

2015-2018

STRATHBOGIE
SHIRE
COUNCIL

INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES PLAN

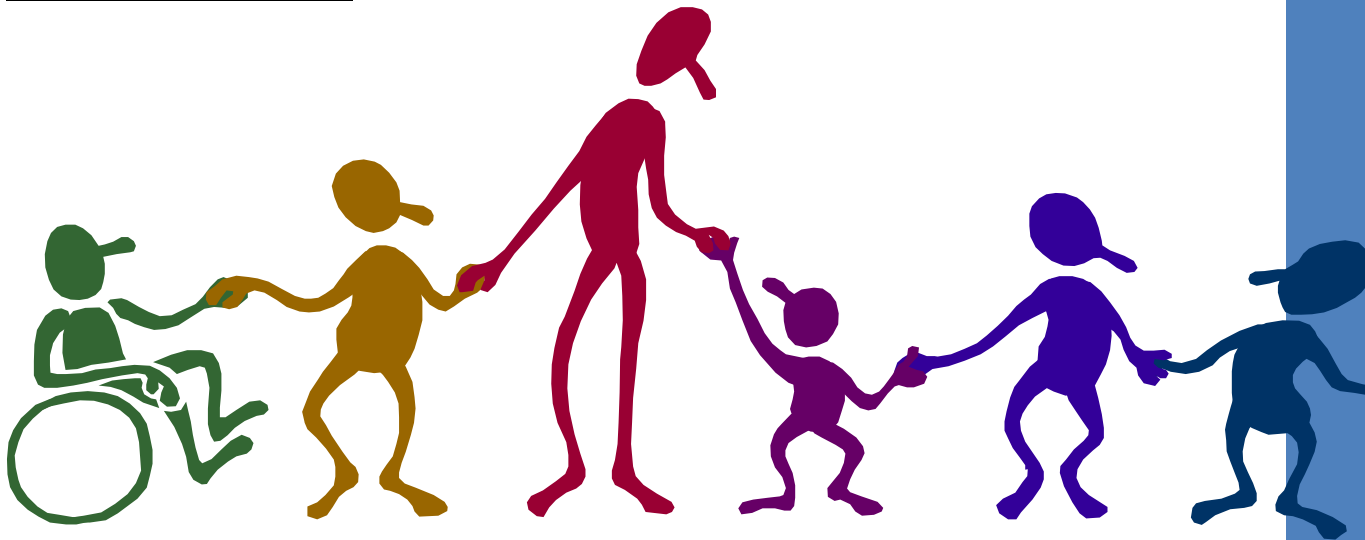




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Sharing the filming progress at Dream Theatre, Jenna Carole and Jenna Elms-Smith



Why we need an Inclusive Communities Plan



Members of Strathbogies Access and Disability Advisory Group (ADAC)

Strathbogies Shire Council is committed to building a stronger, healthier, more accessible community where all people feel safe and welcome. This means making sure everyone in our community has equal access to services and social opportunities and feels generally included. To achieve this goal, we believe that local government and the whole community must work together to support the rights and aspirations of people who may be marginalised such as older people, the disabled and those who face communication barriers.

People with a disability, who live in and visit our Shire, should have the same rights and responsibilities as other people. As an organisation we respect these rights and support people with a disability to make choices, be independent and take part in their local community. We also understand that people with a disability have the right to access information about the services they use within our Shire. We know that people with different disabilities may need different types of supports. We respect families and other people who are important to a person with a disability and aim to assist these families where we can.

This *Inclusive Communities Plan 2015-2018* highlights the rights of people with a disability to live in our community on an equal basis with all other people within the Strathbogies Shire. It outlines how we will support people with a disability over the



next four years to participate fully in their communities. The plan also recognises the contribution that people with a disability make to our community and the need to respect and value social diversity.

The plan includes ways for making communities more inclusive by considering:

- Spaces and places for all;
- Neighbourhoods for all;
- Lifestyle choices for all;
- Services and supports for all; and
- Economies for all.

By addressing these areas through strategic planning, policy making and partnerships, we can build stronger, healthier and more inclusive communities into the future.

How we can plan for better access and inclusion

Strathbogie Shire Council believes in equal access to support and community services.

We know that by planning for universal inclusion our communities will be stronger and enjoy better long-term social, cultural and health outcomes.

This plan aims to implement changes that:

- Support people with a disability to achieve the outcomes they want;
- Safeguard the rights of people with a disability, their family and carers;
- Improve access to Council services for all residents;
- Inform our own practice so it can be improved;
- Support compliance with legislative requirements.

We understand disability

A disability is any condition that restricts a person's mental, sensory or mobility functions. It could be caused by accident, trauma, genetics or disease. A disability



may be temporary or permanent, total or partial, lifelong or acquired, visible or invisible. The 2012 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC) estimated that 4.2 million Australians, or 18.5% of the population, had a disability (*Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014*). We understand that there are many different ways to describe disability. Disability is often not visible and covers a wide range of life experiences and physical and mental states.

