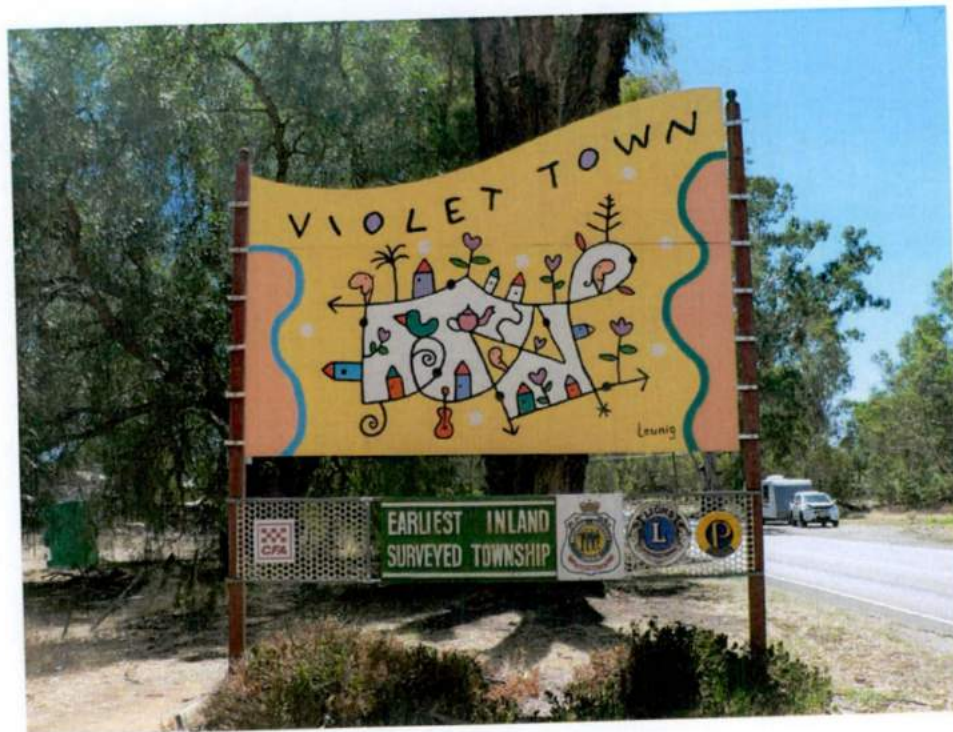


Violet Town Action Group



Community Action Plan

2019 – 2023

SHIRE OF STRATHBOGIE	
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Violet Town Action Group (VTAG) – Statement of purpose

The underlying purpose of the Violet Town Action Group is to promote and facilitate community engagement in matters that affect our community. In carrying out this purpose, VTAG endeavours to:

- speak for or represent the community as required, and at the request of the community;
- promote a community environment that is inclusive;
- promote a community environment that is considerate of the well-being of its members;
- provide financial management and support for active community groups that are under the auspices of the VTAG;
- support other active community groups or organisations as relevant; and
- undertake publicity and marketing of the community and community events as necessary.



“provide financial management and support for active community groups that are under the auspices of the VTAG;”

VTAG therefore takes the responsibility for developing this action plan. It is recognised and supported by the Shire of Strathbogie, State and Federal governments and is the key link between the initiatives outlined in these pages and further funding from philanthropic and/or government funding.

Preamble

The Violet Town Community Action Plan for 2019 – 2023 is the fourth Community Plan developed by the 3669 community – the people of Violet Town and the surrounding districts. It is a compilation and synthesis of the ideas and suggestions raised in a community meeting on October 27th 2018, plus contributions from a stall at the Violet Town 40th anniversary market, a suggestion box in the local supermarket and comments and proposals on the draft version distributed throughout the area.

The purpose of the Action Plan

The Community Action Plan (CAP) sets the direction that the Violet Town and district community wants to move in over the next four years. Improvements and proposals suggested are many and varied and range from mental health advances to developments in public transport. It is a living document that can (and probably will) be added to in its lifespan.

