**Introduction**   
Global consumer culture has a significant impact on people's choices, habits, and market trends in an increasingly linked globe (Steenkamp and de Jong, 2010). Economic integration, technological advancements, and the sharing of ideas among varied groups all influence this cultural phenomenon, which presents possibilities as well as difficulties for service providers aiming to reach minority communities (Mukadam, Cooper, and Livingston, 2013). Hence, the wellness sector has become a key business in response to consumers' increasing focus on overall health and well-being. An important but sometimes neglected market demographic is older adults. One in six individuals globally will be 60 or older by 2030, according to World Health Organisation (WHO) projections. This is an unparalleled demographic transition that calls for creative, inclusive, and customised wellness measures (WHO, 2024). The unique requirements of elderlies, particularly those who are struggling with loneliness, mental health issues, and financial limitations, are often disregarded by conventional wellness providers despite this urgent need.

One example of a community-driven solution to these gaps is the Yarm Wellness Centre. The company, which is run by volunteers, sees itself as a centre for inclusion and provides accessible, reasonably priced activities aimed at improving the social, emotional, and physical health of senior citizens. The centre's dedication to promoting social interaction and holistic health is shown by current programs like the Dementia Café and intergenerational yoga classes (Yarm Wellness, no date). However, the centre must strategically broaden its emphasis to serve the many cultural and social demands of minority groups within the older adult population if it hopes to be competitive and responsive to changing market forces. This strategy is in line with the tenets of global consumer culture, which highlight the need of comprehending complex customer profiles and using these insights to create solutions that are both targeted and sensitive to cultural differences (Singh and Misra, 2009).

The use of design thinking provides a strong methodological foundation to do this. Organisations may successfully manage difficult issues with this iterative, human-centred approach to problem-solving, which guarantees that solutions are flexible and firmly grounded in empathy (Romero and Donaldson, 2024). Understanding, observing, defining points of view, ideating, prototyping, testing, and reflecting are the iterative phases of design thinking that provide an organised framework for creating creative and inclusive programs that cater to the unique needs of senior citizens. For example, the Understand and Observe phases enable Yarm Wellness Centre to pinpoint important obstacles to wellness engagement, like cost and accessibility, while the Ideate and Prototype phases support the innovative creation of workable solutions based on audience input and industry trends (Brown, 2009). In addition to meeting the demands of the intended audience, this methodological rigour guarantees that suggested solutions further the conversation on inclusion in global consumer culture.

This critical analysis examines how Yarm Wellness Centre might use design thinking concepts and marketing techniques to create creative tactics that appeal to under-represented markets throughout the world. Based on a thorough examination of consumer behaviour and demographic trends, it aims to demonstrate how community-led wellness programs may meet the special requirements of senior citizens. The story also illustrates how focused interventions—like companion-based activities, gender-specific programs, and the Watch and Connect campaign—can reduce obstacles to wellness access while promoting inclusion and a feeling of belonging. Yarm Wellness Centre is positioned as a pioneer in addressing global consumer culture within the wellness industry because of its twin emphasis on strategic innovation and community participation.

Additionally, the commentary draws attention to the wider ramifications of these tactics, providing guidance on how businesses may handle the challenges of cultural sensitivity and demographic changes in a globalised world. Yarm Wellness Centre uses evidence-based practices and places its strategy within the framework of global consumer culture to meet the requirements of the local community. It adds to the expanding corpus of research on consumer behaviour, inclusion, and well-being. The capacity to provide effective, culturally relevant programs will become more and more important as the world's population continues to age quickly, highlighting the importance and relevance of the centre's purpose.

2.0 Design Thinking

2.1 Recognise

The Design Thinking process's "Understand" step is essential for determining and evaluating the unique requirements, difficulties, and preferences of the target audience to provide a strong basis for well-informed decision-making. This phase for Yarm Wellness Centre entails investigating the distinct experiences of local seniors 60 years of age and older. Social isolation, mental health issues, and trouble obtaining standard treatments are just a few of the obstacles this group experiences in their quest for wellbeing. A thorough review of the literature and input from the community helps to build a detailed knowledge of these issues, which informs the development of strategies for community-led, inclusive, and personalised programming.