A disability can be caused by an accident, illness, trauma, genetic condition, ageing or can occur from birth. A disability can affect a person's mobility, one or more of the five senses, moods and perceptions, or the way the brain functions and its capacity to learn. It can be life-long or temporary, and include restricted capability from an ongoing medical or mental condition.

People with disability may have:

- A physical impairment, for example cerebral palsy;
- A sensory impairment, for example hearing loss;
- A mental illness;
- A neurological impairment or acquired brain injury
- A communication impairment
- An intellectual disability; and/or
- Developmental delay.

Many people with a disability, particularly those with a severe physical or mental impairment, are amongst the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in our society. Of particular concern are those people with limitations affecting their core activities – such as self-care, mobility and communication. It is also important to acknowledge the carers of these people as part of the disabled community.

We understand legislation

In recent years, there has been a greater focus from all levels of government on strengthening communities by providing support for the rights and needs of people



with a disability. Our *Inclusive Communities Plan 2015-2018* is influenced by the following international, national and state policies:

United Nation's International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

In 2008, Australia became one of the first nations to sign the *United Nation's International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*. The purpose of the covenant is to promote, protect and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights by people with disabilities. It covers a number of key areas such as accessibility, personal mobility, health, education, employment, rehabilitation, participation in political life, and equality and non-discrimination. The convention marks a shift in thinking about disability from a social welfare concern, to a human rights issue, acknowledging that societal barriers and prejudices are themselves disabling.



Dream Theatre is creative group for people with a disability based in Seymour.



The Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA)

The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA) was enacted by the federal government to promote fairness and equity for people with a disability and to ensure that people who have a disability have the same rights and level of access to opportunities and services as other members of the community. The DDA makes it unlawful to discriminate - in the provision of goods, services or facilities – against people on the basis that they have, or may have, a disability. The act makes it illegal to directly, or indirectly, discriminate against a person with a disability in employment, access to premises, membership of clubs, sport, providing information and/or accommodation. This commonwealth act overrides any state act or legislation.

The National Disability Strategy 2010 – 2020

The *National Disability Strategy* sets out a ten year national policy framework for improving life for Australians with disability, their families and carers. It represents a commitment by all levels of government, industry and the community to a unified, national approach to policy and program development. This new approach will assist in addressing the challenges faced by people with disability, both now and into the future and includes the National Disability Insurance Scheme whereby individuals with disabilities will have direct access to funding

The National Disability Insurance Scheme Act (NDIS) 2013

The *National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)* is a new way for people to get disability support that takes an individualised approach to providing care and support over a person's lifetime. The NDIS delivers a life-long approach to support people with disability through individualised funding. This means rather than providing support based on the number of places in a limited number of programs, the NDIS provides funding so people can get the care and support they need, based on their individual support needs, goals and aspirations.

The first stage of the NDIS was launched in July 2013 in four locations across the country, including the Barwon region in Victoria. Further sites in the Australian



Capital Territory, Western Australia and the Northern Territory will be launched from July 2014. The NDIS will also be rolled out across Queensland by 2016.

The Equal Opportunity Act 2010

The Act promotes recognition and acceptance of everyone's rights to equality of opportunity. It also advocates for the elimination of discrimination in all its forms.

The Australian Standards 1428 – Design for Access and Mobility (2009)

This standard addresses design for access and mobility and provides design requirement for buildings encompassing the specific needs of people with disabilities.

Disability (Access to Premises- buildings) Standards 2011.

Any application for a building approval - for a new building or upgrade to an existing structure – is required to meet these standards.

The Indigenous Reform Agenda 2008 COAG (Council of Australian Government)

Closing the Gap is a commitment by all Australian governments to improve the lives of indigenous Australians, and in particular provide a better future for indigenous children.

Victorian State Frameworks:

Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006

The charter is an act of parliament that clearly sets out the human rights and responsibilities of all Victorians. The key sections in relation to disability are:

(8.2) Every person has the right to enjoy his or her human rights without discrimination; and

(8.4) Measures taken for the purpose of assisting or advancing persons or groups of persons disadvantaged because of discrimination do not constitute discrimination.



Victorian Disability Act 2006

The Victorian Disability Act 2006 outlines how the state government plans to support people living in Victoria with one or more disabilities. This act relates to people with a disability and the disability services provided by the government and other organisations. The principles on which the act is based include equity, self-determination and choice, diversity and non-discrimination. Section 38 of the Act requires public sector bodies to prepare a plan and to report regularly to the Victorian Government. (The *Inclusive Communities Plan* meets this requirement.)

The Victorian State Disability Plan 2013-2016

The Victorian State Disability Plan 2013 - 2016 sets out the Victorian Government's future vision for disability and outlines strategies to achieve this vision. The plan outlines the government's approach to disability and reaffirms the rights of people with a disability to live and take part in community life as citizens of Victoria.

