

AUCKLAND COUNCIL SENIORS ADVISORY PANEL REPORT 2019 – 2022 TERM

Ko au, Ko au, Ka Awatea
Light dawns, it is a new day



Seniors Advisory Panel
Front L-R: Jody Smyth, Jane Messer, Zahra Fazelnia, Gayle Marshall
Rear L-R: Jay Reid, David Wong Hop, Lindsay Waugh, Claire Dale
Inset: Jeet Suchdev, Bruce Davies



Seniors Advisory Panel and Council team
Front L-R: Michelle Judge, Cr Tracy Mulholland, Judy Smyth, Zahra Fazelnia, Gayle Marshall
Rear L-R: John Nash, Jay Reid, David Wong Hop, Lindsay Waugh, Claire Dale, Cecilia Dower, Carol Hayward
Inset: Council team: Cr Cathy Casey, Victoria Wicks-Brown, Kathryn Hickling, Olivia Boniface

Foreword – messages from the co-chairs

Claire Dale

This report shows the breadth of the Panel's achievements this (short) term. I have been impressed with the dedication shown by Panel members. Despite Covid, we held all possible meetings and workshops, provided feedback on all matters that came our way, developed and used our strategic plan and importantly, progressed Tāmaki tauawhi kaumātua, the Age-friendly Auckland Plan to the implementation stage.

Learning how to work together as a panel of individuals who didn't know each other beforehand and becoming familiar with working remotely using Teams and Zoom, are also real achievements!

Our Panel members have come to grips with working in the Auckland Council environment with its particular systems, processes, and frustrations. Had there been a further Covid free year, we feel we would have been able to contribute more, and more concretely, to supporting the needs of seniors in Tāmaki Makaurau.

Gayle Marshall

It is gratifying to be part of the Seniors Advisory Panel whose members have worked towards shaping priorities in a Strategic Plan that will add value not only to Tamaki Makaurau as an Age-friendly City but to the Auckland Plan 2050. As these are plans for the future it is imperative that the decisions made lift our seniors to be recognized as the Kaitiaki who have a place and a voice to be heard now and in the future.

I believe Covid has changed our communities and that will also change their needs. The Seniors Advisory Panel have the opportunity to be on the ground at grass root level conversations on the concerns that communities are facing. We are not only the advocates for seniors, but we also participate in NGO's, not for profit organizations and groups that are concerned with the environment, economic development, health and much more; looking at today for the future.

Seniors are the best vintage New Zealand has to offer!

Gayle

Purpose of the report:

This report outlines our work, priorities, achievements, views, and reflections during our 2019-2022 term.

The role of advisory panels

Our role is to provide advice to Auckland Council on its regional policies, plans and strategies and on any other matters of particular interest or concern to seniors, as it relates to the Auckland Plan.

We are the voice of seniors to Auckland Council. We develop a strategic plan at the start of our term which outlines our areas of interest and the priorities we see that can improve outcomes for seniors. Panels collaborate where matters are of mutual interest so for example, we have worked with the Disability Advisory Panel as we have much in common in relation to accessibility.

We also chose continued leadership and support to advance and implement the Tāmaki Tauawhi Kaumātua, Age-Friendly Auckland Action Plan as the project we wanted to see advanced during our term (see below).

Panel members

Claire Dale (co-chair)
Gayle Marshall (co-chair) QSM
Bruce Davies JP (from August 2021)
David Wong Hop MNZM, JP (Retrd)
Jane Messer
Jay Reid (co-chair, to August 2021)
Jeet Suchdev QSM, JP
Judy Smyth (to June 2021)
Lindsay Waugh
Zahra Fazelnia

Advisory Panels Liaison Councillor – Dr Cathy Casey
Seniors Advisory Panel Liaison Councillor - Tracy Mulholland

Seniors Advisory Panel Support staff:

Advisory Panels Manager – Carol Hayward (to July 2021), Victoria Wicks Brown (from October 2021)

Lead Officer – John Nash

Deputy Lead Officer – Cecily Dower (to March 2021), Kathryn Hickling (from March 2021)

Governance Advisor - Michelle Judge (to December 2021), Olivia Boniface (from February 2022)

Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland is finally an Age-friendly City!

