

# **Issues Paper and Profile of Older People**

**Tweed Shire**

January 2015

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## 2 Executive Summary

This Issues Paper has been produced to inform the development of policy and strategy for seniors in the Tweed Shire. It presents a range of community views and data on the Shire's ageing population. The intent is that the paper provides information and data to inform and lead towards policy and strategy that addresses the needs of seniors. It identifies the prominent issues for seniors in the Tweed Shire, structured by the following eight themes/headings taken from the *WHO Global Age-friendly Cities Guide (2007)*:

1. Outdoor Spaces and Buildings
2. Transportation
3. Housing
4. Social Participation
5. Respect and Social Inclusion
6. Civic Participation and Employment
7. Communication and Information
8. Community Support and Health Services

The document starts with the policy context and presents key facts and figures from the regional and local perspective, providing a demographic and geographical profile of seniors aged 65 years and over. The paper then details issues focusing on the results of public consultations with seniors and those working to provide services in this area. In addition, relevant data and statistics are also provided, drawing on existing reports and studies.

For Tweed Shire Council, the challenges are to incorporate a whole-of-Council approach to meet the social, cultural, economic and environmental needs of a changing demographic; and to move towards a 'social contract' with the community that recognises the specific needs for healthy ageing.

## **3 Introduction**

### **3.1 Background**

Population ageing is largely a positive outcome, primarily reflecting improved life expectancy. In Australia a female or male born in 2012 will on average live for an estimated 94.4 or 91.6 years respectively. However, population growth and ageing will affect labour supply, economic output, infrastructure requirements and governments' budgets. Australia's population is projected to rise to around 38 million by 2060, or around 15 million more than the population in 2012. The population aged 75 or more years is expected to rise by 4 million from 2012 to 2060, increasing from about 6.4 to 14.4 per cent of the population. In 2012, there was roughly one person aged 100 years old or more to every 100 babies. By 2060, it is projected there will be around 25 such centenarians (Commonwealth of Australia, 2013).

This Issues Paper has been developed through the capture and use of data and statistics from across the Tweed Shire that is most relevant for Age Friendly planning. In addition three bodies of consultative work with the community, the Tweed Shire Healthy Ageing Issues Papers (Forster, 2008), the Strategic Planning for an Age-Friendly Community in the Tweed Shire report (ASLaRC, 2011) and the evaluation of the Banora Point Community Centre (Gill, 2014) have informed each section.

The document starts with the policy context and presents key facts and figures from a regional perspective. The document then focuses locally on the Tweed Shire LGA, providing a demographic and geographical profile of seniors aged 65 years and over. The paper then details issues focusing on the results of public consultations with seniors and those working to provide services in this area. In addition, relevant data and statistics are also provided.

### **3.2 Purpose and Objectives**

This Issues Paper has been produced to inform the development of policy and strategy for seniors in the Tweed Shire. It presents a range of community views and data to inform how Council supports an ageing population. The intent is that the paper provides information and data to support, inform and lead towards policy and strategy that addresses the needs of seniors.

### **3.3 Study area**

The geographical area of study is the administrative area of Tweed Shire Council. Where the data exists the study area is broken down into smaller suburban geographies to provide more detail and enable focussed planning.

## 4 Policy and Practice

### 4.1 The Tweed Shire and New South Wales

The Northern Rivers has one of the fastest growing and ageing populations in NSW, with the number of people aged 65 years and over expected to double in the next 25 years. *The Northern Rivers Regional Action Plan (2012)* was developed in accordance with the NSW 2021 commitments to assist the NSW Government to develop the *NSW North Coast Ageing Strategy (2014)*. Whilst an increasing population and a shift in the demographic make-up pose a number of challenges it also creates significant opportunities for local and state planning authorities. Regional areas face a range of additional issues with regard to ageing policy development and implementation compared to major urban centres. Areas such as the Tweed, with a significant in-migration of older people, have a population with limited informal networks and supports and thus a greater number of older people at risk of social isolation and loneliness. Regional areas also pose greater challenges in terms of transport and access to services and a greater reliance on local social capital (Hugo, 2009).

The Tweed Shire is a popular retirement location for older people. According to the 2006 Census of Population and Housing, 22 percent of people residing in the Shire were over 65 years of age compared with the State average of 13 percent. Of the six Local Government Areas (LGAs) that make up the Far North Coast of NSW, Tweed is the fastest growing. The population increased by 2.2 percent between 2006 and 2008 compared to an average growth of 1.56 percent in the six LGAs overall (ABS, 2009).

Tweed Shire Council has an in-depth knowledge of the community and can influence the development of an age-friendly community through its role as a strategic and land use planning authority; a provider and manager of facilities and services; a community leader and as an employer at a local level. As the tier of government closest to the local community, council leadership can complement the role of other government agencies and non-government organisations. The Tweed Shire Community Strategic Plan 2013-2023 recognises that a "growing and ageing population does present economic and social opportunities, as well as pressures" (p14). Council's Delivery Program 2011/2015 and Operational Plan 2012/2013 contain objectives and actions in relation to healthy and positive ageing.

### 4.2 Achievements

Council can be proud of its achievements in the area of building an age-friendly community. Council has undertaken a significant body of work including policy and strategic documents, events and community programs and infrastructure development - all with modest resources. Table 1 summarises the Council's achievements towards an age friendly community.

**Table 1: Council's achievements towards an age friendly community**

<b>Civic leadership and supporting community life for seniors</b>		
<p><b>Pensioner rebates provided for</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General rates</li> <li>• Water and sewerage</li> <li>• Domestic waste management charges</li> </ul> <p><b>Positive ageing policy and research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy ageing consultation and issues papers</li> <li>• Healthy ageing strategic commitment in the Community Strategic Plan,</li> <li>• Operational Plan and Delivery Program</li> <li>• Access and inclusion Policy</li> <li>• Tweed Homelessness Issues Paper Consultation Report</li> <li>• Community engagement with older people to incorporate their needs into council decision-making</li> </ul> <p><b>Information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing information about services, community activities and events for seniors</li> <li>• Tweed Council community directory</li> <li>• New resident's kit</li> <li>• Tweed Link newspaper monthly Healthy Ageing Information column and a series of brochures</li> </ul>	<p><b>Seniors Program – Banora Point Community Centre</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Council's Seniors Information Hub providing a wide range of information supporting healthy ageing and a Broad Band for Seniors program</li> <li>• Fun Activities Banora Seniors (FABS) program, providing opportunities for learning, social engagement and leisure activities</li> </ul> <p><b>Facilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three swimming pools in Tweed Shire are accessible facilities and accept Carers Card</li> <li>• Provision of outdoor exercise equipment</li> <li>• Roll out of accessible public toilet facilities</li> <li>• Walking and cycling paths</li> <li>• Universal design principles for park development and renovation</li> </ul>	<p><b>Community Options</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of programs to support HACC eligible residents to live independently in the community and in their own home</li> <li>• Podiatry services</li> <li>• Frail aged and dementia clients</li> <li>• Support services for social isolation and independent community access</li> </ul> <p><b>A partner with other providers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tweed Shire Senior Citizens Committee (e.g. Seniors Week, Tweed Seniors Expo)</li> <li>• Heart Foundation Walking Groups</li> <li>• Tweed Community Care Forum</li> <li>• Men's Sheds - Murwillumbah and Tweed Heads</li> <li>• Community Gardens</li> </ul>

The Council works in partnership with a number of other service providers to develop and deliver services to seniors. This includes coordination and support of the Tweed Shire Senior Citizens Committee and events such as the Tweed Seniors Expo and NSW Seniors week. Council hosts Heart Foundation Walking Groups in Banora, Tweed, Murwillumbah and Tumbulgum and supports the Your Brain Matters program with Alzheimer's Australia. The Council is an active partner in the Tweed Community Care Forum, an interagency of aged care providers. In addition, Council supports the Men's Sheds in Murwillumbah and Tweed Heads and supports several Community Gardens schemes.



## 5 Methodology and Approach

### 5.1 Framework and structure

The results and findings in this paper begin with an overview of the demographic characteristics and spatial mapping of seniors across the Tweed Shire. The issues and data is then structured by the eight themes/headings taken from the *WHO Global Age-friendly Cities Guide (2007)* which has been identified as the framework for the Tweed Shire Age Friendly Community Plan. The themes are presented in Table 2 alongside the focus areas within the *NSW Ageing Strategy (2012)*. Each section presents relevant data and statistics that were available for the Tweed Shire area and also provides a summary of public views gathered from community consultation processes.

*Table 2: WHO Global Age-friendly themes used to structure the report*

	<b>WHO Global Age-friendly Themes (2007)</b>	<b>NSW Ageing Strategy focus areas (2012)</b>
1	Outdoor Spaces and Buildings	
2	Transportation	Road safety Public transport
3	Housing	
4	Social Participation	Social connection Physical activity and creative opportunities
5	Respect and Social Inclusion	Concessions
6	Civic Participation and Employment	Employment
7	Communication and Information	Information services
8	Community Support and Health Services	

### 5.2 Community consultation

The Tweed Shire Councils Healthy Ageing Issues Paper Series provide a 2008 summary of perceptions, views, opinions and first hand experiences of seniors within the Shire. They were the result of two recorded consultations with individuals from a broad range of seniors groups in the Tweed Shire, held in August 2008. There were 8 papers in the series which sought to understand and document the major issues identified in the consultations. The consultations were attended by 40 individuals from a broad range of seniors groups in the Tweed Shire and by representatives of organisations who provide services for relatively healthy seniors in the shire.

In addition a significant body of work was also undertaken by the ASLaRC Aged Services Unit, Health and Wellbeing Research Cluster of the Southern Cross University in preparing the *Strategic Planning for an Age-Friendly Community Tweed Shire NSW* document (2011). This

document was overseen by an advisory group, and included three focus groups during February 2010 comprising 81 attendees from across the Shire. These were held at Tweed Heads South, Murwillumbah and Pottsville. In addition, a service provider online questionnaire was conducted to identify issues impacting on the health and wellbeing of older residents and fifteen responses were received.

An evaluation of the Banora Point Community Centre Seniors Program was conducted in August-October 2014 to gain community feedback in relation to accessibility, quality of services and general satisfaction of activities and programs offered through the Banora Point Community Centre Seniors Program, incorporating the Seniors Information Hub (SIH or the Hub for short) and Fun Activities Banora Seniors (FABS). The consultation comprised a qualitative questionnaire completed by 74 participants, one focus group and more than ten in-depth interviews. For each of the eight WHO themes the results from both the Tweed Shire Healthy Ageing Issues Papers (Forster, 2008) and the Age-Friendly Community consultations in the Tweed Shire (ASLaRC, 2011) are mapped in a table. In addition and where relevant, findings have been extracted and used from the Banora Point Community Centre Seniors Program evaluation (Gill, 2014) within the data and statistics sections under each theme.

## **6 Profile of People aged 65+ in the Tweed Shire**

### **6.1 Demographic characteristics by geographical area**

Understanding population size, growth and demographic characteristics are fundamental to responding to community needs and providing appropriate supporting infrastructure, facilities and programs. Understanding the spatial and demographic variations in population, such as concentrations of older residents, can enable Council to plan specifically for a desired area/suburb and deliver appropriate infrastructure and programs for that community. Between 2006 and 2011, the total population of Tweed Shire increased by 5,799 people (or 7.3 per cent), from 79,307 to 85,105 people. In the 2011 Census, there were 85,105 people in Tweed (A) (Local Government Areas) of these 48.2% were male and 51.8% were female. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people made up 3.5% of the population. The median age of people in Tweed LGA was 45 years.

Tweed Shire has a high proportion of its community aged over 55 (36.4%), when compared to NSW (26.4%), and Australia (25.6%). This is similar for those people aged 65 years and over, which comprised 22.9 per cent of the total population in 2011 compared to 17.8% of the population that were children aged 0-14 years. Table 3 shows the census data (ABS 2011) broken down by age groups from 55 years and compares with NSW and Australia which shows that the Tweed Shire has higher proportions of the population in all categories, in particular those aged 70+.

**Table 3: Tweed Shires ageing population broken down by age categories**

Age	Tweed (A)	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	%
<b>55-59 years</b>	5,778	6.8	419,612	6.1	1,297,244	6
<b>60-64 years</b>	5,804	6.8	390,678	5.6	1,206,116	5.6
<b>65-69 years</b>	5,052	5.9	304,327	4.4	919,319	4.3
<b>70-74 years</b>	4,347	5.1	237,362	3.4	708,090	3.3
<b>75-79 years</b>	3,954	4.6	186,032	2.7	545,263	2.5
<b>80-84 years</b>	3,210	3.8	150,724	2.2	436,936	2
<b>85 years and over</b>	2,902	3.4	139,735	2	402,681	1.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,047</b>	<b>36.4</b>	<b>1,828,470</b>	<b>26.4</b>	<b>5,515,649</b>	<b>25.6</b>

The Census (ABS, 2011) statistics for the concentrations of people aged 65 years and over have been mapped in Figures 1 and 2 for the localities across the Tweed Shire. The concentrations are strongest (80% plus) in a band of suburban areas stretching from West Tweed through South Tweed and Banora Point to Chinderah and West Kingscliff. Murwillumbah has a smaller concentration in its western suburbs. These concentrations often include the locations of aged care homes, independent living villages, manufactured home estates and permanent residential caravan parks. There are two suburban areas with over 90% of their population comprising 65 years or over and these are West of Murwillumbah (92.8%) and West of Kingscliff (90.8%). In addition there are three over 80%: in Tweed Heads South (89.8%); Tweed Heads (88%) and another suburb in Tweed Heads South (82.4%).

Distribution of the population aged 65 years and over (2011)

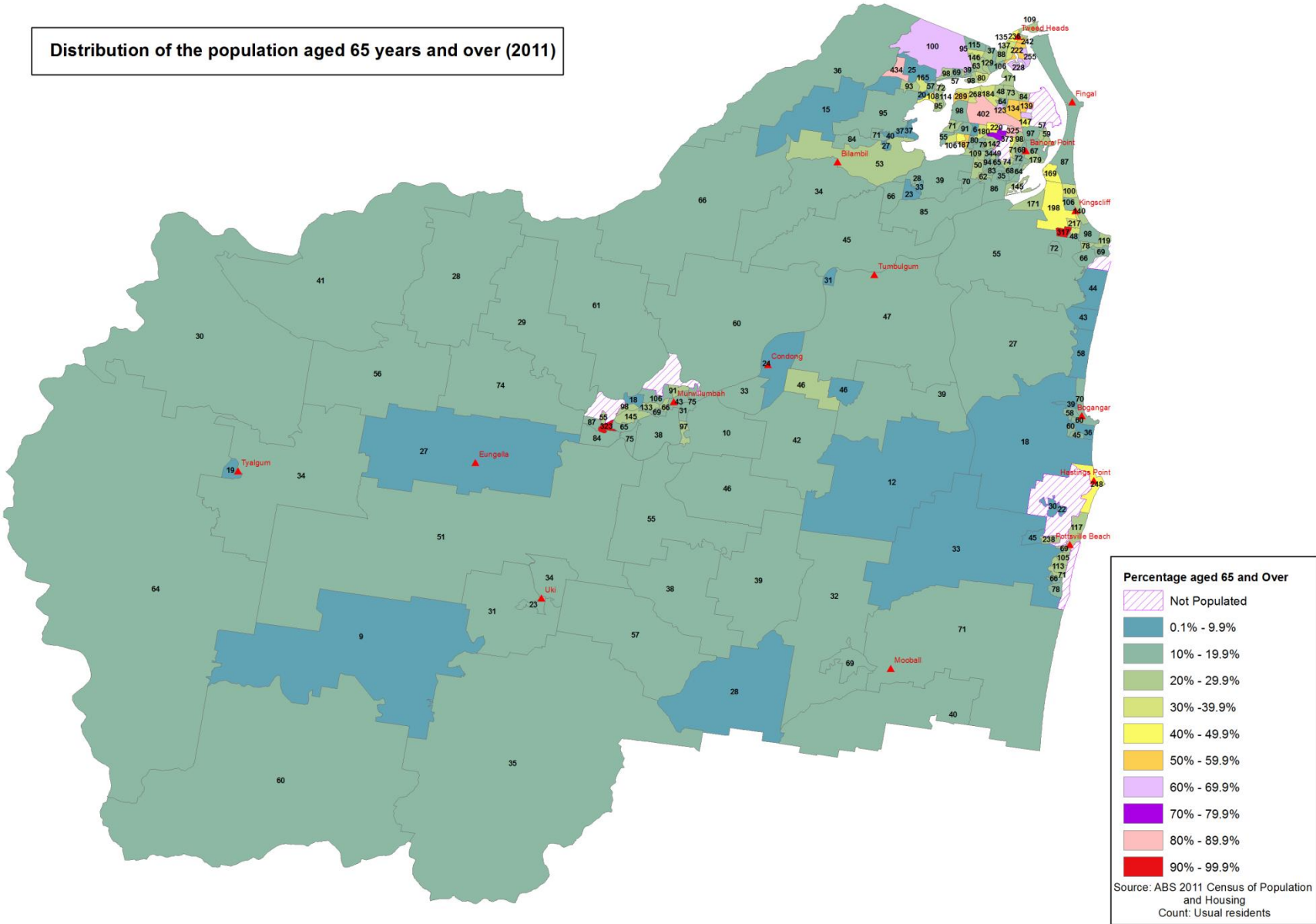


Figure 1: Percentage of the population aged 65 and over

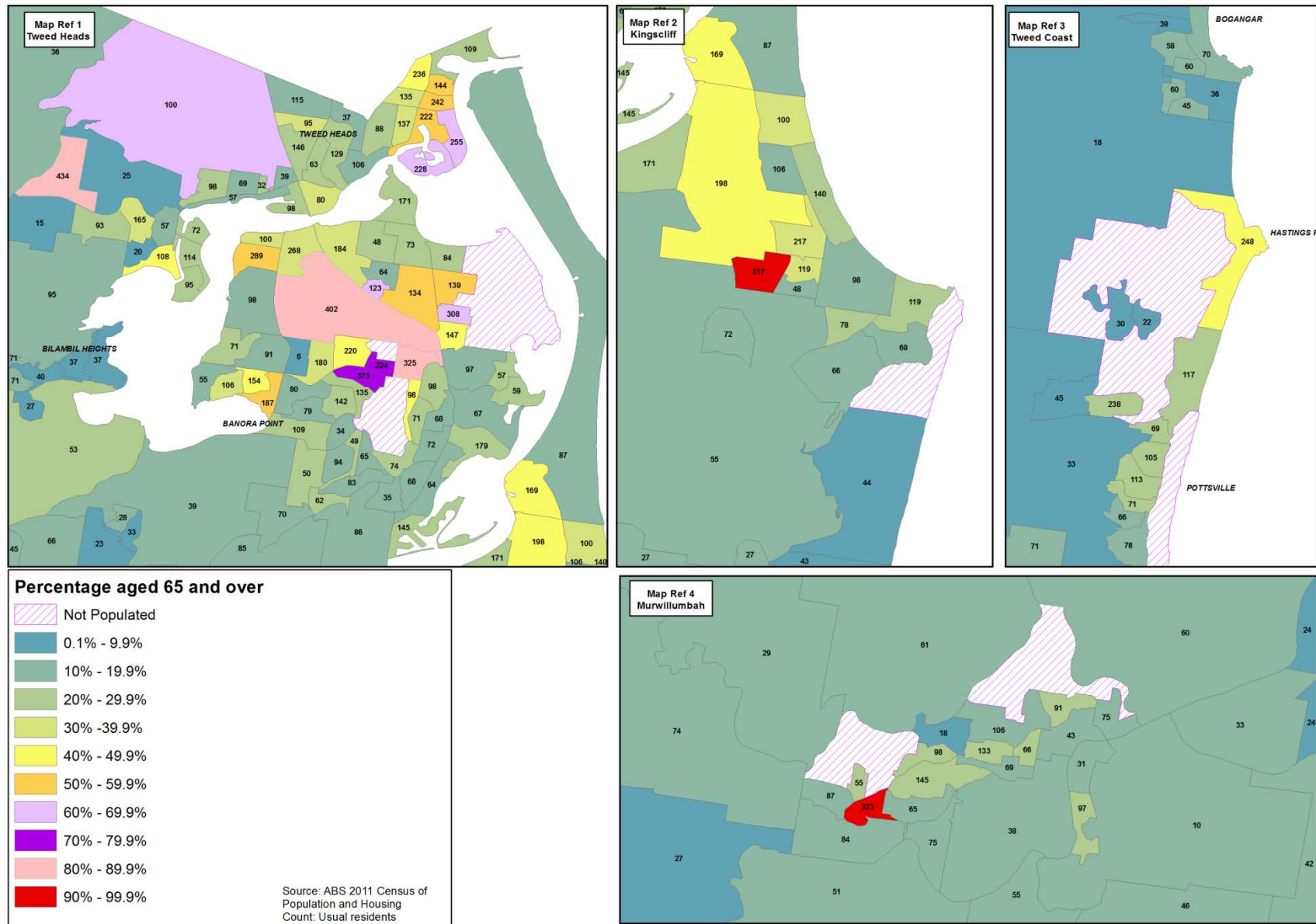


Figure 2: Percentage of the population aged 65+ for Tweed Heads, Tweed Coast and Murwillumbah

## 6.2 Population Growth

The current population of the Tweed Shire is 85,105 with people aged 65 years and over comprising 23% at 19,941 (ABS Census, 2011).

The population figures used for the id. forecasts (table 4 and figures 3 and 4) for 2011 are based on estimated resident population from the Australian Bureau of Statistics that have been subject to change, most notably after Census release (usually one to two years after the Census is conducted). Based on current trends, the id. forecasts estimate the number of people aged 65 or over will increase to 23,207 people by 2021, an increase of 16%. Over the same period, the proportion of people actively engaged in the workforce will only increase by 0.6-0.7 per cent per annum. Estimated population projections assist in quantifying likely future demand for planning and to prioritise program allocation and/or facility developments.

Table 4 shows that by 2036, the Tweed Shire is expected to be an even more favourable destination for retirees. The population of people aged 65+ is expected to increase by 48%, from 19,944 in 2011 to 29,515 persons in 2036. Suburbs such as Cobaki Lakes (2112%), Casuarina (405%), Terranora (196%), Bilambil Heights (132%), Uki (116%), and Burringbar (103%) are expected to have more than a 100% increase of people aged over 65 years. In addition the Cabarita area (86%), Tyalgum (78%), Tumbulgum (74%), and Pottsville (72%) are projected to have more than 70% growth. Cobaki in the Piggabeen area and Casuarina on the mid-coast are new developments which explains the high levels of growth. No areas are expecting a decline in population numbers of those aged 65 and over although Tweed Heads West is expected to remain fairly static at 2%. Those cells highlighted in pink are where the population of seniors in that area comprises between 20 and 29% of the total population, those in blue exceed 30%.

Figures 3 and 4 map the proportion of the population aged 65 years and over across the tweed Shire for 2011 and compares it against the projections for 2021 (fig. 3) and 2036 (fig. 4). The results show an increase in the population of seniors is experienced across the Tweed Shire through to 2036. Two areas that are expected to experience a proportional decline in seniors are Tweed Heads West and Cobaki Piggabeen. The areas with the highest overall percentage of the population aged 65+ in 2036 will still be Tweed Heads (34%) followed by Banora Point in Tweed Heads South (31%) even though the population increase for those aged 65+ is relatively low. By 2036 the proportion of people aged 65 years and over is expected to increase in Kingscliff from 25% to 30%, but the most notable increases are at Uki (12% to 27%), Tumbulgum (14% to 26%) and Tyalgum (13% to 24%).

**Table 4: Population projections for people aged 65 years and over**

Geographic Area	2011_pop	2011_perc	2021_pop	2021_perc	2036_pop	2036_perc	Perc_pop_ Increase (2011-2036)
Bilambil - Bilambil Heights	512	12	691	16	1186	16	132%
Cabarita Area	397	12	511	15	739	21	86%
Cobaki Piggabeen Area	51	10	160	6	1128	9	2112%
Mid Coast - Casuarina	249	9	484	11	1257	13	405%
Murwillumbah and District	1980	20	2375	22	2945	25	49%
North Coast - Kingscliff	2168	25	2584	27	3025	30	40%
North East Hinterland - Tumbulgum	413	14	634	23	717	26	74%
North West Tweed - Tyalgum	367	13	523	19	653	24	78%
South Coast - Pottsville	1321	18	1651	21	2266	22	72%
South East Hinterland - Burringbar	415	13	621	19	843	23	103%
South West Tweed - Uki	286	12	481	21	617	27	116%
Terranora	386	13	559	16	1143	16	196%
Tweed Heads	2554	33	2746	31	3180	34	25%
Tweed Heads South - Banora Point	7099	30	7477	30	8042	31	13%
Tweed Heads West	1746	29	1710	27	1774	27	2%
<b>Tweed Shire</b>	<b>19944</b>	<b>22.58</b>	<b>23207</b>	<b>23.72</b>	<b>29515</b>	<b>23.48</b>	<b>48%</b>

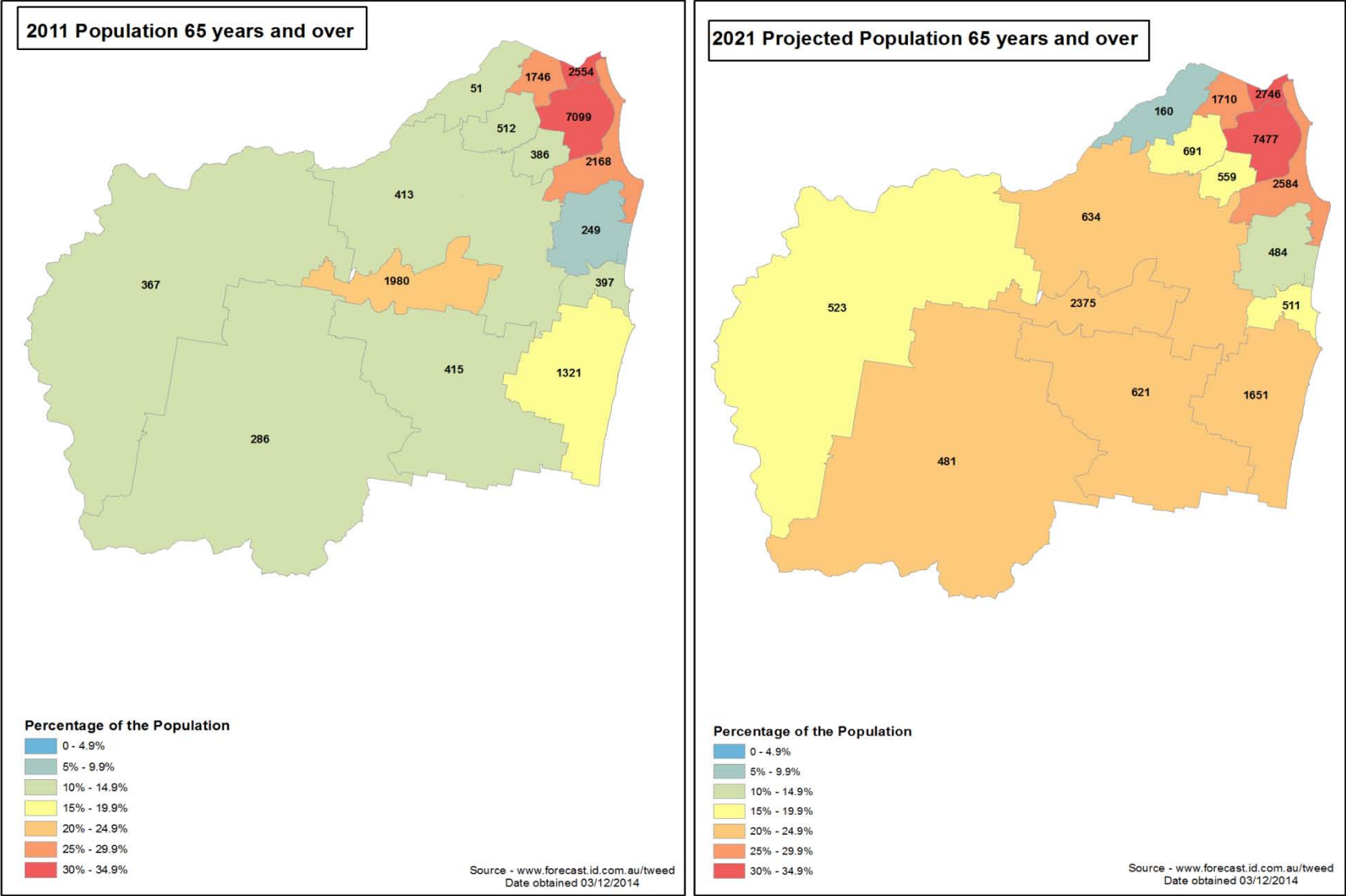


Figure 3: Projected population aged 65 years and over for 2021



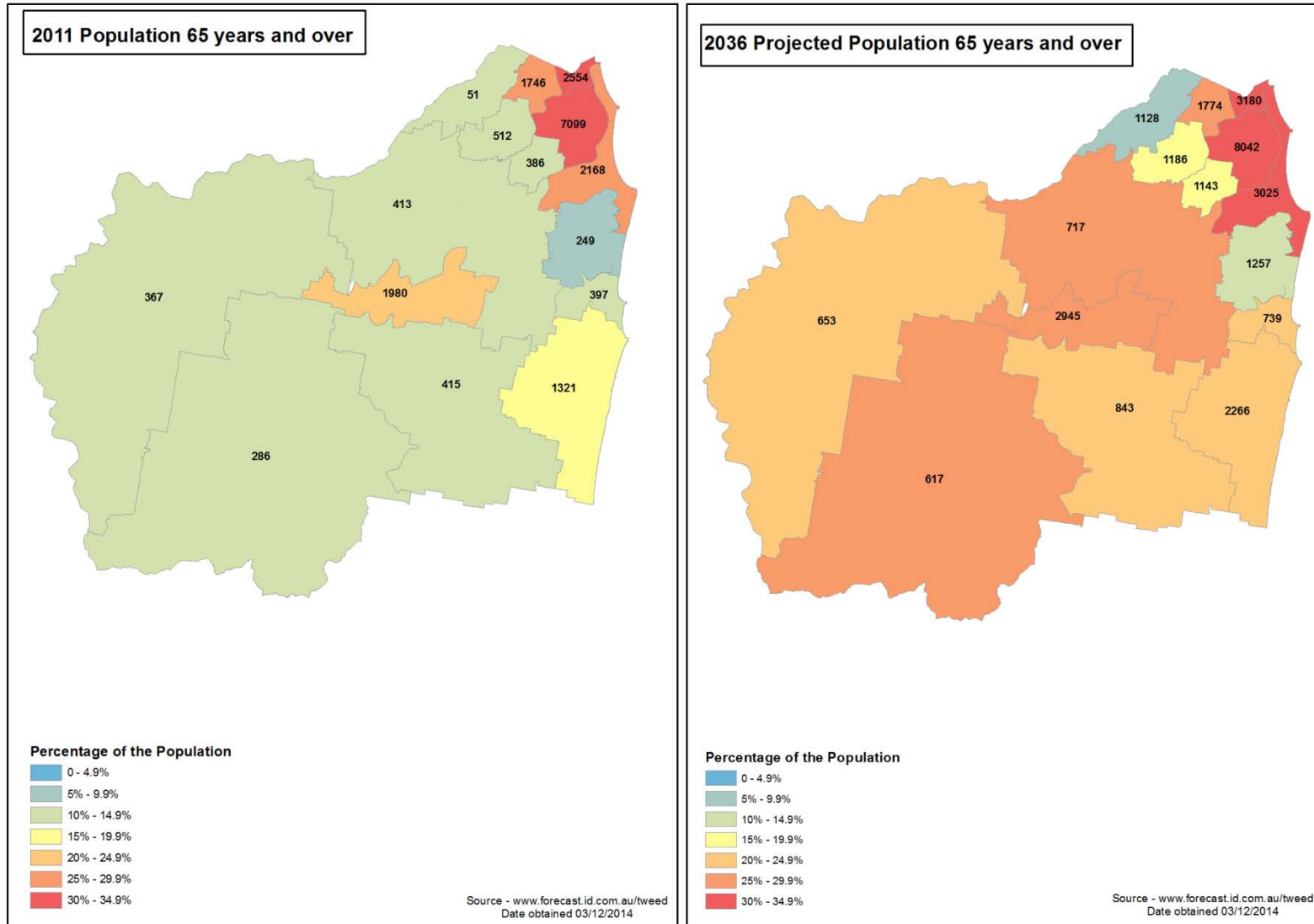


Figure 4: Projected population aged 65 years and over for 2036

## 7 Outdoor spaces and buildings

The World Health Organisations Global Age-friendly Cities Guide (2007) cites that ‘the outside environment and public buildings have a major impact on the mobility, independence and quality of life of older people and affect their ability to age in place.’ This section looks at the issues raised by residents and service providers in relation to outdoor spaces and buildings. It also presents relevant data on the distribution of outdoor space, recreational areas and shopping facilities and centres. Council has responsibility for managing and maintaining public areas, providing areas for exercise and recreation as well as safe walkways and cycle ways.

