



Bowen Island Municipality, British Columbia
AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY PROJECT
REPORT TO COUNCIL

June 15, 2009

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Introduction



The Provincial Government is encouraging and supporting municipalities throughout the province to become “age-friendly communities” (AFC). This concept was developed through the work of the World Health Organization (WHO)¹ and further informed by a project lead by the Canadian Federal Minister Responsible for Seniors.² Motivated by the world’s aging population, the WHO consulted older people, community leaders and caregivers in 33 cities around the world, including the District of Saanich in BC, to identify physical, social and environmental barriers to active aging and to make suggestions for improvement. The Canadian government further engaged 10 remote and rural communities across Canada - including the Villages of Alert Bay and Lumby in BC - in identifying features that make their communities more age-friendly.

Despite the diverse countries and communities that were consulted, they all identified eight key features of an age-friendly community:

1. Outdoor spaces and public buildings that are pleasant, clean, secure and physically accessible.
2. Public transportation that is accessible and affordable.

¹ Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide. World Health Organization. Available from: http://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global_age_friendly_cities_Guide_English.pdf.

² Age-Friendly Rural and Remote Communities: A Guide. Canadian Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Seniors. Available from: http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/library/publications/year/2007/AFRRRC_en.pdf.

3. Housing that is affordable, appropriately located, well built, well designed and secure.
4. Opportunities for social participation in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities with people of all ages and cultures.
5. Older people are treated with respect and are included in civic life.
6. Opportunities for employment and volunteerism that cater to older persons' interests and abilities.
7. Age-friendly communication and information available.
8. Community support and health tailored to older persons' needs.

Bowen Island Municipality (BIM) received a UBCM grant and Faye White was contracted to undertake an assessment that:

- establishes a baseline understanding of how the 8 focus areas of an Age Friendly Community are currently being supported on Bowen Island;
- develops a comprehensive understanding of the outstanding areas for development regarding the 8 focus areas of an Age Friendly Community;
- identifies practical ideas and strategies that can inform current and future planning and policy development;
- helps increase the public profile of older adult needs and the understanding of the elements of an Age Friendly Community in order to build support and commitment within the community and.
- supports the establishment of an advisory committee to council representing the needs of seniors.

Bowen Island Context

Year	Age	Proportion of Population	Total Persons in Age Group	Male	Female
2001	0+	100%	2,957	1445	1510
2006	0 +	100%	3,362	1615	1745
2001	45-64	27%	915	465	445
2006	45-64	37%	1270	620	640

2001	65-84	8.3%	280	140	140
2006	65-79 ³	9.7%	325	160	165
2001	85+	.7%	25	10	15
2006	80 +	2.5%	80	40	40
2001	65+	9%	305	150	155
2006	65+	13.6%	405	200	205

Data Source: Statistics Canada 2001/2006 Census Profile

The 2001 and 2006 census data indicates an increase in residents 65+ by 4.6% during the 5 year period. In 2006, approximately 13.6 % of the Bowen Island population were 65+, with a further 37% being between 45 – 64. This data clearly forecasts increasing seniors’ needs. Research completed by the United Way of the Lower Mainland in 2008⁴, further supports this with their population projection that the number of seniors will more than double in the Lower Mainland by 2027.

A 2007 Seniors’ Healthcare Assessment ⁵, presented to Bowen Island Council, identified a number of older adults with significant health care issues living in their own home on Bowen with limited and often inadequate health supports and services. It also found that 39 Bowen seniors had left the island in the previous four years due to a lack of health supports, including housing options and transportation. This substantiates a trend that is well known on the island.

³ Census Data collection was amended from 2001, 65 – 84, 85+ to 2006 from 65-79, 80+,

⁴ Towards an age-friendly community in the Lower Mainland/Sea to Sky Corridor, 2008. United Way of the Lower Mainland. Available at <http://www.uwlm.ca/NR/rdonlyres/2EF99B09-12D3-4D7E-BE5A-AB43BD9EEAC4/85706/SeniorsForumFullResearchReport.pdf>.

⁵ Bowen Island Seniors Needs Assessment Report , Abbeyfield House of Bowen Island Society, 2007 Available at <http://bimbc.ca/files/embedded/080218CoW3-1.pdf>.

What is an “Age-Friendly Community”?



The World Health Organization (WHO) defines an “age-friendly” community as one in which public officials, service providers, community leaders, businesses and community members:

- recognize the great diversity among older persons,
- promote their inclusion and contribution in all areas of community life,
- respect their decisions and lifestyle choices, and
- anticipate and respond flexibly to aging-related needs and preferences.

In an age-friendly community, policies, programs, services and infrastructure related to the physical and social environment are designed to enable older people to live in security, enjoy good health and continue to participate in society in a meaningful way. It takes into account the biological, psychological, behavioural, economic, social and environmental factors that operate over the course of a person’s life to determine health and well-being in later years.

An age-friendly community benefits people of all ages. Secure neighbourhoods are safe for children, youth, women and older adults. Families experience less worry and stress when their older relations have the services and supports they need. Barrier free buildings and streets enhance the mobility and independence of older adults as well as people with disabilities and parents with children in strollers. The whole community benefits from the participation of older persons in volunteer or paid work and community activities.

Making communities age-friendly is one of the most effective policy approaches for responding to demographic aging.

Local Voices – Process

Step 1: Steering Committee

A Steering Committee made up of key stakeholders and informants was established to oversee the project. The membership of Bowen residents and municipal staff included:

Alison Morse – Councillor, Bowen Island Municipality
Celene Fung/Jason Smith – Planner, Bowen Island Municipality
Christine Walker – Community Services Manager, Bowen Island Municipality,
April Sear – Seniors Keeping Young (SKY) representative
Cindy MacLeod – RN, Geriatric Outreach Program, Vancouver Coastal Health
Marg Witty – Director, Abbeyfield Society of Bowen Island
Tim Rhodes – Past President, Bowen Island Chamber of Commerce
Sarah Haxby – School Coordinator, Bowen Island Community School
Dr. Lynn Beattie – Geriatrician, University of BC/Vancouver Coastal Health

Step 2: Gathering Community Input

The first phase of the Age-Friendly Communities Project involved assessing Bowen’s strengths and weaknesses in promoting active aging. We began by identifying existing programs, supports, services and infrastructure on Bowen that support each of the eight key AFC focuses. This serves as a baseline to build upon. (Appendix 1)