Background

Implementing the Tāmaki tauawhi kaumātua, the Age-friendly Auckland Action Plan during this term has been our priority. Our panel is recognised as kaitiaki in the development and implementation of the plan.

The plan aims to create an Auckland / Tāmaki Makaurau that is a great place to grow older; where everyone feels they belong and can participate.

The journey began in 2016 when a previous senior's panel asked that Auckland Council seek membership of the World Health Organisation's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities. While this was not supported, the 2016-2019 senior's panel's continued advocacy contributed to a 2018 council decision to resource efforts to seek membership of this network. Throughout the rest of its term the previous seniors panel worked with council staff, consulted community groups, and held events, all aimed at progressing this proposal.

Advancing this term

We picked this work up where the last panel left off and engaged with previous panel members to understand their mahi. Staff developing the plan worked closely with us and together we engaged with a wide range of partners who are key to implementing and delivering the actions within the plan. We received regular reports and updates from staff on progress and contributed to the development of the plan.

This hard work was rewarded when in November 2021 Council's Parks, Arts Community and Events Committee approved and adopted the Tāmaki Makaurau Tauawhi Kaumātua – Age-friendly Auckland Action Plan. A big thank-you to our hardworking council staff who have led on this mahi, particularly Rebecca Kruze, Cleo Matthews, and Natasha Lewis.

With this significant milestone reached, we turned our attention to implementation and membership of the World Health Organisation Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities. In March 2022 we were thrilled to be advised that Auckland had been accepted into this network. In a departure from the standard content of the plan which consists of eight Domains, Auckland Council added two additional domains to reflect our bi-cultural foundations and diversity, by adding the Kaumātua and Culture and Diversity Domains and changed the existing Outdoor Spaces and Buildings Domain to Te Taiao - The Natural and Built Environment.

Being a member of this network is just the beginning and now we need to be active in pursuing its goals; active participation, sharing evidence of progress, and developing practises and tools to achieve these goals. We also need to provide assessment, monitoring and evaluation reports and action plans as appropriate. While members will have core values and processes in common, our responses might be unique and tailored to our diverse needs.

Co-chair Gayle Marshall summed up becoming a member of the WHO network in saying that "joining the Global Network was an important milestone for Auckland, especially as the city's population ages.

We know older people have experiences of life which add a richness of understanding and wellbeing, opening barriers to participation across all areas producing outcomes that are meaningful.

If we want to be a world class city, we need to commit to better access for everyone. The Global Network brings together like-minded cities and communities committed to becoming more age-friendly. It's great to see Auckland recognised in this space and we're looking forward to sharing ideas with other members."

Our strategic priorities for this term

All panels develop a strategic action plan early on in their term. This outlines our priorities and areas of focus for the term. We worked with staff over a number of months to put together our plan. It recognises that with an ageing population, seniors are an increasingly large segment of our community, and that we have life skills which can and should be used to make a continued contribution to society.

Each plan contains an objective, priorities, and any other matters we consider important. As we have agreed our focus will be to support the completion and delivery of the Tāmaki Makaurau Tauawhi Kaumātua – Age-friendly Auckland Action Plan, our plan's objective is:

To act as kaitiaki to support, oversee and guide completion and delivery of the Age-friendly Auckland Plan, and ensure the impacts of Covid-19 on seniors are taken into account

As noted above, work done by this and previous panels resulted in Auckland Council approving the Tāmaki tauawhi kaumātua Age-friendly Auckland Action Plan, membership of the

World Health Organisation's Network of Age-friendly cities, and resources being provided to implement the plan's outcomes.

Covid and Climate Change

Recognising the significant impact Covid-19 has had on seniors and that it is an important area that we want to be engaged in, we have included Covid-19 in this plan. We can then discuss the impacts of Covid on seniors when council staff bring material to us for discussion. To further support this we have representatives on the Auckland Council climate action working party.

Plan priorities

We have prioritised actions that we feel are practical, deliverable, and realistic in this financially constrained environment. These priorities link to The Auckland Plan 2050 and the Tāmaki tauawhi kaumātua Age-friendly Auckland Action Plan Domains as these are the panel's guiding documents. Our priorities are as follows - full details of these priorities can be found at the strategic plan link.

Participation and inclusiveness; with a particular focus on the role technology plays in this.