### 7.1 Tweed Shire Data and Statistics

#### 7.1.1 Access to recreational areas and open space

Figures 5 and 6 illustrate the distribution of recreational areas and parks across the Tweed Shire, also showing toilet and BBQ areas. The maps show there are very few TSC parks and toilet/BBQ provision in the locations where 50% or more of the population are aged 65 years and over. There are TSC parks and facilities nearby, however accessibility of all of these sites for senior citizens via footpaths or public transport provision is critically important. Recently a Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP, 2014) was produced for Tweed Shire, where an area within 1.5 km surrounding each of the town centres of Tweed Heads, Tweed Heads South, Banora Point, Kingscliff and Murwillumbah were assessed for accessibility. The investigated zones for Tweed Heads South and Banora Point should hopefully cover the Tweed Heads South SA1 area where 89.8% (325 seniors) of its population are aged 65 and over (see Figure 2, Map ref 1). However the other SA1 area in Tweed Heads South (402 seniors) appears to have had only partial coverage, and the SA1 area (434 seniors) identified in Tweed Heads has none. In addition the top two SA1 areas in the Tweed Shire (see Figure 2, Map ref 2 & 3) with the greatest proportion of those aged 65 and over (identified in Murwillumbah and Kingscliff) do not seem to have been covered by the investigated zones. Table 5 presents the key findings from the audit of existing issues and constraints for pedestrians in the study area and from the user consultation that was undertaken. It is clear that a number of issues and barriers exist for pedestrian access by the ageing community and the use of mobility aids. The full detail of the PAMP findings for each of the town centres can be accessed from the report.

**Table 5: Summary of key findings from the PAMP**

Specific areas of concern that were raised by the PAMP consultation	Key issues and constraints for pedestrians identified in the audit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-- Pedestrian crossings;</li> <li>– Lack of footpaths;</li> <li>– Poor pedestrian access to shopping centres;</li> <li>– School traffic;</li> <li>– Lack of trees, shade and lighting;</li> <li>– Poor pedestrian and cycle linkages;</li> <li>– Footpath obstructions;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Poor quality footpath surfaces;</li> <li>– Informal pedestrian crossing movements on busy roads;</li> <li>– Missing pedestrian links and crossings;</li> <li>– Steep gradients;</li> <li>– Obstructions within the footpath; and</li> <li>– Lack of disabled or pram access.</li> </ul>

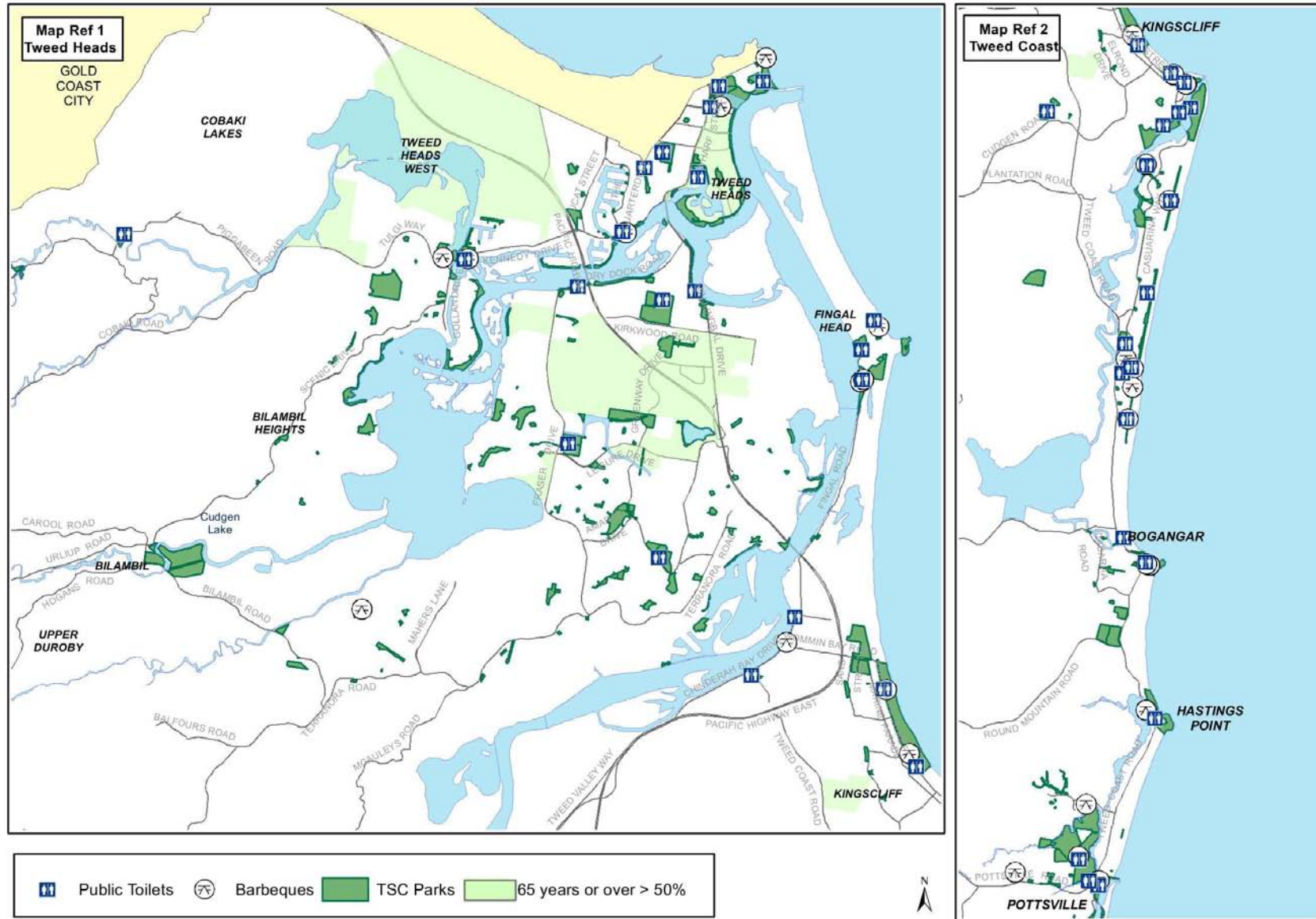


Figure 5: Distribution of TSC parks, toilets and BBQ areas

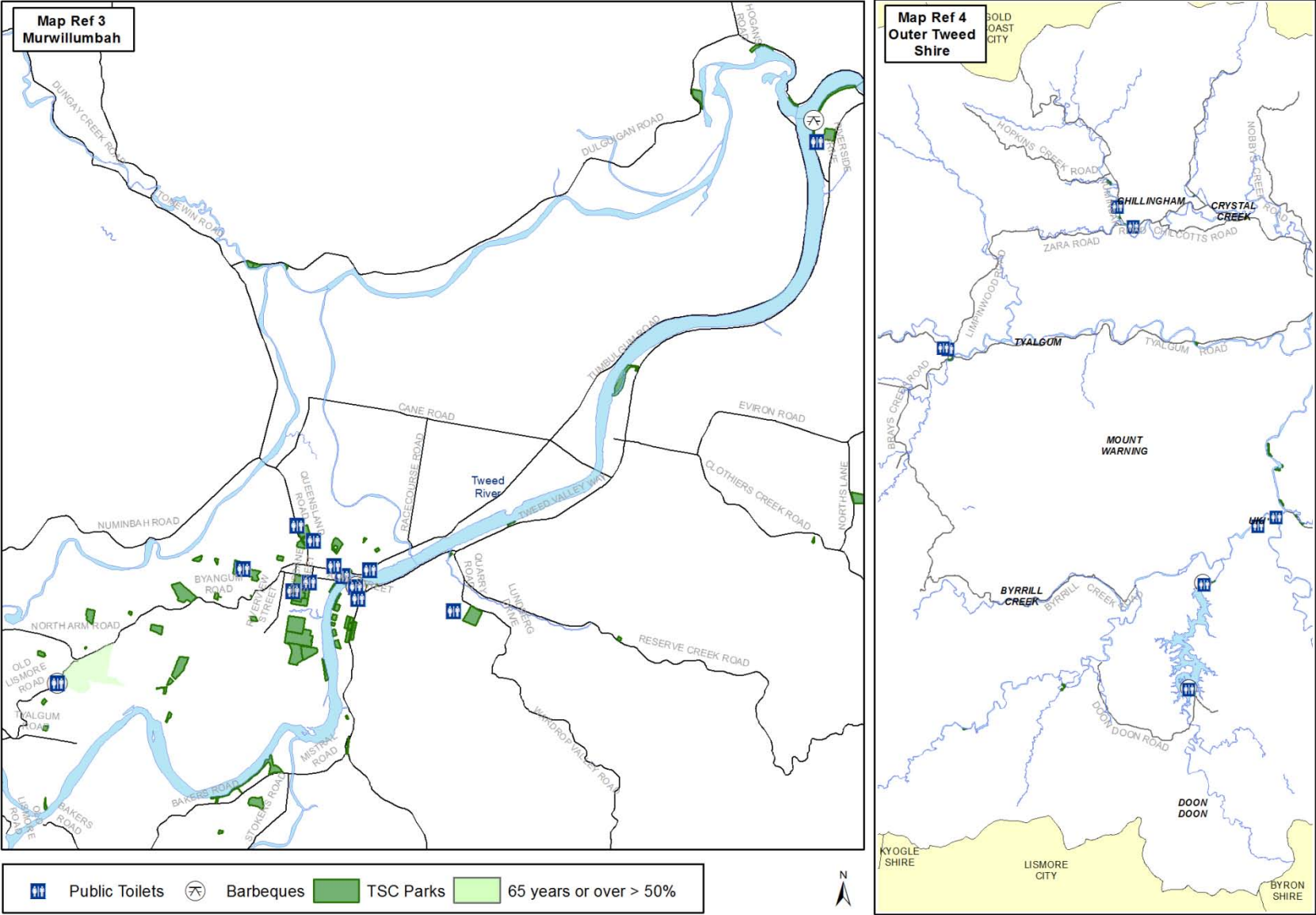


Figure 6: Distribution of TSC parks, toilets and BBQ areas for Murwillumbah and outer Tweed Shire

### 7.1.2 Distribution of Shopping Centres

The distribution of major shopping centres and main street shopping areas are represented in Figures 7 to 10. The mapping shows four concentration points within the Shire; Tweed Heads (including South and West), Banora Point, Kingscliff and Chinderah, and Murwillumbah. These locations are arguably where the bulk of the population and shopping centres are. However, this concentration provides older residents with little opportunity to age in-place without sufficient access to transport to utilise these centres. In particular, those areas with a high concentration of seniors (see Figures 1 and 2) or outlying suburbs of West Tweed, Bilambil and South Tweed.

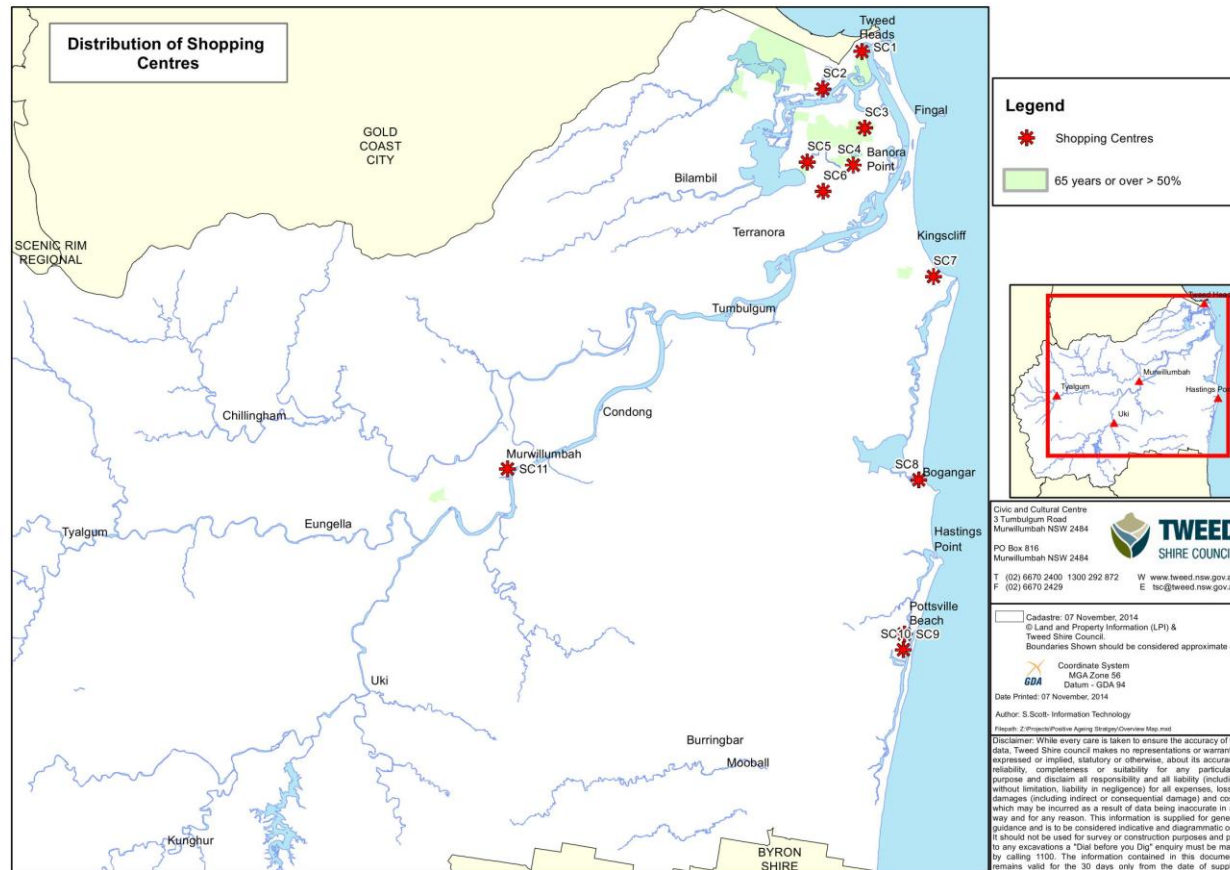


Figure 7: Distribution of shopping centres across the Tweed Shire

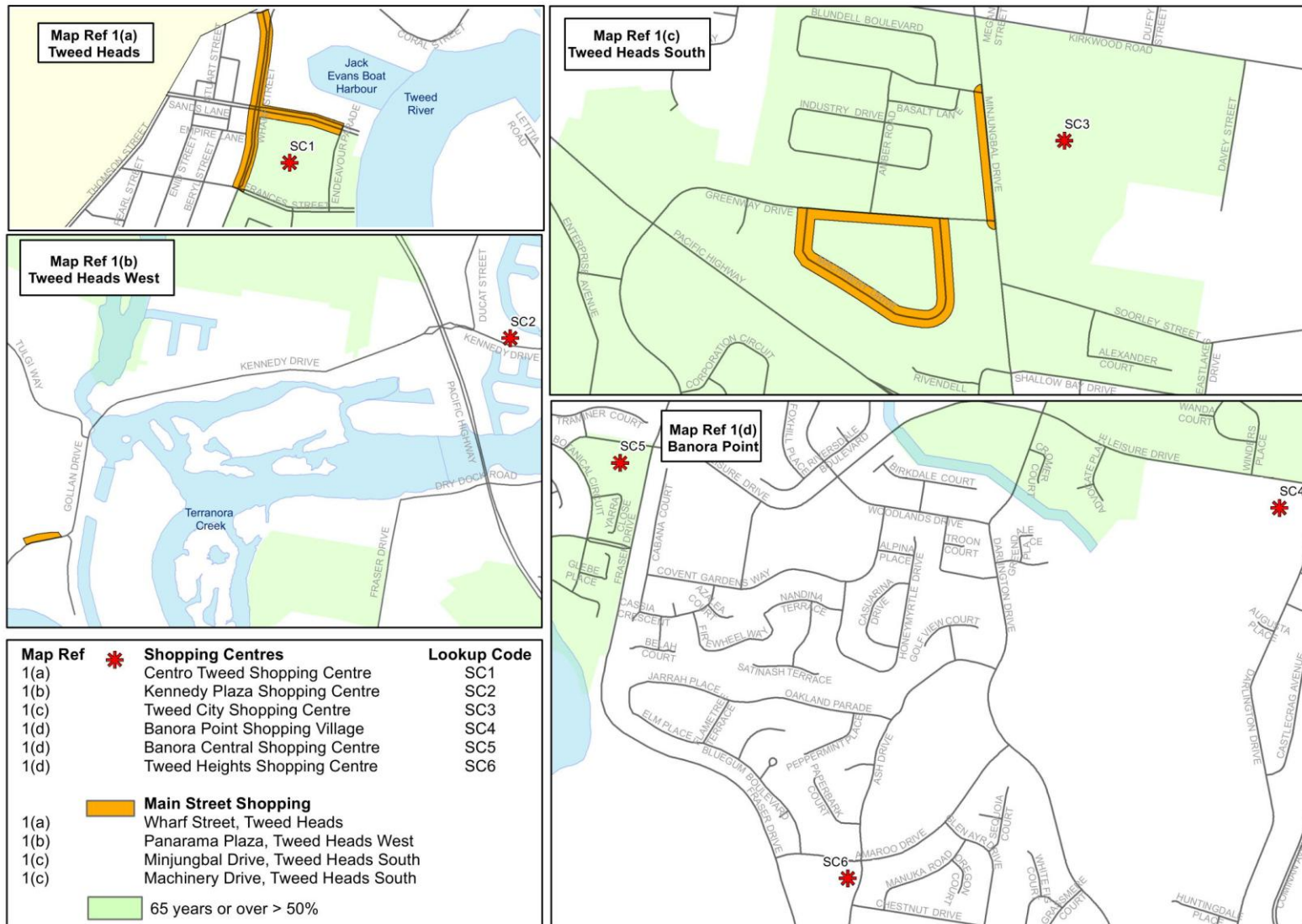


Figure 8: Distribution of shopping centres in Tweed Heads and Banora Point

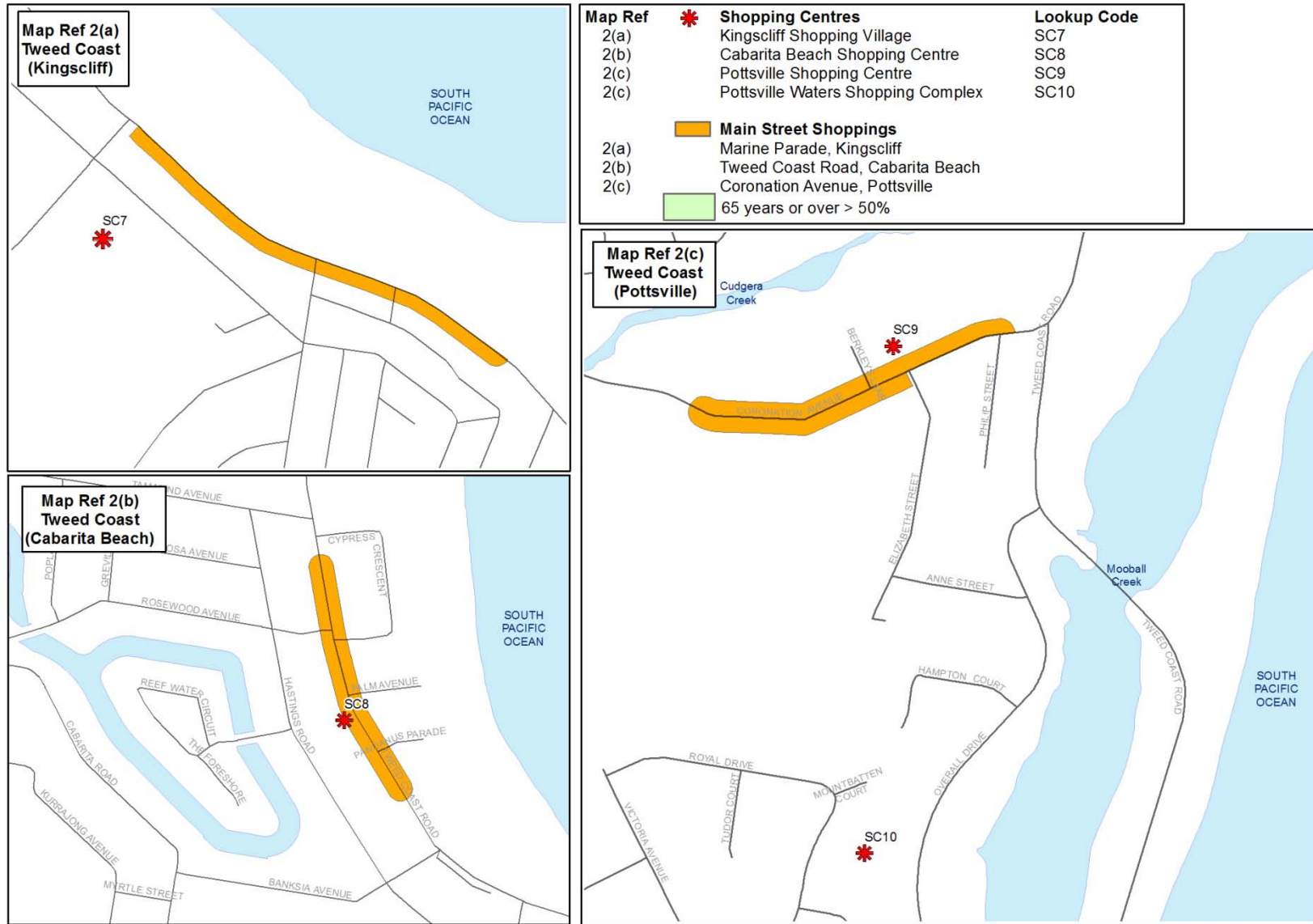


Figure 9: Distribution of shopping centres in the coastal towns

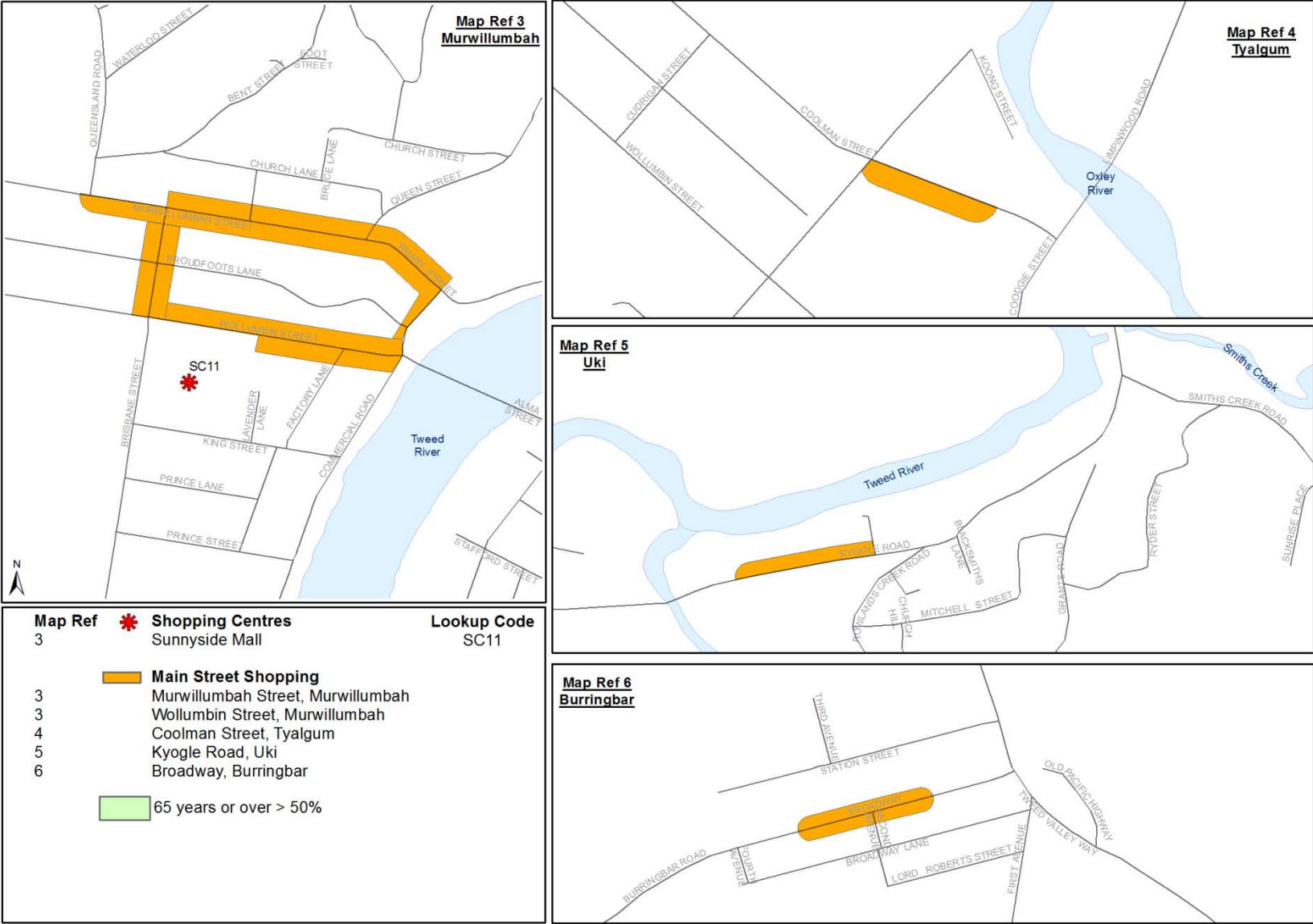


Figure 10: Distribution of shopping centres in Murwillumbah and the surrounding area



## 7.2 Community Consultation and Public Views

	TSC Healthy Ageing Issues Papers (2008)	ASLaRC Age-Friendly Consultation (2011)
<b>Picnic Areas &amp; Park Facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Picnic areas developed that cater for large groups of people.</li> <li>• Facilities need to be age friendly with tables closer together and located near to car parking and toilets.</li> <li>• Paths are needed from the car park to the picnic areas and there needs to be more covered picnic tables.</li> <li>• BBQ's are not being well maintained or aren't working.</li> <li>• Lack of hot water at BBQ sites and the need for refreshment facilities (water bubblers/ cafes) in parks and on walkways.</li> <li>• More public toilets are needed across the shire, particularly W. Tweed.</li> <li>• Need information and improved signage for public toilet locations.</li> <li>• More covered rubbish bins in parks that are closer to picnic tables.</li> <li>• Need development of outdoor activities for older people in parks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning decisions can be made within a visionary framework that identifies the need to protect green space and to develop and allow zoning for mixed land use and inter-generational housing within villages and towns</li> <li>• Incorporates the imminent national planning legislation mandating the principals of Universal Design; and provides inter-connected and well-lit footpaths and cycle ways.</li> <li>• Many older people move to the Tweed Shire for lifestyle reasons and are avid users of such spaces.</li> </ul>
<b>Access &amp; Mobility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of footpaths and some footpaths don't link up. Connectivity in street design needs to be improved to encourage walking &amp; cycling. Walkways between streets need to be documented on maps.</li> <li>• Need special lanes on roads or on footpaths for bikes &amp; mobility scooters. Obstacles inhibit mobility scooters on Leisure Drive.</li> <li>• More integration of planning for disabled patrons.</li> <li>• Automatic doors are needed on public buildings and shopping centres. Slip free flooring needs to be used and handrails are needed in toilets.</li> <li>• There is not enough public seating in shopping centres/ public areas.</li> <li>• Public telephones are needed at key sites such as bus/ taxi stops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People in the Focus Groups commented on the poor standard of footpaths in many areas, the lack of lighting,</li> <li>• Footpaths, parks and public places need to be easily accessible for older people.</li> </ul>
<b>Community Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was an expressed need for more police.</li> <li>• Many seniors are frightened because the media build up 'bad' things.</li> <li>• The closure of Murwillumbah Police Station and resulting lack of police presence has resulted in an increase of property damage and graffiti.</li> <li>• It was suggested that many parks do not have good lighting and maintenance of footpaths is a safety issue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve access and safety for older people.</li> <li>• Regular updates on community safety issues to be included in the Tweed Link.</li> <li>• Walkability and wheelability for footpath safety</li> <li>• Generally residents felt safe in their own homes; however they expressed concern about their safety when accessing the wider community.</li> <li>• Primary concerns related to physical safety, exacerbated by difficult road crossings, poor pathways and the behaviour of other people such as skate-board riders.</li> </ul>

## 8 Transportation

The World Health Organisation's Global Age-friendly Cities Guide (2007) cites 'transportation including accessible and affordable public transport is a key factor influencing active ageing. Being able to move about the area in which you live determines social and civic participation and access to community and health services'. The ASLaRC (2011) study identified transport as the second highest issue of concern for service providers and identified that access to transport influences many other areas of a senior persons' health and well-being. Whilst transport is usually not the direct responsibility of Council it is clear that this is a critical issue and that Council could play a crucial role in facilitating a range of inter-governmental, private sector and inter-agency solutions.

### 8.1 Tweed Shire Data and Statistics

#### 8.1.1 Public Transport Access

The assessment of public transport within the Tweed Shire has only been undertaken at a high level (based on routes and frequency). Figure 11 shows that spatially, there is reasonable coverage of the Shire. There are however a number of areas that appear to have no provision of public transport, including the smaller settlement areas of Pumpenbil, Limpinwood, Hopkins Creek, Dungay, Dulguigan, Rowland's Creek, Carool and Eviron. In addition to these deficiencies, approximately 75% of the geographic area of the Tweed Shire gets less than two trips per day and it is also apparent that a number of these arterial routes are shared School and Public bus routes. Using GIS to identify those SA1 areas where a public bus route does not exist (excluding shared School routes), suggests that 21% of the Tweed Shire population do not have access to a bus service (17,885 residents). The proportions of seniors aged 65 years and over that do not have access to a service are estimated at 18% (3494 individuals). It is noted through the consultations that access to public transport for seniors is a big issue within the Tweed Shire and is irregular and costly. Innovative transport options need to be investigated in these circumstances to fill the gap, including 'Council Cabs', car-pooling and other more formal community transport options.

A major gap in the distribution and access to transport within the Shire is in the services to the villages, and those who are frail-aged. The major rural villages in the Tweed Valley that have been identified as part of the Rural Villages Strategy Discussion Paper (2014) are Tyalgum, Chillingham, Uki, Stokers Siding, Burringbar, Crabbes Creek, Mooball and Tumbulgum. The discussion paper shows that the density of the population of those living in rural areas is dropping, for example Uki population has dropped by almost half between 1911 and 2011. A common theme raised by local communities in workshops was the desire to retain the lively and compact form of the villages, to create more opportunities for social interactions, efficient and less expensive infrastructure, improved access to primary services, more efficient public transport, walkable neighbourhoods and better integrated regional economies. The current and projected demographic trends of the villages and rural areas (see Figures 1 to 4) indicate that the population of residents aged over 65 is expected to grow at an increasing pace and demand for aged care and supportive infrastructure (including affordable and senior housing accommodation) is expected to significantly increase.