The CAP also acts as a reference point when applying for grants and assistance from outside bodies such as the Strathbogie Shire and the State Government. In spite of the success of the Violet Town Market, it is impossible to fund the hundreds of suggestions and requests that the Violet Town Action Group receive each year, so outside support is essential. There must be substantial



Billboard asking for contributions to the CAP

community input for these applications to succeed and the greater the strength of the support, the more likely the applications are to succeed. This fourth Action Plan is proof that the 3669 community is vitally concerned and interested in the prosperity and growth of Violet Town.

The CAP gives the opportunities for individuals and groups to pursue their interests and plans. It also allows individuals with specific expertise to make contributions for the good of the community.

Process for developing this plan

Community input was the key to developing this plan. Advertisements and articles were placed in the Village Voice and website prior to the meeting. Posters were displayed around Violet Town and all households in the 3669 postcode were mail-dropped. (Appendix 1). Steph Ryan State MLA for Euroa and Cathy McGowan Federal MHR for Indi were invited but both apologised for their inability to attend. Shire Councillor for Violet Town, Kate Stothers, attended both as a representative of the Shire and as a private citizen. Thirty-one people took this opportunity to present their ideas and suggestions, which was less than at the previous years' attendance and noted by several people present. The meeting coincided with a local wedding and the Euroa show, neither of which were anticipated and affected overall numbers. However, there were many apologies, some of who wanted the opportunity to add to the plan. This was catered for as outlined below.

At the meeting, tables had been set out with relevant material on them such as a matrix tabulation of current ideas that were under consideration and space for people to write their ideas for the future. People sat at tables according to preference and at 2.15pm proceedings started. After an acknowledgement of the traditional and prior ownership of the Violet Town area by VTAG Chairperson, Jo Bell, committee member Iain Atkin gave a rundown of the previous plan's priorities,



New Hexiplex climbing frame installed in children's playground

(Appendix 2), what had been achieved and why certain ideas were not followed up. This was followed by a more detailed explanation of actions taken in the period 2014 – 2018. (Appendix 3) He then asked each table to contribute new ideas, timelines and who they thought could be responsible for pursuing the projects.


After further discussion, afternoon tea was taken and informal conversations ensued. Tables then reconvened and were asked to explain what they considered their most important projects, including reasons, timelines and who they thought should follow them up. Some animated discussion resulted and a wide variety of priorities debated.

The meeting finished at 5.00 with Iain Atkin thanking all those who took part and outlining the procedure from then on. This was to include further community consultation at a stall at the following market and a table at the local supermarket. The first draft plan was published at the start of December calling for comments over the summer period. The final plan was published ready for VTAG and other action by mid-April 2019 although sub-committees were already formed and starting their planning by March 1st 2019. Shire representatives were invited to attend sub-committee or VTAG meetings to facilitate the ideas and the whole community made aware of the plan via the VTAG website and the Violet Town Community web page.

Violet Town Community Action Plan –

Key themes and actions for the period 2019-2023

1. Emergency and community safety strategies. This includes

	<p><i>“Traffic speed must be reduced at bus pick up points”</i></p>
<p>The Cowslip Street/High Street roundabout to be actively pursued – it’s an accident waiting to happen. If no roundabout, put in a mirror!</p>	
<p>The new speed limit in Cowslip Street must be enforced particularly for trucks</p>	
<p>A pedestrian crossing/central reservation to be built between the police station and the corner store</p>	
<p>More concrete footpaths to be built</p>	
<p>Honeysuckle Creek opposite Caravan Park reduce fire risk</p>	
<p>Develop a microgrid back up power system</p>	
<p>Develop an emergency communication plan as an alternative for when the NBN is down</p>	
<p>Develop a Displan Area</p>	
<p>Flood – ensure that the local voice is represented in Shire flood mitigation plans and works</p>	
<p>Support making VT Safe with publications, initiatives and promotion of Fire plans</p>	
<p>Water immediate notification of Hazardous chemicals in our Strathbogie water Catchment drains and creeks</p>	
<p>Black Spot Signs or High Risk of Accident Zone Sign at the Maher's Road entry to the Freeway.</p>	

