



**Council on Aging Grey Bruce Owen Sound**  
**(COAGBOS)**

Report on  
**ACTIVELY ENGAGING OUR SENIORS**  
Assessing Needs and Gaps Towards a  
Senior Advisory Committee  
In the Township of Southgate.



Prepared by the  
Council on Aging Grey Bruce Owen Sound

AND

The Township of Southgate

Office of the CAO

**June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2017**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The information gathering, advertising and facilitation for the meetings was provide by the Township of Southgate with the in-kind facilitation support of the Council on Aging Grey Bruce Owen Sound (COAGBOS).

Special thanks go out to the community members who participated in the meetings in Dundalk and Holstein.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Township of Southgate in partnership with the Council on Aging Grey Bruce Owen Sound (COAGBOS) engaged the communities of Dundalk and Holstein to conduct community information focus groups. The goal of which was to assess the needs and gaps in each of the respective communities, establish a framework for a “Seniors Advisory Committee” as a committee of municipal council and to establish an action plan toward developing an “Age Friendly” community in the Township of Southgate.

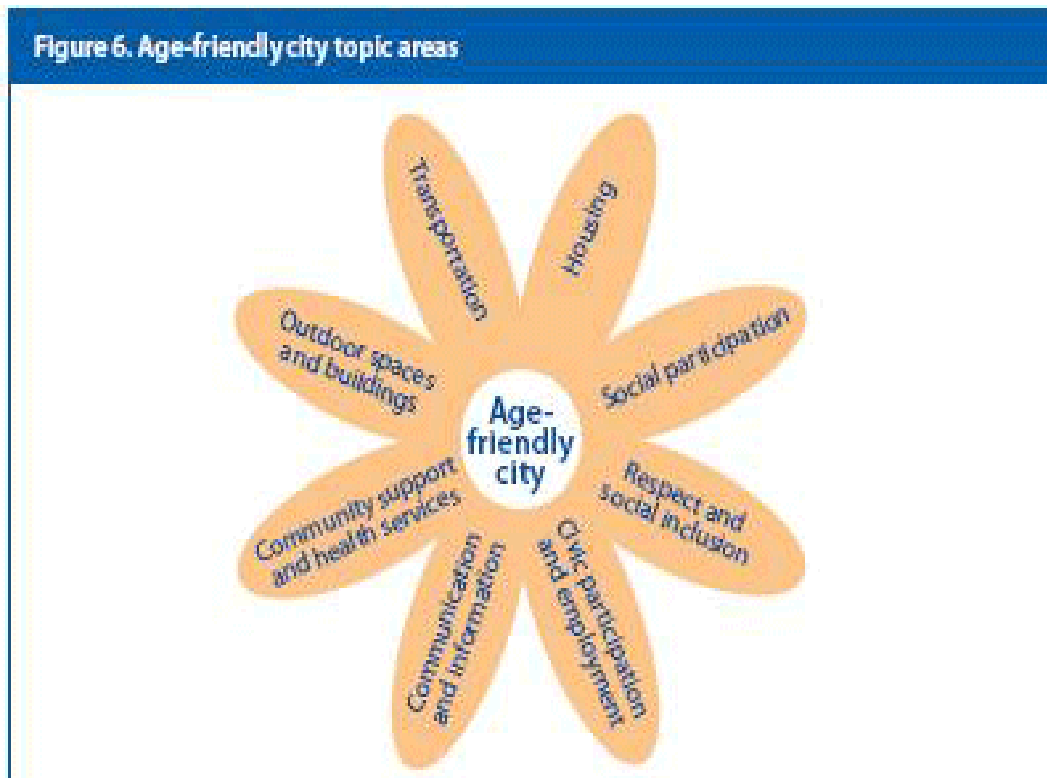
At the time of the consultations the municipality had chosen members to sit on the “Senior’s Advisory Committee”. Those representatives were introduced to the community members attending the two meetings.

The information collected at the meetings in Dundalk and Holstein will form part of the ongoing strategies of the newly formed “Seniors Advisory Committee”. This committee will review the notes that included the municipality’s strengths, opportunities and the gaps noted and collected on June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2017. This will be a beginning point in making recommendations to the Township of Southgate to form an action plan going forward in developing a more age friendly community. This information may also help determine community services and programs which may be enhanced, buildings and structures that may need support in use or physical change.