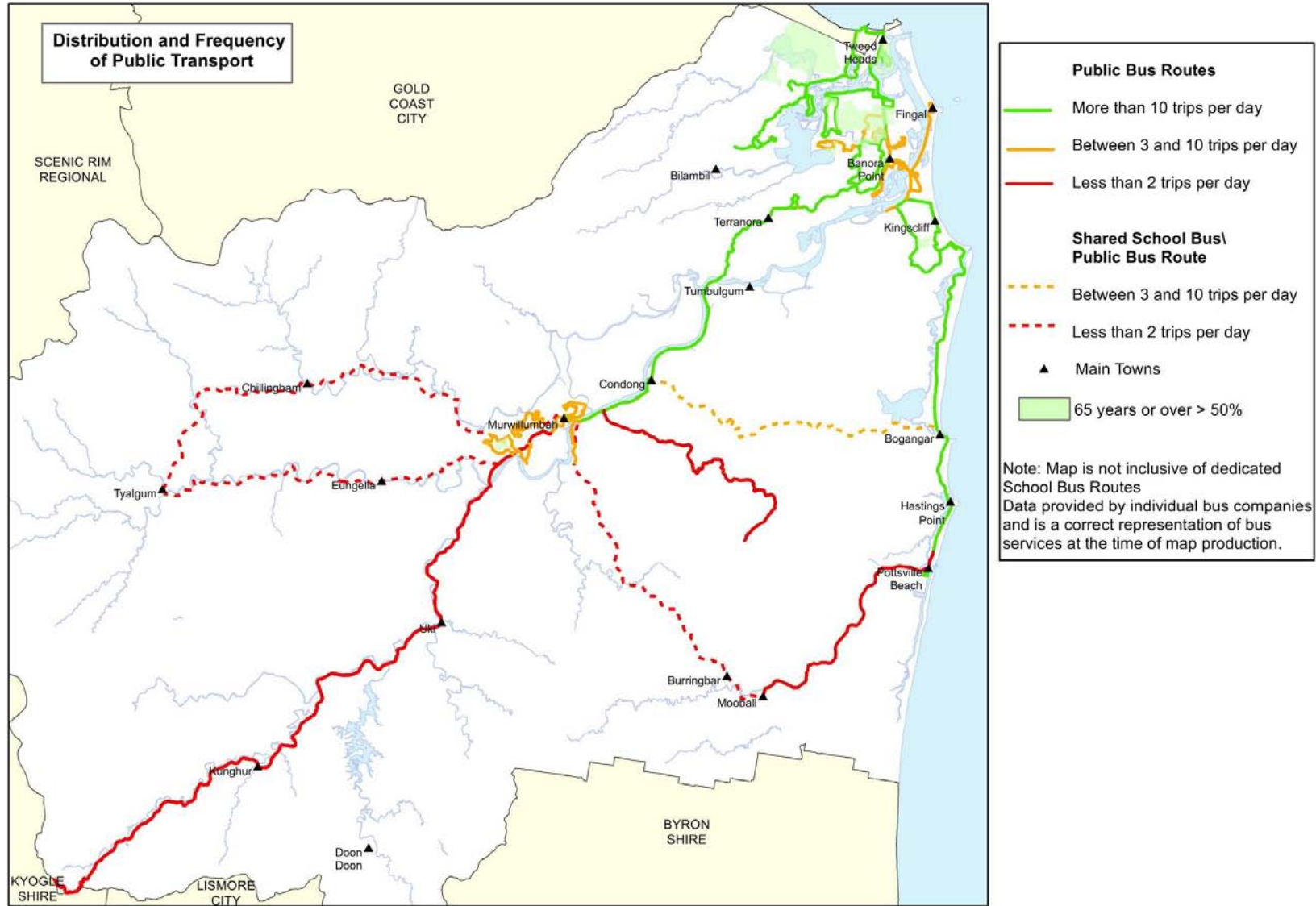


Figure 11: Distribution of public transport bus routes

### 8.1.2 Community Transport

Tweed, Byron and Ballina Community Transport (TBBCT) provide community bus services across the Tweed Shire and are coordinated by volunteers. Trips are counted and documented each way and are a mixture of individual trips to hospital/medical and bus trips for shopping or social outings. Table 6 presents the number of trips and the number of clients for the last three financial years which shows a steady rise in the demand and use of the service.

**Table 6: Number of TBBCT trips and clients**

Financial Year	2011/12	2012/3	2013/14
Number of Tweed trips	12522	14710	16344
Number of Tweed clients	1011	1051	1108

In terms of unmet need, there were 164 TBBCT service refusals for the 2013/14 financial year (up 31% from 113 in 2012/13) and Table 7 provides the detail as to why the service was refused:

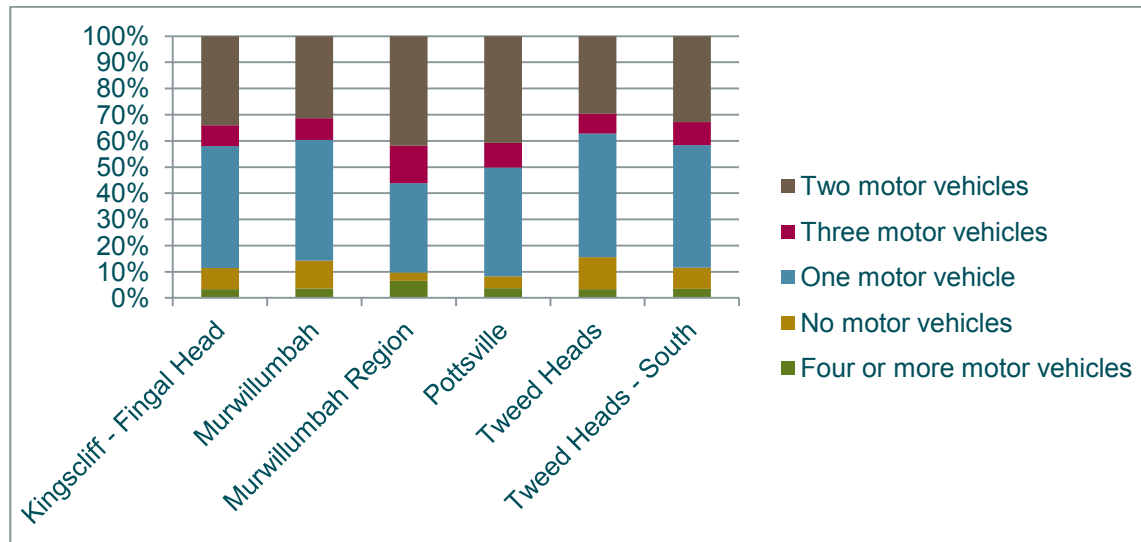
**Table 7: Reason why TBBCT service was refused**

Reason for service refusal (2013/14)	Number of refusals (2013/14)
Lives in an Aged Care Facility	24
Dialysis	10
Not yet eligible (most referred to Health Transport Unit)	35
Not enough notice	36
Lives in Queensland	6
Receives Aged Care Package	7
Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle not available on day	4
Weekend transport request	6
Not the usual service destinations	26
Other	10

### 8.1.3 Car Ownership

Figure 12 presents the 2011 Census data (ABS) on the proportional number of motor vehicles per dwelling in Tweed Shire SA2 areas. The average number per dwelling across the Tweed Shire is 1.6 cars. Overall, 44.8% of people have access to one motor vehicle and 34.1% have access to two vehicles. However 8.3% of the Tweed Shire population do not have a motor vehicle, amounting to 2761 people. Of these, 1764 dwellings (64% of those without a vehicle) are based in Tweed Heads and Tweed Heads South. The proportional profiles for each SA2 area show that the rural Murwillumbah Region (97%) and Pottsville (96%) have the highest percentages of dwellings with access to at least one car. Tweed Heads is the lowest with 88%, showing that 12% of dwellings have no motor vehicle. It is also quite high in Murwillumbah, with 11% of dwellings not having a motor vehicle.

**Figure 12: Number of cars per dwelling by SA2 area**



The evaluation of Banora Point Community Centre Seniors Program (2014) showed that the majority of people drive to the centre by car (86%) with a further 5.4% getting lifts in a car with another person. Car ownership or access to someone who can drive is a key factor for use of the Banora Point Community Centre Seniors Program and 89% agreed that it is a big barrier getting to the centre for those who don't drive, due to the lack of public and community transport available to access the facility. There were 85% of participants that felt more people would attend if the centre was more accessible by public transport. This is particularly important for the frail-aged and functionally-impaired elderly persons.

#### **8.1.4 Pedestrian Access and Mobility**

Walking is the simplest form of transportation. It is available to most people, including those who use mobility aids, is free and has insignificant environmental cost. Furthermore, all trips involve some walking component, if only from the car park to the end destination. Research has shown that those who live in easy-to-walk communities have better outcomes both in physical health (such as lower body fat and blood pressure) but also in mental skills (University of Kansas, 2014). Therefore, planning for safe and convenient pedestrian access is very important in transportation planning. Pedestrians use every part of the public domain, including roads, footpaths, nature strips, shopping centres and other public spaces. Therefore, planners need to consider the needs of pedestrians with regards to design, amenity and personal security. Pedestrians are particularly vulnerable to cars and other motorised traffic.

The Tweed Shire Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP, 2014) provides a framework for existing pedestrian needs, future management, use and enhancement for pedestrians of all ages and mobility. The PAMP is a strategic document that identifies the pedestrian network hierarchy and associated action plan for management. Key findings from the PAMP community survey (28% were +65 years) and workshop revealed that the most commonly identified reason for not using pedestrian routes more frequently to access key locations was 'the routes don't feel safe' and 'lack of pedestrian crossings' (both recorded 38.1%). Only 22.7% of respondents said it was easy or always easy to move around key locations using pedestrian routes, while 48.5% said it was difficult or always difficult. Concerns of highest importance for seniors were around dangerous crossings, lack of kerb ramp access, dangerous or inadequate crossing points and unsafe or discontinued paths. 'Footpath condition and width' was the most commonly identified priority for improvement to the pedestrian network overall, followed by 'pedestrian crossing locations' and 'access for wheelchairs/mobility scooters'.

The key priorities raised by the disability sector were around lack of footpaths or missing links, footpath width, lack of kerb ramp access and dangerous crossings. The majority of concerns of importance are located in the Kingscliff study area and ideas of importance include adding shaded seating along Turnock Street, Kingscliff. The key priorities for seniors and concerns of highest importance were around dangerous crossings, lack of kerb ramp access, dangerous or inadequate crossing points and unsafe or discontinued paths. The majority of concerns of importance are located in the Tweed Heads and Banora Point study areas. Additional areas of concern that were raised that also affect seniors are poor pedestrian access to shopping centres; lack of trees, shade and lighting; footpath obstructions; poor quality footpath surfaces and steep gradients.

## 8.2 Community Consultation and Public Views

	TSC Healthy Ageing Issues Papers (2008)	ASLaRC Age-Friendly Consultation (2011)
<b>Buses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The problem of getting on and off buses is a major issue for seniors.</li> <li>The steps on buses are too steep. There is a need for a ramped, flat or automatic lift entry to buses safe and attractive to seniors.</li> <li>Need a space on the bus to put wheelie walkers, shopping carts &amp; prams.</li> <li>Bus shelters need to be adequate and waterproof.</li> <li>Flexible bus services that allow people to get on &amp; off where they need.</li> <li>Bus drivers should allow time for people to be seated before driving off.</li> <li>Transport staff should display patience and tolerance.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Difficulties accessing bus stops (steep or uneven terrain, no footpaths)</li> <li>Difficulties getting on and off buses</li> <li>The length of time taken to travel by bus from Tweed Heads South to Robina on the Gold Coast</li> <li>The inability to buy interstate train or bus tickets locally</li> <li>Lack of transport services to urban development inland from Pottsville</li> <li>In some cases bus transit areas are poorly located and older residents found it difficult to navigate past buses and negotiate vehicles</li> </ul>
<b>Taxi's</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The high cost and the availability and reliability of taxis were major issues.</li> <li>There are often long waits and some drivers do not assist with bags.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prohibitive cost of taxis</li> <li>Establish a subsidised taxi program for older people and provide free taxis for medical appointments as part of pension payment increases.</li> </ul>
<b>Timetables/ Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The difficulty of getting bus timetable and bus route information for Tweed and Tweed Coast was identified as an issue by a number of groups. There is nowhere to pick up this information.</li> <li>It is difficult to get information about other transport services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of choice with regard to bus schedules and routes.</li> <li>Difficulties accessing bus timetables</li> </ul>
<b>Trains</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of Countrylink train and times of replacement bus services.</li> <li>No linkage of train to QLD, Brisbane &amp; Coolangatta Airport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The inability to buy interstate train or bus tickets locally</li> </ul>
<b>Community and Social Transport</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need more door to door transport to social groups</li> <li>Need more community transport for social outings</li> <li>Lack of affordable bus transport for group outings for the healthy aged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant proportions of residents have relocated to the Shire and have limited informal support networks to assist with being driven to shops or to medical appointments.</li> </ul>
<b>Access &amp; Cost</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If public transport accessibility and cost issues were addressed there may be less resistance and better transition for seniors to give up their driving licence.</li> <li>Places where lack of parking has been identified as an issue are Tweed &amp; Murwillumbah Hospitals and Murwillumbah CBD.</li> <li>There are not enough pick up and drop off bays in public places.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to transport is a critical issue affecting older residents.</li> <li>As people age, frequently they lose their licence or their confidence to drive and rely increasingly on public transport and other means</li> <li>Respondents highlighted the correlation between the lack of access to transport and the rates of re-admission to hospital.</li> <li>Difficulty accessing travel services to the Gold Coast and Brisbane.</li> <li>Issues include affordability, the ability of frail and disabled people to get on and off buses and the frequency of services.</li> </ul>
<b>Walking</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>** Walking wasn't really covered in the Issues papers, however in 2014 consultation was undertaken specifically with seniors for the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan (PAMP). See section 8.1.4</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary concerns related to physical safety, exacerbated by difficult road crossings, poor pathways and the behaviour of other people such as skate-board riders.</li> <li>The difficulty of navigating traffic to access Tweed City shopping centre.</li> <li>Better plan for urban design, e.g. walkways and safe areas for people to be able to participate in free physical activities</li> </ul>

## 9 Housing

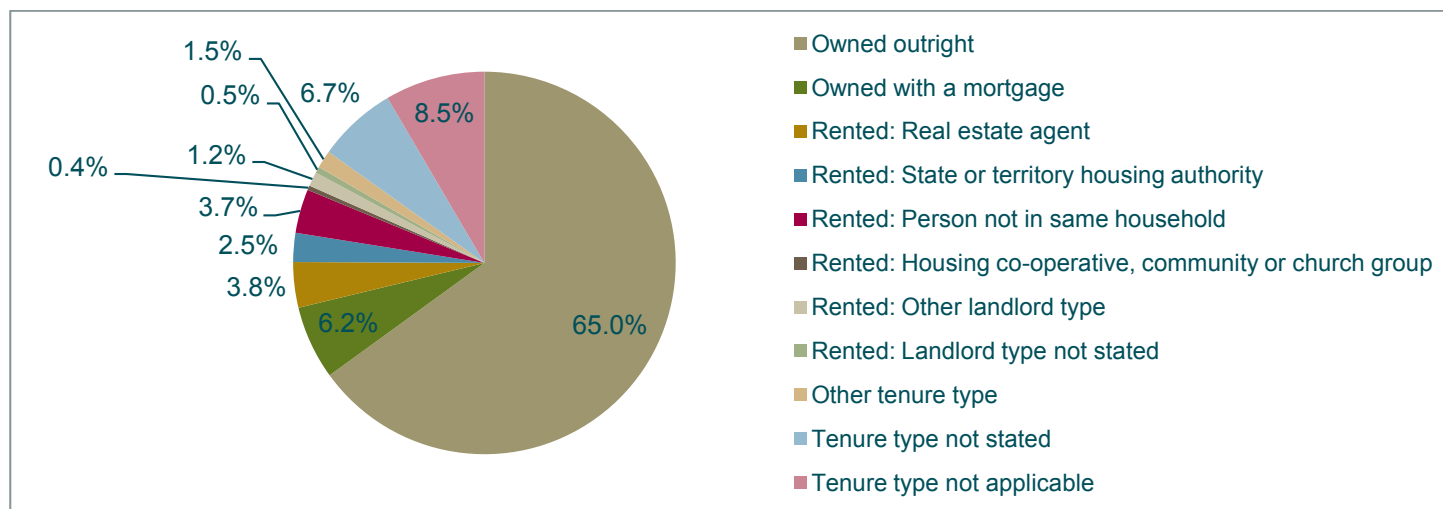
The World Health Organisations *Global Age-friendly Cities Guide* (2007) cites 'housing as essential to a persons' safety and well-being. There is a link between appropriate housing and access to community and social services in influencing the independence and quality of life of older people. It is clear that housing and support that allow older people to age comfortably and safely within the community to which they belong are universally valued.' For the Tweed Shire 'affordable housing' was identified as the top service provider issue of concern for an age-friendly community and poses a number of challenges impacting on both the quality of life of older residents and on the ability of service providers to deliver services.

### 9.1 Tweed Shire Data and Statistics

#### 9.1.1 Occupancy & Ownership

Figure 13 presents the Census data for tenure by those aged 65 years and over (ABS, 2011). The majority (65%) own their property outright, with a further 6.2% owning with a mortgage. Overall, 12.1% (2483) of seniors rent their property, primarily through a real estate agent (32%), a person not in the same household (31%), or a State or territory housing authority (20%).

**Figure 13: Tweed Shire tenure for those aged 65 years and over**





### 9.1.2 Housing and Homelessness

On Track manages 74 properties in the Tweed Shire. They assist people with access to housing and private rental products via Housing NSW. People in their transitional properties are supported by On Track support services. The number of clients/customers over 65 years in the Tweed Shire is not easy to estimate at this time due to the recent changes for all housing and support services which are managing the Going Home Staying Home process. However it is estimated that about 15% of tenants at On Track are aged. All tenants are assisted and referred to support providers for home help, health or mental health services and other services as needs are identified by tenancy staff. Fred's Place in Tweed provides support and services for the homeless and seniors make up an increasingly large percentage of the people who visit the drop-in centre. The average monthly intake since June 2014 shows 26% of access is by people aged 50-60 yrs, 18% are 60-70 yrs, and 8% are 70 years old and over. Those aged over 50 yrs comprise around 52% of the service users.

### 9.1.3 Housing, Mortgage and Rental Stress

A Housing Affordability report went to Council on the 15<sup>th</sup> May 2014 and the following data has been extracted from the report. Housing Stress is defined as per the NATSEM (National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling) model as households in the lowest 40% of incomes who are paying more than 30% of their usual gross weekly income on housing costs. Housing affordability is a significant issue if mortgage and rent payments rapidly increase as a share of income. Mortgage and Rental Stress is defined as per the NATSEM model as households in the lowest 40% of incomes who are paying more than 30% of their usual gross weekly income on home loan repayments or rent. Housing affordability is a significant social problem with many households struggling to afford to buy or rent their dwelling.

While stress can be very dependent on individual circumstances (and macro-economic factors such as interest rates), using Census data to analyse housing and mortgage stress in Tweed Shire provides a good indicator of the likely locations where people are having difficulties meeting their commitments. Table 8 presents and compares the results from the 2011 census data for housing, mortgage and rental stress:

*Table 8: Top 5 areas experiencing Housing and Mortgage Stress*

	Housing Stress	Mortgage Stress	Rental Stress
<b>Top five Areas with the highest proportion of stress</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabarita area (19.4%)</li> <li>• Murwillumbah and District (19.0%)</li> <li>• Tweed Heads West (18.8%)</li> <li>• North West Tweed - Tyalgum (16.6%)</li> <li>• Mid Coast - Casuarina (16.4%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• North West Tweed - Tyalgum (25.6%)</li> <li>• Murwillumbah and District (21.1%)</li> <li>• South West Tweed - Uki (20.7%)</li> <li>• Tweed Heads West (18.8%)</li> <li>• South East Hinterland - Burringbar (18.7%)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tweed Heads West (46.9%)</li> <li>• Murwillumbah and District (46.1%)</li> <li>• South West Tweed - Uki (44.7%)</li> <li>• South East Hinterland - Burringbar (42.8%)</li> <li>• South Coast - Pottsville (40.2%)</li> </ul>

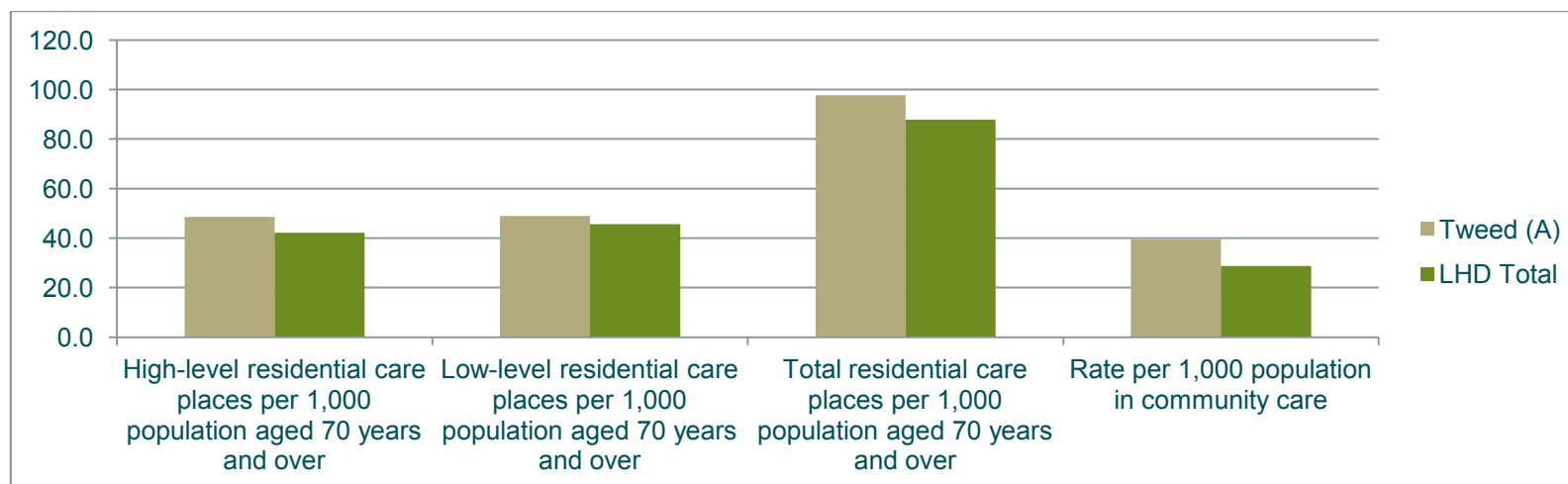
In 2011, 15.3% of Tweed Shire's households were experiencing housing stress compared to 11.4% in Regional NSW. Proportions ranged from a low of 11.3% in Terranora to a high of 19.4% in Cabarita area. The census also showed that 16.5% of Tweed Shire's households purchasing their dwelling were experiencing mortgage stress compared to 11.4% in Regional NSW. Proportions ranged from a low of 12.2% in Tweed Heads to a high of 25.6% in North West Tweed. However, 40.0% of Tweed Shire's renting households were experiencing rental stress compared to 29.6% in Regional NSW. Proportions ranged from a low of 22.0% in Terranora to a high of 46.9% in Tweed Heads West.

### 9.1.4 Aged care facilities

The distribution of aged care facilities was assessed by mapping the major retirement communities and aged care facilities. As shown by Figures 14 to 17, this analysis included retirement communities, nursing homes and hostels, as well as manufactured home villages. The mapping shows four concentration points within the Shire; Tweed Heads (including South and West), Banora Point and Chinderah, Kingscliff and Murwillumbah. These locations are arguably where the bulk of services and shopping facilities are located (and the population centres). The deficiency of these facilities within village locations places a higher pressure on in-home services.

Figure 14 provides data on residential and community care places and is sourced from the Health Atlas of Australia (Public Health Information Development Unit, 2014). The results show that the Tweed Shire scores consistently higher than the Local Health District average, in particular for the total residential care places per 1,000 population aged 70 years and over, and for the rate per 1,000 population in community care.

**Figure 14: Residential and community care places within the Tweed Shire**



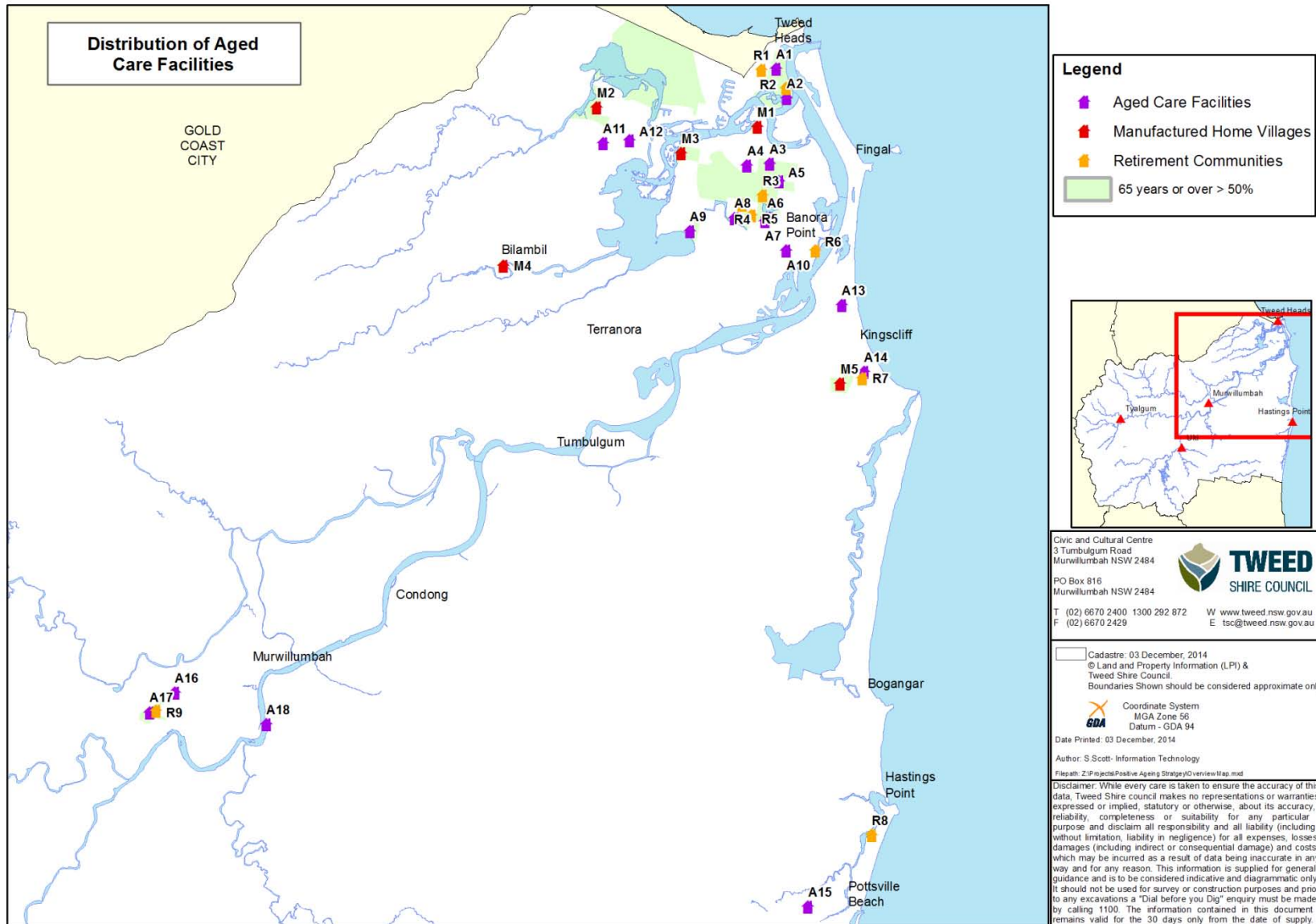


Figure 15: Distribution of aged care facilities across the Tweed Shire

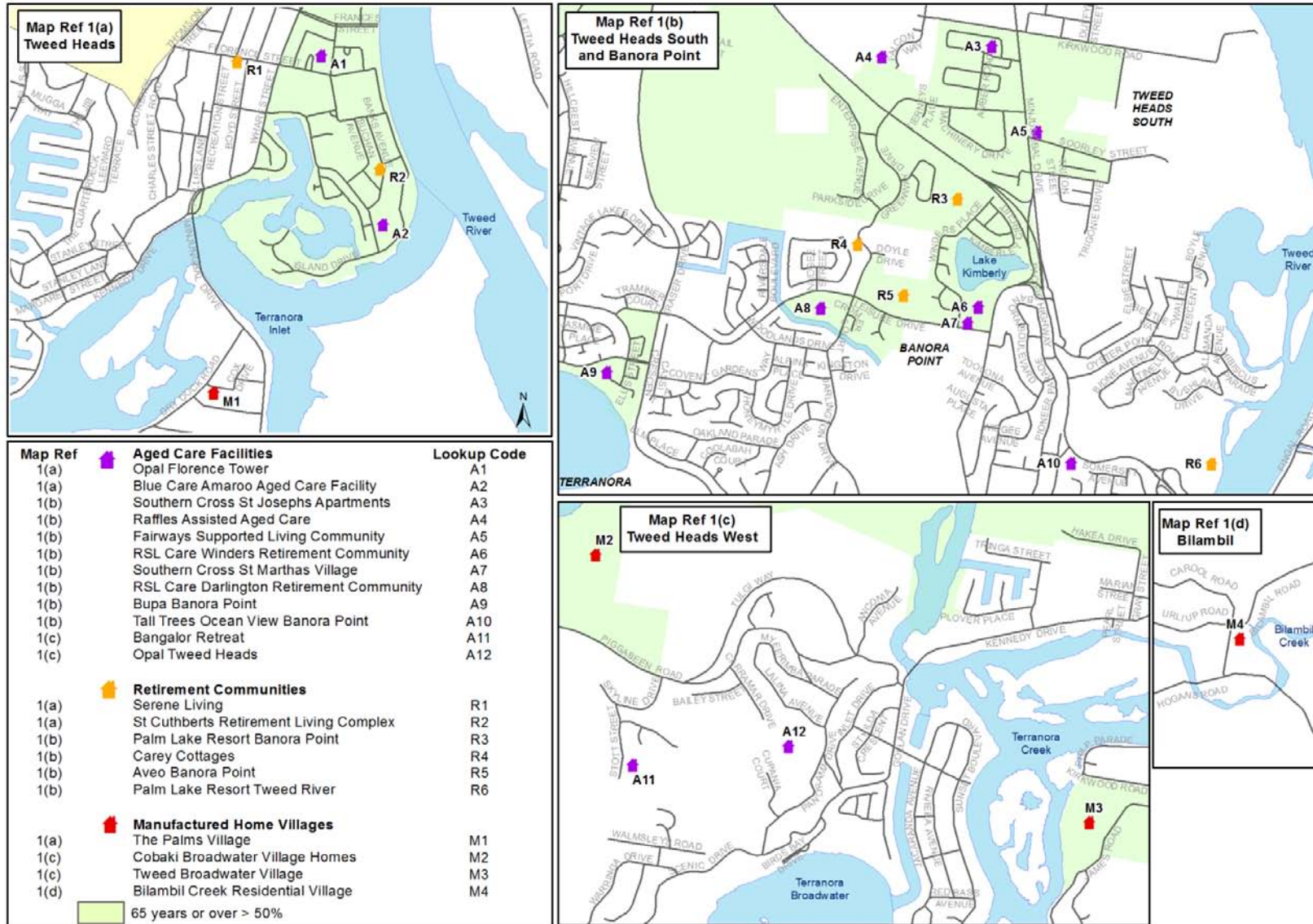


Figure 16: Distribution of aged care facilities in Tweed Heads and Banora Point

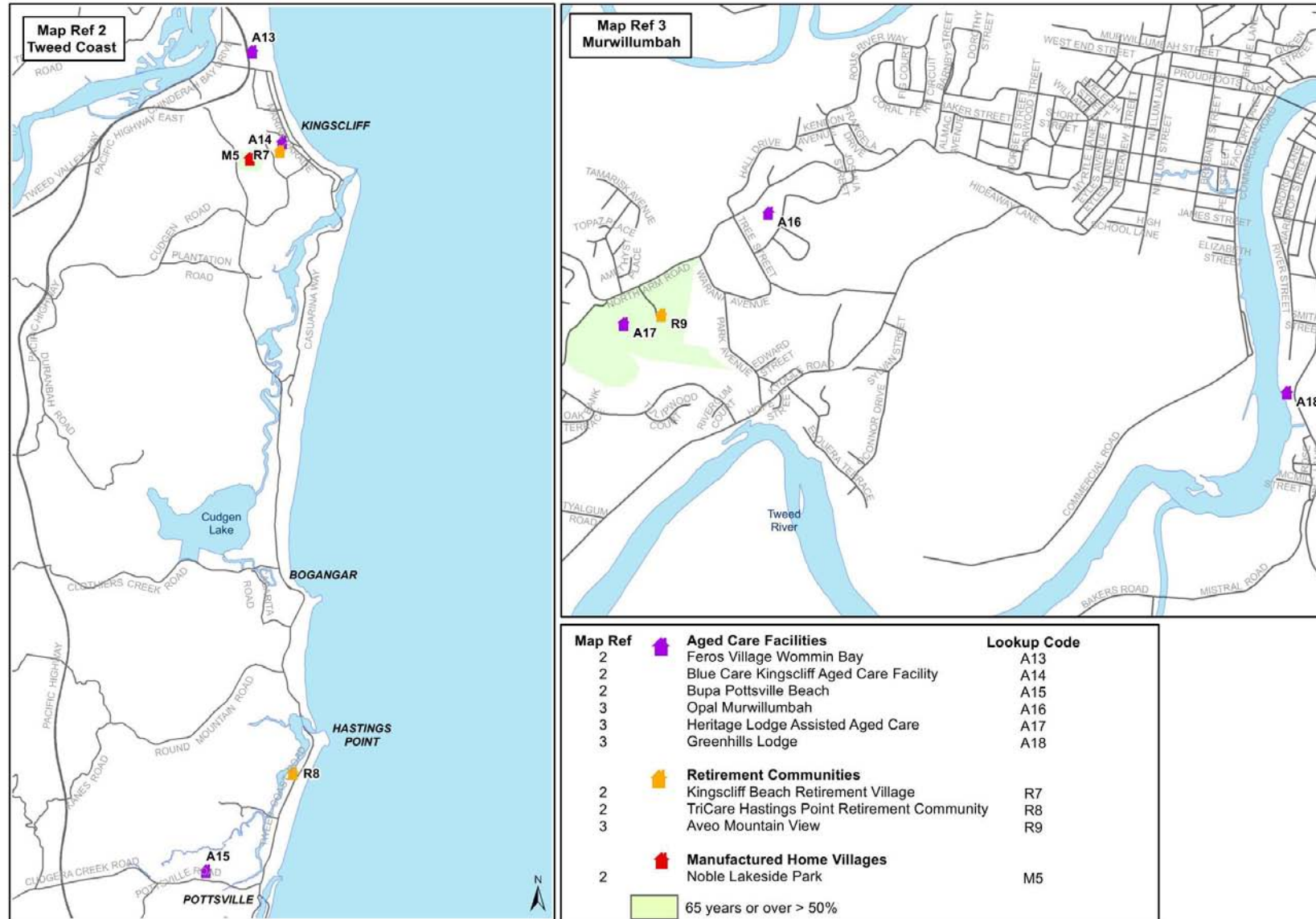


Figure 17: Distribution of aged care facilities in the coastal towns and Murwillumbah

## 9.2 Consultation and Public Views

	<b>TSC Healthy Ageing Issues Papers (2008)</b>	<b>ASLaRC Age-Friendly Consultation (2011)</b>
<b>Cost &amp; Availability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not all income groups can afford retirement villages. High cost of deposits and bonds.</li> <li>• High rental and purchase prices</li> <li>• Centrelink rental subsidy not sufficient</li> <li>• Ratio of cost of rental to cost of living not equitable</li> <li>• High cost of utilities / essential services (Phone, electricity, gas)</li> <li>• Few affordable rentals available</li> <li>• Private rental accommodation not secure in tenure / high costs of moving.</li> <li>• Low quality of rentals. Many landlords not meeting their responsibility for repairs/ maintenance.</li> <li>• Tenancy tribunal not enough protection for rental clients.</li> <li>• Lack of Department of Housing houses. The waiting list is very long</li> <li>• There is limited crisis accommodation for the aged and nowhere for homeless seniors to go.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulties in finding affordable and suitable rental accommodation</li> <li>• Cost barriers to down-sizing</li> <li>• The lack of affordable housing</li> </ul>
<b>Caravan Parks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Because of demand people can pay excessive rents in caravan parks.</li> <li>• Issues arise when caravan park tenants require in home care services and modifications to living space.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cost barriers to moving from caravan parks into housing as support needs increase.</li> <li>• Staff providing showering and other personal hygiene type services found that for older residents living in caravan parks, the facilities make service delivery extremely difficult and potentially dangerous.</li> </ul>
<b>Design &amp; Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need lifts in buildings over 2 storeys or buildings designed for seniors above 1 storey.</li> <li>• Need more granny flats/small affordable living options. Council could encourage these developments.</li> <li>• On approval of low cost housing make sure infrastructure is in place.</li> <li>• Some retirement communities are built in geographically isolated areas.</li> <li>• Adopt (DDA) Disability Access standards for building stock.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respondents identified the need for more public housing stock and the development of additional affordable housing.</li> </ul>
<b>Rates and maintenance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rates are high and the rate increases a concern. The pensioner rebate is not enough.</li> <li>• Self funded retirees do not get pensioner discounts – those earning \$ near the age pension cut off point find it very hard.</li> <li>• Many seniors have nobody to do little jobs for them eg. Change a light bulb, prune the trees, clean the gutters or fix a cupboard or fence. There is a lack of affordable and available home maintenance.</li> <li>• Short term and long term home maintenance services are needed for the frail aged.</li> <li>• Lack of affordable home maintenance can create a physical safety issue.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty in accessing reliable and affordable maintenance services</li> <li>• Difficulty in meeting rates payments</li> <li>• Government’s “push” to keep people in their own homes needs funding and other resources required into supporting people to do so in relation to such things as home maintenance, assisted shopping, social support.</li> <li>• Ensure that older people in communities outside of the main town are able to access services in order to stay in their own homes</li> </ul>

## 10 Social participation

The World Health Organisations *Global Age-friendly Cities Guide* (2007) cites that ‘social participation and social support are strongly connected to good health and well-being throughout life. Participating in leisure, social, cultural and spiritual activities in the community, as well as with family allow older people to continue to exercise their competence, to enjoy respect and esteem, and to maintain or establish supportive and caring relationships.’ Given the links between physical activity and general health, and the identification of social isolation as a risk factor for depression which in turn is a risk factor for dementia, a pro-active, preventative approach will deliver the best outcomes for the community and be the most cost-effective over the long-term.

