



HEPBURN SHIRE COUNCIL
ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL
PUBLIC MINUTES

Tuesday 15 February 2022

Virtual Meeting
via Video Conference

5:30PM

A LIVE STREAM OF THE MEETING CAN BE VIEWED
VIA [COUNCIL'S FACEBOOK PAGE](#)

Confirmed at the Ordinary Meeting of Council held 15 March 2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Drylie".

Chair, Cr Tim Drylie, Mayor

MINUTES

Tuesday 15 February 2022

Virtual Meeting

via Video Conference

Commencing at 5:30PM

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BRADLEY THOMAS

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Tuesday 15 February 2022

CONDUCTING COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUALLY

Council continues to be guided by government directives and wants to do the right thing for the health of our community during the COVID-19 pandemic. In line with these directives, the public are unable to attend this meeting in person. This meeting is being held virtually to protect the health and wellbeing of Councillors, Council Officers, and the community.

In the spirit of open, transparent and accountable governance, this meeting will be live-streamed on Council's Facebook page. The meeting will also be recorded and made available on Council's website as soon as practicable after the meeting.

Pursuant to the Ministerial Guidelines, should technology problems be encountered and we are unable to broadcast this meeting, the meeting will be adjourned until resolution or postponed.

Council's meeting will be conducted tonight in accordance with:

- The Local Government Act 2020
- The COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Act 2020
- The Minister's Good Practice Guideline MGPG-1: Virtual Meetings
- Council's Governance Rules; and
- The Hepburn Shire Council Councillor Code of Conduct.

1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF TRADITIONAL OWNERS

Hepburn Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work. On these lands, Djaara have performed age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal. We recognise their resilience through dispossession and it is a testament to their continuing culture and tradition, which is strong and thriving.

We also acknowledge the neighbouring Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri to our South East and the Wadawurrung to our South West and pay our respect to all Aboriginal peoples, their culture, and lore. We acknowledge their living culture and the unique role they play in the life of this region.

2 SAFETY ORIENTATION

Emergency exits and convenience facilities at the venue to be highlighted to members of the public in attendance.

3 OPENING OF MEETING

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: Cr Brian Hood, Cr Don Henderson, Cr Jen Bray, Cr Juliet Simpson, Cr Lesley Hewitt, Cr Tessa Halliday, Cr Tim Drylie

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mr Bradley Thomas - Chief Executive Officer, Mr Andrew Burgess - Director Organisational Services, Mr Bruce Lucas - Director Infrastructure and Delivery, Ms Leigh McCallum - Director Community and Development, Mr Chris Whyte – Manager Information and Communication Technology

The meeting opened at 5:34 pm.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

“WE THE COUNCILLORS OF HEPBURN SHIRE
DECLARE THAT WE WILL UNDERTAKE ON EVERY OCCASION
TO CARRY OUT OUR DUTIES IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE COMMUNITY
AND THAT OUR CONDUCT SHALL MAINTAIN THE STANDARDS OF THE CODE OF
GOOD GOVERNANCE
SO THAT WE MAY FAITHFULLY REPRESENT AND UPHOLD THE TRUST PLACED IN THIS
COUNCIL BY THE PEOPLE OF HEPBURN SHIRE”

4 APOLOGIES

Nil.

5 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil.

6 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 21 December 2021 (as previously circulated to Councillors) be confirmed.

MOTION

That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 21 December 2021 (as previously circulated to Councillors) be confirmed.

Moved: Cr Tessa Halliday

Seconded: Cr Jen Bray

Carried

7 NOTICES OF MOTION

There were no Notices of Motion tabled for this meeting.

8 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

Nil.

9 COUNCILLOR AND CEO REPORTS

9.1 MAYOR'S REPORT

Councillor Tim Drylie, Creswick Ward

For many people in the shire, new year's resolutions that revolved around a more predictable and relaxed 2022 were dashed very early on with the devastating storm event in Creswick, the rapid rise of Omicron cases in the community and Ausnet attempts to gain forced entry to some properties. I have personally witnessed the stress and trauma these events have created for local people and businesses alike. A lot of my time in the past couple of months has been visiting and talking with people on the ground about their experiences and trying to connect them with appropriate avenues of support.

I have heard stories of elderly residents being rescued from their flooding homes by our dedicated local CFA volunteers, of the difficulties some Moore Street residents have had getting their units cleaned up and repaired to be able to move back in, and the horror stories of drains and gutters overflowing and blocked by golf ball sized hail and other debris, rooves caving in, carpets being ruined and precious furniture and memories destroyed.

There is also the sad stories of massive crop losses for local farmers and their families who are may also be in the path of the Ausnet towers. Many local businesses are also finding it extremely difficult to fill all shifts as so many staff members are isolating and recovering from Coronavirus related exposure. It has been a shocking strain on mental and physical reserves, but there are amazing stories of resilience emerging and some hope that a level of routine normality and pleasures can creep back in.

The Creswick Lions Club and other community groups have been doing an amazing job helping local people with yard clean-ups, setting up a dedicated donation line and helping students repurchase flood damaged schoolbooks and supplies and emergency food. Local social media has been awash with offers of support from one local person to the next, from fresh cooked food, chain sawing of fallen branches, to free accommodation in spare bedrooms and bungalows. Our own Storm Recovery team and other staff have also been extremely dedicated and willing to go to great lengths to find vulnerable people short term accommodation, provide them useful financial advice and the necessary psychological support. Our works teams are steadily working through a large backlog of requests to repair road and other infrastructure too. Your patience and respect for our staff's need for a safe workplace is appreciated as they too are suffering exhaustion and stress in some circumstances.

Among the chaos of the past few weeks and months, it has been good to see some important aspects of our daily lives returning and our community being able to come out to celebrate together once again. I presented several awards and welcomed new

citizens at the Community Wards and Civic Ceremony on a beautiful afternoon outdoors in the Hepburn Springs Mineral Reserve. I climbed Mt Beckworth at sunrise on Australia/Survival Day with others and spoke at the Community BBQ and flag raising event in Trentham. I've been talking to many people at the various pop-up sessions throughout the shire for the Sustainable Hepburn and Positive Ageing strategies. I have also officiated at the L2P program transition event and the \$134000 funding announcement for SHIFT – Sustainable Healthy Integrated Food Towns. I met with a local affordable housing group, the Department of Transport, state ministers Mary Anne Thomas and Jaala Pulford and federal minister, Catherine King.

Over this busy time, I have also attended various media interviews including one for ABC TV on the renaming of Jim Crow Creek. It has great to be able to be out in the world again working with local people on the ground, but I acknowledge that there is still a lot of pain and fatigue in the community as we begin the longer journey to recovery. Council will continue to offer support, advocate and seek community and stakeholder feedback as we look back and review and remediate the factors that contributed to infrastructure and environmental failures or damages more broadly.

9.2 COUNCILLOR REPORTS

Councillor Juliet Simpson, Holcombe Ward

On Wednesday 9 February I attended a positive Ageing Strategy pop up at the Drummond Hall. On Thursday 10 February I attended another pop up for the positive Ageing strategy at the Clydesdale Hall. If you are 55 years of age and over plus haven't done the survey please do it at <https://participate.hepburn.vic.gov.au/positive-ageing>.

On Monday 7 February I attended the Glenlyon Progress Association Meeting at the Glenlyon Hall.

On Thursday 3 February I chaired the International Women's Day Advisory Committee meeting. The Heather Mutimer International Womens's Day event will be held at the Daylesford Town hall on Tuesday 8 March at 6pm.

There was a fire at Up and Down track near Glenlyon. Sadly, the house and shed were destroyed. Brigades from Glenlyon, Malmsbury, Daylesford, Trentham, Spring Hill, Franklindford and Ballan attended. I would like to acknowledge the bravery of the firefighters who went beyond the call of duty to extinguish the fire where there were many gas bottles stored and lockers of live ammunition. There was also an exploding vehicle.

On Tuesday 25 January I attended the new Citizen Ceremony and the Community awards at the Hepburn Springs sound Shell. Eight new Citizens were welcomed to the Shire.

Councillor Jen Bray, Birch Ward

I hope all members of the community, and council have had a chance to refresh and relax over the summer period. For those in Creswick the new year brought devastating floods and council have been working alongside the community to help them through this difficult recovery process.

- 26 Jan I was privileged to attend and speak at the Terra Nullius Breakfast in Daylesford which recognises that the 26 Jan is a day of grieving and survival for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We were fortunate to hear Djaara woman, Rebecca Phillips speak from the heart about the painful stories of the past, but also to acknowledge how far we've come in Reconciliation, and the journey still ahead of us. Thanks also to Mitch for bringing the sound of the didgeridoo to the gathering.
- 25 Jan The day before, council held their Community Awards and Citizenship Ceremony, which was a great opportunity to welcome new citizens and acknowledge all those who were nominated and who received awards for their dedication and commitment to working with this community. Congratulations to all the new citizens, award recipients and nominees.
- February Sustainable Hepburn.
I have attended a number of Pop-Ups in Creswick and Daylesford, seeking community ideas and suggestions into the Sustainable Hepburn Strategy. Had some great conversations with people about how council can better protect our fragile forest ecosystems, recycling ideas, water ways and ground water protection, green waste, education programs, and more. It is very clear that being sustainable and protecting and nurturing our environment is a top priority for this community. I am looking forward to the next stage – the Community Reference Groups giving input into the Sustainable Hepburn Strategy on Waste, Biodiversity, Climate and Water, and getting to Zero Emissions. Starting this Thursday.
- Community I have had many conversations and emails with members of Birch Ward and Hepburn shire on various matters
- The Rex
Many people have contacted me to express their concern about the decision to sell the Rex. Many would like more clear understanding on how this decision was reached, and many have asked for further consultation with the community.

Home Care – Aged and Disability Services

I have also had numerous conversations with older residents and their families about Council’s ‘In Principle decision’ to move out of Aged Care services. It has been valuable to hear their stories and concerns about the changes impacting them.

Planning

There seems to be quite a few concerns about planning – some are about objections to developments, others have mentioned frustrations with delays in Council’s planning system.

I believe that our planning team are working very hard at the moment, but have been hit by a higher number of applications recently which has been compounded by some staff shortages. So we are asking the community for their patience as we work through the backlog.

Other issues that I have discussed with members of the community are: Affordable Housing, Speedway Lease renewal, Ground water, Western Vic Transmission Lines.

Promoted

Creswick Flood Relief, Sustainable Hepburn, Positive Aging, Western Vic Transmission Lines – EES community sessions.

Councillor Lesley Hewitt, Birch Ward

It seems a long time since the last Council meeting and I would like to acknowledge the impact of the January 2022 storm on Creswick residents and offer my support. I would also like to acknowledge the impact on all Council officers. They have had an extremely difficult time with the storm across 35% of the Shire in June 2021, the impact of COVID-19 and the recent impact of the Omicron virus and the January storm. This constant crisis is taking its toll, not just on the community but on staff and whilst I have been impressed with their capacity to respond I know that it comes at a cost to them.

I attended the Glenlyon New Year’s Day Sports event and even though numbers were down, no doubt as a consequence of people’s concern about Omicron, I was impressed with the organization by the Sports Committee – all volunteers, who contribute so much putting on this great event and supporting various community organizations financially as a result.

Congratulations to, to Danny Moynihan, our Citizen of the Year and Katie Topp, our Young Citizen of the Year. I often hear disparaging comments about so called “blow ins”. Well Danny ‘blew in” 23 years ago and Katie “blew in” 2 years ago. Their contribution to the community life of the Shire demonstrates that it’s not how long

someone has been here but rather what they do, that is a measure of commitment to, and value in the community.

In my councillor role I have chaired the Disability Advisory Committee and the Gender Equity Committee in February. There is evidence that COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted on people with disabilities that we should be aware of. Social isolation, financial insecurity and increased costs are some of the impacts that have been identified.

Finally as the Chair of the Daylesford Hospital Upgrade Committee I am pleased to report that the Master Plan, which was funded by \$100,000 provided by people in the local community, is nearing completion and expected to go to the Central Highlands Rural Health Board for endorsement later this month. The Committee is grateful for the interest shown by our local state member Mary-Anne Thomas and our federal member Catherine King and look forward to the endorsement of the Master Plan. Support for the Daylesford Hospital Upgrade is included in the current Council Plan and is also listed in the Advocacy document that is to come to Council this evening.

I have also had meetings and discussions with various residents in relation to planning matters, aged care services, the proposed Daylesford Speedway license renewal, outdoor dining and to discuss the cancellation of the Hepburn Hub at the Rex. I can be contacted on 0408 793 941 to discuss these or any other Council related matters.

Councillor Tessa Halliday, Cameron Ward

No report was presented.

Councillor Don Henderson, Creswick Ward

A verbal report was presented.

Councillor Brian Hood, Coliban Ward

I am pleased to report that the festive season and early days of the new year have been productive and enjoyable – featuring a number of important community events.

Schools – in December I had the honour of presenting citizenship awards to graduating grade six students at both Bullarto and Trentham primary schools. The students and teachers again demonstrated remarkable resilience through another academic year interrupted by the pandemic.

Trentham Community Centre - The six community members on the Project Advisory Group (PAG), in conjunction with Council, held a very successful open day on Sunday 5th December at the Mechanics Hall. The event was a means to reminisce and celebrate the hall's colourful history before works start on the new facility.

Photographic memorabilia was on display along with plans for the new building; a number of eminent citizens entertained the crowd by speaking on the hall's history and events; musical and other entertainment was provided; various hall user groups gave demonstrations; and a sausage-sizzle lunch was provided. The Trentham Lions Club and the Trentham & District Historical Society supported the event and it was enjoyed by all community members who attended. Audio and video recordings were made on the day and will be shown at a later date.

Australia Day – this year's event, run by Council and Trentham Lions Club, was dedicated to paying tribute to the many organisations and individuals who worked tirelessly throughout and after the June 2021 storm event.

Lyonville woodchop – the fiftieth annual woodchop event was successfully held on Saturday 5 February. After suffering cancellation through COVID-19 the event was remarkably well-attended and competition was strong. It is pleasing to note the hard-working Lyonville Hall committee staged such a wonderful event for the community, with proceeds going to maintenance of this important asset.

Trentham childcare – an event was held this week to celebrate the opening of this vital facility. It is a tribute to Council officers (Fran Fogarty and Kate Proctor) that this facility was opened after many delays and is now unsurprisingly very well patronised. It is hoped that the range of hours offered for long day care can be increased when more staff are recruited.

On other matters...

Off-leash dog park – several meetings have recently been held between community members, Council management and myself with the objective of identifying short and long term solutions for the provision of a facility for the safe off-leash exercise of our canine friends. In this regard I look forward to the completion of Council's Domestic Animal Policy.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Mayor's and Councillors' reports.

MOTION

That Council receives and notes the Mayor's and Councillors' Reports.

Moved: Cr Juliet Simpson

Seconded: Cr Don Henderson

Carried

9.3 CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT

The Chief Executive Officer Report informs Council and the community of current issues, initiatives and projects undertaken across Council.

- Nil

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER UPDATE

I'm sure the Christmas break is a distant memory, but I hope everyone's 2022 is off to a great start.

Although December does seem long ago, at the December 2021 council meeting, Council awarded Ballarat-based builder S J Weir with the contract to build the much-awaited Trentham Community Hub.

The hub will incorporate a community library, Council customer service centre, visitor information services, large community hall, commercial-style kitchen, playgroup area, on-site parking and landscaped surrounds, creating a contemporary facility for Trentham and surrounds.

I'm excited that works are expected to commence in February, with a construction lead time of approximately 13 months.



Image: Trentham Mechanic Institute now



Image: Artists impressions of the new Trentham Community Hub

I'm pleased that the Creswick Trail Network is also another step closer, with Council issuing a Notice of Decision (NOD) late last year to grant a planning permit for construction of 60 km of mountain bike trails. This is a major milestone for the project, which will be a fantastic asset for locals, and a terrific destination for visitors to our beautiful shire. There are still several more approvals required before we can start construction, but this is an important stage in what has proven to be a complex project. The timeline for construction will depend on the length of time it takes to complete all the necessary approvals.

The Victorian Government has made a significant contribution of \$2.65M to the Creswick Trail Network through Regional Development Victoria, with a further \$2.1M towards the Hammon Park trailhead through the Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund – Stimulus Round. The tender for construction of the trailhead closed last month.

Our December edition of Hepburn Life went out just before Christmas. If you haven't heard of Hepburn Life, it's our e-newsletter which covers the latest Council news, including project updates, updates on topical matters such as the Western Victoria Transmission Network Project, call outs to receive your rates notice via email... plus a lot more! If you'd like to join up to receive your monthly edition of Hepburn Life you can subscribe [here](#)

As per previous years, our office closed briefly over the Christmas and New Year period.

January can sometimes be a quieter period for many however it was anything but that for many Creswick and Clunes residents who were severely impacted by a storm event in early January. Estimates indicate around \$10 million of damage to Council assets, and around \$25 million damage to crops. We understand close to 150 homes were damaged, which includes 35 partially destroyed or uninhabitable.



Image: Clearing debris out of Creswick Creek following the storm event

A relief centre was opened at Doug Lindsay Reserve in Creswick to support people who were displaced or impacted by the storm event, and the Relief Centre has since transitioned to a Recovery Centre in the Creswick Town Hall.

If you haven't please chat with one of our friendly team members about any impact sustained to your property as a result of the storm on (03) 4373 7373. Our Storm Recovery Team can put you in touch with financial, emotional and logistical assistance, which can be incredibly helpful following a disaster such as this.

Council provided free waste disposal at the Creswick Transfer Station for storm affected households and businesses in Creswick and Clunes, and we have extended the dates for this service to allow time for insurance assessors to complete their assessments of storm damaged properties. Our team have also been collecting storm-affected hard rubbish from kerbsides in Creswick.

The State Government has declared the storm event a natural disaster which means Council is eligible for relief grant funding to assist with the repair of costly infrastructure damage sustained across the region.



Image: Local agencies working together to respond to the flooding and damage caused by thunderstorms. Along with Council, these groups include State Emergency Services, Country Fire Authority, Victoria Police, DELWP, Ambulance Victoria, Salvation Army and Parks Victoria.

In January we also sent out a special storm edition of our e-newsletter, Hepburn Life which you can read at <https://mailchi.mp/hepburn/storm-jan2022>.



| JANUARY 2022

In this special edition of Hepburn Life we look at the damaging thunderstorm that impacted Creswick, Clunes and surrounds and the available support.



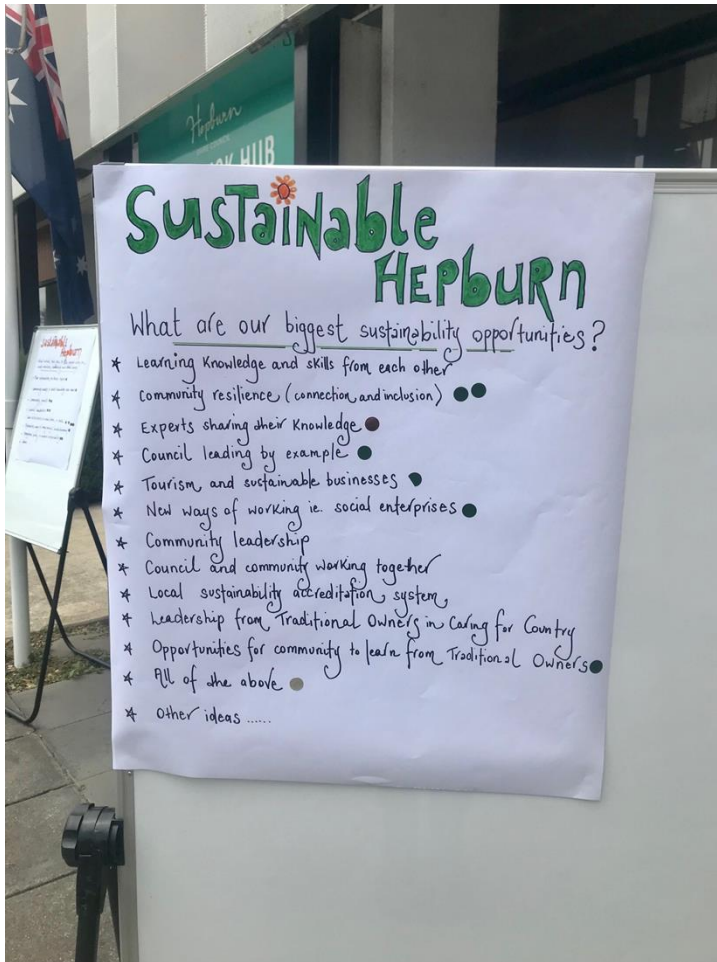
I'm sure when we farewelled 2021 we were all hopeful that in 2022, the end would be in sight for COVID. Whilst COVID restrictions have eased, unfortunately COVID is still with us. Over January the increased cases of COVID-19 impacted our ability to

respond to service requests. We had a number of staff isolating, while others were responding to the impact of the flooding event in the Creswick area. We thank the community for their patience with Council staff in responding to service requests lodged - we prioritised these as best we could.

The strong recommendation to work from home remains in place, and as such some of our team are largely working from home if their role allows for this. Our Shire continues to maintain high vaccination rates which is fantastic. If you are eligible, please get your COVID-19 third vaccination/booster to protect yourself and your community.

After almost two years since our international borders were closed, the borders are re-opening on 21 February and double vaccinated international travellers will be allowed back into the country. This will be welcome news for our tourism sector businesses within the shire who have had an incredibly difficult couple of years. There will still be some obstacles to overcome such as staffing shortages due to how few backpackers and working holidaymakers are in Australia presently, but relief to be returning to COVID 'normal' business operations, which hopefully means higher occupancy and visitation rates within our Shire.

During February Council have conducted several Sustainable Hepburn community consultation and pop-up sessions across the Shire. The Sustainable Hepburn strategy will be Hepburn Shire Council's new environmental sustainability strategy and will provide an integrated sustainability narrative, with detailed action plans for the following strategic themes. An overarching guiding principle is to partner with and enable Traditional Owners to lead and manage Country within Hepburn Shire. If you'd like to get involved in our future environmental sustainability, further information is available on our Participate Hepburn website <https://participate.hepburn.vic.gov.au/sustainable-hepburn>



Clean-up efforts following the June 2021 storm in Trentham continue. We are excited to have reopened bookings for residents and ratepayers to collect up to 2m3 of cut and split firewood for free. The firewood has been collected as part of our storm clean-up efforts.

We'll be offering this through our Transfer Stations in Creswick, Trentham and Daylesford. Bookings are essential and conditions apply and more information is available [here](#).

On 25 January, Council held a community event to welcome eight new citizens and to present our Hepburn Shire Community Awards. This is an important day for the eight residents took the citizenship pledge in our Shire and we're very proud to warmly welcome them to our beautiful region.



Image: New Citizens who took the Citizenship Pledge, with the Mayor, Cr Tim Drylie
 Congratulations to the community award winners:

- Citizen of the Year - **Danny Moynihan**
- Young Citizen of the Year - **Katie Topp**
- Community Event of the Year - Feast on Fraser Street – Christmas in Clunes organised by **Clunes Neighbourhood House**
- Life membership award for services to Town Crying and the Community - **Philip Greenbank** (presented on behalf of the Australasian Guild of Town Criers.)



Image: [Catherine King](#) Federal Member for Ballarat, Cr Tim Drylie, Danny Moynihan, Deb Bright Coordinator [Clunes Neighbourhood House](#), Katie Topp and Mary-Anne Thomas MP.

Many community groups made the difficult decision to cancel their Australia Day events this year due to the escalating COVID cases in the region.

Although Councillors weren't able to visit the Aged Care facilities within the Shire on Australia Day due to COVID restrictions, Council continued the tradition of delivering Australia Day jam and cream sponge cakes to all the aged care facilities within the Shire so that residents could enjoy a slice of cake and a cuppa at their Australia Day events.



Images: Barry & Gloria enjoying a slice of Australia Day Cake

At the end of January we issued our standard monthly issue of Hepburn Life and if you missed it, you can read it at <https://mailchi.mp/hepburn/january-2022>. In this edition we've aligned each of our stories with the five focus areas of our Council Plan.

The school year has recently started for many of Shire's students and we wish students and parents/carers a wonderful start to the school year after an extended period of home schooling.

Over January and early February Council have held several Positive Ageing Strategy consultations across the Shire to hear how we can help residents to age in a positive way. Hepburn Shire has a higher proportion of people over the age of 55 years compared to the Victorian average and is following the international trend of a rapidly growing ageing population. If you're aged 55+ and you couldn't make it to one of the consultations, we'd love you to have your say via our survey which is open until 03 March 2022 and can be accessed at [Positive Ageing | Participate Hepburn](#).

Some of the meetings I have attended over the past two months include:

- Council briefings
- Council meeting
- Staff Consultative Committee meeting
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) strategy meeting
- COVID-19 meetings with various agencies
- Emergency Management Team Summer update meeting
- Budget and Audit look forward meeting
- Creswick Storm Event meeting with Jaala Pulford MP

- Creswick storm event meetings with various agencies
- Creswick Storm Event meeting, focused on Agriculture with Mary-anne Thomas MP
- Meetings regarding the Western Victoria Transmission Network Project (WVTNP)
- Meeting with Local Government Victoria regarding the decision of the sale of the Rex
- Regular and recurring meetings with Directors and direct reports
- Executive Team and Leadership Team meetings
- Meeting with Victorian Farmers Federation regarding the Ausnet transmission proposal
- Central Highlands Regional Partnership Meeting with DELWP regarding the Victorian Planning Scheme discussion
- Community Awards and Citizenship Ceremony event
- Storm advocacy meeting – Macedon Ranges, Moorabool and Hepburn Shire Councils
- Quarterly liaison meeting with Department of Transport
- Introductory meeting with the new CEO of Bushfire Recovery Victoria
- Loddon Campaspe Councils and Central Highlands CEO's meeting

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receives and notes the Chief Executive Officer's Report for February 2022.

MOTION

That Council receives and notes the Chief Executive Officer's Report for February 2022.

Moved: Cr Brian Hood

Seconded: Cr Lesley Hewitt

Carried

10 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TIME

This part of the Ordinary Meeting of Council allows for the tabling of petitions by Councillors and Officers and 30 minutes for the purposes of:

- Tabling petitions
- Responding to questions from members of our community
- Members of the community to address Council

Community members are invited to be involved in public participation time in accordance with Council's Governance Rules.

Individuals may submit written questions or requests to address Council to the Chief Executive Officer by 10:00am the day before the Council Meeting.

Some questions of an operational nature may be responded to through usual administrative procedure. Separate forums and Council processes are provided for deputations or for making submissions to Council.

Questions received may be taken on notice but formal responses will be provided to the questioners directly. These responses will also be read out and included within the minutes of the next Ordinary Meeting of Council to make them publicly available to all.

BEHAVIOUR AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council supports a welcoming, respectful and safe environment for members of the community to participate at Council Meetings regarding issues that are important to them. Council's Governance Rules sets out guidelines for the Mayor, Councillors, and community members on public participation in meetings. It reinforces the value of diversity in thinking, while being respectful of differing views, and the rights and reputation of others.

Under the Governance Rules, members of the public present at a Council Meeting must not be disruptive during the meeting.

Respectful behaviour includes:

- Being courteous when addressing Council during public participation time and directing all comments through the Chair
- Being quiet during proceedings
- Being respectful towards others present and respecting their right to their own views

Inappropriate behaviour includes:

- Interjecting or taking part in the debate
- Verbal abuse or harassment of a Councillor, member of staff, ratepayer or member of the public
- Threats of violence

MOTION

That Council granted an extension of time of 15 minutes in addition to the allocated 30 minutes to allow for public participation time.

Moved: Cr Jen Bray

Seconded: Cr Don Henderson

Carried

10.1 PETITIONS

No petitions were tabled.

10.2 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

The Chair will read out responses to questions taken on notice from the last ordinary meeting, and then read and respond to new questions received in accordance with Council's Governance Rules.

Question 1 – Margret Lockwood

Question in relation to the Glenlyon Recreation Reserve: In addition to the cost of \$83,258 for the above-mentioned assessments, what was the cost to the Hepburn Shire Council of developing the above-mentioned Clean Up Plan including the cost of the independent auditor mentioned in the preamble to Question 2 below?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

Council engaged technical experts and conducted a community briefing early August 2021 to discuss renewal and conditions of Daylesford Field and Game future license. Council implemented these recommendations and has communicated these to the community.

Council submitted its full response to the EPA Clean Up Notice (namely the Clean Up Plan and the Environmental Management Plan) on 23 December 2021 and is currently waiting for the full response back from the EPA which is expected in the next few weeks at which time some further response can be provided to the community as per our commitment.

The GST-exclusive cost for the two consultants (including the independent environmental auditor) of developing the Clean Up Plan is – \$26,268.00 (Assessor) + \$50,417.50 (Auditor) = \$76,685.50.

Question 2 – Margret Lockwood

Question in relation to the Glenlyon Recreation Reserve: Has the Hepburn Shire Council submitted a CUP to the Environment Protection Authority (re-scheduled for October 2021) and if not, what is the rescheduled date? If a CUP has been submitted to the EPA what is the cost to Council of the Clean Up Plan and the proposed timeline for remediation?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

The first deliverable task of the Clean Up Notice, the Clean Up Plan (CUP) was submitted by the due date in October 2021. EPA have accepted this and revoked the

initial Clean Up Notice. The EPA are still reviewing the second deliverable task being the Environmental Management Plan and have yet to provide a response.

Council is currently working through the first stages of the Clean Up Plan with consultants. This stage is further investigation and data validation and will inform any Remedial Options Assessment (ROA) that may be required.

The GST-exclusive cost for the two consultants (including the independent auditor) to implement this stage of the Clean Up Plan is - \$12,560.00 (Assessor) + \$18,132.50 (Auditor) = \$30,692.50.

It is expected that the current work to implement the first stages of the CUP will be finalised in March 2022. Once this work is completed, Council will be in a better position to comment on timing and if any remediation work is required.

Question 3 – Claude Forell

Council's statement on the new Planning Scheme declares that it will protect the towns of Daylesford, Hepburn Springs, Creswick, Clunes and Trentham from inappropriate development. What, if anything, will it do to protect Glenlyon from such development? When will Glenlyon get its promised Structure Plan?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

In addition to the strategic work identified as part of the Planning Scheme review, Council in 2021 resolved a strategic planning program which includes a structure plan for Glenlyon funded in the current 2021/2022 budget. Community consultation is proposed to commence in the 2022/2023 financial year for stage 1 of the Glenlyon Structure Plan.

Question 4 – Claude Forell

How can Council reconcile planning approvals for new sub-divisions of less than 4,000 square metres (about one acre) with the statements in its Domestic Wastewater Management Plan that such housing lots are categorised as "high risk" to groundwater water quality and appropriate wastewater management?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

As part of the Planning assessment process, Planning Officers refer all Land Capability Assessments to the Environmental Health team for advice, and to the applicable water authorities, as the determining authority.

As per the Code of Practice – Onsite Wastewater Management, small lots (<4000m²) must be able to demonstrate how they can minimise the amount of wastewater generated and may require a specialised irrigation system such as wick trenches or mound systems to protect against any offsite discharge.

Land Capability Assessments are used to determine if/how this can be achieved on individual lots considering soil quality and any other constraints such as proximity to waterways, bores, shallow ground water etc.

Question 5 – Marion Clare

When is the Public Consultation for the management of Glenlyon Dam proposed?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

Engagement has not yet commenced. A project and engagement plan is being developed with a view to commencing engagement in coming months.

Question 6 – Marion Clare

Why has a group had a meeting with a Hepburn Shire Manager occurred before this Public Consultation at Glenlyon Dam?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

Council is unsure what meeting is referred to by the questioner. No consultation regarding the management of the Glenlyon Dam has been undertaken at this stage.

Question 7 – Gina Lyons and Julien McDonald

Please note that this question was submitted by both Gina Lyons and Julien McDonald, so a single response has been provided.

Given that Council officers were confident that the loan (for the Rex Project) could be serviced and the final cost projected was sound, what were the financial concerns for not proceeding?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

On the 15 June 2021 Council endorsed a project budget of \$8.755M based on several forecasts including the construction costs if the project was re-tendered. It was proposed that the funding shortfall of \$1.625M was to be funded as a loan facility and repaid with the proceeds of property asset sales after the completion of the project.