The second phase of the project focused on the “lived” experience of older people – what seniors experience in their daily lives on Bowen. (Appendix 2) The data was primarily collected by means of six focus groups with older persons, caregivers, community leaders and service providers. Participants in the older adult focus groups were English speaking, Bowen residents, 65 years or older. They included a mix of persons with varying levels of abilities and disabilities consistent with the make-up of the older population of Bowen. Focus groups were also held with informal caregivers (spouses, family members and friends) and service providers representing services and supports including transportation, health care and spiritual care. The focus groups were supplemented by individual input from people that could not attend a focus group. A total of 38 individuals provided their perspectives regarding areas that needed attention in order to improve Bowen’s support of older residents and suggestions for how these could be addressed. (Appendix 3)

Findings and Recommendations

1. Outdoor Spaces and Public Buildings

Common Bowen Barriers

- Uneven and narrow walkways, with obstacles
- Limited accessibility for those with physical limitations
- Lack of benches and access to washrooms
- Limited handicap parking spots and curb cuts



Killarney Lake washroom, located on knoll with stairs



Handicap parking, can't open passenger door, no curb cut for wheelchair



Crosswalk on speed bump, no curb cuts, difficult for walkers, wheelchairs and people with poor balance



Obstacles in sidewalks, inadequate room for a scooter or wheelchair

Bowen Current Status

- Some handicap parking spots at key locations
- Sidewalk paving in Snug Cove
- Walking paths along Miller Road
- Paving of Seniors Lane

Goal: Outdoor spaces and public buildings that are pleasant, clean, secure and physically accessible.

The design of public spaces can serve to facilitate or restrain the level of access and ability of seniors to fully participate in their community.

Moving Forward.....

Recommendations for an Age Friendly Future

1. BIM “Engineering Standards” – Review existing infrastructure standards and update as necessary to support people with accessibility issues (mobility, visual, auditory challenges). With specific attention to developing standards for:

- **Sidewalks and pathways**

- Wide enough to accommodate scooter, walkers and wheelchairs
- Consistent smooth surface without sloping edges
- No obstacles i.e. poles
- Curb cuts, (not on the diagonal)
- Cross walks on a flat surface (not on a speed bump)

Current priorities for improvements: Sidewalks in the Cove, along Miller Road and Seniors’ Lane are the priorities. Building accessible walking paths along all roads overtime will promote safe, active living for older seniors and all island residents.

- **Handicap parking**

- Adequate number of handicap parking spots, increases proportionate to growth of aging population
- Curb cuts at each spot without obstacles i.e. poles
- Spots are well marked and parking enforced

Current priorities for improvement: Additional spots near ferry, in front of the General Store, Bowen Island Community School and at Artisan Square are the priority.

2. Public Washrooms

- Accessible washrooms in restaurants, commercial and public facilities
- Outdoor public washrooms are located on level ground with a flat threshold.

Current priorities for improvement: Public washrooms in the Cove and Artisan Square and an outdoor washroom at the intersection of the Meadows Park path and the path through Crippen Park , are the priorities

- 3. Public Benches** - Increase the number of public benches
- Explore partnership with the Memorial Garden Society

Current priorities for improvement: Benches beside pathways, along Miller Road and in the Cove

- 4. Public Buildings Design** - Ensure the design of all buildings used by the public support people with accessibility issues (mobility, visual, auditory challenges).
- Incorporate "universal design standards " into all new development and redevelopment to maximize accessibility
 - Hearing system is built into Municipal Hall and public meeting spaces
 - Larger print signage in and outside public facilities to provide clear directions
 - Wheelchair seating in theatres
 - Handicap and scooter parking spots
 - Pull over with overhang for drop off/pick up
- 5. Snow removal** - Minimize isolation by:
- Snow removal from sidewalks in commercial areas
 - Ensure essential services are accessible and available i.e. ambulance
 - Develop a volunteer pool to shovel seniors walks/drives as needed

2. Transportation

Common Bowen Barriers

- No evening public transportation
- Limited bus service - inaccessible to many
- Buses are too large to access Bowen Court
- Restricted access to ferry elevator for scooters and wheelchairs
- Ferry, no access to top floor during emergency
- Cove/Ferry access – narrow, uneven, poorly lit, no pick up/ drop off area



Narrow, uneven pathway, not accessible to scooter or wheelchair

"I don't go to any events in the evening because I don't drive at night."

Older Adult Focus Group Participant

"A taxi service equals to freedom, flexibility and independence"

Older Adult Focus Group Participant

Bowen Current Status

- Translink Community Shuttle Bus Service, during the day, two routes on main roads
- Handidart Service, pick up at Horseshoe Bay ferry terminal

Goal: Public transportation that is accessible and affordable.

Access to transportation promotes or limits participation in activities, access to services on and off island and contributions to the community.

Moving Forward.....

Recommendations for an Age Friendly Future

1. Taxi Service -

- Explore way to enable a Bowen taxi service. i.e. research cooperative taxi models; municipal service contract

2. Pool of Volunteer Drivers

- Development and coordination of an "on call" pool of volunteers

3. Bus Service

- Improved bus service and a smaller bus that can access all parts of the island (including Bowen Court)
- A weekly bus trip for older adults and people with disabilities, to the mainland to facilitate medical appointments, shopping trips and access to recreational activities
- Build a case for Handidart as need increases with population
- Accessible, covered bus shelters

4. Ferry

- Improve accessibility needed on ferry i.e. improved accessibility to elevator for scooters/wheelchairs, emergency procedures
- Improve Cove access to ferry, wider, level sidewalks, lighting, and drop off/pick up area

5. Speed Control

- Traffic calming methods and speed limit enforcement
The Cove and Seniors Lane are the priorities

3. Housing

Common Bowen Barriers

- Very few existing housing options
- Rental options are all inaccessible for people with physical limitations/disabilities
- Housing is unaffordable for many older people
- No options for down sizing
- Zoning restricts many housing options
- No options for “aging in place”, as older people’s needs change

“I know that once I can no longer drive I won’t be able to stay in my home”

*Older Adult
Focus Group Participant*

“I would like to live my life out on Bowen, this is my home.”