### 10.1 Tweed Shire Data and Statistics

#### 10.1.1 Community Safety

Between 2011 and 2031, baby-boomers will pass the age of 65 years and will account for almost one-quarter of Australia’s total population – a significant demographic group. The Australian Institute of Criminology states that although older people are overwhelmingly less at risk of being victims of crime than other age groups, they may be increasing vulnerable to abuse by family members and professional carers. Older people may also experience negligence and fraud by professionals including those working in the health care, legal and finance fields. The crime that elderly people are most likely to experience is credit card fraud.

Table 9 presents data on the recorded criminal incidents for major offences for the Tweed Shire LGA for the 12 months to June 2013 and the 12 months to June 2014. The data was sourced from the NSW Recorded Crime Statistics, Quarterly Update (NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, June 2014). At present data is not available to identify the crimes most affecting seniors, over time this needs refining for criminal incidents and to smaller geographies to help improve service provision and planning for seniors.

**Table 9: Recorded criminal incidents for major offences**

<b>Tweed Shire LGA</b>	<b>Murder</b>	<b>Assault - domestic violence related</b>	<b>Assault - non domestic violence related</b>	<b>Sexual assault</b>	<b>Indecent assault, act of indecency and other sexual offences</b>	<b>Robbery without a weapon</b>	<b>Robbery with a firearm</b>	<b>Robbery with a weapon not a firearm</b>	<b>Break and enter dwelling</b>	<b>Break and enter non-dwelling</b>	<b>Motor vehicle theft</b>	<b>Steal from motor vehicle</b>	<b>Steal from retail store</b>	<b>Steal from dwelling</b>	<b>Steal from person</b>	<b>Fraud</b>	<b>Malicious damage to property</b>
Ratio to NSW Rate	2	1.1	0.9	1.1	0.8	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.8	1	1.2	0.9	0.7	1	0.5	0.8	0.9
12 months to June 2014	2	394	344	63	66	14	2	6	321	165	211	473	164	278	40	487	778
12 months to June 2013	2	299	338	61	45	9	4	8	395	244	205	501	183	222	38	359	821

The ratio to NSW rate statistics are a comparison of a NSW regional rate per 100,000 population, to the NSW rate per 100,000 population. A ratio of one indicates parity with the NSW rate, so the criminal incidents that exceed the NSW rate in Tweed Shire are murder, motor vehicle theft, domestic violence related assault and sexual assault. Trend test results for the number of recorded criminal incidents for major offences over the 24 months to June 2014 for NSW LGAs show two major offences have significantly increased in Tweed Shire over the last two years. These are domestic violence related assault with a 31.8 percentage increase and fraud with a 35.7 percentage increase.

The Australian Institute of Criminology has investigated the risk of criminal victimisation for older people (AIC, 2001) and the following information has been extracted from their website (AIC, 2014). They suggest that the broad pattern of victimisation for older people in Australia for personal offences (such as robbery, assault, sexual assault and homicide) is that older people are far less likely to be victims of crime than other age groups. Risks for older people are also lower for household crimes such as burglary and motor vehicle theft. However, while older people are less likely than younger people to be subject to consumer fraud, within their age group consumer fraud occurs more frequently than other types of crime. Further detail on the criminal victimisation of older people in Australia is provided in Table 10.



**Table 10: Criminal victimisation of older people**

<b>Crime</b>	<b>Criminal Victimization of Older People: extracted from the Australian Institute of Criminology Website (AIC, 2014)</b>
<b>Personal Offences</b>	<p>The National Homicide Monitoring Program (NHMP) showed that between 1 July 2003 and 30 June 2004, there were 21 victims of homicide aged 65 years and over which is 0.8 people per 100,000 of the population that age. The rate of victimisation for the population aged less than 65 years is 1.6 per 100,000 people. The level of victimisation for older people has been consistent since records began in 1989 (Mouzos 2005).</p> <p>Recorded crime: victims, Australia (ABS 2005) indicates that four percent of robbery victims were aged 65 years and over. There were twice as many women as men in these numbers which, while reflecting the larger numbers of women in this age group, could also be a result of handbag snatching. This is also the case in the ABS Crime and Safety Survey (ABS 2003) which shows that, of the total number of robbery victims, four percent were aged 65 years and over. One percent of robbery victims were males aged 65 years and over, and ten percent of robbery victims were females aged 65 years and over.</p> <p>People aged 65 years and over accounted for 2.4 percent of the total number of assault victims in the 12 months prior to the 2002 Crime and Safety Survey (ABS 2003). This compares with 32 percent of people in the 15-24 year age group. Recorded crime: victims, Australia (ABS 2004) indicates that 1.4 percent of all assault victims were aged more than 65 years. The Australian component of the 2004 International Crime Victim Survey (ICVS) showed that people aged 60 years and over accounted for two percent of assault victims in the 12 months prior to the survey (Johnson 2005).</p> <p>Recorded crime: victims, Australia (2004) indicates that 0.4 percent of all victims of sexual assault were aged 65 years and over. The majority of these were women. Data from the International Violence Against Women Survey showed that, of the total sample, two percent of women in the 55-69 year age group experienced physical violence and one percent experienced sexual violence (Mouzos &amp; Makkai 2004).</p>
<b>Household/ property crime</b>	<p>The Australian component of the 2000 ICVS incorporated a supplement targeted at older people (Carcach, Graycar &amp; Muscat 2001). Data for households in which all of the members were aged 65 years or more were analysed. The data showed that, during the year preceding the survey, five percent of people aged 65 years and over had been the victim of a burglary and that 0.5 percent of older people had experienced the theft of a motor vehicle, on at least one occasion</p>
<b>Consumer Fraud</b>	<p>The older people supplement of the 2000 ICVS showed that almost four percent of people aged 65 years and more had experienced consumer fraud in the past year. This was less than half of the level among younger people. Older people were, however, more likely to experience consumer fraud than other offences. Consumer fraud was more than twice as frequent as assault or theft, and 13 times more frequent than robbery. Older people were particularly vulnerable to door-to-door selling; being sold items over the telephone and mail order purchases (Muscat, James &amp; Graycar 2002).</p>

Points worth noting are that risks for older people are not uniform. As is the case for all people, risks are higher in some geographic areas than others. Those who are more economically disadvantaged are generally more at risk, partly because they tend to live in higher-crime areas. Some people experience a disproportionate amount of victimisation and this is similar for older people. The best predictor of victimisation is previous victimisation. Repeat victimisation has clear implications for crime prevention if known victims can be assisted in ways that reduce their risks. Statistics showing the recording of crime by the police are often an underestimate of the number of crimes that have actually occurred. Older people, however, do tend to report crimes to the police more often than younger people.

AI Crime reduction matters no.46 investigates the risk and fear of fraud among older people (AIC, 2006). It states that fraud and financial abuse of older persons is a complex issue and difficult to quantify, as many older people are reluctant to report their victimisation. Research has already documented the problem of people who are disabled and are unable to scrutinise the transactions made by those who hold their power of attorney. Older isolated people are also at risk of investment fraud and are vulnerable to investment brokers and other professionals seeking to take advantage of them (AIC, 2006). Socially isolated people are potentially more vulnerable to people who use the telephone to promote their fraudulent activities.

AI Crime reduction matters no.29 states that regardless of the risk, crime can impact greatly on some people's lives. Reducing crime and its causes for older people, as well as the fear of crime, supports the objective of safe, healthy and supportive communities. Crime prevention and fear-reduction strategies generally work best through a whole-of-government approach. They can include all levels of government, the private sector, non-government agencies, the Police and community organisations. Current policy challenges are to ensure that all older Australians not only live a safe and confident life as part of our communities, but that they also feel safe and secure within those communities. To ensure this, the main policy emphasis should be on (AIC, 2005):

- promoting a sense of security and safety to reduce older people's fear of crime;
- programs that increase the physical security and personal safety of vulnerable older people;
- programs that ensure the financial safety of vulnerable older people;
- identification and application of crime prevention techniques that encourage supportive social environments;
- effective utilisation of the social capital that is available within the older population and in the wider community;
- recognising and working with the diversity of the aged population; and
- measures to reduce media sensationalism of crime and its impact on older people.

Figures 18 and 19 illustrate that each of the three major population centres of Tweed Heads, Murwillumbah and Kingscliff has Police Stations although staffing and station operating hours affect response times. The distribution of the seventeen Neighbourhood Watch groups across the Tweed Shire is fairly evenly spread with most population centres having a group, although Bogangar and some of the outlying communities do not have coverage. The areas identified as having 50% or more of the population comprising 65 years and over do not appear to have neighbourhood watch groups within them, although there are groups adjacent or nearby which may provide some support and coverage.

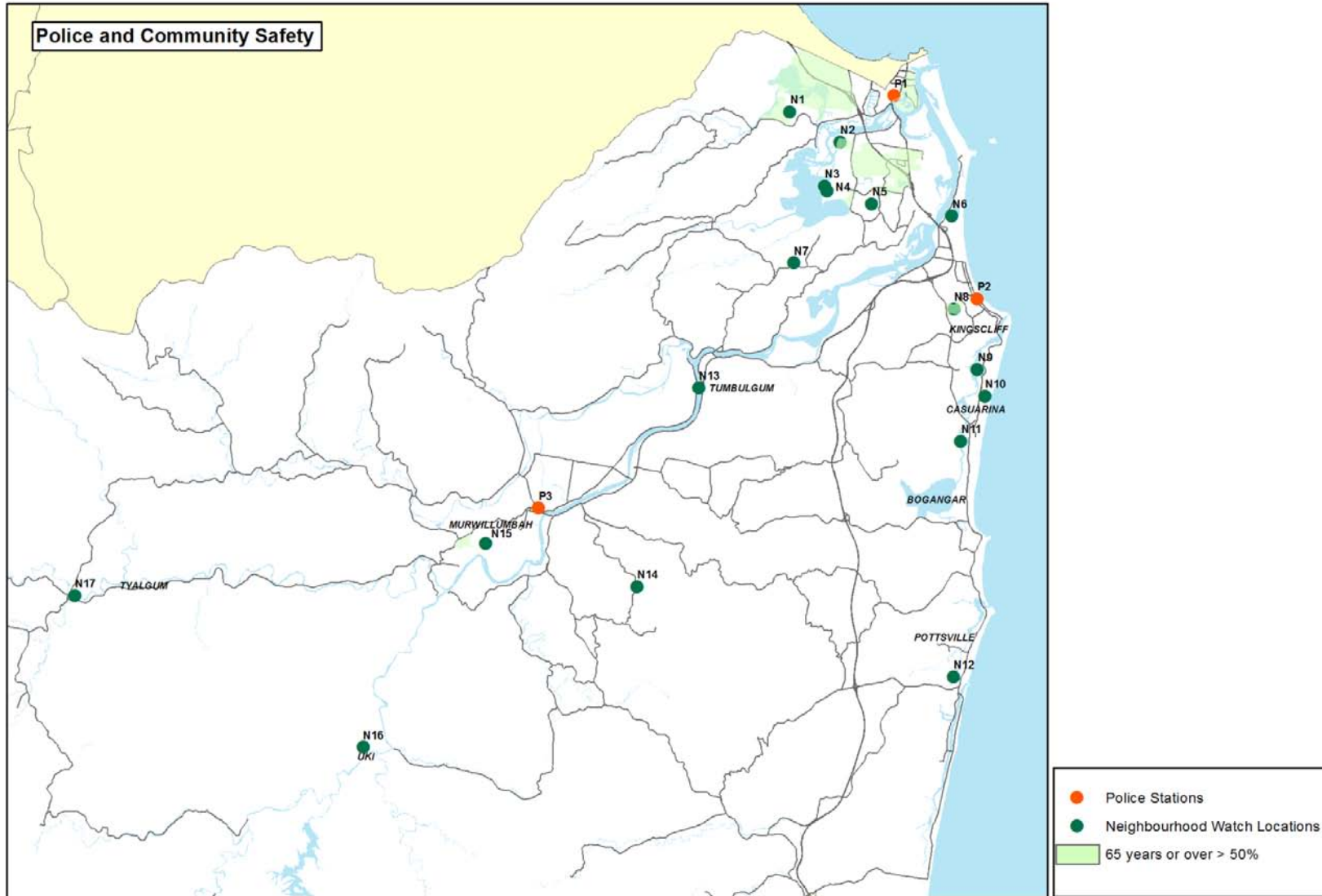


Figure 18: Police Stations and Neighbourhood Watch Groups in the Tweed Shire

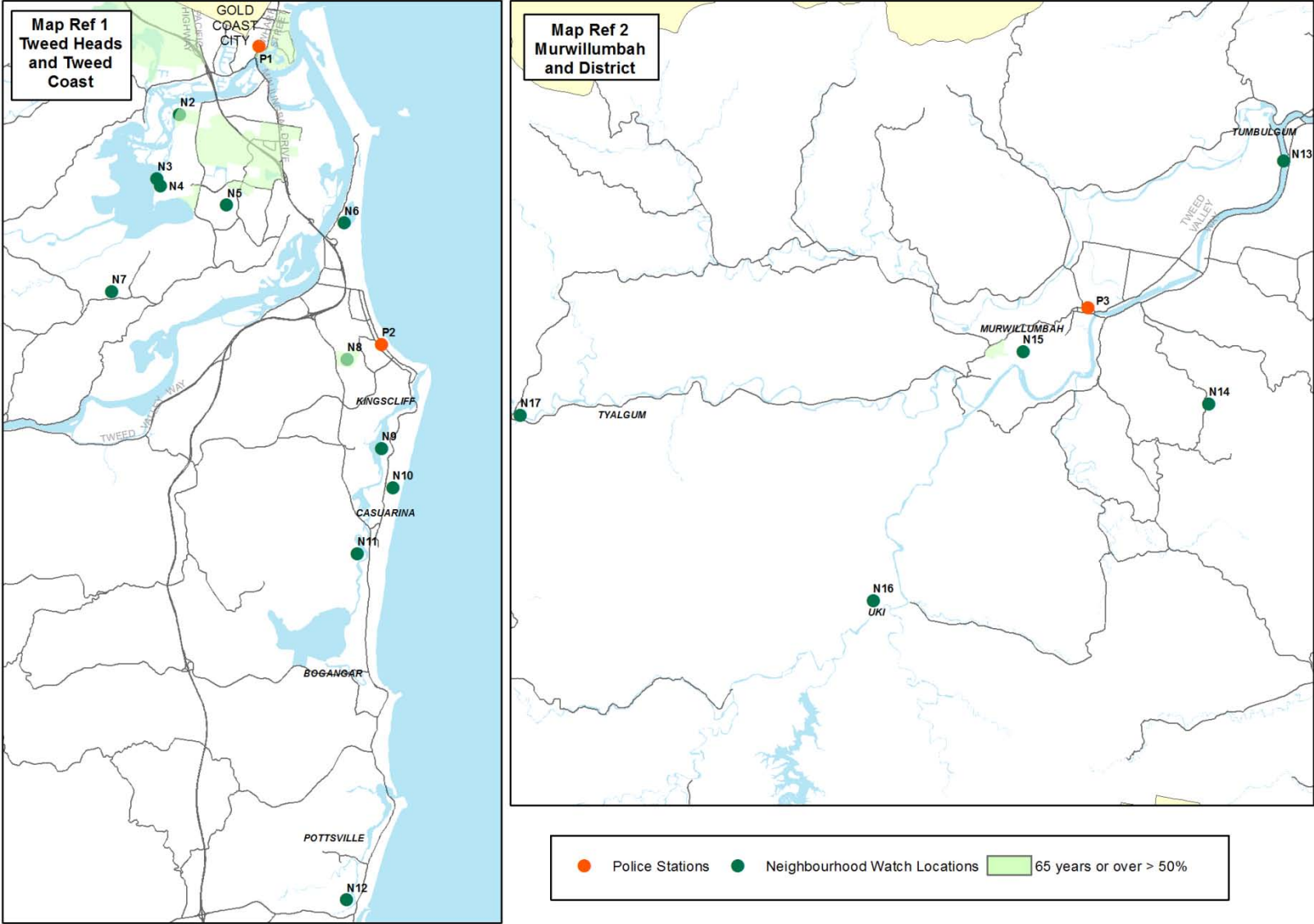


Figure 19: Police Stations and Neighbourhood Watch Groups in the Tweed Heads and Murwillumbah areas

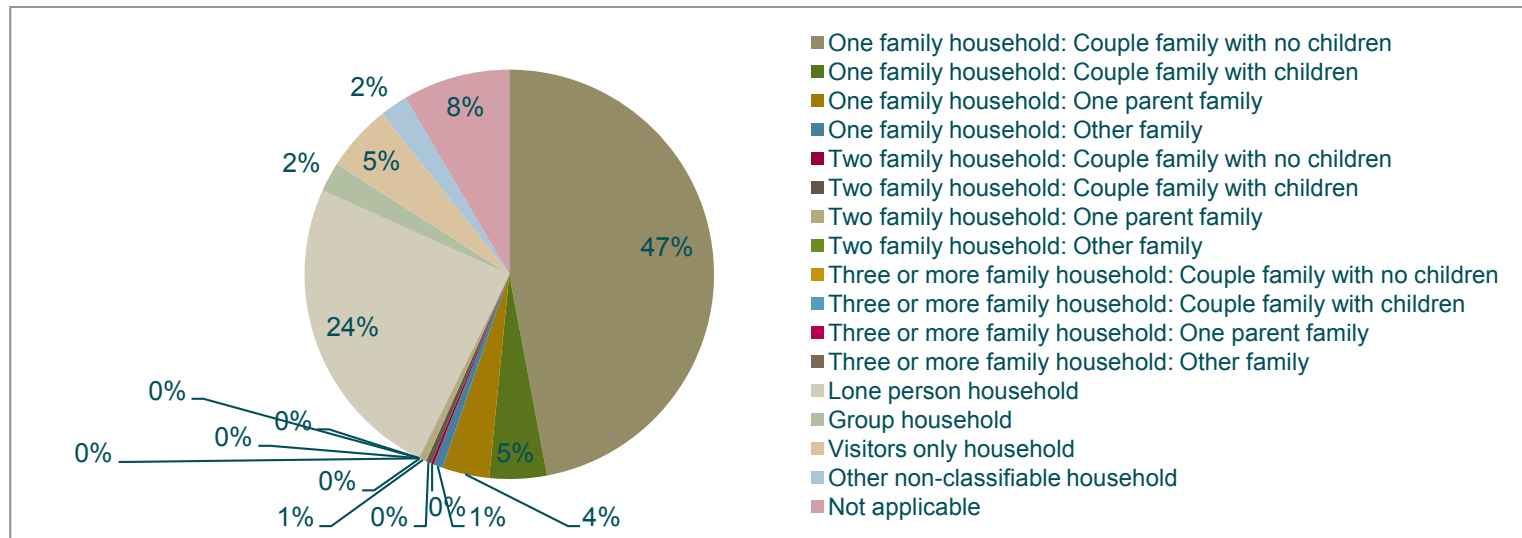
### 10.1.2 Isolation

The evaluation of Banora Point Community Centre Seniors Program (2014) of 74 participants showed that 47.3% live alone. In terms of having supportive networks 70% of the 74 participants have a close network nearby. However 10.8% have no real supportive network, 2.7% have no close network but feel they can cope, and 13.5% have a close network but it is not nearby. All participants (100%) agreed there is a need for a senior's centre and community information and the main barriers to not using the centre were illness (82%) and transport (36%).

The significance and major meaning of the centre for participants was socialising and engaging in activities, subdivided into support and socialisation (82.4%), participating in activities with like-minded people (39%), and a cultural centre for information on activities, events and well-being for seniors (14.8%). The benefits and effects of the centre on seniors well-being was primarily around social health (85%) and emotional health (55.4%); however mental health (43.2%) and physical health (39%) were also identified centre benefits.

Figure 20 presents data from the census on household composition of those aged 65 years and over. The results show that the majority of seniors live in a one family household, comprising a couple with no children (47%). This is followed by lone person household (24%), visitor only household (5.3%) and a one family household comprising a couple with children (4.5%). In total 5003 seniors live alone in the Tweed Shire with a significant number based in Tweed Heads South (1847) and Tweed Heads (1450). However the SA2 areas with the highest proportion of their senior population living alone are Tweed Heads (28%), Murwillumbah (26%) and Kingscliff - Fingal (25%). Murwillumbah region which is predominantly rural and is more likely to exacerbate feelings of isolation has 19% of its senior population living alone.

**Figure 20: Household family composition of the population aged 65 years and over**



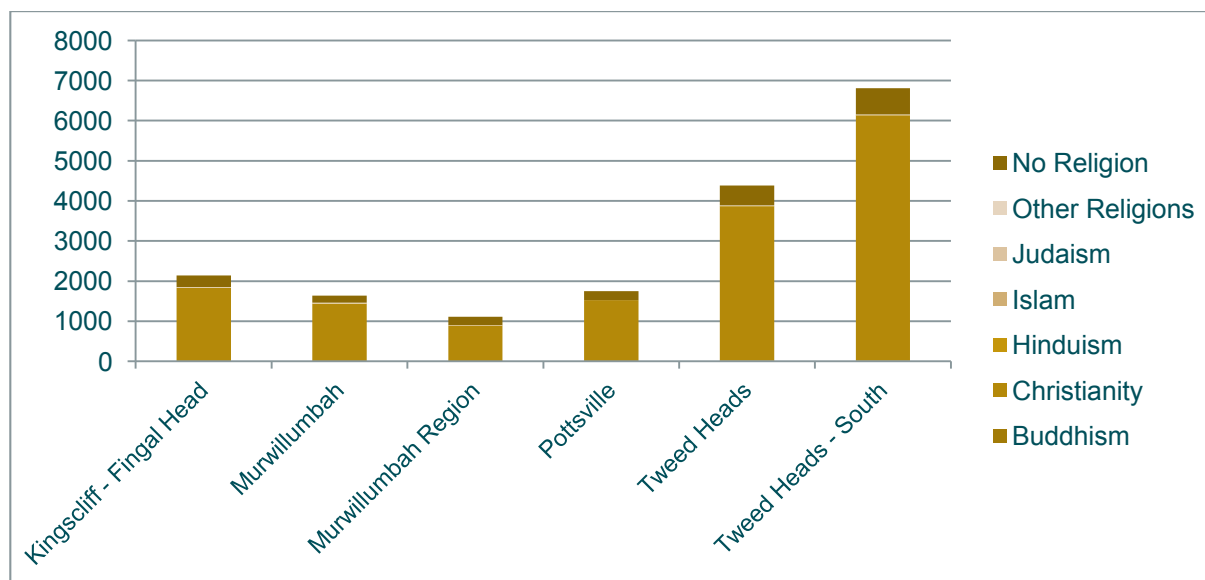
### 10.1.3 Distribution of Community, Social and Religious Centres

Figures 22 to 24 illustrates a good geographic distribution and provision of community halls and facilities across the Tweed Shire. This includes village locations although facilities are adjacent to (not within) the areas where 50% or more of the population exceeds 65+. Community halls can act as important information and activity hubs for the older population, providing opportunities for socialisation, physical activity, community celebrations, and should be key facilities in the event of a disaster (assuming they are unaffected).

There is also a good distribution of clubs and information hubs which is represented in Figures 25 to 27. However, many of the areas with over 50% of the population being 65+ do not have facilities in the direct vicinity although there are facilities nearby. This is similar for the distribution of religious centres and places of worship identified in Figures 28 and 29. The census data (ABS, 2011) presented in Figure 21 shows that 80.2% (15,619) of those aged 65 years and over identified Christianity as their religion, with 10.5% saying they were non-religious. Access to community halls and facilities, as well as other social and religious centres are an important consideration for strategic planning.

It would also be useful to capture future usage data and to further examine the use of facilities by older people across the Tweed Shire. The Council maintains and manages a number of community and cultural facilities across the Tweed Shire (49) so it is important to consider how accessible these are for senior citizens as part of the Community Infrastructure Framework and Network Planning process (TSC, 2014a).