At the 23 November 2021 Council meeting, following the retendering process, Council considered a report to award a contract for the Hepburn Hub at the Rex – Building and associated works. The value of the contract was \$6.3M (\$6,327,415) which required a further additional investment of \$649,415 above the budget allocation to complete the project.

The financial concerns were taking account of the required funds in excess of the project budget.

Question 8 – Gina Lyons

Why did Council not consider any alternatives to selling, such as partnering arrangement, sale and lease back etc?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

Council had previously workshopped a range of scenarios including renting and lease back options as part of considering cancelling the previous contract and to proceed with retendering the project.

Part 6 of Council's determination at the 23 November 2021 meeting does include a requirement for officers to prepare a project scope for a new planning project to review possible solutions for community facilities and staff accommodation. It is envisaged that this project will consider alternative project options (apart from the Rex site). It should be noted that the resolution of Council requires a sale process to be undertaken in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020, which will include community engagement.

Question 9 – Joy Durston

Recently there has been a massive increase in the number of housing lots sold in Glenlyon. Glenlyon has no water or wastewater infrastructures - an increase of approximately 25% on the current population and housing will impose a heavy toll on land capability and already stretched water resources.

Given the Planning Minister's recent approval of planning scheme amendment C80hebp, and that there is no mention of a structure plan for Glenlyon in the document and that recent communication from CEO Bradley Thomas says: Glenlyon will be after Creswick and Trentham in late 2022, will Council place a moratorium on planning applications and not approve any further development in Glenlyon until the review and implementation of the Glenlyon structure plan is in place?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

Unfortunately, there is no ability to place moratoriums on development proposals in the Victorian Planning system. Therefore, decisions regarding development in Glenlyon will continue to be made under the new planning scheme now and into the future when the structure plans are formalised. The strategic planning program currently underway includes a structure plan for Glenlyon which is funded in the current 2021/2022 budget. Community consultation is proposed to commence in the 2022/2023 financial year for stage 1 of the Glenlyon Structure Plan.

Question 10 – Stan Capp

Given the public mood with 1,092 citizens calling upon the Local Government Minister to replace Councillors with an Administrator and countless formal and informal complaints about the Rex decision to not proceed, why is it that The Rex

does not appear as an agenda item at every Council meeting to enable an update to both Councillors and the community on the status of the issue?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

Council has previously determined to not proceed with the Hepburn Hub at the Rex project and this project has now been cancelled so there is no report to be considered.

Following a Community Engagement process about the sale of the building, in accordance with our community engagement policy, a report will be presented to council that details the community feedback for consideration by Council in determining the next steps.

Question 11 – Stan Capp

When will Council establish a process under its own Community Engagement Policy to inform itself about the community views on the future of The Rex with all options on the table including the acceptance of a Tender to proceed as recommended by Council Officers?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

As part of the sale process, and in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council is required to undertake a Community Engagement process in accordance with our Community Engagement Policy. Officers are currently planning for this process and a further report will be presented to Council for consideration and determining any next steps.

Part 6 of Council's determination at the 23 November 2021 meeting does include a requirement for officers to prepare a project scope for a new planning project to review possible solutions for community facilities and staff accommodation. It is envisaged that this project will consider alternative project options (apart from the Rex site, as per Council resolution).

Question 12 – Julien McDonald

What was the amount and terms of the loan negotiated by Council Officers for completing the Rex building project as presented for the November 2021 Council Meeting?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

A loan from the Commonwealth Bank for \$3,012,000 was drawn down on 28 June 2021. This loan is a principal and interest facility with a 10 year term and a fixed interest rate of 2.3%. The first repayment was made at the end of December 2021.

Question 13 – Stefan Szonyi

In light of the community concern regarding the abandonment of the Rex project is Council prepared to reconsider its decision and attempt to find ways of completing this project so that at the end of the day the community has a tangible asset rather than just a debt which it has to service?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

Council has determined to not proceed with the Hepburn Hub at the Rex project and this project has now been cancelled.

Council has commenced the planning for the sale of the building in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2020* and a further report will be presented to Council following a community engagement process to determine to proceed with the sale or not.

Question 14 – Edwin Beacham

In view of the fact that many local residents donated money and volunteer time to making the Daylesford Cinema successful, in the expectation that this was to be a continuing facility for the district, what commitment does the Hepburn Shire Council have to providing a cinema for the citizens and ratepayers of Daylesford, Hepburn and surrounding areas?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

The full scope of services to be provided within any new Hepburn Hub project have not yet been determined. The full scope and services to be provided in a new facility will be considered by Council at a later date.

Question 15 – Jenny Beacham

Where can residents access a list of council owned sites and properties in the Shire?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

Council is responsible for managing council owned properties and properties that Council is designated Committee of Management on behalf of DELWP.

Our Manager Waste, Facilities and Community Safety will make contact with yourself to provide the requested details.

Question 16 – Jenny Beacham

What is the timeline for the steps necessary to sell the Rex?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

Prior to formally listing The Rex for sale, Council is required to meet the requirements in Section 114 of the *Local Government Act 2020*. This includes completing a community engagement process which council officers are currently preparing, so expect to undertake in March/April. We anticipate providing a further

report to Council on the community feedback for a decision to proceed (or not) with the sale in May or June 2022.

Question 17 – David Moore

David provided a detailed preamble, the question has been summarised.

The sale proposal of the Rex throws up many of the same conundrums as the last unsuccessful building contract.

This is because section 189 of the *Local Government Act* requires Council to do certain things before selling the land.

Is the Council capable of doing this? What is the timeline to perform all these tasks?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

The steps outlined in the question relate to the *Local Government Act 1989* which has been superseded by the *Local Government Act 2020*. Council is fully aware of the requirements under the *Local Government Act 2020* for the sale of property and is capable of complying with these requirements. In this case Section 114 is relevant and lists the requirements of Council prior to selling land. We anticipate providing a further report to Council on the community engagement process required by Section 114 in May or June 2022.

Question 18 – David Moore

In the October Meeting (Council moved a motion) for a Health and Safety Workcover audit of existing accommodation and the need to properly house the staff, especially Disabled Access.

The second part of this question enquired after a particular Councillors rationale in relation to this matter. Council will refer the questioner to the Councillor in this instance.

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

At the 20 July 2021 meeting, Council resolved in part:

That in response to an investigative report that broadly describes Council’s current office accommodation as “non-compliant with relevant state or federal legislation” and “presenting a substantial health and safety risk”, and mindful of our obligations and responsibilities under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, Council request officers to obtain expert advice, as a matter of urgency, so as to identify the remedies that are required to be undertaken in order to address specific deficiencies.

Moved: Cr Brian Hood

Seconded: Cr Don Henderson

Carried

This independent, expert assessment has been completed and officers are scheduling works to prioritise the resulting recommendations. Council remains committed to ensuring safe and appropriate accommodation is provided for staff.

Question 19 – Bill Guest

To establish a true financial position in determining the future of the Rex and alternative solutions will Council:

- Obtain and advise the Community the market valuations for all Council assets in Daylesford. These include Duke Street offices, Duke Street house and land next to the Rex, Information Centre and offices, the building between the Information Centre and the Post Office, the Library and vacant land?
- Obtain and advise the Community market rental income valuations for the commercial spaces in the Rex if the redevelopment is completed. These include three shops in Vincent Street, the public theatre and the area behind the theatre along Vincent Street frontage?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

It is not cost effective to engage an independent qualified valuer to undertake an asset valuation for all Council owned assets in Daylesford. However, it is a requirement to undertake a property valuation for any asset that is proposed to be sold. An updated asset valuation will be obtained for the Rex Building however this may be deemed commercial in confidence as its public release may compromise the sale value.

In terms of commercial rental will only be an estimate and for the above reasons this may not be made public until after the sale process.

Question 20 – Kathleen McCrae

The Rex is a lovely old building that contributes to Daylesford being an attractive tourist destination.

It should be kept for community use and not sold for private ownership. Why is it being sold?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

The Rex Building is proposed to be sold because Council provided a direction to the Chief Executive Officer to commence the sale process at the 23 November 2021 Council meeting. However, a community engagement process will be undertaken and your views on the sale process can be shared as part of the engagement.

Question 21 – Kathleen McCrae

I think the cinema should remain at the Rex which is its natural home. The historic cinema building is a huge attraction to tourists who are looking to visit true places of history especially those that are art deco.

How can the Council retain this important Community facility?

Response – Mayor Tim Drylie

Council have directed officers to commence the sale process for the Rex building. This process requires a community engagement process to hear the community feedback on the proposed sale. Following this community engagement process a further report will be provided to Council to consider the feedback and consider next steps.

10.3 REQUESTS TO ADDRESS COUNCIL

Members of our community who have submitted a request in accordance with Council's Governance Rules will be heard.

Ms Janine Granger addressed Council regarding the Hepburn Shire Aquatic Strategy.

Ms Margaret McDonald addressed Council regarding the Hepburn Shire Aquatic Strategy.

11 A HEALTHY, SUPPORTED, AND EMPOWERED COMMUNITY

11.1 AWARDING OF CONTRACT - HEPBU.RFT2021.261 - HAMMON PARK TRAILHEAD CONSTRUCTION

DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DELIVERY

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager Major Projects, I Ben Grounds have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. CONFIDENTIAL - Tender Evaluation Report HEPBU.RFT2021.261 Hammon Park Trailhead [11.1.1 - 11 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to award contract HEPBU.RFT2021.261 Hammon Park Trailhead Implementation.

Officers undertook a Request for Tender (RFT) process in accordance with the Procurement Policy to seek submissions to construct the Hammon Park 'Trailhead' (also known as the Hammon Park Community and Youth Hub), an interconnected cycling and recreation space, which will also serve as the trailhead for the future Creswick Trails network.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. *Award the contract HEPBU.RFT2021.261 Hammon Park Trailhead Implementation to NaturForm for the sum of \$1,931,709 (ex GST), subject to the satisfactory outcome of a financial assessment of the company.*
2. *Delegate authority for the Chief Executive Officer to sign and seal the contract documents on behalf of Council.*
3. *Delegate approval of contract variations to the Project Manager up to their financial delegation for each variation, within the project budget.*
4. *Resolve that the attached Tender Evaluation Report remains confidential and that the Minutes record the successful tenderer and the accepted tender price.*

MOTION

That Council:

- 1. Awards the contract HEPBU.RFT2021.261 Hammon Park Trailhead Implementation to NaturForm for the sum of \$1,931,709 (ex GST), subject to the satisfactory outcome of a financial assessment of the company;*
- 2. Delegates authority for the Chief Executive Officer to sign and seal the contract documents on behalf of Council;*
- 3. Delegates approval of contract variations to the Project Manager up to their financial delegation for each variation, within the project budget;*
- 4. Resolves that the attached Tender Evaluation Report remains confidential and that the Minutes record the successful tenderer and the accepted tender price;*

Moved: Cr Don Henderson

Seconded: Cr Tessa Halliday

Carried

BACKGROUND

Hammon Park is a recreation reserve located on Water Street, Creswick. In addition to being identified in the Playspace Strategy as a District Park, Hammon Park is the sole trailhead for the Creswick Trails Network which proposes 60 kilometres of mountain bike and shred trails located in the adjacent the Creswick Regional Park, State Forest and plantation lands.

In September 2020, Council adopted a masterplan for Hammon Park Trailhead. In March 2021, following a successful grant application to the State Government's Regional Tourism Infrastructure Fund, Hammon Park received \$2.1M in State Government funding for construction.

KEY ISSUES

Probity and Documentation

Given the expected value of the tender, ARC Blue Consulting, an independent firm specialising in procurement probity, was engaged to oversee the process.

ARC Blue's probity report identified that the process was fair, rigorous, and compliant with policy requirements.

Tender Advertising

HEPBU.RFT2021.261 Hammon Park Trailhead Implementation was advertised through *tenders.net* on 2 December 2021 and closed on 27 January 2022 for a total of 8 weeks live for open tender. This extended timeframe was provided given the

time of year, complexity of the documentation and to provide ample opportunity for tender responses to be prepared.

The documents were downloaded by 37 firms or entities with two responses received by the close of tender.

Tender Evaluation Panel

A Tender Evaluation Panel (TEP) composed of Manager Projects, Manager Financial Services, Project Manager Creswick Trails (Chair) and Coordinator Sport and Active Recreation was formed to evaluate submissions.

Evaluation Criteria and Weighting

The advertised evaluation criteria and weighting for this tender opportunity were:

- Risk/OHS Management – 5%
- Local Content – 5%
- Response to Specification – 25%
- Experience and Qualifications – 25%
- Sustainability – 5%
- Business and Financial Capacity – 5%
- Contract Price – 30%.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the tender responses took place as follows:

- Individual assessment of tender responses by panel members
- Initial Tender Evaluation Panel meeting leading to initial consensus score
- Respondent interviews on two responses
- Reference checks on two responses
- Second assessment of Tender Evaluation Panel to assess new information from interviews and reference checks
- Tender Evaluation Panel Recommendation to Council.

Preferred Contractor

The Preferred Contractor for Contract No. HEPBU.RFT.2021.261 Hammon Park Trailhead Implementation is NaturForm based on their superior experience, capability, and suitable sub-contractors. NaturForm can meet the required timelines, present good value, are experienced with large and complex jobs and come highly recommended by their references.

Amenities Block

The installation of a new amenities block for Hammon Park is the subject of a separate procurement process.

POLICY AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Council Plan 2021-2025

A healthy, supported, and empowered community

2.3 Optimise the use of public spaces to increase participation and community connection.

Embracing our past and planning for the future

3.3 Build and maintain quality infrastructure that supports and promotes liveability and active living in the community.

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Recycled road base from works elsewhere in Hepburn Shire will be brought in as clean fill to construct the cyclocross jumps. The recommended contractor has an international standard certified Environmental Management System.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Funding for construction comes from a State Government Grant, a contribution from Creswick Community Bank and a Council contribution. The recommended tender price is within the project budget.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

Given the nature of the construction, several risk mitigations measures have been put in place for this contract.

A contingency sum is proposed for this project given the complexity and possibility for the need to rectify damage resulting from the recent catastrophic floods in Creswick. These floods happened following advertising of the tender but before tender award.

Other risk mitigation measures include:

- Financial Capacity of Contractor - a detailed financial assessment has been carried out on NaturForm as the preferred contractor by Corporate Scorecard (Equifax). The results of the assessment are pending at the time of writing. This is a requirement of the Procurement Policy for awards of this size.
- Communications - reputational risk has been and will continue to be managed through positive communications with community, stakeholders, State Government and service providers through the Creswick Trails project website, Participate Hepburn, onsite signage and direct e-newsletters to interested parties.

- Management - the project will be monitored by a Project Manager with regular planned and unplanned site meetings and inspections.
- OH&S – Fortnightly OH&S inspections will be conducted.
- Construction Risk – a risk matrix has been compiled for the works. This will be a live document being updated as required.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement has been undertaken at various stages in the process to implement a trailhead at Hammon Park including:

- Community feedback into the creation of the master plan
- Community feedback on the draft masterplan
- Updates regarding Council’s adoption of the masterplan, receipt of grant funding, progress toward tender and progress toward a new amenities block.

Engagement regarding construction scheduling, potential disruption and site safety will be ongoing throughout the build.

Hammon Park is owned by DELWP with Council as the Committee of Management. DELWP has given permission to construct the Hammon Park Trailhead.

Council’s Disability Advisory Committee (DAC) have been briefed at several points in the development of the Hammon Park Trailhead Masterplan and the progress of the project and are very supportive of the accessibility considerations built into the constructed outcome.

11.2 DRAFT HEPBURN SHIRE AQUATICS STRATEGY FOR PUBLIC EXHIBITION DIRECTOR COMMUNITY AND DEVELOPMENT

In providing this advice to Council as the Coordinator Sport and Active Recreation, I Kathie Schnur have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy Draft Report 080222 [**11.2.1** - 73 pages]
2. Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy App 1 - Community Survey Summary Final Report [**11.2.2** - 26 pages]
3. Hepburn Aquatics Strategy Draft Summary Report 080222(2) [**11.2.3** - 35 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The development of the Hepburn Shire Council Aquatics Strategy aims to provide a 10-year priority plan to guide the future strategic direction, infrastructure development priorities, asset management and maximise participation and programming opportunities to contribute to the health, wellbeing and liveability of the communities of Hepburn Shire.

The planning, and community and key stakeholder engagement undertaken to date has informed the development of the draft Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy (2022 – 2032) attached.

The community interest shown through the high response to the consultation opportunities undertaken to date has acknowledged that the draft Aquatics Strategy is critical to providing Council and the community with a clear strategic direction on the future aquatics provision throughout the Hepburn Shire over the next 10 years.

Through the development of the draft Aquatics Strategy the need for access to all-year-round indoor aquatics provision has been identified, and the draft Aquatics Strategy has addressed the identified need through a number of recommended strategic directions and actions.

The most significant challenge for Council in determining a future indoor aquatics facility is the affordability to build and operate such a facility. This includes the ability to attract sufficient capital funding for a new facility and the ability to sustain the ongoing operational cost.

In its considerations, Council will also need to take into account the existing aquatics facilities and the further detailed planning work required to fully understand the feasibility, business case and funding strategy to undertake the upgrades identified and Council's ability to fund those works.

The draft Hepburn Shire Council Aquatics Strategy is a summary of market research, asset condition, current operating information and broad community engagement. It will guide the future strategic direction, infrastructure development priorities, asset

renewal and upgrades, operational improvement and activation of aquatics provision throughout the Shire.

Several key stakeholders were involved to guide the development of the draft Aquatics Strategy. They include Sport and Recreation Victoria, Daylesford Indoor Aquatics Centre (DIAC) Advocacy Group, Creswick and District Aquatics Centre Advocacy Group and Central Highlands Rural Health.

The content of the draft Aquatics Strategy includes:

- Strategic Review and Background Research
- Demographic Review
- Current Facilities Operational Review
- Market Research and Industry Trends
- Community Engagement Findings
- Vision
- Objectives
- Facility Hierarchy and Provision
- Strategic Recommendations and Actions.

The draft Aquatics Strategy is consistent with the Hepburn Shire Council Plan 2021-2025 key focus area: A healthy, supported and empowered community and Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025. This includes optimising the use of public spaces to increase participation and community connections which is supported by the provision of leisure and recreation facilities such as outdoor community pools, that encourage healthy and active lifestyles to improve the health and wellbeing of the community.

There are a number of Strategic Direction Recommendations and Actions arising from the draft Aquatics Strategy including consideration of priority projects including outdoor aquatics facility upgrades assessment and outdoor pool and waterplay upgrades. These Strategic Recommendations and Actions will require further detailed planning work including feasibility, business case and funding strategy.

The draft Aquatics Strategy supports the identified need for access to an all-year-round indoor aquatics facility to support the needs of Hepburn Shire residents. The evidence that supports the need includes:

Hepburn population demographics - the younger and older demographic profile of the Shire requires access to indoor aquatics facilities to support the key areas of learn to swim programs, therapy, aquatics programs and recreational swimming. The travel and climate conditions make it difficult for some residents to access aquatics services in neighbouring municipalities i.e., Ballarat and Macedon Ranges

Identified community need – extensive feedback from the community engagement process identified a strong need and desire for access to a year-round aquatics facility for learn to swim, therapy, aquatics programs and recreational swimming.

Current facilities barriers to participation – evidence that the existing Hepburn aquatics facilities are underutilised due to aging infrastructure, cold water temperatures, poor accessibility and facilities are not meeting identified community needs.

Whilst the draft Aquatics Strategy identifies the need for access to an indoor all year round aquatics facility to support the needs of Hepburn Shire residents, further work is needed.

As outlined in Recommended Strategic Direction 7.4.7 in the draft Aquatics Strategy further detailed investigation and the development of a feasibility study/business case is needed. The further work that needs to be undertaken includes aquatics provision options, preferred location, facility components and concept plan, capital cost estimate, financial operating model and funding strategy.

This further work will identify the capital and operating costs associated with an Indoor Aquatics Facility. This will need to be further considered by Council at the appropriate time.

The high order indicative costs associated with implementing the actions arising from the recommended Strategic Directions outlined in the draft Aquatics Strategy are estimated to be \$5.9 million - \$7.98 million. This includes Facility upgrades compliance and OH&S works, Management and Operation, Facility Programming and Activation, Asset Management Plan, Outdoor pool and Waterplay Upgrades and further Indoor Aquatics Facility Planning. Funding the implementation of the proposed actions would be subject to achieving funding as part of future Council budgeting processes and seeking external partner funding opportunities where applicable.

The purpose of this report is to seek Councils endorsement of the draft Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy for public exhibition.

Following the endorsement of the draft Strategy for public exhibition, the next phase of community and stakeholder engagement is proposed for February and March 2022. Following the second phase engagement, it is anticipated that the final draft of the Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy will be presented for Councils further consideration and seeking adoption in April 2022.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Endorses the draft Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy (2022 – 2032) for Public Exhibition from 16 February 2022 to 18 March 2022; and*
- 2. Notes that, subject to changes after the consideration of the public exhibition feedback received, the Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy (2022 – 2032) will be*

presented for adoption by Council at the Ordinary Meeting of Council in April 2022.

MOTION

That Council:

- 1. Endorses the draft Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy (2022 – 2032) for Public Exhibition from 16 February 2022 to 18 March 2022; and*
- 2. Requires that, prior to the commencement of Public Exhibition, an amendment is made to the Aquatic Strategy Draft Report and the Aquatics Strategy Summary Report to state that the Strategic Direction Recommendations and Actions arising from the draft Aquatics Strategy are not currently included in the long term financial plan and would require significant external funding; and*
- 3. Notes that, subject to changes after the consideration of the public exhibition feedback received, the Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy (2022 – 2032) will be presented for adoption by Council at the Ordinary Meeting of Council in April 2022.*

Moved: Cr Brian Hood

Seconded: Cr Lesley Hewitt

Carried

BACKGROUND

Hepburn Shire has four (4) community outdoor pools and one (1) free water play splash park including:

- Daylesford Community Outdoor Swimming Pool (DOP)
- Trentham Community Outdoor Swimming Pool (TOP)
- Clunes Community Outdoor Swimming Pool (COP)
- Creswick Splash Park (CSP)
- Calembeen Park Toddlers Pool (CPTP)

Four sites (Daylesford, Trentham and Clunes community outdoor swimming pools) are owned and operated by Council, whilst Calembeen Park Toddlers Pool is located on crown land with Council having the role of Committee of Management.

The development of the Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy commenced in April 2021 with the aim to undertake the development of a 10-year Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy to guide the future strategic direction, infrastructure development priorities, asset management and maximise participation and programming

opportunities to contribute to the health, wellbeing and liveability of the communities of Hepburn Shire.

Council engaged Project Consultants, Otium Planning Group to work in collaboration with Officers to undertake the Strategy development.

The development of the Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy has been funded through the Victorian Government's, Local Sports Infrastructure Funding Program (\$30,000) and Council (\$50,000).

The objectives that have guided the development of the Strategy are to:

- Develop a sound understanding of the current aquatics provision within the Hepburn Shire.
- Provide direction on a network of diverse aquatics provision opportunities throughout the Shire, increasing inclusive programming and including participation opportunities for underrepresented groups.
- Provide direction on the asset management and allocation of resources for the development and maintenance of aquatics facilities.
- Provide direction on the operational business planning of existing and any proposed future aquatics provision throughout the Shire.
- Acknowledge and celebrate the area's local community character, indigenous and cultural heritage, tourism and artistic culture in the consideration of aquatics provision throughout the Shire.

The draft Aquatics Strategy has been informed through undertaking the following planning:

- Technical audits of the Shire's existing aquatics infrastructure.
- An operational, participation and financial assessment of Council Aquatics Program over the past 5 years.
- Extensive community engagement (as outlined in the Community Engagement Section of this report).
- Benchmarking the aquatics provision of neighbouring and other similar Local Government areas.
- Consideration of the current and future trends in aquatics provision.
- Review of State, Regional and Hepburn Shire Strategies and Policies that have relevance to Council's aquatics provision.

The key issues identified through the market research, centre review and stakeholder engagement stages of the project include:

- Aquatics facilities and services support the strategic commitment to healthy and active communities.
- Current aquatics facilities do not cater for all key user markets.
- Facility catchment, accessibility and cold climate challenges.
- Asset renewal – short to medium term priorities.
- Management model options review.

- Affordability of a new facility – capital and operational costs.
- Potential Partnerships.

The key issues and opportunities were presented to a Councillors Briefing on 14 December 2021 to further inform the proposed strategic directions and actions contained within the draft Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy over the next 10 years.

KEY ISSUES

Based on the planning, and key community and stakeholder engagement to date the proposed strategic directions and actions of the draft Hepburn Shire Council Aquatics Strategy (2022 – 2032) are as follows:

Proposed Vision:

Provide sustainable, affordable and accessible aquatics facilities that bring Hepburn residents together to enjoy health, wellbeing, education and leisure experiences.

Proposed Objectives:

- Access to affordable, accessible and inclusive aquatics facilities that support participation opportunities and key program needs.
- Existing facilities are well managed and maintained to meet current design and operational industry standards.
- Facilitate access to a network of complementary facilities that support health and wellbeing outcomes for the community.
- Future design of facilities will be operationally sustainable and based on contemporary design principles.

Facility Hierarchy and Provision:

Given the diverse and dispersed characteristics of the Hepburn shire population it is proposed that the provision of aquatics facilities will be provided using a network approach.

With a small population catchment providing multiple indoor aquatics facilities within the shire is not achievable or affordable for Council.

The recommended aquatics provision strategy is a combination of:

- Council owned aquatics facilities including outdoor pools, splash parks and the exploration of one future indoor facility.
- Facilities and services available from the private sector (e.g., swim schools, commercial day spas/bathhouse, private gyms and personal training studios)
- Regional and Sub Regional facilities in adjoining municipalities of Ballarat (Ballarat Aquatics and Lifestyle Centre), Macedon Ranges (Kyneton Aquatics and Sports Centre) and Central Goldfields (Maryborough Sports and Leisure Centre).
- Natural water bodies including lakes, waterholes and mineral springs.

The recommended future development options are based on the following localised trends:

- Need for funding investment to address the operational and technical issues identified via the detailed facility audits of the ageing aquatics facilities.
- Opportunity to integrate key facilities and service areas at one location to support year-round access to aquatics facilities to support learn to swim and therapy-based activities.
- New leisure and water play opportunities to continue to support the informal leisure/social/family markets and access to an aquatics experience in small townships.
- Consider opportunities to support indoor health and fitness programs and services.
- Improvements to disability access, amenities, improved shade, more seating and landscaping.
- Maintaining the existing pools is the priority in the immediate to medium term. However, if the cost of these works cannot be afforded over the long term, Council may be forced to close one or more of the existing pools.
- Need to consider the future management arrangements of the facilities to ensure the long-term sustainability of operations.

7.4 Recommended Strategic Directions

Section 7.4 in the draft Hepburn Shire Council Aquatics Strategy provides the Recommended Strategic Directions and Actions arising from the draft Strategy.

The recommended strategic directions for the Hepburn Aquatics facilities are as follows:

7.4.1 Facility Upgrades – Compliance and OH&S Works

- Undertake recommended upgrades identified in Technical Review audits to meet current compliance and OH&S requirements (Existing Facilities).

7.4.2 Management and Operations

- To ensure the management and operations of the facilities is financially sustainable for Council and aligned to industry trends and compliance requirements it is recommended that Council undertake a detailed assessment of the options available and associated costs and benefits for the future management of the facilities. This would include Inhouse model, External Contractor, Company Limited by Guarantee and Lease.

–

7.4.3 Facility programming and activation

- Undertake a review of the current programming of the outdoor pools. Develop and implement new programming and activation opportunities across the outdoor pools to encourage greater participation outcomes. This may include more regular aquatics programs, special events, family fun days, community

partnership activities and promotions, themed activity days and increased school use.

7.4.4 Asset Management

- To ensure the aquatics facilities are maintained in accordance with industry standards it is recommended that Council implement an Aquatics Facilities Asset Management Plan and site-specific maintenance plans for all aquatics facilities in line with Technical Assessments.

7.4.5 Outdoor Pool Upgrades

- Further investigate identified upgrade options to the three outdoor pools in Daylesford, Clunes and Trentham. This includes the provision of warmer water, amenities, plant rooms and associated infrastructure.

7.4.6 Water Play Upgrades

- Develop concept plans and cost estimates for the addition of water play facilities at the three outdoor pools to cater for the growing expectations of different aquatics experiences for families and children. This should include consideration of the enhancement of features at the Creswick Splash Park and further investigation and exploration of the identified replacement options for Calemben Toddlers Pool to ensure compliance with industry guidelines.

7.4.7 Indoor Aquatics Facility

- The Aquatics Strategy identifies the need for access to an indoor all year round aquatics facility to support the needs of Hepburn Shire residents.
- Further detailed planning work including feasibility, business case and funding strategy is required to fully understand Council's ability to fund, develop and operate an indoor aquatics facility.
- The scope of the detailed investigation should include exploring aquatics provision options, facility benchmarking of similar size aquatics facilities within the rural and regional areas, facility components, concept plan, capital cost estimate, financial operating model, site assessment, funding strategy (council and external).

The draft Hepburn Shire Council Aquatics Strategy is presented to Council to consider endorsing the draft Strategy for public exhibition. It is anticipated that following the public exhibition phase and in consideration of the community comments received, the final Strategy will be presented to Council seeking adoption. in April 2022.

The Grampians Region Sport and Recreation Victoria Officers have been fully involved in the Strategy development and support the anticipated completion of the project by end of April 2022.

POLICY AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Council Plan 2021-2025

A healthy, supported, and empowered community

2.2 Increase the availability and accessibility of services in the Hepburn Shire area to support liveability, health, and wellbeing.

2.3 Optimise the use of public spaces to increase participation and community connection.

2.5 Improved mental wellbeing within the community.

Embracing our past and planning for the future

3.3 Build and maintain quality infrastructure that supports and promotes liveability and active living in the community.

A dynamic and responsive Council

5.2 Actively communicate, inform and engage with our community about events and decision-making

5.5 Strong asset management and renewal.

The development of the Aquatics Strategy has reviewed and considered the following State, Regional and Local Strategies to inform the consideration of the future aquatics provision with Hepburn Shire.

- Hepburn Shire Council, Council Vision and Plan - 2021 – 2024
- Hepburn Shire Council, Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2016-2021
- Healthy Active and Safe Children Hepburn Shire Municipal Early Years Plan – April-2015
- Hepburn Shire Economic Development Strategy 2016-2021
- Hepburn Shire Youth Strategy – 2016 – 2021
- Hepburn Shire Active Women and Girls Strategy
- Hepburn Shire Reconciliation Action Plan – 2018
- Hepburn Shire Council Disability Access and Inclusion Plan, 2018 to 2022
- Hepburn Shire Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017 to 2021
- Activate 2020 – 2030 Regional Strategic Plan
- Hepburn Shire Playspace Strategy 2020-2030 – Play is for Everyone
- Sport and Recreation Victoria, Active Victoria – A strategic framework for sport and recreation in Victoria 2017-2021
- Sport and Recreation Victoria, Female friendly sport infrastructure guidelines
- Sport and Recreation Victoria, Design for Everyone Guide

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic, social and environmental sustainability opportunities and implications are key considerations in the development of the draft Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The high order indicative costs associated with implementing the actions arising from the recommended Strategic Directions contained in the draft Hepburn Shire Council Aquatics Strategy are estimated to be \$5.9 million - \$7.98 million.

Funding the implementation of the proposed Strategic Directions Recommendations and Actions would be subject to achieving funding as part of future Council budgeting processes and seeking external partner funding opportunities where applicable.

The following table provides a breakdown of the indicative costs for each of the recommended strategic directions as further detailed in the Draft Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy.

Recommended Strategic Directions	Indicative Cost Range*
Facility Upgrades – Compliance and OH&S Works	\$415,000 - \$480,000
Management and Operation	\$20,000 - \$30,000
Facility Programming and Activation	\$10,000 – \$20,000
Asset Management Plan	\$30,000 - \$40,000
Outdoor Pool Upgrades	\$3,320,000 - \$4,730,000
Waterplay Upgrades	\$2,000,000 – \$2,520,000
Indoor Aquatic Facility Planning	\$120,000 - \$160,000
Total Indicative Cost Range	\$5,915,000 - \$7,980,000

*Note: Indicative costs only – estimates are likely to change over time subject to timing of delivery, cost escalation, CPI and final scope of works for each project. The figures exclude contingencies and project management fees.