*Older Adult
Focus Group Participant*

Bowen Current Status

- Bowen Court – seniors housing co-op, 55+, 19 one and two bedroom units
- Abbeyfield Seniors Supportive Housing is in the process of development, 22 units
 - Council support for the rezoning
 - Council waved rezoning & permit fees
 - Council grant for property taxes on the vacant land secured for the seniors housing
- Municipality owns lands near Snug Cove
- Municipality has adopted an affordable housing policy

Goal: Housing that is affordable, appropriately located, well built, well designed and secure

Housing is a basic determinant of health. The needs and personal choices of seniors vary, requiring a range of housing options to address them.

Moving Forward.....

Recommendations for an Age Friendly Future

1. Range of Housing Options

- Accessible, affordable housing near amenities and transportation.
- Granny flats on existing lots
- Park model homes (an affordable, accessible housing option)
- Smaller clustered homes for mixed ages, close to services/ amenities and transit (i.e. Co-Housing Model)
- Abbeyfield and additional Bowen Court units
- Assisted living and multi level care facility

2. Design Guidelines

- BC Building Code changes, to require all buildings to incorporate “universal design” principles to improve accessibility in new construction
- Design of all affordable housing and development of public lands (surplus lands) support people with accessibility issues (mobility, visual, auditory challenges).
- Design communal spaces (i.e. front porches, shared gardens, common rooms) into the design of affordable housing and development of public lands, to facilitate community connections

3. Maintenance

- Develop and publicize a list of reliable handy people, grant information re: home renovations etc.
- Bowen students earn their school community service credits by doing odd jobs for Bowen older adults

4. Social Participation

Common Bowen Barriers

- Participation is limited by transportation, particularly in the evening
- Most activities are dependent on volunteers and volunteers burn out if not supported – activity dissolves
- Many seniors are unaware of activities, so don't attend
- No community meeting place for seniors
- Limited intergenerational activities



Carpet Bowling – BICS



Exercising – SKY

Bowen Current Status

- SKY - weekly speakers, exercise, dance and coffee on Mondays. Seniors picked up if required.
- Recreation Policies: Seniors discounts on some programs and fitness drop-ins/memberships (60+, 20- 25%). Financial assistance for anyone who cannot afford to participate
- Seniors Recreation and Fitness programs through BIM Community Recreation: Seniors Keep Fit, Tai Chi, Carpet bowling, Yoga, 55+,
- Grand friends – BICS invites grandparents and seniors to interact with children, activities, tea, presentations & story-sharing
- IPS Master works, mentorship
- BICS Heritage Day celebration with children and seniors
- Royal Canadian Legion Branch No. 150 – Friday meals and entertainment (carpool)

Goal: Opportunities for social participation in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities with people of all ages and cultures.

It is essential to recognize and accommodate the diversity of seniors' interests and abilities. These will continue to evolve and one size does not fit all.

"Old people need old people, but they also need the young and young people need contact with the old." (A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction). ⁶

Moving Forward.....

Recommendations for an Age Friendly Future

1. Coordination and Support

- Part time Seniors Program Coordinator to coordinate senior's activities (funded and volunteer).
- Senior's clearing house for information i.e. directory included with BICS semi annual calendar, BIM website – coming events and contacts for information, community calendar
- Seniors meeting space incorporated into the design of the Community Centre
- Volunteer visitor/phone call program for shut ins
- Buddy system to encourage people to participate

2. Choice of activities

- Organized on and off island activities, varied, everyone welcome i.e. daytime concerts, men's group, monthly mystery tours, walking group inside BICS gym, hiking group

3. Transportation

- All programming encouraged to provide transportation as needed, i.e. carpool, volunteer drivers

4. Intergenerational Activities

- Develop a mentorship program
- Promote social activities appropriate for all ages i.e. scrabble nights
- Projects involving seniors and young people

5. Opportunities for Learning

- Elder college – lectures
- Evening Programs
- Youth teaching seniors computer lessons

⁶ Alexander, C. (1977). *A Pattern Language: Towns, Building, Construction*. p 216

5. Respect and Inclusion

Common Bowen Barriers

- Seniors issues are not a high priority on Bowen Council meeting
- Council meeting are held in the evening when transportation is unavailable
- Many seniors won't speak up at large public meetings



Heritage Days, 1999 (BI Historians)



Grand friends, 2009

Bowen Current Status

- Municipal elections, a mobile poll goes to households that cannot make it to the polling station to vote.
- BIM provided a grant for the purchase of infra-red hearing aid equipment, which is used by BIM, SKY and other community groups for meetings.
- Grand friends – BICS invites grandparents and seniors to interact with children, activities, tea, presentations & story-sharing

Goal: Older people are treated with respect and are included in civic life.

Moving Forward.....

Recommendations for an Age Friendly Future

1. Seniors Voice at Municipal Council

- Seniors' portfolio assigned to a BIM Councillor
- Elders Advisory Council to BIM
- Senior's advocate
- Develop consultation methods that ensure input from seniors i.e. telephone tree organized through SKY to share information and gather input, kitchen table discussion captured and contributed

2. Accessibility

- Transportation to all council and public meetings available as needed
- Public meetings accommodate accessibility issues (mobility, visual, auditory challenges), provide comfortable seating and breaks.

6. Employment and Volunteer Opportunities

Common Bowen Barriers

- A lot of work is done on Bowen by volunteers, with little or no recognition
- People don't recognize that some older people need to work to support themselves
- Older adults have many skills and experiences that could benefit others that are not being utilized.

"I need to work but people are hesitant to hire me because I am 70 years old."

*Older Adult
Focus Group Participant*

"I would like to use some of the skills I developed in my profession, now that I am retired."

*Older Adult
Focus Group Participant*

Bowen Best Practices

- Seniors Keeping Young, a volunteer organization that is focused on mutual support and wellness.
- Numerous opportunities to volunteer

Goal: Opportunities for employment and volunteerism that cater to older persons' interests and abilities

"As people grow older, ...satisfying work which nourishes, becomes more and more important". (A Pattern Language: Towns, Buildings, Construction).

Moving Forward.....