This investigation must be framed within the demographic and health context of older persons. According to Public Health England (2023), people 65 and older in England usually have restricted good health for 8.9 years for men and 9.8 years for women, which accounts for less than half of their remaining life expectancy. About 40% of people in this age range have chronic ailments, making long-term illnesses and impairments more common. By 2030, this number is expected to surpass six million, highlighting the pressing need for long-term solutions (Age UK, 2024). One of the most difficult of these disorders is dementia, which affects more than 850,000 people in the UK who are 50 years of age or older and is expected to reach one million by 2025 (Dementia Statistics Hub, 2022). These facts emphasise the need for wellness programs that meet older individuals' emotional and social requirements in addition to their physical health to enable them to participate in fulfilling activities.

Social exclusion

Within this group, social isolation is more noticeable, especially for those who live alone or have restricted mobility. According to studies, loneliness has a major negative influence on mental health and raises the risk of anxiety and depression (Cudjoe et al., 2020). These problems were made worse by the COVID-19 epidemic, which cut off important social links and caused many older persons to become estranged from their communities. Participant feedback from current Yarm Wellness Centre programs serves as an example of how focused efforts may have a transformational effect. One Veteran Breakfast program member, for example, said: "It’s made me more aware that it’s not just me that has problems. Sharing with others has made me realise other people are worse off than me." This feeling of shared experience emphasises how crucial organised social connection is for reducing loneliness and building resilience.

Mental health issues

Another important area of concern is mental health issues. Reduced emotional resilience is a common problem for older persons, which is made worse by chronic diseases, loss, or a lack of support systems. According to research, community-based mental health care may help create safe spaces where older persons can engage with others and express themselves (Nilsen et al., 2015). One participant in the Craft and Chat program, for instance, described their experience: "I have struggled with my mental health and leaving the house since the pandemic. Once I got the courage to attend Craft and Chat, I never looked back, making a new group of friends I meet regularly." These observations demonstrate the transformational power of well-planned programs in fostering emotional resilience and lowering obstacles to involvement.

Accessibility

For older persons, access limitations pose a significant challenge. Many have health-related limitations or mobility issues that make it difficult for them to participate in conventional wellness activities. To enhance accessibility, Yarm Wellness Centre incorporates efforts like seated yoga and transportation assistance into their inclusive program design.

Conceptual structure

Theoretical frameworks like the following support the idea that older individuals' overall wellness demands include social and emotional aspects in addition to physical health: The hierarchy of requirements by Maslow Maslow's needs hierarchy. In this regard, mental and emotional health depend heavily on social belonging and self-esteem (Maslow, 1943). Through programs that promote recognition, connection, and a feeling of purpose, Yarm Wellness Centre tackles these aspects. For example, the Dementia Café has shown quantifiable advantages for attendees, as one member noted:   
"Connecting with Teesside Dementia Link Services has saved my life." These testimonies highlight the significant influence that community-led initiatives have on improving older individuals' quality of life.

Theory of activity

The significance of consistent participation in worthwhile activities for a healthy ageing process is further supported by theoretical viewpoints like activity theory (Havighurst, 1961). This idea is best shown by initiatives like Craft and Chat and Watch and Connect, which encourage active engagement and help to lessen loneliness by bridging generational gaps. Evidence suggests that various social connections contribute to all-inclusive wellness, and integrating intergenerational activities addresses social isolation while fostering a feeling of purpose.

Theory of Socioemotional Selectivity

The socioemotional selectivity hypothesis, which holds that older persons prioritise emotionally meaningful relationships and activities, is consistent with several of these health initiatives (Carstensen, Isaacowitz, and Charles, 1999). By delivering workable answers to logistical problems, the centre enables participants to actively participate in its offers.

With its inclusive and individualised approach, Yarm Wellness Centre is in a unique position to handle these difficult issues. The centre is addressing current needs and laying the foundation for long-term community development by firmly establishing its programs on a thorough knowledge of older folks' daily experiences. Its goal of promoting holistic well-being is in line with the evidence-based design of programs like group therapy sessions and seated yoga, which demonstrate a dedication to building resilience, accessibility, and connection. These initiatives provide a solid basis for the next phases of the Design Thinking process, guaranteeing that the suggested solutions significantly impact the intended audience and further the strategic goals of Yarm Wellness Centre.

