

# Age Friendly Ambassadors

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the Age Friendly Ambassador Program?

This program is a new initiative of the City of Ballarat being established to support us to achieve the vision of an Age-Friendly Ballarat. While planning for the *Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy 2022 – 2026* older people within our community told us what was most important to them. This feedback has informed the action plans that guide our work.

However, striving for an Age-Friendly Ballarat (or age-friendly community) is an ongoing journey and a continuous improvement process, as we keep learning and adapting over time. To be successful, we need to work together with older people in an ongoing way to respond flexibly to changing needs, preferences, priorities and circumstances.

The Age-Friendly Ambassador Program will consist of up to 12 local community members who will:

- Represent the views of older people, including providing feedback on needs and preferences and support peers to share their views.
- Identify barriers and opportunities that will help to guide our actions towards being an Age-Friendly Ballarat.
- Be conversation starters, help to raise awareness of age-friendly initiatives and share key age-friendly and age positive messages
- Share information with other community members about relevant City of Ballarat activities and projects, and engagement opportunities and encourage them to contribute.
- Help us to assess and evaluate our actions and identify opportunities for improvement.
- Assist us to collectively develop the next Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy.

In the future, there may also be an option for interested Ambassadors to participate in a group project with the support of the Ageing Well Services Team.

### Why are we establishing an Ambassador Program now?

Ballarat has a growing population of older adults. In recognition of this, the City of Ballarat introduced its first age friendly focused strategy in late 2022 – *Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy*. This Strategy clearly demonstrates Council's commitment to an age friendly approach. As a result, City of Ballarat has recently

been accepted as a member of the Global Network of Age Friendly Cities and Communities.

Listening to and working with older people is integral to our progress in achieving our shared vision for an increasingly age friendly Ballarat.

### **Who is best placed to become an Age Friendly Ambassador?**

Ambassadors are people who:

- Are passionate about their local community and the needs and interests of older adults.
- Have good community connections, often from being a representative of one or more special interest groups, cultural groups, clubs or diverse community groups.
- Are interested in developing public speaking and engagement skills. E.g. Connecting older adults with relevant information and to local opportunities. Or sharing age positive messaging including challenging ageism.

### **What do we know about older adults in Ballarat?**

Almost 1 in 3 Ballarat residents are 55 years and over, with approximately:

- 1 in 4 living alone and 2 out of 3 of these people being women
- 1 in 6 volunteering
- 1 in 7 born overseas
- 2 out of 3 aged 55 - 64 years and almost 1 in 5 aged 65 – 74 years in the labour force

Suburbs with the largest proportions of older residents are Ballarat, Ballarat East – Warrenheip and Sebastopol – Redan.

We also heard from many residents about what is important to them when developing our Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy. We have used this information to inform the *Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy and Action Plan*.

## What is the role of the Age Friendly Ambassador?

Ambassadors will be volunteers for the City of Ballarat Ageing Well Services Team.

Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Connecting older adults to resources and information that will help them to age well within the City of Ballarat. This includes sharing details about local events, activities, programs and services.
- Providing ideas and insights that could help to make the City of Ballarat more age friendly.
- Actively participating in at least two City of Ballarat events and activities each year, such as during the Ballarat Seniors Festival and for key dates of significance such as Ageism Awareness Day.

For further information, please refer to the **Age Friendly Ambassador Role Statement**.

## What time commitment is expected of Ambassadors?

Ambassadors are encouraged to commit to the following:

- Attending 1.5-hour Ambassador meetings held bi-monthly at the Ballarat Town Hall or another civic building including pre-reading of:
  - Meeting agendas and minutes
  - Background information (up to 4 pages including images)
- Representing the City of Ballarat at a minimum of two Ageing Well community events or activities per calendar year

Bi-monthly meetings are proposed to be held during July, September, November, March and May. Optional one hour networking opportunities will be offered during August, October, February, April and June. No meetings or networking events will be scheduled in January or December.

Council staff will provide information and seek Ambassador feedback during meetings. Ambassadors will be encouraged to represent the views of older people in Ballarat on issues affecting older people and to inform the implementation of actions from the *Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy*. Key areas of influence may include contributing to the planning of major events such as Seniors Festival, supporting the implementation of various initiatives and activities the align with the Strategy. Therefore, some reading or reflection may be required between meetings.

### **How long can I be an Ambassador for?**

Appointment to the Age Friendly Ambassador Program is for a two-year term. As this is our first intake, Ambassadors will be given an option to withdraw at the end of a one-year term or continue for the full two-year term. Continuing Ambassadors will have an option to re-apply at the end of their term, for a further two-year term.