Accessibility; focusing on working with the Disabilities Advisory Panel and Council's urban designers on areas of need including housing, signage, and public amenities.

Transport; making it easy for seniors to use public transport and still providing the infrastructure seniors need to retain the independence of private car travel. These include safe footpaths free of hazards, seating in public places, adequate bus services and shelters with seating, and carparks close to the services seniors use.

Valuing and including seniors; provide opportunities for seniors to contribute their skills and experience, and develop programmes, activities and learning to enable seniors to be engaged, helps support active and healthy ageing.

Housing; particularly social and affordable housing. The voices and needs of seniors need to be heard when Council develops plans and strategies that control housing development. Ideas include rent-to-buy schemes, locating seniors suitable housing on bus routes and close to shop, libraries etc, and ensuring good connectivity e.g. Wi-Fi installation.

Heritage. Seniors are kaitiaki and storytellers of the past. We hold huge historic knowledge and have much to contribute to this area. Heritage signage needs to be large and legible. We also have a particular interest in cemetery records being digitised and having easy to find information on how to manage headstones.

In all the above, we have stressed the importance of seniors being engaged by Council planners and decision-makers to ensure our needs are heard and understood. Only through being heard can the value we bring to decisions be realised. Otherwise, we remain invisible and undervalued in society.

Engagement, advice, and feedback

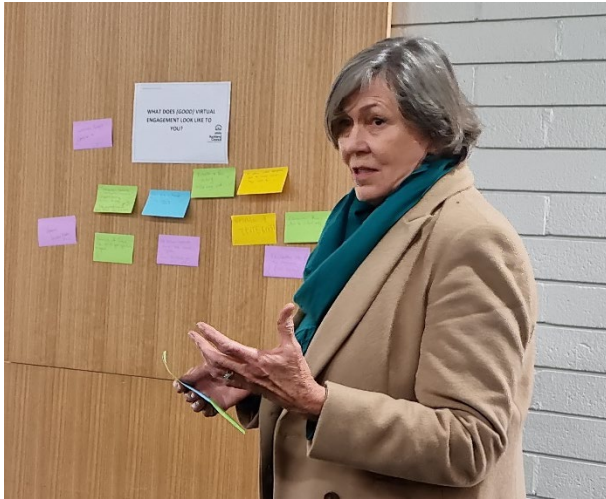


Panel members David Wong Hop, Judy Smyth, Lindsay Waugh and Zahra Fazelnia in discussion

Despite Covid, we held six business meetings and nine workshops during our term. We prioritised and pushed for these as we value direct connection to get real work done. While Auckland Council has had to restrict access to its venues during lockdowns and under red-light settings, we have shown true resilience by embracing often new remote meeting technologies. Regardless we hope council will return to the full panels schedule in the new term.



Screen shot of the panel meeting by Teams, April 2022



Lindsay Waugh at Cross Panel Engagement Guidelines hui June22

The following table summarises our engagement, advice, and feedback during our term. Our focus has been on Age-friendly Auckland matters and engaging with Council staff and outside organisations on the priority matters outlined in our strategic plan.

1. Input on Auckland Council family plans and policies	
Progressing Tāmaki tauawhi kaumatua / Auckland's Age-friendly action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least ten meetings with council staff working on this plan since October 2020 • These included providing advice and feedback on draft material, receiving progress updates and information on matters relevant to the plan e.g. the Older Aucklanders Quality of Life report • Members reported back on activities they have been engaged on relating to the plan, such as working groups and co-chairs meetings • Lindsay Waugh and Jane Messer who sit on the plan implementation group provided regular updates on their work along with Jeet Suchdev who is also on the group for the Bhartiya Samaj Charitable Trust • Co-chairs also presented to Council's Parks, Arts, Community and Events Committee at the meeting where the Committee adopted the plan
Input on Council Budgets - Long-term Plan 2018-2028 - Annual Plan 2022/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 2021 - staff presented on Long Term Plan consultation • April 2021 - Co-chairs Gayle Marshall and Jay Reid provided feedback at a Finance and Performance Committee workshop • August 2021 - the Finance and Performance Committee Chair responded in writing to our key advocacy points • May 2022 - we received an update on our feedback on the Annual Plan 2022/23
Tākaro – Council has developed a plan for how it invests in play to take account of population and demographic change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2021 - staff supporting the Disability Advisory Panel along with AUT students presented a design guide on play spaces for older adults they are developing and incorporated the panel's feedback into their work

