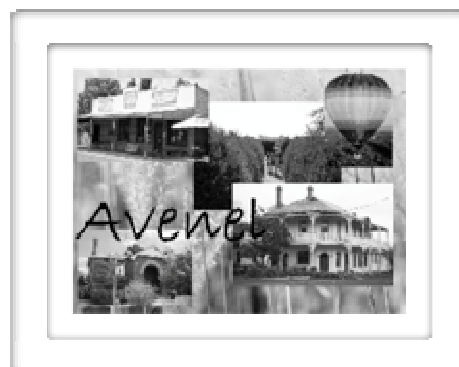


AVENEL ACTION GROUP
- AvAg

P.O. Box 90, Avenel Victoria 3664



AVENEL ACTION GROUP

COMMUNITY PLAN 2014

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1.0 Introduction

This Avenel Action Group Community Plan is as a result of a public meeting held on 10th July, 2014. The community action plan is part of a broader Strathbogie Shire support for communities to improve local decision making and for local decisions to enhance the quality of life in each community.

The values for Avenel are:

- **To ensure there is a connected community** – that is, that people are aware of what is happening in their community and contribute to community affairs as they evolve.
- **To ensure a supportive community** – that is, that community can socialise together but also support each other, in order to build community spirit.
- **To demonstrate a community that shares opportunities** – that is, that the physical attractiveness, activities and history combine to build a community that is proud of its location and willing to share it between the community and with others.

Consequently the objectives for the new community plan are around:

- To identify initiatives that bring the community together
- Identify projects that will contribute to the values as outlined above

1.1 Priorities

The Av Ag Community Plan was approved by a meeting of the Avenel Action Group on the 14th of August 2014 and the three most pressing priorities from the plan were determined:

Avenel Memorial Hall refurbishment – a Master Plan has been developed by the Avenel Memorial Hall committee for future development of this vital community resource.

Paths & walkways – the Strathbogie Shire Council has a published Bicycle and Walking Path Strategy (December 2009) which clearly indicates why Avenel urgently requires pathways in the town, where they are required and in what order of priority they should be built.

Skate Park - a Master Plan has been developed by the Av Ag Skate Park subcommittee and a survey conducted of potential sites. Young skaters in Avenel have shown their support for a skate park by raising funds for the Master Plan with a cake stall at the monthly Avenel Market.

These three projects require a partnership between the local community, Strathbogie Shire Council and Federal and State Government to come to fruition. Ag AG and the Shire hope to secure funding for these major community building projects from Federal and State Government.

1.2 Avenel History

Avenel got its first rap from explorer Thomas Mitchell, who when described the surrounding country as 'ready for the plough in many parts, as though specially prepared by the creator for the industrious hands of Englishmen'. These predictions proved accurate, with solid agricultural industry producing high quality wool and in particular, lamb.

The town was established along the old Hume Highway and the highway now bypasses the outskirts of the town. The Post Office opened on 2 June 1858. It is frequently stated as having been named for a village in Gloucestershire by Henry Kent Hughes. Hughes settled there in 1838, laid out the future town, and named the Hughes Creek, which flows through it.

Ned Kelly, who spent his childhood living in the town and attended the local primary school. It was during this time that Ned saved a young Richard Shelton from drowning in the local Hughes Creek. For his bravery, Shelton's parents rewarded Ned with a green silk sash – Ned was wearing this as a cummerbund at the Siege of Glenrowan, when he was finally captured.

His father John (Red) Kelly died in Avenel and is buried at the Cemetery. Red also had his dalliance with the law, once charged, but later acquitted of cattle stealing although fined for illegal possession of a hide. His case was heard at the Avenel Court House, which remains standing today.

Avenel also boasts one of provincial Victoria's most impressive bridges in the six-arch, stone crossing of Hughes Creek. Built by Hugh Dalrymple in 1850, the bridge remains but was superseded for traffic by a modern structure in 1969.

The Avenel of today is a welcoming small community with all of the appeal that goes with that.

(Sources: nagambielakesandstrathbogieranges.com.au, Wikipedia)

1.3 Council's Support for Community Planning

The Strathbogie Shire Council has commenced a Community Planning program to increase resident input through their local Action Plans in order to shape the individual needs of each community.