**Figure 21: Religious practice of those aged 65 years and older**



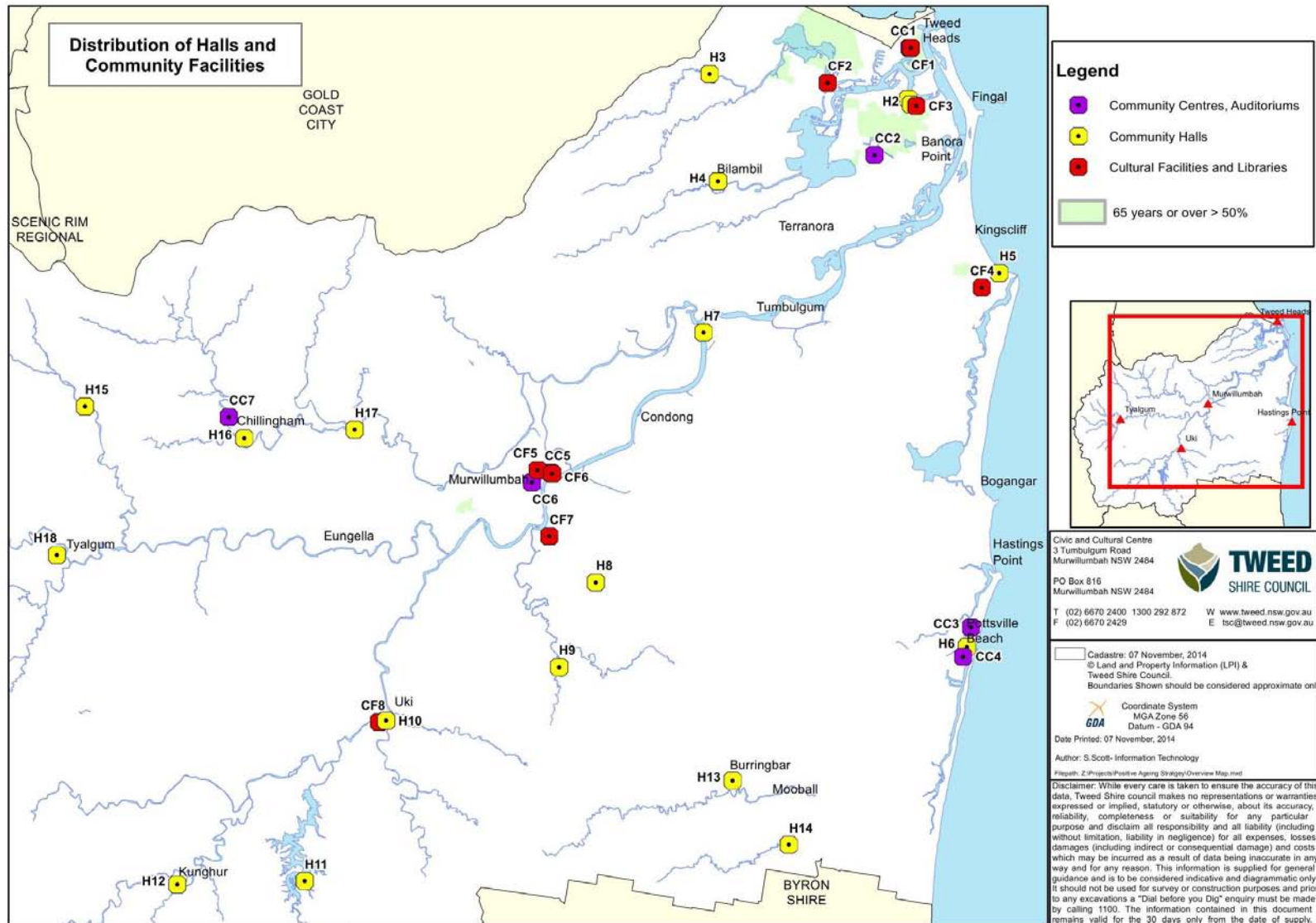


Figure 22: Distribution of halls and community facilities across the Tweed Shire

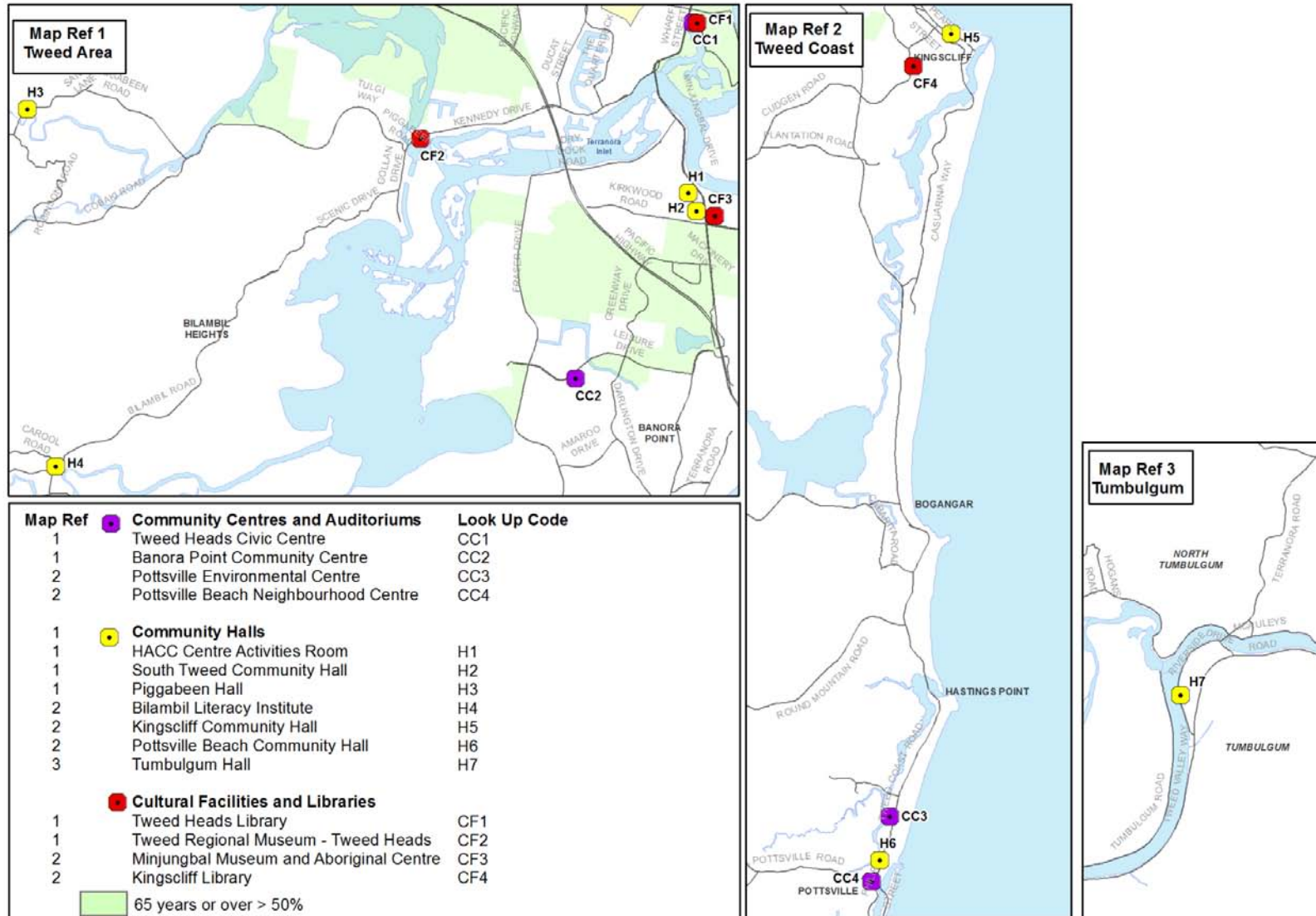


Figure 23: Distribution of halls and community facilities in the Tweed and Coastal areas



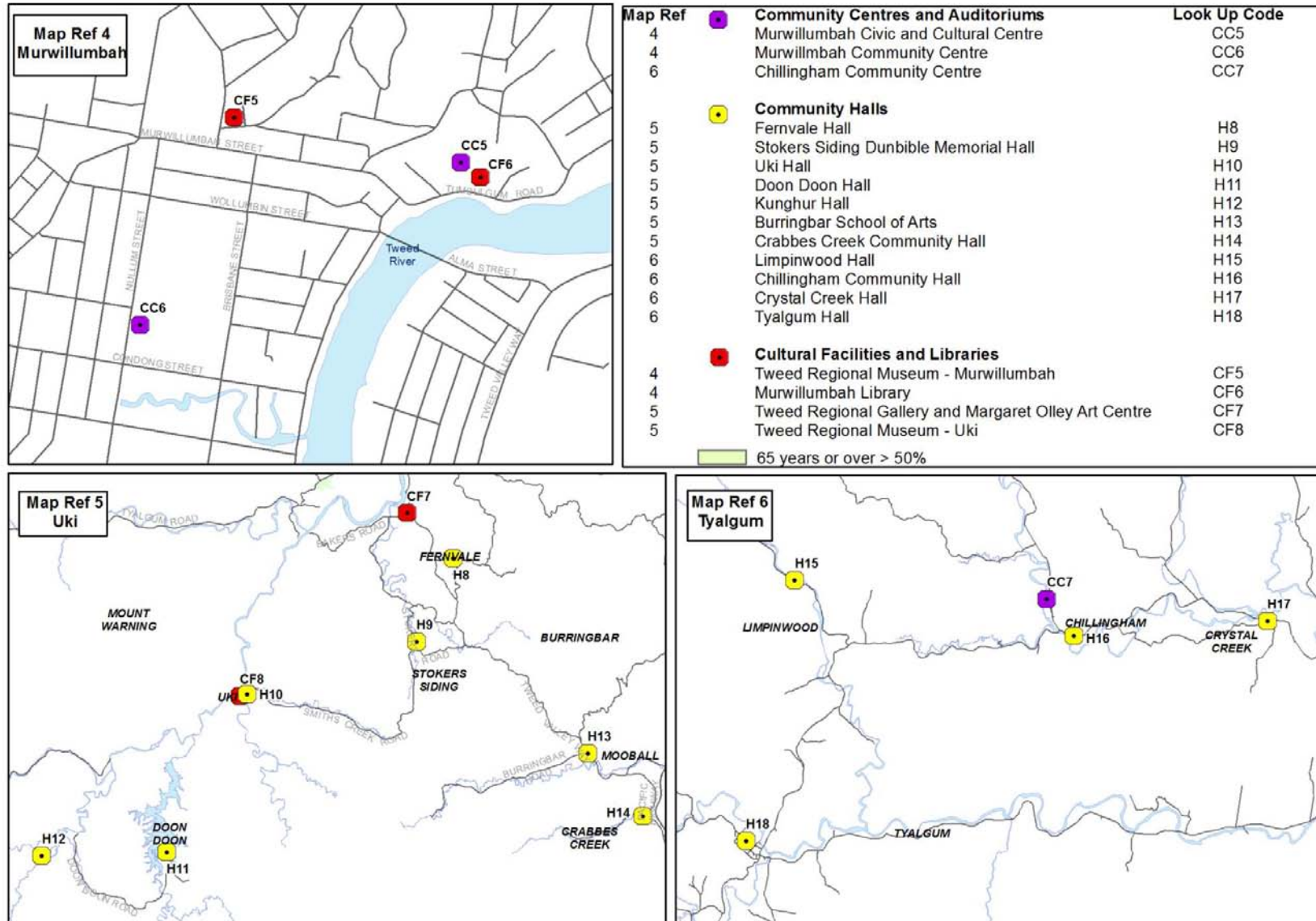


Figure 24: Distribution of halls and community facilities in and around Murwillumbah

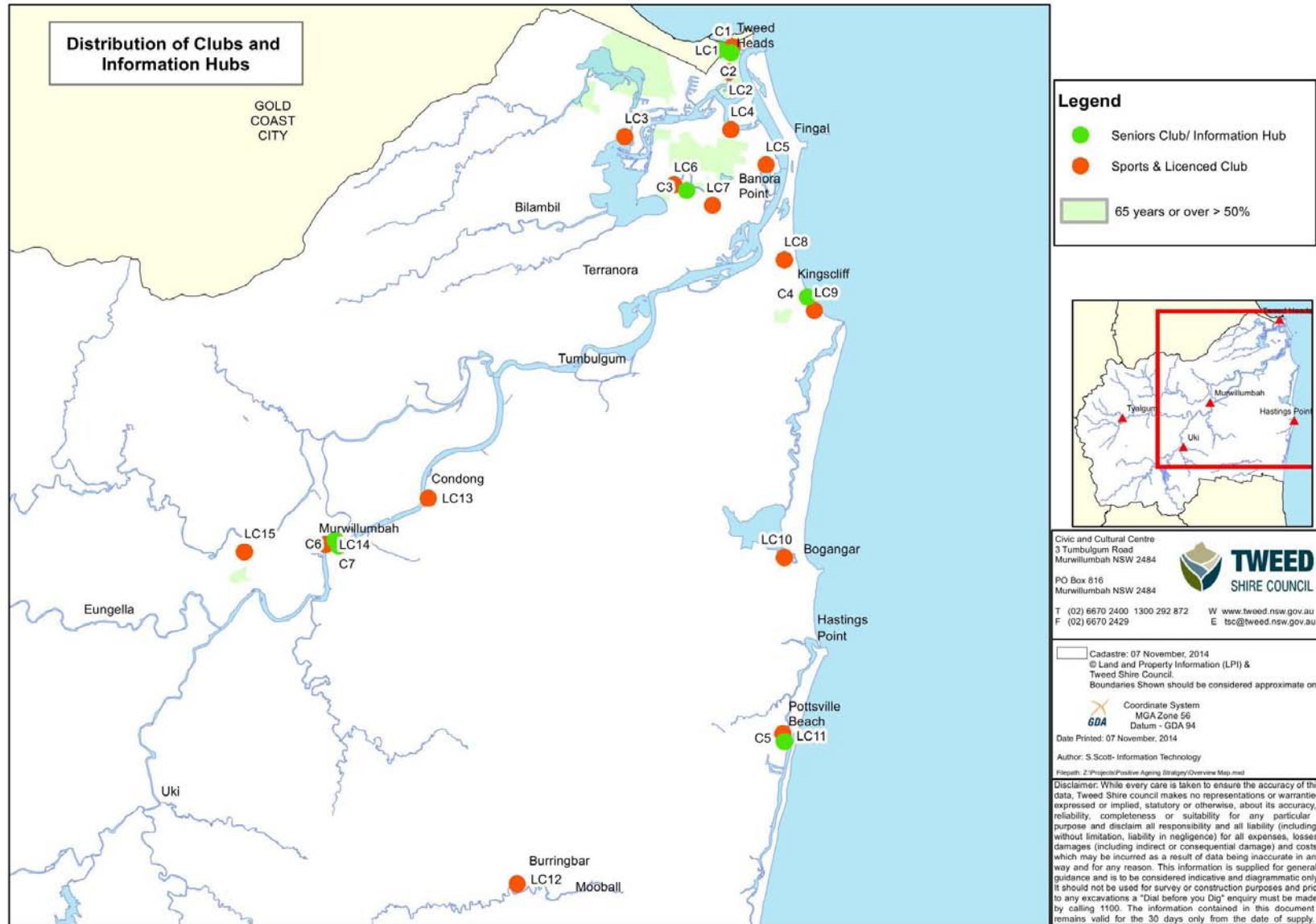


Figure 25: Distribution of clubs and information hubs across the Tweed Shire

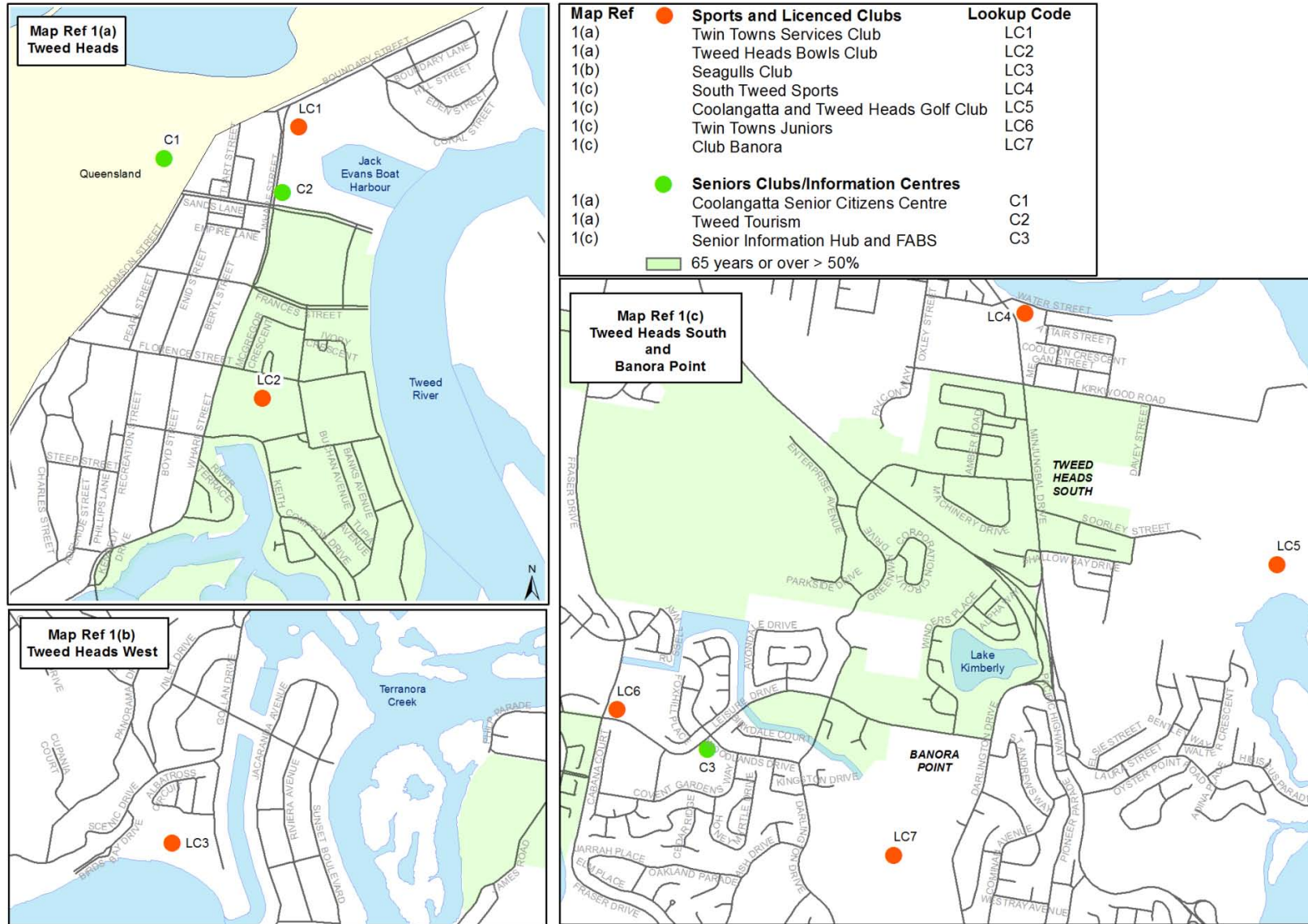


Figure 26: Distribution of clubs and information hubs in Tweed Heads

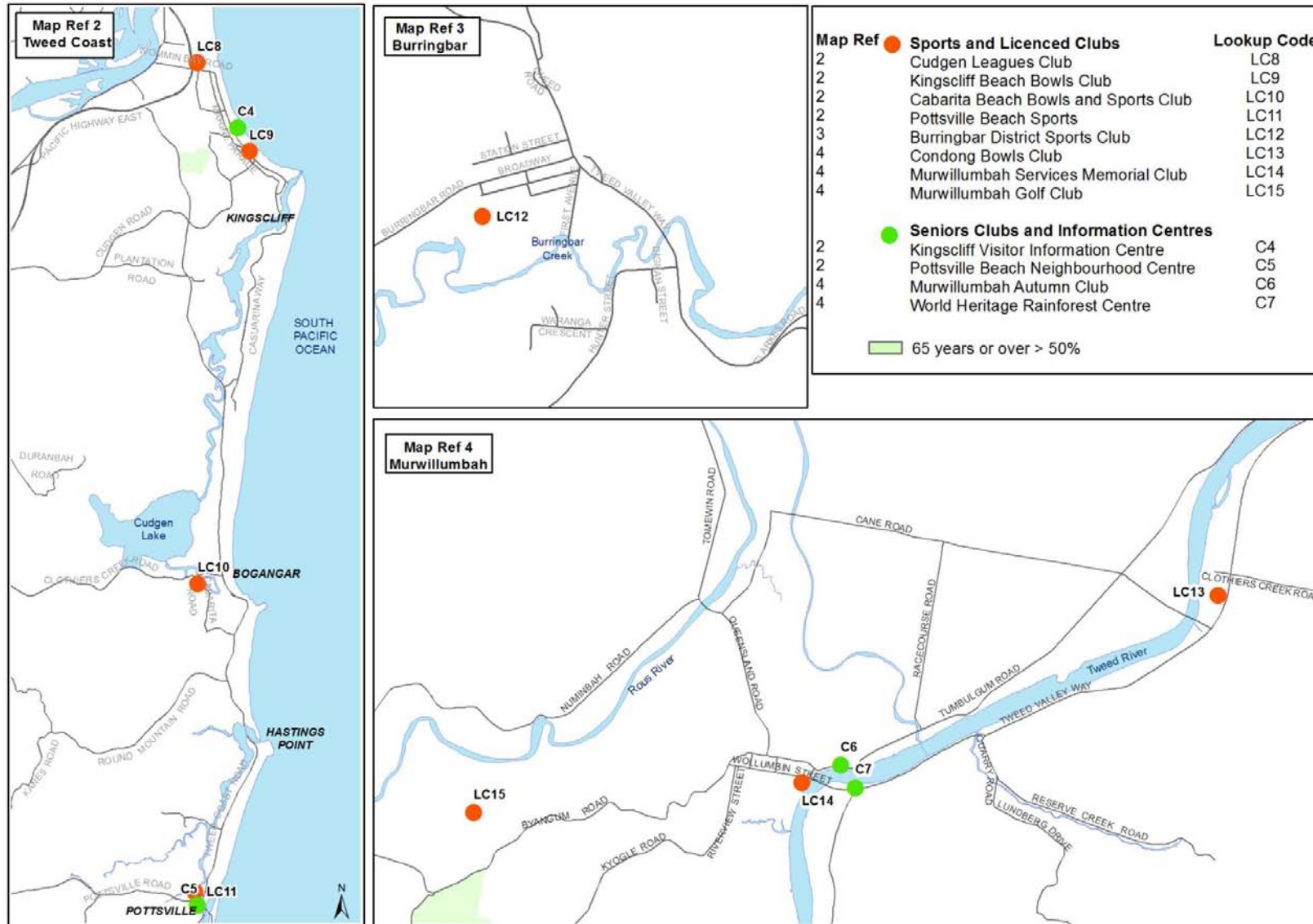


Figure 27: Distribution of clubs and information hubs on the coast and Murwillumbah areas

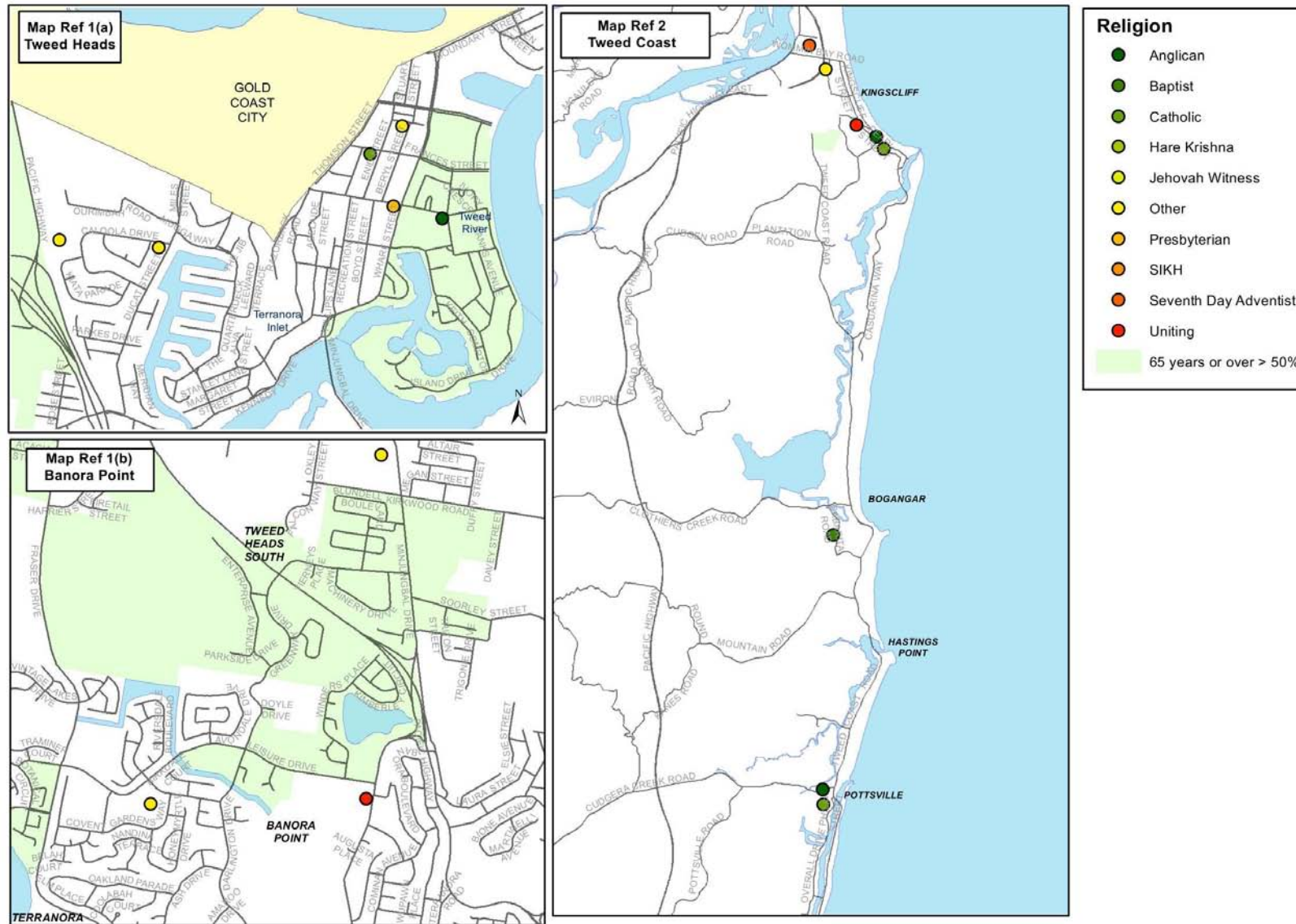


Figure 28: Distribution of religious centres and places of worship in the Tweed and Coastal areas

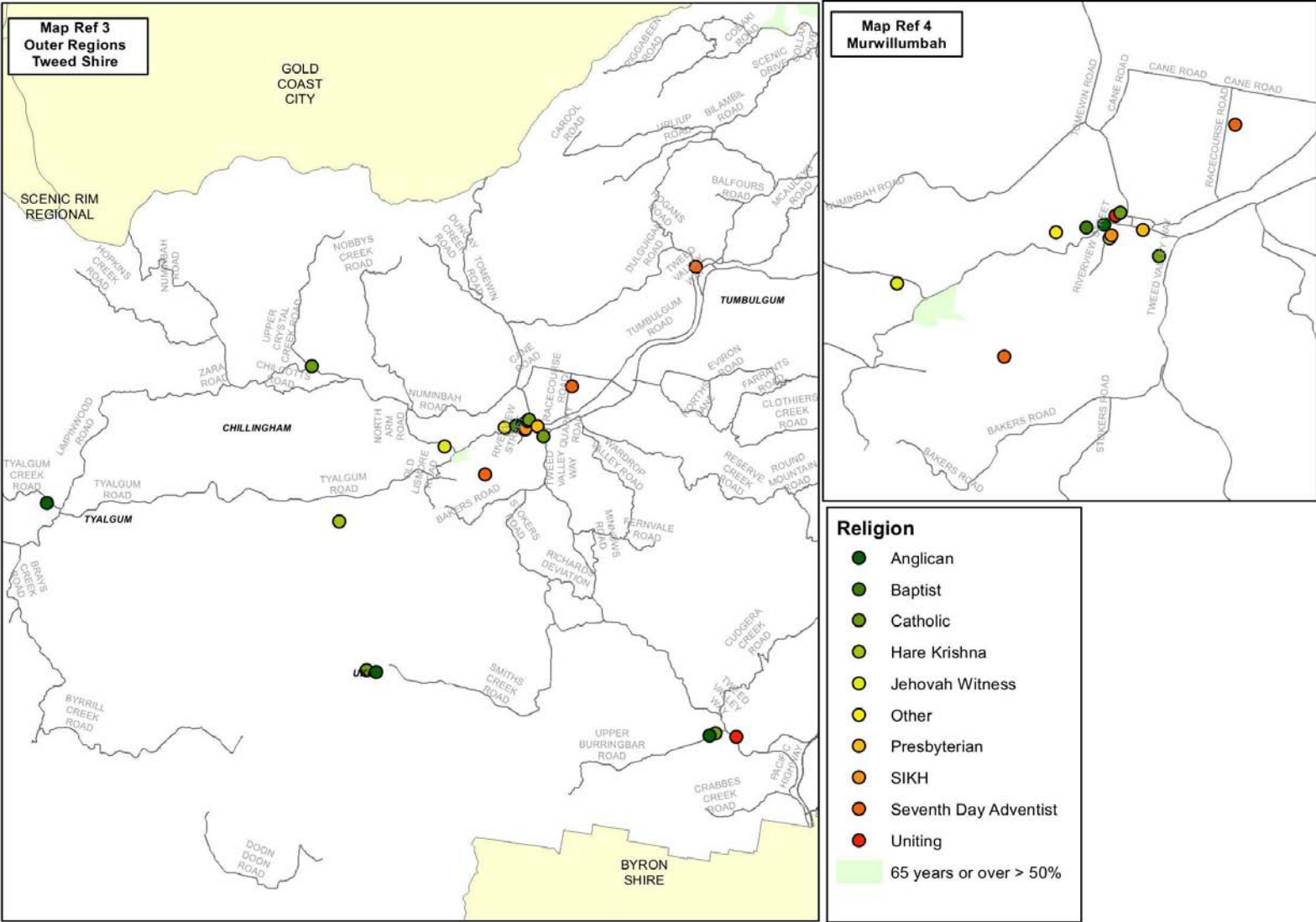


Figure 29: Distribution of religious centres and places of worship in Murwillumbah and surrounding areas

## 10.2 Consultation and public Views

	TSC Healthy Ageing Issues Papers (2008)	ASLaRC Age-Friendly Consultation (2011)
<b>Access to Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lots of activities out there but difficult to find the information.</li> <li>• Problems include lack of or limited public transport to venues, and cost of transport.</li> <li>• There is no cross cultural community worker to develop culturally appropriate senior's activities or to help seniors overcome ethnic and language barriers to get involved in existing activities.</li> <li>• Few opportunities for cross generational or cross cultural activity.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was evident that older residents struggle to keep abreast of services, events and changes within the community.</li> <li>• Whilst many cited the Council's Tweed Link as a key source of information it was evident that word of mouth was the primary source for most people.</li> <li>• The key finding was the need for some form of central repository of up-to-date information which people could access as they required it.</li> <li>• Respondents noted the need for information centres where older residents could go to seek up-to-date information on services, activities and bus timetables. The preference was for physical locations where people could have face-to-face contact.</li> <li>• Whilst Community Centres were seen as potential information hubs, there was also the suggestion that Council could play a more active role in providing information to new arrivals. It was suggested that real estate agents could be useful partners and that Tourist Information Offices could broaden their scope to be information sources for everyone, not only for tourists.</li> </ul>
<b>Cost and financial pressures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of groups identified that the cost of activities could restrict participation.</li> <li>• It was seen that there is a lack of range of affordable activities.</li> <li>• The cost of hiring venues of a suitable standard affects the cost of activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Service providers commented on the financial impact on many of the older residents who have relocated to the Tweed Shire and left behind support networks, as well as the inability of many older residents to meet increasing living costs.</li> </ul>
<b>Loneliness and Social Isolation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficult to contact socially isolated seniors who want to participate or to assist people to maintain participation or re link after illness.</li> <li>• Grandparents are taking on more childcare responsibilities which limit their ability to be involved in social activities for themselves.</li> <li>• Losing drivers licence can lead to isolation.</li> <li>• As some people age they become increasingly physically and socially isolated. This can be in their own homes or in nursing homes.</li> <li>• Older people need to be considered when planning community activities and events.</li> <li>• Many caravan parks are geographically isolated and social isolation is an issue in many caravan parks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The isolation of outlying areas such as Bray Park, Murwillumbah</li> <li>• Loneliness, social isolation and financial pressures were identified as impacting negatively on the health and well-being of older people in the Tweed Shire.</li> <li>• Often this is a result of people having moved to the area in earlier years, away from established family and social networks, and then their spouse dies or becomes ill.</li> <li>• Men are often reluctant to go out and be involved socially unless they are going for a purpose or a hobby. It was also noted that men do not openly ask for assistance so service providers need to take a different approach to supporting them.</li> <li>• It was also noted that "We have the first batch of "out" gay and lesbian seniors ready to enter aged care services".</li> <li>• Older people living alone are often fearful of leaving their homes, resulting in further social isolation.</li> </ul>
<b>Community Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a general concern for the isolated elderly who live alone. It was seen that volunteers could play a part in improving the safety of these people i.e. phone calls to check on them (Telecross).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally residents felt safe in their own homes; however they expressed concern about their safety when accessing the wider community.</li> <li>• Safety concerns at night due to a lack of street lighting.</li> <li>• Greater police visibility and more police on the street.</li> <li>• Specific concerns registered about young people in groups, skate-boarding or loitering around shopping centres.</li> </ul>

## 11 Respect and social inclusion

The World Health Organisations *Global Age-friendly Cities Guide* (2007) cites that ‘older people report experiencing conflicting types of behaviour and attitudes towards them. The extent to which older people participate in the social, civic and economic life of the city is also closely linked to their experience of inclusion.’

### 11.1 Tweed Shire Data and Statistics

#### 11.1.1 Disabilities

The number of people with disabilities increases with age. Seventy per cent (70%) of people with disabilities in Tweed Shire are aged over 55 years of age. More than twenty two percent (22%) of the population is over 65 years of age which is twice the NSW rate. This number is predicted to increase in coming years. Table 11 shows a summary comparison of estimated disability rates for 2011, 2026 and 2036, showing the proportion to remain fairly static across the whole of the Tweed Shire but for the Rural West District an increase of over 3% is projected.

**Table 11: Comparison of disability rates for the Tweed Shire now and into the future**

<b>Summary comparison of estimated disability rates</b>				
	<b>2009</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>2036</b>
National Survey	18.5%			
Tweed Shire LGA		23.47%	23.80%	23.64%
Tweed Urban North District		25.68%	24.42%	23.88%
Coastal District		21.24%	22.56%	22.62%
Rural West District		21.09%	23.78%	24.41%

**Sources:**

Usual residents by age, 2011 Census, Profile ID; Tweed Shire 2021, 2031 Population Projections, Forecast ID (updated July 2014).

Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers 2009 Summary of Results, Australian Bureau of Statistics Catalogue No. 44300DO001

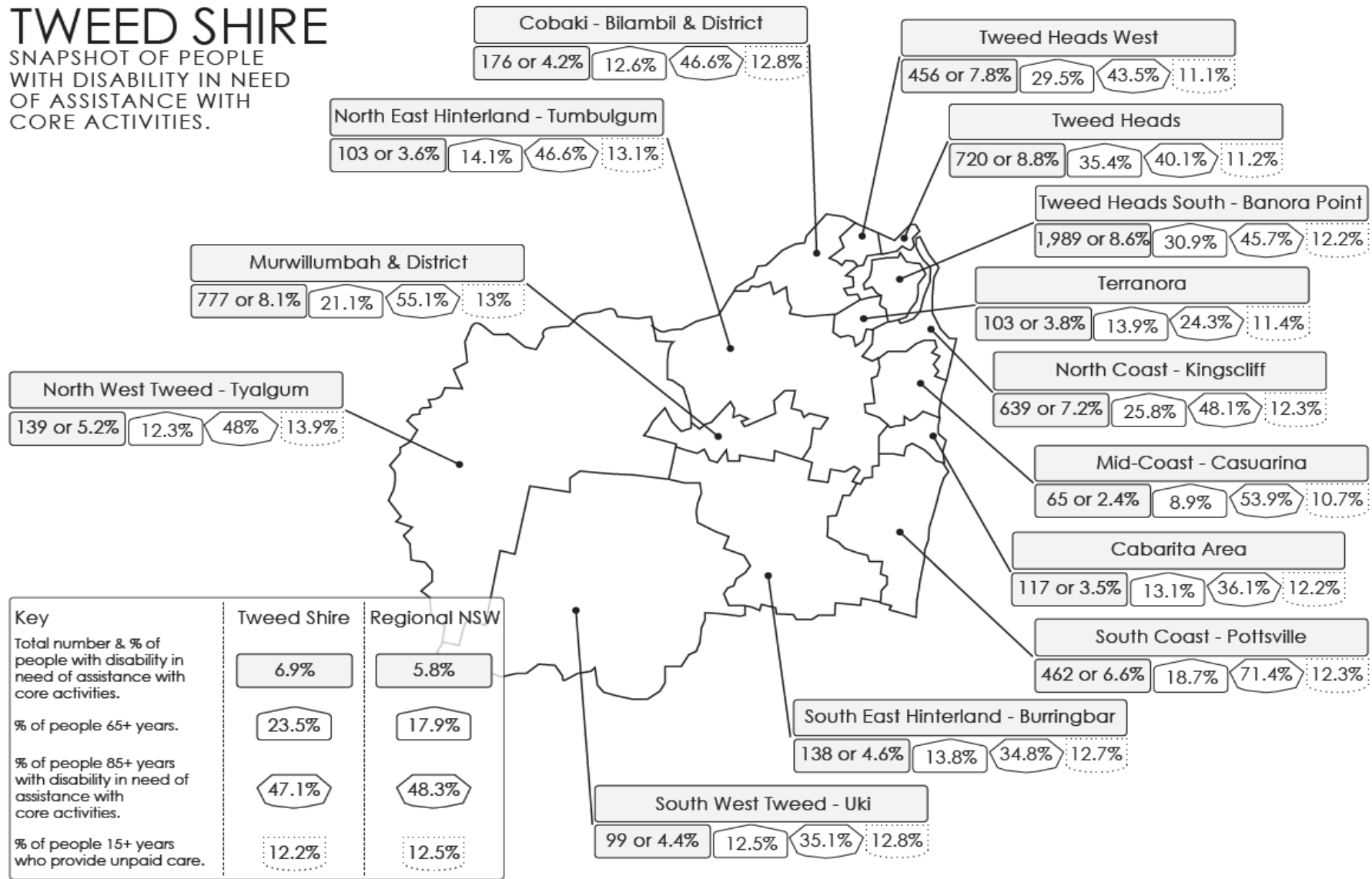
Note: Estimate of number of persons in Tweed Shire with disability is derived by applying national disability rates by age at 2009 to the same age groups for usual residents in Tweed Shire at the 2011 Census.



Figure 30: Snapshot of people with a disability in need of assistance across Tweed Shire

# TWEED SHIRE

SNAPSHOT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE WITH CORE ACTIVITIES.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics Census of Population and Housing 2011. Compiled and presented in profile.id (usual residence)

The percentage of people with disabilities in needs of assistance with core activities in the Tweed Shire is 6.9%, compared to the 5.8% regional NSW average. Figure 30 (sourced from TSC, 2014b, p9) provides a more detailed snapshot across the Tweed Shire which shows that 24% of these people are aged 65 years or over, and 47% are aged 85 and over. The areas in the Tweed Shire that have the highest proportion of their seniors population that have a disability and need assistance is Tweed Heads (35.4%), Tweed Heads South - Banora Point (30.9%) and Tweed Heads West (29.5%). For those aged 85 years or over, Pottsville is the highest (71.4%), followed by Murwillumbah and District (55.1%) and Mid Coast - Casuarina (53.9%). This last group is more likely to represent the frail-aged and yet the three areas identified are relatively rural in nature.

### **11.1.2 Gender**

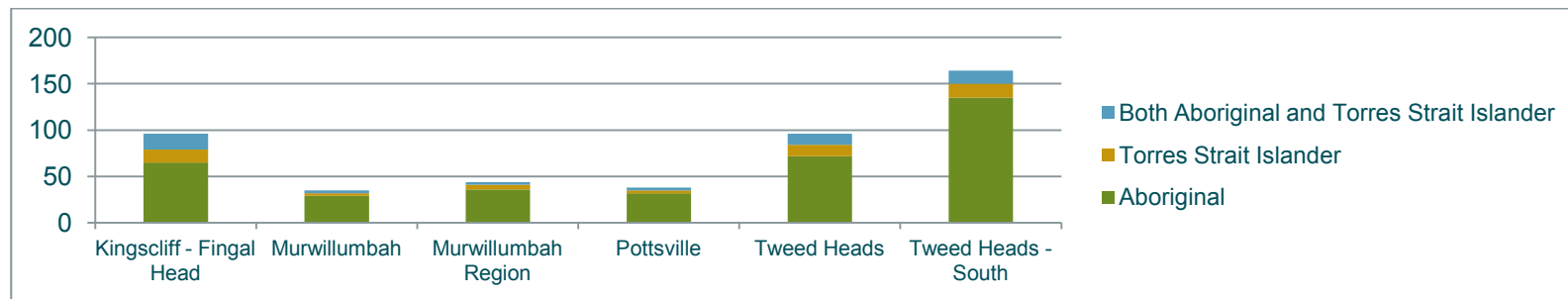
There are slightly more females (51.8%) than males (48.2%) in the older population groups in the Tweed based on the 2011 census population data. The evaluation of Banora Point Community Centre Seniors Program (Gill, 2014) highlighted a significant ratio imbalance of females (81%) to males (19%) in terms of senior participants attending the centre. Many female participants reported having husbands at home who don't attend the centre. It was suggested that programs and activities relevant to older men and centres such as the "men's shed" need better promotion.

### **11.1.3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities**

The 2011 Census (ABS) showed that the aboriginal population of the Tweed Shire is 2943 people (ABS Census, 2011). This means that 3.5% of the whole Tweed population identified themselves as Indigenous and/or Torres Strait Islander which is higher than the State and National average which are both 2.5%.

Figure 31 shows the numbers of aboriginal people split by SA2 area, for those aged 50 years and over (classification for Aboriginal seniors). For the whole of the Tweed Shire there are 473 senior aboriginal people, which comprise 16% of the total aboriginal population. The graph illustrates that over half (55%) of the aboriginal elders live in either Tweed Heads South (35%) or Tweed Heads (20%), with a further 20% living in Kingscliff - Fingal Head. In terms of the proportion of the aboriginal population that are aged 50 years and over in each of the six SA2 areas, the aboriginal elders are most prominent in the ATSI communities of Kingscliff - Fingal Head (21%), followed by the Murwillumbah Region (19%). Identifying and supporting the specific needs of older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will be an important part of the Tweed Shire Age Friendly Community Plan. The evaluation of Banora Point Community Centre Seniors Program (2014) identified a distinct lack of Aboriginal (0) and South Sea Islander (2) participants at the Centre.

Minjungbal is the primary cultural facility in the Tweed Shire, however the Tweed Civic Centre and the HAAC Centre in South Tweed are also accessible for the Aboriginal community. There are three Aboriginal services which work with the community based in Tweed and these are Bundjalung Home Care, Canowindra Aged Care and Bugalweena Aboriginal Health.

**Figure 31: Population of ATSI aged 50 years and over for the SA2 areas**

### 11.1.4 Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

The Banora Point Community Centre evaluation (Gill, 2014) found that the numbers of participants from other countries accessing the centre was relatively small, with participants from the UK (11), New Zealand (6), Malta (1), Spain (1) and Germany (1). The Community Options data (HACC) for the 2014 financial year shows the majority of users to be English speaking (98.8%) with only 2 Spanish speaking, 1 Netherlandic and 1 Italian (1.2%). Addressing the needs of Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) population contributes to overall cognitive health. The National Ageing and Aged Care Strategy for People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds (2012a) is designed for the 30 per cent of older adults born outside Australia. It highlights the importance of older people from CALD backgrounds, their families and carers to be supported and have the knowledge and confidence to maximise their use of the aged care system; that all areas of ageing and aged care understand and deliver culturally and linguistically responsive care; that care and support services are appropriate to the needs of older people from CALD backgrounds; and individuals from CALD backgrounds and CALD communities have the capacity to both articulate their ageing and aged care needs and be involved in the development of services and the workforce to meet needs.

### 11.1.5 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans-gender, and Intersex (LGBTI)

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans-gender, and Intersex (LGBTI) population represents an emerging issue within older adults. With the baby boomer generation, an increase in the number of LGBTI people in the older adult's community is also rising. Due to the severe discrimination and stigma faced by this generation throughout their lives, further education and services may need to be developed to address their needs. The Australian Governments' LGBTI Ageing and Aged Care Strategy (2012b) aims "to inform the way the Australian Government supports the aged care sector to deliver care that is sensitive and inclusive of the needs of LGBTI people, their families and carers" (p9). The evaluation of the Banora Point Community Seniors Program (Gill, 2014) showed no participants identified themselves as gay or lesbian but felt this is to be expected considering "those, if any, who may be homosexual in this age group, have probably lived a fairly closeted life and are reluctant to reveal their sexuality for fear of rejection". Arguably, they may also feel these services and centres are not accessible to them in the first place for these reasons.

## 11.2 Consultation and Public Views

	TSC Healthy Ageing Issues Papers (2008)	ASLaRC Age-Friendly Consultation (2011)
<b>Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need for a centralised place to get information was a big issue.</li> <li>Seniors felt that they were not included in information readily available.</li> <li>The move to automated and computerised information and service systems has left many seniors behind. Many are uncomfortable using these systems. Eg. Some seniors still have bank passbooks.</li> <li>Commonwealth Carelink (the phone information service) was not widely known.</li> <li>No strategies exist to utilise the information already developed in an ongoing way.</li> <li>No physical place to get information about the Health services that are available.</li> <li>Difficult to work out whether a Health service is government, private or community.</li> <li>Ever changing service provision environment – difficult to keep up with.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purpose-build a Seniors Centre, providing activities and socialisation every day and which could also be used as a resource Centre where older citizens could obtain information and referrals to other services.</li> <li>Fund more staff to provide on-the-ground assistance to develop needed services.</li> <li>Shop-front information service and community activities.</li> <li>Supporting Community Centres that provide a range of services and act as information hubs.</li> <li>Other sources of information were local radio, newspapers and service providers.</li> </ul>
<b>Access to social activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shopping centres can be too noisy and do not have enough seating in and around the shops.</li> <li>No awareness of older persons needs when waiting for services.</li> <li>Need two clocks in shopping centres for one each for NSW &amp; QLD times.</li> <li>It is difficult to buy small amounts of items suitable for one person - usually have to buy things in bulk packaging.</li> <li>Most businesses do not adapt to the needs of older people. Lack of appropriate customer service skills</li> <li>Poverty was seen as a barrier to participating in social activities. If cost of living is high no funds are left for social activities. Residents of nursing and aged residential homes are not included as part of general community activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Older people now want more opportunities to stay fit, healthy and away from doctors and hospitals, recognising the importance of providing all residents - and particularly older people - with autonomy, independence and control</li> <li>Facilitating, active engagement in society for all ages.</li> <li>Community Centres should have an intergenerational focus and provide support and connections for all of the community.</li> <li>Community Centres provide the best value to the community where there is a paid coordinator to manage programs and activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Community Attitudes &amp; Respect</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many seniors feel that there is a general impatience and intolerance toward older people in shops and service outlets. It is thought that manners and respect were no longer taught and valued.</li> <li>Stereotyping older persons is an issue. Seniors want to be viewed as individuals.</li> <li>Seniors complain about being patronized or excluded on the basis of age.</li> <li>There were mixed feelings about young people. Programs that link young people with seniors were generally seen as positive eg. help with technology, adopt granny</li> <li>Working and volunteering to help older people is not attractive to young people.</li> <li>There is no multicultural worker or group in Tweed.</li> <li>Seek ways to engage Aboriginal and CALD groups/ people in consultations/activities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opportunities for intergenerational connections such as those developed through school volunteering, mentoring programs or, for example, short courses at Community Centres where younger people up-skill older people in the use of technology, could help to break down barriers and shift perceptions.</li> </ul>
<b>Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is inadequate disability access to some Dr's and specialists buildings.</li> <li>No awareness of the needs of older people or those with a disability) whilst waiting.</li> <li>Need improvement of facilities/ signage for the hearing and sight impaired.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor wheelchair access to the medical centre in Pottsville</li> </ul>

## 12 Civic participation and employment

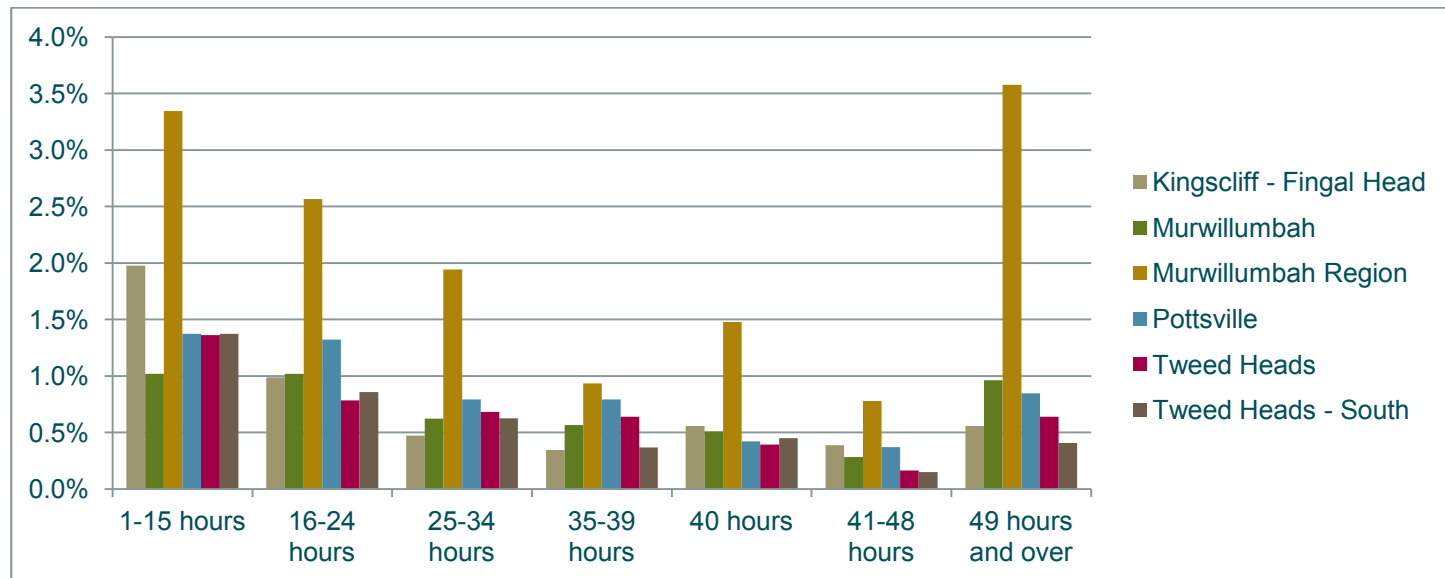
The World Health Organisations *Global Age-friendly Cities Guide* (2007) cites that ‘an age-friendly community provides options for older people to continue to contribute to their communities, through paid employment or voluntary work if they so choose, and to be engaged in the political process.’

### 12.1 Tweed Shire Data and Statistics

#### 12.1.1 Employment and hours of work

Figure 32 shows the hours of work undertaken by those aged 65 years and over across the six SA2 areas in the Tweed Shire (Census 2011, ABS). The majority of those aged 65 years and over, comprising 94.6% do not work or the question was not applicable or not stated. The remaining 5.4% of the senior population do work (1048 people), between 1 to 49 hours and over. The Murwillumbah Region has the highest proportion of seniors working (14.6%), almost three times the Tweed Shire average. Of these, 3.6% are doing over 49 hours of work a week.

**Figure 32: Hours worked by people aged 65 and over**



The census data (ABS, 2011) reveals labour force status and shows that 93.8% of those aged 65 and over are not in the labour force or this question was not applicable. Of the remaining 3.3% work part-time, 2.1% full time, 0.6% employed but away from work, and 0.2% are looking for work in the Tweed Shire. Figure 33 presents census data on the occupation by type for residents aged 65 and over who are working (based on their place of usual residence). The occupations vary across the six SA2 areas with managerial occupations being predominant in the Murwillumbah Region (47%), whereas this is as low as 11% in Tweed Heads. Across the Tweed Shire the most popular occupations for seniors are managers (23%), followed by professionals (17%), labourers (15%), and clerical and administrative workers (13%).

**Figure 33: Occupation by type for those aged 65 years and over**

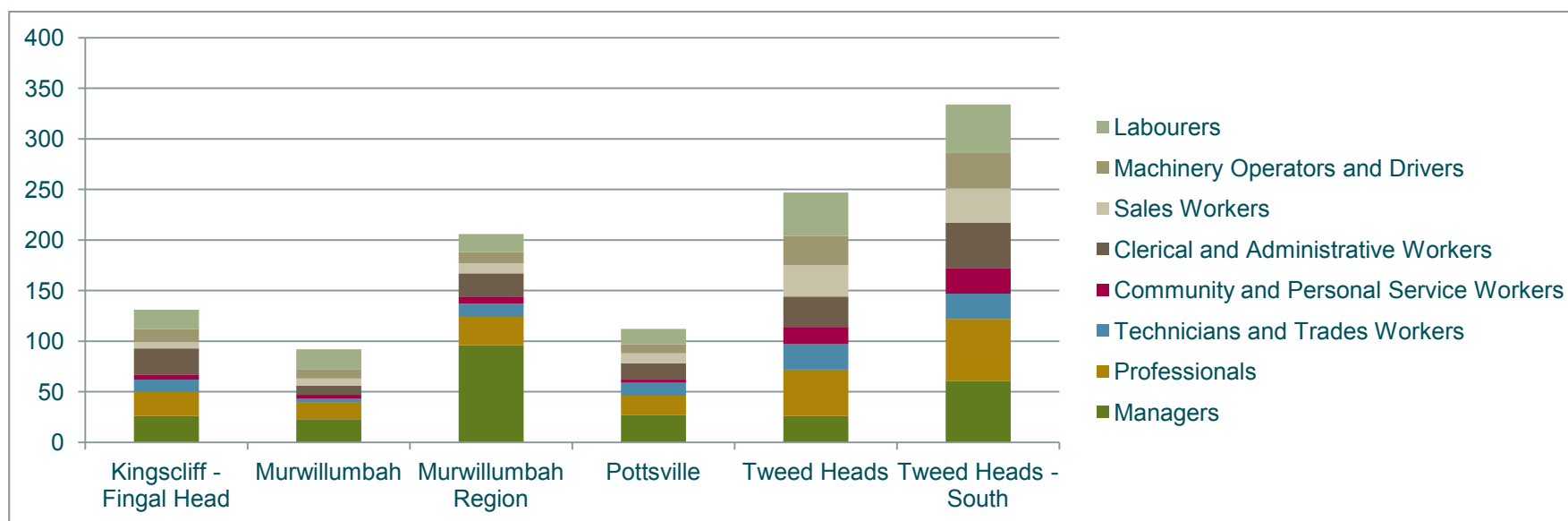
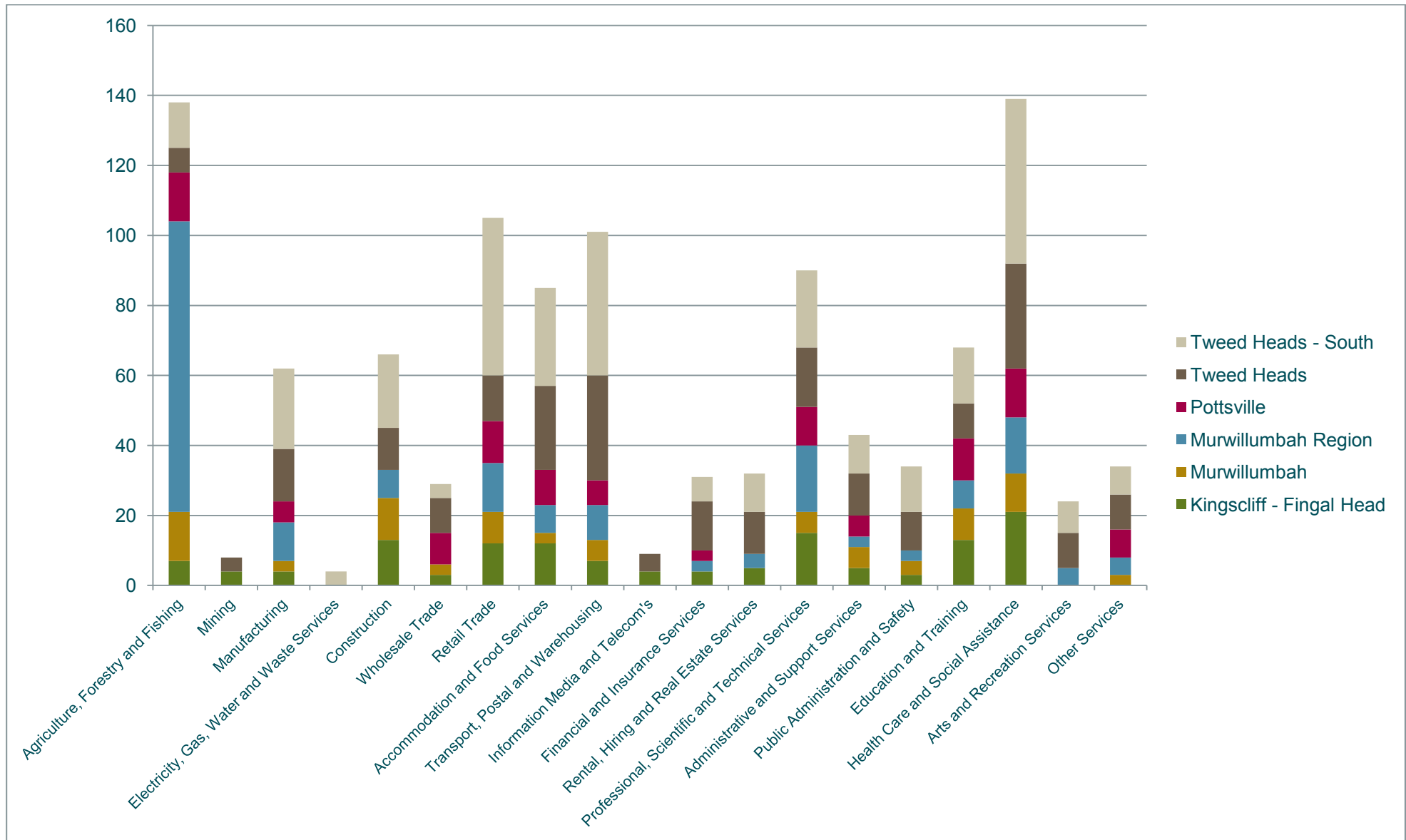


Figure 34 shows the industry of employment for those aged 65 and over across the Tweed Shire. The most common is Health Care and Social Assistance (12.6%) and Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (12.5%). These are followed by Retail Trade (9.5%), and Transport, Postal and Warehousing (9.2%). The Census data (2011) clearly shows that those working in Health Care and Social Assistance live primarily in South Tweed (34%) and those working in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing live predominantly in the Murwillumbah Region (60%).

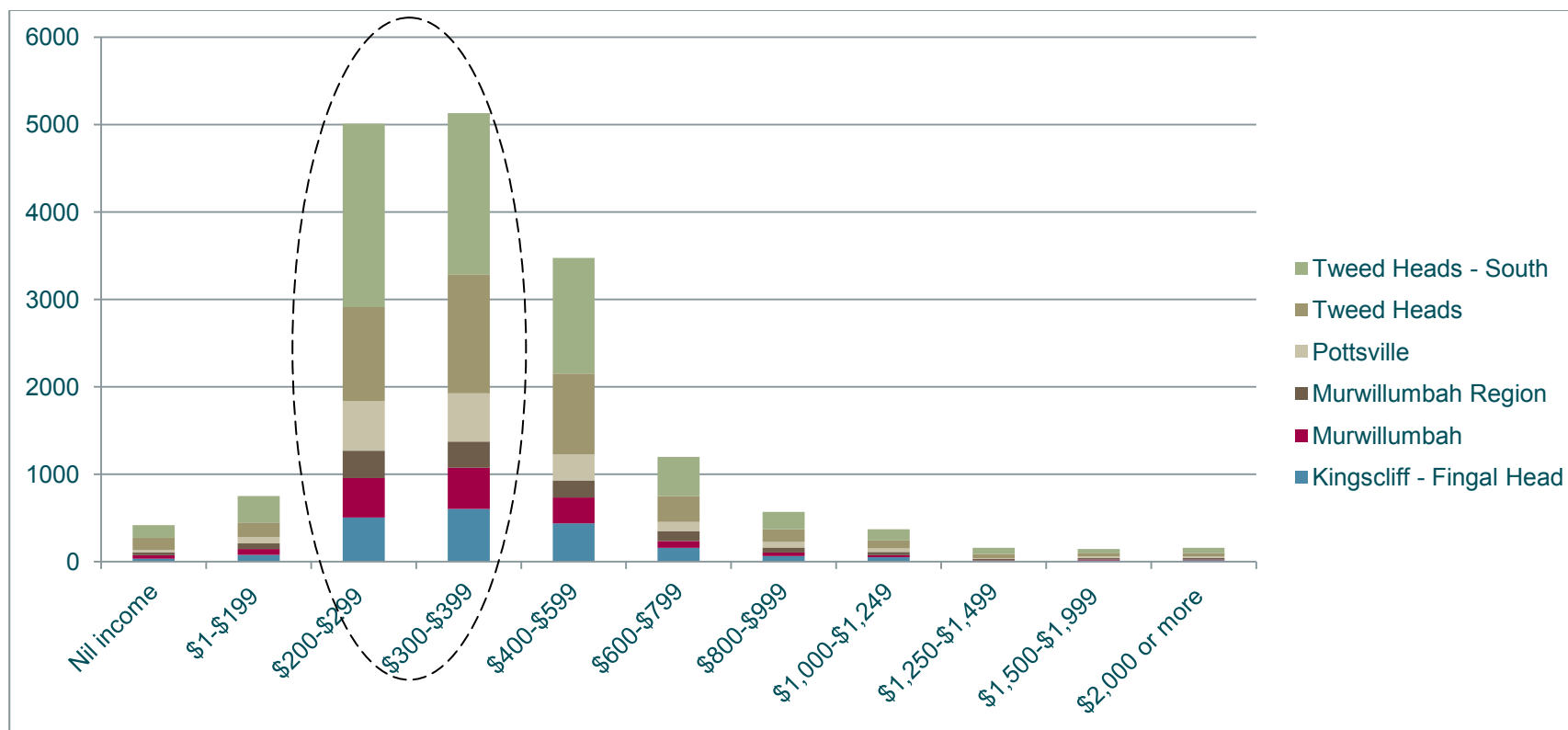
**Figure 34: Industry of employment for those aged 65 years and over**



### 12.1.2 Average Income and Affordability

The 2011 census data estimates (ABS) for median household income in the Tweed is \$442 per person and \$845 for a household. This is significantly less than the State average, being 27% and 46% less respectively. The detailed census data for those aged 65 years and over is illustrated in Figure 35. This shows that for all categories of earning more than \$600 per week, the highest proportion is consistently in the Murwillumbah Region. However this is also one of the two SA2 areas with the highest proportion on the lowest income of less than \$199 per week, alongside Tweed Heads. For the whole of the Tweed Shire 85% (14,782 seniors) earn less than \$599 per week, with 65% (11,309) earning less than \$399. Overall, 26.4% of seniors earn between \$300-399, 25.7% earn \$200-299, and 17.8% earn \$400-599.

Figure 35: Weekly income for those aged 65 years and over





### 12.1.3 Age Dependency Ratio

The age dependency ratio divides those typically not in the labor force (the *dependent* part determined as those aged 0-14 & 65 years and over) by those typically in the labor force (the *productive* part determined as those aged 15-64 years). Data are shown as the proportion of dependents per 100 working-age population. It is used to measure the pressure on the productive population to maintain the economically dependent (youth and elderly). The age dependency ratio for Australia has been estimated as 50 for 2013 (World Bank, 2014).

Table 12 shows the estimated age dependency ratio results for the Tweed Shire for 2011 and projections to 2026 and 2036 using id. population projection data. The Tweed Shire overall dependency ratio is expected to have a significant increase from 67.41 percent in 2011 to 74.52 percent in 2026 (In short about 79,368 people will be dependent out of a total population of about 106506 people). This is likely to place an increased burden on the productive part of the population. The fewer people of working age, the less people there are to support services and results in direct impacts on financial expenditure on things like health, social security and education, the services most used by the youngest and oldest in a population. This is an important consideration for Council planning and service provision, but not all people aged 65 years and over are necessarily dependent and more information is needed on productivity within the Tweed Shire. Looking specifically at the old age dependency ratio (excludes young people) shows a dependency of 40% in 2011 for the Tweed Shire, double the national old age dependency ratio of 20% (World Bank, 2014).

**Table 12: Age dependency ratio for the Tweed Shire**

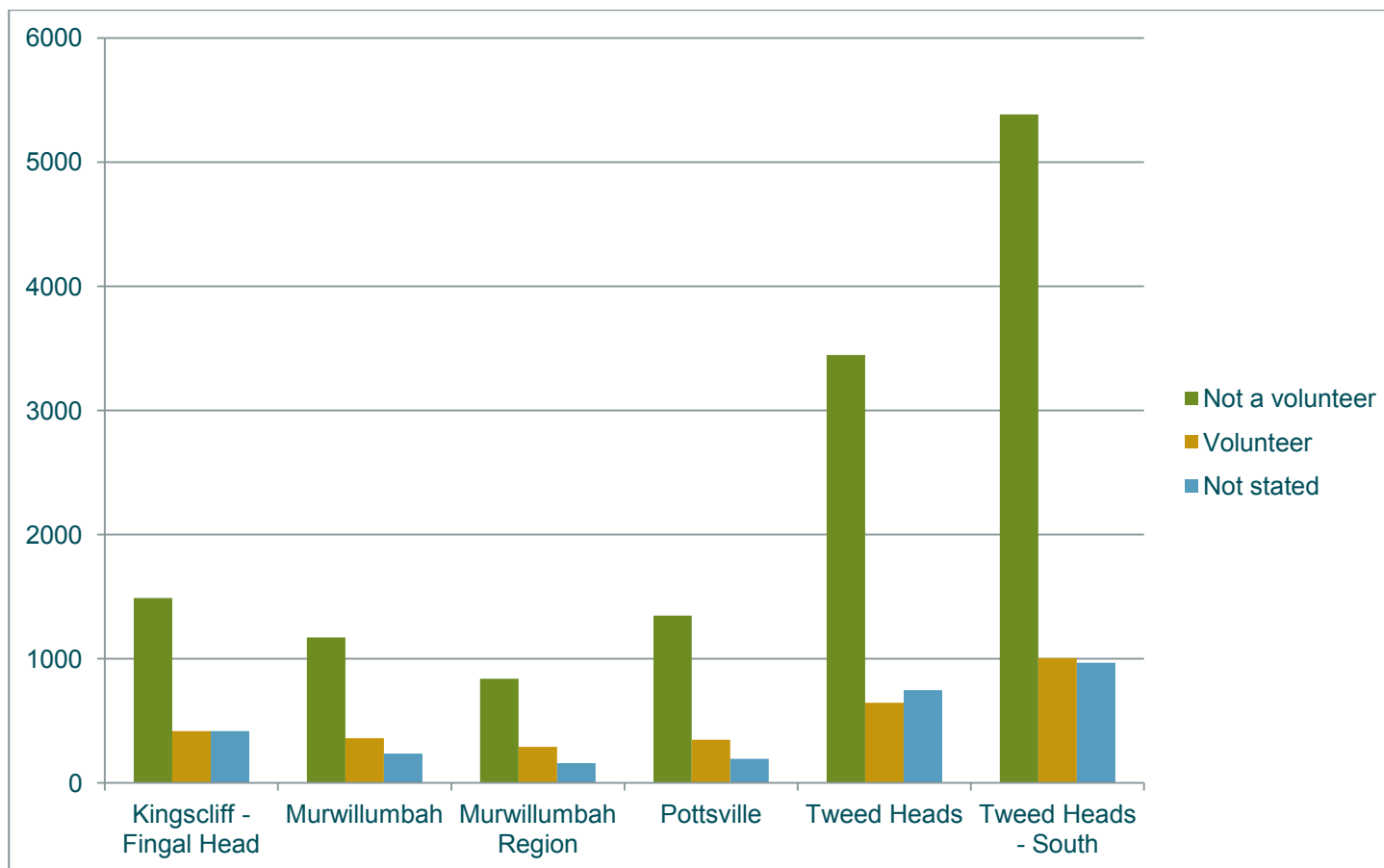
Year	2011	2026	2036
<b>Dependency ratio</b>	67.41	74.52	73.76

### 12.1.4 Volunteering

The evaluation of Banora Point Community Centre Seniors Program (2014) revealed that all of the volunteers that were surveyed (9) enjoyed their volunteer role, with one stating "volunteering gives me a sense of purpose". The reasons for volunteering (N=9) were primarily to interact with others and for social contact (100%), to give back to the community by sharing their skills (55%) and to be involved with their local community (44%).