Auckland Unitary Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2021- planning staff presented on removal of minimum parking from the Unitary Plan • October 2021 – planning staff presented on new timeframes for implementing these changes
Economic Development Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 2021 - we provided feedback on this plan • A summary statement was included in the final plan noting how our input was reflected in the final plan
2. Meetings with Council group staff	
<p>Auckland Transport</p> <p>We have taken a keen interest in transport matters. Lindsay Waugh is a member of two of Auckland Transport's CPAG and PTAG advisory panels</p>	<p>Auckland Transport staff presented to us and held workshops which we attended as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November 2020 – meet and greet • April 2021 - Regional Land Transport Plan workshop • June 2021 - Public Transport Operating Model • July 2021 - City Centre Bus Plan • November 2021 - Transport Emissions Reduction Plan • May 2022 - draft Auckland Parking Strategy • July 2022 - draft Transport Plan Change to the Auckland Unitary Plan. This included accessible parking, provision of infrastructure for EV charging, better pedestrian access, and access for refuse collection
<p>Housing</p> <p>We have taken a keen interest in housing and have sought input into and provided advice on a range of housing matters</p>	<p>Council staff and other hui were held as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 2021 - a draft Affordable Housing Advocacy Plan • November 2021 - Council's Affordable Housing and Homelessness Work Programme • May 2022 - the National Policy Statement on Urban Development • November 2021 - Haumaru Housing's CEO presented an overview of its work • June 2022 members attended a cross panel hui on housing and homelessness.
Tātaki Auckland Unlimited - Auckland's economic and cultural agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2022 - Tātaki Auckland Unlimited staff met with the panel in to talk about their work supporting planning for jobs in the Southern Corridor
Heritage team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September 2021 - Council's Heritage team manager presented on its work programme
Connected Communities team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 2021 - staff presented an overview of their team and its work • March 2022 – staff presented on the Auckland Council Venue for Hire Project

Diversity and Inclusion team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> October 2021 - staff introduced the Inclusive Auckland Framework and Ara Moana Pasifika Strategy
3. Covid-19 response	
<p>Council staff provided information, advice, and updates to the panel on a number of occasions throughout the pandemic, including advice on panel meetings based on agreed Council gathering restrictions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> August 2021 - re lockdown October 2021 - re the Super Saturday vaccination drive February 2022 - an informal panel meeting discussed and fed back its concerns on the impact on Council's covid response on Seniors, to Council's Executive Leadership Team March 2022 - Council staff presented their response 	
4. Co-chairs forum and cross-panel collaboration	
<p>The panel co-chairs collaborated with other demographic advisory panel co-chairs and met with elected members and members of the executive leadership team at co-chairs forum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> November 2020 March 2021 August 2021 November 2021 March 2022 May 2022 June 2022 August 2022 <p>Panel members gave advice to Council through large scale all-panel cross panel hui on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 2021 Auckland Transport – Regional Land Transport Plan November 2021 -Thriving Communities Strategy December 2021 - Three Waters June 2022 - Auckland Council Engagement Guidelines July 2022 - Homelessness and Housing Affordability <p>Governing Body-Executive Leadership Team-Co-Chairs meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> November 2020 November 2021 	
5. Membership of Council working groups	
<p>Thriving Communities Working Group</p> <p>A core programme assisting communities to thrive and be resilient</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> October 2020 - Council established a working group to advance this programme Jay Reid, Zahra Fazelnia, Jane Messer, and Jeet Suchdev appointed to the working group Members updated us on the working groups work in December 2020, February 2021, and October 2021
Elections Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Zahra Fazelnia is a member and updates us on its work after meetings are held Council staff updated us on the upcoming 2022 elections in March 2022