The Local Government Act 1989

This Act provides a framework for the establishment and operation of Victoria's 79 local Councils. The Act requires Local Government to manage communities in a way that includes people of all ages and abilities.

The Multicultural Victoria Act 2004

This Act enhances a 'whole-of-government' approach to multicultural affairs. It promotes social, cultural, economic and political participation, access to services provided by government and other bodies. It also advocates for the retention of social identity among cultural and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities. The Act improves accountability of Government departments in the area of multicultural affairs, including ensuring compatibility with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*.

For new residents or refugees from other countries, having English as a second language, or speaking no English can be regarded as a 'communication barrier' and is therefore relevant to the context of this plan.



A Fairer Victoria 2010

A Fairer Victoria 2010 and updates sets out the Victorian Government's strategy to reduce disadvantage in Victoria. The policy document recognises that a long-term, whole of government approach is essential in ensuring social sustainability. The majority of the strategies contained in the policy, relate to people with a disability, their families and carers. Specifically, section ten of the social policy action plan is designed to ensure that people with disabilities enjoy the same rights as other Victorians and to increase their opportunities to participate in the community.

The Autism State Plan 2009

Victoria was the first jurisdiction in Australia to develop an Autism State Plan to improve outcomes for people of all ages with an autism spectrum disorder.

Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002

The *Transport Standards* recognise that access to public transport enables people with disabilities, their families and their carers to fully participate in community life and also benefits many older Australians and parents with infants in prams.

Victoria's Action Plan to address violence against women and children 2012 – 2015

The central tenet of the *Action Plan* is that violence against women and children in any form, in any circumstance and in any community is unacceptable. The plan reflects the Victorian Government's commitment to preventing violence happening, holding perpetrators to account for their actions and providing support to women and children who experience violence. Prevention is at the core of the Action Plan, with an emphasis on educating and engaging the community to positively change attitudes and behaviours.

The Victorian Homelessness Action Plan 2011 – 2015

The *Victorian Homelessness Action Plan 2011-2015 (VHAP)* is the Victorian Government's four-year plan to deliver services in a new way to people experiencing homelessness.



The plan is focused on: supporting innovative approaches to homelessness; investigating models that focus specifically on early intervention and prevention; better targeting resources when and where they are most needed and where they will make the biggest difference.

The plan sets out a reform process to review the existing system, trial innovative approaches and recommend a new way of working to address homelessness in Victoria.

The Carers' Recognition Act 2012

The *Act* recognises and values the role of carers and the importance of care relationships in the Victorian community. The *Act* includes a set of principles about the significance of care relationships and specifies obligations for state government agencies, local councils and other organisations that interact with people in care relationships.





What our community looks like

Strathbogie Shire at a glance

- **Our people:** The current estimated population of the Strathbogie Shire is 9,660, more than half of which is aged over 45 (*Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2014*). While 89.6 % of the Shire is dedicated to rural land use, most of our residents choose to live predominantly around the four small towns of Euroa, Nagambie, Violet Town and Avenel. Strathbogie's population growth is relatively stable and predicated to grow at a slower rate than metropolitan Melbourne and other neighbouring Shires. 9.7 of the population was born overseas (4.2% in a non-English speaking country) while a further 0.97% identifies as of Aboriginal or Torres Strait decent. (*Medicare Local, Goulburn Valley, 2012*). In addition to the permanent resident population, the shire has a further 2,300 non-resident ratepayers. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the population swells by up to 4,500 people during peak holiday season, to around 14,000 people in total. (*Strathbogie Shire, 2014*)
- **Our services:** Council offers a variety of services, including libraries, maternal and child health, community development programs, community planning and youth development programs. While the Shire has a range of medical and educational facilities, the community can experience difficulty in accessing some of these services. People with a disability, like the general population, rely on a range of government-funded services to meet their various needs. As our people get older, we will see an increase in demand for services to support both disability and ageing trends. Although Strathbogie is notable for its lack of local community health services, there are some 39 external agencies that provide an 'in-reach' model into the region. Specialist disability services are offered by Villa Maria, Connect GV, Family Care, Shepparton Access, Goulburn Options, the Regional Information and Advocacy Council (RIAC) and Yooralla. Most community health facilities also offer some disability services. (*Medicare Local, Goulburn Valley, 2012.*)



- **Growing tourism:** The Shire of Strathbogie has seen enormous growth in the tourism and event market. Our central location and proximity to Melbourne, good freeway access, water, mountains, wine and gourmet foods have created a new destination within an easy drive of most parts of the metropolitan area. Tourism is a major contributor to our economic, social and cultural wealth. Visitors spend around \$29 million per annum within the Shire, and our area attracts 225,000 domestic day and overnight visitors per annum. There are 303 businesses directly linked to tourism in our Shire. The majority of visitors come from Melbourne (69%) for a 1 to 2 night stay. (*Tourism Research Australia, 2008*) A proportion of these visitors to the Shire will have a disability, either declared or hidden.
- **Work opportunities:** Strathbogie's unemployment rate, as of 2011, sat on 5.9% compared to the state average of 5.4%. The median household income is lower than the state and national averages, partially due to the Shire's older population who are less likely to have completed education to year 12 (*Goulburn Valley Interim Health Needs Assessment, 2012 – 2013*) Agriculture accounts for nearly a quarter of the labour force in the Shire, followed by manufacturing and construction. (*Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011*)

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) research tells us that:

- People with a disability have a higher unemployment rate (11.2%) than those without a disability.
- On average, people with disabilities earn on average over \$300 less than person without a disability.