The further work undertaken as part of Indoor Aquatic Facility Planning noted in the above table will identify the capital and operating costs associated with an Indoor Aquatics Facility. This will need to be further considered by Council at the appropriate time.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of Council Plan 2021 – 2024 – Strategy 2.3.9 in Hepburn Shire Council Plan is to *Finalise and implement the Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy*. If this project does not progress, then this puts at risk Council not achieving one of its Strategies contained in the Council Plan.

Impact on Service Provision - If the draft Aquatics Strategy that provides a 10-year strategic plan for Aquatics is not supported then Council runs the risk of not having a strategic plan in place to support the need to upgrade aging aquatics facilities and not being able to provide this service if facilities fail.

Reputational risk – Council has entered into a Funding Agreement with Sport and Recreation Victoria to develop a Hepburn Shire Council Aquatics Strategy. There is also keen interest and expectation from two advocacy groups and the broader community to comment on a draft and finalise an Aquatics Strategy.

Impact on ability to attract funding partners – Council will seek funding opportunities from relevant Funding Bodies to assist with the implementation of the Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy should it be endorsed by Council. Having a Strategy in place strengthens Council's ability to attract funding partners.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

While this project scores within the Low range, Officers recognised that this project possesses high community sentiment and that there has been, and will continue to be, significant community attention on the issue and therefore conducted community stakeholder engagement to a level more in line with a medium.

In collaboration with the Project Consultants, Officers have undertaken extensive community engagement between April and August 2021 and despite the challenges experienced due to COVID-19 restrictions and other significant events during this time, we have engaged with over 1000 Hepburn Shire residents and over 50 shire-wide community organisations and schools, through the following consultation opportunities:

- Councillors Briefings/Workshops (April and December 2021).
- An on-line community survey.
- Emailed submissions from community groups and individuals.
- Four community pop-in sessions were conducted in Daylesford, Clunes, Creswick and Trentham.
- Internal and external key stakeholder workshops and interviews.
- The Project has been placed on the Participate Hepburn website and the community engagement opportunities were promoted through:
 - Social and local media networks
 - Direct contact with key project stakeholders

- Signage placed at the Daylesford, Clunes and Trentham Outdoor Pool and Creswick Splash Park
- Project Bulletins placed at Council's Customer Service hubs, Libraries and each of the local Neighbourhood Centres
- A randomised mail out to 50 Hepburn Shire ratepayers.

Full details of the community engagement undertaken is provided in the draft Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy and community survey findings Report (attached).

Two documents have been developed for the purposes of public exhibition:

1. A Hepburn Shire Council Aquatics Strategy Draft Summary Report (attached); and
2. A Hepburn Shire Council Aquatics Strategy Draft Report.

The draft Summary Report provides the key elements of the full draft report and will be the main document used to receive comment on as part of the public exhibition process. The full draft report will also be made available for public exhibition for members of the community who wish to view and make comment on the full draft report.

Following the endorsement of the public exhibition of the draft Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy the next phase of community and stakeholder engagement will be undertaken between 16 February to 18 March 2022 and include the following consultation opportunities:

- An on-line community survey (hard copy surveys to also be made available).
- Invited written submissions from community groups and individuals.
- 4 Community pop-in sessions at the aquatic's facilities in Daylesford, Clunes, Creswick and Trentham.
- Internal and external key stakeholder workshops and interviews.

Engagement opportunities will be placed on the Participate Hepburn website and the community engagement opportunities will be promoted through:

- Social and local media networks.
- Direct contact with key project stakeholders.
- Signage placed at the Daylesford, Clunes and Trentham Outdoor Pool and Creswick Splash Park.
- Project Bulletins placed at Council's Customer Service hubs, Libraries and each of the local Neighbourhood Centres.
- A randomised mail out to 50 Hepburn Shire ratepayers.



Hepburn
SHIRE COUNCIL

Hepburn Shire Council Aquatics Strategy

DRAFT REPORT

February 2022

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The Hepburn Shire Council acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government for their funding contribution to this project.

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Executive Summary

The development of the Hepburn Shire Council Aquatics Strategy commenced in April 2021 and aims to provide a 10-year priority plan to guide the future strategic direction, infrastructure development priorities, asset management and maximise participation and programming opportunities to contribute to the health, wellbeing and liveability of the communities of Hepburn Shire.

Together with the Project Consultants, Otium Planning Group, Council Officers have undertaken a suite of planning and community and stakeholder engagement to inform the development of the Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy.

The Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy is a summary of the market research, current operating information and broad community engagement. It will guide the future strategic direction, infrastructure development priorities, asset renewal and upgrades, operational improvement and activation of aquatics provision throughout the Shire.

Several key stakeholders were engaged to guide the development of the Aquatics Strategy. They include Sport and Recreation Victoria, Daylesford Indoor Aquatic Centre (DIAC) Advocacy Group, Creswick and District Aquatic Centre Advocacy Group and Central Highlands Rural Health.

The Aquatics Strategy includes:

- Strategic Review and Background Research
- Demographic Review
- Current Facilities Operational Review
- Market Research and Industry Trends
- Community Engagement Findings
- Vision
- Objectives
- Facility Hierarchy and Provision
- Strategic Recommendations and Actions.

The Aquatics Strategy is consistent with the Hepburn Shire Council Plan 2021-2025 key focus area: A healthy, supported and empowered community and Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025. This includes optimising the use of public spaces to increase participation and community connections which is supported by the provision of leisure and recreation facilities such as outdoor community pools, which encourage healthy and active lifestyles to improve the health and wellbeing of the community.

The Aquatics Strategy provides market research, current operating information and broad community engagement. It provides a guide on the future strategic direction, infrastructure development priorities, asset renewal and upgrades, operational improvement and activation of aquatics provision throughout the Shire.

There are a number of Strategic Direction Recommendations and Actions arising from the Aquatics Strategy including consideration of priority projects including outdoor aquatic facility upgrades assessment and outdoor pool and waterplay upgrades. These Strategic Recommendations and Actions will require further detailed planning work including feasibility, business case and funding strategy to fully understand Council's ability to fund the facility upgrades identified.

The Aquatics Strategy supports the identified need for access to an all-year-round indoor aquatics facility to support the needs of Hepburn Shire residents. The evidence that supports the need includes:

- **Hepburn population demographics** - the younger and older demographic profile of the Shire requires access to indoor aquatics facilities to support the key areas of learn to swim programs, therapy, aquatics programs and recreational swimming. The travel and climate conditions make it difficult for some residents to access aquatics services in neighbouring municipalities i.e., Ballarat and Macedon Ranges.
- **Identified Community Need** - extensive feedback from the community engagement process identified a strong need and desire for access to a year-round aquatics facility for learn to swim, therapy, aquatics programs and recreational swimming.
- **Current facilities barriers to participation** - evidence that the existing Hepburn aquatics facilities are underutilised due to ageing infrastructure, cold water temperatures, poor accessibility and facilities are not meeting identified community needs.

Further detailed planning work including feasibility, business case and funding strategy is required to fully understand Council's ability to fund, develop and operate an indoor aquatics facility.

As outlined in Recommended Strategic Direction 7.4.7 in the Aquatics Strategy, further detailed investigation and the development of a feasibility study/business case is needed. The further work that needs to be undertaken includes aquatics provision options, preferred location, facility components and concept plan, capital cost estimate, financial operating model and funding strategy.

The most significant challenge for Council in determining a future indoor aquatics facility is the affordability to build and operate such a facility. This includes the ability to attract sufficient capital funding for a new facility and the ability to sustain the ongoing operational cost.

1. Introduction

The Hepburn Shire Council Aquatics Strategy will guide the future strategic direction, infrastructure development priorities, asset management, operational development, and activation of aquatics provision throughout the Shire over the next 10 years.

Hepburn Shire has five public aquatics facilities:

- Daylesford Outdoor Pool
- Clunes Outdoor Pool
- Trentham Outdoor Pool
- Creswick Splash Park
- Calembreen Park Toddlers Pool.

The four outdoor pools are reported to be nearing their end of life and not fit for purpose for many residents in the community. There is a growing demand and expectation from the community for access to year-round warm water facilities that cater for learn to swim, therapy, aquatics programs and recreational swimming. It is because of these reasons, that a long-term strategic plan for aquatics facilities provision is an important project for the Hepburn Shire Council to guide its investment strategy for the next 10-20 years.

1.1 PROJECT TIMELINE

The following graphic shows the key project stages and tasks undertaken to inform the final Aquatics Strategy report.

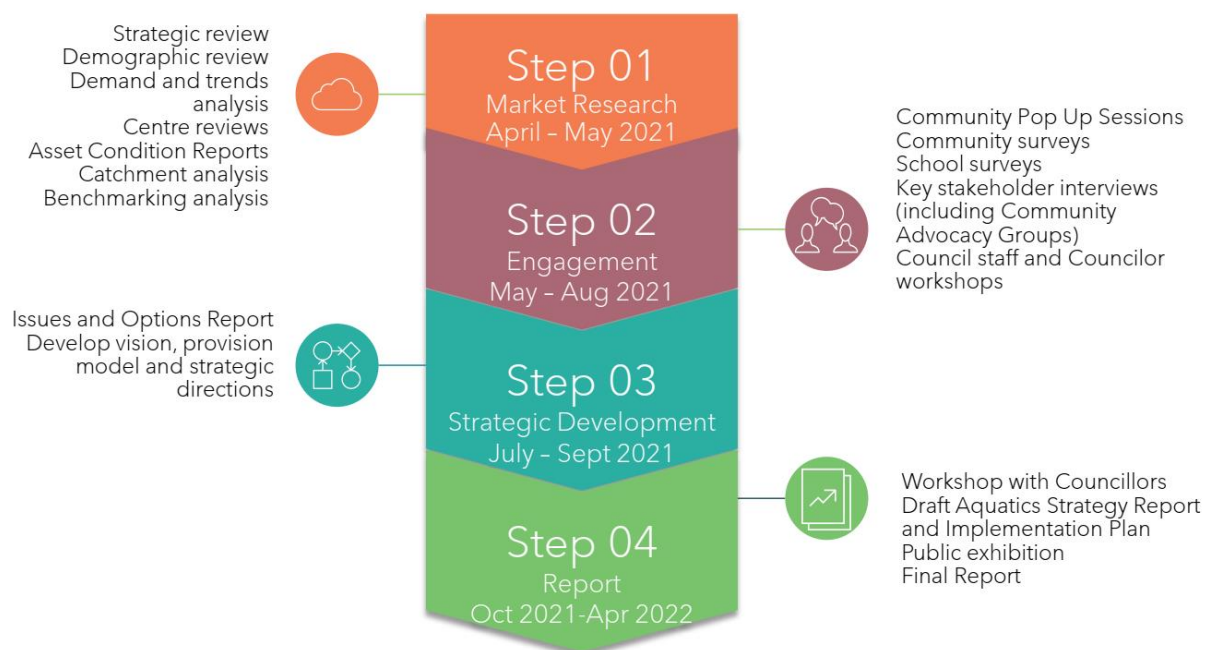


Figure 1: Project Plan Milestones

2. Demographic Review

Who are we planning for?

This section profiles the population and demographic characteristics of the Hepburn Shire community. These characteristics will influence the aquatics and leisure services and facilities needed for the community into the future.

2.1 PROJECT AREA

Hepburn Shire is renowned for its heritage buildings, parks, reserves and native forests. Located in central Victoria, the Hepburn Shire includes the townships of Clunes, Creswick, Daylesford, Hepburn Springs, Trentham and many other small villages and hamlets. Within easy access to Ballarat, Bendigo and Melbourne, Hepburn Shire's neighbouring municipalities include Macedon Ranges, Ballarat, Mount Alexander, Central Goldfields, Pyrenees and Moorabool.

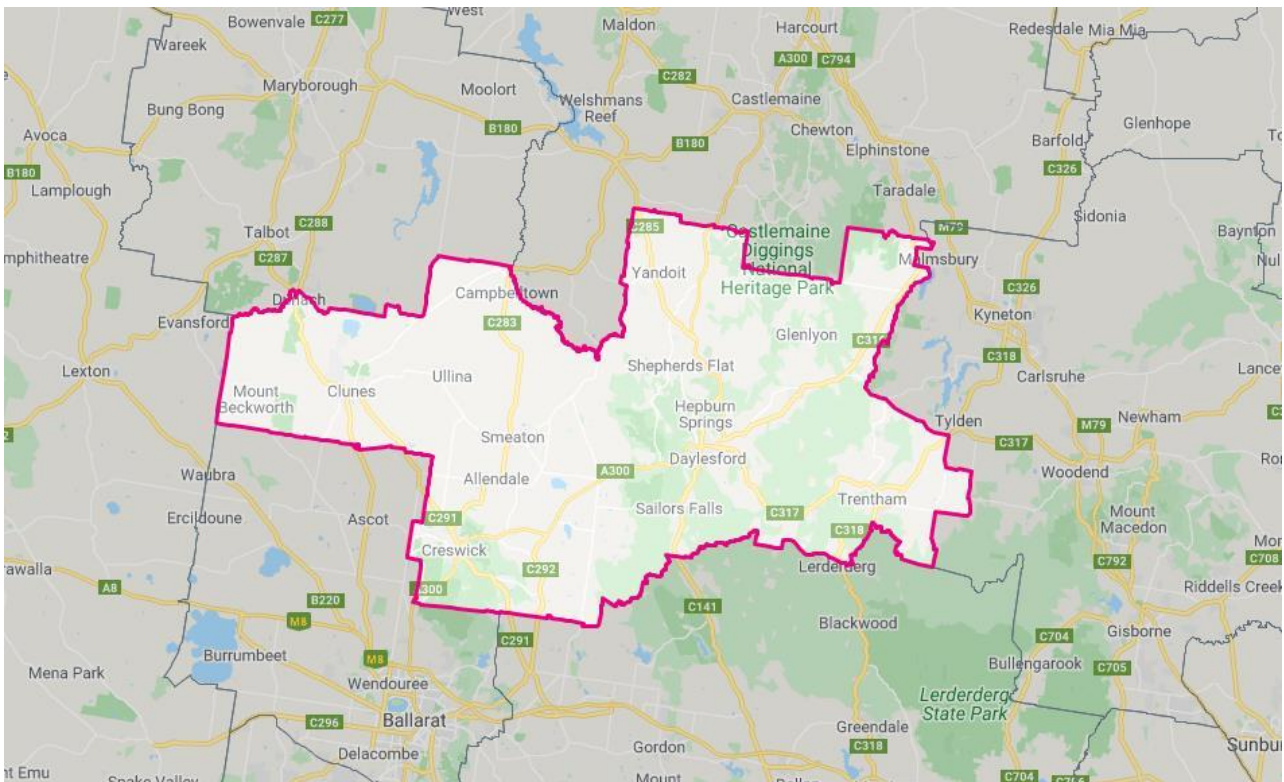


Figure 2: Location Map

2.2 RESIDENT PROFILE

The resident profile is based on the 2016 ABS Census data and has been sourced from Remplan, an online company that analyses ABS Census data.

Population

- Hepburn Shire has experienced a population increase of 963 residents from 14,368 in 2011 to 15,331 in 2016, representing an annualised rate of 1.31%. The 2019 Estimated Residential

Population (ERP) is 15,975 which represents an annualised growth rate from 2016 to 2019 of 0.96%. In 2021 the population reached 16,157.

- Victoria in Future 2019 provides projections of population and households for Local Government Authorities and forecasts an additional 1890 residents by 2036, representing a 0.6% increase in population. The 2036 population projection, in the most recent Council Plan 2021-25, estimates it will increase to 17,700.
- Hepburn Shire has an ageing population, with 35% of the population aged 60+ years and 17.27% aged between 50 and 59 years. This is much higher when compared with the whole of Victoria which is 20.96% for 60+ and 12.42% for 50 to 59 years age groups. The 0 to 19 years represents 19.38% of the population which is low when compared to the State average of 24.25% for that age group.
- There are a higher number of two person families (32.77%) in Hepburn Shire when compared to Central Highlands (30.29%) and lower number of couples with children (19.36%) compared to Central Highlands (26.10%).

Diversity

- There is a lower level of cultural diversity in Hepburn Shire when compared to the State, with 10% of the population born overseas compared to the Victoria state average of 28.3%.

Disadvantage and Social Capital

- The SEIFA Index of Disadvantage for Hepburn Shire in 2016 was 995. This score ranks Hepburn Shire 351 out of 544 local government areas across Australia. It should be noted that 77.96% of localities within Hepburn Shire rated within the 1000-1099 SEIFA, showing a greater spread of advantage within the Shire. There are some areas of Hepburn Shire that are more disadvantaged than others including Clunes (924) and Creswick (972).
- The varying levels of advantage across the Shire are represented in the differences in household income data. The three most common cohorts are earning between \$52,000 to \$64,999 per annum (9.34%), \$104,000 to \$129,000 per annum (8.80%) and \$41,600 to \$51,999 per annum (8.33%).
- A total of 875 people (or 5.74% of the population) in 2016 reported needing assistance in completing core activities due to disability. This is less than the 5.86% recorded for the Central Highlands Region.
- A total of 33.34% of the population reported not being in the labour force which reflects the high number of older adults in the Hepburn Shire. This compares to 28.71% and 27.17% in Central Highlands and the whole State respectively. Unemployment rates are low in Hepburn Shire, with the 2% unemployment rate recorded sitting below Central Highlands (2.96%) and the State (3.26%).
- Property prices are comparatively lower with the most common cohort (4.38%) paying a monthly mortgage repayment of between \$1200 and \$1399, which is below the \$2000 to \$2199 monthly mortgage payment range for Victoria (4.36%).

2.3 HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF HEPBURN SHIRE

The Hepburn Shire Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 was developed through a collaborative approach with support from the Health and Wellbeing Working Group. This working group included partners from Central Highland Rural Health, Central Highlands Primary Care Partnership, Health Futures Australia, Women's Health Grampians and four local Neighbourhood Centres. The Plan informed the 2021-2025 Council Plan and reviewed the health profile of the municipality, with key findings identified listed below:

- 37.6% of adult residents diagnosed with anxiety or depression.
- 45.9% of people are pre-obese or obese.
- 54.7% of people don't meet Australian Guidelines for fruit and vegetable consumption.

- 65.5% of people meet physical activity guidelines.
- 20.6% of residents have sought help from a mental health professional.
- 15.6% of people have asthma.
- 9.1% of people drink sugar-sweetened drinks daily.
- Residents have higher mortgage and rental stress rates than the Central Highland and Victoria average.

Four priority areas were established to inform the Health and Wellbeing Plan. They include tackling climate change and its impact on health, increasing healthy eating, improving mental wellbeing and preventing all forms of violence. While the priority areas are described separately, there are important correlations between the priorities which creates greater opportunities for action and effect in many areas.

The VicHealth Indicators 2015 results provide the following key insights:

1. *Hepburn Shire residents have an increased perception of safety compared to the rest of the State.* 94.4% of Hepburn Shire residents agreed that they felt safe walking alone in their local area during the day and 69.2% agreed they felt safe walking alone after dark. This is higher than the Victorian average with 92.5% and 55.1% respectively.
2. *Hepburn Shire residents experience a significantly higher level of resilience and neighbourhood connectedness when compared to the rest of the State.* Hepburn Shire residents reported an average resilience score of 6.7 out of 8, higher than the state average of 6.4. Just over three quarters (77.4%) of Hepburn Shire residents felt that they live in a close-knit neighbourhood, and 86.5% felt that people within their neighbourhood could be trusted. This is significantly higher than the state averages of 61.0% and 71.9% respectively.

Additionally, the VicHealth Indicators 2015 found that when compared to the rest of the State, Hepburn Shire residents experience similar levels of:

- a. Wellbeing and life satisfaction
- b. Physical activity levels
- c. Fruit and water intake per day
- d. Alcohol intake per month.

The local impact of COVID-19 has been significant. A health and wellbeing survey conducted by Central Highland Rural Health reported some concerning statistics including:

- Overall levels of physical activity decreased.
- There was an increase in feeling lonely three or more days per week.
- 20% more people were anxious five to seven days per week.
- 29% of people increased alcohol consumption.

2.4 KEY FINDINGS FROM DEMOGRAPHIC REVIEW

Hepburn Shire has an older population with 51.59% of the population aged 50 years and over. This is significantly higher when compared to the Central Highlands region (40.49%) and the State (33.38%). The high number of older adults within the community reflects a need for therapy based programming and warm water provision.

Comparatively, the number of children and teens aged 19 years and under (19.38%) is lower when compared to Central Highlands (25.33%) and Victoria (24.25%).

There are varying levels of disadvantage throughout the Hepburn Shire which is represented in the differences of household income. While the second most common cohort of the population (8.80%) earns between \$104,000 to \$129,000 per annum, there are a significantly higher than average number of low-income households with 45.8% of residents earning less than \$400 per week. Therefore, providing accessible and affordable facilities and programs are important to encourage participation.

Opportunities exist to significantly improve the health and wellbeing of Hepburn Shire residents. Most alarmingly, 52.5% of people are pre-obese or obese. Additionally, a high percentage of residents (37.6%) have been diagnosed with anxiety or depression and over 54% of residents don't consume enough fruit or vegetables.

Aquatics and leisure facilities and programs play a key role in increasing physical activity levels, with the health, social and wellbeing benefits associated with visitation assisting in addressing some of the identified health priorities.

3. Strategic Review

What strategic commitments will underpin decision making?

This section includes a review of relevant strategies. The review identifies key strategic objectives and principles that will guide Council's decision making when considering the aquatics and leisure service and facility provision into the future.

Strategic Links

Council has a number of service planning and strategic documents that are important linkages to the planning and delivery of aquatics facilities in Hepburn.

The Hepburn Council Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and Activate 2020-2030, articulate Council's vision and overarching frameworks used to make key decisions and deliver service priorities. The Recreation and Open Space Strategy, Playspace Strategy and Council's strong focus on community engagement help inform the Aquatics Strategy.

The diagram below shows the strategic links between Hepburn Shire Council's key strategic documents, plans and policies.

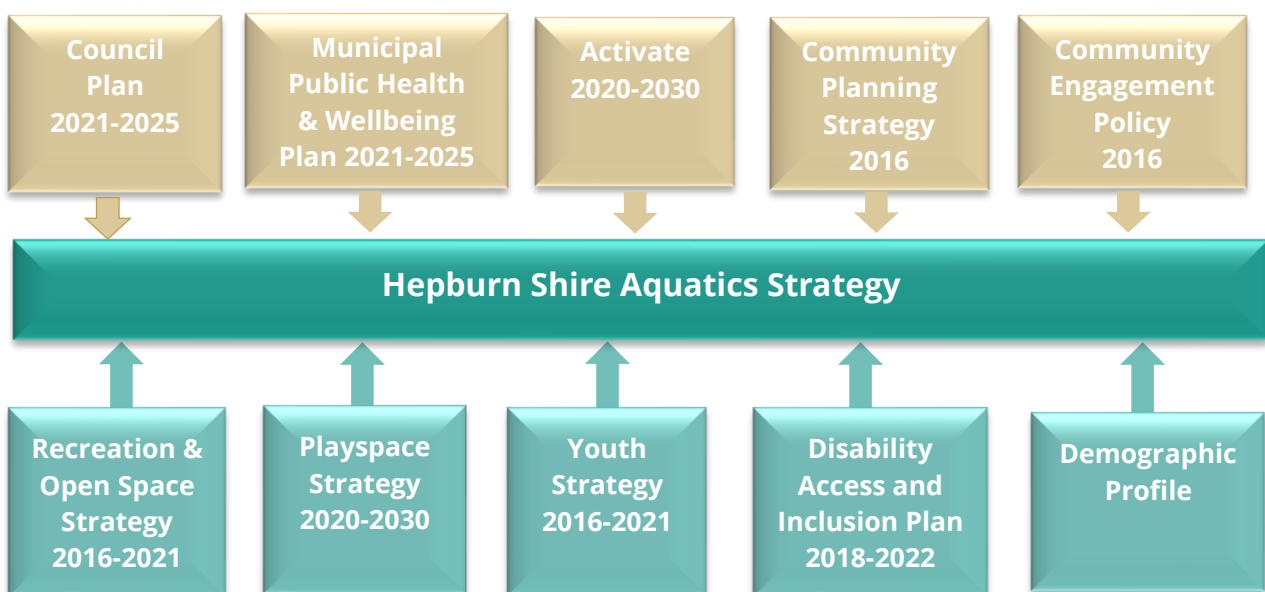


Figure 3: Strategic Links Overview

3.1 HEPBURN COUNCIL STRATEGIES AND PLANS

Council Plan 2021-2025

Hepburn Shire Council's 2021 -2025 Council Plan stipulates a vision; Hepburn Shire - an inclusive rural community located in Dja Dja Wurrung country where all people are valued, partnerships are fostered, environment is protected, diversity supported, and innovation embraced.

In aspiring to achieve the above and to create strong alignment with the needs and aspirations of the community, Council has identified five key focus areas:

1. A resilient, sustainable and protected environment.
2. A healthy, supported and empowered community.
3. Embracing our past and planning for the future.
4. Diverse economy and opportunities.
5. A dynamic and responsive Council.

Specific key strategic activities that relate to the provision of aquatics and leisure services and facilities include:

- Increase the availability and accessibility of services in the Hepburn Shire area to support liveability, health, and wellbeing.
 - Promote partnerships with health service providers to improve shared community health outcomes.
 - Developed services networks to increase community awareness and access to local services.
- Optimise the use of public spaces to increase participation and community connection.
 - Finalise and implement the Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy.
- Improved mental wellbeing within the community.
 - Ensure Council services, activities and facilities are accessible and inclusive to remove barriers to participation.
- Build and maintain quality infrastructure that supports and promotes liveability and active living in the community.
 - Continue to provide strong management and maintenance of our infrastructure.
 - Ensure sustainable and accessible infrastructure that promotes healthy recreation, physical activity and social connection.
 - Advocate for and partner in the delivery of Council's priority projects.
- Strong asset management and renewal.
 - Continue to invest in asset maintenance, renewal and upgrade programs.
- Adapt to and mitigate climate change to reach net-zero community emissions by 2030.
 - Review procurement policies and procedures to ensure they provide a focus on sustainable practices.
 - Promote the use of environmentally sustainable practices through planning processes and the Environmentally Sustainable Development Policy.

Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025

The plan sets four priorities that guide action over four years. The priorities have been determined based on review of health-related data, community engagement and health partners consultation.

The four priority areas of the plan are:

1. Tackling climate change and its impact on health.
2. Increasing healthy eating.
3. Improving mental wellbeing.
4. Preventing all forms of violence.

Under the improving mental wellbeing priority area there are two strategies Council has committed to:

- Adopt a co-benefit approach to improving mental wellbeing, supporting active living and healthy eating initiatives.
- Ensure Council services, activities and facilities are diverse, accessible and inclusive to remove barriers to participation.

Activate 2020-2030

The intention of the Activate 2020-30 Strategy is to provide a regional framework and 10-year action plan that enables a coordinated and collaborative approach aimed at increasing participation in sport and active recreation for liveability, health and wellbeing for the following municipalities:

- Ararat Rural City Council
- City of Ballarat
- Golden Plains Shire Council
- Hepburn Shire Council
- Moorabool Shire Council
- Northern Grampians Shire Council
- Pyrenees Shire Council

The Activate 2020-30 shared vision is that the Central Highlands and Grampians Pyrenees communities are the most active, healthy and liveable in Victoria. This will be achieved via the four strategic pillars identified as working together, activating places and spaces, creating quality physical activity environments and community cohesion through sport and active recreation.

The Clunes Recreation Reserve Masterplan Implementation is the sole key action identified within the Strategy that relates to the provision of aquatics facilities within the Hepburn Shire.

Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2016-2021

The Recreation and Open Space Strategy provides the following vision for recreation and open space within the Shire: Hepburn Shire features a diversity of quality, accessible and sustainable recreation and open space facilities supported by passionate community members. The vision is supported by five pillars to guide Council's priorities and service delivery:

1. Facilities
2. Community Support and Development
3. Sustainability
4. Utilisation and Participation
5. Policy and Management

The Strategy recognises that recreation (in all forms; passive, active, structured or non-structured) provides opportunities for residents and visitors to improve their fitness, which enables protecting against poor health outcomes, reducing social isolation and creating a higher awareness of environmental influences.

Specific to the provision of aquatics services and facilities, the Strategy outlines the following actions:

- Action the outcomes of the Creswick pool consultation undertaken in 2016-17.
- Explore the potential to extend the Daylesford outdoor swimming pool's season through the use of sustainable heating technology.
- Prepare or review master plans for Calembeen Park (Creswick), Clunes Recreation Reserve and Trentham Recreation Reserve.

Playspace Strategy 2020-2030 - Play is for Everyone

Play is for Everyone is the vision of the Strategy; Hepburn Shire will have a network of engaging, inclusive and sustainable play spaces that are reflective of our people and our places. The following planning principles have been developed to guide the planning, management and maintenance of play spaces in the Hepburn Shire:

1. Strategic
2. Activated
3. Multifunctional
4. Well maintained
5. Inclusive
6. Economically sustainable
7. Environmentally sound
8. Shire wide

In relation to the provision of aquatics and water play features within play spaces, the Strategy outlines:

- That water play/aquatics play is not supported for a local level play space but may or may not be included at a municipal or regional level play space dependant on local need and site context suitability.
- A long-term action to renew the Creswick Skate and Splash Park (inclusive of outdoor fitness).

3.2 STATE GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY STRATEGIES

The Royal Life Saving Society Australia: The Social, Health and Economic Value of the Australian National Aquatic Industry 2021

In July 2021, The Royal Life Saving Society Australia released a report detailing the social, health and economic value of the National aquatics industry. The report is assessed on Council-owned pools, public-access privately owned pools and swimming pool sports; it did not include privately owned pools that are not publicly accessible or aquatics theme parks. Key findings of the report include:

- Victoria has 570 aquatics facilities, with 94% of residents living within a 20-minute drive of a facility.
- On average, indoor aquatics facilities receive five times more visits annually than an outdoor swimming pool. This reflects their ability to support recreational needs of people all year round.
- Rates of social return on investment are detailed as:
 - **Regional Australia:** \$2.18 social return for each \$1.00 spent operating existing aquatics facilities and \$1.97 for each \$1.00 spent if a new aquatics facility is constructed in a regional location.
 - **Indoor aquatics facilities:** \$3.61 social return for each \$1.00 spent operating existing indoor facilities and \$3.04 for each \$1.00 spent if a new indoor facility is constructed in an area with unserved demand.
 - **Outdoor swimming pool:** \$2.80 social return for each \$1.00 spent operating current outdoor facilities and \$2.38 for each \$1.00 spent if a new outdoor pool is constructed in an area with unserved demand.
- The aquatics industry is one of the largest employers in the sport and recreation sector; 33,600 average annual full-time roles support by the aquatics industry Australia wide.
- Nationally, the aquatics industry makes a significant contribution to the health and wellbeing of Australians, providing:
 - \$1.65 billion in physical health benefits
 - \$238 million in mental health benefits

- \$399 million in reduced absenteeism benefits
- \$174 million in reduced drowning benefits.

Active Victoria 2018-2021

Active Victoria was launched by the State Government as a strategic framework for sport and recreation in Victoria. It plans to cater for growing demand and to enhance Melbourne's (and Victoria's) reputation as Australia's sporting capital. The framework includes the following six key directions:

- Meeting demand
- Broader and more inclusive participation
- Additional focus on active recreation
- Build system resilience and capacity
- Connect investment in events, high performance and infrastructure
- Work together for shared outcomes.

The development of an Aquatics Strategy for the Hepburn Shire correlates with key directions of meeting demand, connecting investment in infrastructure, additional focus on active recreation and broader and more inclusive participation.

3.3 AQUATICS FACILITY PLANNING IN HEPBURN

Daylesford Indoor Aquatic Centre ('DIAC') Community Advocacy Group - Scoping Study 2018

This scoping study was undertaken by the DIAC Advocacy Group to create a community led vision for the facility and assist with lobbying of Council.