The 2011 Census statistics show that 18% of people in the Tweed Shire did voluntary work through an organisation or group in the last 12 months and 12% provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability in the last 2 weeks. These results are slightly higher than the State averages (16.9% and 11.4%). Figure 36 presents the census data for those aged 65 years and over for the six SA2 areas. The findings for the whole of the Tweed Shire are that 70.3% don't volunteer, 15.8% do volunteer, and 14% it wasn't stated. The area with the highest volunteering is Murwillumbah Region (22.6%), followed by Murwillumbah (20.4%). Tweed Heads (13.3%) and Tweed Heads South (13.7%) have the lowest proportion of seniors that volunteer.

**Figure 36: Volunteering by those aged 65 years and over in the Tweed Shire**



## 12.2 Consultation and Public Views

	TSC Healthy Ageing Issues Papers (2008)	ASLaRC Age-Friendly Consultation (2011)
<b>Volunteering</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of groups felt that volunteers were not truly valued, respected or appreciated. Organisations need to offer volunteers rewards for their work E.g. Fuel vouchers.</li> <li>• It was felt that the government relies too much on volunteers to do some jobs that should be paid positions.</li> <li>• There are not enough volunteers to run all the services needed.</li> <li>• Organisations are losing senior volunteers because they can no longer afford to volunteer as cost of living rises. Not enough funding to support volunteers.</li> <li>• Few opportunities for facilitators to update skills and get enough support and training.</li> <li>• Difficult to get insurance to cover volunteers who are over 80.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Another combination of contradictory factors identified by respondents was the need for more volunteers in the community but increasing regulation and insurance costs, makes this problematic.</li> <li>• Older people are needing to stay at work longer – which means that there will be fewer people to be the volunteers to provide services to the “old old”.</li> </ul>
<b>Employment</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Older people are likely to work longer – for both aspirational and economic reasons such as needing to pay for support services and to maintain their home, health and well-being.</li> </ul>

## 13 Communication and information

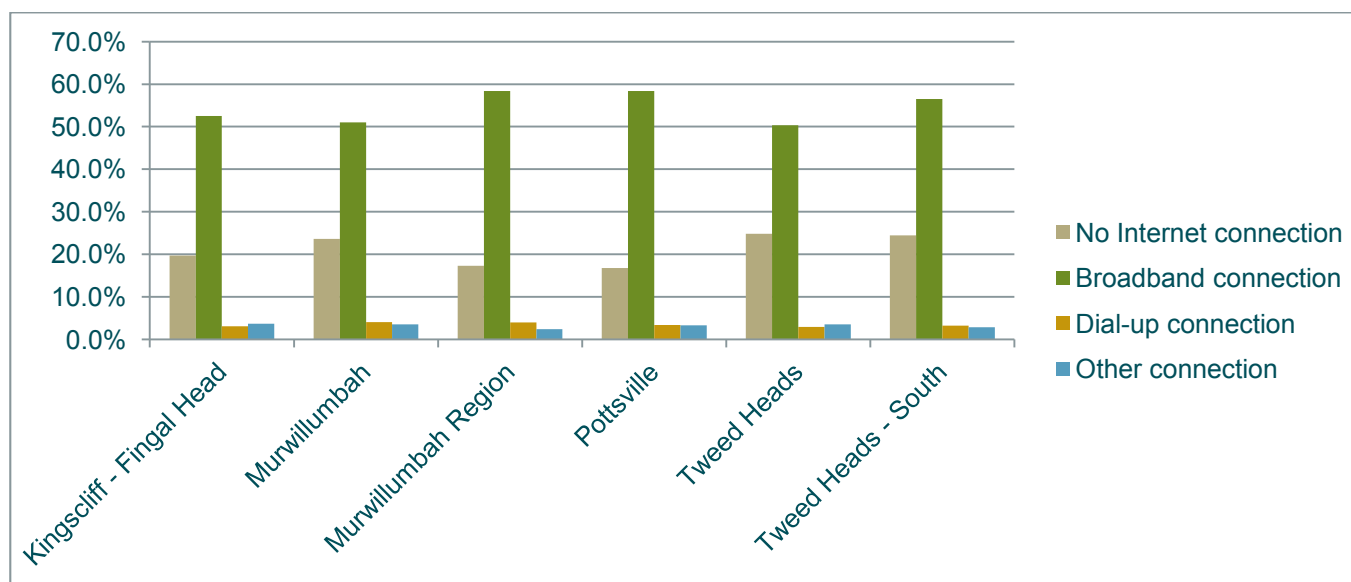
The World Health Organisations *Global Age-friendly Cities Guide* (2007) cites that ‘staying connected with events and people and getting timely, practical information to manage life and meet personal needs is vital for active ageing.’ Access to information came out as the third top issue of concern for service providers in the ASLaRC report (2011).

### 13.1 Tweed Shire Data and Statistics

#### 13.1.1 Access to the internet and library services

Figure 37 presents data from the 2011 Census (ABS) on internet access across the Tweed Shire, split by the six SA2 areas. Across the Tweed Shire, 22% of dwellings have no internet connection and 61% do, comprising broadband (54.5%), dial up (3.3%) and other connections (3.2%). The SA2 areas with the largest proportion of dwellings without internet connection are Tweed Heads (24.8%) and Tweed Heads South (24.4%). Pottsville (65%) and Murwillumbah Region (64.8%) are the areas with the largest proportion of dwellings with internet access.

**Figure 37: Access to the internet and broadband**



User data provided by Richmond Tweed Regional Libraries on the demand for library services and borrowing of books by the 60+ age group shows a decrease over the last five years, across the Tweed, Kingscliff and Murwillumbah libraries. In total across all three providers there have been 4963 less borrowers from the 60+ age group in that time, amounting to a percentage decrease of this age group of -37% from 11/12 to 13/14. However specific detail in Table 13 suggests borrowing by those who are housebound has increased. The number of activities for seniors has increased significantly over the last three years and substantially increased the associated attendance (217%). PC and wireless internet usage isn't broken down by age, but there is an increase in the use of both of these facilities, 32% for PC usage, and a remarkable 812% for wireless internet usage. Wireless usage increases can be related to the quality and range of eResources (eAudiobooks, eBooks, eMagazines) now provided by the libraries. Currently the senior borrowers and baby boomers are the highest users of this new technology and require assistance with new devices to access library services.

Tweed Shire branch libraries also provide Victor Stream Reader loans, a program provided free of charge to borrowers (predominantly seniors with visual impairment or print handicap) where Victor Stream devices are loaned and loaded weekly or fortnightly by library staff with titles from the Vision Australia database of 30,000+ titles. Victor Streams are very popular due to the ageing demographic in the Tweed Shire area and the high percentage of community members with visual impairment or macular degeneration, used also by housebound members. The Tweed Shire libraries also have community partnerships established with Palm Beach Currumbin Lioness Club and Kingscliff Meals on Wheels to deliver housebound items to Tweed Shire seniors in order to assist them with lifelong learning and recreational needs.

NOTE: It is important to note that the library membership database had its first ever purge of inactive members during the 2012/13 period to enable an accurate reflection of library borrowers and categories.

**Table 13: User Statistics for the Tweed Shire Libraries**

<b>Tweed Shire Libraries</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
Senior Borrowers	13474	10839	8511
Housebound Borrowers (no indication of use by age, includes aged care facilities as single borrower)	308	326	368
Seniors Activities	21	73	92
Seniors Activities attendance	390	1188	1235
PC Usage (no indication of use by age)	19781	20898	26161
Wireless Usage (no indication of use by age)	2123	5220	19364
Visually impaired navigator loans	4140	3196	4474

Tweed Shire branch libraries provide central points where people can access up to date information on services, activities and bus timetables. Libraries as the “third space” are valued for building a sense of community, a sense of self, and for encouraging creativity and the free exchange of ideas and are a central point of information for many people. The concept of pop-up libraries in the future will enable the wider distribution of information and will have the ability to move the physical central information point more frequently to areas within the community where the information and service needs are.

### **13.1.2 Promoting centres and facilities to senior's**

The Evaluation of Banora Point Community Centre Seniors Program (2014) showed that participants (N=74) prefer to receive information through a variety of avenues. In order of priority the main avenues were the FABS newsletter (82%), free advertisements on local free newspapers (59%), and a monthly email to centre users (39%), announcements (16.2%) and notices on community and library notice boards (16.2%).

## 13.2 Consultation and Public Views

	TSC Healthy Ageing Issues Papers (2008)	ASLaRC Age-Friendly Consultation (2011)
<b>Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting information was a major issue. People do not know how to get the information they need – who to ring, where to go. There is also no identified place that seniors can go to get information on services and activities.</li> <li>• There is no specific Tweed Seniors Information Internet site - site would be linked with TSC webpage.</li> <li>• Databases of community information are not up to date.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy access for all ages to commonly-accessed amenities</li> <li>• Support of Community Centres that provide a range of services and act as information hubs</li> <li>• Communication strategy needs to be inclusive of all residents in the Tweed Shire and capitalise on the expertise within Council</li> </ul>
<b>Technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A major issue was that there is an assumption that all people (including seniors) have and are able to use computers.</li> <li>• Many websites are confusing and you are unable to find basic contact details so that you can speak to a person.</li> <li>• Quick changes in technology is disruptive and confuses and alienates seniors who are not used to this fast pace of change. Eg. Video-DVD-CD.</li> <li>• High cost of communication is a problem Eg. Cost of computers &amp; internet, changing programs and repairs.</li> </ul>	
<b>Phones</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phone Information services can be confusing. Need to be familiar with language used in index choices before you can use it. Hearing can also be an issue.</li> <li>• Expectation that you will have a mobile phone and know how to use it. Mobile phones keys and writing too small.</li> <li>• Telephone plans and sales confusing. Telemarketing a problem – confusing.</li> </ul>	
<b>Signage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need improvement of facilities/ signage for the hearing and sight impaired.</li> </ul>	

A TSC webpage exists now for seniors and a Seniors Information Hub was officially opened at the Banora Point Community Centre in October 2013. These will help alleviate and address some of the problems surrounding information provision and availability identified above. However there is arguably still a need to improve access to information in other areas of the Tweed Shire that has a high proportion of seniors.

## 14 Community support and health services

The World Health Organisations *Global Age-friendly Cities Guide* (2007) cites that 'health and support services are vital to maintaining health and independence in the community.' Whilst it is acknowledged that health care is outside the responsibility of local government, it is a key concern of local residents and Council provides a number of facilities and services that support active lifestyles and promotes good health. These include opportunities to maintain health through physical activity, social interactions, mobility, and access to health services and improvements for personal safety.

### 14.1 Tweed Shire Data and Statistics

#### 14.1.1 Health risks for senior citizens

In older adults, the most common causes of death are heart disease, stroke and cancer (Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, 2010). The main contributor to years of life lost due to disability is dementia with falls also contributing to older adults overall burden of disease (Bradley, 2013). An emerging health issue is the growing number of older people living with HIV, STI's, and drug addiction (Lyons, 2010; AIVL, 2011). Healthy ageing strategies will need to consider these issues and their impact on the health care system. Furthermore, the extreme lower life expectancy of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population which is 17 years less than rest of population (Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, 2010), and their higher levels of disability and lower quality of life are important considerations in any strategy inclusive of the whole community (Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, 2010). The health care costs attributable to elderly people in the population far exceed those attributable to younger members of the community.

In Australia the prevalence of dementia is estimated to increase from around 257,000 people in 2010 to just over 981,000 people in 2050, an increase from 1.2% (2010) to 2.8% (2050) of the population (Alzheimer's Australia, 2013). According to Alzheimer's Australia NSW (, the Tweed state electoral division currently has the highest prevalence of dementia in New South Wales, with an estimated 1,760 cases. In 2050 the prevalence of dementia in the region is predicted to increase by 318.9%, amounting to 3,794 cases (Access Economics, 2010). For people aged 65 and over, dementia was the second leading cause of overall burden of disease and the leading cause of disability burden, accounting for a sixth of the total disability burden in older Australians (Australian Government, 2012).

Alzheimer's Australia's Your Brain Matters program provides evidence-based advice that healthy and active lifestyles are associated with better brain function and lower dementia risk. This program is included in the Seniors Week program and at events such as Dementia Awareness Week and Expo. One important element of Your Brain Matters is regular physical activity. Physical activity includes planned exercise and sport, as well as other activities that involve bodily movement and are done as part of playing, working, transport, household chores and leisure activities (Alzheimer's Australia, 2013).

Older adults are the least physically active age group (ABS, 2009). A lack of sufficient physical activity can contribute to overweight and obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, some cancers, and many other negative health outcomes (Hamilton et al, 2008). According to 2008 national health survey data more than one third of men and women between 55-64 years of age are overweight. If the current trend continues, 6.9 million Australians are likely to be obese by 2025 (Access Economics, 2008).

Falls are linked with increased mortality and morbidity and twenty per cent of older people who experience a fall at home require hospitalisation (Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, 2010). One in three older people sustain a fall each year, with over 30 per cent experiencing significant injuries requiring medical attention. The burden of fall related injury is therefore high, with 1 in every 10 hospital days (1.3 million patient days in total) for older people directly attributable to a fall related injury (Australian Institute of Health & Welfare, 2010). Strategies that increase awareness and which provide a practical component (e.g. strength and balance training, falls risk assessment) are most effective at reducing falls. The COPS and Community Health team are running falls prevention programs in the Tweed.

#### 14.1.2 Community Care and Assistance

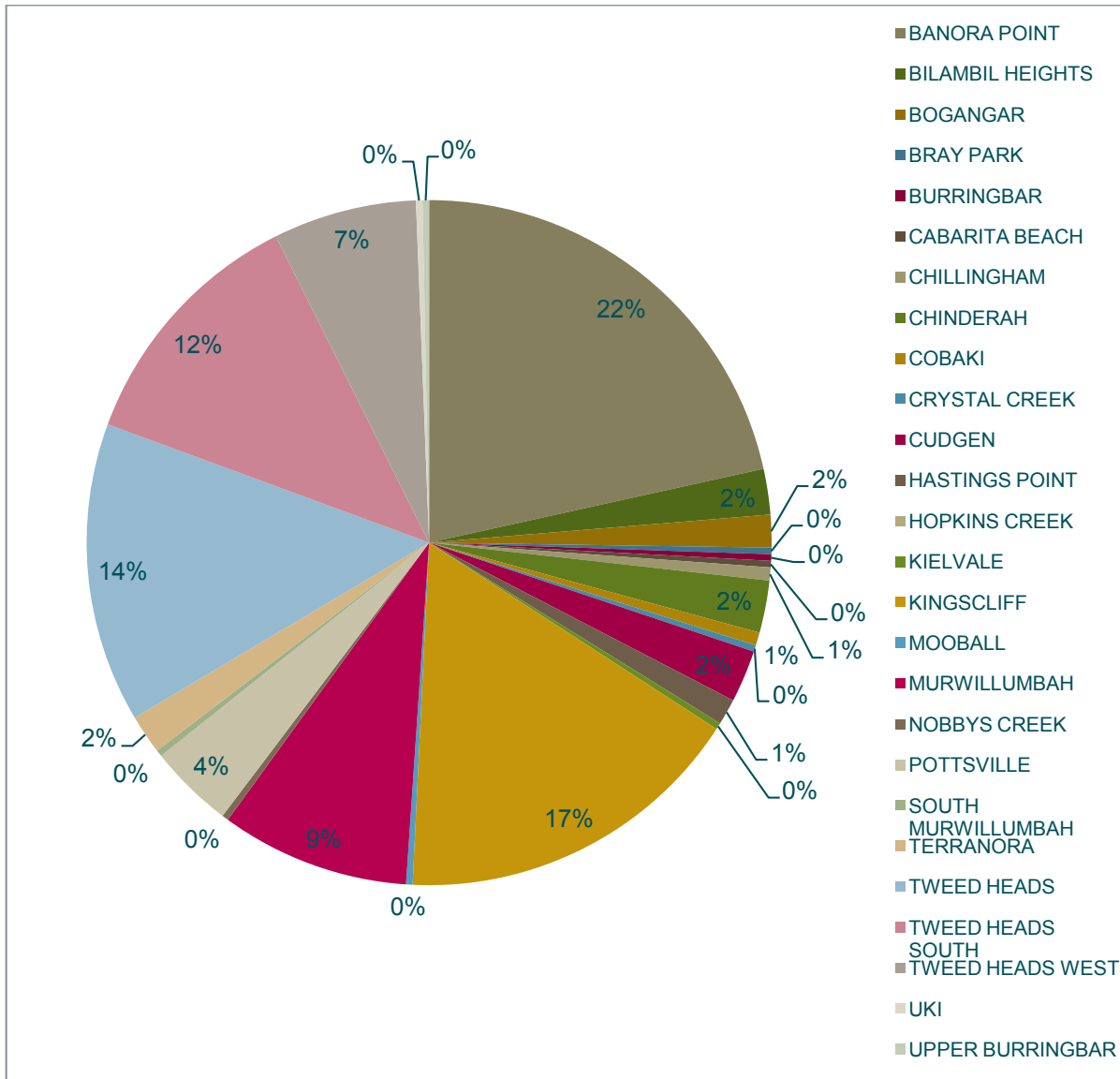
Community Options data provided by the Home and Community Care Services (HACC) at South Tweed for the last three financial years from 2012 through to 2014 is presented in Table 14 and Figure 38. They show an increase in the number (35.4%) and overall proportion (70.8%) of clients aged 65 years and over (seniors). The senior clients for 2014 were predominantly female (72%), with 28% being male. Figure 40 illustrates data for the most recent financial year (2014), which shows the highest proportion of senior clients that require assistance reside in Banora Point (22%), followed by Kingscliff (17%), Tweed Heads (14%), Tweed Heads South (12%) and Murwillumbah (9%). Data on the living arrangements of clients (Figure 39) show that 49% live alone, 48% live with family, and the remaining 3% live with others or the living arrangements were not stated. Between 2012 and 2014 the overall proportion of senior clients with a carer has decreased from 32% to 26.5%, although the overall number of those with carers has increased by 11%. Of the 26.5% with carers, 87% co-reside and carers are primarily a spouse/partner (67.4%), or a son or daughter (20.9%).

**Table 14: COP clients aged =>65 years for last three financial years**

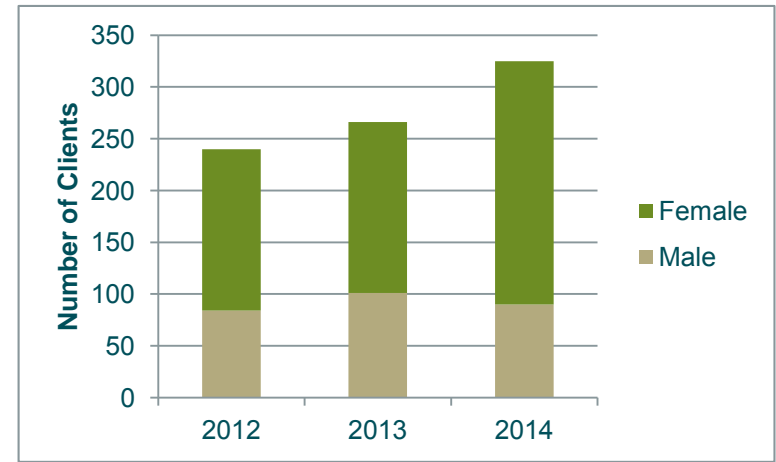
<b>Financial Year End</b>	<b>All Clients</b>	<b>=&gt;65</b>	<b>% 65+</b>
<b>2014</b>	459	325	70.8%
<b>2013</b>	413	266	64.4%
<b>2012</b>	373	240	64.3%



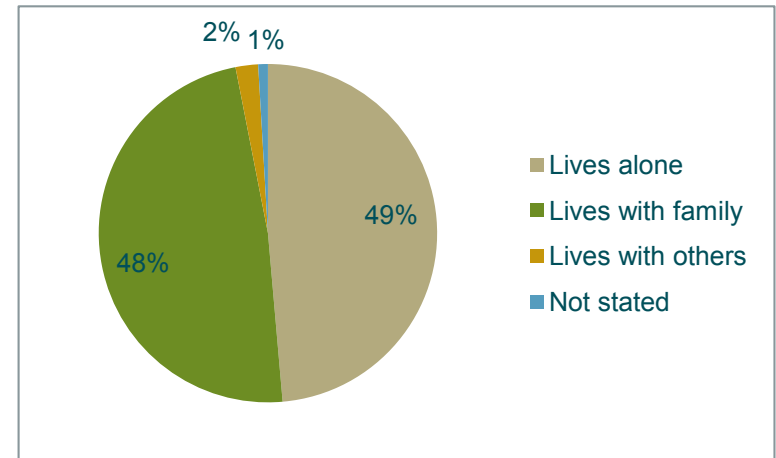
**Figure 40: Suburbs where COP clients =+65 years and over reside (2014FY)**



**Figure 38: Gender mix of COP clients =+65 years**



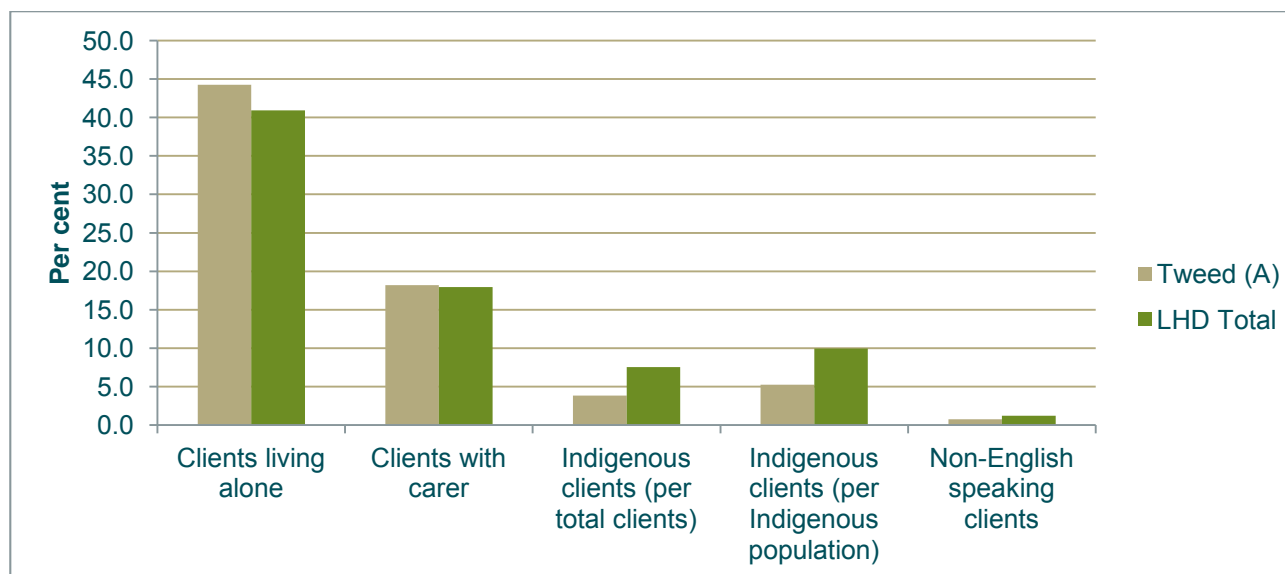
**Figure 39: Living arrangements of COP clients =+65 years**



### 14.1.3 Home and Community Care

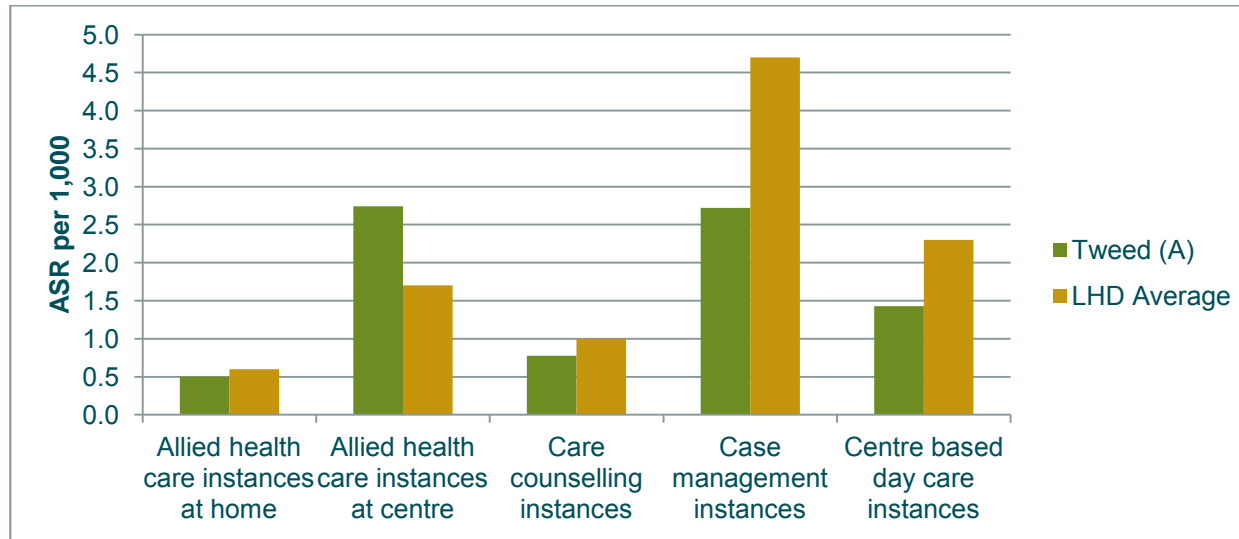
The Social Health Atlas of Australia (NSW February 2014 release) has data by local government area on a range of population characteristics, including demography, socio-economic status, health status and risk factors, and use of health and welfare services. The Home and Community Care (HACC) Programme data for the Tweed Shire is presented against Local Health District (LHD) data in Figures 41 to 44.

**Figure 41: HACC clients living arrangements**

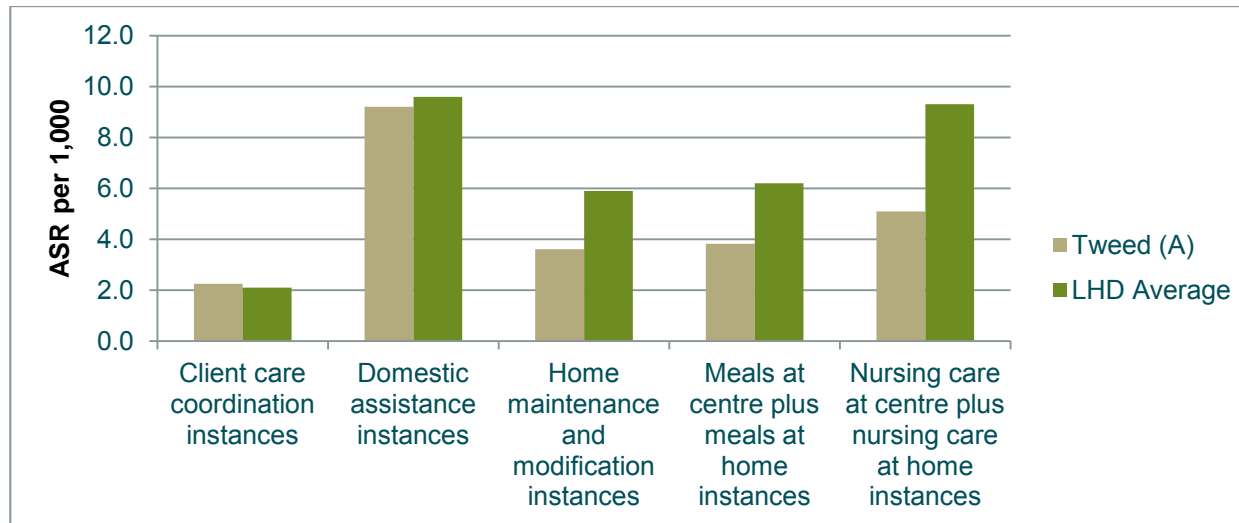


The results show that compared to the LHD average, Tweed Shire has a higher percent of clients that live alone (44.2%) compared to the LHD average of 40.9%. Tweed Shire also has a higher rate of allied health care instances at the centre of 2.7 ASR per 1,000 population compared with 1.7 for the LHD. However across most of the HACC indicators Tweed Shire has a lower rate relative to the LHD average, in particular for: case management instances; centre based day care instances; home maintenance and modification instances; meals at centre; nursing care instances and social support. The rate for transport instances is significantly lower for the Tweed Shire, with the LHD average being 122% higher. Follow up with Community Options revealed that these findings for the Tweed Shire could be influenced by funding restrictions as HACC continually operates with a waiting list for all services, including transport support and case management.

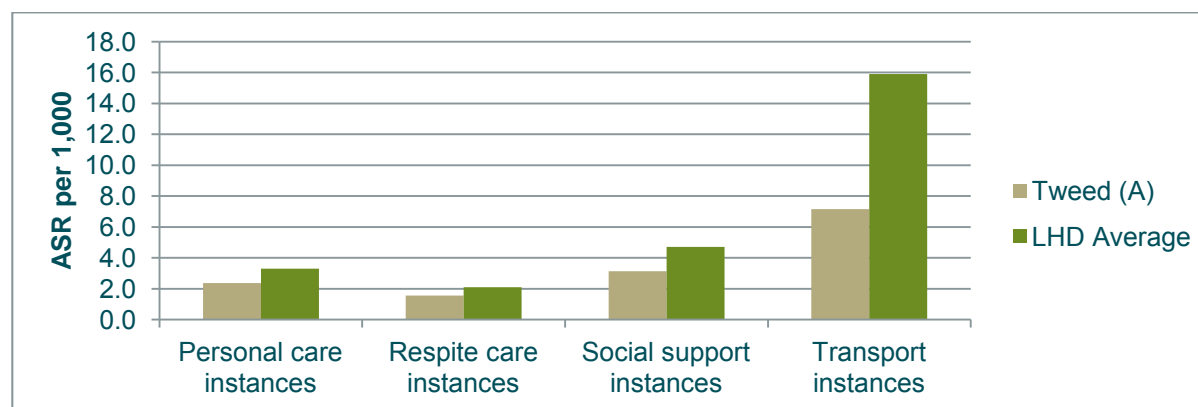
**Figure 42: Health care, counselling, case management and day care instances**



**Figure 43: Client care, nursing care and domestic support**



**Figure 44: Instances of social support, transport, personal and respite care**



#### 14.1.4 Hospitals, medical facilities and disaster planning

Figures 45 to 47 demonstrate a good distribution of medical centres across the Tweed Shire and some of these are located within areas where the population of 65+ exceeds 50%. Hospitals are located in Tweed Heads and Murwillumbah so public and community transport systems are crucial for access to these facilities.

The elderly and frail-aged are identified as a vulnerable group for disaster planning and management. Flooding is the biggest hazard in the Tweed Shire but there are also fire risks. Retirement homes and aged care facilities have been identified as part of the Tweed Shire Disaster Plan; however those who are independent living are not and would be particularly vulnerable. The State Emergency Service and Council work together to educate the community and improve the planning and preparedness of individuals to protect themselves and their property should an incident occur. It is important that mechanisms are put in place to get information out to those seniors that are living independently.

#### 14.1.5 Distribution of swimming pools, sport and leisure facilities

Figures 48 to 50 demonstrate that the Tweed Shire has a good coverage and distribution of a range of sport, swimming and leisure facilities that are available for seniors to keep fit and maintain healthy lifestyles. Similar to the findings for the provision of other facilities across the Tweed Shire, the majority of facilities are not within the areas that comprise over 50% of the population aged 65 years and over. However, there is an exception of 1 bowls, 1 tennis court, 1 outside fitness circuit, and several fitness centres which are located within these areas. Further information is needed on use of these facilities by seniors and further detail on issues surrounding access and public transport opportunities.

