

**AGE-FRIENDLY CITIES INDEX PROJECT**

*Statement by Minister for Seniors and Volunteering*

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah - Minister for Seniors and Volunteering)** [12.10 pm]: Through the Office for Seniors Interests and Volunteering the state government is entering into a partnership with the City of Melville to conduct research as part of the World Health Organisation's age-friendly cities index project. The aim of the age-friendly cities index project is to examine the environmental and social determinants of active ageing to help make the settings of daily life more age-friendly.

In the developed world, three-quarters of older people live in cities; therefore, making cities age-friendly is one of the most effective policy approaches to respond to population ageing. Many aspects of urban settings and services contribute, either positively or negatively, to the participation, health, independence and security of older people. An age-friendly city prevents and corrects the barriers that people increasingly encounter as they grow older. In an age-friendly city, policies, services and structures related to the physical and social environment are designed to support and enable older people to age actively; that is, to live in security, enjoy good health, and participate fully in society.

This exciting project will tie the results of the research occurring in the City of Melville with those from 30 partner cities, from Great Britain, the United States, Germany, India, Lebanon, Mexico, Argentina and Brazil. The research will follow strict specifications devised by the World Health Organisation to allow meaningful comparisons between these different countries. The project will take the form of extensive qualitative research, in the form of focus groups, to be conducted jointly by the Office for Seniors Interests and Volunteering and the City of Melville. Participating in these focus groups will be older people who live in the City of Melville, caregivers of older residents who require care, and providers of services to older residents. This project provides an opportunity to work collaboratively with local government and to be part of a major international initiative.

Importantly, this project adds an important component to the government's active ageing strategy and reflects the Carpenter government's commitment to plan for and respond to the challenges of an ageing population.