



Membership Application

To join the **AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities**
and the **World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Cities and Communities**

- If you have questions while completing this form, please email livable@aarp.org
- If you need additional space for answering the questions you may add an additional sheet of paper

Section 1: COMMUNITY DETAILS

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE: 10/4/2019

NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: Town of Swampscott

STATE: Massachusetts

POPULATION SIZE: 14,563

PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: 27.5

**NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: Peter Spellios, Chairman,
Swampscott Select Board**

OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: 22 Monument Avenue, Swampscott, MA 01907

Section 2: COMMUNITY CONTACT for the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities

- The community contact is the local staff member or volunteer who is primarily responsible for carrying out the community-level work — it is not the responsible AARP staff member.

Please describe the named person's role in the city or community's age-friendly initiative:

The Director of Community and Economic Development reports directly to the Town Administrator and is charged with providing a wide range of services in an effort to achieve the goals and visions of the Town while ensuring that policies and actions are in alignment and compliance with local, State and Federal regulations. The Office of Community and Economic Development engages directly with the following boards and committees, among others, specifically regarding the Town of Swampscott's age-friendly initiative: Select Board, Planning Board, Council on Aging, Affordable Housing Trust, Housing Authority and the Swampscott for All Ages Committee.

The person named above agrees to be subscribed to the [AARP Livable Communities Weekly e-Newsletter](#), which is one of the primary ways we share useful news and resources. To add additional subscribers, type their names and email addresses into below. Once this application is processed, a subscription confirmation message will be sent so the individual can confirm that they want to subscribe. To subscribe today, follow the link above or visit [AARP.org/Livable-Subscribe](#).

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Section 3: COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES, ENGAGEMENTS and COLLABORATIONS**1) Please provide a brief summary of the community policies, programs and services that are targeted toward older people and how the community plans to become more age-friendly.**

The Town of Swampscott has acknowledged that our age demographic is rapidly changing. In fact, recent studies have indicated that the population of older adults in town, those aged 60 and above, is projected to experience significant growth over the next ten to fifteen years. A nine member Council on Aging serves as the policy-making board that works to identify and respond to needs of elders and to advocate on their behalf. The Director of the Swampscott Senior Center (SSC), who also sits on the Council on Aging, leads seven staff members in the day to day operation of the center. The SSC is located within our High School building to foster generational diversity within the community and provides a hub for social and civic interaction for our older residents. A full program of activities is provided by the SSC in their indoor spaces, outdoor spaces, or by using the town owned fleet of vans to accommodate the needs of our seniors. Program highlights include full lunch service 5 days per week, transportation to and from the SSC, transportation for shopping and medical appointments in town or nearby communities, transportation for recreational outings, health screenings, health clinics, referral services, outreach programs and tons of recreational activities. The current list of recreational activities lists over 20 items including Zumba, Yoga, Cribbage, Bridge, Tai Chi, Creative Writing, Bocce, Knitting, Golf, and Movies among others. The SSC also publishes a monthly newsletter, The Compass, to provide information about the upcoming events and relevant topics of interest within the senior community as well as maintaining a website. In a January 2019 report on the AARP livability index, the Town of Swampscott received a 57 percent overall livability rating. Out of the six domains cited in the report, 1 was in the top third (neighborhood), 4 were in the middle third (Opportunity, Transportation, Environment, and Health), and 1 landed in the bottom third (Housing). Information gleaned from the Master Plan that was done in conjunction with MAPC had also identified Housing as an area of concern for the Town. Since the adoption of the Swampscott 2025: The Master Plan by the Planning Board in May of 2016, the Town has approved a Housing Production Plan, passed an Inclusionary Zoning Bylaw, established an Affordable Housing Trust, and adopted a Complete Streets Policy for all ages. To further focus attention on age friendliness, the Town has formed the Swampscott for All Ages Committee, a committee of over 30 residents and volunteers to serve in an advisory role to the Select Board and Town Administration. In 2018, Town Meeting approved \$30,000 to fund a study that would evaluate issues facing Swampscott residents as they age conducted by the University of Massachusetts-Boston, Gerontology Institute and Center for Social & Demographic Research in Aging. This study follows the AARP roadmap for age friendly communities by examining the eight domains that the impact of quality of life of Swampscott's aging population. Our plan going forward is to enroll with AARP and to use this study information to feed eight subgroups formed within the Swampscott for all ages Committee (one for each domain). Each subgroup will analyze their respective domain, perform public outreach, develop an action plan and propose specific actions to make those areas better. We are also partnering with our local Aging Services Area Provider, Greater Lynn Senior Services (GLSS), to ensure that complimentary plans, services and programs are implemented.