(*Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2013*)

- **Disadvantage:** Overall, the Strathbogie Shire is more disadvantaged in terms of socio-economic wellbeing than many local government areas in Victoria, ranking 23 on a scale of 1 to 79 where 1 is most disadvantaged. In fact, our Shire sits within the top 30% for disadvantage in the state. People with a serious disability are less likely than others to have a ready source of



assistance from outside the home, have limited access to transport and are more inclined to feel unsafe at home and to experience violence or a break-in. People with disabilities are also less likely to have qualifications and, consequently, more likely to be economically disadvantaged than people without disabilities. (*Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011/2013*)

- **Getting older:** Our population, like most parts of Australia, is ageing. This ageing trend is projected to continue, but at a higher rate as the baby boomers enter old age. Forecasts show that the Strathbogie Shire will have the second highest population of people over 60 years of age in Victoria by 2021 (*Department of Human Services, 2004*). The Shire has the second highest % population of over 60 year olds in Victoria (34.2%) and the fifth highest of over 75 years olds (11.5%). By 2031 the number of people 60 years and older is predicted to be 44%. (*Department of Planning and Community Development, 2011*). The incidence of disability increases with age from 4.4% of children to 95.9% of people aged over 90. The chance of becoming the primary carer of someone with a disability, usually a partner or other family member, also increases with age, peaking in the 55 to 74 years age group. (*Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2004/10*)
- **Mental health:** Suicide rates for males in rural communities have increased steadily over the past 20 years, with rates for young males consistently higher in small rural communities than in metropolitan and regional areas. The Disability Adjusted Life Years (DALY) rate for male suicide in Strathbogie (5.6) is higher than Victoria overall (3.9); and the rate for depression in females is also higher in Strathbogie (8.9) than Victoria (7.1).(*Goulburn Valley Primary Care Partnership, 2009*)
- **Disability in the Strathbogie Shire:**

In 2011 ABS census data estimated that the Strathbogie Shire population had an age-adjusted disability rate of 5% compared with 5.1% Victoria-wide. (*VLGA , 2014*)



- 77 in every 1000 people receive disability pension.
- The rate of disability is projected to increase by 41.2%, from 621 persons in 2014 to 877 persons in 2031. (Goulburn Valley *Interim Health Needs Assessment*, 2013)

English as a second language and social diversity barriers:

In 2013 2.7 % of the population in Strathbogie spoke a first language other than English (*Hume Region Health Profile*, 2013). It is important to consider community members who do not speak English, use English as a second language, or have Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, as a group likely to experience barriers to communication and social inclusion. These communities might experience a range of limitations, such as poor access to information, exclusion from social activities and difficulty understanding cultural norms in mainstream Australian society. If combined with a physical disability, a communication barrier can worsen social inclusion on many levels. While not a disability, language diversity is relevant to the context and aspirations of this plan.



Who are our partners?

Strathbogie Shire Council believes that government and the community should work together to support people with disabilities. We know that people with disabilities need to be asked about what they need to be part of the community. By partnering with others, we are able to better understand what needs to be done over the next four years. Our key partners in this process have included:



- The Strathbogie Shire Access and Disability Advisory Committee (ADAC);
- Strathbogie Health Consortium (Violet Town Bush Nursing Hospital, Nagambie Healthcare, Euroa Health)
- Goulburn Rural Access;
- Goulburn Valley Primary Care Partnership;
- Regional Information and Advocacy Council (RIAC);
- Aged and disability services; and
- Strathbogie Shire Council departments.

The Strathbogie Shire ADAC provides valuable advice and guidance to Council on a strategic level by helping to integrate disability issues into core business such as service planning and policy development. The committee acts as a forum for people with a disability to share their concerns and ideas around access to services and supports within our Shire.

We have also worked with neighbouring shires, to develop an agreed framework that helps us to work together with a common purpose and shared commitment to building an inclusive community. Our approach towards planning and service delivery allows Council to work in a leadership role and/or a delivery role.

This plan has clear links with other plans in the region and in neighbouring Shires which means that initiatives can be rolled out across the Shire in a coordinated, collaborative and meaningful way.

What are our key issues and priorities?

