



Membership Application

To join the **AARP Network of Age-Friendly 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@aarpp.org.
- If you need additional space for answering the questions you may add an additional sheet of paper.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION DATE: 2/6/2019

Section 1: COMMUNITY DETAILS

NAME OF THE COMMUNITY: Westwood

STATE: New Jersey

POPULATION SIZE: 11,170

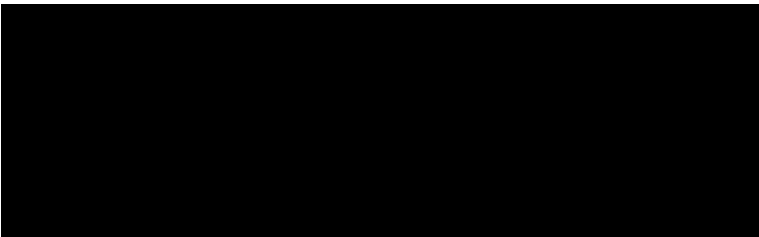
PERCENTAGE OF RESIDENTS ABOVE THE AGE OF 60: 17.4% 65+, 13.5% age 50-64

NAME AND TITLE OF THE ELECTED OFFICIAL SIGNING THE OFFICIAL COMMITMENT: Mayor John Birkner, Jr.

OFFICE ADDRESS OF THE SIGNER: Borough of Westwood, 100 Washington Ave. Westwood, NJ 07675

Section 2: COMMUNITY CONTACT FOR THE AARP NETWORK OF AGE-FRIENDLY 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:

Lisa Bontemps manages the implementation of Henry & Marilyn Taub Foundation's funded initiative, "Westwood for All Ages" which includes administering age-friendly programming, consulting with governmental department heads, elected officials and other civic stakeholders in order to incorporate more age-friendly strategies into the fabric of their operations and plans. The coordinator also conducts outreach activities to established groups in the over 55 demographic and ensures that information on areas of concern such as transportation, health and well-being, housing and more are made available through multiple forms of communication. Ms. Bontemps evaluates programming for effectiveness and works closely with an advisory committee formed of multiple community stakeholders to ensure that age-friendly efforts are consistent with the needs of the community and generating positive outcomes.

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.

Since beginning our work on becoming an Age-Friendly community, our efforts have been focused primarily on Communication and access to information, Transportation, and to a lesser extent housing. We have employed multiple methods of communicating with older residents about available local and county resources through bi-monthly print newsletters distributed at many locations throughout town and in senior housing facilities, newspaper press releases, and public access television. The need for local, free transportation for older residents is currently being met through a town-owned van that currently provides rides twice a week for residents 60 and over or who have special needs. The borough is planning to expand this service to three times a week and also exploring possible special shopper shuttle days and outings. As part of our Westwood for All Ages initiative, we have promoted other forms of low-cost or free transportation options and have also piloted a program subsidizing memberships in EZRide's Ryde4life which has yielded moderate success. We will continue to explore other avenues to help older residents access on-demand types of transportation at a reasonable cost. The other programmatic area that has been a large focus of the past year is our Street Smart campaign aimed at creating greater awareness for pedestrian and driver safety, and walkability in the community. These efforts are ongoing and will hopefully continue to enhance the quality of life and walkability for all ages in Westwood.

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

We currently have a team of Westwood for All Ages Ambassadors comprised of residents over 65 who are already involved in various community and civic organizations. Their role is to be a voice for their community, educate others on services and programs available for older residents, advocate at local and state levels for the needs of older residents, and help drive future programming geared towards helping older residents live and thrive in place. The Mayor has also established a Senior Advisory Committee of 9 older residents who meet on a monthly basis to assess how older residents needs are being met, and identify areas requiring municipal attention in order to create a higher quality of life for older residents of Westwood. The Westwood for All Ages initiative also has a Steering Committee that consists of members of the Senior Advisory Committee, the Ambassadors, borough council representatives, department heads, residents and other stakeholders who share information and help identify priorities for age-friendly programming. We

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.

Westwood for All Ages has been fortunate to have strong partnerships with several borough departments that have direct impact on our older residents such as the public library, the recreation department (which hosts a very robust over 55 “Forever Young” program), the DPW, as well as the Mayor and Council. In addition, the initiative’s Assistant Project Manager has just been elected as a borough council member and will continue to be a strong advocate and liaison for our community’s older population and will be very instrumental in keeping the Age Friendly programming highly visible in Westwood. We also enjoy very close collaboration with the borough’s multi-faith Clergy Council as well as several non-profit agencies. One of our closest partners that we are fortunate to have an extremely strong relationship with is Hackensack University Meridian at Pascack Valley Medical Center, a representative from which sits on our Steering Committee and has provided helpful resources for some of our health-related programming. We will continue to work closely with these and other agencies in order to collaborate and implement programs that benefit all ages of our community.

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 Communities and the World Health Organization Global Network of Age-Friendly Communities?

As a Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation funded Age-Friendly initiative, we have benefitted from sharing best practices with other AFCEI coalition partners and have presented our work at the 2018 International Federation on Aging conference in Toronto. We intend to share lessons learned in the course of our initiative with other communities in our county and state in order to help New Jersey become an Age Friendly state. We appreciate the reality that collectively we can be more useful to our local communities when we collaborate in a network such as AARP's AF Communities and the WHO Global Network rather than operating in a vacuum. Sharing best practices, failures and successes, lessons learned, etc. is best done working in a collaborative framework with the support of AARP resources.

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

We recognize the incredible value of learning and sharing best practices. Just as importantly, we believe wholeheartedly in the mission of becoming a more livable community where people will be able to live and thrive in place as they age. Becoming a part of these networks will send a strong message to our community and other communities that the governing body and local stakeholders are all committed to and aligned with this mission. We want to serve as a model for other communities may look to for ideas on how they may join in this mission as well.

6) Please provide a digital (JPG, PNG or PDF) file or link of a logo or other image that represents your community.

The image resolution should be at least 72 dpi. As an example of an image, here's ours >



<http://westwoodforallages.org>