

Violet Town Community Plan

2014 – 2018



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Disclaimer:

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1.0 Introduction

The Violet Town Community Plan 2014 – 2018 is the third Community Plan developed by the community of Violet Town and the surrounding district. It has been put together by information provided from the local community. This information was gathered through a number of different ways: at a Community Opportunity Workshop (COW) held on the 14 November 2013; from targeted input from key community groups before and after the COW; from ideas gathered through a suggestion box placed in the local supermarket for a period of three weeks; and via comments on a draft version distributed throughout the community.

1.1 The Purpose of a Community Plan

The Violet Town Community Plan outlines future initiatives intended to bring about improvements to Violet Town and its local district. The Plan is a living document and responsive to changes that may need to occur (see Section 4.0). On the whole, the community planning process:

- identifies local community issues and the actions required to address them;
- provides an opportunity for a range of groups, committees and individuals to be involved in its implementation;
- enables access to technical assistance from people within the community, and potential funding opportunities from local, state or federal departments who require inclusive community planning processes;
- facilitates broader participation and shared responsibility by the inclusive and consultative development process; and
- assists proactive advocacy to various government and philanthropic investors regarding the needs of the local community.

1.2 Violet Town Action Group

The Violet Town Action Group (VTAG) has initiated the process to develop this Community Plan. VTAG works to support community activities and initiatives and provide a forum which facilitates discussion and decision making for the communities of Violet Town and surrounding district (*Violet Town Community Plan 2007-2010*). The Shire of Strathbogie supports VTAG, and Action Groups across the Shire, in undertaking community planning and development initiatives. VTAG provides a key link to/for the Shire on these issues.

1.3 Development of this Community Plan

The process to develop this Community Plan included extensive advertising for input, Village Voice articles, emails to key community group leaders, a suggestion box in the local supermarket, as well as personal invitations. A major component for input was the delivery of a COW, with approximately 50

people present, where individual ideas were collated, grouped into similar themes and then prioritised. Also at the COW, a list of achievements was presented (see Section 1.4), displaying the vast number of projects completed since the formulation of the last Community Plan in 2007. The 2014-2018 Community Plan was then put together using all the information and suggestions collected.



Above: Photos from the Community Opportunity Workshop, Violet Town, November 2013

1.4 Achievements since the 2007 Community Plan

Table 1 (below) outlines some key achievements of the Violet Town and district community since 2007. A wide variety of local community groups and people have been involved in bringing this list of achievements to fruition.

| Violet Town community achievements since 2007 (in no particular order) | |
|--|---|
| Increased activities at the Swimming Pool | Eco-living project and energy-efficient retrofit of Community Centre and Kindergarten ECC |
| RSL Anzac Avenue planting | New fire station |
| Continuing growth of the Violet Town market | Doctor in town |
| Business contact directory | Honeysuckle Festival |
| Community Wood-fired Oven | Main street beautification |
| New lighting at the Recreational Oval | Netball courts upgrade and re-surfacing of two tennis courts |
| Community House upgrade | Gallery of historical photos in main street |
| Local calendar produced with historical photos | New town entry signs by Michael Leunig |
| Planting of street trees | Living History Writers – now The History Group |

Table 1: List of some of the achievements since the last Community Planning session, undertaken in 2007



New Fire Station



RSL ANZAC Avenue Plantings



Violet Town Medical Clinic

2.0 Some priorities for 2014-2018

At the COW, held 14 November 2013 in Violet Town, individual ideas were collected and grouped together into similar themes. Each person was then allowed five votes to allocate to their highest priority ideas. The resulting top priority ideas are listed below in priority order:

| Priority No. | Action |
|--------------|---|
| 1 | Promotion to attract more businesses to town |
| 2 | Increased storage area for all user groups at the Recreational Reserve |
| 3 | New toilet block at Recreational Reserve |
| 4 | Natural gas pipeline into Violet Town |
| 5 | Local energy generation, including solar and wind |
| 6 | Footpath improvements throughout the town |
| 7 | Recognition of past events with indigenous peoples, such as a memorial with plantings |
| 8 | Roundabout at corner of Cowslip and High Streets |