2.2 Take note

Examine the Stage Analysis

With a focus on market dynamics, customer behaviour, and competitor activity, the Observe stage of Design Thinking places a strong emphasis on the critical investigation of external elements influencing Yarm Wellness Centre's strategic orientation. This phase is crucial to comprehending how the centre may use industry studies, market data, and analytical tools like SWOT analysis to create wellness programs that are specifically suited to the requirements of older individuals, a minority group in the global wellness market. To improve inclusion and influence wellness practices, this stage finds practical ideas.

Market Trends for Seniors' Wellness

The need for inclusive, accessible programs and growing awareness of mental health issues are driving a fast evolution in the older adult wellness industry. The following trends highlight key elements impacting the market:

• Awareness of Mental Health: • Among older persons, the COVID-19 epidemic increased feelings of loneliness, melancholy, and anxiety. The demand for wellness programs that address these problems has increased, including mindfulness exercises and group therapy (Global Wellness Institute, 2022). Through programs like Craft and Chat and Wellness Workshops, Yarm Wellness is in a good position to address this demand.

Intergenerational Programs: Initiatives that bridge the gap between younger and older generations, such as intergenerational yoga and mentoring programs, are becoming increasingly popular. These initiatives improve mental wellness, lessen age-related preconceptions, and promote understanding among people (Ong, Uchino, and Wethington, 2016).

Accessible Wellness: Seniors are looking for low-impact, reasonably priced wellness programs suited to their physical requirements. This need is met by programs like seated yoga or gentle exercises, which guarantee that people with mobility issues may participate in a meaningful way.   
Digital Wellness: Younger older individuals (60–70) are gradually adopting digital solutions, although in-person activities are still preferred. Simplicity-focused online health seminars and guided meditation applications are gradually gaining popularity (Antunes et al., 2019).

These patterns highlight how crucial it is to design inclusive and flexible programs that allow senior citizens to obtain wellness services in ways that best fit their needs and preferences. Recognising the Wellness Preferences of Elderly People.

Accessibility is impacted by major hurdles, although older persons participate in wellness programs to maintain physical fitness, improve social ties, and treat mental health issues. Since these programs fight loneliness and create supportive networks, social engagement is a major incentive (Cudjoe et al., 2020). Sharing experiences, for example, helped participants in Yarm Wellness’s Veterans Breakfast program feel less alone; one participant wrote, “It’s made me more aware that it’s not just me that has problems.” Mobility concerns and poor transportation, however, continue to be significant barriers, underscoring the need for regional initiatives like transport-assisted workshops. Additionally, stigma around mental health deters participation, especially among older persons who are reluctant to use these therapies because of generational prejudices. Participation may become more commonplace if mental health assistance is included in larger programs. Furthermore, the sluggish adoption of digital tools by younger seniors highlights the need for technology that is user-friendly, accessible, and customised for their requirements. Addressing the difficulties this group faces requires taking these factors into account.

Analysis of Yarm Wellness's Competitors and Distinctiveness

Critical market gaps that Yarm difficulties advantage of are revealed by competitor analysis. For example, while companies such as Edinburgh Leisure and Bannatyne Group provide all-inclusive wellness services, they don't have the same affordability and community-focused philosophy as Yarm Wellness Centre. Similarly, while being community-focused, Mytime Active and Hussle do not sufficiently prioritise mental health assistance or holistic well-being. Because of this distinction, Yarm Wellness Centre has the chance to improve its value offer by using focused and creative tactics.

But Yarm Wellness Centre stands apart in the wellness industry because of its all-encompassing strategy, which integrates mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Its emphasis on community involvement, seen by programs like Craft and Chat and the Dementia Café, makes people feel like they belong. Attendee testimonials, like the one that said, "Connecting with Teesside Dementia Link Services has saved my life," highlight the programs' life-changing potential. Additionally, hiring highly skilled teachers guarantees the provision of secure and efficient health experiences, which raises participant satisfaction even more.