The community focus groups were facilitated by David Bradley and Wally Halliday of the Council on Aging Grey Bruce Owen Sound (COAGBOS) using the World Health Organization (WHO) framework, the eight key elements of age – friendly communities.

These elements are:

- Outdoor Spaces and Public Buildings
- Transportation
- Housing
- Social Participation
- Respect and Social Inclusion
- Civic Participation and Employment
- Communication and Information
- Community and Health Services



An age friendly community applies to all ages and helps people stay healthy and active as they age and provides the much needed support for those who can no longer look after themselves. In a rural area such as Southgate neighbours and friends as well as the municipality play a large role in ensuring these principles.

During the focus group process all of the WHO elements were explored by the community members in attendance. All comments were recorded for further consideration by the municipality and its Seniors Advisory Committee and follow this summary.

The Township of Southgate is very supportive of the process and, in developing its future strategic plan, will include a section on “Age Friendly” elements.

At this juncture the Council on Aging Grey Bruce Owen Sound (COAGBOS) would like to recognize all the people who attended the focus groups in Dundalk and Holstein and provided input into the information collected. We also commend those who are members of the Seniors Advisory Committee as well as the Township of Southgate for moving forward on creating an “Age Friendly” community. This is a super start and a snap shot of the community today.

At the beginning of each focus group session David Bradley gave an overview of the Council on Aging Grey Bruce Owen Sound (COAGBOS) through the use of a slide presentation that is available to the community.

Wally Halliday then proceeded to walk the participants through the eight elements of the World Health Organization’s framework generating feedback from participants at the focus groups.

Rosalind Brooks compiled the comments and suggestions on flip charts for participants to view as well as to facilitate the compilation of all the notes for an Executive Summary for future use by the Seniors Advisory Committee and the Township of Southgate.

## **MEETING THE CHALLENGE**

Our population is aging nationally, provincially, regionally and within our local communities.

We have a growing population of aging residents and transient families especially in rural areas. Aging residents create an opportunity as they wish generally to age in their respective community and contribute a vast volunteer base giving energy, expertise and financial resources to local endeavours and projects creating a vibrant community.

An aging population can also be a challenge as an older population requires more and better coordinated service. Challenges occur in the need for accessible transportation and housing that is generally single storied. Properties that are easy to maintain and services that meet holistic needs.

We therefore as a community focus back to the eight elements of “**WHO**”.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

### National: - Canada

- Between 2006 and 2011 Canada's population aged 65 and over grew by 14%
- 2011 - Canada's population aged 65 and over was 15%
- 2016 - Canada's population aged 65 and over was 1 in 6 people- (16.667%)
- 2036 - Canada's population aged 65 and over is projected to be 1 in 4 people, (25%)

### Regional: - Grey County

- 2015 – Grey County's population totalled 95,146 residents. Of that total the population aged 64 and under was 72,298 while the population aged 65 and over was 22,849. This represents 24% of the population in Grey County.

These rapidly changing demographics may create further needs for health services, transportation, social participation, employment opportunities etc. Through a dedicated effort to maintain the older population within the community their wealth of knowledge, volunteerism and financial resources may be utilized to further the community growth and vitality.



## AGE FRIENDLY THEMES – WHAT WE HEARD

During the focus group sessions the Council on Aging Grey Bruce Owen Sound members referenced the World Health Organizations (WHO) Global Age- Friendly Cities Guide which identifies eight aspects of community life. These themes intersect, overlap and interact to directly affect all ages and particularly older community adults. Discussions around these topics encouraged input and thoughtful feedback as people reflected on their own experiences.

Following are the overviews of the “**WHO**” themes, local observation and input received. Some key ideas are **bolded**

### Dundalk:

Dundalk greets visitors to Grey at the very south-east corner of the county, home of big skies, country living and Mennonite culture on the surrounding backroads.