2. Developing the Shadforth Reserve – This includes

<p>Lobby the Shire to re-establish Shadforth Reserve committee of management</p>	
<p>Move the market to Shadforth Reserve</p>	
<p>Fencing Shadforth Reserve to allow stock to graze and reduce fuel load</p>	
<p>Develop an action plan for community forest in Shadforth Reserve</p>	
	<p><i>“Develop Shadforth Reserve for broad community use”</i></p>
<p>Develop push, play and awareness at Shadforth reserve</p>	
<p>Develop bush-kinder at Shadforth Reserve</p>	

Develop free bikes program – use and leave at Shadforth Reserve
Use the golf club building – find group
Develop free camping and caravan sites and a dump point


3. Sports, recreation and all-round well-being – This includes

	<p><i>“Redevelop and move the Skate park”</i></p>
Build multi-age exercise stations around HREP track	
Splash pool/water park	
Build a BMX track	
Put new globes/lights on the synthetic courts	
Keep improving Brian Hayes pavilion	
Retain kids in town to support footy and netball clubs	
Build a children’s playground using recycled material	
Develop facilitated exercise classes	
<p><i>“Wheelchair access to Honeysuckle Creek walking track”</i></p>	


4. Arts, culture and festivals – This includes

Keep applying for Arts grants
Paint a mural on Café wall
Develop an arts Trail
Develop an artist’s Register
Develop a Culture and Creative Hub
Develop a creative Houses project
Support local arts by holding a large arts/music/cultural/ Sustainable living organic festival.
Build a sculpture at the wetlands to highlight the northern entrance to Violet Town
Put lights on the Leunig signs at entrance to town
Build arts monuments around the Honeysuckle Creek Park
Develop social enterprises such as the museum and gallery shop
Develop a chalk art mural on the GMCU wall
Support community art show in the community hall
Hold history telling event around a fire in pizza area
Put in bigger signs in entrances for town – get Leunig to design them
Partner the Lions club to turn Cowslip Street park into a Leunig Park

5. Reconciliation, multi-culturalism and social cohesion – This includes

Invite migrant communities and/or individuals to events such as Nightmare on Cowslip Street, HREP plantings. Include WWOOFers and back packer input
Support First Nations Voice: Let's Hear It!
<p><i>"Fly the Torres Strait Islander flag"</i></p> 
Establish a food truck park with diverse culture foods
Hold Bush Tucker education – work with Euroa arboretum
Support the building of a transition village – tiny house community for temporary housing for those in need
Hold a Diwali Indian festival
Hold joint welcome to country by Yorta Yorta and Taungurung at all Violet Town celebrations
Include a First Nations display at museum
Place signs on the creek walk to identify Sheoak connection to First nation people
Support recognition of indigenous people in the Constitution
Grow a bush tucker garden in partnership with local indigenous people
Engage speakers on indigenous issues to help ignorance - Include local people of aboriginal heritage in this

6. Sustainable living, food and the environment – This includes

Improve the cardboard recycling at the market.
Pursue renewable energy initiatives including a microgrid solar scheme
Promote social enterprise food initiatives
Community power station for cheaper power
Promote education about water saving
Develop a local co-op/food swap group
Develop a village food growing scheme
Publish a community cookbook
Develop a Repair Café including education in conjunction with the men's shed
 <p><i>"Support the community garden – enlarge it, add a bush tucker garden and plant indigenous plants"</i></p>
Develop integrated weed management plan to stop the use of glyphosate
Support sustainable living, aquaponics, mushroom growing
Waste facility capping
Formal links to Strathbogie Inc
Develop Energy focus group to promote innovative ideas

Promote organic options for fruit fly control

7. Infrastructure and local services – This includes

Install solar powered lights along Honeysuckle Creek track

Build exhibition spaces in Cowslip Street

Build better gardens in Cowslip Street.