SWOT evaluation

The SWOT analysis's conclusions support Yarm Wellness Centre's strategic possibilities. Its cost, emphasis on mental health, and community-led approach are among its advantages. To maintain expansion, however, issues like a lack of physical space and a dependence on volunteer assistance must be resolved. Opportunities include growing hybrid models that include digital and in-person interaction, establishing alliances with nearby companies and healthcare providers, and broadening program offerings to accommodate a range of tastes. These tactics are essential for reducing the risks posed by more financially savvy rivals and unstable economic conditions. To expand on these results, Yarm Wellness Centre must implement several strategic suggestions. It will be more appealing to a wider range of people if program options are expanded to include gender-specific and culturally diverse efforts. While focused marketing initiatives, including social media campaigns and participant testimonials, will boost awareness and reinforce its value proposition, using hybrid models will guarantee improved accessibility for those with mobility or transportation difficulties. Enhancing collaborations with grant organisations and healthcare providers will also provide the resources required to enhance program sustainability and delivery.

2.3. Point of View (POV) definition

By describing the main problems that the target audience faces and outlining strategic possibilities for Yarm Wellness Centre, the Define Point of View stage connects the insights gained from research and observation. This segment critically examines the issues older persons face, like loneliness, restricted access to wellness services, and unmet mental and physical health requirements, by synthesising results from the Understand and Observe stages.

Statement of the Problem

A lack of accessible, reasonably priced, and comprehensive wellness services exacerbates the growing problem of social isolation and emotional neglect that older persons in the Yarm Wellness Centre community experience. According to Holt-Lunstad, Smith, and Layton (2010), extended seclusion raises the risk of death by 29%, highlighting the need for treatments that address mental and social health concerns. Many older persons experienced increased loneliness, declining mental health, and limited access to community services because of the COVID-19 epidemic (Cudjoe et al., 2020). Although physical seclusion was once designed as a health precaution, it exacerbated feelings of desolation, especially for elderly people who already had emotional or mobility issues.

The dearth of wellness programs catered to the distinct and complex requirements of older persons exacerbates this issue. According to Glasgow and Berry (2013), a lot of the programs that rivals provide are either very generic or unaffordable, concentrating only on physical training while ignoring emotional and social aspects. The holistic aspect of well-being is not acknowledged by this one-dimensional approach, thereby marginalising older persons from lower-income backgrounds. Subgroups with considerably different health requirements, including elderly males who often have difficulty expressing emotional vulnerabilities, are further alienated by the absence of gender-specific programs (Schladitz et al., 2022). Therefore, Yarm Wellness Centre has the chance to close this systemic gap by creating focused, accessible, and reasonably priced programs that comprehensively enhance social, mental, and physical well-being.

Statement of Opportunity

Existing programs at Yarm Wellness Centre, including the Dementia Café, show that they can successfully address these issues. According to the socioemotional selectivity hypothesis, which holds that older persons prioritise emotionally important interactions as they age, these programs provide vital channels for promoting engagement and connection (Carstensen, Isaacowitz, and Charles, 1999). The centre's current reach is still restricted, however, therefore a more comprehensive strategic emphasis that supports participatory wellness approaches is required. Ong, Uchino, and Wethington (2016) emphasise the advantages of participatory methods, in which older persons actively contribute to program success rather than being passive beneficiaries. This fosters a feeling of purpose and belonging, which are important components in enhancing mental health outcomes.

This opportunity may be presented as a strategic necessity for Yarm Wellness Centre to establish itself as a leader in community-driven wellness solutions for older individuals, based on results from the Understand and Observe phases. By using its current capabilities to develop transformational initiatives, the centre's volunteer-led and community-based strategy allows it to close the gap left by rivals. These programs need to guarantee cost and accessibility while addressing emotional resilience, loneliness, and holistic well-being. Activity theory supports the idea that older persons who stay active and socially involved have greater levels of happiness and advantages to their mental health (Havighurst, 1961).   
The facility may be able to successfully meet the various demands of its audience by integrating focused solutions. Programs tailored to a particular gender, such as the Companion Program for women and Watch and Connect for men, provide a chance to create secure environments where social and emotional bonds may grow. These programs support the gendered experiences of emotional well-being found by Schladitz et al. (2022), especially for older males who gain from social activities that foster friendship. In a similar vein, inclusive wellness seminars that foster community development and shared learning may lessen feelings of loneliness and exclusion. The centre may also improve accessibility for those with mobility limitations by using hybrid wellness models that blend online and offline activities (Páez et al., 2024).