### OUTDOOR SPACES AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS:

**“WHO” SAYS-** age friendly outdoor spaces are clean and pleasant, with green spaces and walkways (with separated bicycle paths), places to rest (including public toilets), accessible buildings and pavement, clustered services and safe roadways. These aspects of community amenities allow people of all ages and abilities, including older adults to have the opportunities to participate in everyday fully and in safety.

**WE SAW that** the focus group was held in a public building. It was accessible. The parking space was large and accessible. We ate at a local restaurant that was not accessible but mobile seniors were observed eating there. The restaurant had a large screen monitor that was displaying local and community activities.

**PEOPLE SAID** that they want to maintain the spaces they use for gathering places to socialize, play games and cards etc. *Rentals of buildings becomes a barrier as does accessibility*

- **The Sidewalks** are hard to walk on in winter.
- *Can we have extra snow removal, sand/salt especially at the crosswalks. Sometimes the ploughs go by and pile snow on the sidewalks.*
- **The Crosswalk** at the drug store in winter is hard to and/or can't get to; difficult to reach the button to change the signal AND cars/vehicles/drivers are not stopping.
- *We need a connection to the O.P.P., some education and more signage*
- **Lighting**- Some people are affected by the bulbs used in the "Dark Sky" compliance.
- *We need to know if the "dark sky compliance" lighting is affecting people if so we need to give the municipality our feedback.*
- **The Arena** is used by walking programs, a great resource especially in winter. The arena has stairs only to the second floor. **Many people cannot use the stairs**
- *We need an elevator or a lift to the second floor*
- **Benches** are an asset to a community for all ages.
- *We need **Benches** between Foodland and Uptown to allow a place to rest.*

## **TRANSPORTATION:**

**"WHO" SAYS** transportation, including accessible and affordable public transit, is a key factor influencing active aging in particular; being able to move about a community determines an individual's level of social and civic participation and access to community and health services.

**WE SAW** that the focus group was held in a central location which would generally require transportation to reach except by Dundalk residents who may be able to walk within the village and could walk to the meeting. It was noted that most people drove.

**PEOPLE SAID** Foodland and the drug store delivers to your home for a small fee, the Grey Bruce Bus Service goes to the city (Toronto) and passes by/will stop in Dundalk. **Health and Community Support Services** covers volunteer drivers, for drivers that volunteer to help others it is worthwhile to add, for a small fee, a waiver on your insurance policy. There is a **volunteer driver system** in place. People in the room are volunteer drivers for the Mennonite population. Services are available but often people do not know it is there. E.G SMART transit and Health and Community support Services Programs. People are reliant, to a degree on family and neighbours. Getting to appointments outside the community can be a challenge. **211 is a great resource.**

- *We need to advertise and educate people on the services available and we need a taxi or “**Buddy System Network**”*
- *A Grey County **transit system** needs to be regionalized.*

## **HOUSING:**

**“WHO” SAYS** there is a strong link between appropriate housing and access to community and social services in influencing the independence and quality of life of older people.

**WE SAW** people who attended the focus group are still living independently in their own homes.

**PEOPLE SAID** they want to age in place. Seniors want to meet their needs as well as that of the community. We need to keep our seniors in the community to support their needs as well as those of the community. People were also concerned over the availability of long term care beds and assisted living and the possible closure of Grey Gables in Markdale

- *There is not a sufficient supply of housing for seniors, the disabled or young families.*
- *Some seniors have expressed an interest in moving into **smaller one-story/one level homes close to services.***
- *An **affordable price** was important as was accessibility for example wide doorways, accessible kitchen and bathrooms. Snow removal, grass cutting and general maintenance would also be appreciated.*



- ***A developer is interested in developing “The White Rose” subdivision and would like input from the community. It is noted that new developments should meet or at least consider age friendly standards.***
- *People were also interested in places to find **financial supports** to help make their homes more age friendly ...grab bars, stair lifts etc. are some examples.*

## **SOCIAL PARTICIPATION:**

**“WHO” SAYS** social participation and support are strongly connected to good health and well-being through- out life. Participating in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities in the community, as well as with family allows older people to continue to exercise their competence, enjoy respect and esteem and maintain or establish supportive caring relationships. It fosters social integration and is key to staying informed.