Recommendations for an Age Friendly Future

1. Develop Seniors Skills Bank

- Inventory the skills/talents/interests of older adults
- Share with BI Chamber of Commerce to promote part time work that meets the needs of local merchants and seniors
- Share with schools and Teen Centre to encourage mentoring and intergenerational activities
- Share with volunteer organizations to promote a quality volunteering experience that meets the needs of the organizations and the seniors

2. Recognition

- BIM annual volunteer recognition for all Bowen volunteers, including seniors

3. Promotion/Coordination

- Incorporate a volunteer information centre into the design of the Community Centre.

7. Communication and Information

Common Bowen Barriers

- Many seniors are unaware of activities, so don't attend
- Most information is printed in smaller print, i.e. papers, Council minutes
- Hearing device is not available at all public meetings
- Accessing library material can be difficult



Bowen Current Status

- Large print and audio library books
- Infra red hearing aid equipment available for public functions
- Library provides public access to computers.

Goal: Age-friendly communication and information available.

Moving Forward.....

Recommendations for an Age Friendly Future

1. Access to information

- Large print - information sheets, flyers
- Hearing device at all public/council meetings
- Develop an Information Telephone Tree to share information (don't rely solely on ads, flyers)

2. Heighten the profile of seniors

- Seniors stories profiled in local papers
- Seniors correspondent

3. Library

- Large print books are located in one section
- Listening device/players on hand for talking books.
- Library book pick up/delivery – through volunteers car pooling
- Mobile library, as population grows

8. Community Services and Health Care

Common Bowen Barriers

- Vancouver Coastal Health community services are inconsistent and inadequate
- If caregivers are not supported they burn out
- Grocery shopping is difficult for some older adults
- At least 40 older adults have left over the past 4 years due to lack of services/supports
- There is no one place to find information about services and supports – people do not know what exists

"If I get sick my husband will have to go into a care home off island."

*Older Adult
Focus Group Participant*

"I have a neighbor who can't use Stong's grocery deliver because they don't have a computer and they are hard of hearing."

*Older Adult
Focus Group Participant*

Bowen Current Status

- Quality of existing health and community services is high
- Equipment Loan Cupboard
- Ambulance - 24/7 Airlift or water taxi to Horseshoe Bay in as required. Volunteer fire department first responders.
- Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions Self-Management Program, offered by BICS
- Life Labs - 1 x week, portable laboratory services, ECG, Thursday a.m., at Dr. Bueckert's office
- VCH Long Term Care Service - assessments, home support services, referrals to off island Adult Day Care, Assisted Living and Facility Care
- VCH Home Care Nursing Service, including Palliative Care
- VCH Older Adult Mental Health Team and Geriatric Outreach Team, Specialty assessments and services.
- VCH In-home OT/PT therapy if eligible
- Grocery shopping on island and delivery from Stongs off island
- Better Meals, delivered weekly to older adults

Goal: Community support and health tailored to older persons' needs.

Community and health care services are essential to support seniors to “age in place”.

Seniors on Bowen Island despite their health care needs, are living at home with minimal or inadequate public supports. (2007 Seniors' Healthcare Assessment)

Moving Forward.....

Recommendations for an Age Friendly Future

1. Home Support Services

- Advocate to VCH for the services Bowen seniors are eligible to receive and to develop sustainable ways to deliver them
- Work with VCH to develop sustainable ways to deliver their services i.e. transportation options for home support workers without a vehicle

2. Respite for Caregivers (family/friends)

- Advocate to Vancouver Coastal Health to provide on-island respite for caregivers, Abbeyfield will have space
- Build a case for on-island Adult Day Program and advocate for it as population requires
- Develop an on-island support group for caregivers

3. Range of Housing and Care Options

- Advocate for and enable (i.e. zoning) the development of a range of housing and care options including support in individual homes, supportive housing, assisted living, multi level care facility

4. Grocery Delivery

- Local affordable grocery delivery, work with merchants
- Community volunteers to order from Stongs or local stores, for those struggling with computer or telephone ordering

5. Current listing of service/supports for Bowen

- Establishment of a comprehensive list of health and support services that is kept up to date and published

6. NERP Program

- Identify all older people living in neighbourhoods
- Phone trees to seniors during emergencies and prolonged snow storms

Moving Forward

This report is presented to the Bowen Island Municipal Council to inform their current and future planning initiatives. There are a number of planning processes that are underway that will benefit from this information and set of recommendations including the:

- OCP Review
- Greenways Plan
- Civic Facilities Community Hall and Arts Centre Planning

In order to heighten the awareness of the general public this information will be shared through a public meeting, Saturday, June 20, 2009 at Bowen Court and newspaper articles. In addition the report will be provided to the Official Community Plan Steering Committee, Bowen Island Municipal Staff, Advisory Planning Commission, Advisory Design Panel, Greenways Advisory Committee, Community Hall and Arts Centre Committee, Ferry Advisory Committee and the Chamber of Commerce.

Recommendations:

- *That council receive the Age friendly Communities Report and*
- *That the report be referred to the OCP Steering Committee for use in the OCP Update Process and*
- *That Council direct staff to develop an implementation plan and.*
- *That council establish a Seniors Advisory Committee, terms of reference to include:*
 - *Monitor the implementation of the Bowen Island Age Friendly Community Plan*
 - *Identify and advocate for seniors issues*
 - *Liaise with seniors and seniors groups*
 - *Represent seniors at the Community Services Advisory Committee*
- *That council forward a copy of the Bowen Island Age Friendly Community Report to*
 - *Rizwan Damji, Vancouver Coastal Health; John Weston, MP, Joan McIntyre, MLA, Bowen Island Municipality Ferry Advisory Committee, The Greenways Committee and the Community Center Committee*