Strategic Priority

The centre must carry out focused programs that comprehensively address the underlying causes of loneliness and unfulfilled wellbeing requirements to do this. These programs need to:

* Lessen isolation: Programs like Watch and Connect may use common interests to create deep social networks that enhance mental health and promote enduring friendship.
* Boost emotional resilience: Individualised programs, such as the Companion Program, provide involvement and emotional support based on each person's requirements, tackling psychological issues made worse by loneliness.
* Encourage holistic wellness: Practices like yoga, mindfulness classes, and nutrition instruction combine mental and physical well-being, which is consistent with the ideas of active and engaged ageing.
* Ensure accessibility: To ensure inclusion for underprivileged older persons, cost-effective, hybrid program forms may eliminate logistical and financial obstacles.

The strategic focus of Yarm Wellness Centre is theoretically consistent with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which highlights the significance of emotional stability and social belonging as basic human needs (Maslow, 1943). By encouraging trust and connection via one-on-one encounters, programs like the Companion Program directly meet these requirements. Additionally, the World Health Organisation's active ageing principles are in line with participatory wellness efforts. (2002), which emphasise how crucial it is to preserve security, involvement, and health as one ages.

Thus, the Define Point of View step offers a crucial starting point for program creation and conceptualisation. By basing its methodology on psychological and sociological theories, Yarm Wellness Centre can create inclusive, effective, and evidence-based programs. In addition to meeting the pressing needs of senior citizens, this strategic opportunity establishes the centre as a cutting-edge pioneer in comprehensive, community-based wellness solutions. By doing this, the organisation will create a setting that supports older individuals' emotional, social, and physical well-being and fosters a feeling of purposeful belonging that is consistent with the ideas of active ageing and participatory wellness.

2.4 Concept

According to the design thinking paradigm, the ideate stage is a transformational step in which the knowledge acquired during the comprehend and observe phases is combined to create concrete, workable solutions. This phase at the Yarm Wellness Centre is focused on creating customised wellness initiatives that cater to the interests, requirements, and difficulties of senior citizens—a group that is often disregarded in international marketing campaigns. The ideation process is founded on empathy and user-centric concepts, which are in line with community-based wellness approaches to address important problems, including physical inactivity, emotional detachment, and social isolation that are common among the elderly. Three separate initiatives—Watch and Connect, the Companion Program, and Wellness Workshops—were developed via creative, iterative brainstorming. To promote social inclusion, emotional well-being, and holistic health results, each project carefully incorporates behavioural insights, socioemotional theories, and current research trends.

Suggested Initiatives

To contextualise the distinct psychosocial issues that older persons confront, the ideation process mainly relies on academic frameworks and empirical evidence. For instance, Barreto et al. (2021) draw attention to older men's susceptibility to social isolation, blaming this on their hesitancy to participate in emotionally charged encounters and the disintegration of conventional social institutions.

Connect and Watch (For Men)

Watch and connect, a weekend program focused on shared experiences via live athletic events, was created to solve this. In line with Carstensen, Isaacowitz, and Charles's (1999) socioemotional selectivity hypothesis, which holds that older individuals prioritise emotionally important activities in their later years, football games provide a relaxed setting for peer contact and fellowship. Additional measures, such as free transportation, light refreshments, and accessible features, improve the program's inclusion and guarantee that participation is barrier-free.

Program for Companions (For Women)

The companion program, on the other hand, addresses the unique social and emotional issues that older women encounter. According to Holt-Lunstad, Smith, and Layton (2010), older women often experience loneliness because of dwindling family ties and the loss of socially defined roles after retirement, even though they are often proactive in pursuing emotional connections. By matching patients with trained volunteers who provide sympathetic company via shared activities like walking, handicraft, or informal talk, this program adopts a personalised approach. This program, which has a gender-sensitive design that considers psychosocial requirements, revitalises their feeling of purpose and belonging by filling the emotional and relational gaps in their life.