### **What support will I be provided with?**

Ambassadors will be provided with support to:

- Complete any documentation required to be an Ambassador
- Connect with other Ambassadors
- Better understand the local community and the role of the Ageing Well Services team
- Become more familiar with the *Ageing Well in Ballarat Strategy and Action Plan*, and engagement opportunities with Council
- Participate in education and training during meetings to:
  - Be more confident in the role of Ambassador
  - Increase understanding of what is meant by an Age Friendly Community
  - Increase awareness, understanding and skills in challenging ageism
  - Broaden strategies to encourage the participation of older adults in programs, events, activities and services, and in the Council engagement opportunities that affect their lives.

### **Are there other ways that I can support this work other than being an Ambassador?**

If you are not able to commit to being an Ambassador, here are other ways that you can support this work:

1. Sign up to the Ageing Well Newsletter – phone 5320 5500 and ask to speak with the Ageing Well Team, email [ageingwell@ballarat.vic.gov.au](mailto:ageingwell@ballarat.vic.gov.au) or visit our webpage [ballarat.vic.gov.au/community/ageing-well-ballarat](http://ballarat.vic.gov.au/community/ageing-well-ballarat)
2. Follow us on our Facebook page – [facebook.com/ageingwellballarat](https://facebook.com/ageingwellballarat) – You can share what is happening by liking and sharing our posts with others.
3. Follow us on Humanitix - [events.humanitix.com/host/ageing-well-ballarat](https://events.humanitix.com/host/ageing-well-ballarat) – You can share information about events that are coming up with others.
4. Join us at our education sessions to learn more about a range of topics to increase understanding about how to age well in Ballarat.

## How do I express my interest in being an Age Friendly Ambassador?

There are several ways to register your interest:

- Using this online form - [forms.office.com/r/WdVwystSci](https://forms.office.com/r/WdVwystSci)
- Completing a printed form
  - collect the expression of interest form and reply-paid envelope from the Phoenix Building (25 Armstrong Street South) or one of the Ballarat Libraries.
  - make a request to Bern Duffy on 5320 5500 or via email [ageingwell@ballarat.vic.gov.au](mailto:ageingwell@ballarat.vic.gov.au) for a printed form to be posted to you with a reply-paid envelope
  - collect the form at an information opportunity and return via reply paid envelope or to the Phoenix Building.
- Call Bern Duffy on 5320 5500, or email [ageingwell@ballarat.vic.gov.au](mailto:ageingwell@ballarat.vic.gov.au) to request documents in an accessible format or for support.

## What are the key dates I should know about for this process?

**Expressions of Interest open:** 20 March 2025

- Online: [forms.office.com/r/WdVwystSci](https://forms.office.com/r/WdVwystSci)
- Hard copy: collect from the Phoenix Building (25 Armstrong Street South, Ballarat), any Ballarat Library (Central, Sebastopol, Wendouree) or request a copy from Ageing Well Services by phone 5320 5500 or via email [ageingwell@ballarat.vic.gov.au](mailto:ageingwell@ballarat.vic.gov.au)

### Information opportunities:

- Informal information sharing at:
  - Ballarat Ageing Well Expo at the Mercure Convention Centre, Main Road, Ballarat
    - Wednesday 26 March - 10am to 2pm
- Drop-in information sessions (no bookings required):
  - Wednesday 2 April 2025 at the Ballarat Town Hall in Committee Room 2 between 10am and 11am
  - Thursday 3 April 2025 at the Ballarat Library (178 Doveton Street North, Ballarat) in Meeting Room 2 between 4pm and 5:30pm.

**Expressions of Interest close:** 30 April 2025 at 5pm

**Initial shortlisting complete:** 7 May 2025

**Conversations with shortlisted applicants:** Mid-late May

**Meet and greet/ First meeting:** June - July 2025

**Who will pay for the Police check and Working with Children Check?**

Applications for Police check and Working with Children Check (WWCC) are not required until a formal offer to the role is provided to you by City of Ballarat following shortlisting, a conversation with team members and referee checks.

The costs of a Police check are covered by City of Ballarat. There will be no cost to the volunteer applicant for a Police check. The Volunteer WWCC required is free to apply for and obtain online. Applicants can be supported through this process.

**Who do I contact if I still have questions?**

Phone 5320 5500 and ask to speak with Bern Duffy, Community Engagement Officer – Ageing Well Services. Alternatively, you can email [ageingwell@ballarat.vic.gov.au](mailto:ageingwell@ballarat.vic.gov.au).