Appendix 1

Bowen Island Age Friendly Baseline Assessment – February 2009			
<i>Outdoor Spaces & Buildings</i>	<i>Transportation</i>	<i>Housing</i>	<i>Social Participation</i>
Handicap Parking spots at library, in front of Doctors offices, municipal hall, 3 major commercial developments (USS Co, Village Square, Artisan Square)	Translink Community Shuttle Bus Service, during the day, two routes on main roads.	Abbeyfield Seniors Supportive Housing being developed (22 units); Council support for the rezoning Council waved rezoning & permit fees; Council grant for property taxes on the vacant land secured for the seniors housing Council plans to consider a property tax exemption once the housing is built	SKY - weekly speakers, exercise, dance and coffee on Mondays. Seniors picked up if required.
Sidewalk paving in Snug Cove	Handidart Service, pick up at Horseshoe Bay ferry terminal	Bowen Court – seniors housing co-op, 55+, 19 one and two bedroom units	Seniors Rec. and Fitness programs through the BIM Community Rec.: Seniors Keep Fit - a mild/moderate class , all components of fitness 1x week Tai Chi - 1-3 times per week Carpet bowling - 1 time per week Yoga, 55+ Non-impact aerobics, Pilates for seniors, SKY
Walking paths along Miller road		Future Affordable and Seniors housing, Municipality owns lands near Snug Cove and has adopted a policy of securing affordable housing as part of rezoning applications	Recreation Policies: Seniors discounts on some programs and fitness drop-ins/memberships (60+, 20- 25%) \$\$ assistance for anyone who cannot afford to participate
Paving of Seniors Lane			Grand Friends – BICS invites grandparents and seniors to interact with children, activities, tea, presentations & story-sharing
			IPS Master works/annual Heritage Day @ BICS with children and seniors
			Royal Canadian Legion Branch No. 150 – Friday meals and entertainment (carpool)

Bowen Island Age Friendly Baseline Assessment – February 2009

<i>Respect and Inclusion</i>	<i>Employment & Volunteer Opportunities</i>	<i>Communication and Information</i>	<i>Community Support & Health Services</i>
Grandfriends – BICS invites grandparents & seniors to interact with children, activities, tea, presentations & story-sharing	SKY, weekly speakers, exercise, dance and coffee on Mondays. Seniors picked up if required.	Large print and audio library books	Older Adult Mental Health Team and Geriatric Outreach Team, Specialty assessments and services.
Infra red hearing aid equipment for public functions used by the BIM for public information mtgs., by SKY and other groups. BIM grant for purchase.	BI Historians collect record & exhibit Bowen's history through the Museum & Higgins Cottage to honour Bowen's history. BIM provides a property tax exemption & provides a core operations grant	Infra red hearing aid equipment for public functions, used by the BIM for public information mtgs., by SKY and other groups. BIM grant for purchase.	Loan Cupboard - equipment such as wheel chairs, crutches are loaned to individuals in need of aids. Service run by an individual volunteer from her home
Municipal elections, a mobile poll goes to households that cannot make it to the polling station to vote.		Library public access to computers. Previous attempts to offer computer lessons for seniors through BICS.	Ambulance - 24/7 Airlift or water taxi to Horseshoe Bay Volunteer fire department first responders.
BI Historians collect record & exhibit Bowen's history through the Museum & Higgins Cottage to honour Bowen's history. BIM provides a property tax exemption & provides a core operations grant			Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions Self-Management Program offered by BICS - a free program of six 2 1/2 hour workshops designed to create a personal set of skills and methods to communicate, cope, strategize and manage any chronic condition.
Historians are taping seniors stories			VCH Long Term Care Service - assessments, home support services, referrals to off island Adult Day Care, Assisted Living and Facility Care
			Life Labs - 1 x week
			VCH Home Care Nursing Service, including Palliative Care
			VCH In-home OT/PT therapy if eligible
			Grocery shopping on island and delivery from Stongs Grocery off island

Focus Group Questions

1. Outdoor Spaces and Public Buildings

What are our challenges?

- Sidewalks, pathways and trails
- Public restrooms and rest areas
- Public buildings
- Safety and security
- Access to amenities, shopping, activities, services

What things need to be factored into the design of the community facility to make it AF?

What things need to be factored into the greenways plan to make it AF?

2. Transportation

What are our challenges?

- Roads
- Community Transportation Services
- Parking
- Snow Removal

What practical things can we do to improve these things?

3. Housing

What are our challenges?

- Housing options
- Maintenance
- Modifications
- Housing design
- During Blackouts

What practical things should be included in the design of new homes to make them AF?

4. Respect and Inclusion

What are our challenges?

- Respect, kindness and courtesy are shown
- Opinions are sought and respected
- Interaction between generations
- Seniors are honoured and stories documented

What are the best ways to ask seniors for their opinions?

How could we celebrate seniors on Bowen?

5. Social Participation

What are our challenges?

- Choice and range of activities
- Events and activities are accessible and affordable
- Isolated seniors are reached out to
- Intergenerational activities
- Seniors are honoured and stories documented
- Activities are well publicized

What practical ideas do you have for improvement?

6. Communication and Information

What are our challenges?

- Information re: activities and services is shared
- Limitations re: sight/hearing accommodated
- Seniors know where to find information
- Access to computers available to seniors
- Seniors are profiled positively in the media

What practical ideas do you have for improvement?

7. Employment and Volunteer Opportunities

What are our challenges?

- Volunteer opportunities are varied and flexible (short term)
- Vol. opportunities allow for intergenerational involvement
- Older adults have opportunity to work and are fairly compensated
- Seniors with disabilities are accommodated for volunteer and paid work
- Older adults are well represented on council, boards and committees

What practical ideas do you have for Improvement?

8. Community Supports and Health Services

What are our challenges?

- Home support services are available and affordable
- Meals are available to all seniors
- Delivery services for groceries, medications are available
- Programs to maintain wellness are available and affordable
- Caregivers have support and respite
- Health/wellness information is available, e.g. speakers

What practical ideas do you have for Improvement?

Consultation Participants

Hank Strubin
Angi McCulloch
Cindy MacLeod
Jane Henley
Marilyn Harris
Caroline Orr
Jon Furst
Jules De Groot
Bud Massender
Jean Jamieson

Dorothy Lawson
Joan Henley
Carol Jones
Sandy Logan
Ed Sanders
Susan Bell
Bev Rogers
Dr. Lynn Beattie
Dr. Martha Donnelly
Diane Marshall

Dale Gagne
Peter King
Rev. Sheilagh McKinnon
Nairn Knipe
Jean Cleator
Dora Trethewey
Pat Adams
Ruth Fortune
Pauline Le Bel
Don Marshall

The following individuals were invited to participate but were unable to:

All SKY members
Mallory & Mary Ann Smith
Bert Davies
Anitra Clements

Lois McLaren
Jan Chivers
Dr. Bueckert

Lael Hamilton
Ron Strange
Dr. Schloegl

In addition an invitation was extended to all seniors and caregivers in the Undercurrent and Bowen Island Times

