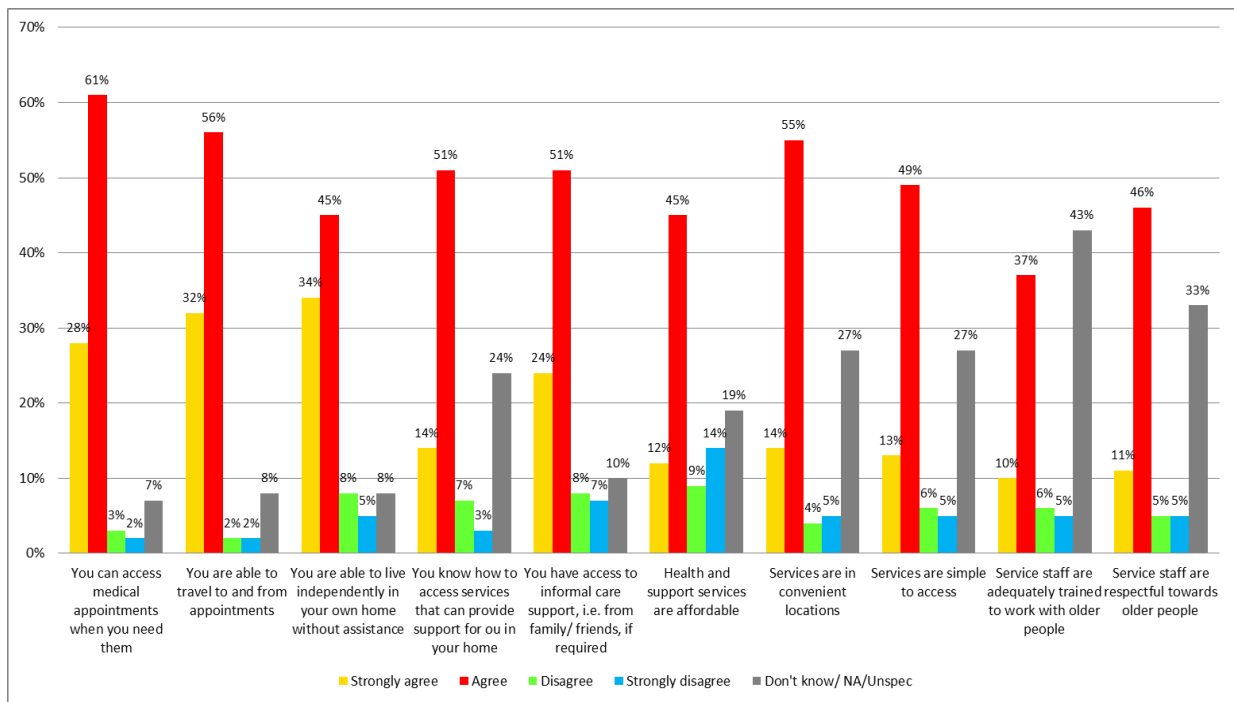


Figure 8: Community Support and Health Services

## AGE FRIENDLY HUBS/POST IT

A total of 191 comments were provided as part of the Age Friendly Hubs located at Unley Shopping Centre; Unley Libraries and Unley Community Centre. Visitors to the hubs were asked to provide comments on post-it-notes, under the categories – *Best Things to Support Ageing in Unley* and *Improvements to enhance the City of Unley as a place to grow old*. Top 5 responses for each included:

### Best things to Support Ageing in Unley

- Council general
- Parks and gardens
- Support from Council
- Council services – in home support
- Communication from Council

### Improvements to enhance the City of Unley as a better place to grow old

- Footpath maintenance
- Road safety – pedestrians and traffic
- Development and planning
- Parks and gardens
- Communication from Council

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## 4. CONCLUSION

In summary, an extensive community initiative was undertaken in late 2014 to seek input into the development of a new Age Friendly Strategy for the City of Unley. Over 200 people provided valuable feedback and insight, which will now be used to develop the draft Strategy.

Overall, those who participated were positive about growing older within the City of Unley, with key areas of strength being relationships and support of their neighbours, services and support provided by Council and other providers, opportunities to participate in civic and social activities and engagement, quality of community information and parks and gardens.

Key areas for improvement included footpath quality and maintenance, road safety, city planning and development and the volunteer support models to improve the experience of volunteering offered by the City of Unley.

The engagement also highlighted areas where increased awareness may be of benefit, especially around services available, opportunities to participate in civic and social activities, downsizing of housing and public/taxi transport options.