**WE SAW** those gathered at the focus group were familiar with the location and those around them. Some were not necessarily aware however of supports, activities and programs in places other than their own local community.

**PEOPLE SAID** they had personal ties with at least one other individual in their community. Some had been in the community and active in clubs or boards for decades and had not experienced isolation. Reaching out to others and checking on them was the norm in this rural community. Some expressed concern for those that had had to move to other communities. It was noted that some people preferred not to join community activities. Their prerogative as long as they have someone to reach out to them and ensure their safety.

- Dundalk Young at Heart has 56 members. They meet monthly for dinner, entertainment and/or speakers.
- The library is a key building in the community. It is accessible, offers courses and programs. Grants provide tutoring, youth help and is always open to new ideas
- The South East Grey Community Health Centre (SEGCHC) is new in the community. It also offers courses and programs. Let them know what is needed.
- The lawn-bowlers and youth have partnered in a project. Seniors teaching youth to lawn bowl. The partnership is developing and is to continue. The youth teaching seniors how to Wii bowl.

- The Hillside Academy for Senior's (Swinton Park) has 107 members. They regularly entertain pot lucks, pepper etc. as well as a Halloween party for the local children. These rural programs look after their own as much as possible.
- There is an agreement with the municipality to use empty buildings. The municipality can also help in recruitment via newsletters, information in the tax mailings etc.
- There are not as many activities during the day as at night. ***We need more during the day e.g. shuffleboard, euchre etc.***
- *Churches are social centres but they are **no longer well attended and many are not accessible.** There are Federal and Provincial grants to assist in accessibility.*

## **RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION:**

“**WHO**” says community attitudes, such as a general feeling of respect and recognizing the role that older adults play in our society are critical factors for establishing an age-friendly community. Building positive community attitudes involves fostering positive images of aging and intergenerational understanding. The extent to which older people participate in the social, civic and economic life of the community is also closely linked to their experience of inclusion.

**WE SAW** those gathered at the focus group were engaged and involved in their communities. They generally felt respected and wanted to continue to contribute to the vibrancy of the community.

**PEOPLE SAID** the local aging population supports the opportunity for more networking, recreational and educational opportunities. They are a big part of **community participation** for example 2017 Home Coming in August and the Fair Board (annually).

***The Fair Board would like to see younger people participating in the planning and support of the fair.*** This will perpetuate succession planning and the annual renewal process that keeps the fair going.

***There needs to be more shared on what is available at the local level both rural and urban.***

The ***municipality agreed to share information*** as much as they have that information across the whole area.

***Mixing seniors and youth in groups and programs/projects were seen as opportunities to share knowledge and experience across generations.*** Some people commented that youth at times seem to be able to talk to the older generation in times of stress.

## **CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT:**

**“WHO” SAYS** many older retired people continue to provide unpaid and voluntary work for their families and communities. An age-friendly community provides options for older people to continue to contribute to their communities. Giving older adults a meaningful role in community development, providing opportunities for lifelong learning or creating interesting volunteer opportunities are all critical factors in civic engagement.

**WE SAW** most participants were involved in community volunteer activities. People were engaged and especially interested in age-friendly communities.

**PEOPLE** said **engagement in the community is important** and that there are opportunities for volunteering. Some participants were volunteers. Some were volunteer drivers for the Mennonites, Home and Community Support Services, SMART and the Cancer Society. Perhaps there needs to be more talk about what is needed and available.

Some were aware of **211** and noted that it is only as good as the local information submitted to keep it up to date. Maybe something local is also a good idea.

- ***Volunteers are needed in the schools, OEYC programs, Friends of the Library, Day Away and Reading to seniors.***
- ***There is a lack of opportunity of work for seniors who need flexible time slots. There is generally a lack of full time employment in the community. Generally youth work the part time hours, at for example, - Tim Hortons.***

## COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION:

**“WHO” SAYS** staying connected with events and people and getting timely practical information to manage life and personal needs is vital for active aging. It is important to have relevant information that is readily accessible to older people with varying capacities and resources.

**WE SAW** that focus group participants felt there was a gap in accessing local information. 211 does not have all the information required for all the clubs, services and groups in the community. 211 is only as good as the information that is sent to it to keep up to date.