Bowen Island Age Friendly Community Focus Group Raw Summary of Responses

Individual priorities identified by *

Focus Group #1

Outdoor spaces and public building

- No snow removal from sidewalks in Cove
- Idea: South sidewalk in Cove needs to be the same as north side **
- Idea: Need public benches along paths, work with Memorial Society *
- Idea: BIM to ensure w/c access outside (curb cuts, room on sidewalks, consistent smooth surfaces)
- Restaurants and businesses need to be w/c accessible – including bathroom with grab bars
- Idea: Community Centre – light weight doors/automatic, grab bars in bathroom, parking spaces for scooters/plug-ins, hearing systems, lever handles
- Idea: Need w/c accessible bathrooms along paths
- Idea: Need handicap pkg. outside General Store

Transportation

- Idea: pool of drivers, on call reimbursed for costs
- Idea: Taxi, BIM support license \$ *****
- Idea: salt boxes on hills for ice
- Need access to pedestrian water taxis
- Bus is not accessible in all neighbourhoods and if you are not on the main routes
- Idea: bus collection areas
- Bus can't access Bowen Court

Housing

- Idea: BIM zoning for granny flats
- Need more Bowen Court units
- Need to develop options to down size with a mix of ages – pets/garden, near Cove so
- can walk rather than drive Idea: BIM support Co-Housing model
- Need respite/convalescent care - Abbeyfield
- Idea: develop and publicize a list of handy people that show up
- Idea: regular reminders in undercurrent/flyers re: Emergency Preparedness
- Idea: new builds – ramps, wide doorways/halls, reinforcement in bathrooms for bars, rainwater reservoir, lever handles
- Idea: IPS community service – lawns/light bulbs

Social participation

- Need affordable exercise classes
- Transportation and parking is a barrier to participation *
- Idea: newsletter – coming events, Forum – coming events

- Idea: BIM website – coming events and contacts for info. *
- Need regular island outings to pools, plays etc.
- Idea: advertise community activities in BICS booklet
- Idea: scrabble nights, crib, poker – mixed ages
- Idea: computer lessons for beginners
- Respect and inclusion
- Knick/Knack/Nook focus on including seniors as volunteers
- Community Centre, seniors need to be fully involved, not a separate seniors room
- Seniors need to be included in everything, offer transportation
- Idea: telephone tree organized through SKY to share information and get input into topics.
- Historians need to continue taping seniors storied
- Individuals need to date/name photos
- Idea: mobile library

Employment and volunteer opportunities

- Idea: list of volunteer opportunities to be included in BICs program/Chamber Newcomers pkg.
- Idea: annual volunteer recognition
- People with limitations need to be accommodated to volunteer i.e. Historians
- Communication and information
- idea: hearing devices present at public events
- library has public computers
- idea: develop a community calendar
- idea: all activities offer transportation if needed (car pool)

Community supports and health services

- Need consistent access to Home support service *
- Need respite for caregivers
- Need caregiver support group
- Need grocery delivery

Focus Group #2

Outdoor spaces and public building

- Existing sidewalks don't accommodate scooter/walkers – poles, inconsistent surface, width **
- Idea: incorporate walk paths along all roads overtime – crushed limestone surface
- Idea: cats eyes on roads (different colors)
- Idea: mailbox kept accessible by BIM during storms
- Idea: scooter path along Miller/Cove
- Need plug in for scooters in Cove
- Idea: accessible public restrooms in restaurants
- Idea: cut away curbs (not on diagonal) and at each handicap spot
- Idea: more benches in Cove and along trails (Memorial Society)
- Community Centre:*
- Auto doors
- Larger print

- Ramps
- Handicap/scooter parking + plug in
- Graduated ramp to pool
- Pull over with overhang for delivery
- Non-slip flooring
- Designated space for seniors
- *Idea: Provincial license exemption to 40 km. for Bowen*

Public Transportation

- *Idea: During snow*
- triage system developed to identify essential services that must kept clear*
- list of people you can call
- salt provided
- IPS students/neighbours help with shoveling
- School community service credits – approach Rockridge/West Van/IPS
- *Idea: develop pool of volunteer drivers, that are reimbursed for costs and time*
- Not bus access to Bowen Court
- *Idea; develop bus shelters*
- Walking onto the ferry is difficult for many
- Need a bus, handidart directly to mainland weekly
- *Idea: BIM needs to be proactive and assertive with BC Ferries and Translink – incline on low tide very difficult, lighting poor*
- *Idea: Build a case overtime for handidart*

Housing

- Need to make grant information re: home renovations
- *Idea: Hold a seniors accessibility forum with information i.e. stair chair*
- All rentals have stairs, not accessible. Bowen Court not accessible due to hills
- *Idea: Handicap pkg. spot at Bowen Court*
- *Idea: change policy to allow for park models and other – clustered, small one level, small garden/patio, close to transit, services and amenities.(more affordable/fast)*
- Need full continuum of housing/care including Assisted Living and Multi level facility
- *Idea: change policy to allow for granny flats*
- Design guidelines for affordable housing and surplus lands – wc/scooter accessible, ramps, grab bar capacity, railing in halls, accessible parking with good lighting
- *Idea: Develop a list of handyman/maintenance services with reference – hire a student)*
- *Idea: Provide unbiased financial advice for seniors down-sizing*

Social participation

- Shifting with baby boomers – need to recognize difference in seniors, personal, well/independent, transitioning
- *Idea: Need to have a senior's directory/clearing house – one group doesn't know what the other is doing.**
- *Idea: use existing resources i.e. Tunstall Bay pool – seniors exercise*
- *Idea: encourage a buddy system to encourage people to participate **
- Transportation barrier to participating

- Classes too expensive for some (trade-off with necessities)
- Idea: Develop a volunteer visitor/phone call program
- Idea: Monthly bridge parties, organizing
- Idea: Hire a part time coordinator at Community Centre
- Idea: Monthly mystery tours organized *
- Idea: intergenerational activity – bingo nights at the school, advertize through BICS and Legion

Respect and inclusion

- Idea: provide transportation to public meetings as needed
- Idea: ensure good seating, breaks, microphone, hearing and sight issues addressed
- Idea: May feel intimidated, buddy system, round table discussions captured and contributed
- Senior's advocate*
- Idea: create a BI book – snapshot of neighbourhoods, every family writes their story, blue book