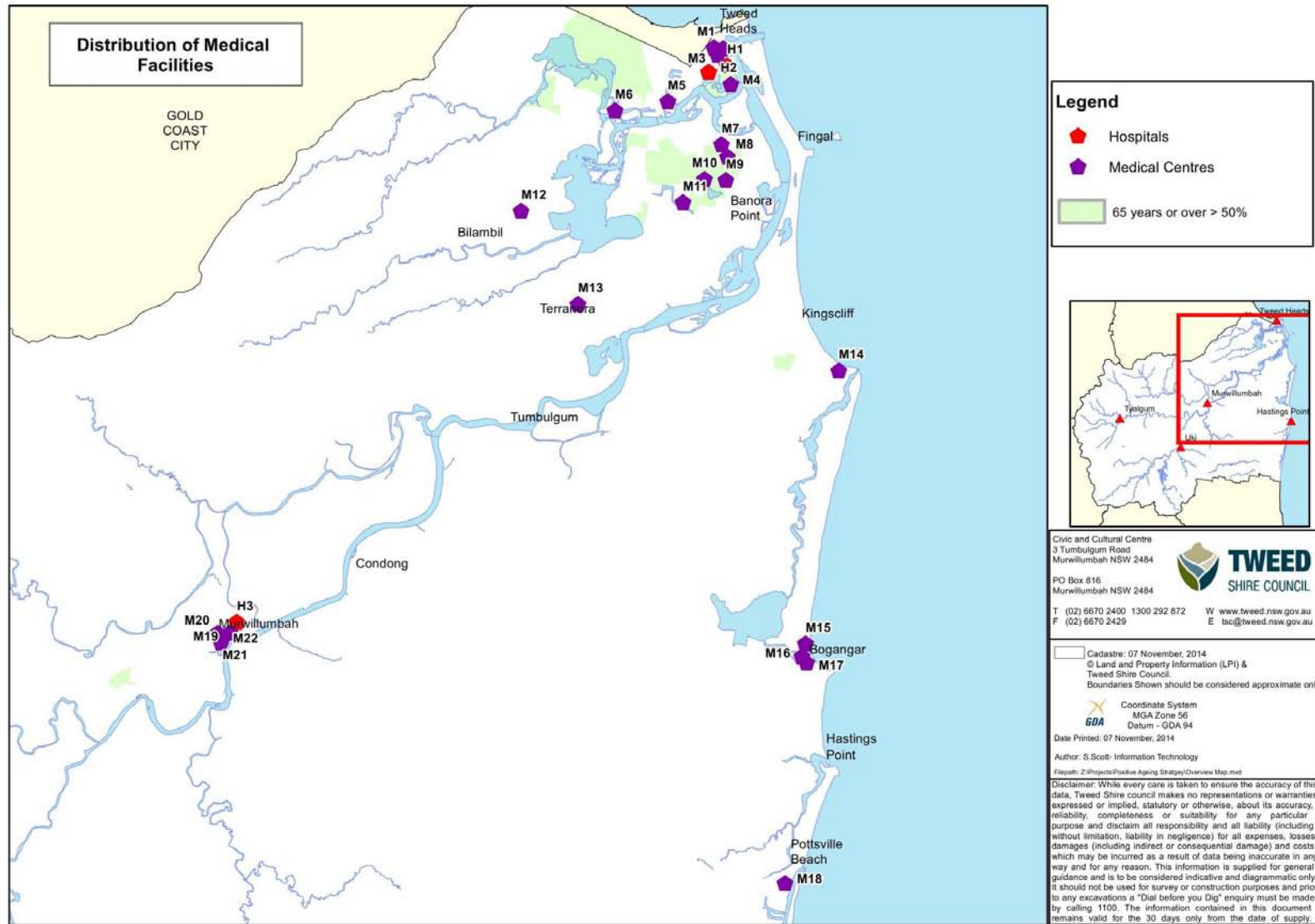


Figure 45: Distribution of Hospitals and Medical Facilities in the Tweed Shire

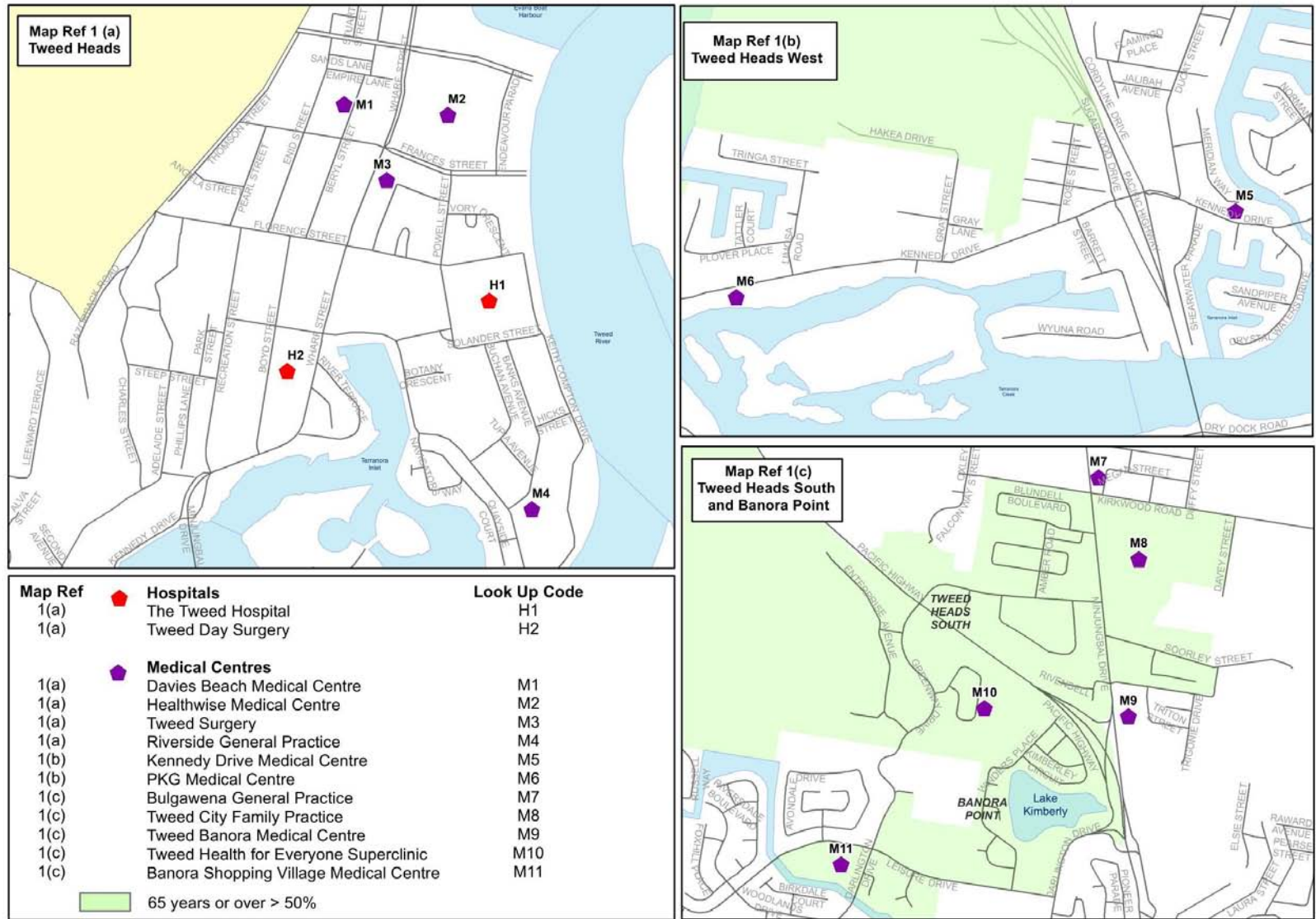


Figure 46: Distribution of Hospitals and Medical Facilities in Tweed Heads and Banora Point

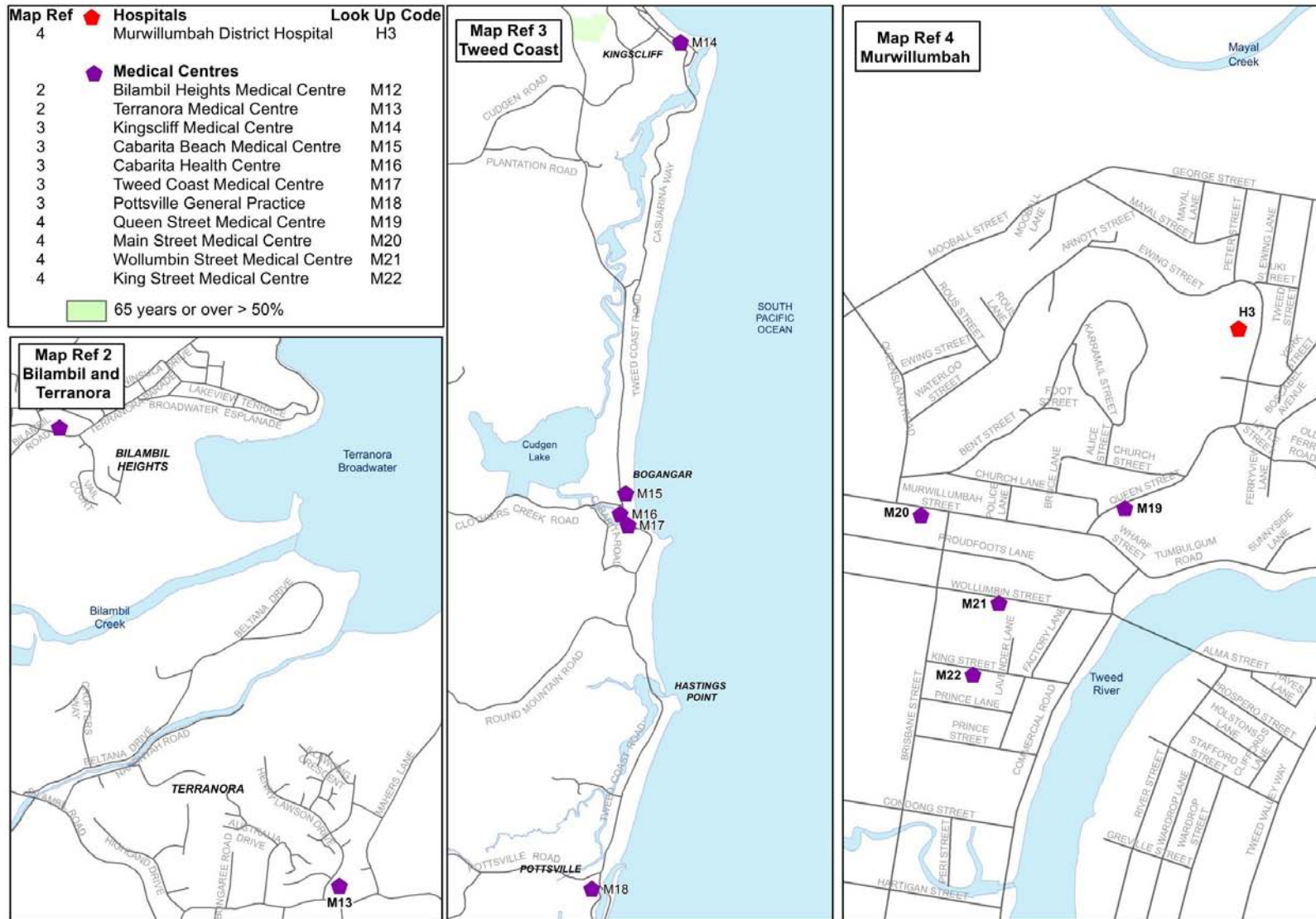


Figure 47: Distribution of Hospitals and Medical Facilities in the Coastal and Murwillumbah areas

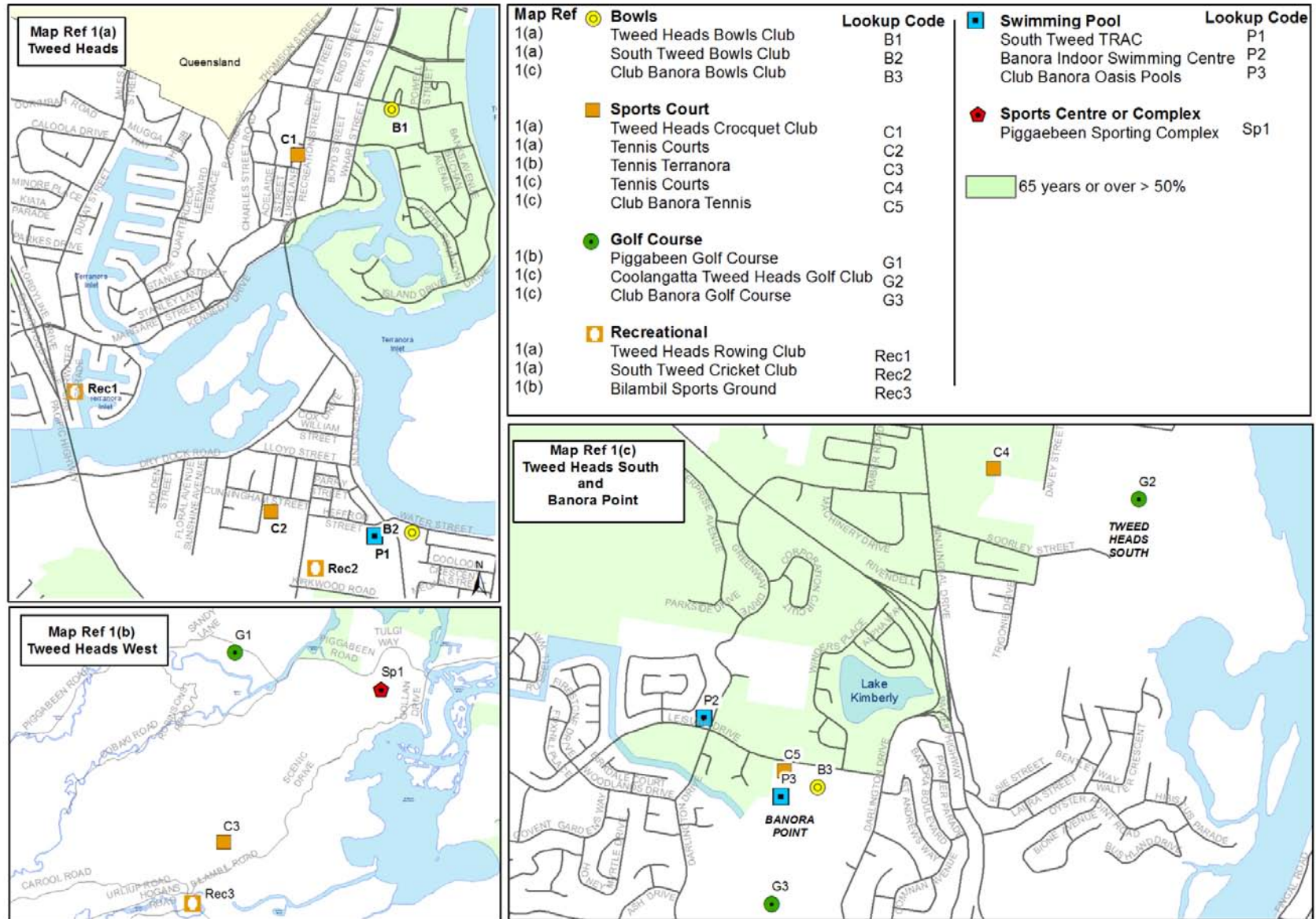


Figure 48: Distribution of leisure and sports facilities in Tweed Heads and Banora Point



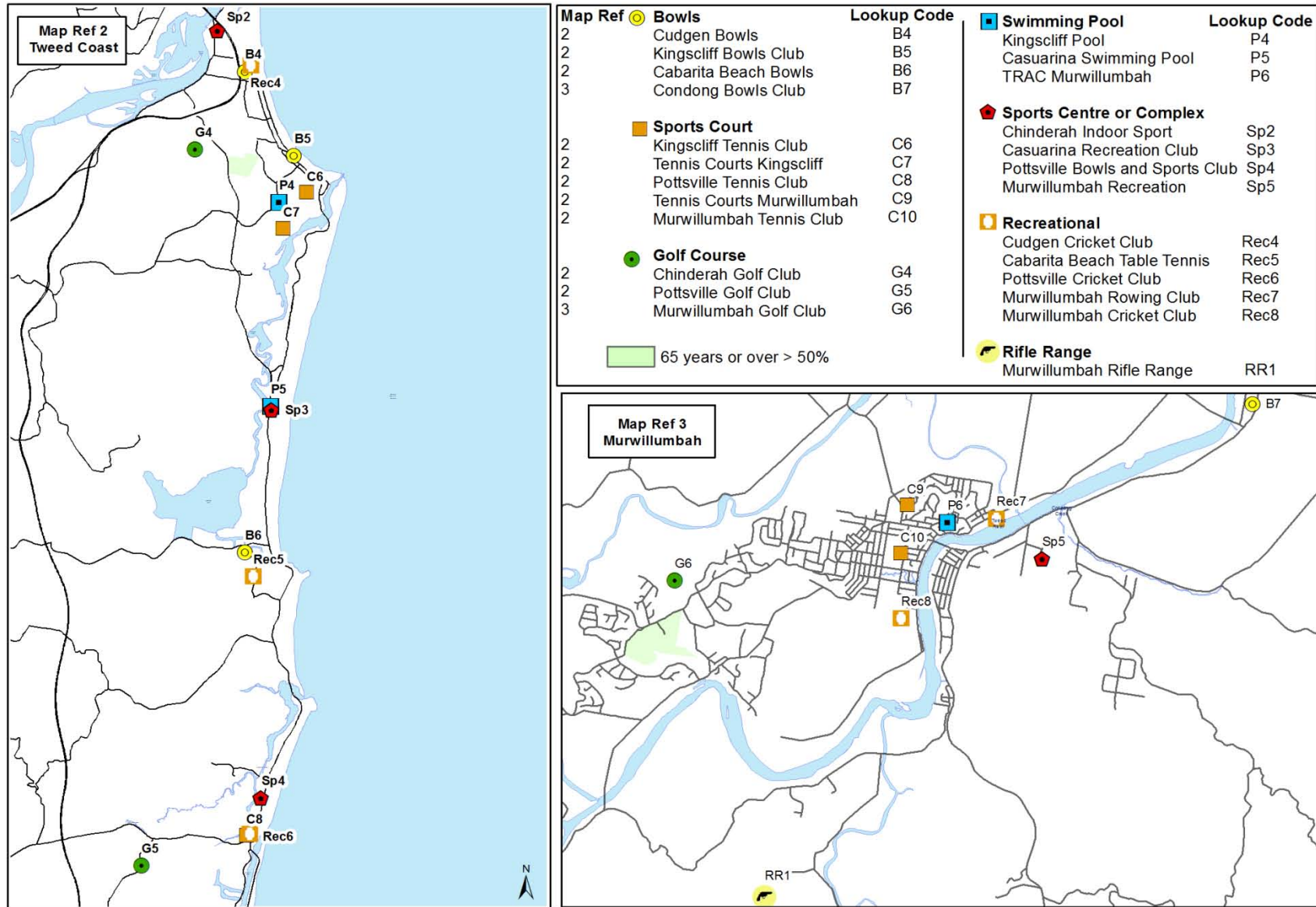


Figure 49: Distribution of leisure and sports facilities in Murwillumbah and along the Coast

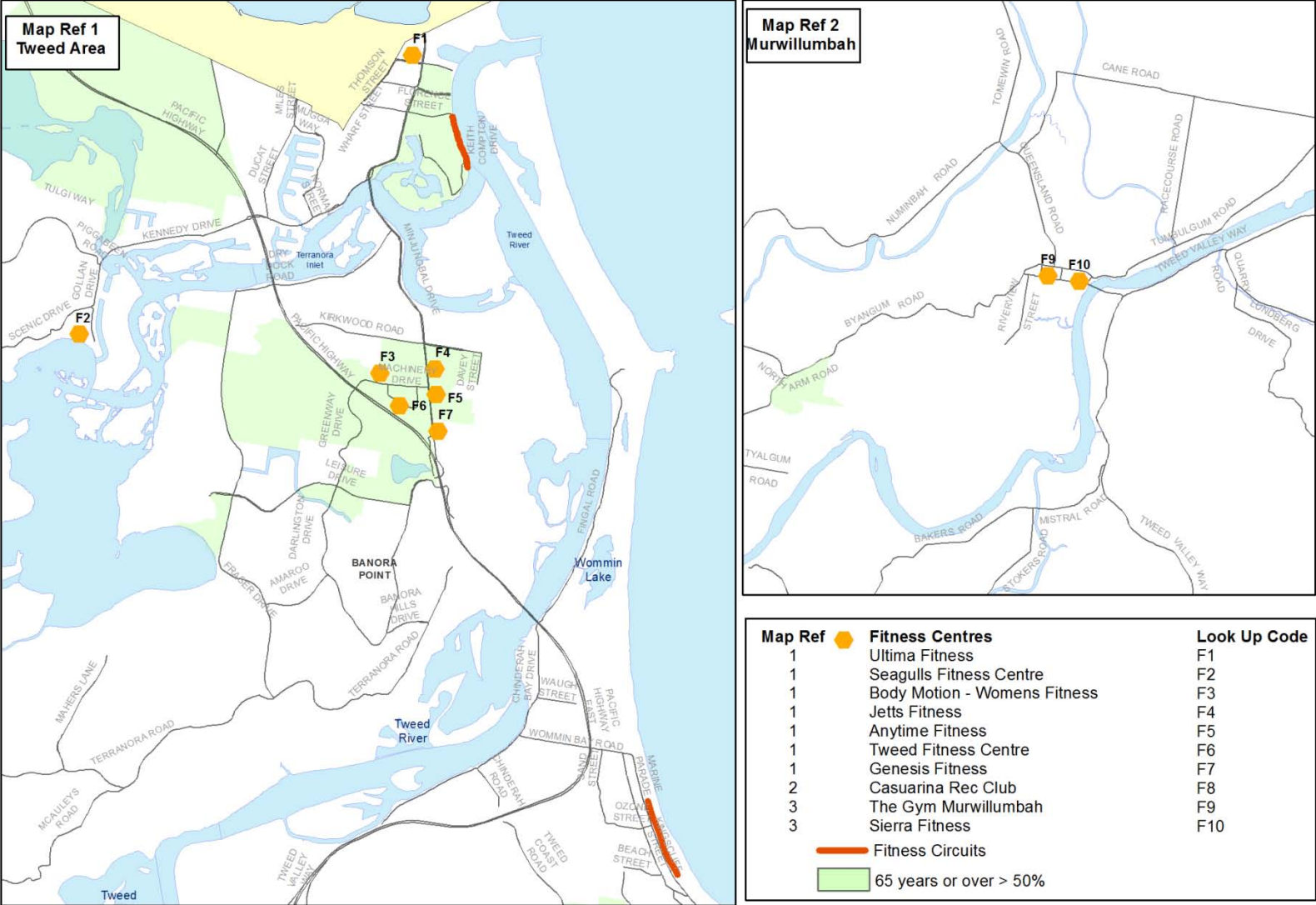


Figure 50: Distribution of fitness centres in the Tweed Shire

## 14.2 Consultation and Public Views

	<b>TSC Healthy Ageing Issues Papers (2008)</b>	<b>ASLaRC Age-Friendly Consultation (2011)</b>
<b>Services Needed</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Home maintenance services for pension age people. Eg. gardening, gutter cleaning, small home maintenance jobs.</li> <li>• More home modification services (for safety &amp; when ability changes).</li> <li>• More carer respite services and more ACAT services.</li> <li>• More medical transport assistance including services for people requiring eye operations and consultations.</li> <li>• More radiology, dermatology and Telecross services.</li> <li>• Geriatrician needed in Tweed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition people commented on the need for greater access to the Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) and Home Care services.</li> </ul>
<b>Hospitals/ Health facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emergency patients kept waiting / treated badly in Tweed (Murwillumbah good).</li> <li>• Hospital services overstretched: staffing not kept up with increasing population/tourist demand.</li> <li>• Need private health insurance to go to John Flynn Hospital.</li> <li>• Discharge processes from QLD Hospital into Tweed Shire not working well. Different system models in different states a problem for coordination.</li> <li>• Distance required to travel to medical services in QLD.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reduction of services at Murwillumbah Hospital and the difficulty spouses have visiting people transferred to Tweed Hospital.</li> </ul>
<b>Service Issues</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waiting time to see a Doctor is sometimes over a week.</li> <li>• Need more bulk billing Doctors.</li> <li>• Community service funding not sufficient to meet needs - need to increase medical and care services to cope with existing population and growth.</li> <li>• Waiting list for many community care services (showering, washing etc).</li> <li>• Long wait for radiology and self funded retirees have to pay for it.</li> <li>• Ultrasound waiting list.</li> <li>• Long waiting lists for elective surgery i.e. cataract, knee surgery and specialist services.</li> <li>• Demands on Murwillumbah Rehabilitation Unit outweigh service availability.</li> <li>• Generally many services are overstretched and need expansion in the Tweed.</li> <li>• Lack of emphasis and on prevention and promotion of seniors exercise programs.</li> <li>• Tenders awarded to non local agencies that don't have local information.</li> <li>• Need more 'at home' health / medical assessments.</li> <li>• Cannot fill local health professional positions.</li> <li>• Lack of communication between health service and other services.</li> <li>• Phone assessments not a good way to get an accurate picture of what is wrong (Home Care).</li> <li>• All groups identified the lack of public dental services (long waiting list and service is unavailable to self funded retirees).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problems with accessing specialist medical services which tend to be concentrated in the Tweed Heads area, (or in some cases in Brisbane or Sydney) and in accessing public dental services.</li> <li>• The waiting time required to get in to see a doctor or dentist; and the need to travel to hospital away from the local community and the impact this has on access and support from spouses and others within their support network.</li> <li>• Men exercise less, have poorer nutrition and their health is likely to be neglected as it is harder to get men to have regular medical appointments and they need more education on the importance of health checks.</li> </ul>
<b>Volunteers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health services are having difficulty getting and keeping volunteers because of costs (i.e. petrol costs) and stress.</li> <li>• Need more appreciation and support of volunteers (financial and otherwise).</li> </ul>	

## **15 Best practice and benchmarking**

A number of local and state governments are planning in response to the ageing of the population and a number of these could be used for present and future benchmarking. These include:

- Byron Shire Council Positive Ageing Strategy 2012-2016
- Clarence Valley Positive Ageing Strategy 2011-2020
- Gold Coast City Council Plan for an Ageing Community 2008-2010
- Sunshine Coast Council Positive Ageing Strategy
- Redland City Council Ageing Well in the Redlands

Two NSW councils have now achieved recognition as members of the WHO Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities. These are Lane Cove and Great Lakes. Other Australian LGAs which have achieved this recognition are Boroondara VIC, Canberra ACT, Clarence TAS, Melville WA, Rockingham WA, Unley SA and Warrnambool VIC.

In addition the Australian Classification of Local Government uses criteria to classify Councils based on size and regional/urban status. This could be used to help identify suitable Councils to benchmark against. The Department of Local Government used it for their Comparative Information Series which unfortunately ceased in 2012. For example Tweed is in the same classification as Newcastle and Wollongong (Category 5).

It is recognised that it is important to benchmark the performance of the Tweed Shire for its services and support for seniors and healthy ageing. The priority areas and indicators for benchmarking need to be identified alongside selection of the most appropriate Councils to benchmark against. This benchmarking will form part of the Tweed Shire Age Friendly Community Plan and the Community and Cultural Services Unit planning.

## 16 Conclusion

For Tweed Shire Council, as for Councils throughout Australia, the challenges are: to incorporate a whole-of-Council approach to meet the social, cultural, economic and environmental needs of an ageing population; and to move towards a 'social contract' with the community whilst managing competing demands within a tightening fiscal environment. Age-friendly communities are designed to provide a range of inclusive and accessible spaces, with easy and safe access to buildings, services and recreation spaces, legible signage and directions, with regular and reliable transport options.

There is a need for the various Council departments to work more closely together on issues relating to older people. It is evident from the information collated that Council already has a number of initiatives under way, or planned, that will address some of the issues and concerns raised but there is still a considerable way to go to create an inclusive age-friendly Tweed Shire. To conclude, the following are key areas emerging from this Issues Paper for people aged 65+ in the Tweed Shire:

1. Within the Tweed Shire there are target areas that have a high proportion of people aged 65+ and in some areas this exceeds 90% of the population. Future projections show that the proportion of people over 65 years of age and the proportion of people with a disability will increase significantly in the future. The Tweed state electoral division currently has the highest prevalence of dementia in NSW.
2. The mapping of community services and facilities across the Tweed Shire shows a distinct lack of provision for those who live in the rural outlying districts, and within the geographic areas where 50% or more of the population are aged 65 or over. This demonstrates a need for improved strategic planning and control to ensure the design and development of facilities and services match the demographic profile of the community.
3. Public and community transport options are limited, irregular and costly, with around 75% of the Tweed Shire getting less than two bus services per day, and for many communities no service provision exists. Access to transport is a crucial issue to be addressed if an inclusive age friendly strategy is to succeed. Service improvements are needed to and around urban centres where hospitals, medical facilities, shopping, leisure and police facilities are located. In particular community transport services are needed for the outlying rural villages, for the frail-aged and functionally impaired, and for those communities where more than 50% of the population are aged 65 years and over.
4. Council facilities, parks and buildings need to be age friendly and accessible for older people. This includes good lighting, adequate provision and maintenance of pedestrian routes (for example from car parks to picnic areas), seating, shade and public toilets. The design and planning of spaces and places needs to consider walk-ability, wheel-ability, and the needs of an ageing population.

5. Planning and building control services need to actively review applications and plans to ensure they promote positive and healthy ageing and do not inhibit or exacerbate the problems identified in these issues papers, such as social isolation. This includes open spaces, public footpaths, building design, adequate road crossing points and ramp access points, public transport access and provision, shade, avoiding steep gradients and use of appropriate surface materials.
6. Council needs to ensure that development (improvements to existing or new) in the Tweed Shire is designed with older people and 'access for all' in mind. This includes appropriate housing provision; aged care facilities, shopping centres, public areas, recreational facilities, open spaces and supporting infrastructure. The findings reflect that there is inadequate disability access and limited awareness of access needs by the wider community. There also needs to be greater awareness and commitment to implementing the Disability Access Standards and guidelines.
7. The Tweed Shire has limited affordable and suitable rental accommodation, limited crisis accommodation for the aged and nowhere for homeless seniors to go. Approximately 52% of accesses to homeless services at Tweed are aged over 50 years and the demand by seniors has been steadily rising. There is an increasing issue for seniors who have bought homes in caravan parks where their tenure is not secure and residents have limited protection and cost barriers for relocation into housing. Site agreements which give people the right to keep their house on a park can be terminated and is happening in Tweed Shire as a result of development applications to upgrade parks. Council needs to improve affordable housing provision and work to reduce homelessness through improved planning and targets for affordable housing, improved development and building control policies and inclusive holiday park management, and developing partnerships with housing providers such as On Track.
8. The Government's focus to help elderly people to stay in their own home requires improved in-home support services such as home maintenance, assisted shopping, social support, affordable public transport, disaster planning and affordable access to social centres and activities. Council needs to work with partner agencies to develop these services and provide help and advice to seniors on where they can access appropriate support. There are particular challenges for current health and community support services which are operating at capacity and around the provision of in-home care services for caravan park tenants.
9. It is apparent that older residents struggle to meet living costs and poverty is a barrier, so the pricing of Council services and activities needs to be carefully considered so it does not restrict participation. In particular access to low or no cost exercise options, such as accessible well lit footpaths and outside exercise equipment that support healthy ageing. Council also needs to further investigate the economic data surrounding older people in relation to affordability, but also the age dependency ratio to inform economic and strategic planning.

10. It is evident that older residents struggle to keep abreast of service information, events and changes in the community. There is a need for improved information provision and central points (physical) where people can access up-to-date information on services (including health), activities and bus timetables. Council should play a more active role in information distribution through partner agencies, community centres, libraries, and to new residents to the area through partnerships with real estate agents and the Tourist Information Offices. A major issue is the assumption that all people (including seniors) have and are able to access and use computers, mobile phones and the internet.
11. There is a need to actively engage and address the needs of senior males, elders from the ATSI communities, the culturally and linguistically diverse, and the LGBTI population.
12. It is important to value, recognise and support volunteers (young and old) that support seniors across the Tweed Shire and actively promote opportunities to volunteer and the benefits (includes insurance, training, recognition, fuel vouchers, funding, stress management). Around 24% of seniors in the Tweed Shire live alone and are more vulnerable to feelings of isolation. So engagement in society and through volunteering opportunities or receiving support from volunteers/neighbours is an important element of healthy ageing.
13. A closer partnership needs to be forged with the Police to improve access to crime and community safety data for the Tweed Shire. This will help to inform improved planning and delivery of Council services to design out and reduce crime. In particular for this issues paper, it would have been useful to have access to data on crime instances in relation to those aged 65 years and over.

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Customer Service | 1300 292 872 | (02) 6670 2400

[tsc@tweed.nsw.gov.au](mailto:tsc@tweed.nsw.gov.au)  
[www.tweed.nsw.gov.au](http://www.tweed.nsw.gov.au)

Fax (02) 6670 2429  
PO Box 816  
Murwillumbah NSW/2484