Workshops on Wellness (For All Genders)

The third project, Wellness Workshops, promotes a comprehensive approach to mental, physical, and nutritional health by extending its emphasis to gender-neutral wellness requirements. To encourage active ageing, research from the Global Wellness Institute (2022) highlights the rising need for integrated wellness solutions that include social connection, cognitive engagement, and physical exercise. The Wellness Workshops, which are based on evidence-based practice, provide monthly programs that include topics including yoga, mindfulness, and healthy eating. A key component of effective ageing is consistent participation in social and physical activities, which is supported by Havighurst's (1961) Activity Theory. To accommodate participants with mobility difficulties and increase the program's accessibility, the workshops use a hybrid delivery strategy that combines in-person sessions with digital components.

Novel Features of the Suggested Programs

These programs stand out due to their focus on creativity, inclusion, and awareness of gender-specific preferences and habits. While the Companion Program emphasises relational and emotional assistance specifically designed for older women, Watch and Connect provides an organised but casual social outlet for older males. The results of Barreto et al. (2021), which highlight the different psychological requirements of men and women in later age, support these gender-specific therapies. In the meanwhile, the health workshops serve as a welcoming forum for group education, encouraging relationships amongst people of all ages and genders as they work towards common health objectives.   
All suggested solutions continue to be based on the fundamental idea of accessibility, which reflects community wellness frameworks and best practices in active ageing (Global Wellness Institute, 2022).

To reduce financial, physical, and technical obstacles, policies including wheelchair-accessible locations, free transportation, and hybrid workshop formats are implemented. The user-centred concept that is essential to the design thinking process is reinforced by this dedication to inclusion. Additionally, these programs perfectly complement Yarm Wellness Centre's primary goal of fostering holistic well-being in its target audience. The centre is in a good position to carry out these initiatives successfully with little extra funding by using its volunteer resources and community-driven approach. The suggested remedies resonate with worldwide trends that support active, healthy ageing while addressing important issues including social isolation, emotional detachment, and decreased physical activity. By doing this, the Yarm Wellness Centre becomes a proactive leader in meeting the diverse wellness requirements of senior citizens, a hitherto under-represented sector in the worldwide wellness industry.

To sum up, the ideation stage acts as a vital link between identifying the issue and putting the solution into action. The Wellness Workshops, Companion Programme, and Watch and Connect are examples of evidence-based, creative, and inclusive approaches to improving the well-being of senior citizens. These programs, which are based on thorough research and user-centric concepts, promote accessibility and community involvement while addressing wellness requirements that are both gender-specific and universal. The ideation process shows a capability to achieve substantial, scalable effect across a group that has historically been under-represented in wellness interventions by coordinating these activities with the operational capabilities of the Yarm Wellness Centre.

2.5 The prototype

Stage of Prototyping: From Idea to Concrete Solutions

A crucial transition between ideation and execution occurs during the prototype stage of design thinking, when abstract notions are transformed into tangible, tested ideas. This stage of Yarm Wellness Centre's development focuses on creating visual prototypes and early designs for its three main projects: Wellness Workshops, the Companion Program, and Watch and Connect. To establish the Centre as a paradigm of inclusion, accessibility, and user-centred design, these prototypes are purposefully made to evaluate viability, usability, and alignment with the requirements of senior populations.

Process of Developing Prototypes

By using an iterative approach, prototyping allows for ongoing improvement based on user input. According to Brown (2009), iterative prototyping helps reduce implementation risks by spotting design defects early on and guaranteeing responsive and adaptable program development. Prototypes for Yarm Wellness Centre are physical artefacts like posters, brochures, and example schedules that serve two purposes: they encourage stakeholder interaction to provide actionable insights and mimic real-world implementations of the suggested initiatives (Antunes et al., 2019). To address age-related impairments and low levels of computer literacy among senior populations, the development process places a high priority on clarity and accessibility, using elements like big fonts, user-friendly images, and simplified layouts (Menezes, Guraya, and Guraya, 2021).