Employment and volunteer opportunities

- Saturation of volunteerism, burn out
- Idea: encourage a mix of ages on committee/groups
- Idea: Develop a seniors skill bank – Chamber (work) School/Youth Centre (mentoring)
- Idea: Educational Opportunities, Elder College, Evening programs, provide transportation
- Communication and information
- Idea: IPS kids teach seniors computers – school project/community service, summer day program
- Idea: share information through a telephone tree, a group commits to make 5 calls each once a month
- Need large print information sheets
- Idea: Highlight WV seniors programs in BICS calendar – organize trips

Community supports and health services

- Idea: develop a list of services/supports – who is responsible for what**
- Idea; develop a phone tree, could be part of NERP
- Idea: Address inadequate Home Support services – not accessible, not notified if HSW isn't coming, agency reluctant to send HSW from off island (cost/transportation on island, don't know where they are going), no on-island transportation, private care expensive ***
- Need delivery of meds
- Trips to doctors, transportation challenges on and off island
- Idea: Build a case overtime for Handydart
- Idea: Lunch program – affordable, social, sponsored by Ruddy?
- Ruddy is a good resource – prepared meals
- Stongs is difficult for those that are hard of hearing/don't use computer
- Idea: Community Volunteer ordering
- Idea: Develop respite for informal caregivers, ADC, support group/HSW coverage
- Idea: Walking group inside BICS gym/Community Centre/flat area on or off island
- Emotional wellness during periods of isolation due to bad weather

Focus Group #3

Outdoor spaces and public building

- Idea: develop a sidewalk along seniors lane
- Idea: make existing sidewalks in cove/Miller wide enough for W/C (able to get around poles), smooth surface
- Current sidewalks are sloped
- Idea: more benches in Cove
- Idea: bus shelters and benches
- Idea: paths developed using crushed gravel with binder – priority Cove trails
- Idea: snow removal enforced on sidewalks in the Cove **
- Idea: Community Centre design *
- Ramp
- Accessible washroom – raised seats. Bars
- Dedicated space for seniors
- ADC respite for caregivers
- Infrared in council and theatre **
- Elevator
- Lighting
- Larger print on signage
- Handicap parking, scooter parking, curb cut outs
- Levered handles
- Automatic door
- Chairs, straight back, flat bottom

Public Transportation

- major concern is there is no transportation in the evenings which promotes isolation
- idea: taxi, co-operative model ****
- need more bus routes and service in evening
- idea: pool of volunteer drivers that are reimbursed for expenses
- idea: 4 wheel drive ambulance (couldn't access Bowen Court during snow)
- idea: handi-dart
- idea: handicap parking outside General Store, ramp walkway
- ferry
- no elevator to top – emergency
- no room for wheelchair on sidewalks getting to/from ferry
- idea: waiting room should be on the north dock, with 4 walls, accessible washroom, door, heat
- idea: handicap drop off/pick up
- idea: lighting, getting to/from
- idea: smooth walking surface getting to/from (people have fallen)
- elevator is not large enough to accommodate a scooter

Housing

- need affordable options (1/3 of income)
- sewer hook up to Abbeyfield
- housing options close to services

- different sizes
- all existing rental space (other than Bowen Court) is upstairs, inaccessible
- Abbeyfield is needed
- Idea: develop a list of services i.e. handyman
- Idea: incorporate a workshop area in housing for intergenerational mentoring
- Idea: add new housing – bars, thresholds, wide doorways, in floor heating, geothermal
- Idea: smaller clustered homes for mixed ages – share equipment/skills
- Idea: pet allowed in all housing options

Social participation

- Idea: more activities in the afternoon, i.e. Tea dances, work with students
- Idea: Elder college – lectures
- Idea: walking group
- Idea: toast master
- Idea: Paid BIM Coordinator of Seniors Programming ***

Respect and inclusion

- idea: council member assigned “senior portfolio” ****
- people are respectful now
- all neighbourhood activities i.e. garage sales, parties need to include seniors
- idea: develop a newcomers club – Realtors
- idea: develop a method of indicating willing to give rides downtown

Employment and volunteer opportunities

- idea: develop a seniors skill bank
- idea: build on skill bank to encourage mentoring youth and helping others and contribute to projects

Communication and information

- Seniors should be profiled in papers
- Idea: develop a senior correspondent – pd. Senior
- Some volunteer opportunities are inaccessible to seniors i.e. Historians – stairs
- Idea: Community Centre – seniors info. centre and volunteer information centre – opportunities, skill bank etc ***
- Idea: 1 big group with a variety of activities, everyone invited

Community supports and health services

- We have good existing service providers, lab/drs./dentist/PT etc.
- We need a x-ray machine
- We need mobile eye testing
- Further develop NERP program
- We need improved Home Support service, it is not accessible, consistent, or affordable – most have to hire privately, those without resources do without
- Need assistance with cooking, cleaning, yardwork, assistance with shopping
- Idea: pharmacy to deliver meds to shut-ins
- TTY, does it work on Bowen?
- Idea: Respite for caregivers, SKY, if person is not require a lot of care
- Non-impact aerobics, Pilates for seniors, SKY

Focus Group #4

Outdoor spaces and public building

- Accessibility, ramps, thresholds, wider doorways, w/c with grab bars*
- Need curb cuts
- Idea: Need more public washrooms in Cove – wide doors, space for assistance, grab bars, raised toilet seat/stool for young people
- Idea: small plow – driveways/sidewalks to reduce isolation
- Need more benches on paths
- Existing paths/sidewalks (Miller/Cove) have obstacles, uneven surfaces/poles/uneven surfaces * Attention to Cove/Artizan a priority
- Handicap Parking spots – pole in front of spot, need curb cuts
- Need ramps to buildings with proper angle, surfaces and corners
- Sandy Beach, remove logs regularly to enable access
- Public Bldg. good acoustics, hearing system, w/c seating in theatre (removable seating) electric door, lever handles, non-slip flooring, color contrasts, clear signage
- Can't access dentist due to stairs and inadequate railing