The empty hotel in Cowslip St. Current toilets at Rec. Reserve Cowslip and High Street corner

3.0 Key Themes and Actions for 2014 – 2018

The themes listed in Table 2 (below) were used to collate ideas and priority actions for this Community Plan. These themes are based on the previous Community Plan, with slight adjustments to ensure they continue to be current. Information then outlined under each theme includes a vision, the actions and priorities arising from the COW and other consultation, and a list of potential partners who could assist in achieving the actions. The visions are a long-term aim, and therefore are largely taken from the previous Community Plan, as they still remain applicable now.

| Violet Town Community Plan Themes | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Children, Youth and Families | Emergency Preparedness |
| Sports and Recreation | Arts |
| Reconciliation | Energy, Food, Fibre, Water and the Environment |
| Infrastructure and Local Services | Planning and Development |
| Marketing | Other (for ideas that didn't fit the above themes) |

Table 2: The themes used to group people's ideas for the development of this plan.

3.1 Key Theme: Children, Youth and Families

Vision: *To improve and support opportunities for children, youth and families of Violet Town*

Actions:

- Increase the entertainment opportunities for children and teenagers in town
- Implement a local Learner-driver Assistance Program
- Increase numbers of pupils at primary school
- Implement an active after-school care program
- Re-develop the children’s playgrounds in both the Recreation Reserve and Lions Park.

Potential Partners:

Violet Town Community House, Violet Town Early Childcare Centre, Peranbin Primary College, VTAG, Shire of Strathbogie, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Department of Human Services, local sporting clubs (for example, the Tennis Club’s after-school program).



Peranbin Primary School, Violet Town



Playground at Recreational Reserve

3.2 Key Theme: Emergency Preparedness

Vision: *To improve the engagement of the community in their planning for disasters and build capacity to prepare and respond to a disaster*

Background*:

Violet Town faces a fire risk with the open grazing land surrounding the majority of the town making it vulnerable to fast moving grass fires. The forested Strathbogie Ranges close by to the south of the town also presents a potential hazard. Violet Town has also been susceptible to floods (of shorter term duration) in the past. The town’s relatively close proximity to the Hume Freeway and the Melbourne to Sydney railway provides a further risk to the community with the potential for road and rail emergencies, such as the spillage of dangerous goods.

** As this is a new theme (not included in the previous two Community Plans), this extra detail is included.*

Actions:

- Ensure the widespread knowledge of the use of SMS for emergency situations (and general communication)
- Implement the 'Over the Fence' concept aimed at looking after neighbours

Potential Partners:

Making Violet Town Safer Steering Group, Violet Town Community House, Country Fire Authority, State Emergency Services, Red Cross, Shire of Strathbogie, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, Department of Environment and Primary Industries, Department of Justice

3.3 Key Theme: Sports and Recreation

Vision: *To achieve inclusive and sustainable sporting and recreational activities that target broad participation in a range of recreational opportunities.*

Actions:**Work to achieve the following:**

- New watering system on oval
- Access and beautification of recreation reserve
- Synthetic grass at the pool
- Start an action group to save the Golf Club
- Skate Park redevelopment
- New bridge on Honeysuckle Creek to replace low level crossing
- Senior Citizens exercise stations – in the park or around track
- Gym at Football Club
- After- business hours access to gym
- Storage area for user groups at Recreation Reserve
- New cricket roller
- Heated Pool – option to have this at the Bush Nursing Centre
- Resurface bottom Tennis Courts
- New combined tennis /netball facility
- Lights on the synthetic grass tennis courts
- Lights completed on football oval
- Bowls Club – seating, synthetic turf, increased participation, disabled toilet access
- Lap-pool / hydro therapy pool at the Bush Nursing Centre
- Bike track at Golf Club
- Upgrade Bryan Hayes Pavilion to include enclosing the pavilion verandah, installation of blinds and efficient heating/cooling system, and improved change rooms.