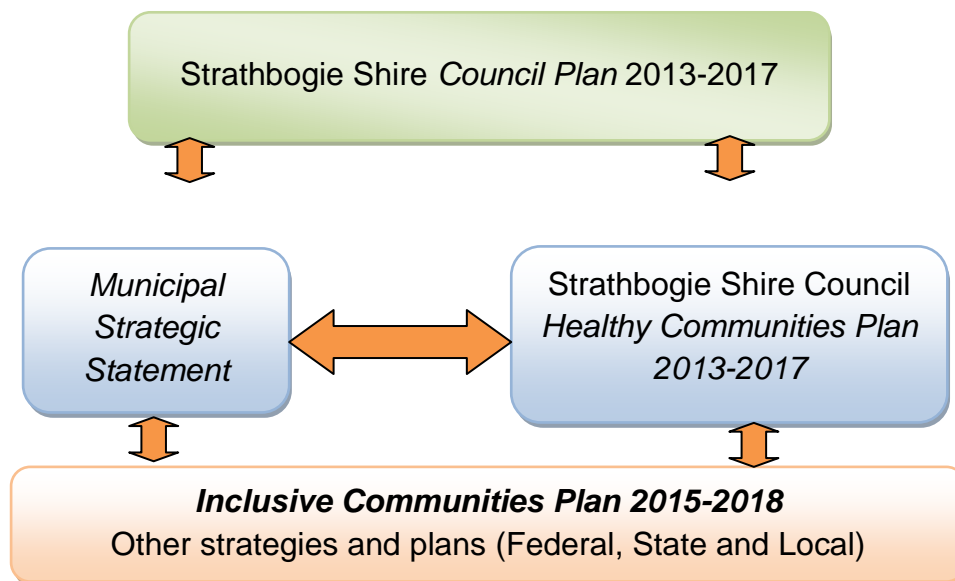
Often people with a disability are restricted from taking part in an activity or accessing a service because of environmental or attitudinal 'barriers'. Barriers are obstacles that stop people with disabilities from carrying out day to day tasks. By identifying and removing these barriers, Strathbogie Shire Council can increase the level of access to services and community support.



Planning for the removal of barriers and the development of good access not only helps people with a disability, but many other people including:

- Parents with prams;
- Elderly people with walking frames or sticks;
- People with communication barriers
- People with sports or other injuries; and
- People with temporary disabilities or medical conditions;

This *Inclusive Communities Plan 2015-2018* influences, and is influenced by, a series of other Council plans and strategies. Together, they identify what is going on in our community and set the key priorities for the future of the Strathbogie Shire.



What we are going to do?

Social inclusion is a core principle in the Strathbogie Shire Council Plan. We value widespread participation in civic and community life among people of all abilities and backgrounds. Like the *Healthy Communities Plan 2013-2017*, our action plan is framed by five key factors which uphold our vision of a strong, healthy and accessible community:



Accessible and inclusive spaces and places

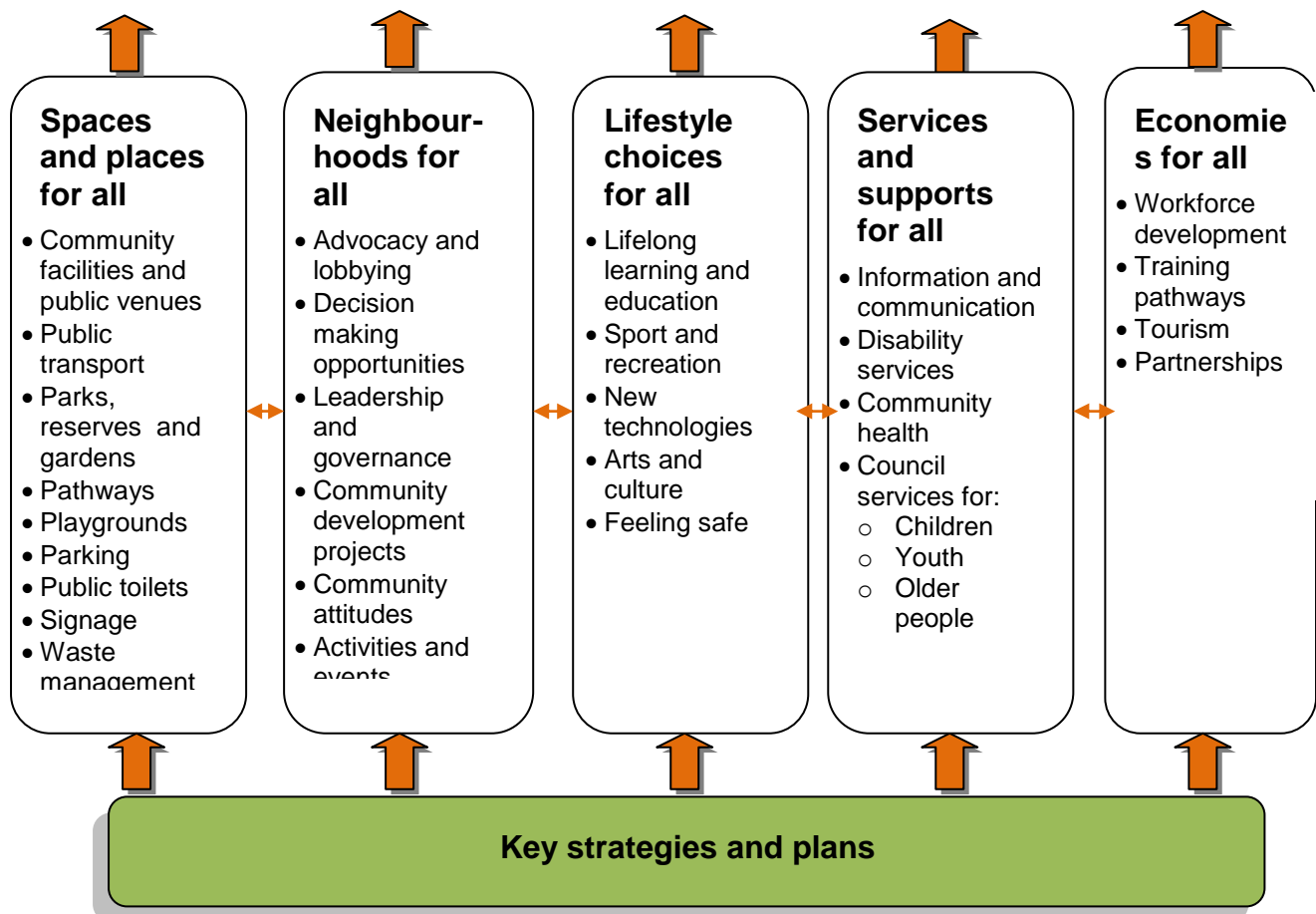
Accessible and inclusive neighbourhoods

Accessible and inclusive lifestyle choices

Accessible and inclusive services and supports

Accessible and inclusive economies

OUR VISION FOR THE NEXT FOUR YEARS





Factor 1: Accessible and inclusive spaces and places

Why we need spaces and places for all

We know that inclusive communities are shaped by the environments in which people live. How we plan our buildings, parks, facilities, roads and pathways impacts on the way people participate in our community affecting their wellbeing. Where people live forms the backdrop to their lives, so it is important that, as a Council, we plan ahead for accessible and inclusive spaces and places.



Paralympic basketball players Leanne and Shelley visiting Euroa Secondary College

What we have done recently

- Produced a *Mobility Map*
- Installed Recharge points
- Developed *Wayfinding* signage
- Improved the *Hughes Creek Nature Trail* at Stewart Park, Avenel
- Ensured all new buildings seeking Council permits complied with the building code and are DDA compliant
- Ensured ongoing compliance with *Footpath Trading Policy*
- Ensured all Council building and facility upgrades and redevelopments are accessible for people with disabilities



- Incorporated a significant weighting for all community grant applications that address improved accessibility to spaces and places

What we will do in the next four years

Key priorities

1. Improve accessibility to Council owned facilities
2. Seek funding to further implement Council's *Walking/Cycling Path Strategy*
3. Explore ways to continue the rollout of Council's *Wayfinding Strategy*

| Key Priority | Actions | Who is responsible |
|---|---|--|
| Improve accessibility to Council owned facilities | <p>Review the Playground Strategy</p> <p>Continue to consult with the Access Committee in planning new facilities and updating existing buildings</p> | Asset Services |
| Implement Council's <i>Walking/Cycling Path Strategy</i> | <p>Seek funding to support further rollout of the Strategy</p> <p>Support development of the <i>Tracks and Trails strategy</i></p> | <p>Grants Coordinator</p> <p>Economic Development, Community Development</p> |
| Improve <i>Wayfinding</i> signage | <p>Seek funding for <i>Wayfinding</i> signage in Nagambie & Violet Town</p> | Asset Services, Grants Coordinator |

Factor 2: Accessible and inclusive neighbourhoods

Why we need neighbourhoods for all

People have a sense of wellbeing if they are connected to others in their community and feel like they belong. We all need to feel safe, work in a meaningful way, earn



enough money to live, feel valued and have time to spend with others. By planning ahead, Council can create opportunities for people of all abilities to actively participate in community life.