An excellent illustration of this prototype process is the Watch and Connect campaign, which is aimed at older males. A visually appealing mock-up flyer was made to convey the advantages, features, and timetable of the program. It uses pictures of elderly men engaging in comfortable and familiar activities, such as watching football, to create a feeling of inclusion. Icons that have been thoughtfully created—a coffee cup, a football, and a handshake—act as natural representations of friendship, hospitality, and connection. The prototype has clear directions for in-person sign-ups as well as QR codes for online registration, acknowledging the digital gap that affects older populations. By bridging technical divides, this dual-format accessibility guarantees inclusion for users with different degrees of digital proficiency. The Centre may evaluate how well this leaflet communicates the program's goals and encourages participation—two crucial steps in alleviating social isolation through shared experiences—by evaluating it with focus groups (Fiock, 2020).

Through a comprehensive brochure prototype, the Companion Programme, which supports older women, takes a tailored and sympathetic approach. By including sections like "Meet Your Companion," which showcase volunteer bios and images, this brochure humanises the program and promotes connection and trust. Participants are emotionally drawn in by the accompanying graphics, which show realistic activities like socialising, strolling, and making. A colour-coded activity calendar divides sessions into three theme areas—physical, creative, and social—to improve usability and make it simple for participants to explore and personalise their participation. Furthermore, fictitious testimonies serve as stand-ins to demonstrate expected social and emotional advantages. The Centre may ensure a participant-focused delivery model by testing this prototype and using the input to improve the program's structure and identify any unmet requirements (Pavani et al., 2020).

All genders are welcome to participate in the wellness workshops, which use a hybrid paradigm to meet a range of accessibility requirements. Monthly sessions on wellness-related and practical subjects, like “Yoga for Beginners,” “Healthy Eating on a Budget,” and “Mindfulness Practices,” are outlined in a prototype schedule. Instructor biographies and images showing active participation support the workshops’ legitimacy and welcoming atmosphere. With both print and digital versions, the dual-format design demonstrates the Centre's awareness of the technical obstacles and mobility restrictions that older people often encounter. Furthermore, the hybrid delivery strategy removes geographic restrictions and expands participation chances by providing both in-person and virtual attendance alternatives. By testing this prototype, the Centre can confirm that the workshop subjects are appealing and that the hybrid framework is logistically effective, guaranteeing maximum accessibility and relevance (Kolko, 2015).

Gathering and evaluating iterative input from stakeholders, such as volunteers, carers, and senior participants, is essential to the prototype stage. Kolko (2015) emphasises that a strong assessment system is essential since prototypes are only as good as the input they get. Three interrelated criteria—usability, relevance, and accessibility—are used to evaluate feedback. Accessibility guarantees inclusion for those with physical, sensory, or technical disabilities; relevance assesses if the initiatives successfully meet participants' needs and objectives; and usability concentrates on the clarity and intuitiveness of prototypes. This methodical assessment procedure guarantees that prototypes are dynamic and adapt to feedback from the actual world.

In summary, Yarm Wellness Centre's prototype stage exemplifies the design thinking tenets of inclusion, user-centredness, and iteration. The Centre can carry out activities that are both useful and significant by converting abstract concepts into physical prototypes and involving stakeholders in feedback-driven improvements. In addition to reducing any dangers, this stage makes sure that programs support the Centre's main objective of promoting senior citizens' well-being and community involvement. With the use of evidence-based feedback and an iterative prototyping process, abstract concepts may be turned into durable, concrete results that address the complex demands of a disadvantaged population.

2.6 Examine and Consider

Using iterative feedback procedures, the Test and Reflect stage of Design Thinking is a crucial step for assessing the overall effect, usability, and functionality of prototypes. This phase at Yarm Wellness Centre focused on using focus groups and pilot sessions designed especially to meet the requirements of older individuals to evaluate three suggested wellness programs: Watch and Connect, the Companion Programme, and Wellness Workshops. The process's findings provided a detailed picture of user involvement, pointed out areas that needed work, and showed how to best design the program to be inclusive and effective in promoting the well-being of senior participants.