Potential Partners:

Violet Town Football Netball Club, Violet Town Cricket Club, Violet Town Tennis Club, Violet Town Golf Club, Violet Town Swimming Pool, Violet Town Bowls Club, Honeysuckle Recreational Environment Project Steering Committee, Violet Town Community House, VTAG, Violet Town Market Subcommittee, Violet Town Community Bush Nursing Centre, Shire of Strathbogie, Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure



Football and Cricket Ground



Netball Court

3.4 Key Theme: Arts

Vision: *To achieve a vibrant arts community - with spaces to exhibit - in Violet Town, by increasing the range of opportunities to participate, and encouraging broader involvement.*

Actions:

- Put on an arts-focussed annual event, for example, a musical festival on one of the market weekends
- Enhance the use of places and venues in town and surrounds – for example, the old op shop to become a cinema, museum, art space and gallery. Community marquee for art displays
- Revisit a previous funding application and implement the ideas of public Art, sculptures, murals – Lions Park, Honeysuckle Creek walking track, Cowslip Street,
- Approach Michael Leunig about the idea of a mural on the Café wall.

Potential Partners:

Violet Town Community House, Violet Town History Group, Violet Town Film Society, Honeysuckle Recreational Environment Project, Violet Town Men’s Shed, Regional Arts Victoria, Department of Premier and Cabinet (state)



Live music in the Park



Puppet show at the Honeysuckle Festival

3.5 Key Theme: Reconciliation

Vision: *To increase the understanding of issues and the connection with local indigenous people*

Actions:

Creek:

- Install interpretive signs along the Honeysuckle Creek pertaining to the indigenous peoples of this area.

Recognition of past:

- Memorial to indigenous people, e.g. stand of sheokes ('The Whispering in Our Hearts') that one can walk amongst and sit within
- Plantings/garden of local indigenous plants
- Artefacts collection and display

Potential Partners:

Honeysuckle Recreational Environmental Project Steering Committee, Yorta Yorta, Bangerang, Taungurung Aboriginal Cultural Cooperative, Aboriginal Affairs Victoria, Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure, Department of Social Services

3.6 Key Theme: Energy, Food, Fibre, Water and the Environment

Vision: *To achieve a level of self-reliance in relation to the production of local food, energy and fibre, with a healthy natural ecosystem underpinning it.*

Actions:

- Increased planting around town, including street trees and especially along Honeysuckle Creek
- Guide/brochure on the Honeysuckle Creek area: "Life on the Honeysuckle" booklet

- Sustainable lifestyle initiatives – sustainable housing, better-labelled products and more recycling at the market
- Food – raw food co-op, produce exchange at market, bakery in town
- Local energy generation – solar farm at the golf course, wind farm on Wilson’s Hill
- Small Towns Autonomous Energy Supply
- Natural Gas and power generation

Potential Partners:

Violet Town Seed Savers, Honeysuckle Recreational Environment Project Steering Committee, GeckoClan Landcare Network, Strathbogie Ranges Conservation Management Network, various farm industry groups, Shire of Strathbogie, Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority, Department of Environment and Primary Industries (state), Office of Living Victoria, Department of Environment (federal), Department of Agriculture (federal)



Solar panels on the Bryan Hayes Pavilion



Environmental plantings on the Honeysuckle Ck

3.7 Key Theme: Infrastructure and Local Services

Vision: *To develop infrastructure and local services that improve the amenity, safety and liveability for residents, and which provides capacity to develop existing businesses and attract new ones.*

Actions:

Community Complex

- Senior citizens’ building (potentially in the old library [when the new library is built])
- Increased maintenance of the courtyard at the Library

Town

- Independent, solar passive, low energy Living Units in town
- Low-cost sustainable housing for rental

- Footpath improvements throughout the town
- Solar-powered lights under Harry's Creek Rd Bridge and on the Leunig signs at the town entrances
- Updated list of all community groups for the town - produced annually - that outlines the contact details, fees, membership details, etc.