Work with the History Group to install signs for surrounding areas

Investigate public transport options for a bus to Benalla

Make sure the VT Bush Nursing Hospital community bus is better advertised

Promote the wood fired oven for use by different groups

Build a covered bus shelter at railway station

Update VT website and keep VTAG transparent with docs available online

Create ability to access community portal on line (website)

Work for a much better train service – long delays late for appointments

Establish better recycling management systems

Seal Mary's Lane, Lilac Street

Free/low cost camping, caravan sites

“Upgrade Lions Park toilets – water fountain, hand dryers”



More residential land blocks to be made available

Promote schemes to ensure affordable elderly accommodation in town

Build group garden support for VT Stationeers to help them progress projects

Promote a buy local scheme eg VTBNC to use local pharmacist not a Benalla one

Clean up Lily Street/train line

Consider a sewer upgrade

Build wheelchair friendly ramps in footpaths

Establish a bakery in town which could be part of a general upgrading of streetscape

Get the owners to reopen the old pub

Main street lighting (down centre medium strip)

Better signs around town

Signs to public toilets outside community house, near Post Office

Improve street name signage



“Seal the unsealed roads around town”

No internet connection therefore disconnected

8. Planning and development – This includes

Have a budget for show bags for new people in town
The Violet Town Website MUST be made exciting and updatable.
Purchase a rickshaw type tribike to implement a Cycling Without Age chapter in Violet Town and share usage with the market to add an extra tourism dimension on market days. (VTBNC project)
Improve the market – powered sites to be looked at seriously
Develop co-ops as a way to get business into town. Bakery? Post Office?
Attract more business to town
Encourage social enterprise initiatives and local business
More accommodation to improve tourism
Get empty shops open
VTAG needs to have a policy of buying local first and have an ongoing campaign to encourage the whole community to do that
Develop local business opportunities
Find ways to get VTBNC to engage more with VT community and businesses
Find ways to engage better with school staff/community to ensure healthy school in future
Find ways of enhancing wetlands use by community eg bandstand, gardens, artworks
Buy the land that the community garden is on
Evergreen trees in median strip
Permanent shelter in market site to attract people to stay and have lunch
Cost of market sites prohibitive. Make it, bake it grow it
Encourage new businesses to make VT a destination not a pass-through town
Establish Loan committee

9. Theme nine – marketing and communication – This includes

Establish tourism group to promote town
Encourage shared resources, branding etc
Encourage tourism focus
Instate a sub-committee of VTAG for marketing
Publish new VT phone book
Host mass garage sale in VT for fundraiser
VTAG to appoint communications person to drive communication
Pay for a new LED display sign (VNS)
New VT Community logo/town branding

Improve Village Voice – more contemporary, better articles
VTAG to communicate much more Shire info
Establish a Chamber of Commerce Violet Town
Need to involve more of our community. How do we get people out of their homes?
Create chamber of commerce or a Sub-committee of VTAG for marketing
New VT Community logo/town branding
Violet Town Website - MUST be made exciting and updatable.
Get tourist organisers involved

Theme ten – Other – This includes

Volunteer planning and succession planning
Make sure every club is on the VT website.
Community Coffin Club
Community event applications to shire to be easier to apply for
Living History Theme
Improve amenities and business of caravan park
Community should buy, improve and run caravan park as a social enterprise
Look for opportunities for communities to fund initiatives – less reliance on government funding
Examine developing World War II fuel depot as area of historical interest

Reviewing the Community Plan

The Violet Town Action Group has the responsibility of initiating, supporting and facilitating the Action Plan but the whole 3669 community is responsible for its development and implementation. 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 publicise the proposals calling for any other changes or additions to this document and if necessary, host a community meeting. This allows the whole of the community to have an opportunity to review and update the document. VTAG will call for reports on a monthly basis from any sub-committees or individuals who have undertaken to pursue any areas of the plan and will keep the community notified of progress.

The Community Action Plan was prepared for the Violet Town Action Group by Iain Atkin between October 2018 – April 2019. It contains ALL the suggestions that were proposed both at the community meeting in October and subsequent consultations. The ideas will be prioritised by sub-committees and VTAG and not all will be implemented in the next four years. The success of the plan will be influenced by how much the community is willing to drive ideas and how realistic the ideas are. VTAG will facilitate and contribute to proposals and will help develop relations between Community, Shire, State and Federal governments in order to implement them and when the fifth CAP is developed in 2023, it will be interesting to see how many suggestions have become realities.