**PEOPLE SAID** word of mouth, phone chains (Young at Heart) and local papers are seen as the lines of communication that is most direct and accurate. New communication systems in business often leave people behind although it is said that the senior population uses technology to its advantage as much as any other internet user group.

- The **Economic Development Officer** needs input from the community in regards to getting *developers on board for housing starts* and to *develop a “Welcome Package”* for new comers. Seniors could also distribute the latter. **It is important to welcome newcomers to the community and to provide them with information that will answer their questions.**
- **The Municipality needs** input from the seniors and the community on the science of LED lighting and signs.
- **Non Profit Groups can post on the Municipal websites**
- **Township of Southgate has an annual calendar** that is free to all households. There are also flyers with junk mailings but not everyone receives these.
- South East Grey Community Health Centre **distributes a recreational booklet.**
- *Comments- make sure the front of the SEGCHC circular is “Intergenerational” and inclusive of its programs offered. Perhaps a section dedicated to Seniors Services could be added.*

## **COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES:**

**“WHO” SAYS** Health and support services are vital to maintaining health and independence in the community. People are concerned globally with the availability of sufficient good quality, appropriate and accessible care. Experiences differ depending on different systems with very different expectations but nevertheless older people everywhere voice a clear desire for basic health and income support. Health care costs are perceived as too high everywhere and the desire for affordable care is consistently expressed.

**WE SAW** that those who attended the focus group were generally in good health and although older were fit and vibrant. They generally felt involved and connected but had concerns over the availability of community support and health services and welcomed the support of the South East Grey Community Health Services. No one was particularly keen on travelling long distances to health care and specialist appointments in Owen Sound or Orangeville.

**PEOPLE SAID** they have concerns around accessing home care through the Community Care Access Centre, now governed by the South West Local Integrated Health Network.(SWLIHN), across the area as some parts in the lower south eastern quadrant of the municipal area are covered by the another LIHN. Confusion was common over where care would be coordinated from in these more rural remote areas. Proton and Egremont are trying to get realigned to the South West LIHN rather be separate and divided from the LIHN.

- **Agencies are fighting over territory. Patients are suffering.**
- People expressed a need **for more capacity at Grey Gables and for Long Term Care** in general and close to home. **Accessible extended care beds** are also needed. Perhaps a need to lobby as a community.
- As people “age in place” **more appropriate housing and health care services are needed.**
- The senior’s advisory committee would be **charged with researching** the types of home and community living that is required. Examples might be Abbeyfield, Hillside Manor in Neustadt, the Tara and Chesley community housing etc. Once determined the committee would work with the local developer.
- Erskine provides space for a Nurse Practitioner and a doctor (allied services) a mish mash of services and supports.

- SEGCHC can fill the void as required. If other services are needed the community can connect with SEGCHC.

## **General Comments:**

**At the end of the conversations people were asked to comment on the focus group experience.**

- Optimistic and pleased with the outcome and the comments expressed.
- Making progress
- Good presentation and connections
- We have a lot of work ahead
- Informative questions and answers
- Happy with the meeting- refocus on lobbying
- Hodge podge, little groups, patchwork (inclusive)?
- Nothing is central
- Need to cover all of Southgate
- Believe in one another
- Sew the patchwork quilt together

## HOLSTEIN:

Holstein is the little village with a huge heart, home to some of Grey County's most popular events: Holstein Maplefest and the famous Holstein Non-Motorized Santa Claus Parade. It is also at the heart of horse & buggy country.

## OUTDOOR SPACES AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS:

“WHO” SAYS that age friendly outdoor spaces are clean and pleasant, with green spaces and walkways (with separated bicycle paths), places to rest (including public toilets), accessible buildings and pavement, clustered services and safe roadways. These aspects of community amenities allow people of all ages and abilities, including older adults to have the opportunities to participate in everyday fully and in safety.

WE SAW that the focus group was held in a public building within a rural setting. It was a large gathering space with many amenities and it was accessible. The parking space was large and accessible. The signage was welcoming.

