

# Age Friendliness in Botkins, Ohio

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## ABSTRACT

Age friendliness in the current society that we live in has not been a major issue until now because of the growing elderly population (Baby Boomers). Today, the elderly makes up about 15% of our population and in just 10 years, that number will increase to 21%. Recently, we have discovered that not necessarily people in particular, but our society as a whole, is ageist in some ways. Age friendliness is an issue in our society, and it all starts with and breaks down to age friendliness in our communities that we live in. Age friendliness in communities is vital to our society and in my own community (and all our communities) of Botkins, Ohio is the start of it all. I will be assessing the age friendliness in my own hometown to decide what I might need to do to help it become age friendly.

## INTRODUCTION

Age friendliness in communities is vital to our society and in my own communities of Botkins, Ohio is the start of it all. My presentation will be assessing the age friendliness in my own hometown to decide what I might need to do to help it to become age friendly.

## Demographic Info

- Under the Age of 18 = 27.5%
- Aged 18 – 24 = 10.0%
- Aged 25 – 44 = 28.5%
- Aged 45 – 64 = 20.3%
- Aged 65 and older = 13.6%

Botkins has a total population of 1,155 people meaning that roughly 157 of those individuals are over the age of 65.



## Housing Options

- There is a couple groups of apartments that are reserved for those that are 65+ or for those that struggle with physical disabilities. These best fit people that can still take care of themselves because these apartments aren't considered to be nursing homes, assisted living facilities, etc.
- These apartments are simply designed to just have seniors that can look out for other seniors because they all live in close proximities to one another.
- The closest nursing home or assisted living facility would be The Gardens, Bridges, and Wapakoneta. All of which is just a 10-minute drive from Botkins.

## Outdoor Spaces

- Botkins does have a nice and big park for all ages. The nice part of having it so big is that there are things for everyone to do without bothering or getting in the way of each other.
- For seniors, they can swing on picnic style swings, walk the trails with multiple rest points and benches, relax in the hammocks, play mini golf, or just chill out in one of the shelter houses if its too warm or raining outside.

## Community Support

- In Botkins, Ohio there are no big business let alone ones that would offer a senior work program. All that is really in Botkins is a welding/fab shop, a drywall businesses, a hardware store, and a small electrical shop that I work at part-time. There are no big corporations that would offer a senior work program, but there is an elderly gentleman that lives 12 miles from where my parents do and he has owned his own woodworking business for over 30 years and he started having other elderly/retired people come join him to provide lessons as to the basics of woodworking. He does two classes every Saturday and the one is for the youth and the other one is for seniors. He's been doing this for about the past 8-10 years and its truly something pretty neat.

## Transportation Options

- Transportation is where Botkins is sub par if you will in age friendliness. There are no transportation services of any kind that would transport seniors.
- Although, it doesn't seem to be an issue because anyone would do just about anything for anybody in Botkins including of someone needed a ride somewhere.

## Social Environment

- Like I've stated, there are apartments reserved for seniors, but those apartments aren't secluded to where they are completely out by themselves. They have lots of opportunities for intergenerational communication as well as conversing with other age groups. Botkins provides a great social environment because of the small population and size, which contributes to knowing a lot of people, being involved in the community, and not having things rushed and having the streets be hectic.

## Health/Wellness Services

- The nearest hospital closest to Botkins is Wilson Memorial Health Systems in Sidney which is just about 15 minutes away. Although that is the closest hospital, there are a few other physicians that practice locally including one in Botkins that is actually connected to the local library. There is also the one I go to in Jackson Center which is just about a 10-minute drive from Botkins but only about a 4-minute drive from where my parents live. There aren't really any senior service agencies besides one or two in Sidney and Wapak which are both 10-15 minutes away from Botkins. There is however a new yoga studio that opened in Botkins two months ago, but it obviously hasn't been in use quite yet because of COVID-19. It will open eventually but its original idea was to have three different classes of it. One for pregnant women, the general population, and a class for senior citizens. When I fist heard of this, it made me pretty happy to hear and see how my hometown is becoming that much more age friendly.

## Senior Center Info

- There are no senior center agencies or organizations in Botkins, and the closest ones would be in Sidney or Wapak.
- The nearest senior center is in Sidney, Ohio and it is called the *Senior Center of Sidney-Shelby County*. Shelby County and the City of Sidney help to run this center and they provide multiple services. They serve hot meals, have a gym with a personal trainer, and the walking track are all open everyday. Other activities include aqua aerobics, billiards, poker tournaments, chair yoga, knitting and crocheting, along with many other activities.
- The *Senior Center of Sidney-Shelby County* is available to anyone in Shelby County and even for those outside of Shelby County. There is an annual fee of \$30 for those that live in Shelby County and a fee of \$35 annually for those that do not.

## General Services/Amenities

- Botkins does have a grocery store being that a Dollar general was just built a few months back. There is no pharmacy or any department stores. There is a hardware store, a coffee shop, a new yoga studio, a post office, a couple bars, and that's about it. They are all located within the central part of Botkins (within ½ mile of each other)

## Summary of Findings

- Based off the literature that we've covered in class I don't believe that my community has met all the standards of an age friendly community and so I don't think Botkins could be defined as an age friendly community. Ethically however, based on what we have covered in class, I do believe that Botkins is considered an age friendly community because of the good physical and social environments, housing options, etc.
- To provide a new age-friendly service to Botkins, you would first need to bring it up to the village council and/or the mayor and he would bring it up to the village council and a vote would be made.