Public Transportation

- Speed is an issue for pedestrians
- Idea: volunteer to shovel seniors walks/drives as needed – Teen Centre Program, School Community Services credits
- Need to respect handicap parking
- Need taxi
- Need accessibility to pedestrian water taxi
- Idea: List of volunteer drivers – reimbursed for expenses
- Ambulance couldn't access Bowen Court during snow
- Are buses too large?
- Snow – abandoned cars, idea: snow plows could curve into drives

Housing

- Idea: Zoning for "granny flats"*
- Idea: Caregiver Respite – for regular relief and holidays, individual homes/Abbeyfield
- Need smaller housing option need amenities
- Idea: new builds – accessible/1 level for some, ground floor of buildings, reinforces walls for bars, railings, ensure access for ambulance, flat external access

Social participation

- Senior rate for tickets to events
- Daytime activities i.e. concerts
- Hiking groups
- Idea: current listing of activities in Undercurrent/BICS calendar (with info.contacts listed)
- Bowfest presence
- Respect and inclusion
- Need to provide public transportation to public meetings
- Need to increase courtesy during snow storms and use of handicap parking spots

Employment and volunteer opportunities

- Idea: seniors skill bank – chamber of commerce**

- Idea: "chicks helping chicks" *
- Barter - help each other

Communication and information

- Idea: don't rely on posters and ads idea: telephone tree
- Idea: computer repairs/classes
- Idea: public meeting/council mtg. need to be amplified, infra-red
- Idea: library book pick up/delivery – car pooling
- Idea: library – large print in one section, listening device/player on hand for talking books.
- Idea: Undercurrent to profile seniors
- Idea: information pkg. for newcomers and new seniors

Community supports and health services

- Need a support for caregivers
- Idea: develop caregiver support group
- Idea: ADC at Bowen Court or Abbeyfield – respite for caregivers
- Need a community meeting place
- Need a senior men's group
- Idea: build a social/drop in space into design of CC
- Need improved home support services – not accessible, unavailable, inconsistent, costly*
- Idea: develop a list of private/public home supports
- Idea: develop a booklet/pamphlet of available services/supports

Focus Group #5

Outdoor spaces and public building

- Lack of public restrooms, lake w/c – has a step/ at top of knoll, often used for storage
- *Idea: need additional one on Crippen Park path @meadows intersection****
- *Idea: sheltered benches Cove*
- *Idea: additional benches along Crippen Pk. Path*
- *Idea: path with consistent surface along west side of Miller Road***
- *Idea: sidewalk on s. side of Govn't Rd. needs a consistent surface (pole moved from middle of road)*
- Need lighting needed off ferry
- Need light seniors lane (style to fit with island)
- *Idea: public buildings, everything to support accessibility and infrared system built into Community Centre*

Public transportation

- improved bus service, more frequent and subsidized ****
- designated waiting areas – for pick up
- picking up hitch hikers encouraged, idea: included in Chamber Welcome Pkg.
- night time is a major problem, leads to isolation
- idea: pool of drivers – reimbursed for their costs**
- speeding along seniors lane
- idea: more disability parking spots with cut outs

- idea: taxi (equates with freedom/flexibility/independence)

Housing

- Affordability a problem
- Abbeyfield important
- Need extended care
- Idea: new builds need accessible showers/baths with bars, wider hall ways and doorways, 1 level living options in all building, flat thresholds/graduated entrances, green building standards/water barrels
- Idea: NERP program needs a BIM supported Coordinator- greater importance,
- emergency locations identified, neighbourhood associations opportunity

Social participation

- Transportation is a major barrier to participation, idea: ensure it is available*
- Lots aren't affordable
- Idea: Clearing House for information

Respect and inclusion

- Some afraid of seniors, results in poor interaction due to lack of contact with seniors
- Idea: seniors encouraged to speak up and teach others
- Idea: seniors called to invite/encourage participation in activity/consultation*.
- Idea: senior mentorship (Andrea Little) – IPS Master works/Heritage Day @ BICS
- Idea: Elder of the Year

Employment and volunteer opportunities

- Idea: Skill bank – shared with Chamber of Commerce (part time work) and teen center (to foster mentoring)
- stairs prohibit access (i.e. Historians) requires work that can be done at alternate location or stopping
- Idea: BIM annual volunteer recognition
- Idea: Seniors' liaison on Council *

Communication and information

- Idea: clearing house/central repository of information (services/grants)
- Idea: wireless back up communication during emergency
- Don't assume everyone has a computer, ensure alternate means
- Idea: Volunteers available to help access information off computer for seniors*
- Idea: list of service providers – maintenance, handyman service**

Community supports and health services

- Idea: list of services (including those that will go to the home i.e. lab/podiatrist)*
- grocery delivery, Stongs is difficult for some, requires computer or calling in which is hard with hearing problems
- Idea: approach General Store to offer affordable delivery
- Idea: BIM support/co-ordination for volunteer activities
- home support is inconsistent and inadequate
- need respite and caregiver support
- Idea: blood donation on Bowen
- Affordability a problem
- Abbeyfield important
- Need extended care

- Idea: new builds need accessible showers/baths with bars, wider hall ways
- and doorways, 1 level living options in all building, flat thresholds/graduated entrances, green building standards/water barrels
- Idea: NERP program needs a BIM supported Coordinator- greater importance,
- emergency locations identified, neighbourhood associations opportunity

Individual Responses:

- Need grocery delivery
- Handicap parking in front of general store
- Public buildings – access, no steps/ramps, scooter parking, lever handles, hearing device
- Transportation, need more buses to all parts of the island, problems for HSW without car, limits participation in activities
- Bath bars in home design
- Snow is very isolating
- Respite for caregivers
- Grass roots volunteer driver program
- Intergenerational programs
- Formal or informal ways to have seniors represented in local government
- Abbeyfield is essential
- Housing/care options: assisted living, multi level care facility
- Volunteers to organize shopping rips
- Driving Miss Daisy program
- Seniors Choir
- Mentoring Network – seniors have a lot of knowledge and wisdom to share with the community
- Elders Advisory Council to BIM
- Chamber of Commerce Award for “Elder of the Year”. They have Citizen and Youth of the year
- Volunteer driver program
- Taxi service, idea: municipal taxi, volunteer drivers
- Improved bus access
- Elder recognition, tied to responsibility to give back to the community
- Sidewalks, paths need to be accessible
- Lack of access to bathrooms
- Shops need to be more accessible, wider aisle, low threshold