The benefits of a community preparing and supporting their local Action Plan, for the Strathbogie Shire Council are:

- To be able to provide improved facilities, services and initiatives that better reflect the community, and are more sensitive to the various stakeholders.
- To contribute to the quality of life issues that benefits each community.
- To identify services, facilities and activities needed in each community.
- To closely assist and monitor community needs and its changes.
- To advocate on behalf of the community to other government agencies for appropriate funding for initiatives needed and identified by communities.
- To identify the services in which Council has a role.
- To develop a better understanding of the needs of communities.
- To identify more appropriate strategies in response to the needs of communities.

Avenel Action Group Community Plan 2014

In particular Av AG would like to thank Robbie Rae, Community Development Officer - Community Planning of the Strathbogie Shire Council for her thoughtful and energetic support, and for running the Community Plan evening on the 12th of July.

Shire Councillor Malcolm Little has also been a passionate supporter of Av Ag, attending many of the Group's meetings and liaising with council to progress Av AG projects.

1.4 What are the Key Principals of Avenel Community Action Planning?

- **Partnerships** -at the centre of community planning is the opportunity to build partnerships between the community and stakeholders external to Avenel.
- **Sustainability** – the community is seeking to improve its quality of life. All the outcomes of any actions must be able to be maintained into the future.
- **Consultation** – the community must ensure that its plans and ideas for each initiative is genuinely what local people want, and it fits into the foreseeable future needs of the Avenel community. It includes involving residents in developing each initiative that increase community participation and continuously improve community opportunity and services.
- **Commitment** – the Avenel community in pursuing these goals must ensure that the outcomes are supported by direct community involvement and support, through either recognised and agreed paid resources or volunteer time.

1.5 Community Action Group

The following residents make up the Avenel Community Action Group:

Jeff Moran, President

Neil Larson, Treasurer, and temporary Secretary

Frank Dawson

Lynj James

Linda Riddle

Robin Hyland

However all members of the community may join the group at anytime..... or simply attend meetings.

2.0 Suggestions for the Avenel Community Action Plan

The development of the Action Plan has evolved through a series of meetings and public discussions. At all stages, residents have been encouraged to participate.

The following suggestions represent all of the initial views and suggestion to come out of the public session. The final outcomes or directions will require further research and development. This will ensure the final concept that is proposed for implementation, represents broad community approval.

By undertaking components of this Community Action Plan, it prepares the Avenel community to seek access to program funding. It also enables potential resource providers to acknowledge that the Community Action Plan represents a combined community direction.

The following suggestions were made at the public meeting:

Avenel Strengths

- Friendly/family oriented/nice feel about town
- Generous
- Community Minded/supportive
- Pro Active
- Energetic
- Picturesque
- Heritage buildings /trees
- Centrally Located/good access to freeways/highways
- Lovely parklands
- Great community facilities
- Good signage
- "The Market"
- The Avenel Station
- Safe environment
- Sporting teams and involvement
- Mixture of ages and occupations
- Good volunteering ethic
- Size of community
- Street Trees
- Small and supportive businesses
- Good Climate
- Great primary School/kindergarten
- Hughes creek an asset to be enhanced and developed

2.1 Topic One - Infrastructure

Proposed Actions to be carried forward from previous plan:

Paths & walkways
Drainage
Keep town character
Town entry signage
Street lighting
VicRoads through route
Local street improvements
Upgrade Lambing Gully Road
Speed restrictions on entry to town reviewed

Suggestions from 2014 community meeting

- Heritage slate roof recognition
- Street lighting increase
- Memorial hall refurbishment
- Road transport Plan and parking
- Freeway sound barrier
- Footpaths in Avenel and Stewart park
- Footbridge across Hughes creek at Watson st
- Drainage general improvement
- Natural Gas service for Avenel
- Off Grid power supply – solar/wind
- Helipad for Avenel emergencies
- Public toilet upgrades at recreation reserve
- Extra street seating

Proposed Actions

The group will work on any of the above projects or other projects not listed as it assess the priorities and capabilities of the group.