What we have done recently

- Ensured the community planning model for community action groups is informed by access and inclusion principles
- Ensured Council meetings and councillor information sessions are accessible to all community members
- In partnership with Greater Shepparton City Council and Moira Shire Council, recruited a new Rural Access Officer
- Continued to support and build the capacity of the Access and Disability Advisory Committee (ADAC)
- Encouraged representatives from different cohorts to join the ADAC
- Partnered with Greater Shepparton City Council to celebrate International Day of Persons with a Disability
- Partnered with the Euroa Community Cinema to support World Refugee Day by running the film *Wadjda* and the Dream Theatre 'Five Films Festival' celebrating actors with disabilities.
- Incorporated a significant weighting for all community grant applications that address accessible and inclusive neighbourhoods

What we will do in the next four years

Key priorities

1. Support the use of the Euroa Community Cinema as an accessible space for community events
2. Encourage professional development/leadership for community members with a disability
3. Enhance positive images of people with disabilities in the community and celebrate diversity



| Key Priority | Actions | Who is responsible |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Support the use of the Euroa Community Cinema as an accessible space for community events</p> | <p>Promote the Cinema to community groups as a potential venue</p> | <p>Community Development</p> |
| <p>Encourage professional development/leadership for community members with a disability</p> | <p>Stay informed about the implementation of the <i>NDIS</i> and assist in developing local employment and skill building opportunities</p> <p>During the review of the community grants program, explore the possibility of a disability specific professional development grant</p> | <p>Community Development</p> <p>Community Development</p> |
| <p>Enhance positive images of people with disabilities in the community and celebrate diversity</p> | <p>Include positive images of people with disabilities on the website and other council publications</p> <p>Seek opportunities for public events that celebrate diversity</p> | <p>Communications</p> <p>Community Development, Economic Development</p> |



Factor 3: Accessible and inclusive lifestyle choices

Why we need lifestyle choices for all

An inclusive community supports healthy choices and a healthy lifestyle for all people. By feeling safe, participating in physical activity, looking after our mental health and exercising our brains, we can live longer, feel better about ourselves and strengthen our links within the community. To do all this, we need to be able to access the right information. Council has an important role in planning for opportunities that support healthy lifestyles for community members of all abilities.

What we have done recently

- Supported disability and community agencies to advocate on behalf of people with disabilities
- In partnership with the Goulburn Valley Primary Care Partnership, delivered the *Act, Belong, Commit* (mental health promotion) program
- In partnership with Women's Health Goulburn North East joined the Steering Committee for the *Hume Region Preventing Violence Against Women and*



Children Strategy 2013-2017; and associated Local Government Sub-Committee

- Used both PDF and Word formats in Council downloadable website documents

What we will do in the next four years

Key priorities

1. Ensure that Council uses a diversity lens in the development of all Council strategies and plans
2. Continue to improve Council's website and public documents to improve accessibility

| Key Priority | Actions | Who is responsible |
|---|---|--|
| Ensure that Council uses a diversity lens in the development of all Council strategies and plans | Include access / inclusion in the induction of new staff and introduce biennial Disability Awareness Training for staff to ensure that accessibility is embedded across Council | Human Resources, Community Development |
| | Continue to promote 'keeping mentally healthy' message through <i>Act-Belong-Commit</i> | Community development |
| | Endeavour to include young people living with disabilities – eg in nursing homes in the implementation of the <i>Youth Strategy</i> | Community development , Youth services |
| | Support GLBTI | |



| | | |
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| | <p>(Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex)</p> <p>Inclusion by seeking opportunities for staff professional development to ensure confidence about GLBTI inclusion</p> <p>Research and develop processes to identify and respond to breaches of cultural safety for GLBTI community members</p> | <p>Community Development, Human Resources, Communications</p> <p>Community Development, Human Resources, Communications</p> |
| <p>Continue to improve Council's website and public documents to improve accessibility</p> | <p>Consult accessibility professional to assess website and public documents across Council</p> <p>Develop access & inclusion content of website</p> | <p>Rural Access , all staff</p> <p>Community Development, Communications</p> |

Factor 4: Accessible and inclusive services and supports

Why we need services and supports for all

We know that to be an inclusive community, we need ease of access to a range of health and community services. By building partnerships with other organisations and thinking about ways to improve access to our own services, Council can plan for healthier outcomes across the Shire for people of all abilities.

What we have done recently

- Continued support for the Strathbogie Health and Community Services Consortium



- Continued to provide services to young children and their families through the Maternal and Child Health service
- Joined the *Getting There Network* public transport online hub
- Provided co-location facility for the Goulburn Rural Access Officer
- Continue to support Senior Citizens with funding for maintenance of centres and activities
- Incorporated a significant weighting for all community grant applications that address improved accessibility to services and supports
- Provided Shire-Wide grants roadshow to support applications using the new on-line system, *SmartyGrants*
- Provided Home and Community Care services for frail, aged people and younger people with a disability
- Successfully applied for accreditation to display the Accessible Communication Symbol, including training for Council staff and volunteers

What we will do in the next four years

Key priorities

1. Improve Community Engagement
2. Foster relationships with neighbouring Councils to maximise outcomes

| Key Priority | Actions | Who is responsible |
|------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Improve Community Engagement | Utilise the <i>Community Engagement Strategy</i> in developing new projects | All staff |
| | Aim to work at or above the base level of Australian Disability Standards by utilising the skills and knowledge of the Access and Disability Advisory Committee to | All staff |



| | | |
|---|--|---|
| | inform practices across Council | |
| Foster relationships with neighbouring Councils to maximise outcomes | <p>Research successful programs delivered by other Councils to identify those of value to Strathbogie Shire – especially in the area of public/community transport.</p> <p>Work with the Strathbogie Health Consortium to encourage expansion of services to support ageing people, people with a disability and their carers.</p> | <p>Community Development</p> <p>Community Development and Executive</p> |

Factor 5: Accessible and inclusive economies

Why we need economies for all

A healthy economy contributes to our health and wellbeing by providing opportunities for us to develop new skills, work or be involved in the community, have enough money to participate in life and have access to goods and services locally. We know that to build a healthy economy Council must encourage economic development through job creation, training, mentoring and providing concessions and rebates for people of all abilities.