PEOPLE SAID that the VON SMART program is great and is held in the old municipal council building that is accessible. The **VON SMART program is a Wellington County program.**

- *Can Grey set up a VON SMART program?*
- *The VON SMART program is **looking for accessible space in Dundalk** to run a program there.*

The sidewalk has been extended from the school to the park which then links to the rail trail. This has provided a safer environment for the school children and others using the sidewalk and the trails.

- *It would be **great to have benches placed along this route** to the park and the trail for rest periods. It will encourage more physical activity.*

## TRANSPORTATION:

**“WHO” SAYS** transportation, including accessible and affordable public transit, is a key factor influencing active aging in particular; being able to move about a community determines an individual’s level of social and civic participation and access to community and health services.

**WE SAW** that the focus group was held in a rural location which would generally require transportation to reach except by those who may be able to walk from the village and could walk to the meeting. It was noted that all people drove to this meeting.

**PEOPLE SAID** generally families provide transportation when required to do so. Getting to Mt. Forest is more difficult. The community members look out for each other but are concerned that there may be people they do not know who may have needs.

- ***Access to a more public or volunteer drive system would be great to get to e.g. Mt. Forest to shop or for medical appointments.***
- ***Isolation may be a problem. How do we reach out to others we don’t know about?***

## HOUSING:

**“WHO” SAYS** there is a strong link between appropriate housing and access to community and social services in influencing the independence and quality of life of older people.

**WE SAW** people who attended the focus group are still living independently in their own homes.

**PEOPLE SAID** they prefer to age in place including in their own homes but in the community is an option too.

- ***The Holstein area does not have any seniors housing. We need communities like “Abbeyfield” Would like it to be non-profit and the houses to be single storey at street level.***
- ***There are no meals on wheels. The closest are in Durham and Mt. Forest***
- ***We would like “Lifelines” to be more available and cheaper.***



## **SOCIAL PARTICIPATION:**

**“WHO” SAYS** social participation and support are strongly connected to good health and well-being through - out life. Participating in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities in the community, as well as with family, allows older people to continue to exercise their competence, enjoy respect and esteem and maintain or establish supportive caring relationships. It fosters social integration and is key to staying informed.

**WE SAW** those gathered at the focus group were familiar with the location and those around them. Some were not necessarily aware however of supports, activities and programs in places other than their own local community.

**PEOPLE SAID** they had personal ties with at least one other individual in their community. Some had been in the community and had not experienced isolation. Reaching out to others and checking on them was the norm in this rural community. Some expressed concern for those that might be socially isolated. It was noted that some people preferred not to join community activities. This is their prerogative as long as they have someone to reach out to them and ensure their safety.

Churches are closing. This was a place that provided social space. A three point charge provided space for pot lucks, games and a seniors club(s).

There are gatherings at the Optimist building (space we are in tonight) but this space does not provide for gatherings to play cards, shuffle board etc.

- Can the ***Optimist building be available for seniors/others to gather to play cards, shuffleboard etc.?***
- ***We need space to meet for potlucks, games etc.***
- ***We would like to form a speakers list, (resources such as VON, Public Health-Emily Powell to speak on the effects of drugs, vision impairment etc.) We could make plans to go on trips***

The SMART program (an exercise program) provides a time to socialize.

- Offering ***food allows a continuation of the social part*** of the program

## **RESPECT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION:**

“**WHO**” says community attitudes, such as a general feeling of respect and recognizing the role that older adults play in our society are critical factors for establishing an age-friendly community. Building positive community attitudes involves fostering positive images of aging and intergenerational understanding. The extent to which older people participate in the social, civic and economic life of the community is also closely linked to their experience of inclusion.

**WE SAW** those gathered at the focus group were engaged and involved in their communities. They generally felt respected and wanted to continue to contribute to the vibrancy of the community.

**PEOPLE SAID** the local aging population supports the opportunity for more networking, recreational and educational opportunities. They are a big part of **community participation** and say there is respect but are not sure about inclusion for all.

The Municipal members do show respect and often stop and talk. (One participant remarked that after 20 years of not seeing one another the Reeve got out of his truck to introduce himself and chat.) In one case, the Reeve saw a person working by the road that he did not recognize and stopped his truck, got out and introduced himself.