2) How will the community engage and involve older people in the process of becoming a more age-friendly?

Since the overall aim of this initiative is to improve inclusivity and engagement of older residents, it is our complete intention that all age groups will have ample opportunity and will be encouraged to participate directly in the process. Nobody could be more capable of determining the needs, wants, and fears of our aging residents than those residents themselves. The initial townwide survey was completed for all households with older residents and the response rate was phenomenal, indicating that the Town residents are ready to engage. The Swampscott for All Ages Committee membership was opened to any and all residents that expressed an interest and the invitation to join the committee remains open. The committee will be broken down into smaller subgroups for each of the domains and will meet separately to formulate their action plans. A cornerstone of those smaller meetings will be public outreach through targeted public forums as required for each domain. It is envisioned that there will be several forums held at the Swampscott Senior Center and that significant public notice will be given for each. It is also anticipated the the forums would be scheduled such that the the time and locations would be conducive for all age groups to attend and to allow them to make use of existing infrastructure at the SSC such as transportation, etc. Additionally, there will be significant public communication through social media, Town and SSC websites, and through traditional printed media including local newspapers and the Senior Center newsletter. Lastly, all of the committee members are deeply immersed in the community and it is anticipated that there will be significant 'word of mouth' communications regarding the activities, plans, and ideas. These informal conversational communications will provide the general public with an additional avenue for getting their inputs and comments heard and included.

3) Briefly describe the mechanisms the community has or is planning to put in place to facilitate collaborative planning and implementation between different agencies and departments.

Given the small size of the Town, there is significant natural interaction between the different agencies and departments. All meetings are held in public, notices and agendas are posted electronically and physically in the Town Hall well in advance, most are televised on local cable access and archived on the town website. There are frequent meetings between boards, committees, and departments when necessary. In particular, with respect to age friendly initiatives, the Swampscott for All Ages committee includes several members that currently serve on other boards, committees and departments in Town to regularly exchange information between them. The following boards, committees, and departments are represented directly on the Swampscott for All Ages Committee; Council on Aging, Planning Board, Fire Department, Police Department, Retirement Board, Capital Improvements Committee, and Board of Health.

Section 4: NETWORK MEMBERSHIP

- Your answers to the following questions will help us complete your membership in the global age-friendly network and better enable us to understand how to support the network.

4) How do you hope to contribute to the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?

The Town of Swampscott is looking forward to collaborating with our peer communities to share best practices, learn from each other and have our local actions contribute to a greater global impact. We are uniquely positioned as a small town with a relatively high percentage of senior residents and an aging population that is projected to grow significantly in the foreseeable future. We also have a well established team of Town officials that are committed to making provisions for our seniors to thrive in Swampscott, a vibrant Senior Center, and a strongly committed Swampscott for All Ages committee to work out the details. By joining the AARP and the WHO Global Network we would hope to actively share ideas, offer insights and glean wisdom while adding to the overall diversity of the network.

5) What motivated your community to join the AARP Network of Age-Friendly States and Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?

The Town of Swampscott prides itself on being a beautiful and quaint seaside town that provides an ideal environment in which to live, work, play, raise a family and grow older. All indications are quite clear that Swampscott residents feel strongly that they want to stay in Swampscott as they age and to maintain and their independent lifestyle within their means. Unfortunately, there are many challenges to fulfilling that wish. The Town leaders have recognized that there is a gap that exists between what residents want and what is currently attainable and have committed to closing those gaps wherever possible. By joining the broader network, it shines light on the things that we can do now that other communities may have already done successfully. The AARP and WHO Global Network opens up a vast array of resources and support networks to enhance the lives of older adults.

6) Provide a digital file or link of a logo or other image that represents your community and for which you have reprint rights. The image resolution should be at least 72 dpi. As an example of an image, here's ours:

A copy of the Town seal was emailed to Livable@aarp.org on 07/18/19.