Climate Change Working Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lindsay Waugh, Judy Smyth, and Jane Messer are members and provided updates to the panel in October and December 2020, February 2021, March, and May 2022
6. External agencies	
Age Concern	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> December 2020 - Age Concern Auckland CEO presented to us on Age Concern's work
Whau Ace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> October 2021 - Whau ACE Adult & Community Education's Manager, Treasurer and an Executive Board Member presented an overview of its organisation and services
7. Central Government matters	
Three Waters central government reforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> December 2021 - Cross panel meeting on Three Waters reforms April 2022 - Update by CCO/External Partnerships team
Future of Local Government reforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> April 2022 - Update from Strategic Advice staff
Interaction with Office for Seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> June 2022 - we met with Minister for Seniors the Hon. Ayesha Verrall and gave feedback in issues of importance to seniors



Seniors Panel members Lindsay Waugh, Gayle Marshall and Zahra Fazelnia at cross panel hui June 2022

A Special Engagement

One particular highlight for us was the meeting with Minister for Seniors the Hon. Ayesha Verrall. Postponed at the last minute in 2021 when Auckland went into lockdown, the panel was finally able to meet with Minister Verrall in June 2022.



Front L-R: Co Chair Gayle Marshall, Minister for Seniors Dr Ayesha Verrall, Co-chair Dr Claire Dale, Zahra Fazelnia
Back L-R: Jane Messer, Bruce Davies, David Wong Hop
Absent: Lindsay Waugh, Jeet Suchdev

After introductions, Minister Verrall spoke about her work and how she saw her role, as an 'influencer' with the government. Dr Verrall welcomed the appointment of the Aged Care Commissioner, the Dementia Action Plan, the Better Later Life Action Plan and the public transport and supermarket actions, as well as the energy around Age Friendly Cities and Communities.

We then each took a turn to talk about our work. Our lead councillor Dr Cathy Casey spoke about her role supporting all panels and some of the great work the seniors panel is doing, particularly highlighting Age-friendly Auckland.

Co-chair Claire Dale provided more detail on Auckland's journey to an age-friendly city and our role in this. Claire noted this plan's importance given that Auckland has the largest and most ethnically and culturally diverse population of people aged 65 and older in the country, which will only increase further over the next few decades. Claire then introduced our Strategic Action Plan to the Minister and invited other panel members to elaborate on areas of particular interest to them.

Co-Chair, Gayle Marshall, spoke to issues for seniors of accessibility, transport, parking and safety, and community facilities.

Zari Fazelnia then spoke to reinforce the issues of transport, parking and safe streets and reiterating that the diversity of seniors in Auckland meant their needs can be very different too.

Bruce Davies picked up the topics of seniors' participation and inclusiveness including technology and education, highlighting the gaps for many rural dwellers, including seniors. In accessing technology, which need Central Government support.

Jane Messer spoke to health including aged care, and aged abuse, acknowledging the work of Minister Verrall and her colleagues to keep all our communities including seniors safe from Covid. Jane also noted the crisis in aged care around staffing issues and government under-resourcing which has left many aged care facilities and hospitals struggling.

David Wong Hop's focus was on housing, especially for senior citizens. David asked the Minister to support Māori and ethnic communities working with Central Government in providing more accommodation for seniors in the larger cities and towns.

Gayle Marshall then closed the formal part of the meeting recognising the senior's panel's role as kaitiaki, caretakers of the Age Friendly Kaupapa and guiding plans and policies to have a positive impact on seniors and to help make Tamaki Makarau a city where Seniors are seen, involved, respected, and socially accepted.

Conclusion

It's no surprise to anyone that building relationships between panel members who haven't met before, in a pandemic and within Council's systems and processes, is no mean feat!. We think we've done a pretty good job in the circumstances and been shown the respect and attention we had hoped for.

Our record speaks for itself. We continue to promote and speak up on creating an Auckland which is truly age-friendly and to work with partners and other interested parties to ensure the voice of Seniors is valued and not lost.

We want to say a huge thank you to the Council team that has supported and advised us on this journey.

Our advice to the next panel, is to get to grips early with Council's expectations of your role and build a strong relationship with your support team as they will guide you through your term. It's a tricky balancing act navigating between the things seniors panel members naturally want to focus on and what your actual Council role is – they won't always be the same.

We also strongly recommend getting to know the other demographic panel members. We share many concerns and can give strength and force to each other's mahi.

