

In the last Scarborough e-newsletter we shared a survey from the Age Friendly Scarborough Initiative. We have had a lot of questions about the survey, and would like to share some more information about the survey, and how the Age Friendly Initiative started.

This survey was put together by a new informal committee, The Age Friendly Scarborough Committee, as a first step in our age friendly initiative as a town. This group is sponsored by Community Services and is Town Council driven. The group was formed in response to goals set out by town council in 2018. One of the goals was to "Consider participation in AARP's Age-Friendly Community Programs". The Advisory board for the Scarborough 55+ Program took this project on and applied through AARP to join the network of Age Friendly Communities. The informal Age Friendly Scarborough Committee is comprised of existing members of our senior advisory board, and others residents who reached out to AARP directly with an interest in Age Friendly Communities. Right now, we have about 13 folks who have been involved. We haven't had many meetings, but hope to become more active in the New Year. If you, or someone you know is interested in getting involved, we would be happy to add you to our email group.

The goal of the survey is to gather information about what Scarborough is doing well, and where Scarborough could improve when it comes to 8 domains of livability. The 8 domains of livability are things that AARP has researched and found are important to people of all ages in the community. We do not have another survey at this time that is geared specifically toward younger residents. We are hoping to gather some basic information through this survey, and have the opportunity to do additional surveys and hold focus groups later on down the road.

The 8 domains of livability we focused on in the survey include:

- 1) Outdoor spaces & buildings
- 2) Transportation
- 3) Housing
- 4) Social Participation
- 5) Respect & Social Inclusion
- 6) Civic Participation & Employment
- 7) Communication & Information
- 8) Community Support & Health Services

Our Age Friendly Community Committee developed a survey with questions related to the 8 domains listed above. The plan is to collect surveys through the end of the year, and then the Age Friendly Community Committee will work together analyze all the responses, put together a summary/report, and then develop an action plan. The summary of our findings will be made available to the public.

The printing for the paper survey, and the online survey monkey account for our digital survey has been funded solely through an AARP grant we received at the end of July.

Several of our surrounding towns, like Biddeford, Saco, OOB, Cumberland, Portland, Yarmouth and Windham have recently surveyed their communities and developed Age Friendly action plans based on their responses. Some communities developed volunteer ride share programs, community gardens, community resource guides, and worked with other town committees to address other community needs.

If you would like to learn more about the AARP Network of Age Friendly Communities, you can follow this link:
<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/>