Cowslip Street:

- Exhibition spaces in main street
- Rejuvenate the Lions Park in Cowslip Street
- Roundabout at corner of Cowslip and High street
- Crossing of Lily and Cowslip Streets needs refuge stop near supermarket
- Horse-hitching rail in Cowslip Street
- Increased maintenance of Cowslip Street - median strip maintained by the Shire
- Maintenance of shop frontages, where the owner/leasee are not doing it, Shire to charge shop-owner/leasee
- Tenants in empty shops
- Save the Old Op-shop building – restore to be a gallery
- Use of existing library (once new library is built) , senior citizens' rooms, RSL Rooms
- Tenant the empty pub – restaurant, brewery, B'n'B,
- Art Gallery combined with the new library

Recreation Reserve:

- Children's playground developed
- Drought-resistance garden in netball area
- Develop Wood-fired Oven for other groups to use
- Improving storage in market area for user groups – Wood-fired oven, market, sporting clubs, etc. – with a meeting area/corporate area above – possible location is next to scoreboard.
- Compound for rubbish bins at market site
- Public Transport options – bus to Benalla or Shepparton

District:

- Signage for rural surrounding communities, e.g. Tamleugh, Upotipotpon, Earlston, Koonda, Boho, etc

Potential Partners:

Shire of Strathbogie, VicRoads, Department of Human Services, Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure (state), and Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development (federal).



Community Wood-fired Oven



Community Centre, Cowslip St.

3.8 Key Theme: Planning and Development

Vision: *To provide for orderly and appropriate development of Violet Town and district that enhances the amenity and sustainability of the built and natural environment for residents, businesses, visitors and future generations.*

Actions:

- Natural gas pipeline into Town

Potential Partners:

Violet Town Community Bush Nursing Centre, business and other users, Shire of Strathbogie, Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure

3.9 Key Theme: Marketing

Vision: *To maximise community benefits by promoting and developing Violet Town as a:*

- *Place to live;*
- *Place to establish and grow a business; and*
- *Visitor destination.*

Actions:

Violet Town area:

- Attracting more businesses to town

- Invigorated meet and greet for new residents
- Violet Town Brochures:
 - What does the town offer?
 - Walking tours – Historical, Honeysuckle Creek walking track, highlights of the town
- Town map displayed in town
- Website updated and developed – linked to signage in Lions Park
- Access to free Wifi in town for visitors
- Free bicycles for short term use: for seniors (three wheel), residents from out of town, visitors, etc.

Violet Town Market

- Permanent signs for market on highway
- Dog-minding at the market
- Improving the market
- Move the market to Shadforth Reserve

Potential Partners: Violet Town Action Group, Violet Town Website committee, local businesses, Violet Town Market, sub-groups of VTAG, Shire of Strathbogie, Department of State Development, Business and Innovation, Foundation for Regional and Rural Renewal



Violet Town Market



Violet Town Website

3.10 Key Theme: Other

Actions:

- WW1 centenary commemorations in 2015 – Anzac Avenue rededication, launch of book of local soldiers and nurses history.
- The Flowering Tree email group for communication
- Updated history of Violet Town and surrounds

- Lobby Group at political level
- Volunteer management and succession planning
- Paid Community Coordinator – this could be expansion of the Market Coordinator role to take on a broader community role as well, or it could be separate to this

4.0 Reviewing the Community Plan

The community of Violet Town and its surrounds are responsible for the development and implementation of this Community Plan. It is acknowledged, that over time, there may be unforeseen circumstances or new initiatives that need including in the plan, or proposed changes that need updating. Being able to update this document will help keep it live and current.

Where changes or additions are proposed, individuals or groups should approach VTAG with their proposal. VTAG will then host a community meeting, whilst also calling for any other changes or additions to this document. This allows the whole of the community to have an opportunity to review and update the document. VTAG is committed to undertaking this approximately once a year or on an as-needs basis.