Whatever decision is made in the new term re advisory panels, it is critical that the seniors voice is heard, and we feel we've advocated strongly and clearly for a seniors' perspective to enhance and improve the outcomes of diverse communities during our term.

Appendix 1 snapshots of seniors panel members mahi outside of the panel

We are also busy in our communities and continue to engage on individual areas of interest. A snapshot of the amazing work of some panel members in and with their communities, which link to the work and priorities of the panel and assist members to bring relevant topics to panel discussions, is summarised here.

Gayle Marshall

I have included some photos of people and places I engage with in support of seniors, as they link to the panel's Strategic Plan priorities.

Heritage

Seniors, as kaitiaki and storytellers of the past appreciate Auckland's heritage, wish to see it restored, protected, and recognised and want to help with this.



Photos of the Chapel of Faith and Jewish Prayer House in the Oaks, Waikumete Cemetery and walkers enjoying the parks heritage.

Engaging with seniors at these places also enables us to hear what they think of Council initiatives, and we can feed this back through the Seniors panel.

Valuing and including seniors



Residents at a Haumaru Housing village enjoying a singalong



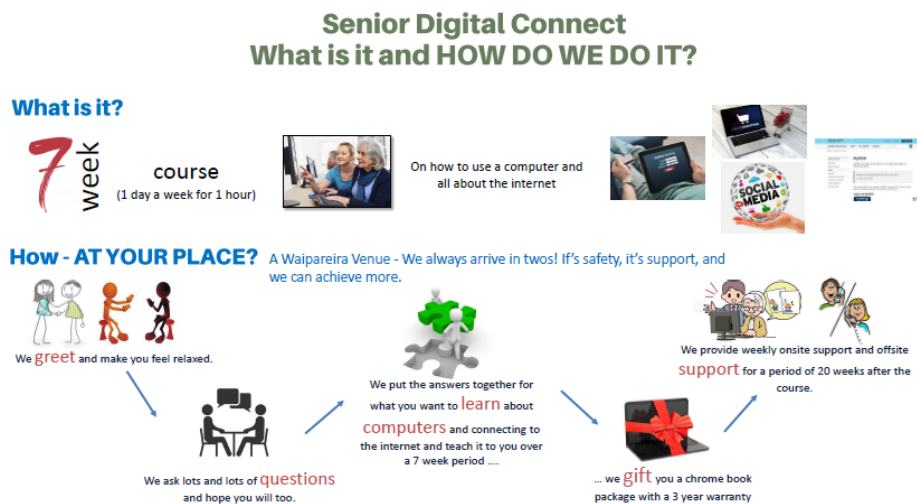
Giving out Christmas bags at a housing village



Photo of a day of information, fun, pampering, exercise, and dancing at a Council facility

I also chair Whau Ace, an organisation which supports people with accessible learning to assist them to find work. It focuses on the over 45's, with services located in local libraries around Auckland, WINZ offices and online. A few of Whau Ace's programmes include support from the Pasifika Panel to have 10 clients starting and we are adding people from across Auckland - north, south, east, and west. Whau Ace is also working with 8 Libraries across Auckland and seeking a position on ACC to assist people to be job ready.

Below is an example from Whau Ace's digital programme which is aligned to the panel's strategic priority of Participation and Inclusiveness, especially Technology.



Claire Dale

During my time on the Panel, I have co-authored [Women and Retirement in a post COVID-19 world](#), and subsequently spoke at the launch of the OECD Publication [Towards Improved Retirement Savings Outcomes for Women](#). I also published [Long term in-home and residential care for our ageing population](#), [Commissioner for the Future - Again](#), [Aged Care Commissioner for Aotearoa](#), and [Seniors, COVID-19 policies and the 2020 Budget](#).

Our own research at Ngā Tāngata Microfinance showed that almost 19% of all applicants for our no-fee no-interest loans are aged 61+ led to me to write: [Looming Crisis for Retirees](#). In July 2022 I was invited to join the MSD's *Older People, Vulnerability and Multiple Disadvantages Work Programme External Advisory Group*. In February 2022 I was invited to meet with the Minister for Women, Jan Tinetti, to discuss issues for older women. I have participated in numerous webinars organised by Te Ara Ahunga Ora Retirement Commission discussing the 2022 Review of Retirement Income Policies.

Ngā mihi nui,
Claire

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