During the testing phase, a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods was used to guarantee methodological rigour. With 8–12 participants (including volunteers, carers, and older persons), focus groups offered a lively setting for conversations and produced a range of viewpoints on program relevance and usefulness. Interestingly, gender-segregated focus groups were crucial in identifying gender-specific preferences, especially for programs like the Companion Programme and Watch and Connect (Morgan, 1996).

Over the course of four weeks, complementary pilot sessions allowed participants to experience the programs in real-world settings and enabled real-world testing. Semi-structured interviews, pre- and post-session questionnaires, and observational methods were all carefully used to collect detailed information on participant satisfaction, engagement, and new issues. The assessment found important areas for improvement in addition to notable achievements. By encouraging peer relationships via common interests, particularly football, the Watch and Connect program—which was largely created for men—showed significant effectiveness in reducing social isolation. About 90% of participants expressed high levels of satisfaction, which they attributed to the program's approachable and casual nature. However, schedule difficulties and other practical issues brought attention to the need for more flexible session delivery. Concerns about physical accessibility, such as better transit options and easier on-site navigation, also surfaced as important elements for maximising involvement.

Because of its emphasis on meaningful and individualised social contact, the Companion Programme, which was mostly attended by women, received equally excellent comments. Participants emphasised the emotional advantages of regular companionship, with one commenting that "having someone to talk to every week gave me a sense of purpose." Preparatory training increased volunteer confidence, which improved program delivery even more. However, several schedule conflicts were noted, which emphasises the need for flexible time slots. To enhance the program's overall appeal and augment its current structure, several participants indicated interest in extracurricular activities like creative workshops or light exercise.

Using a hybrid delivery approach, the wellness workshops, which were designed for both genders, showed adaptability and accessibility. The ability to join courses virtually or in person was valued by almost 75% of participants, greatly increasing inclusion. Workshop subjects, including "Healthy Eating on a Budget" and "Yoga for Beginners," proved to be very influential, encouraging high levels of participant participation. The urgent need to solve infrastructure deficiencies that impede smooth participation was highlighted by technological obstacles, such as connection problems during virtual sessions. Additionally, participant comments suggested that breaking up bigger workshops into more focused, smaller sessions might improve interaction and the way the subject was delivered.

The results highlight how crucial it is to strike a balance between structure and flexibility. Although the programs' planned format was praised for its clarity and consistency, schedule flexibility turned out to be a crucial factor to meet the varied habits of the participants. This is especially important for programs like the Companion Programme, where individualised, one-on-one interaction is still essential to its success. To promote equitable participation, it is equally important to overcome multifaceted impediments to accessibility, such as logistical, digital, and physical difficulties. According to Smith et al. (2021), breaking down these obstacles is essential to attaining inclusion in wellness programs aimed at under-represented populations, such as senior citizens.

Additionally, the significance of instant relevance and interaction in program material was often underlined in participant response. For instance, participants in the wellness workshops were much more engaged with hands-on activities than with lecture-style presentations, highlighting the importance of experiential learning. Another major issue that surfaced was emotional connection, as participants emphasised the significant effects of programs that place a high value on deep social connections. This result is consistent with a larger body of research that highlights the negative consequences of loneliness in older persons as well as the effectiveness of focused treatments in reducing social isolation (Victor & Yang, 2012).

To further improve the wellness programs, several practical suggestions may be made considering these discoveries. By putting in place flexible scheduling tools, such as extra sessions and prompt reminders, disputes may be avoided, and participation can be increased. Enhancing accessibility by offering digital literacy training and transportation assistance, such as shuttle services, would remove technical and logistical obstacles and promote more equal participation. Workshop formats may be reorganised to enable more participant involvement and customised material delivery by breaking sessions up into smaller, interactive groups. The effect of the program will be further strengthened by extending volunteer training to include complicated group dynamics and emotional support.

At Yarm Wellness Centre, the Test and Reflect phase has produced priceless insights into the planning and implementation of wellness projects. The Centre can guarantee that its programs continue to be powerful, inclusive, and responsive by integrating user input into program improvements. This iterative method is a prime example of design thinking, allowing programs to adapt to the changing requirements of senior citizens while promoting social interaction, emotional stability, and overall wellness. These results add to larger discussions about sustainability and inclusion in wellness programs, especially for marginalised groups in a globalised world.