In 2018, DIAC completed a scoping study to explore the project opportunities. Key considerations relating to facility trends and priority components proposed in the report are detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: DIAC Scoping Study (2018) key facility considerations

Consideration	Notes
Aquatics facility trends	<p>Aquatics facilities have evolved from being primarily outdoor pools to being recreation and community centres with a range of facilities. Trends identified include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm water pools for use by healthcare professionals to prescribe water-based exercise programs. Aquatics therapies continue to experience explosive growth due to the ageing population. • Outdoor pools are being replaced by larger, all-inclusive aquatics facilities to consolidate resources and lower operating costs. • Water play/splash pad areas are becoming increasingly popular as they embody accessibility, safety, innovation and affordability objectives. • The addition of supporting amenities such as gym, spa, sauna, café and in some instances allied health services transform a pool into a recreational hub and to assist in financial viability. • The inclusion of universal access as a legislated requirement when constructing new facilities. • Increasing community expectation to meet environmentally sustainable design targets. Consideration is to be given to water and power efficiencies such as harvesting of rainwater, thermal pool coverings, solar heating, and efficient appliances, fixtures and fittings.
Priority facility components	<p>The above identified trends should inform facility features to ensure that a Daylesford Indoor Aquatic Facility is viable and sustainable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highest priority is placed on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Eight lane 25-metre pool; research indicates the need for sufficient space to cater for programming and casual use needs. ○ Depth of 1.1 metres to accommodate learn to swim and encourage casual use.

Consideration	Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Business case to explore options for an adjustable floor to allow use for competition swimming. ○ Warm water pool to allow therapeutic and programmed use. ○ Water play area to attract families with children. ○ Change rooms to be suitable for school group use. ○ Office and administration area. • Lower priority components to be explored where budget permits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Gymnasium; include equipment and free weights exercise area. ○ Café: dependant on proposed site of facility this may not be necessary. ○ Childcare facilities; priority component for small number of survey respondents.

The 2018 DIAC Scoping Study also identifies the following:

1. **Cost** - Architect estimates an indicative opinion of cost between \$10 million and \$12 million, dependant on the quality of facility and finish (Otium can confirm this is not consistent with industry benchmarking for similar size indoor aquatics facilities. A small indoor aquatics facility is likely to cost between \$17 million to \$22 million based on current quantity surveyor estimates).
2. **Funding opportunities** - a combination of community fundraising, philanthropic funds, sponsorship and commercial partnerships, and State and/or Federal Government grants are identified as possible funding sources.
3. **Location** - a number of sites were identified and assessed against criteria to consider visibility, profile, topography, site conditions, orientation opportunities, car parking and traffic accessibility (including proximity to public transport and bicycle networks/trails) and capacity for future expansion.

Daylesford Indoor Aquatic Centre
Scoping Study

Version 1.4
January 2018

8.3. Option to Redevelop Existing Pool

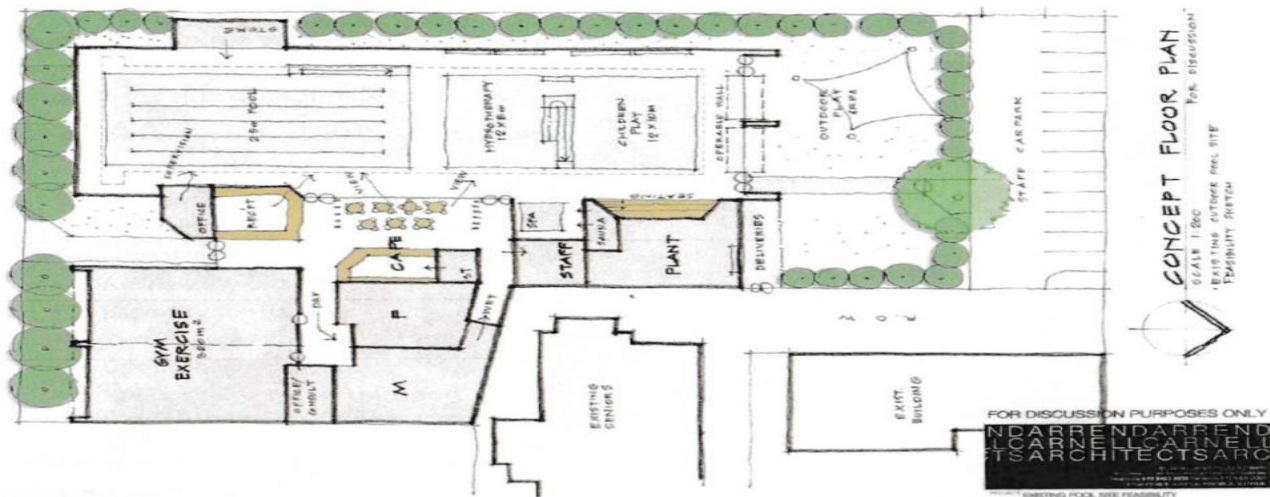


Figure 4: DIAC Advocacy Group - Concept Plan Existing Outdoor Pool Site

Daylesford Indoor Aquatic Centre ('DIAC') Community Advocacy Group - Interim Business Plan 2021

The members of DIAC prepared a draft Business Plan in late 2021 for an indoor aquatics facility in Daylesford. This is an extension to the work undertaken on the previous Scoping Study that was developed in 2018. The Business Plan was provided to Council Officers for consideration in the Aquatics Strategy.

The Business Plan includes a budget model based on specific assumptions and information sourced from the Kyneton Sports and Aquatic Centre. There is also reference and comparisons to other Otium work undertaken recently for the Gannawarra Shire Council with regards to an indoor facility model in Kerang.

The Business Plan notes a revised capital cost estimate between \$11 million (based on quantity surveys obtained by DIAC) and \$20 million (reference to the Gannawarra Aquatics Strategy prepared by Otium).

An annual operating budget is proposed in the Business Plan based on specific fees and charges assumptions, labour cost projections and other expenditure forecasts. This budget modelling also informed a five-year projection for the indoor pool operation.

Creswick Pool Consultation Report 2016 and Concept Plan

Hepburn Shire allocated internal funds of \$30,000 in 2016/17 to undertake community consultation in Creswick to assess the level of interest for a potential swimming pool within the Creswick area. The Consultation process aimed to understand a range of topics from the level of need, location, design, use, cost and funding. It was decided to undertake the consultation element using internal Council staff rather than commission an external consultant.

Key interest groups were consulted including the Creswick RACV Resort, John Curtin Aged Care Facility, Melbourne University, Creswick & District Aquatic Centre Group, local schools, Friends of Calembreen Park, Doug Lindsay Recreation Reserve Committee and Hepburn Health.

The concept design on the following page was presented by the Creswick and District Aquatic Centre Advocacy Group to Council Officers. This group have been strong advocates for an aquatics facility in the town for many years and this design has been created to provide a vision for the facility. The design has not been costed through a quantity surveyor.

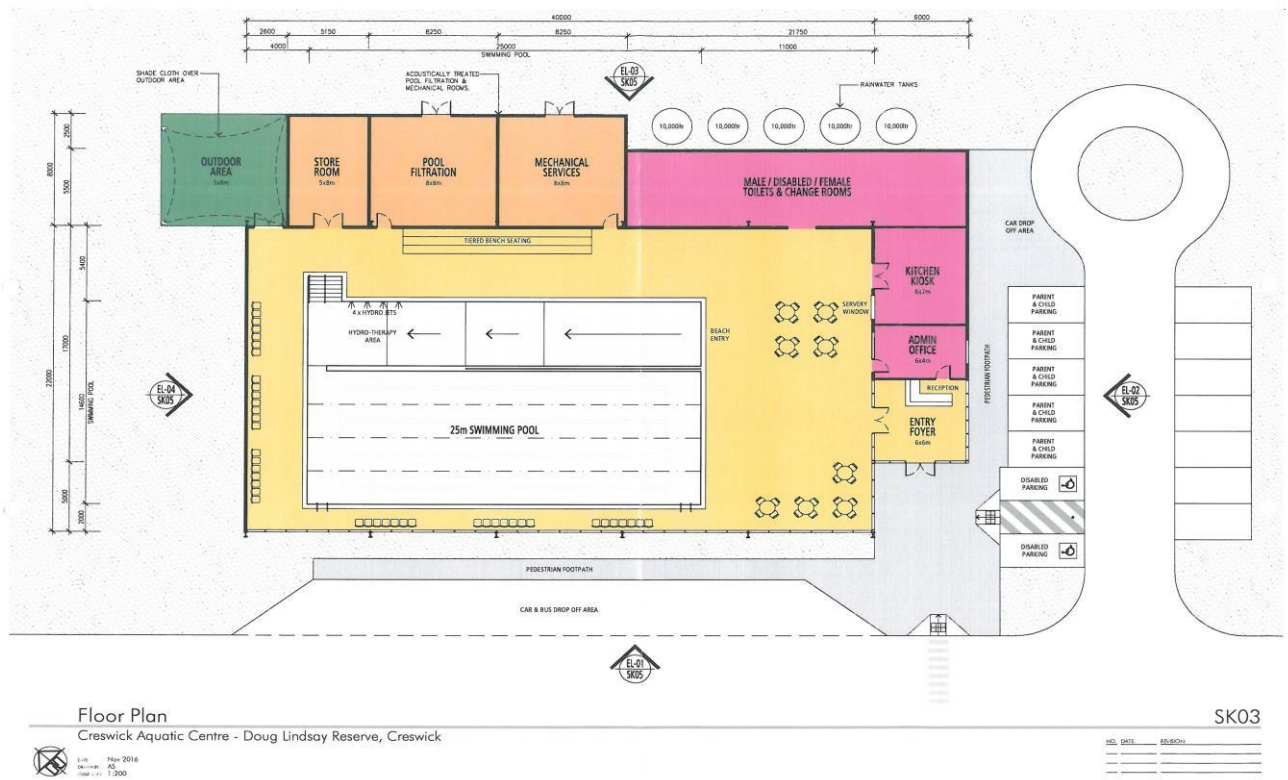


Figure 5: Creswick Aquatic Centre Advocacy Group Concept Plan

The following conclusions and recommendations were presented in the report from the research and consultation undertaken with the Creswick community.

Three key actions were suggested in the report:

1. Build a new indoor aquatics facility at Doug Lindsay Recreation Reserve - design and costings to be finalised.
2. Upgrade Calembreen Park - focus on middle pool and amenities upgrades.
3. Partner with John Curtain Aged Care Facility or Hepburn Health to build a hydrotherapy pool.

Suggested Next Steps from the Report

1. Develop concept plans and cost estimates for capital and operation.
2. Apply for a planning grant to undertake a feasibility study through Community Sports Infrastructure Fund.
3. Further consultation with the community to present the outcomes of consultation, potential design option and sources for funding. Test the community response for an indoor pool in Creswick once full capital and operational costs are available.
4. Review the Calembreen Management Plan 2010 for future upgrades and include in Recreation Priority Planning for future works.

Otium has confirmed with Council Officers that this report and proposed actions did not progress further in terms of funding, design or cost estimates. However, Council did acknowledge the community's feedback and decided to develop an Aquatics Strategy to further investigate the provision of aquatics facilities across the entire Hepburn Shire. Council allocated funding in the 2020/21 budget which was matched by Sport and Recreation Victoria through a grant to develop the Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy.

Calembreen Park Management Plan 2009

This plan was commissioned by Council and the Friends of Calembreen Park in 2009. The Management Plan aims to provide the local community and Council with clear directions about the future management, maintenance and improvement of use of Calembreen Park. Key management principles identified include conservation, trail connections, activities, sustainable management, maintenance, historical interpretation, signage, traffic management and entry presentation.

Consultation to inform the Management Plan indicated that Calembreen Park is highly valued by residents for its capacity as a local swimming area and park and for its historical relevance and unique landscape. The focus of the Management Plan should be to return Calembreen Park to a quality recreation space and swimming destination.

Outcomes of the consultation resulted in a vision for the future of Calembreen Park to include the following statements:

- It will provide a swimming baths area that is managed and maintained to safe standard.
- The reserve will provide a tranquil setting for passive recreation such as swimming, sailing, walking, picnics and be accessible for all to enjoy.

The following actions were identified to align with the management principles and are relevant to swimming and aquatics at the park:

1. Protect water quality.
 - a. Regularly test water for E-Coli and other contaminants. It is suggested that a minimum of four tests take place throughout the year, with most occurring during the warmer months in the lead up to a swimming season and during a swimming season. It is recommended to test in October (pre-season), November, January, February.

2. Activities.
 - a. The reserve is to be maintained for passive recreation only. Suitable developments to provide for passive activity include:
 - i. Development of more picnic facilities, shade and seating.
 - ii. Provision of quality swimming and diving facilities.
 - iii. Development and improvement of walking/cycling paths.
 - iv. Protection and enhancement of native vegetation.
 - v. Interpretation of baths and other areas (restoration and signage).
 - vi. Development of facilities that improve accessibility.
 - vii. Replace diving tower and if fencing is required, design fencing that is more sympathetic to the surrounds.
3. Managing risk.
 - a. Provide lifeguard supervision for the diving tower and look to extend this role for a one season period to encompass a level of supervision of behaviour in the water.
 - b. Monitor and improve water clarity.
 - c. Remove dangerous equipment installed by community members (i.e., Tarzan rope).
4. Minimal built form onsite.
 - a. There is to be minimal built form on the site reflecting the intent of the reserve as a tranquil area with a natural and historic landscape.
 - b. Built form is to reflect the natural and historic character and the capacity for access.

3.4 KEY FINDINGS FROM STRATEGIC REVIEW

In aspiring to achieve objectives identified in the 2021-2025 Council Plan, Hepburn Shire identifies a key goal of continuing to activate the existing outdoor swimming pools and strengthen their role as a community resource, including the recommendation to finalise the Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy. This is supported by other general yet relevant activities relating to the provision of aquatics facilities, such as:

- Improving access, maintenance and renewal planning and programs for Council assets, including opportunities to reduce Council's energy consumption.
- Promoting and encouraging inclusive, accessible and equitable access to sport and recreation opportunities in the Shire, including the associated health benefits.

The Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2016-2021 acknowledges the role that all forms of recreation play in the general wellbeing of residents and visitors. Of relevance are the following actions specified within the Strategy:

- Action the outcomes of the Creswick pool consultation undertaken in 2016-17.
- Explore the potential to extend the Daylesford outdoor swimming pool's season through the use of sustainable heating technology.
- Prepare or review master plans for Calembreen Park (Creswick), Clunes Recreation Reserve and Trentham Recreation Reserve.

Additionally, the Playspace Strategy 2020-2030 provides the following guidelines relating to water play:

- Water play/aquatics play is not supported for a local level play space but may or may not be included at a municipal or regional level play space dependant on local need and site context suitability.
- A long-term action to renew the Creswick Skate & Splash Park (inclusive of outdoor fitness).

These actions from the Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2016-2021 and the Playspace Strategy 2030 will be considered in this Aquatics Strategy.

There is a long history of planning and community lobbying regarding the provision of an indoor aquatics centre within the Shire, with community advocacy groups established in Creswick and Daylesford and each with their own facility concept plans developed. In addition to considering renewal opportunities for existing aquatics infrastructure, this Aquatics Strategy will also explore the demand and merit of an indoor facility, its role within the network of existing facilities and possible locations.

It is acknowledged that there are a number of natural water bodies that exist within the Shire that are used for aquatics facilities, and these are not included in the scope of this report.

4. Current Aquatics Facilities Review

What aquatics facilities do we have in Hepburn Shire?

This section reviews each aquatics facilities components, usage trends, asset condition and compliance and operational performance.

4.1 HEPBURN SHIRE AQUATICS FACILITIES PROVISION

Hepburn Shire has three outdoor pools and two unsupervised aquatics spaces:

- Three of these aquatics facilities are owned and managed by Council (Daylesford Outdoor Pool, Clunes Outdoor Pool and Trentham Outdoor Pool – all seasonal facilities).
- Creswick Splash Park is owned and maintained by Council. It is a zero-depth, unsupervised aquatics play space.
- Calembreen Park Toddlers Pool is located next to Calembreen Lake which is natural water body. It is a fenced shallow seasonal toddler pool and is not supervised.
- There are also several natural water bodies across the Shire that are used by local residents including Lake Calembreen, St Georges Lake, Bluewaters, Hepburn Pool, The Blowhole, Sailors Creek, Vaughn Springs, Tipperary Spring, Lake Daylesford and Jubilee Lake.
- The Hepburn Bath House is also located in the Shire; however, this facility is seen as a commercial/tourist spa that does not provide for the aquatics needs of residents.

4.2 DAYLESFORD OUTDOOR POOL



Figure 6: Aerial view of Daylesford Outdoor Pool

Overview

The Daylesford Outdoor Pool was built in 1972 making it nearly 50 years old. The facility is open for the summer season which is approximately 14 weeks per year. The facility is located in the town centre, off the main street and at the rear of the Council's Town Hall building.

The facility is managed internally by Council staff.

The table below outlines the aquatics components at the Daylesford facility.

Table 2: Daylesford Outdoor Pool facilities

Pool	Size	Depth
Main Pool	50 metres x 13.4 metres x 6 lanes	1 metre shallow end to 3.4 metres deep end
Toddler Pool	7.3 metres x 6.1 metres	0.3 - 0.4 metres
Diving Board at the deep end	1 metre board	3.4 metres

Other features of facility include:

- Amenities and change rooms - very small and in poor condition. Evidence of asbestos ceiling.
- Reception, kiosk and office area.
- Shades structures and grassed areas.
- Plant and storerooms - small sheds with compliance issues with access and chemical storage.

Usage

The facility caters for lap swimming, recreational users, school groups and families. The cold temperature of the water is one of the key challenges for encouraging great use. This has been confirmed through the community engagement findings as a barrier for participation.

The length of season and closures for cooler weather days are also barriers for growing the usage of the facility. As an example, the facility was closed for 33 days out of 92 schedule operating days due to weather closures in 2020/21.

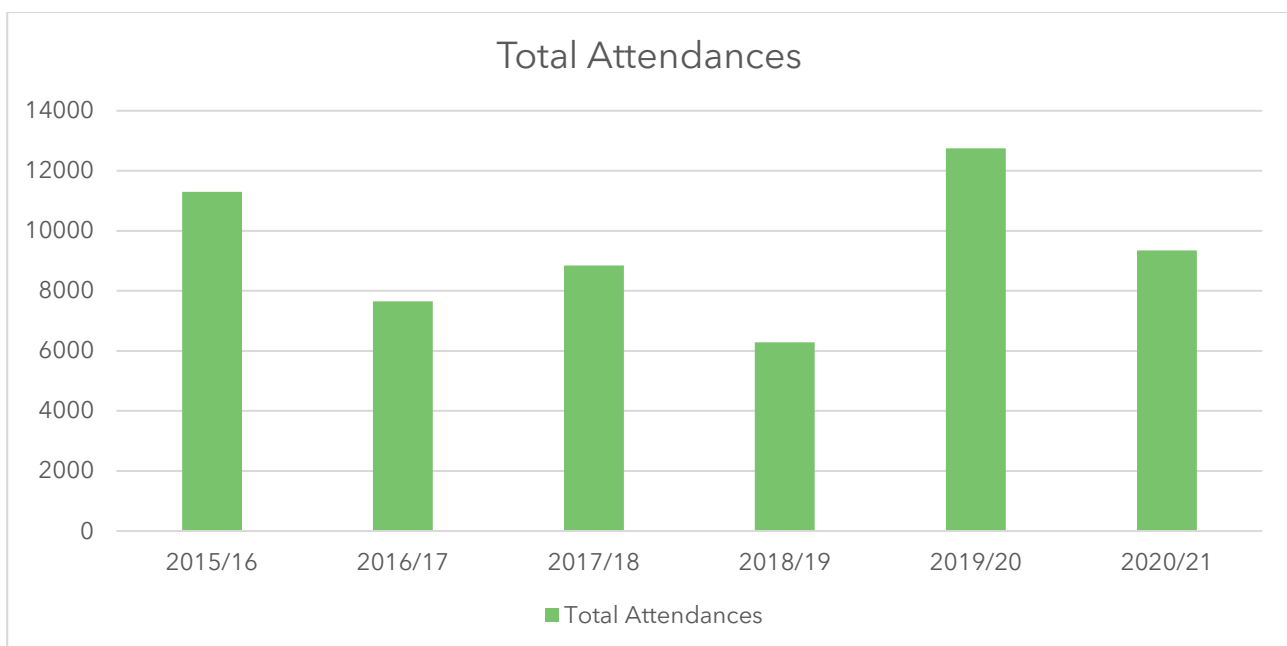


Figure 7: Daylesford Outdoor Pool Attendance Data

The following trends are evident from the attendance data:

- The visitations have fluctuated over the last six years with weather closures being a major factor in this trend.
- Over the last six years the lowest visitations were in 2018/19 6,286 and the highest visits were in 2019/20 12,753.
- Since the introduction of the free entry policy in 2019/20 visitations increased sharply recording the highest visitations ever recorded.
- Interesting to note that 2015/16 was the second highest visitations over the last 6 years which coincided with Council assuming the internal management of the facility after decades of external contract management arrangements.

Operating Revenue Summary

The graph below provides a summary of the total revenue for the last five years between 2016/17 to 2020/21.

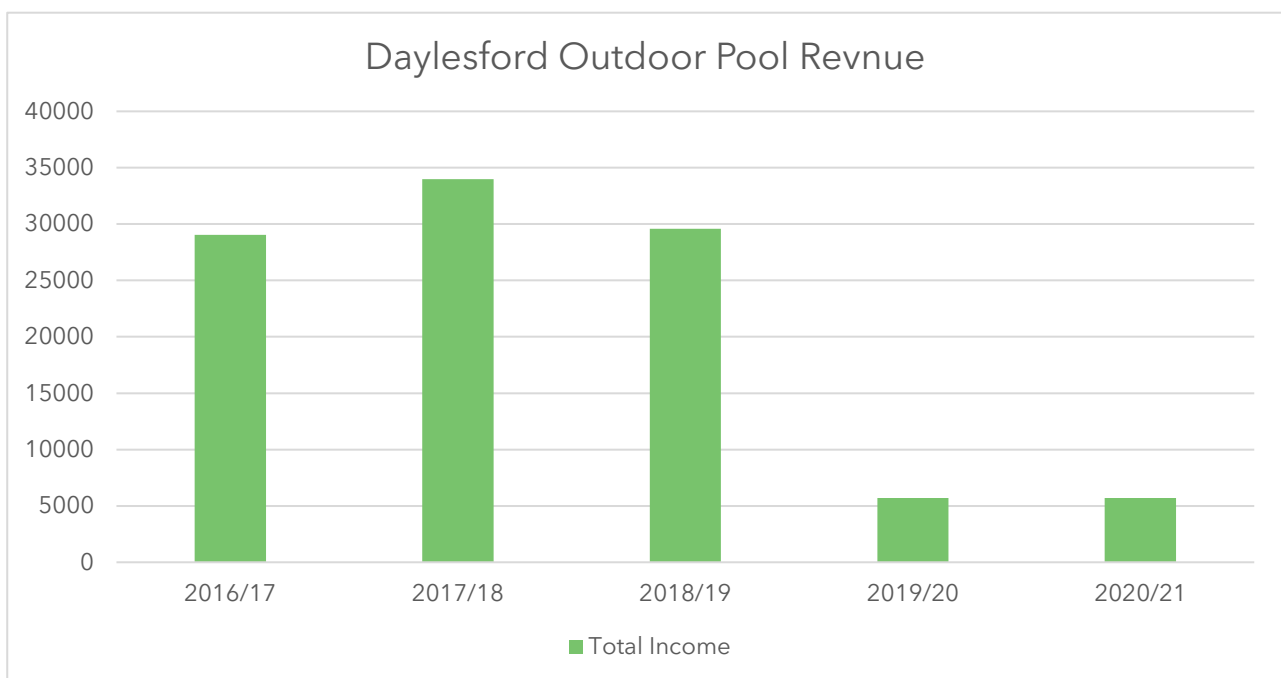


Figure 8: Daylesford Outdoor Pool Operating Revenue

The following trends are evident from the revenue data:

- Since the introduction of the free entry policy in 2019/20 income has decreased sharply.
- The highest income of \$33,996 was achieved in 2017/18.
- The lowest income of \$4,363 was recorded in 2020/21.

Asset Condition and Compliance

The following is a summary of the JWC Asset Condition Assessment Report. The objective of the assessment is to provide direction on the asset management and allocation of resources for the development and maintenance of aquatics facilities.

The following observations were made by JWC Engineers during the site visit:

- The main pool is now likely to be some 50-60+ years old and is now only in fair condition from an aesthetic viewpoint. While nearing the end of its expected life there is still some remaining life of approximately 10-20+yrs. The remaining life will largely depend on stable ground

conditions continuing to remain, and preventing reinforcement corrosion, there is no indication otherwise.

- The main issue is leakage. Installation of a water meter on the make-up water, and leak testing is recommended. Expansion joints are likely required to be re-sealed.
- The water treatment plant is much newer than the pool, estimated to be 20 years old, and overall, it is in reasonably good condition.
- The hypo fill area requires a spill containment parking slab for the tanker. To be constructed where the tanker now parks at the rear of the Town Hall building.
- The electrics are an ad-hoc mixture of old and new and the older boards should be replaced and possibly consolidated with other elements.
- The site is small and constrained with the only available land to the north of the main pool. There is no opportunity to expand the site.

The items in the table below are remedial works required in the short to medium term (up to 5 years).

Recommended Works - Daylesford Outdoor Pool

Table 3: Short term Capital Works and Maintenance Priorities

Item	Description	Cost Estimate
1	Install water meter on make-up water to Water Treatment Plant.	\$1,000
2	Leak test main pool and pipework. Allowance includes for some remedial works to expansion joints.	\$30,000
3	Hypo fill point requires spill containment tanker parking slab/valves drainage and an expanded fence enclosure.	\$40,000
4	Replace/upgrade old switchboards in plantroom. Undertake electrical check of plantroom electrics, including RCD's.	\$15,000
5	Connect backwash tank discharge to sewer, utilising a small pump.	\$10,000
6	Provide weather protective covers for solar pool covers.	\$2,000
7	Contingency fund.	\$20,000
	TOTAL	\$118,000

Potential Redevelopment Option

The JWC Asset Condition Assessment Report notes that, if redevelopment of Daylesford Outdoor Pool is a potential future option, the following comments are provided for consideration:

- The pool shell is likely to remain serviceable for another 10-20+ years. This could potentially extend further if ground conditions remain stable and any initial reinforcement corrosion is kept at a minimum by prompt treatment.
- The 13.4m pool width is insufficient to meet current day expectations of 8 x 2m lanes.
- Conversion to a wet deck is not considered a viable option due to the age of the pool. Conversion would involve significant structural works plus changes to pipework and this could expose and cause adverse impacts on adjacent infrastructure. There would be similar issues with a disabled access (DA) ramp into the shallow end of the pool.
- The water treatment plant is adequate for the current pool spaces albeit that the toddlers pool is connected into the main pool system when preferably it should have its own dedicated system. The main equipment generally has 10-20+ years of life remaining but noting that pumps and dosing equipment have less economic life than filters and pipes etc and their replacement will likely be at the lower end of this range. Filter laterals may also need attention in this shorter time frame.

- Heating of the pools was discussed with Officers on the inspection day. Given the limitations of the existing solar heating, alternative options of electric heat pumps or gas fired boilers could be explored.
- Disinfection options were discussed with Officers on the inspection day. Alternatives to the traditional sodium hypochlorite-based disinfection typically default to calcium hypochlorite and on-site chlorine generation systems. Of these two options, calcium hypochlorite dominates; it needs only a simple mixer system to create required chlorine solution for dosing. It is being adopted largely because being a solid powder (or briquette) it is safer to handle than liquid sodium hypochlorite. But it is also more expensive. On-site chlorine generation systems are essentially a saltwater pool with the salt water (brine) solution located in the plantroom. They do not have a strong track record of reliable operation and only produce a low percentage strength chlorine solution. This means they often need to be supplemented with sodium hypochlorite, manually dosed, on busy days.
- The toddlers pool and main building do not warrant being retained in any redevelopment due to their age, small size, functionality issues and low asset value. Their removal would leave this upper tier level open for any new development.
- Any new water space, including a splash play area will require its own dedicated water treatment system(s).

4.3 CLUNES OUTDOOR POOL



Figure 9: Aerial view of Clunes Outdoor Pool

Overview

The Clunes Outdoor Pool was built in the 1960's making it approximately 60 years old. The facility is open for the summer season which is approximately 14 weeks per year. The facility is located adjacent to the Clunes Recreation Reserve and Clunes indoor stadium. The facility is managed internally by Council staff.

The table below outlines the aquatics components at the Clunes facility.

Table 4: Clunes Outdoor Pool facilities

Pool	Size	Depth
Main Pool	25 metres x 5 lanes	1 metre shallow end - 3 metres deep end
Toddler Pool	4.5m x 3.6m	0.35 metres

Other features of facility include:

- Amenities and change rooms
- Reception, kiosk and office area
- Shade structures and grassed areas
- Plant and storerooms.

Usage

The facility caters for lap swimming, recreational users, school groups and families. Despite having a solar heating system one of the key challenges for encouraging greater use is the water temperature. This has been confirmed through the community engagement findings as a barrier for participation.

The length of season and closures for cooler weather days are also barriers for growing the usage of the facility. For example, the facility was closed due to weather closures for 4 days out of 92 scheduled operating days for the 2020/21 season.

The graph below provides a summary of the total visitations for the last six years between 2015/16 to 2020/21.

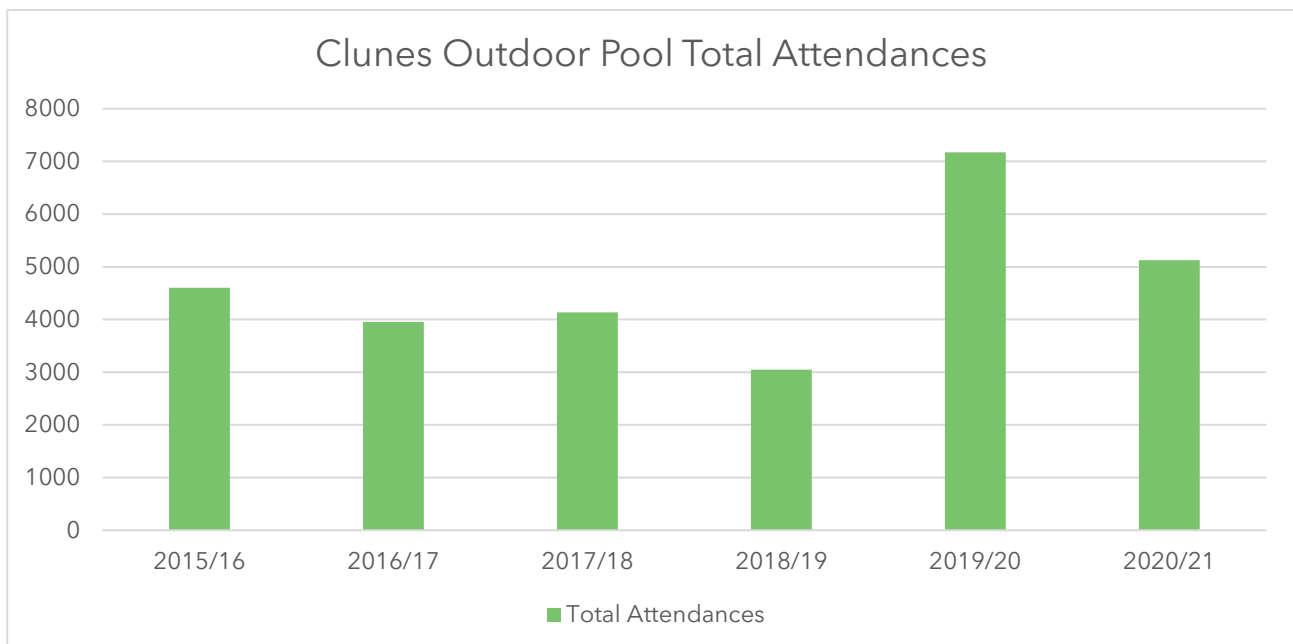


Figure 10: Clunes Outdoor Pool Attendance Data

The following trends are evident from the attendance data:

- Since the introduction of the free entry policy in 2019/20 visitations increased sharply recording the highest visitations ever recorded. Although visits dropped slightly in 2020/21 it was the second highest attendance level in the last six years.
- Over the last six years the lowest visitations were 3,049 in 2018/19 and the highest visits were 7,170 in 2019/20.
- Interesting to note that 2015/16 was the third highest visitations over the last 6 years which coincided with Council assuming the internal management of the facility after decades of external contract management arrangements.

Operating Revenue Summary

The graph below provides a summary of the total revenue for the last five years between 2016/17 to 2020/21.