It is hard to find information about the community when people first move in/arrive.

The annual calendar is great; re: the information contained within.

- ***A welcome package for new comers is a good idea.*** Good to meet new neighbours and make them feel welcome.
- ***Please continue and enhance the Community Calendar***

## **CIVIC PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT:**

**“WHO” SAYS** many older retired people continue to provide unpaid and voluntary work for their families and communities. An age-friendly community provides options for older people to continue to contribute to their communities. Giving older adults a meaningful role in community development, providing opportunities for lifelong learning or creating interesting volunteer opportunities are all critical factors in civic engagement.

**WE SAW** some participants were involved in community volunteer activities. People were engaged and especially interested in age-friendly communities.

**PEOPLE SAID engagement in the community is important** and that there are opportunities for volunteering. Some sit on boards. Some participants were volunteers.

- *Perhaps there needs to be more talk about what is needed and available.*

**211** is a resource but noted that it is only as good as the local information submitted to keep it up to date.

Some seniors are employed locally.

## **COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION:**

**“WHO” SAYS** staying connected with events and people and getting timely practical information to manage life and personal needs is vital for active aging. It is important to have relevant information that is readily accessible to older people with varying capacities and resources.

**WE SAW** that focus group participants felt there was a gap in accessing local information. 211 does not have all the information required for the services and groups in the community.

**PEOPLE SAID** not everyone has the internet. Word of mouth, phone chains (Buddy System) and a friendly voice on the phone, a monthly dinner meeting and local papers such as the “Biz Bull” which is “Southgate” wide are seen as the lines of communication that are most direct.

The billboards such as those at the Credit Union, Optimist Centre, Foodland and the Holstein Store are also useful.

Not all of “Southgate” gets the Mt. Forest paper.

The “Mt. Forest Confederate” is free. There is free advertising on the radio station- 88.7 “The River”.

Newspapers are not always the best form of communication!

- The **Economic Development Officer** needs *input from the community in regards* to *developing a “Welcome Package”* for new comers. Seniors could also distribute the latter. It is important to welcome newcomers to the community and to provide them with information that will answer their questions.
- Home and Community Support Services has “Friendly Visitors” but at the moment they *need more volunteers in “Southgate”*. *We need to build a “Volunteer Network”*
- *We need to invite the O.P.P to talk to us about fraud*
- **NOTE: Non Profit Groups can post on the Municipal websites**

## **COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND HEALTH SERVICES:**

**“WHO” SAYS** Health and support services are vital to maintaining health and independence in the community. People are concerned globally with the availability of sufficient good quality, appropriate and accessible care. Experiences differ depending on different systems with very different expectations but nevertheless older people everywhere voice a clear desire for basic health and income support. Health care costs are perceived as too high everywhere and the desire for affordable care is consistently expressed.

**WE SAW** that those who attended the focus group were in good health and although older were fit and vibrant. They generally felt involved and connected.

**PEOPLE SAID** they wish that seniors did not have concerns/be afraid about going to the hospital. Three new doctors are now in Mt. Forest and are taking patients.

- *We need to provide reassurance and advocacy to seniors; re: medical concerns and returning home.*
- *As people “age in place” more appropriate housing and health care services are needed.*

## **GENERAL COMMENTS:**

**At the end of the conversations people were asked to comment on the focus group experience.**

- Worthwhile meeting
- Great to hear ideas, different perspective and that the Seniors Community Advisory Committee is in place
- We need more 211 stickers/magnets
- Well-presented/topics covered well
- Wish there had been a few more people, hopefully we have enough ideas
- The Municipality is behind the SCAC. Please bring other ideas to the Seniors Community Advisory Committee and/or Mr. Dave Millner, CAO, Township of Southgate.
- Use of collective voice
- SCAC – Municipality – SCAC – Community
- Host functions in all parts of the municipality (Township of Southgate). Use of electronic signs!

The Council on Aging Grey Bruce Owen Sound (COAGBOS) would like to thank all the participants and the Municipal representatives who attended both focus groups. It was a beginning point for the work that will be carried out over the next few months. The COAGBOS representatives are happy to support your journey in any way we can. Please contact us by email or phone!