



Find out more

For more information visit our website
www.cotavictoria.org.au
or contact:

Ronda Held

CEO

rheld@cotavic.org.au
9655 2102

Sharon Granek

Acting Manager – Community Participation

sgranek@cotavic.org.au
9655 2105

Older People Supporting
Local Communities:

The COTA Age Friendly Initiative

For over 65 years, COTA Victoria has represented the voices of older Victorians. We provide valuable information, education and engagement services to older people and support government to develop and implement policies that improve the lives of older Victorians. Since 2013 Age Friendly Victoria has been facilitating and supporting older people to ensure their local communities are thriving places for all people to live, work, learn and play.



Why is Age Friendly important?

People across Victoria are now living longer and healthier lives. This exciting change in the makeup of our society means there will soon be as many older people as there are children. People aged 80+ are the fastest-growing age group and this is bringing major social change. Many generations are now living, learning, working and socialising together.

An Age Friendly world enables people of all ages to actively participate in community activities and treats everyone with respect, regardless of their age. In Age Friendly communities older people live safely, enjoy good health and stay involved.

The COTA Age Friendly Initiative

Using the World Health Organisation's Active Ageing Policy Framework, COTA is creating opportunities for older people to use their skills and knowledge to support communities to become Age Friendly.

COTA is supporting local governments, health and other service providers to work with local residents to develop and drive activities that bring about an Age Friendly community. We do this by:

- promoting active ageing
- recognising that older people are a valuable resource
- involving older people in deciding priorities and shaping actions
- understanding that where we live affects how we live
- making improvements to the physical environment
- raising awareness that Age Friendly communities benefit everyone.

To create Age Friendly communities, COTA works with older people to conduct Age Friendly 'audits', engage older people in the local community, and report findings at the local community level.

Our approach is one of partnership. We:

- work with older people to establish local networks across government, business and community to develop an action plan to bring about positive change
- mentor, train and support older people to act as consumer representatives on advisory groups and committees
- work with local governments and community groups to engage local communities to develop Age Friendly cities.

What our partners say about COTA Age Friendly

[We have] appreciated COTA's partnership and support ... with the development of the Age Friendly Champions program through the delivery of the training workshop during the consultation phase of the Active & Healthy Ageing Initiative. Maroondah considers COTA Victoria to be an important partner in the Age Friendly space.

— **Maroondah City Council**

COTA Vic was engaged to assist us in consulting with our community in regard to the Age Friendliness ... The staff and volunteers were knowledgeable, professional and receptive to our needs ... and were able to engage with the community in a variety of methods to ensure a high level of participation. We received positive feedback from the community regarding COTA's presentation and engagement methods and the information collected was presented to us in a useful manner, which has assisted the development of strategic documents for our organisation in regard to Age Friendliness.

— **Moira Shire Council**

I would like to acknowledge the support COTA staff provide for our communities in East Gippsland ... we are grateful for the assistance to focus our efforts on working with such a large socio-demographic change. The work undertaken in East Gippsland by COTA staff has assisted communities to understand the concepts of what an Age Friendly community entails and how their voices can be heard in the ongoing discussion.

— **Cr Joe Rettino, Mayor, East Gippsland**

Our Vision

Ageing in Australia is a time of possibility, opportunity and influence

Our Mission

COTA advances the rights, interests and futures of Australians as we age