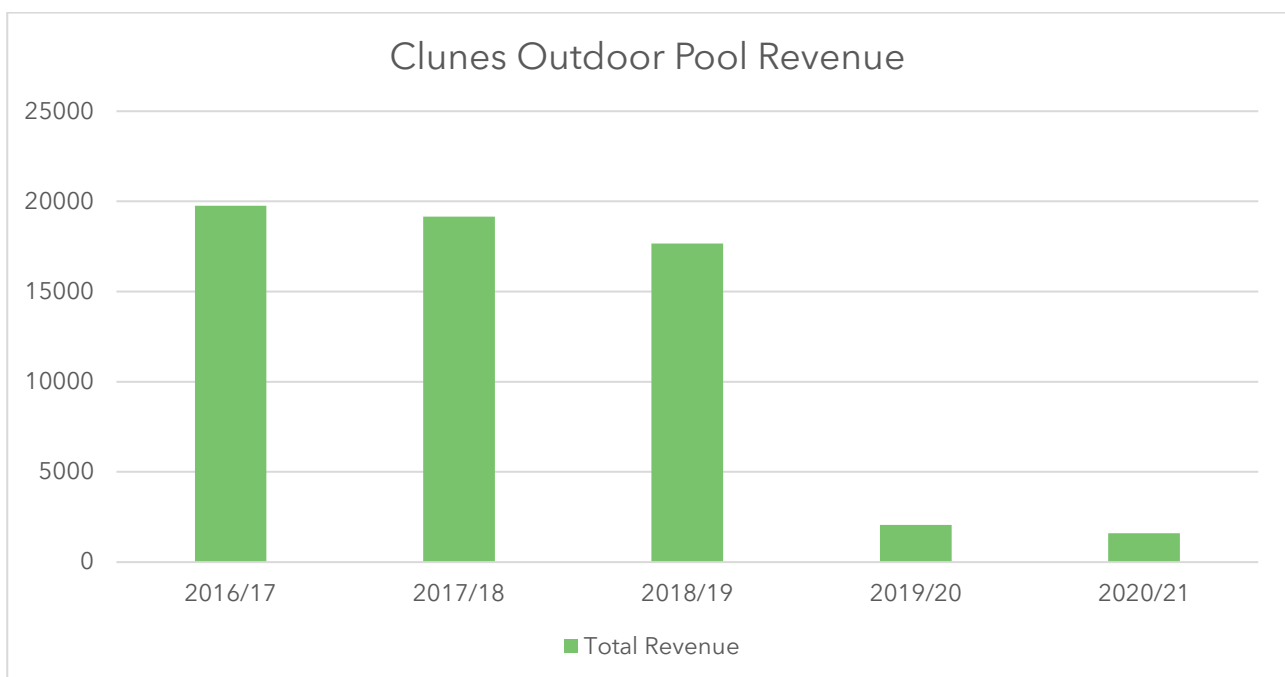


Figure 11: Clunes Outdoor Pool Operating Revenue

The following trends are evident from the revenue data:

- Since the introduction of the free entry policy in 2019/20 income has decreased sharply.
- The highest income of \$19,757 was achieved in 2016/17.
- The lowest income of \$1,604 was recorded in 2020/21.

Asset Condition and Compliance

The following is a summary of the JWC Asset Condition Assessment Report. The objective of the assessment is to provide direction on the asset management and allocation of resources for the development and maintenance of aquatics facilities.

The following observations were made by JWC Engineers during the site visit.

- The main pool is now likely to be approximately 60 years old, has a low build quality and is now deteriorated to fair condition. While nearing the end of its economic life the shell remains functional and is likely to remain so for the next 15-20 years. Remaining life expectancy will largely depend on ground conditions continuing to be remain stable (and there is no indication otherwise) and continuing to manage leakage.

- As for most older pools the main issue is leakage. Installation of a water meter on the make-up water to establish a data base, and formal leak testing is recommended. Hydrostatic and dye testing should focus on the expansion joints and pipework. Expansion joints are highly likely required to be renewed and this work is in the Recommended Works table.
- The toddler's pool is a small, domestic type fibreglass pool. It is a very basic installation, in poor condition. It has a low asset value and retaining it in any redevelopment is not warranted.
- Any new toddlers pool or splash play area will need its own dedicated water treatment plant. Although site space is very limited the logical location for this is along the east boundary.
- The main water treatment plant is much newer than the pool estimated as approximately 20years old, and overall, it is in good condition.
- The water distribution system into and from the pool has been influenced by the additional pipework to the pool installed as part of the Water Treatment Plant replacement. This presents some risk of short circuiting which could adversely affect water quality. This risk however can be mitigated, particularly on busy days, by taking water samples directly from the pool in likely dead spots i.e., not relying solely on the automatic system and managing bather numbers accordingly.
- The original pipework will remain a risk (relative to the newer pipework), as evidenced by the drainpipe / valve failure and total water loss in February 2021. There is little that can be done in terms of planned maintenance to mitigate risk of the older pipe and thus reactive maintenance can only be expected to increase over time.
- The hypo fill area requires a spill containment parking slab for the tanker. This is a significant amount of work and if the current parking spot is retained it will involve legal assessments on land ownership and use. Alternatively, it may be feasible to relocate it to inside the site. This project needs further investigation of design options and land issues before proceeding.
- The site is small and constrained. There is no opportunity to expand the site.

The items in the table below are remedial works required in the short to medium term (up to 5 years).

Table 5: Short Term Capital Works and Maintenance Priorities

Item	Description	Cost Estimate
1	Install water meter on make-up water to Water Treatment Plant	\$1,000
2	Leak test main pool and pipework. Allowance includes for some remedial works including renewal of expansion joints.	\$25,000
3	Hypo fill point requires spill containment tanker parking slab/valves drainage and an expanded fence enclosure.	\$50,000
4	Undertake electrical check of plantroom electrics, including RCD's. Allowance includes for some nom. remedial work.	\$5,000
5	Connect backwash tank discharge to sewer, utilising a small pump.	\$15,000
6	Provide weather protective covers for solar pool covers	\$3,000
7	Paint 'lane' lines on pool floor	\$1,000
8	Contingency fund	\$20,000
	TOTAL	\$130,000

Potential Redevelopment Options

The JWC Asset Condition Assessment Report notes, in terms of redevelopment, the fact that the main pool has some remaining life and the relatively young water treatment plant, coupled with the linkage to the newer oval pavilion building supports retaining the facility. There is potential for numerous cosmetic improvements, depending on budgets.

Replacement of the toddler's pool is recommended and there is opportunity, albeit limited by space constraints, for a splash play area.

4.4 TRENTHAM OUTDOOR POOL



Figure 12: Aerial view of Trentham Outdoor Pool

Overview

The Trentham Outdoor Pool was built in the 1960's making it approximately 60 years old. The facility is open for the summer season which is approximately 14 weeks per year. The facility is located centrally in the township and is adjacent to the Trentham tennis courts and neighbouring park. The facility is managed internally by Council staff.

The table below outlines the aquatics components at the Trentham facility.

Table 6: Trentham Outdoor Pool facilities

Pool	Size	Depth
Main Pool	25 metres x 10.6 metres x 5 lanes	1 metre shallow - 2.6 metres deep end
Toddler Pool	9.2 metre hexagonal shape	0.2 metres - 0.3 metres

Other features of facility include:

- Amenities and change rooms
- Reception, kiosk and office area
- Shade structures and grassed areas
- Plant and storerooms.

Usage

The facility caters for lap swimming, recreational users, school groups and families. Despite having a solar heating system one of the key challenges for encouraging greater use is the water temperature. This has been confirmed through the community engagement findings as a barrier for participation.

The length of season and closures for cooler weather days are also barriers for growing the usage of the facility. To emphasize this the facility was closed due to weather closures for 33 days out of 92 scheduled operating days for the 2020/21 season.

The graph below provides a summary of the total visitations for the last six years between 2015/16 to 2020/21.

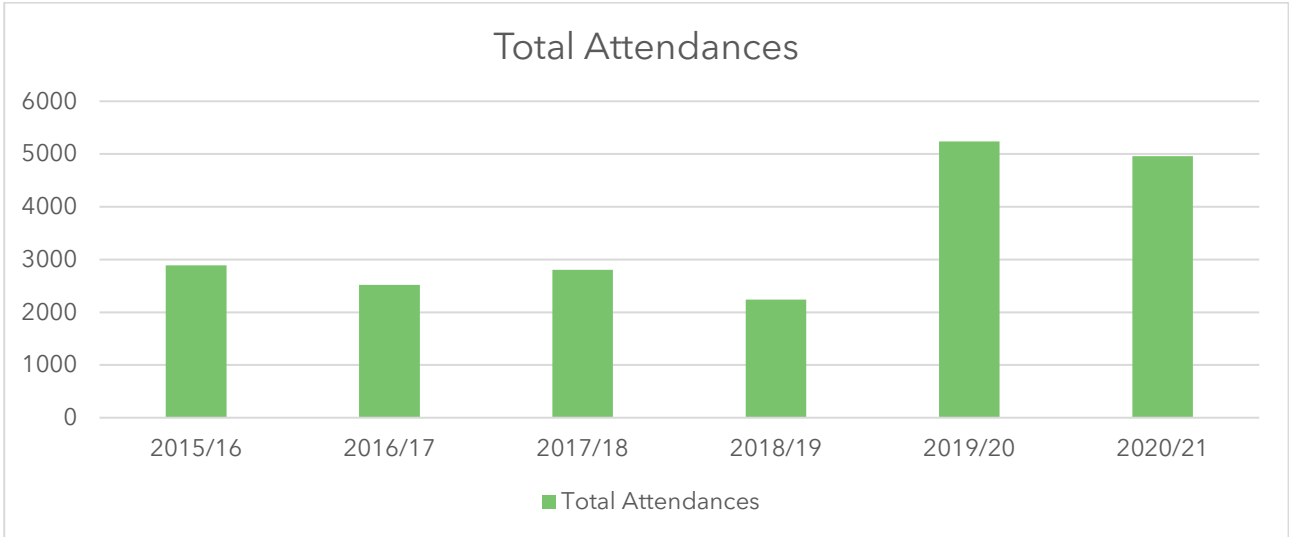


Figure 13: Trentham Outdoor Pool Attendance Data

The following trends are evident from the attendance data:

- Since the introduction of the free entry policy in 2019/20 visitations increased sharply reaching the highest visitations ever recorded. Although visits dropped slightly in 2020/21 it was the second highest attendance level in the last six years.
- Over the last six years the lowest visitations were 2,239 in 2018/19 and the highest visits were 5,241 in 2019/20.
- Interesting to note that 2015/16 was the third highest visitations over the last 6 years which coincided with Council assuming the internal management of the facility after decades of external contract management arrangements.

Operating Revenue Summary

The graph below provides a summary of the total revenue for the last five years between 2016/17 to 2020/21.

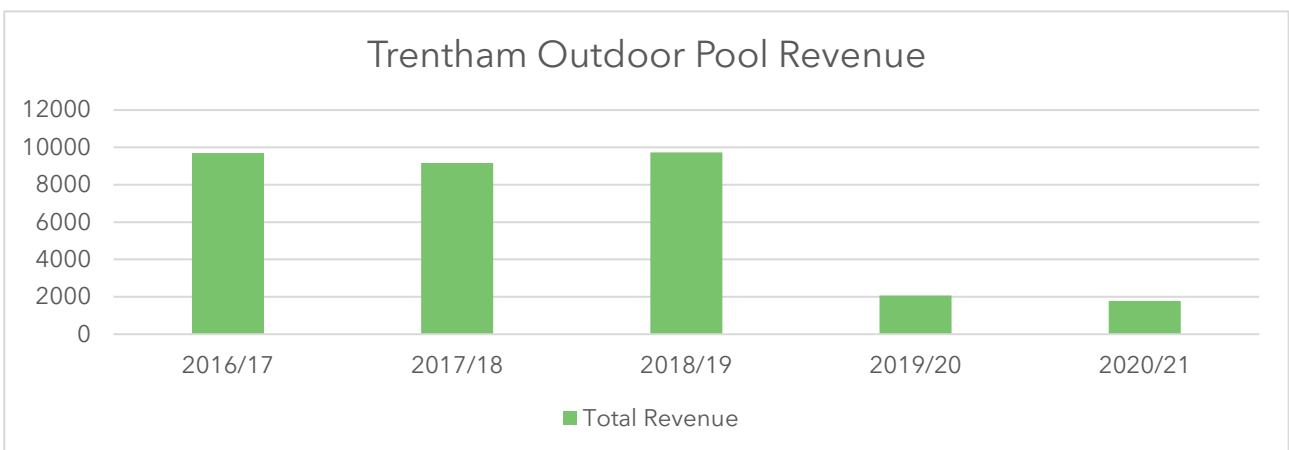


Figure 14: Trentham Outdoor Pool Operating Revenue

The following trends are evident from the revenue data:

- Since the introduction of the free entry policy in 2019/20 income has decreased sharply.
- The highest income of \$9,729 was achieved in 2018/19.
- The lowest income of \$1,776 was recorded in 2020/21.

Asset Condition and Compliance

The following is a summary of the JWC Asset Condition Assessment Report. The objective of the assessment is to provide direction on the asset management and allocation of resources for the development and maintenance of aquatics facilities.

The following observations were made by JWC Engineers during the site visit:

- The main pool has suffered from floor uplift at some stage which represents a technical structural failure. The resultant cracks have been repaired. While the shell is nearing the end of its economic life, it is functional and is likely to remain so for the next 10-20+ years. Remaining life expectancy will largely depend on ground conditions continuing to be remain stable (there is no indication otherwise) and continuing to manage and control leakage.
- The prime issue is leakage, even more so than at Clunes and Daylesford. Trentham has a greater leakage rate than the other two pools and this is suspected to be due to the pool uplift event/cracks many years ago. Installation of a water meter on the make-up water to establish a data base, and formal leak testing is recommended. Hydrostatic and dye testing should focus on the expansion joints and pipework. Expansion joints are highly likely required to be renewed and this work is in the Recommended Works table.
- The main shade structure is in poor condition and appears to lack structural robustness. Replacement is recommended.
- The toddler's pool is quite large. It is a basic installation but still serviceable and serves its purpose.
- The main water treatment plant is much newer than the pool, estimated about 20 years old, and overall is in good condition.
- The original pipework under the concourse is a long-term risk but unfortunately there is little that can be done in terms of planned maintenance to mitigate this risk. Reactive maintenance can only be expected to increase with time until ultimately pipes will need to be replaced.
- The site is small and constrained. The only direction for expansion is further into the Reserve to the west, moving closer to Market St.

Recommended Works - Trentham Outdoor Pool

Table 7: Short Term Capital Works and Maintenance Priorities

Item	Description	Cost Estimate
1	Install water meter on make-up water to Water Treatment Plant.	\$1,000
2	Leak test main pool and pipework. Allowance includes for some remedial works including renewal of expansion joints.	\$25,000
3	Main pump foot valve, rectify opening in inlet grille.	\$1,000
4	Acid mixing tank, provide compliant nesting bund tank. Remove incorrect Cal-hypo label from door.	\$1,000
5	Replace main shade structure along south side of pool.	\$40,000
6	Undertake electrical check of plantroom electrics, including RCD's. Allowance includes for some minor remedial work.	\$3,000
7	Connect backwash tank discharge to sewer.	\$10,000
8	Provide weather protective covers for solar pool covers (only 1 seen onsite).	\$2,000
9	Contingency fund.	\$20,000
TOTAL		\$104,000

Potential Redevelopment Options

The JWC Asset Condition Assessment Report notes, in terms of redevelopment, the fact that the main pool has suffered a technical structural failure, albeit some time ago, restricts opportunities to essentially maintaining the status quo.

4.5 CRESWICK SPLASH PARK



Figure 15: Creswick Splash Park

Overview

The Creswick Splash Park was installed in 2016 in the town centre, opposite the new Creswick IGA store. It forms part of a broader recreation precinct which also includes the skate park, shelters, BBQ facilities and outdoor gym equipment. It's a vibrant and highly popular facility for locals and visitors.

Facilities include:

- Zero depth splash pad approximately 15 metres x 10 metres with a variety of interactive waterplay features including tipping buckets, water tunnels, and sprays.
- Plant room.
- Shade structures and picnic areas.
- Paved and grass surrounds.

Usage

Visitation data is not collected for this site.

Asset Condition

The following is a summary of the JWC Asset Condition Assessment Report. The objective of the assessment is to provide direction on the asset management and allocation of resources for the development and maintenance of aquatics facilities.

The following observations were made by JWC Engineers during the site visit.

Splash Park

- Facility is five years old and consists of two components, the splash park and adjacent is the Green River.
- One splash park water feature has been abandoned due to poor performance/operational issues.
- Play surface is bare concrete, no soft padding, but conversely there are no climbing water features.
- All water from Splash Park drains separately to a new balance tank, then to the treatment plant. The original balance tank had to recently be supplemented with this tank, with increased volume.
- Treatment plant and feature pumps are located in two small sheds along northern boundary. Auto-dosing is installed for sodium hypochlorite and sodium bisulphate chemical treatment of water.

Green River feature

- There is a simple 'river themed water feature' built under separate contract.
- River is approximately 35 metres long and gently snakes down a 5-metre-wide concrete pathway towards Midland Highway/service road.
- River pathway also serves as primary walkway from the street (Midland Highway) to picturesque creek frontage and pedestrian bridge. This dual purpose indicates the flat and gentle nature, in fact water ponds in the 'river' in places.
- River water only runs, from mains water pressure, with button activation by the public. However, the flow is hardly noticeable with water taking minutes to migrate a few metres downslope. Hence it is little used.
- The pragmatic solution is to abandon this river feature, on the basis that the water-side infrastructure has low asset value. If high pressure pumps were added then that would add significant cost, raise safety issues and start to compromise the walkway functionality.
- The plant is still as new but heat build-up in the sheds on hot days is an issue that has affected some electrics. Staff have put additional shade overhead to reduce this problem.
- Both the sodium hypo and acid mixing tank need to have higher walled bunding tanks (as per Clunes, Daylesford and Trentham) to meet regulations.

Council Officers mentioned lack of shade and seating for parents while children were playing on Splash Park. Currently parents look into the setting evening sun from existing shade structure, another shade structure on the west side looking east could be considered. The closest toilets are on other side of busy Midland Highway which is not ideal. Consideration of a public amenities block adjacent to the Splash Park would be beneficial for users.

Recommended Works - Creswick Splash Park

Table 8: Short Term Capital Works and Maintenance Priorities

Item	Description	Cost Estimate
1	Acid mixing and hypo dosing tank, provide compliant nesting bund tank.	\$1,000
2	Allowance to improve shading arrangements/ventilation if needed over both plantrooms.	\$10,000
3	Contingency fund.	\$5,000
	TOTAL	\$16,000

4.6 CALEMBEEN PARK TODDLERS POOL



Figure 16: Aerial view of Calembreen Park Toddler Pool

Overview

Calembreen Lake was the original swimming hole for the Creswick community. It has a long history dating back to the early 1900's. Council recognised that the reserve provided an opportunity to create a more formal swimming baths for Creswick. Dressing sheds, spectator seating and landscaping was completed which created one of the more popular swimming spots available in the region at the time.

Over time, limited resourcing and risk management issues have resulted in the loss of much of the historical infrastructure. Although the area is still picturesque there are a number of ongoing challenges with asset renewal and upgrades within Calembreen Park that will need to be considered.

The facility includes:

- Toddlers Pool on the banks of the lake, in a fenced area.
- Intermediate pool, shallow section of the main lake. This area is not chemically treated, natural water body.
- Amenities and change rooms.
- Plant room.
- Shade structures and picnic areas.

Usage

No usage data is collected for this site.

Asset Condition and Compliance

The following is a summary to the JWC Asset Condition Assessment Report. The objective of the assessment is to provide direction on the asset management and allocation of resources for the development and maintenance of aquatics facilities.

The following observations were made by JWC Engineers during the site visit:

- The toddlers pool structure is nearing the end of life.
- Simple and basic pool shell 12 metre x 4 metre with 250mm to 400mm depth.
- The toddlers pool abuts the lake but is separated/surrounded by a pool safety fence.
- Treatment plant is estimated at approximately 30 years old. It is a simple domestic type of sand filter system located in a very small timber shed and well away from pool.
- Disinfection is with sodium hypochlorite and pH control is with hydrochloric acid, both delivered in 15 litre containers. It does have a new water chemistry control system (1 yr. old) but no remote telemetry. Maintaining water quality is a challenge for Council staff.
- Numerous pipe blockages occur due to leaves etc. Saw-cuts in the concourse above wall nozzle inlets show that these pipes have been replaced. Pipe blockage problems appear reasonably frequent, and this could possibly be linked to poor geotechnical conditions from the proximity to the lake.
- Leaking drain valve to lake requires investigation/repair.
- Filter backwash discharges directly out through rear wall of this shed, onto ground and drains into the lake.

There are a number of safety and compliance concerns with this pool. It is not staffed during summer which exposes Council to a level of risk for incidents. Compliance with current health department water quality regulations is a concern also as water is drawn from the lake which is filled with stormwater. There have been previous recordings of E-Coli existing in the water supply which is a significant concern for parents and toddlers using the pool. Daily water tests are undertaken on the toddler pool when in operation to ensure compliance with Health Department regulations.

Recommended Works - Calembeen Park Toddlers Pool

Table 9: Short Term Capital Works and Maintenance Priorities

Item	Description	Cost Estimate
1	Leak test pool and pipework. Allowance includes for some remedial works including renewal of expansion joints.	\$10,000
2	Re-align plantroom pipework to improve performance and OHS safety.	\$5,000
3	Increase separation distance between hypo and acid to improve safety.	\$1,000
4	Upgrade plantroom electrics, including RCDs to ensure compliance. Allowance.	\$5,000
5	Connect backwash discharge to sewer. This will require tank, pump and 60m pipe to public toilets.	\$10,000
6	Contingency fund.	\$20,000
	TOTAL	\$51,000

Potential Redevelopment Options

- The pool and plant are both basic and old.
- The pool shell has cracks around the perimeter and replacement nozzles and pipework saw-cuts in slab indicate previous pipework problems, possibly due to poor geotechnical issues from being so close to the lake.
- The ad-hoc plant and plantroom has OHS issues and regulatory non-compliances such as the backwash discharge going to ground and returning to the lake.
- There is no solar heating; roof area is scarce.
- Both the pool structure and plant room have reached the end of their economic life.

4.7 SUMMARY OF HEPBURN AQUATICS FACILITIES OPERATING PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

Limited financial data for each site was available for the operating performance analysis section. Prior to the 2020/21 season all Council financial data was aggregated for reporting purposes.

Combined Hepburn Outdoor Pool Attendance Data Overview

The following graph shows the aggregated annual attendance data for the last six years.

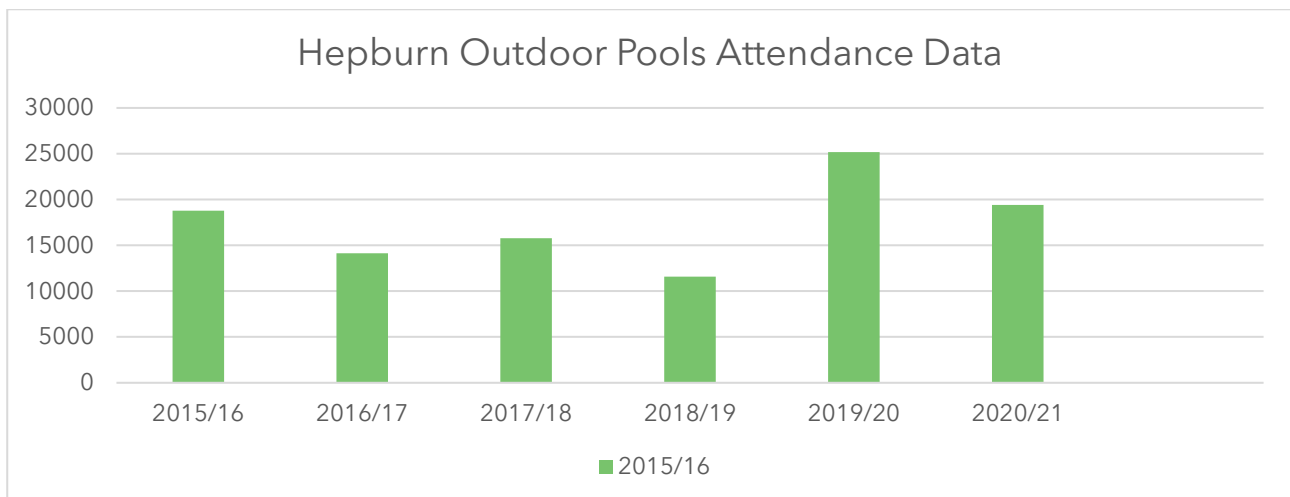


Figure 17: Hepburn Aquatics Facilities Annual Attendance Summary

The attendance summary indicates the following trends:

- The graph shows an overall increase in visitations for the Hepburn Council managed aquatics facilities over the past two seasons.
- The three outdoor pools attracted the highest recorded attendances of 25,164 visits in 2019/20, which was driven by a new free entry policy adopted in 2019.
- There was a slight decline in 2020/21 however each facility had a significant number of closures due to weather conditions and maintenance closures. They were also closed for five days due to COVID lockdowns.
- The lowest visitations of 11,574 was recorded in 2018/19 and highest visitations of 25,164 was achieved in 2019/20.

Operating Revenue Comparison

The following graph shows the annual operating revenue for each outdoor pool for the last five years.

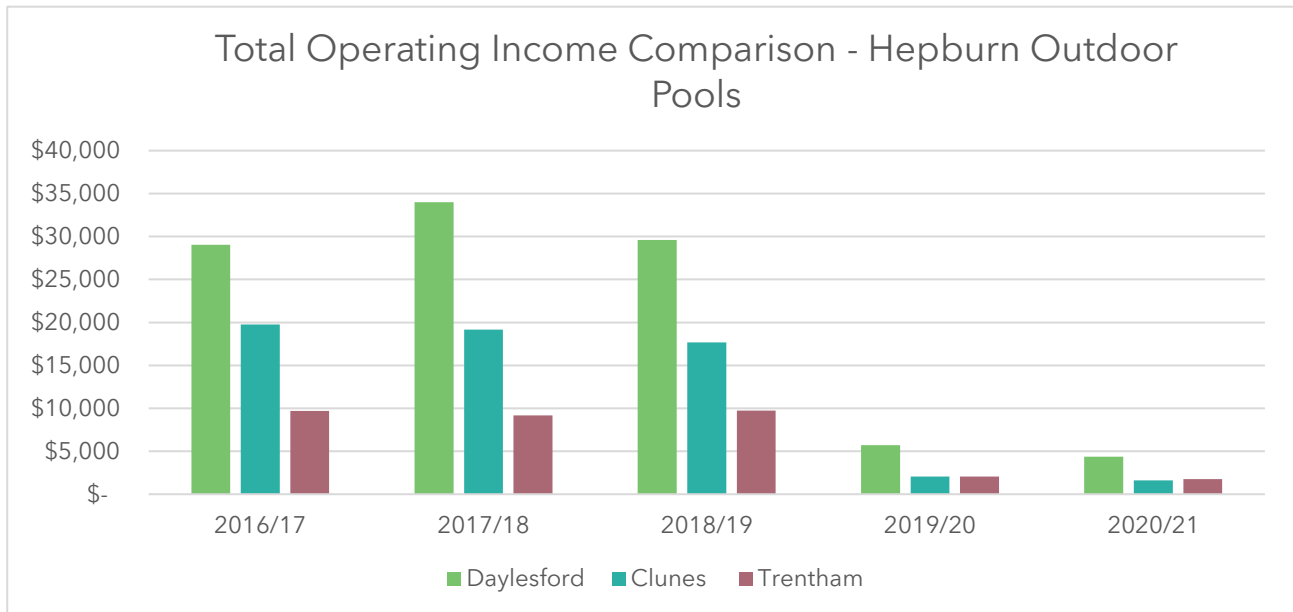


Figure 18: Hepburn Aquatics Facilities Operating Revenue

The operating revenue summary indicates the following trends:

- The graph shows a decline in revenue over the past five years across all three outdoor pools. This is attributed to the free entry policy adopted in 2019. Revenue in 2019/20 and 2020/21 is only kiosk sales income.
- The Daylesford Outdoor Pool generated the highest income compared to the other two pools over the five years. The peak year for income was 2017/18.
- Clunes and Trentham Outdoor Pools attract far less visitations and revenue compared to Daylesford which is expected due to lower population catchments.
- The average annual income between 2016/17 and 2018/19 was \$59,265 per season prior to the introduction of the free entry policy. This compares to the average income \$8,786 per season for 2019/20 and 2020/21.

Hepburn Aquatics Facilities Annual Operating Performance

The following graph shows the combined financial performance for the Hepburn aquatics facilities over the last six years. This includes Daylesford Outdoor Pool, Clunes Outdoor Pool, Trentham Outdoor Pool, Creswick Splash Park and Calembreen Park Toddlers Pool.

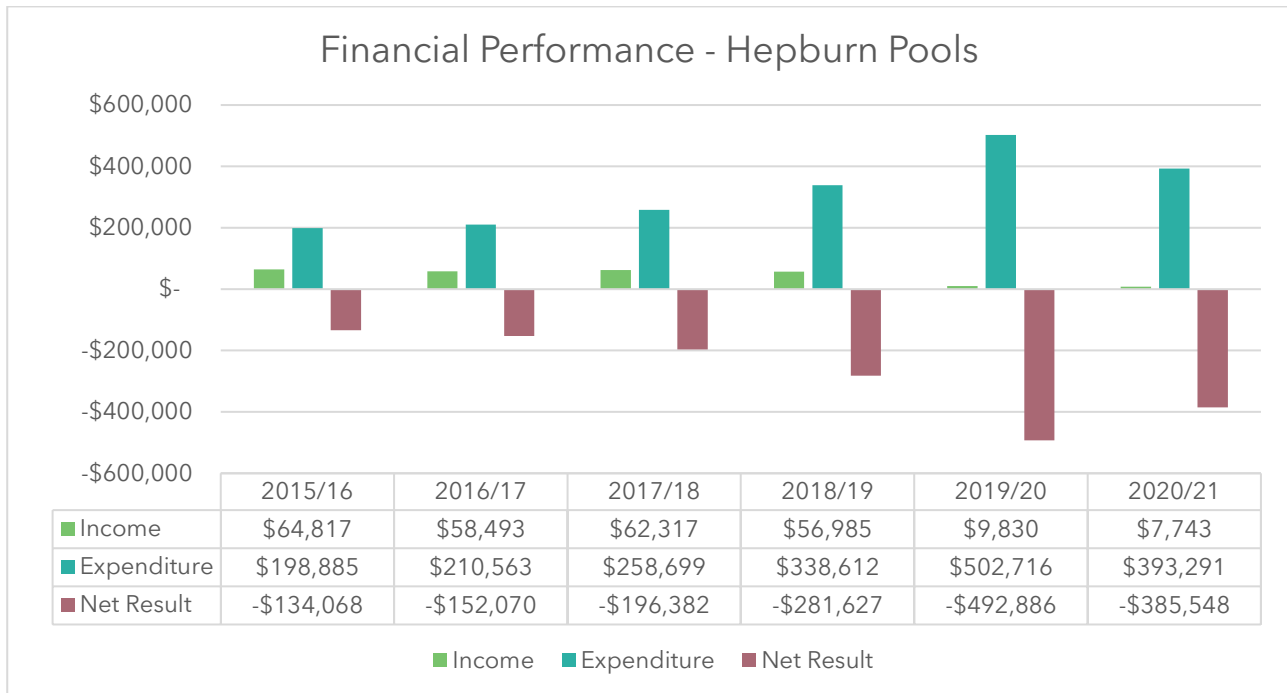


Figure 19: Hepburn Aquatics Facilities Annual Financial Performance Summary

The combined financial performance summary indicates the following trends:

- Total income gradually declined between 2016/17 and 2018/19, then dropped sharply in 2019/20 after the commencement of the free entry policy adopted by Council.
- Conversely expenditure increased significantly over the same period. Expenditure increased by 153% from \$198,885 in 2015/16 to \$502,716 in 2019/20. This is attributed to higher staff costs with Council assuming the internal management of the three facilities in 2019/20. Prior to this a hybrid management model was in place with subcontracted lifeguard staff sourced through Momentum One.
- The net performance declined significantly over the six-year period. The operating deficit grew from a loss of \$134,068 in 2016/17 to \$492,627 deficit in 2019/20. This equates to a 267% increase in the operating subsidy to operate the outdoor pools. The key factors for the decline were the introduction of the free entry policy combined with higher staffing and maintenance costs since Council assumed the internal management control of the facilities.
- Council commenced an annual maintenance contract in 2019/20 to address numerous asset management issues across the pools. This was additional expenditure added to the net operating results, which was not included between 2016/17 and 2018/19. Council spent \$98,000 in 2019/20 and \$86,000 in 2020/21 on maintenance.
- It should also be noted that seasonal pools typically see up to 30% swing in revenue annually depending on the weather conditions, particularly during the peak summer holiday periods. An example was the 2020/21 season which had 33 days of closures at Daylesford and Trentham in due to poor weather and COVID disruptions.