Special thanks to all those people who have made suggestions, innovations and corrections to the plan. It is truly a community document and shows the wide interest in the future of the district.

Violet Town Action Group

Invites all interested people, community groups, businesses, clubs and associations to put their thinking CAPS on and . . .



take part in the four-yearly **Community Action Planning** workshop on

**Saturday 27th October 2.00 at the
Community Hall.**

Speakers from Local, State and Federal levels of government will be there but the outcomes are what YOU decide, so If you want to have a say on the future direction of our community, where to spend money and what projects you would like to see pursued, come along and make your voice heard.

Drinks and light snacks served during the afternoon

For more information phone Iain Atkin 0407922406 or Jo Bell 0427505335

**Appendix Two – VTAG, group or private individual projects completed
or in hand 2014 - 2018**

Cupboard door emergency contact leaflet, Emergency app, New watering system for footy oval in next year's Shire budget, New trees along creek in recreation reserve, Synthetic grass at pool, Master plan of Shadforth Reserve created, Storage area for user groups in Recreation reserve, Footballs for the next two years, New/improved tennis courts/netball facilities – Doug Gibbs shed, Bus to Benalla pool for hydro therapy,



Speed reduced in Cowslip Street



Museum rebuild

Children's playground developed, Arts-focused annual event, Enhance the appearance of places and venues in town, RSL mural, History plaques around town, History Calendars, Honeysuckle track plantings, Artefact collection and display in new museum, Increased planting around town, memorial trees, Honeysuckle Creek, Southern Aurora, Guide to Honeysuckle creek, Violet Town

market bags, Buy swap and sell days, Increased maintenance of library courtyard and garden, Major development of VicTrack land, New toilets in Recreation Reserve, New Men's shed, Footpaths slowly being improved, Drought resistant garden, Welcome to Violet Town Brochure, Shire developing tracks and trails policy with VTAG input, Town map displayed, Free WiFi in library, No dogs at market, Signs on freeway for market day, WW 1 centenary commemorations



Guide brochure Birds of the Honeysuckle Creek



Promotional video loop in Cafe

Appendix 3 Letter box drop informing 3669 residents of overall themes and calling for interested people to become involved

Update on the Violet Town Community Action Plan

The Strathbogie Shire has a strategic plan for Violet Town. Created in 2010 it has a rather generic statement as a vision for the town. A new vision statement has been suggested that better reflects the specific ideas clearly outlined at the CAP meeting and would be the basis of all planning over the next four years. The new draft vision statement is

“To establish Violet Town as a growing sustainable vibrant town with an enviable lifestyle and availability of services. It will be a great place to visit and be an attractive place to live for younger families. It will develop a strong community spirit based upon the arts, leadership and community values.”

This is only a draft so if anyone has any thoughts on it, get in touch with Iain Atkin on 0407922406 or email atkinsix@bigpond.com

The Community Action Plan has been circulated widely over the past few months and is now moving into the implementation stage. VTAG has grouped the many ideas into the following areas and are calling on people to take some responsibility for getting them up and running. If you haven't seen it, or have forgotten the ideas, the full plan is on the Violet Town Action Group website, in the Post Office, the Corner Store and at the library or I can send you a copy via email. The groupings are

Emergency and community safety strategies

Developing the Shadforth Reserve

Sports, recreation and all-round well-being

Arts, culture and festivals

Reconciliation, multi-culturalism and social cohesion

Sustainable living, food and the environment

Infrastructure and local services

Planning and development

Marketing and communication

Other

Council are keen to meet and assist anyone who wants to put their hands up and organise projects within these groupings. VTAG will bring the Shire representatives to Violet Town to explain their roles and how they can help, so let VTAG know of your interest. Don't forget, your ideas won't become a reality unless we have people to drive them. VTAG is there to take responsibility for some of the plan and to help, facilitate and coordinate community members and groups. However, it won't be able to do it all and needs your help. Thank you to those who already have expressed an interest and I look forward to getting some of these ideas up and running.

Violet Town's next four years are in your hands