2.2 Topic Two – Sport, Recreation & Leisure

Proposed Actions to be carried forward from previous plan:

- Entrance upgrade to Jubilee Park
- Need for a second oval
- Roofing of change rooms at swimming pool
- Plans for landscaping at bowling club
- Improvements to golf club house
- Lighting of tennis court

Suggestions from 2014 community meeting

- Skate park development
- Plexipaving of netball courts
- Safe walking program
- Cycle paths established around Avenel
- Tennis Clubrooms expansion
- Swimming pool upgrade

Proposed Actions

The group will work on any of the above projects or other projects not listed as it assess the priorities and capabilities of the group.

2.3 Topic Three – Events & Activities

Proposed Actions to be carried forward from previous plan:

- Support hosting golf sand greens competition
- Bowling club 50 years old
- Local produce store/cooperative
- Primary school fete

Suggestions from 2014 community meeting

- Walking map and Directory of town highlights/buildings for visitors
- Major fireworks and bonfire in conjunction with other annual events
- Annual Fun run
- Annual Antique Expo/Fair

Proposed Actions

The group will work on any of the above projects or other projects not listed as it assess the priorities and capabilities of the group.

2.4 Topic Four – Environment

Proposed Actions to be carried forward from previous plan:

Clean up Hughes Creek in township area
Tree planting in Avenel increased/replaced – take into account impacts
Bindi program

Suggestions from 2014 community meeting

- Annual cleanup and rehabilitation of Hughes Creek environment
- Indian Myna removal program
- Significant Vegetation overlay to protect street trees
- Important/heritage building protection
- Bindi Eye removal program

Proposed Actions

The group will work on any of the above projects or other projects not listed as it assess the priorities and capabilities of the group.

2.5 Topic Five – Health & Wellbeing

Proposed Actions to be carried forward from previous plan:

BMX/skate park activities
Public transport
Youth activities
List of visiting services to Avenel and consider promotions etc.
Promote a ‘tan’ and fitness station

Suggestions from 2014 community meeting

- Multi generation activities – create consecutiveness with all age groups
- Town Newsletter
- Reinstate Doctor service in Avenel
- Men’s shed development?
- Bus service to major centres – community bus

Proposed Actions

The group will work on any of the above projects or other projects not listed as it assess the priorities and capabilities of the group.

3.0 Function of Community Planning

3.1 Action Plan Governance

The Avenel Community Action plan will be lead by a community group that nominated at the public session. Any other member of the community can join this group.

In addition, the group shall have:

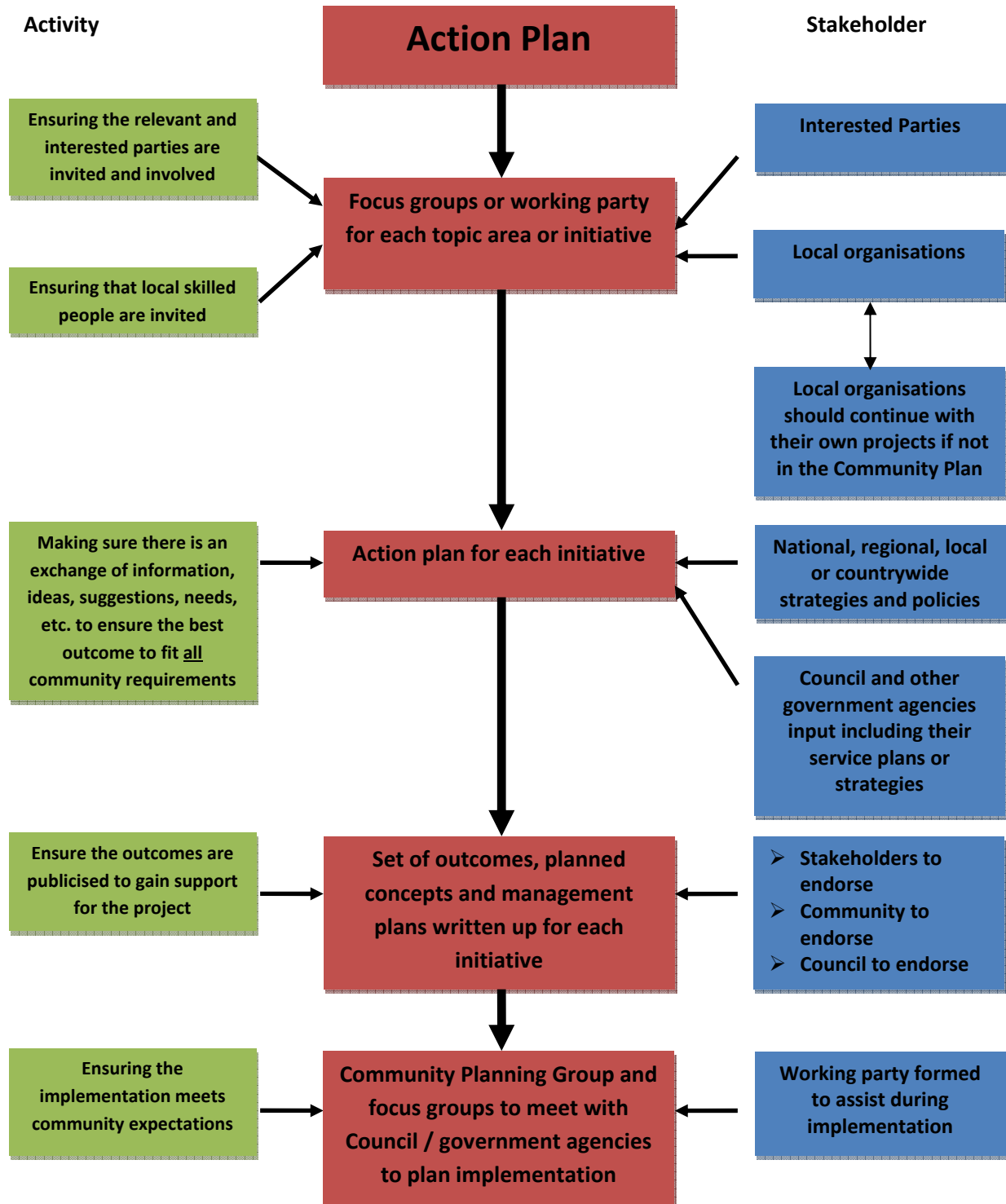
- President and secretary/treasurer.
- All members of the Avenel community are welcome to attend any meeting.