4.8 COUNCIL'S WEATHER CLOSURE POLICY

The current Weather Closure Policy across the three outdoor pools states that during the operating season the pools close on days of 21 degrees or less.

The current weather closure policy is causing high levels of frustration from the community. It was raised in stakeholder discussions, at the Community Pop Up sessions and in the community survey results. The community sees the current policy as not providing consistent or reliable opening hours. During each season a significant number of days and hours are lost due to the closures. For example, in 2020/21 both Daylesford and Trentham closed for 33 days out of a total 92 days that the pools are officially open during summer. This indicates that the pools were closed for over 30% of the season. This is a similar trend each year.

4.9 KEY FINDINGS OF CENTRE REVIEW

The following table provides a summary of the operational performance of Hepburn aquatics centres across the last six years.

Table 10: Summary of Overall Operational Performance - 2015/16 to 2020/21

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	6 Year Average
Visits	18,795	14,121	15,782	11,574	25,164	19,430	17,477
Income	\$64,817	\$58,493	\$62,317	\$56,985	\$9,830	\$7,743	\$43,816
Expenditure	\$198,885	\$210,563	\$258,699	\$338,612	\$502,716	\$393,291	\$317,127
Operational Surplus / Deficit	-\$134,068	-\$152,070	-\$196,382	-\$281,627	-\$492,886	-\$385,548	-\$273,311
Income Per Visit	\$3.45	\$4.14	\$3.95	\$4.92	\$0.39	\$0.40	\$2.88
Expense Per Visit	\$10.58	\$14.91	\$16.39	\$29.26	\$19.98	\$20.24	\$18.56
Operating Cost Per Visit	\$7.13	\$10.77	\$12.44	\$24.33	\$19.59	\$19.84	\$15.68

The operating indicators show:

- Visitations ranged from a high of 25,164 in 2019/20 and a low of 11,574 in 2018/19. The average annual visits were 17,477 over the six years. There was a sharp increase in visitations in the 2019/20 with the introduction of the free entry policy. This new policy was embraced by the community, and it was further validated from the positive feedback gained at the Pop-Up sessions, online survey and stakeholder consultation sessions.
- Income fluctuated between 2015/16 and 2018/19 due to weather conditions and facility closures. There was a sharp decline in revenue in 2019/20 with the introduction of the free entry policy. The only sources of income in the last two years have been kiosk sales and private bookings.
- While revenue has declined, expenditure has grown significantly over the last six years. The key factors behind this change are higher wages costs, new maintenance agreements and internal management model commencing in 2019/20.
- The operating deficit has grown by 188% from \$134,068 to \$385,548 over the last six years. This is due to declining revenue levels and higher operating costs as explained above.
- Despite growing usage, introducing free entry has impacted the cost per visit which has increased by 178% from \$7.13 to \$19.84 over the past six years.

5. Market Research Analysis

What is the demand for aquatics and leisure services and facilities in Hepburn?

This section analyses the catchment of facilities, participation demand and aquatics facility trends.

5.1 CATCHMENT ANALYSIS

Leisure and sporting facility trends and benchmarking generally indicates that local or municipal facilities have a primary catchment radius of approximately 5km and a secondary catchment radius of 10km.

In general, approximately 75% to 85% of users will reside within a 0km to 5km radius of a facility with the remaining 15% to 25% coming from areas within the 5km to 10km radius of the facility. Regional facilities, providing unique and varied facility components and a larger number of services will draw users from a much wider catchment than a local/municipal facility. In rural Victoria a 20km catchment area is observed for regional facilities.

The size and shape of the catchment area will be influenced by a number of factors including the range and quality of facilities and services offered, natural and built barriers i.e., freeways, travel times and the availability of competing facilities. In metropolitan Melbourne, it is common for facilities to share catchment areas, particularly the secondary catchment areas.

The Catchment Map on the following page shows:

- The facility catchment areas of the five Hepburn aquatics facilities.
- The catchment areas for the indoor facilities surrounding the Hepburn Shire boundaries including the Ballarat Aquatic & Lifestyle Centre, Kyneton Toyota Aquatic Centre and Maryborough Sports and Leisure Centre.
- Primary and Secondary catchment shaded zones surrounding each aquatics facility.
- Plotting of other aquatics facilities which surround Shire's outdoor pools and the Hepburn Bathhouse.

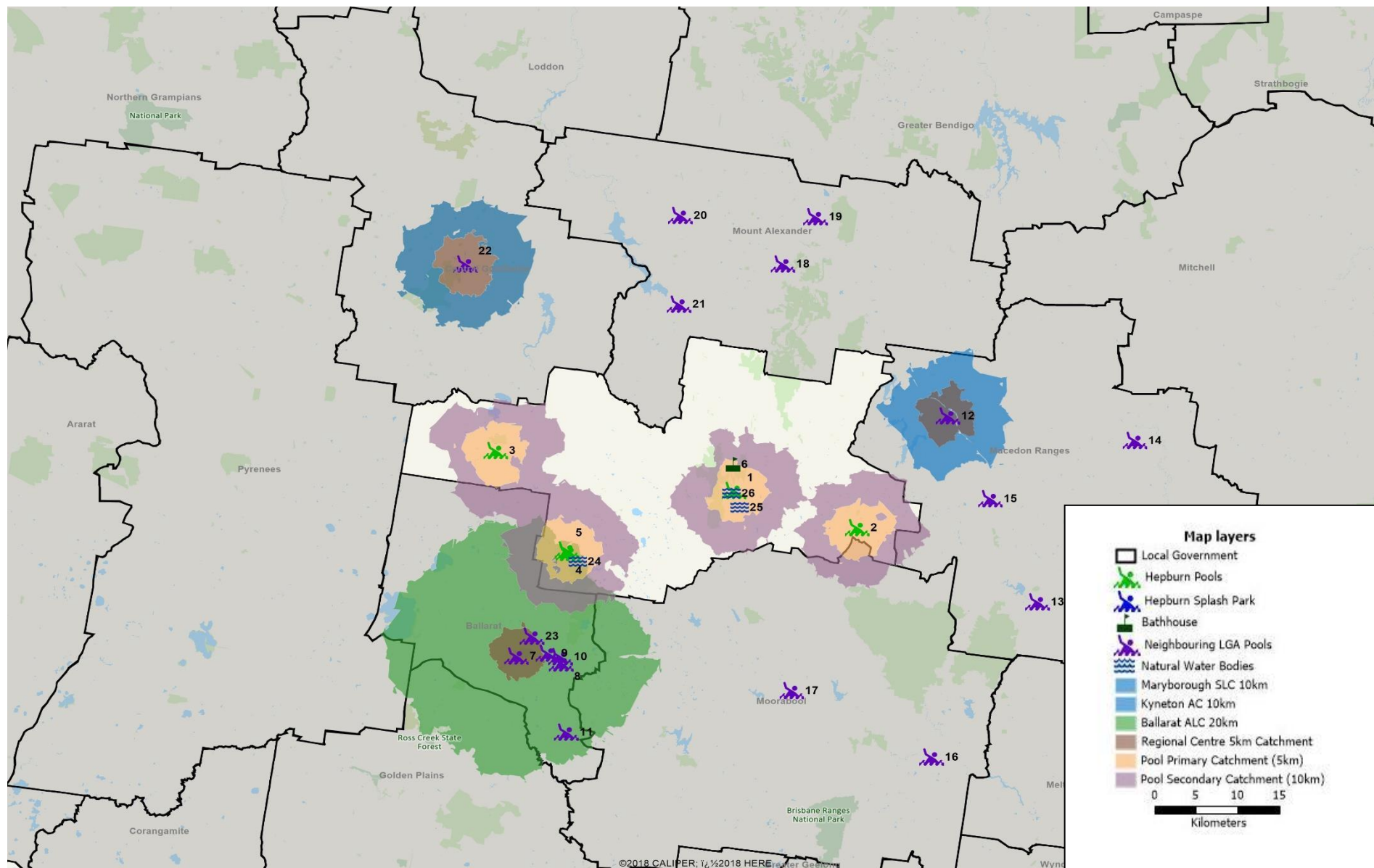


Figure 20: Hepburn Aquatics Facilities Catchment Map

5.2 PARTICIPATION RATES

AusPlay is the national population tracking survey funded and led by the Sports Commission (formerly known as the Australian Sports Commission) and follows on from the previous Exercise, Recreation and Sport Survey (ERASS) and Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia'. Annually, about 20,000 interviews are conducted with adults aged 15 and over and about 3,500 interviews with parents/guardians of children under 15 years of age.

Key participation statistics show:

- The annual population estimate of Australian Adults (15+ years) participating in swimming was 2,984,880 or 14.8% of the adult population.
- Overall, females accounted for 56% of participants and males 44%.
- Swimming participation rates increased steadily from early adulthood to their peak in the 35 to 54-year age groups.
- Conversion to club participation was low with only 6% of participants a member of an organised swim club.
- An estimated 1.5 million children (Under 15 years) participating in organised swimming out of school e.g., learn to swim or squad classes. This accounts for around one third of all Australian children.
- The peak participation rates for children in organised out of school swimming were five and eight years.
- Adult swimmers participated regularly with a median frequency of 48 sessions per annum for a duration of 45 minutes.
- The highest rating reasons for participating in swimming was 'physical health/fitness (51%) and 'fun/enjoyment (34%).'.
- The highest rating reasons for drop out were not enough time/too many commitments (19%) and poor health or injury (16%).

In 2013, The Australian Sports Commission commissioned the CSIRO to research future sports trends, including the impact of megatrends - patterns of social, economic or environmental changes that influence sports participation (Future of Australian Sport: Megatrends shaping the sports sector over the coming decades, Australian Sports Commission, 2013).

The research found activities supported by aquatics and leisure facilities including swimming, aerobics and fitness/gym participation rates per capita have increased in recent years and remains within Australia's top 10 sport and recreational activities.

The key megatrends profiling the types of participants identified in the Australian Sports Commission's the Future of Australian Sport report that can support greater participation in swimming and fitness/gym include:

- A perfect fit - personalised sport for health and fitness.
- More than a sport - achieving health, community and overseas aid objectives via sport.
- Everybody's game - sports that respond to demographic, generational and cultural change.

OPG research has identified a range of general sport and recreation participation trends that are likely to impact on local communities in the future. These are:

- **A gradual ageing of the population.** As life expectancy increases, birth rates stay low and the "baby boomers" of the 1950s and 1960s grow older. This is placing a demand on providing specific older persons programs.

- **Flexibility in the times when people recreate.** As demands on people's time increases and work practices change, people are seeking to take their sport and recreation at different times, over a broad spread of hours and at facilities that offer a lot of activities under the one roof. Health and fitness facilities are particularly attractive and getting easier to use, as many are open 12 to 16 hours per day, 7 days a week, with some now also open 24/7.
- **Increased variety in sport and recreation options.** People's sport and recreation options are changing towards newer more varied activities offered over a greater range of timeframes compared to previous decades where limited variety in activities and scheduling occurred. This has supported the trend to more multi-use facilities to attract a broader range of users as well as multiple programs to meet different needs at the one facility.
- **Constraints to sport and recreation participation.** Lack of time, lack of facilities close by, family and work constraints, health problems and cost of service or use of facilities are the main constraints to many people's sport and recreation participation. The development of targeted markets of users, programs and services at many health and fitness centres has assisted in reducing some of these participation constraints.
- **Changing employment structures, trading and work hours.** These trends often make participation in traditional sport and recreation activities difficult and therefore people are looking for facilities that are open longer hours and have a lot of activity options at the one site. This makes opportunities such as indoor sports courts attractive as their long opening hours and days open per year means usage can be made in a wide range of social, training, competition and educational settings.
- **Different people want different activities.** The different population characteristics sees the need for facilities to offer potential users a much more varied range of programs and services than previously offered. All year round available indoor and outdoor sport and recreation facilities also provide the greatest diversity of activities throughout the different seasons impacted by the areas weather.
- **Provision of high standards and quality of facilities and services.** People are more and more looking for high standard, high quality facilities and services to meet their sport and recreation needs. This has also seen the trend for indoor facilities becoming very popular as they allow activity in safe and secure spaces in all weather and environmental conditions. This leads to indicating that building low standard, low-cost facilities will not attract the maximum user market. The development by a number of peak sporting bodies of sport specific facility standards and guidelines has also placed pressure on facility providers to meet higher standards of provision.
- **Desire for activities to be affordable.** The development of multi-purpose fitness and indoor sport centres has enabled the high operating cost activities to be cross subsidised by more profitable activity areas such as health and fitness, food and beverage and entertainment areas. This has enabled many facilities to keep general entry fees low to encourage use whilst seeking users who want special services to contribute at a greater level to the cost of such activities. In general, there is a greater reliance on locally accessed and lower cost opportunities by those without the resources to travel and pay for more expensive activities.
- **Recognition of strong links between physical activity and health.** Preventative health care and active lifestyles are very important to many people and health and fitness and indoor sport activities are becoming a large part of people's activity choices. There is increased recognition of the strong links between involvement in recreational activity and good health, and the development of appropriate activities and services, which support this,
- **Expectations of equity and access.** Today's society expects all abilities and people with disabilities to be catered for in public facilities. This has seen improved design features to increase accessibility to and within such facilities. Added to this is the growing array of programs and activities offered to people of all abilities, physical condition and skill levels.
- **Sustainable Development.** In addition to the trends above there are specific trends relating to leisure and sporting facility development such as sport facility planners and operators need to respond to community demand for more sustainable and eco-friendlier infrastructure.

5.3 FACILITY TRENDS

Aquatics and Leisure Facility Usage Trends

There has been a much greater emphasis in the development of a variety of water spaces within public aquatics centres including:

- Program pools designed for learn to swim and a variety of aquatics programs.
- Warm water pools which are used for rehabilitation and therapy, one of the highest use spaces within public aquatics and leisure centres.
- Water play including large, enclosed slides, water jets and other leisure play opportunities.

Health and fitness programming have also advanced with a greater emphasis on programs for older adults as well as a much broader range of opportunities including Pilates, Yoga and Boot Camp.

Components that contribute to successful contemporary aquatics and leisure facilities are summarised in the figure below.

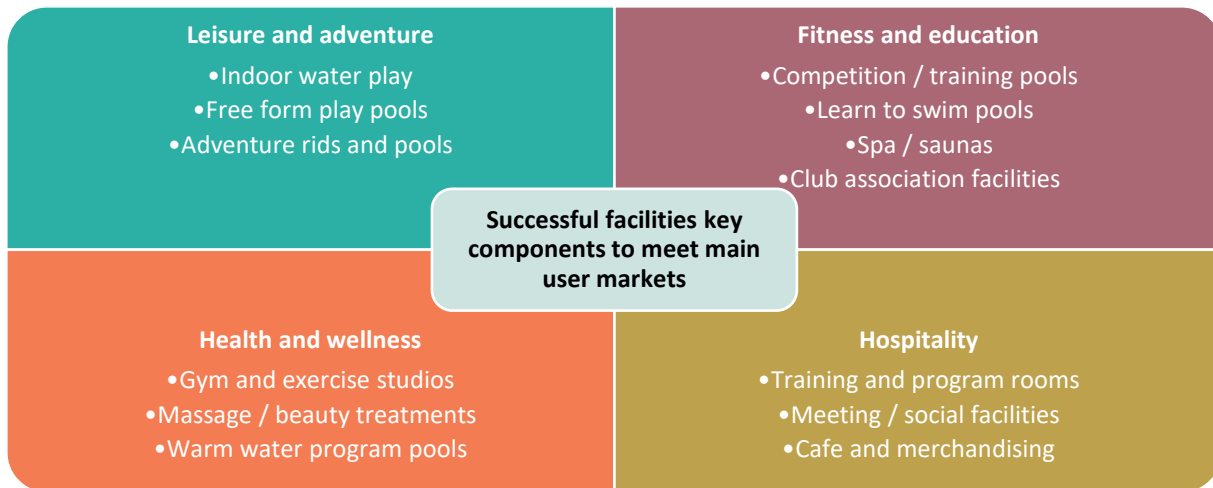


Figure 21: Successful Aquatics and Leisure Facility Model

Detailed planning and comprehensive feasibility studies show targeted user profiles with the majority of aquatics facility market research indicating complexes must equally cater for four distinct aquatics user markets, summarised in the figure below.

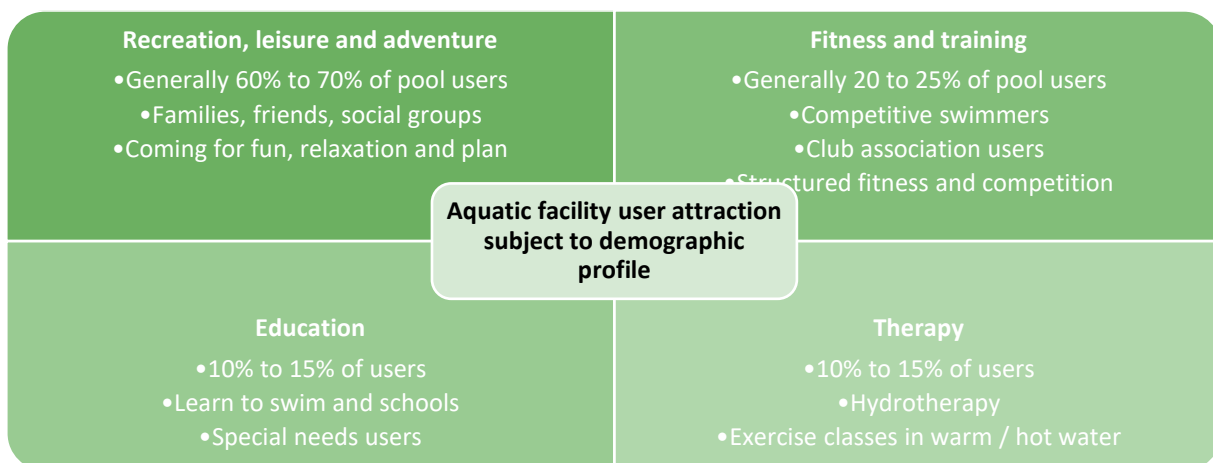


Figure 22: Main Aquatics and Leisure Facility User Markets

Research was completed to understand the user catchments of Hepburn residents who use the two neighbouring indoor aquatic facilities in Ballarat (Regional size facility) and Kyneton (Municipal size facility). The following table captures current member and learn to swim data from both facilities.

Participation data from Ballarat Aquatic & Lifestyle Centre and Kyneton Toyota Aquatic Centre

The table below shows the number of Hepburn Shire residents using the Ballarat and Kyneton indoor aquatic facilities, as members or Learn to Swim enrolments.

Table 11: Participation Data - Indoor Facilities Outside Hepburn Shire

Postcode	Birch Ward	Cameron Ward	Coliban Ward	Creswick Ward	Holcombe Ward	Kyneton Members	Ballarat Members	Kyneton LTS	Ballarat LTS
3352				Bullarook, Mollongghip, Sulky, Wattle Flat		0	2	0	2
3363				Creswick, Creswick North, Dean, Langdons Hill		0	77	0	24
3364		Lawrence, Smeaton, Werona, Campbelltown, Kooroocheang		Allendale, Blampied, Kingston, Newlyn, Newlyn North, Bald Hills, Cabbage Tree, Mount Prospect, Rocklyn, Smokeytown, Springmount, Broomfield		0	36	0	6
3370		Clunes, Ullina, Glengower				0	23	0	18
3444			Tylden South			3	0	0	0
3458			Newbury, North Blackwood, Trentham, Little Hampton, Fern Hill			30	1	6	0
3460	Basalt, Daylesford					16	10	3	13
3461	Dry Diggings, Elevated Plains, Franklindford, Hepburn, Hepburn Springs, Korweinguboora, Musk Vale, Porcupine Ridge, Sailors Falls, Sailors Hill, Shepherds Flat, Yandoit, Yandoit Hills, Leonards Hill		Bullarto, Bullarto South, Lyonville, Musk	Eganstown,	Coomoora, Wheatsheaf, Denver, Drummond, Glenlyon, Mount Franklin, Clydesdale, Strangways	20	7	12	17
Total						69	156	21	80

5.4 KEY FINDINGS FROM MARKET RESEARCH ANALYSIS

No aquatics facility in Hepburn Shire provides for a successful integrated aquatics and leisure facilities providing a range of contemporary 'wet' and 'dry' elements that appeal to broader market segments including:

- Leisure and social
- Health and wellness
- Aquatics education and learn to swim
- Therapy and rehabilitation
- Competitive and recreational swimming
- Food/beverage and merchandise services.

Providing equitable access to aquatics and leisure facilities (and other services like health, education, cultural, recreational and other community services) in rural and regional areas is a challenge, particularly in smaller townships. Particularly with the capital and operational costs of aquatics and leisure facilities having risen significantly over the last 10 to 20 years.

Participation data gathered from surrounding indoor aquatics centres in Ballarat and Kyneton shows that 326 Hepburn Shire residents currently use these facilities on a regular basis as members or Learn to Swim enrolments. Ballarat Aquatic & Lifestyle Centre services 156 members and 80 Learn to Swim participant, with the largest percentage of these users living in the Creswick Ward. Kyneton Aquatic Centre services 69 members and 21 Learn to Swim enrolments, with the largest percentage of these users living in the Coliban Ward.

These factors raise some key questions for Council:

- What is the financial capacity to provide capital funding to future aquatics facility projects?
- What is the impact of funding pool improvements or new on other services and facilities?
- How will we support small township outdoor pools?

6. Stakeholder and Community Engagement

What do residents like or dislike about Hepburn Shire aquatics facilities?

This section summarises the findings from stakeholder interviews, workshops and community surveying undertaken for the project.

A detailed community engagement plan was developed to ensure Hepburn residents had the opportunity to provide input into the development of the Aquatics Strategy. The extensive consultation and engagement included:

- Councillor workshop
- Stakeholder interviews and workshops (9 completed)
- Resident Community Survey (795 responses)
- Pop up sessions in each major township (Approx. 150 residents attended)
- School survey (7 school responses)
- Written submissions (13 submissions).

The following provides a summary of the key issues identified.

6.1 STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS AND WORKSHOPS

Councillor Workshop

A workshop was held in April 2021 with Councillors and the Executive Management Team to identify and capture current successes, required improvements and strategic considerations relating to the provision of aquatics facilities within the Hepburn Shire. Key findings are detailed in the figure below.

Benefits of current services / facilities	Required improvements	Strategic considerations and issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities; available in summer months and in each main township (albeit limited in Creswick). Family friendly, safe environment with qualified lifeguards. • Health and wellbeing; recreation, exercise and therapy is catered for in some capacity at existing facilities, providing health and therapeutic benefits. Good social spaces for kids and teenagers, school carnival use. • Success; Creswick Splash Park and 2020/21 free entry. • Community interest; significant lobbying for new indoor facility in Daylesford and Creswick. Use of natural water bodies in Creswick and Daylesford is attractive to some residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity and access; distance and cost of travel, cool climate, lack of ramps and warm water programs are barriers. • Facilities; limited indoor facilities for warm water and learn to swim programs. Clunes needs shade, activation and repairs. • Partnerships; to be enhanced with health sector, Parks Victoria, schools and neighbouring Shires with indoor facilities (Ballarat, Maryborough, Kyneton). • Sustainability; ESD, salt water chlorination and other energy efficient opportunities. Additional income generating opportunities to be explored. • Hepburn Bathhouse; focused on tourism market with limited local access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordability; capital and operational budgetary pressures and constraints. • Location; pressure from Daylesford and Creswick for indoor facility. Opportunity to repurpose land at existing sites (i.e Daylesford Outdoor Pool/Town Centre). • Weather; Clunes generally has better weather and has solar heating. Icy roads in Winter discourages early morning and late evening use (particularly near Daylesford). • Hepburn Bathhouse; barriers include price, mixed change rooms and deep water. • Tourism; a new indoor facility has potential as visitor destination.

Figure 23: Feedback from Councillor Briefing Workshop

Staff workshop

An internal staff workshop was conducted in May 2021 to understand the internal sentiment on issues and opportunities with aquatics provision in the Hepburn Shire, with representatives from the following teams in attendance:

- Environmental Health
- Community Care
- OH&S
- Parks and Open Space
- Sustainability
- Information and Communications Technology
- Environment and Waste
- Sport and Active Recreation
- Youth and Disability
- Operations and Facilities
- Events
- Economic Development
- Asset Management.

Key themes captured in the workshop are described in table below.

Table 12: Hepburn Shire Internal Staff Workshop

Theme	Benefits / Successes	Barriers / Challenges
Accessibility		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility issues at Daylesford pool deters users. • Lack of lifts, ramps and inclusive signage.
Resourcing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inhouse management has been good in providing local employment. • Junior lifeguard program has been a successful program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited resourcing for maintenance. Reactive rather than preventative. • More resourcing required to support the pools. • Training for lifeguards/staff; Child Safe Standards and managing behaviour of youth. • Aquatics Officer resourcing is stretched with other department responsibilities.
Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free entry has been very well received. • Clunes and Trentham pools; high local visitation, using COVID-19 sign in protocol. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to learn to swim programs and aquatics activities. • Weather Policy is 21 degrees; closed for many days in the season.
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low level maintenance for outdoor pools. • Hang out space for youth; enjoy with friends on hot days. • Healthy choices café has been difficult but valuable. • Daylesford pool is great location. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperature of water is a concern, barrier for primary schools. • Poor quality of changerooms. • No asset management plan. • Lack of data on buildings. • Sustainability Strategy expires 2021. • Lack of indoor facility. • Lack of heating. • Duck waste is a hygiene issue that is difficult to manage. • Introduction of synthetic grass and improved grounds. • Compliance with regulations; water quality, pools need the right equipment.
Other		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community perceptions; tensions between users. • Lack of promotion of pools.

Community Pool Advocacy Groups

Daylesford Indoor Aquatic Centre (DIAC) Advocacy Group

The DAIC Community Association was formed in 2018 with the purpose to:

- Explore the feasibility of establishing an indoor aquatics centre in the Daylesford/Hepburn Springs region.
- Develop an indoor aquatics centre that is community based and operated.
- Raise funds for the building and ongoing operation of an indoor aquatics centre.

The DAIC Community Association is led by a committee and membership has grown to 400 members in 2021. The Facebook page has received 468 likes. A 0-0-200 philosophy is adopted, which aims for a \$0 net operating loss, zero greenhouse emissions and 200,000 visits annually.

Daylesford has a tourism population market with an average of 800,000 overnight stays annually which is a potential market catchment for the new facility on weekends.

In 2016-17 the DAIC Association negotiated a \$400,000 Community Bank sponsorship pledge. There is flexibility on expenditure and delivery timeframes for this funding.

The DAIC Association have had some contact with local and State MP's, Sport and Recreation Victoria however have not yet met with Federal MP's.

To prioritise a wellness focus, the proposed scope of facilities is similar to the Kyneton Toyota Sports and Aquatic Centre, incorporating:

- 8 lane 25-metre pool at 1.1 metre depth
- Warm water exercise pool
- Water play/splash pad facility
- Small café/merchandise facilities
- Childcare services.

An aquatics centre to this scale would enhance wellness models currently in place and delivered by a local GP. The 'Spring in Your Step' program was developed with some Federal funding, and while it was created to improve cardiac health it has now extended to improve mental health conditions. The 40-50-minute sessions are run twice per week and designed by an exercise physiologist with assistance from a dietician, nutritionist, podiatrist and physiotherapist. The program has a waiting list of 50 people.

In consideration of the above, the following sites have been identified by the DAIC Association as potential opportunities for the development of an indoor aquatics centre:

- Daylesford Secondary College
- Victoria Park
- Daylesford Lawn Tennis Club
- Daylesford Dharma School
- Daylesford Outdoor Pool site
- Daylesford Hospital.

Creswick and District Aquatic Centre Inc. (CDAC) Advocacy Group

The CDAC Inc. was formed in 2012 with the purpose to begin working on the planning and development of an indoor, hydrotherapy and swimming facility for the use of all residents and visitors to the Hepburn

Shire. CDAC are registered as a community/charitable organisation and as a registered fundraiser with Consumer Affairs Victoria.

The CDAC is led by a community volunteer committee and membership has grown to approximately 200. The Facebook page has received 517 likes.

Initial interest and fundraising for the project was derived from attendance at local markets, indicating great community support for an aquatics facility in Creswick. CDAC receive ongoing financial support from Bendigo Bank and Creswick Lions, with many local businesses also providing letters of support and donations of goods for fundraising.

Various community consultation phases over time have provided the following feedback:

- Generally speaking, Creswick residents would not travel to a facility in Daylesford.
- Approximately \$10,000 is spent on bus costs in transporting local school students to Ballarat for school swimming lessons.
- A facility is needed for older adults and kids/families.
- Some concerns around rate levy.

CDAC have visited indoor aquatics facilities at Ballarat, Kyneton and Maryborough, and in 2016 developed a concept design which was based on the Belfast Aquatics facility in Port Fairy. With a priority on families and health and wellbeing, the recommended scope includes learn to swim and warm water facilities with an accessible beach entry. While the concept includes a four-lane pool, the CDAC would prefer a six-lane facility with hydro jets.

Council conducted a scoping study process in 2016 to determine sites. RACV Resort was considered, and high-level discussions initiated regarding the potential location of a warm water exercise pool at John Curtin Aged Care Complex. The preferred site was identified as Doug Lindsay Reserve, however due to unfavourable site conditions this has not been supported by Council.

The preferred site is required to be easily accessible and visible from the main street and ideally within walking distance from John Curtin Aged Care Complex, local schools and kindergartens.

CDAC outline concerns regarding Calembeen Park facilities including water quality and E-Coli, and risks associated with no surveillance and glass/debris. Opportunity identified to convert the existing toddlers pool to a splash park. Calembeen Park is considered an intermediate swimming area.

The Creswick Splash Park was created with the conversion of an old bowling green to open park space including BBQ area, skate park, outdoor exercise equipment, pedestrian walking track and the water splash park.

Hepburn Shire Advisory Groups

Disability Advisory Committee

The Disability Advisory Committee work closely with Council to address barriers to access and inclusion issues within the community, and to monitor the implementation of the Disability Access and Inclusion Plan. Representation within the Committee includes eight residents with lived experience of disability ranging from sensory, mental health, neurological, physical and intellectual impairment.

Discussion and feedback captured from the Committee is documented in the following table.

Table 13: Feedback received from Disability Advisory Committee.

Discussion points	Feedback / Comments
Current provision of facilities and programs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's good • Barriers for accessibility/use • Opportunities for improvement • Community insights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locality is ok; schools are located close to facilities. • Free entry has been well received by the community. • Facilities don't work, accessibility issues at all sites. • Appropriate change facilities need to be provided they are in poor condition, very outdated and not accessible. • Cold water is a barrier. Daylesford pool is unusable as hydrotherapy pool. • Travel - Bendigo is 45 mins for access to warm water pool. Hydrosplash program/rehabilitation programs at Ballarat and Kyneton are good. • Project was underway for existing Daylesford site but ceased due to insufficient funding. Included a hoist but only proposed beach entry. Committee supported Council's decision not to proceed. • Creswick splash park has received very positive feedback, great location and safe. • Creswick has better public transport connection. • Hepburn Bathhouse doesn't work for people with disabilities due to poor accessibility.
Future demand - if a new indoor facility was considered then what components are important?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for co-design/ co-location with public transport proximity, library, community hub, health services. • Health and wellbeing aspects should be a priority. • A publicly accessible facility for the whole community is needed. • Challenges with operating costs and attracting skilled staff (lifeguards).

Central Highland Rural Health (CHRH)

Two discussions were held with staff from Central Highland Rural Health, with included the Management team and CEO.