What we have done recently

- Raised Council awareness of the New Zealand *BeAccessible* online business and community initiative.
- Provided position descriptions in accessible formats on the Council website and in hard copy upon request
- Ensured Council's workplace, where practical, is accessible for employees of all abilities
- Provided national relay training and mental health first aid training for staff
- Provided Communication Access training for staff and volunteers
- Incorporated a significant weighting for all community grant applications that address improved accessibility to economic outcomes
- Actively encouraged key community events to be more inclusive
- Supported better communication and decision making by internal departmental staff and contractors through the Rural Access Program

What we will do in the next four years

Key priorities

1. Develop a Shire-wide reputation that is welcoming of people from diverse backgrounds
2. Support diversity and difference with the local economy



| Key Priority | Actions | Who is responsible |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Develop a Shire-wide reputation that is welcoming of people from diverse backgrounds</p> | <p>Work with local business groups to promote ‘<i>good access is good business</i>’</p> <p>Support and implement Council’s <i>Bike and Walking Path Strategy</i> and future development of infrastructure in the Shire which will link key tourism sites through walking, cycling and boating</p> <p>Lobby for better passenger rail services into Melbourne & regional centres and for increased VLine stops and shuttle services</p> <p>Lobby for and promote affordable local housing options to retain and build population</p> | <p>Rural Access, Economic Development, Community Development</p> <p>Economic Development , Asset Services, Executive</p> <p>Economic Development, Executive</p> <p>Economic Development, Executive</p> |
| <p>Support diversity and difference within the local economy</p> | <p>Support the development Industries Network to</p> | <p>Economic Development, Community Development</p> |



| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>support the mental wellbeing of the agricultural community e.g. via <i>Act-Belong-Commit</i> resources</p> <p>Encourage local businesses and agencies to partner and develop supported community work opportunities - e.g social enterprise</p> | <p>Economic Development, Executive</p> |
|--|--|--|

How we plan to keep on track

Strathbogie Shire Council has followed an action planning model in the development of the *Inclusive Communities Plan 2015-2018*. The framework encourages a continuous cycle of planning, consultation and evaluation. Future reviews of the *Inclusive Communities' Plan* will use this model to guide evaluative processes.

Assessing needs and assets

- **March 2014:** Review Strathbogie Shire Council *Inclusive Communities Plan 2010-2013*

Agreeing on a vision

- **July 2014:** Gather and analyse local data

Generating ideas and plans for actions

- **August 2014:** Develop an action plan with key partners
- **October 2014:** Present draft *Plan 2014 – 2018*
- **November 2014:** seek community feedback on draft



Enabling action

- **March 2015 :** Adopt/advertise *Inclusive Communities Plan 2014 - 2018*
- **Ongoing:** Provide resources to implement actions

Monitoring and evaluation

- **Ongoing:** Develop signposts to track the plan's progress

To further ensure Strathbogie Shire Council's *Inclusive Communities Plan 2014-2018* remains relevant and meets the changing needs of our community, signposts which identify the success of the plan will be established at the beginning of each action planning period. The Access and Disability Advisory Committee (ADAC) will work with the regional Rural Access Officer to monitor and review the plan on behalf of Council. The Committee will comprise active service providers and community members who can assist the Shire in identifying needs, defining priorities and monitoring progress for the duration of the Plan period.





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Appendix: Related Council Plans and Strategies

Council Plan 2014 – 2018/19

Strategic Resources Plan 2014 – 2018/19

Economic Development Masterplan 2013 – 17

Health Communities Plan 2010 – 14.

Community Engagement Strategy, 2014

Youth Strategy, 2013 – 15

Healthy Children and Families Plan

Playground Management Plan

Asset Management Plan

Sustainable Landuse Plan

Nagambie Connect Development Plan

Avenel 2030,

Violet Town and District Strategic Development Plan

Euroa and Avenel Rural Residential Development Plan

Relevant regional plans:

Creating a more inclusive community for people with a disability; a strategic framework for local government, 2015

Hume Strategy for Sustainable Communities 2010 – 20

Hume Regional Growth Plan, 2014

Victorian State Disability Plan 2013 – 16

Greater Shepparton Universal Access and Inclusion Plan, 2013 – 17

Mitchell Shire Access and Inclusion Disability Plan, 2013 – 17