The process for managing and implementing the Action Plan is set out in the following table. The aim of Community Planning in this process is to ensure as many people as possible are involved and support the outcomes identified in the Avenel Action Plan.

In essence, the steps are:

- i.** For a working party to be formed (if appropriate) for each topic area or activity that the community identifies as requiring significant attention.
- ii.** Working party develops action brief for Community Planning Group for their information and input.
- iii.** The working party ensures that they investigate research and develop a suggested set of actions that best suit the residents of the Avenel community.
- iv.** The working party discusses the suggested actions with Council or their agencies seeking their support for implementation (which includes funds).
- v.** Parties agree to actions including an Action Plan document, timeframe, funding, ownership, perpetuity, issues etc.
- vi.** Actions initiated by parties as agreed.
- vii.** Working party monitor and report progress to Community Planning Group (monthly or as appropriate).
- viii.** Project implemented / completed.
- ix.** To provide records in order to develop appropriate reports.

This is further explained in the following:



3.2 Role of Community Action Group

The role of the Community Action Group is to support only the actions nominated within the Action Plan.

This involves:

- Coordinating and bringing together all interested parties and the broader community to plan action for any initiative in the Action Plan.
- Supporting and assisting the development of project plans for each initiative to achieve implementation.
- Assisting the focus groups for each initiative to negotiate partners, funds and expertise to complete the project.

3.3 Alterations to the Action Plan

The Action Plan has been established through a public process and consequently this process must be respected. Any alteration to the Action Plan requires a public process. This allows the community to have an opportunity to consider any changes at the time and authorise any alterations to priorities as a result of that community meeting. The Action Plan is a vibrant, flexible and dynamic document. It can change, but change should occur through due process.

3.4 Dispute Resolution

In the event of a dispute all parties must meet, discuss and resolve the matter as soon as possible. If parties are unable to resolve the dispute, they must agree to hold a meeting in the presence of a person nominated through the Strathbogie Shire Council. The role of mediation is to guide the parties towards settling the dispute, not make the decision to resolve the dispute. In any dispute, all parties must be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard, to ensure natural justice is applied to the whole process.

3.4 Emergency Circumstances

It may be necessary from time to time for the Community Action Group to suspend actions on the Action Plan because of an emergency that has occurred within the Community or region. The emergency must be of a significant community nature that requires broad community action as a priority above all other actions.