The staff are well aware of the community aspiration for an indoor facility. They received regular feedback from the community about the lack of suitable warm water therapy facilities in the Hepburn region. There is some evidence that a hydrotherapy facility would be well used by the ageing population to provide rehabilitation programs, social connection opportunities and a more reliable service than the outdoor pools. The cold climate of Hepburn is a significant barrier for residents to use the outdoor pools. Accessibility of existing facilities is also a major challenge for many residents.

Opportunities for co-location with health services is an opportunity they would genuinely explore. Having a viable allied health presence at a future indoor facility could be challenging as CHRH have problems already attracting qualified staff to the region and there is a high percentage of low socio-economic residents who could not afford private allied health services.

The Daylesford Hospital is currently under review with a Master Plan in the early stages of scoping. Health Planners are currently conducting a site review of the existing Hospital buildings. The CEO confirmed a hydrotherapy facility is unlikely to be included in the Hospital site Master Plan given the high demand for other acute rehabilitation services.

Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) - Grampians Regional Office

An update was provided by the SRV staff on the feasibility study scope and engagement activities. There was some discussion about the evidence and need for an indoor facility within Hepburn Shire to service a growing ageing population. They also understand the importance of accessibility aquatics and learn to swim programming to the local communities.

Discussion about inter municipal linkages with the aquatics facilities network was highlighted by SRV staff and that the Aquatics Strategy needs to consider broader regional planning considerations, including better access and use of existing indoor facilities across the region.

Gender neutral change room and amenities was highlighted, along with Universal Design principles for new and existing aquatics facilities.

They also stated that aquatics facility provision should be linked to Hepburn Shire Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

School Interviews and Online Surveys

School Interviews

Online interview sessions were offered to all school with Hepburn Shire. Only two schools took up the opportunity which were Creswick North Primary School and Daylesford Secondary College. A summary of the discussions follows.

Creswick North Primary School

- A small rural school of 36 students, who expect to grow as the Creswick town population expands.
- They use Ballarat Aquatic & Lifestyle Centre for annual swimming lessons – which is a 15-20-minute drive each day for two-week intensive program. It's an expensive activity for families to fund.
- They also use the natural water bodies of St Georges Lake for the fishing program and Calembreen Park is used by students' afterschool during summer.
- With no pool in Creswick local kids are forced to travel to Ballarat for swimming programs during and after school.

Daylesford Secondary College

- Further follow up with the school is planned as the interview was interrupted due to COVID matters.

Online School Survey Summary

A total of seven local schools completed the online survey. These schools included Hepburn Primary School, Creswick Primary School, St Michael's Daylesford Primary School, Creswick North Primary School, St Augustine's Creswick Primary School, Newlyn Primary School and Daylesford Primary School.

The following insights have been gathered from the responses:

- Six schools (75% of respondents) currently use Ballarat Aquatic & Lifestyle Centre for learn to swim programs, school carnivals and fun days.
- One school uses the Daylesford Outdoor Pool for a carnival, one school uses Kyneton Toyota Aquatic Centre for swimming lessons and one school uses the Swim and Survival Academy in Wendouree for swimming lessons.
- All schools generally use the facilities for 1-2 hours for swimming lessons and fun days, and school carnivals for 4-5 hours.
- Most schools use the aquatics facilities in terms 1 and 4. One school conducts their swimming program in term 3.
- Most schools use bus transport, a combination of large buses and minibuses depending on the school size.
- Most schools travel between 15 – 45 minutes to attend an indoor aquatics facility outside the Shire. One school travels up to 15 minutes to the Daylesford Outdoor Pool.
- All schools rated the indoor aquatics facility they use as good to excellent. They highlighted the quality of staff, access to indoor pools, distance from the school, and the whole is able to attend as the key reason for choosing the facility.
- All school stated they would be more encouraged to use a facility in the Hepburn Shire if it was an indoor heated facility.

- Swimming programs range between \$50 - \$110 per student depending on the length of the program. This cost includes lesson and bus travel costs.

Community Engagement Pop Up Sessions

Community Pop Up sessions were conducted during the survey open period. These sessions provided the communities with an opportunity to meet with the project team to share the feedback. There were approximately 150 residents who participated. Attendees were provided with either hard copy of the community survey or a QR code to enable them to complete the survey online. The following locations were used:

- Daylesford - Farmers Market
- Clunes - outside the IGA store
- Creswick - outside the IGA store
- Trentham - Due to the June 2021 storm event and COVID restrictions delaying the in-person town Pop Up session, two video conference sessions were undertaken.

Key themes emerging from the Pop-Up sessions were:

- Residents highly value the existing aquatics facilities.
- Creswick Splash Park is a popular facility for younger children and families.
- Opening hours of the current pool is limiting some residents from accessing facilities. Earlier openings and morning sessions requested.
- The outdoor pools are important for teenagers to socialise and gather during school holidays.
- Cold water is a barrier for some residents.
- Residents would like to see more programming including events, learn to swim and aquatics exercise classes.
- Interest in an indoor facility within the Shire, however some concerns over Councils financial capacity to afford both the capital and ongoing operational cost.
- Travel distance to pools is a barrier for some residents.
- Free access to the pools has been well accepted and encourages more people to use the pools.
- Accessibility at the outdoor pools is poor.
- More maintenance and upgrades needed at the ageing outdoor pools.

Written Submissions

Council received thirteen written submissions including seven community organisations (Daylesford Rotary Club, Daylesford Indoor Aquatic Centre Association, Daylesford Football Netball Club, Daylesford Men's Shed, Riding for the Disabled Association Daylesford - (RDA Daylesford), Hepburn Football Netball Club and Daylesford and Hepburn United Soccer Club), one school (Daylesford Primary School) and five resident submissions. The key themes from the feedback provided were as follows:

Indoor Aquatics Facility

- There is strong support for an indoor aquatics facility within Hepburn Shire.
- Any future indoor facility should cater for all age groups and offer learn to swim programs and opportunities for older adults to access warm water facilities.
- It was suggested that an indoor aquatics facility should be located in Daylesford or Hepburn Springs as a central location in the Shire and has the largest population base.
- An indoor aquatics facility with a gym, childcare and other program spaces would be well used.

- The significant tourism market in the region is an opportunity to improve the viability of an indoor aquatics facility.
- An indoor aquatics facility in Daylesford is necessary and long overdue for community.
- An indoor aquatics facility would lead to substantial health benefits across a spectrum of ages from children, youth, middle age and elderly adults.
- An indoor aquatics facility would provide local employment, be a drawcard for future residents and further boost tourism revenue in the region.
- One submission offered financial contributions from community groups and willingness to assist with community fund raising activities to contribute the ongoing operational costs of an indoor aquatics facility.
- The Daylesford community has campaigned for over 20 years for an indoor heated pool and Council needs to demonstrate its commitment to the health, safety and wellbeing of their residents through the provision of this important infrastructure.

Access

- The current facilities accessibility challenges were highlighted as a barrier to use.
- The existing outdoor pools are old and inadequate for the needs of many residents.
- Evidence that Hepburn school students are not reaching national swimming and water safety benchmarks.
- The travel distance to Ballarat and Kyneton makes it difficult to bus students regularly for learn to swim programs.

6.2 COMMUNITY SURVEY

An online community survey was undertaken to determine the community's feedback on the current aquatics' provisions across the Hepburn Local Government Area. The survey was open from 14 May 2021 to 23 August 2021. A total of 965 residents started the survey, with 795 fully completing responses. The survey was "live" for a total of 14 weeks, after several extensions were offered to the community due to COVID and Community Pop Up session disruptions. The full survey report is included as Appendix 1.

Survey Respondent Profile and Satisfaction Ratings

The following respondent profile is summarised below:

- Females represented 72% of total responses compared to Males at 25%. 3% of respondents preferred not to specify their gender.
- The largest age cohort who responded to the survey was 40-49 years at 24%, followed by 50-59 years and 60-69 years with both recording 21% of total responses. The 30-39 age group contributed 16% of responses. These four age categories represented 82% of total completed responses.
- The largest survey participation came from Daylesford, Hepburn and Hepburn Springs residents (41%) and Creswick/Creswick North (24%), which is indicative of the larger population bases in these towns.
- A total of 50.06% of respondents had visited a Hepburn Shire aquatics facility in the past 12 months. Of those who visited a Hepburn aquatics facility, Daylesford had the highest response of 57.55% of all respondents.
- Daylesford Outdoor Pool and Calembeen Park Toddlers Pool as facilities had a majority rating of poor. The quality of the pools, change rooms and grounds were the key issues highlighted in the responses. Water temperature was also raised as an issue for many residents.
- The programming across all pools was rated poorly, with Clunes receiving the highest rating of adequate.

- The top five issues of importance for residents were:
 1. Temperature of the water
 2. Range of programs and services offered
 3. Learn to Swim programs
 4. Maintenance
 5. Cleanliness.

Facility Usage Summary

The key findings from the visitation characteristics were:

- Three-quarters of visitors were at the pools for more than 1 hour, with the most common duration 1-1.5 hours.
- Typical visitation times were during normal working hours (9am -5pm), accounting for 91% of all responses. This may be a representation of the typical respondents' characteristics, who were predominately either women in typical parental ages, or those in age cohorts who may be retired or working reduced hours.
- Almost all respondents were travelling from home, by car either on their own or with others, to the Shire pools.
- Frequency of pool usage varied significantly with 54.09% visiting the pool weekly, of which 22.96% visited 2-3 times a week. This also means there are almost as many people visiting less frequently as there are those who visit weekly.

The top four reasons for using the aquatics facilities were relatively consistent:

- Close to them and easy to get to
- Only swimming pool in the area, they are aware of
- Family/friends use it
- Outdoor pool.

Respondents were asked to identify the main activities that they undertook at the pool, with four clear activities emerging across the five sites:

- Cool down from hot weather
- Recreation swimming/fun
- Take child to pool
- Lap swim/ fitness.

Respondents Who Don't Use Hepburn Aquatics Facilities

A total 397 surveys or 50% of total respondent Respondents stated that they hadn't used a Hepburn Shire Aquatics Site in the past 12 months. They were asked to select up to three reasons as to why. The graph on the following page details the most common responses.

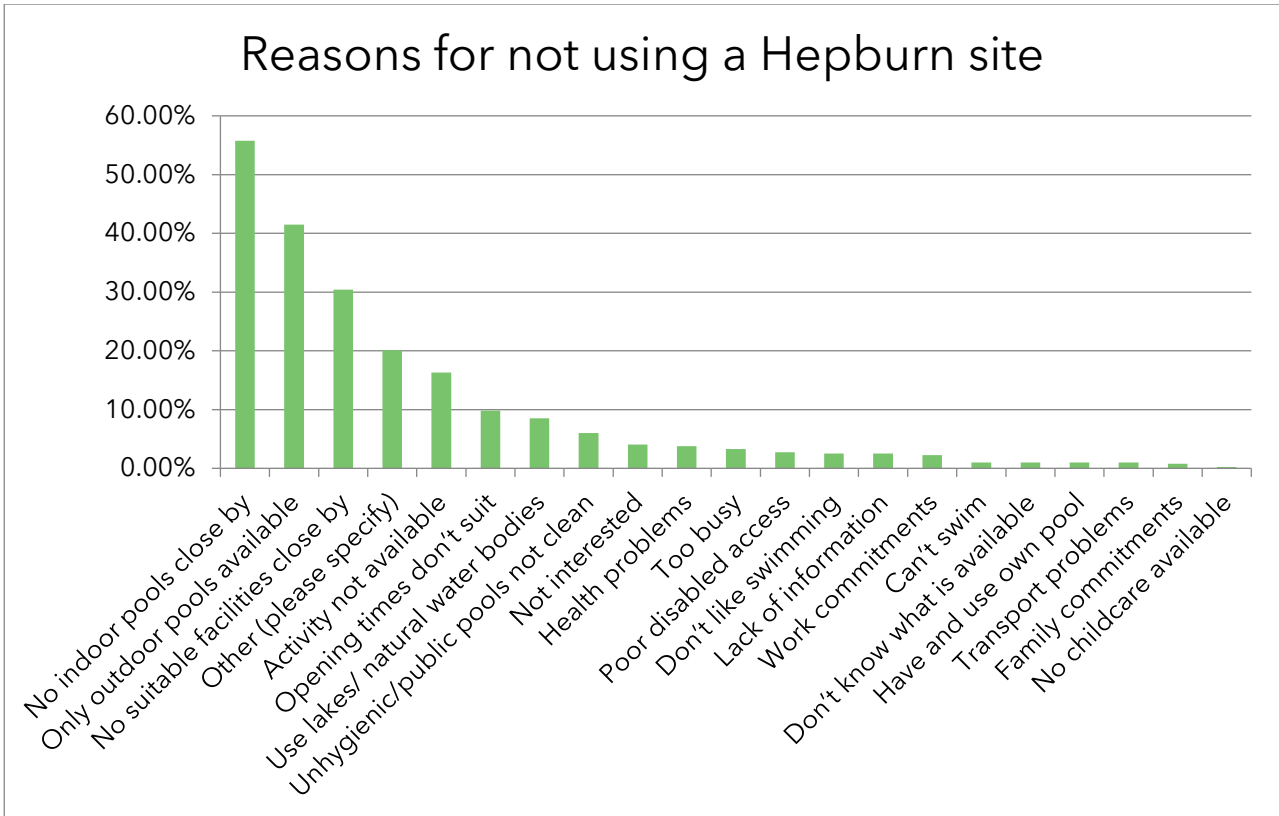


Figure 24: Reasons for not using a Hepburn Shire Aquatics Facility

The most common responses for not using an existing Hepburn Shire facility were:

- Lack of an indoor pool within the Shire.
- Poor access to suitable water temperature, these responses included access to indoor or heated pools.
- The respondent travelled outside the LGA to use other facilities.

Respondents were also asked if they use neighbouring LGA facilities, in particular Ballarat Aquatic & Lifestyle Centre and Kyneton Toyota Aquatic Centre, as shown in the graph on the following page.

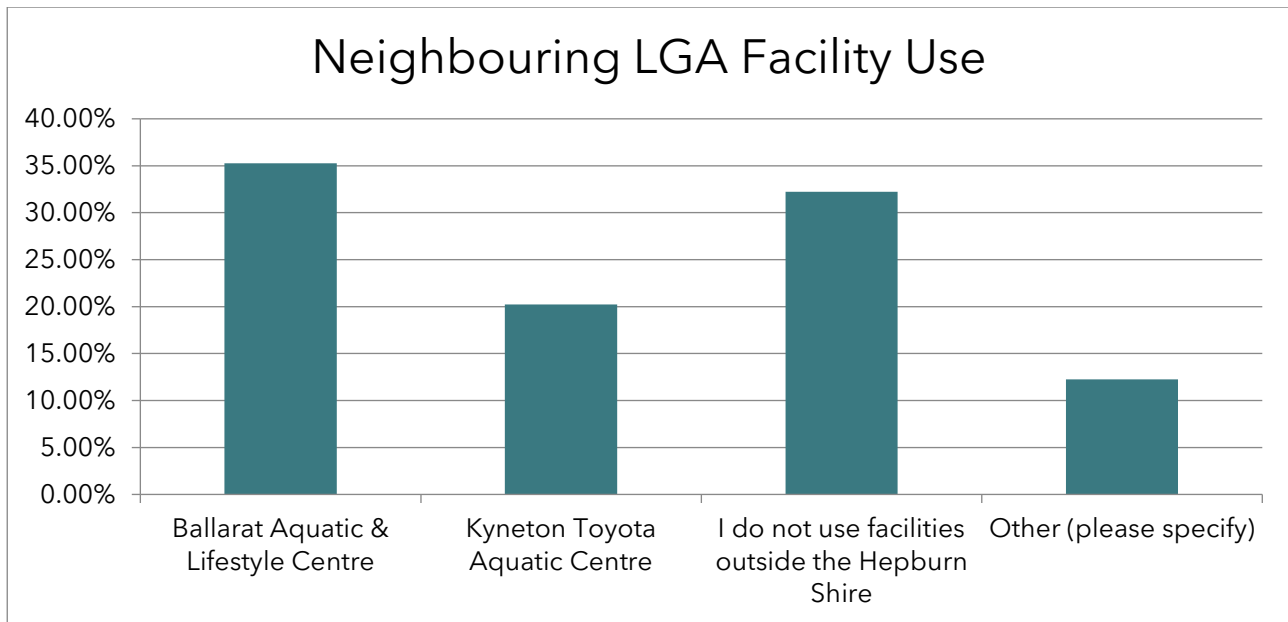


Figure 25: Non-Hepburn Aquatics Centres Use

Those who selected other also identified facilities across Victoria, including Swim and Survive Ballarat, Eureka Pool, and Bendigo Indoor Aquatics Centre.

The respondents who stated that they visit centres outside of the Hepburn Shire were asked to identify why they were visiting these centres. The results indicate the facility offerings were most likely reason to visit a centre.

What Would Encourage Greater Utilisation

Of the 795 respondents who completed the survey, 755 stated that they would like to make greater use of aquatics centres. These respondents were then asked to identify the three facilities or features that would encourage them to use aquatics facilities more. The graph on the following page details the most common facilities and features that would encourage the greater use of aquatics centres.

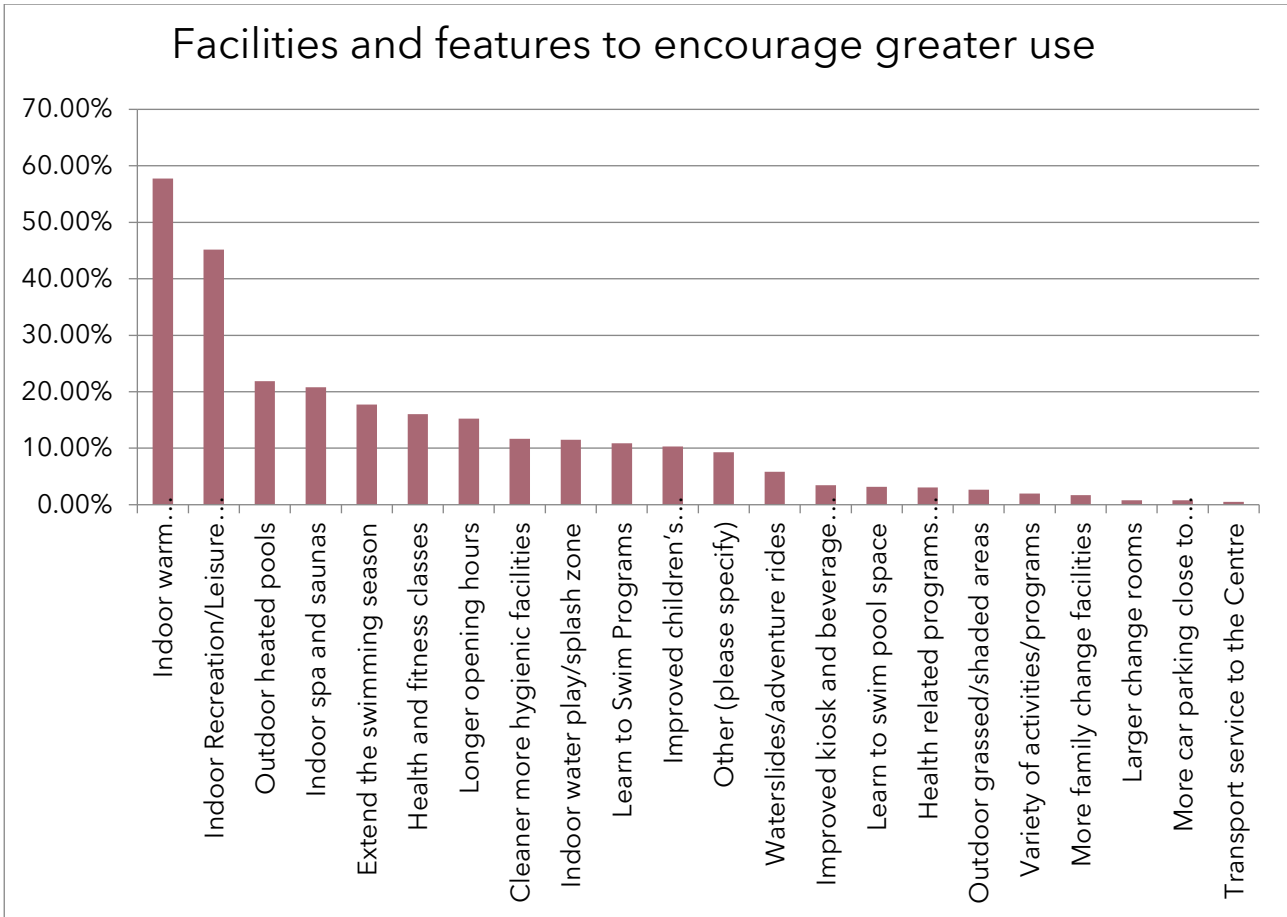


Figure 26: Facilities to encourage greater use

The top three responses from the graph above were:

- Indoor warm water program pool
- Indoor recreation and leisure pools
- Outdoor heated pools.

Additional Comments from Respondents

Respondents were asked to make any additional comments on aquatics facilities in Hepburn Shire. There were 379 comments made and these were categorised into nine themes. The table on the following page details the themes and response rate of the additional comments.

Table 14: Summary of Additional Comments Themes provided by Community Survey Respondents

Theme	Referenced	Response percentage
Heated pool	1. Heated/warm pool or hydrotherapy 2. Either indoor, outdoor or non-specified (if indoor then indoor tag has been applied)	34.04%
Indoor	3. Indoor pool facilities 4. Aquatics centre 5. Includes any reference to extending operating hours and supporting facilities as a result of indoor facility being built.	47.49%
Cost/affordability	6. Capital or operating (effect on rate base) 7. Accessibility; if built or added to existing facilities (i.e., Hepburn Bathhouse, travel costs) 8. Free entry to facilities 9. Fundraising and grants	12.14%
Operations/maintenance	10. On existing facilities 11. Opening hours / season length / scheduling 12. Maintenance and improvements 13. Cold pool temps 14. ESD opportunities to explore	22.69%
Programs/services	15. Learn to swim, aqua classes etc	21.37%
Travel/weather	16. Travel as a barrier 17. Currently travelling to other facilities 18. Cool climate 19. Weather policy	27.18%

These comments followed the theme throughout the survey that the community believed there was a need for improved access to aquatics facilities, in particular heated or indoor pools, to provide increased service capabilities and more access year-round.

6.3 KEY FINDINGS FROM STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

There is significant interest from key stakeholders and the broader community in the aquatics facilities provision across the Hepburn Shire. The feedback gathered indicates the outdoor pools, although highly valued, are not fit for purpose for many ageing residents, who are a significant proportion of the population with 34% over the age of 60. The other key issue is younger children have limited access to year-round swimming lessons.

An indoor aquatics facility is strongly supported by stakeholders and residents. There are two very active and passionate community advocacy Groups in Daylesford and Creswick that have undertaken significant lobbying, research and preliminary assessments for an indoor facility over the last ten years.

The Community Engagement Survey received significant interest with 795 residents completing the online or hard copy surveys. The majority of responses came from residents in the Daylesford, Hepburn and Hepburn Springs towns (41%) and Creswick/Creswick North areas (24%).

Close to 50% of the survey respondents stated they don't use an existing Hepburn aquatics facility.

The main reasons for not using an existing facility included lack of an indoor facility (56%), the only pools available are outdoor facilities (41%) and no suitable facilities close by (30%). Other factors such as cold-water temperature, lack of suitable programs/activities and unsuitable opening times were also key issues for some residents not using the existing aquatics facilities.

A significant number of respondents use indoor aquatics facilities outside the Shire. They include Ballarat Aquatic & Lifestyle Centre (35%) and Kyneton Toyota Aquatic Centre (20%). The key reasons for using these Centres were the availability of indoor pools, warm water program pools and the variety of programs and activities offered.

The future improvements that would encourage greater use of aquatics facilities include provision of an indoor warm water pool, indoor recreation and leisure pools, outdoor heated pools, indoor spas and sauna, extended swimming season, health and fitness classes and longer opening hours.

Of the seven schools that responded to the school survey 75% use the Ballarat Aquatic & Lifestyle Centre for school carnivals, swimming lesson and fun days. The Daylesford Outdoor Pool is used by one school for a carnival and one school uses Kyneton Toyota Aquatic Centre for swimming lessons. All schools indicated they would use an indoor facility within Hepburn Shire if it were developed in the future. There is support for an indoor heated year-round facility within the Shire.

Council received eleven written submissions including seven community organisations (Daylesford Rotary Club, Daylesford Indoor Aquatic Centre Association, Daylesford Football Netball Club, Daylesford Men's Shed, Riding for the Disabled Association Daylesford - (RDA Daylesford), Hepburn Football Netball Club and Daylesford and Hepburn United Soccer Club), one school (Daylesford Primary School) and five resident submissions.

All submissions expressed strong support and need for an indoor aquatics facility that is accessible, caters for all ages and abilities, provides access to warm water programs and offers a variety of learn to swim and other aquatics programs year-round.

7. Strategic Directions

The following section summarises the key issues identified through the market research, facilities review and stakeholder engagement stages of the project. Strategic directions are proposed to address these issues together with a proposed aquatics facility network approach to meet the identified community needs.

7.1 KEY ISSUES

Aquatics facilities and services support the strategic commitment to healthy and active communities.

Hepburn Shire has a number of strategies that have key objectives to improve the health and wellbeing of the community. These include the Council Plan 2021-2025, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Activate 2020-2030 and the Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2016-2021. A key focus in each of the strategies is providing quality infrastructure that encourages active and healthy lifestyles and social inclusion opportunities.

Current aquatics facilities do not cater for all key user markets

The existing outdoor pools are ageing, and do not cater for the key user markets adequately. A successful aquatics facility should cater for the following four key user markets:

1. Recreation, leisure and adventure (water play, recreational swimming, families, socialising, fun).
2. Fitness and training (training, competitive swimming, swim clubs).
3. Education (Learn to Swim, school swimming lessons and special needs programs).
4. Therapy (hydrotherapy, aqua exercise classes, rehabilitation).

There are also barriers for some of Hepburn's population demographics including older residents and young children who are seeking warmer water for water therapy, aquatics programs, recreational swimming and learn to swim programs. These barriers include cold water temperatures, irregular opening hours due to weather closure policy, poor accessibility compliance and lack of suitable activities and programs.

The natural water bodies scattered throughout the Shire are also frequently used by local residents. The use of some of these areas (particularly Calembreen Park) provide some level of health and safety risk to users. It's important to note that Calembreen Park is Crown land and controlled by the State Government Department of Environment, Water, Land and Planning (DEWLP). Hepburn Shire Council has a role as Committee of Management in the day-to-day operation of the site but the liability for risks and health and safety issues is the responsibility of DEWLP.

The feedback gathered from key stakeholders and the community survey support the need for a contemporary indoor warm water program pool to support year-round rehabilitation, water therapy and swimming lessons.

Facility catchment, accessibility and cold climate challenges

Hepburn Shire has some unique characteristics that make it challenging to cater for the changing needs of its townships and communities. The outdoor pools cater for a limited market given they are not contemporary year-round facilities. With an ageing population there is a growing need for greater access to indoor year-round warm water pools with good accessibility features such as ramps and compliant change rooms.

The long travel distances between towns and poor public transport result in the existing facilities being very localised to its user catchments. Determining a potential location for an indoor aquatics centre is challenging given the population distribution across the Shire. Any future solutions will need to consider how the Hepburn facilities work as a complementary network with other neighbouring shire aquatics facilities.

The cold climate of Hepburn Shire creates some constraints (cold pools and icy roads) for accessing aquatics services. The need for flexible operating hours and warmer outdoor pool water temperatures was highlighted throughout the community engagement activities.

Asset renewal – short to medium term priorities

There are significant asset renewal, compliance and maintenance priorities across the aquatics services offered by Council that will need to be planned for over the next 10 – 20 years. This will be further impacted if Council decides to invest in modern technology solutions for more effective water heating, energy efficiency initiatives and improve accessibility compliance to pools and change rooms.

Council has recently funded the installation of a solar system at each outdoor pool, as a means of increasing the water temperature. The technical audit has identified that the current system is inefficient due to that the volume of water. For solar systems to be effective, a larger surface area is required for the solar panels. The water temperature increase is negligible and has not improved user comfort. An option to improve this would be the installation of electric heat pumps.

Calembeen Park Toddlers Pool and broader lake precinct pose significant health and safety risks to users which need to be addressed in the short to medium term. These risk issues are also highlighted in the Calembeen Park Management Plan 2009.

Management model options review

The management of the outdoor pools has varied over the last 10 – 20 years impacting the usage and operating performance of the facilities. The pools are currently operated by Council, which has increased the operating costs in the last two years due to higher wage rates of the local government award.

The operating deficit has also grown significantly since the introduction of the free entry which removed payment of entry fees for use of the outdoor pools. However, usage has increased dramatically which is a positive outcome in supporting residents' participation in active and healthy lifestyles.

A review of the management model options should be considered. This would include investigating the various models in the market and/or shared services model between other surrounding councils.

Affordability of a new facility – capital and operational costs

The most significant challenge for Council in determining a future indoor aquatics facility is the affordability to build and operate such a facility. This includes the ability to attract sufficient capital funding for a new facility and, more importantly, the ability to sustain the ongoing operational cost.

Opportunities to ensure residents across the Shire can access aquatics services should be considered. This may include bus services or alternate models of provision i.e., supporting learn to swim businesses.

Potential Partnerships

It was evident from the key stakeholder interviews with the regional health providers that future partnership opportunities should be further explored. This could include co-location opportunities, integrated programming and a shared focus on community health and wellbeing alliances.

Opportunities for partnerships with governments, private sector operators, schools, community organisations and commercial businesses should be explored for funding, sustainable management models and shared use/facility location opportunities.

7.2 STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above key issues, the proposed vision and objectives of the Hepburn Aquatics Strategy are:

Proposed Vision

“Provide sustainable, affordable and accessible aquatics facilities that brings Hepburn residents together to enjoy health, wellbeing, education and leisure experiences.”

Proposed Objectives

Objective 1: Access to affordable, accessible and inclusive aquatics facilities that support participation opportunities and key program needs.

Objective 2: Existing facilities are well managed and maintained to meet current design and operational industry standards.

Objective 3: Facilitate access to a network of complementary facilities that support health and wellbeing outcomes for the community.

Objective 4: Future design of facilities will be operationally sustainable and based on contemporary design principles.

7.3 FACILITY HIERARCHY AND PROVISION

Given the diverse and dispersed characteristics of the Hepburn Shire population, it is proposed that the provision of aquatics facilities will be provided using a network approach. With a small population catchment, providing multiple indoor aquatics facilities within the Shire is not achievable or affordable for Council.

The recommended aquatics provision strategy is a combination of:

- Council owned aquatics facilities including outdoor pools, splash parks and the exploration of one future indoor facility.
- Facilities and services available from the private sector (e.g., swim schools, commercial day spas/bathhouse, private gyms and personal training studios).
- Regional and Sub Regional facilities in adjoining municipalities of Ballarat (Ballarat Aquatic & Lifestyle Centre), Macedon Ranges (Kyneton Aquatics and Sports Centre) and Central Goldfields (Maryborough Sports and Leisure Centre).
- Natural water bodies including lakes, waterholes and mineral springs.

Table 15: Hepburn Shire Aquatics Facility Hierarchy

Service Hierarchy	Population Size	Typical Travel Time to the Facility	Service Level Objective
Local Local rural township catchment population	1,000 - 10,000	0 - 5 mins drive time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a local aquatics experience i.e., pool or water play/leisure water • Usually linked to other community facilities to share management and operation cost
District Major townships centre and district catchment population	10,000 - 40,000	5 - 10 mins drive time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to provide program pool combined with water play/leisure water • Consider provision of limited dry/gym facilities
Sub Regional Major township centre with highest population area servicing a municipal catchment	40,000 - 70,000	10 - 30 mins drive time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to separate program and leisure water • Larger dry/gym facilities • Additional limited facilities
Regional Regional city catchment population servicing across municipal boundaries	70,000 - 150,000	30 - 45 mins drive time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More extensive program and leisure water • Consideration of indoor 50m pool and complementary warm water pool • Increased gym and program space • Additional complementary amenities, food and beverage

7.4 RECOMMENDED STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The recommended future development options are based on the following localised trends:

- Need for funding investment to address the operational and technical issues identified via the detailed facility audits of the ageing facilities.
- Opportunity to integrate key facilities and service areas at one location to support year-round access to aquatics facilities to support learn to swim and therapy-based activities.
- New leisure and water play opportunities to continue to support the informal leisure/social/family markets and access to an aquatics experience in small townships.
- Consider opportunities to support indoor health and fitness programs and services.
- Improvements to disability access, amenities, improved shade, more seating and landscaping.
- Maintaining the existing pools is the priority in the immediate to medium term. However, if the cost of these works cannot be afforded over the long term, Council may be forced to close one or more of the existing pools.
- Need to consider the future management arrangements of the facilities to ensure the long-term sustainability of operations.

Based on the above the recommended strategic directions for the Hepburn Aquatics facilities is as follows, noting that further detailed planning work is required to fully understand Council's ability to fund the future development options identified.

7.4.1 Facility Upgrades - Compliance and OH&S Works

Undertake recommended upgrades identified in Technical Review audits to meet current compliance and OH&S requirements.

The key findings that support this strategy include:

- Ageing assets at all sites that are reaching end of life.
- Management and mitigation of risks identified in the Technical Review Audits.
- Ensure Council meets contemporary OH&S and compliance regulations.

Action Plan: Facility Upgrades - Compliance and OH&S Works

Table 16: Strategic Direction Recommendations

Proposed Recommendation	Proposed Timing	Indicative Cost Range
That funding be provided to undertake the necessary maintenance works as identified within the technical review audit at the three outdoor pools.	Short	\$350,000 - \$400,000
That funding be provided to undertake the necessary maintenance works as identified within the technical review audit at the Creswick Splash Park.	Short	\$15,000 - \$20,000
That funding be provided to undertake the necessary maintenance works as identified within the technical review audit at the Calembreen Park Toddler Pool.	Short	\$50,000 - \$60,000
Total		\$415,000 - 480,000

Note Timeline Scale: Short Term 1 - 3 years, Medium Term 4 - 7 years and Long Term 8 - 10 years

7.4.2 Management and Operation

To ensure the management and operations of the facilities is financially sustainable for Council and aligned to industry trends and compliance requirements it is recommended that Council undertake a detailed assessment of the options available and associated costs and benefits for the future management of the facilities. This would include:

- **Inhouse Model**
- **External Contractor**
- **Company Limited by Guarantee**
- **Lease.**

The key findings that support this strategy include:

- The increasing operational cost to Council over time under an in-house management model.
- Challenges in attracting and retaining high quality and qualified aquatics staff.
- The need for contemporary corporate systems and adequate internal expertise in aquatics.

Action Plan: Management and Operation

Table 17: Strategic Direction Recommendations

Proposed Recommendation	Proposed Timing	Indicative Cost Range
That Council undertake an annual review of the performance of all facilities in meeting key performance measures and progress made on the strategy.	Short	Existing Resources
That Council undertake a Management Model Review to consider the costs, issues and benefits of the various options available.	Short	\$20,000 - \$30,000
That Council determine the most suitable option for the future management of the aquatics facilities and develop an implementation plan.	Short	N/A
Total		\$20,000 - \$30,000

Note Timeline Scale: Short Term 1 - 3 years, Medium Term 4 - 7 years and Long Term 8 - 10 years

7.4.3 Facility Programming and Activation

Undertake a review of the current programming of the outdoor pools. Develop and implement new programming and activation opportunities across the outdoor pools to encourage greater participation outcomes. This may include more regular aquatics programs, special events, family fun days, community partnership activities and promotions, themed activity days and increased school use.

The key findings that support this strategy include:

- Significant community feedback for more programs and activities to be offered over summer at the outdoor pools.
- Maximise the free entry to all outdoor pools to increase community use and participation.
- Create more vibrant facilities and increase participation through innovative programming and activities.

Action Plan - Facility Programming and Activation

Table 18: Strategic Direction Recommendations

Proposed Recommendation	Proposed Timing	Indicative Cost Range
That Council undertake a review of the aquatics programming schedule for each outdoor pool.	Short	Existing Resources
That Council review the weather policy to enable greater access to the outdoor pools.	Short	Existing Resources
That Council develop and implement a programming and activation plan for each outdoor pool.	Short	\$10,000 - \$20,000
That Council undertake an annual review of the programs and seek community feedback for improvements via the annual outdoor pool survey.	Short/Medium	N/A
Total		\$10,000 - \$20,000

Note Timeline Scale: Short Term 1 - 3 years, Medium Term 4 - 7 years and Long Term 8 - 10 years

7.4.4 Asset Management Plan

To ensure the aquatics facilities are maintained in accordance with industry standards it is recommended that Council implement an Aquatics Facilities Asset Management Plan and site-specific maintenance plans for all aquatics facilities in line with Technical Assessments.

Action Plan: Asset Management Plan

Table 19: Asset Management Recommendations

Proposed Recommendation	Proposed Timing	Indicative Cost Range
That Council implements an Aquatics Facilities Asset Management Plan and maintenance plans for all aquatics facilities in line with Technical Assessments prepared; and align Council's operational and renewal budgets.	Short	\$30,000 - \$40,000 (if outsourced)
Total		\$30,000 - \$40,000 (if outsourced)

Note Timeline Scale: Short Term 1 - 3 years, Medium Term 4 - 7 years and Long Term 8 - 10 years

7.4.5 Outdoor Pool Upgrades

Further investigate identified upgrade options to the three outdoor pools in Daylesford, Clunes and Trentham. This includes the provision of warmer water, amenities, plant rooms and associated infrastructure.

The key findings that support this strategy include:

- The current outdoor pools are highly regarded by the local community as important community facilities for all ages.
- The need for warm water temperature for patrons, which was consistent feedback from the community.
- The need to improve the accessibility, functionality and usage of the existing outdoor pools to cater for broader user markets.

Action Plan: Outdoor Pool Upgrades

Table 20: Strategic Direction Recommendations

Proposed Recommendation	Proposed Timing	Indicative Cost Range
That Council undertake a cost benefit analysis of installing electric heat pumps to replace the ineffective solar heating system, to increase the water temperature for bather comfort.	Short	\$20,000 - \$30,000 (Cost Benefit Analysis Report) \$1.8M - \$2.2M (Heat pump and plant room installation)
That Council develop an asset management plan and provides the required funding in the Capital Works program for the replacement, upgrade or renewal of facility infrastructure as it reaches end of life. This includes change rooms, shelters, seating and plant room equipment.	Short/Medium	\$1.5M - \$2.5M (Asset renewal/upgrades)
Total		\$3.32M - \$4.73M

Note Timeline Scale: Short Term 1 - 3 years, Medium Term 4 - 7 years and Long Term 8 - 10 years

7.4.6 Water Play Upgrades

Develop concept plans and cost estimates for the addition of water play facilities at the three outdoor pools to cater for the growing expectations of different aquatics experiences for families and children. This should include consideration of the enhancement of features at the Creswick Splash Park and further investigation and exploration of the identified replacement options for Calembreen Toddlers Pool to ensure compliance with industry guidelines.

The key findings that support this strategy include:

- The current outdoor pools are ageing and lack contemporary water play facilities for families and children.
- Creswick Splash Park is a popular destination for families which will require renewal in the future.
- The current Calembreen Toddlers Pool is an ageing asset reaching end of life. It also does not comply with current Royal Life Saving Society Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation.

Action Plan: Waterplay Upgrades

Table 21: Strategic Direction Recommendations

Proposed Recommendation	Proposed Timing	Indicative Cost Range
That Council further investigate water play options and costs for the outdoor pool sites to enhance the facilities for families and children and attract higher participation.	Short/Medium	Existing Resources
Consideration of feasibility and concept plans for water play and toddler zone to replace the ageing toddler pool infrastructure at the outdoor pool sites.	Medium	\$40,000 - \$50,000 (Feasibility and Concept Plans) \$1.8M - \$2.2M (New waterplay and plant rooms)
That Council upgrade or renew infrastructure as it reaches end of life at Creswick Splash Park. This includes Splash Park features, shelters, seating and plant room equipment.	Medium/Long	\$150,000 - \$250,000
That Council investigate and explore options for water play experiences at Calembreen Park to ensure a low-risk environment for toddlers and children.	Short/Medium	\$10,000 - \$20,000 (Scoping Study)
Total		\$2M - \$2.52M

Note Timeline Scale: Short Term 1 - 3 years, Medium Term 4 - 7 years and Long Term 8 - 10 years

7.4.7 Indoor Aquatics Facility Planning

The Aquatics Strategy identifies the need for access to an indoor all year-round aquatics facility to support the needs of Hepburn Shire residents.

Further detailed planning work including feasibility, business case and funding strategy is required to fully understand Council's ability to fund, develop and operate an indoor aquatics facility.

The scope of the detailed investigation should include exploring Aquatics Provision Options, Facility Benchmarking of similar size aquatics facilities within the rural and regional areas, Facility Components, Concept Plan, Capital Cost estimate, Financial Operating Model, Site Assessment, Funding Strategy (Council and External).

The evidence that supports the need is:

- **Hepburn population demographics** - the younger and older demographic profile of the Shire requires access to indoor aquatics facilities to support the key areas of learn to swim programs, therapy, aquatics programs and recreational swimming. The travel and climate conditions make

it difficult for some residents to access aquatics services in neighbouring municipalities i.e., Ballarat and Macedon Ranges.

- **Identified Community Need** – extensive feedback from the community engagement process identified a strong need and desire for access to a year-round aquatics facility for learn to swim, therapy, aquatics programs and recreational swimming.
- **Current facilities barriers to participation** – evidence that the existing Hepburn aquatics facilities are underutilised due to ageing infrastructure, cold water temperatures, poor accessibility and facilities are not meeting identified community **needs**.

Action Plan

Table 21: Strategic Direction Recommendations

Proposed Recommendation	Proposed Timing	Indicative Cost Range
That Council accept the identified community need for access to a year-round indoor aquatics facility to support the needs of the Hepburn Shire residents.	Short	N/A
That funding be provided in the Council budget for further detailed investigation and the development of a feasibility study/business case that will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquatics provision options • Preferred location • Facility components and concept plan • Capital cost estimate • Financial operating model • Funding Strategy 	Short	\$40,000 - \$80,000
Based on the outcome of the feasibility study and business case develop an advocacy plan to seek internal and external funding (state and federal governments) including broader partnership opportunities to support the development of an indoor aquatics centre.	Medium/Long	\$30,000 - 40,000 (Funding and Advocacy Strategy)
Total		\$70,000 - \$120,000

Note Timeline Scale: Short Term 1 - 3 years, Medium Term 4 - 7 years and Long Term 8 - 10 years

7.4.8 Strategic Recommendations Indicative Cost Summary

The table below provides a high-level summary of the total indicative cost range estimates for the Strategic Recommendations Actions outlined on the previous pages.

Table 22: Strategic Recommendations Cost Indicative Range Summary

Strategic Recommendation	Indicative Cost Range
7.4.1 Facility Upgrades - Compliance and OH&S Works	\$415,000 - \$480,000 *
7.4.2 Management and Operation	\$20,000 - \$30,000 *
7.4.3 Facility Programming and Activation	\$10,000 - \$20,000 *
7.4.4 Asset Management Plan	\$30,000 - \$40,000 *
7.4.5 Outdoor Pool Upgrades	\$3,320,000 - \$4,730,000 *
7.4.6 Waterplay Upgrades	\$2,000,000 - \$2,520,000 *
7.4.7 Indoor Aquatics Facility Planning	\$120,000 - \$160,000 *
Total Indicative Cost Range	\$5,915,000 - \$7,980,000 *

*Note: Indicative costs only – estimates are likely change over time subject to timing of delivery, cost escalation, CPI and final scope of works for each project. The figures exclude contingencies and project management fees.

Funding the implementation of the Strategic Directions Recommendations and Actions would be subject to achieving funding as part of future Council budgeting processes and seeking external partner funding opportunities where applicable.

The further work undertaken as part of Indoor Aquatics Facility Planning mentioned in the above table will identify the capital and operating costs associated with an Indoor Aquatics Facility. This will need to be further considered by Council at the appropriate time.

8. Warranties and Disclaimers

The information contained in this report is provided in good faith. While Otium Planning Group has applied their own experience to the task, they have relied upon information supplied to them by other persons and organisations.

We have not conducted an audit of the information provided by others but have accepted it in good faith. Some of the information may have been provided 'commercial in confidence' and as such these venues or sources of information are not specifically identified. Readers should be aware that the preparation of this report may have necessitated projections of the future that are inherently uncertain and that our opinion is based on the underlying representations, assumptions and projections detailed in this report.

There will be differences between projected and actual results because events and circumstances frequently do not occur as expected and those differences may be material. We do not express an opinion as to whether actual results will approximate projected results, nor can we confirm, underwrite or guarantee the achievability of the projections as it is not possible to substantiate assumptions which are based on future events.

Accordingly, neither Otium Planning Group, nor any member or employee of Otium Planning Group, undertakes responsibility arising in any way whatsoever to any persons other than client in respect of this report, for any errors or omissions herein, arising through negligence or otherwise however caused.

Appendix 1: Community Survey Results





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 www.facebook.com/hepburncouncil

DAYLESFORD

Cnr. Duke & Albert Streets,
Daylesford
8:30am – 5:00pm

CRESWICK

Creswick Hub
68 Albert Street, Creswick
8:30am – 5:00pm

TRENTHAM

13 Albert Street, Trentham
Mon, Wed, Fri 10am-5pm
Sat 10am-1pm

CLUNES

The Warehouse – Clunes
36 Fraser Street, Clunes
Mon & Thurs 10am – 6pm
Wed & Fri 10am – 4pm

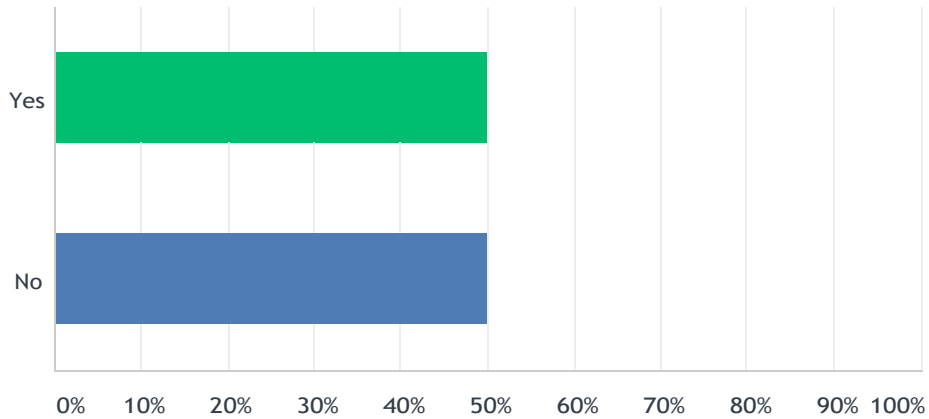
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Managing Director
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Q1 Have you used or visited an aquatics facility within the Hepburn Shire in the last 12 months?

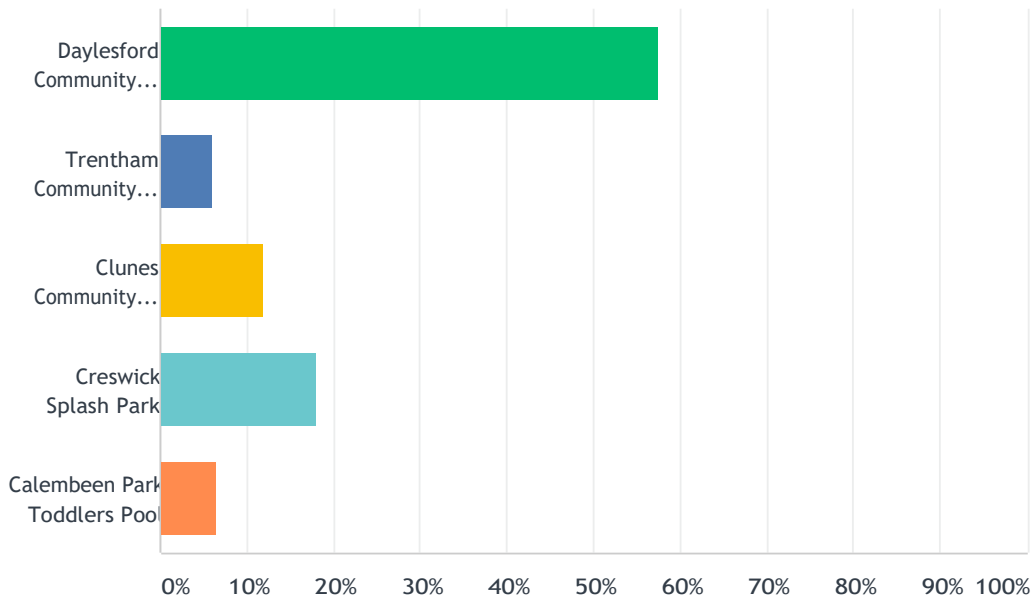
Answered: 795 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	50.06% 398
No	49.94% 397
TOTAL	795

Q2 Which Hepburn aquatic facilities do you use most in the last 12 months?

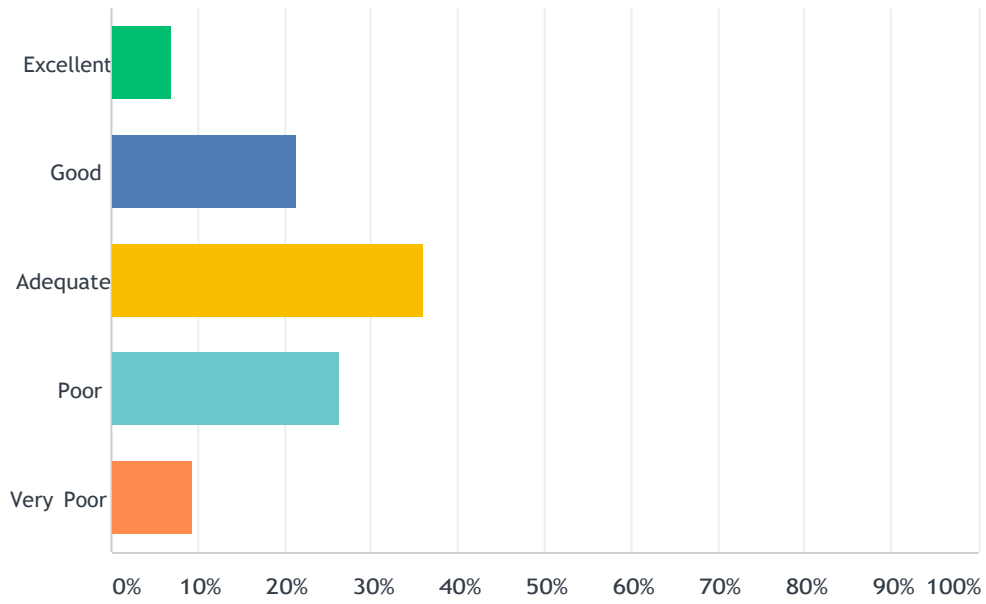
Answered: 384 Skipped: 411



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Daylesford Community Outdoor Swimming Pool	57.55% 221
Trentham Community Outdoor Swimming Pool	5.99% 23
Clunes Community Outdoor Swimming Pool	11.98% 46
Creswick Splash Park	17.97% 69
Calembeen Park Toddlers Pool	6.51% 25
TOTAL	384

Q3 Overall, how would you rate the facilities?

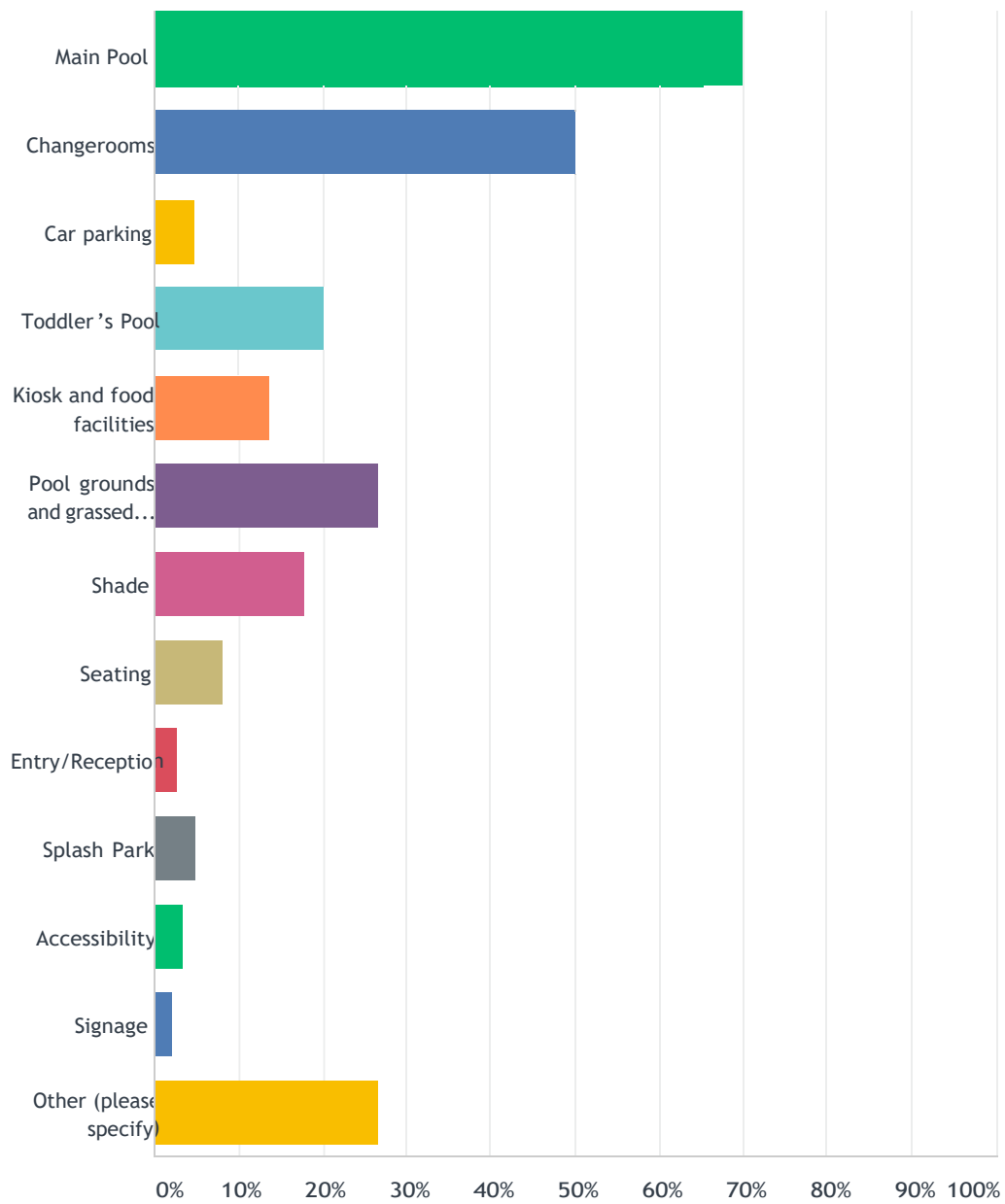
Answered: 394 Skipped: 401



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Excellent	6.85% 27
Good	21.32% 84
Adequate	36.04% 142
Poor	26.40% 104
Very Poor	9.39% 37
TOTAL	394

Q4 Please indicate which aspects of the aquatic facilities you are not happy with.

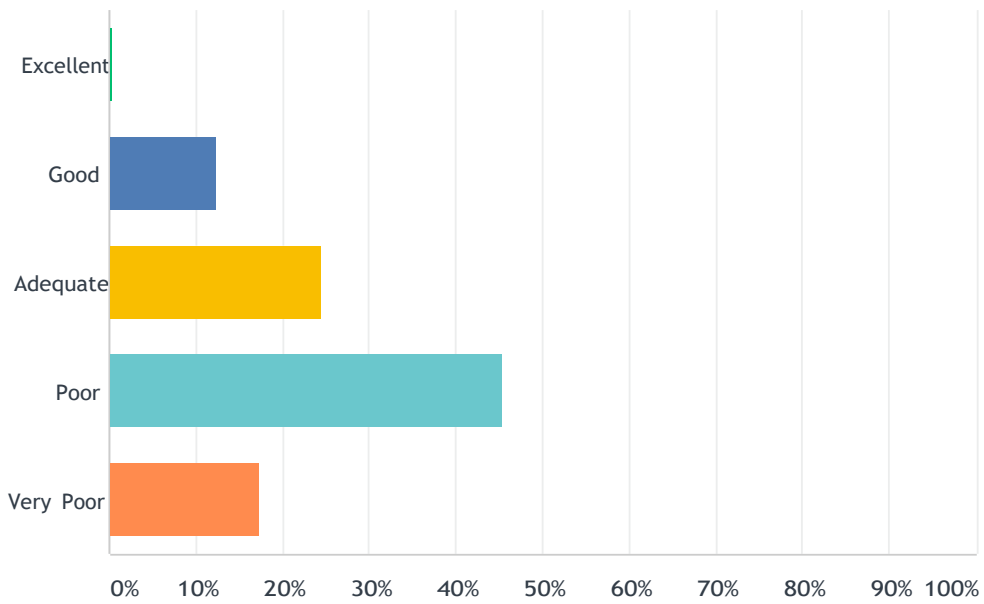
Answered: 147 Skipped: 648



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Main Pool	65.31%	96
Changerooms	50.34%	74
Car parking	4.76%	7
Toddler's Pool	21.09%	31
Kiosk and food facilities	13.61%	20
Pool grounds and grassed areas	26.53%	39
Shade	17.69%	26
Seating	8.16%	12
Entry/Reception	2.72%	4
Splash Park	4.76%	7
Accessibility	3.40%	5
Signage	2.04%	3
Other (please specify)	26.53%	39
Total Respondents: 147		

Q5 Overall, how would you rate Hepburn Shire’s aquatic programs and services?

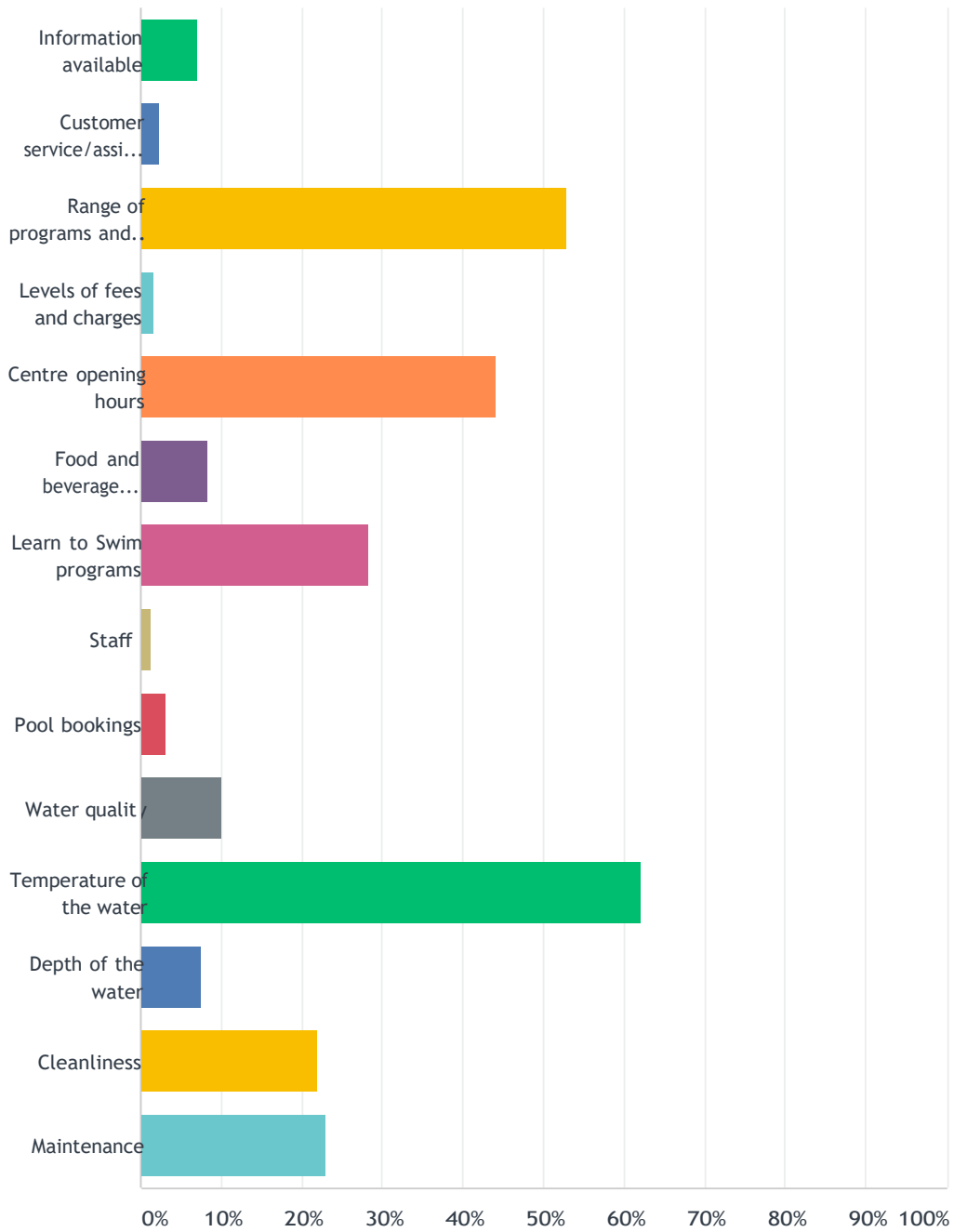
Answered: 397 Skipped: 398



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Excellent	0.50%	2
Good	12.34%	49
Adequate	24.43%	97
Poor	45.34%	180
Very Poor	17.38%	69
TOTAL		397

Q6 Please indicate the program and services you are not happy with?

Answered: 251 Skipped: 544

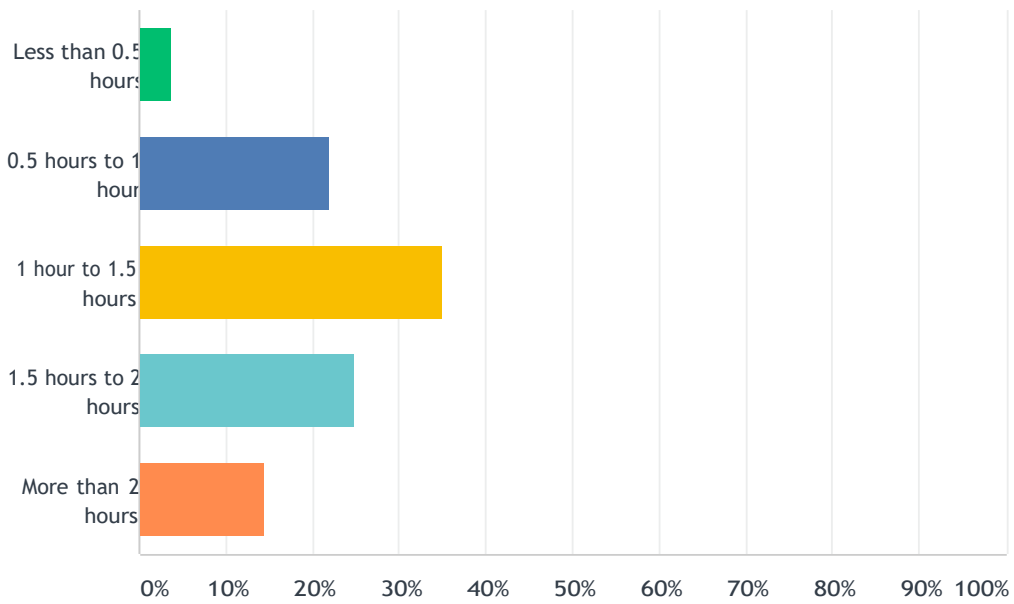


Aquatics Strategy – Community Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	ATTACHMENT 11.2.2 RESPONSES	
Information available	7.17%	18
Customer service/assistance	2.39%	6
Range of programs and services offered	52.99%	133
Levels of fees and charges	1.59%	4
Centre opening hours	44.22%	111
Food and beverage services	8.37%	21
Learn to Swim programs	28.29%	71
Staff	1.20%	3
Pool bookings	3.19%	8
Water quality	9.56%	24
Temperature of the water	62.15%	156
Depth of the water	7.57%	19
Cleanliness	21.91%	55
Maintenance	23.11%	58
Total Respondents: 251		

Q7 How much time do you spend at the aquatic facilities areas during a normal visit?

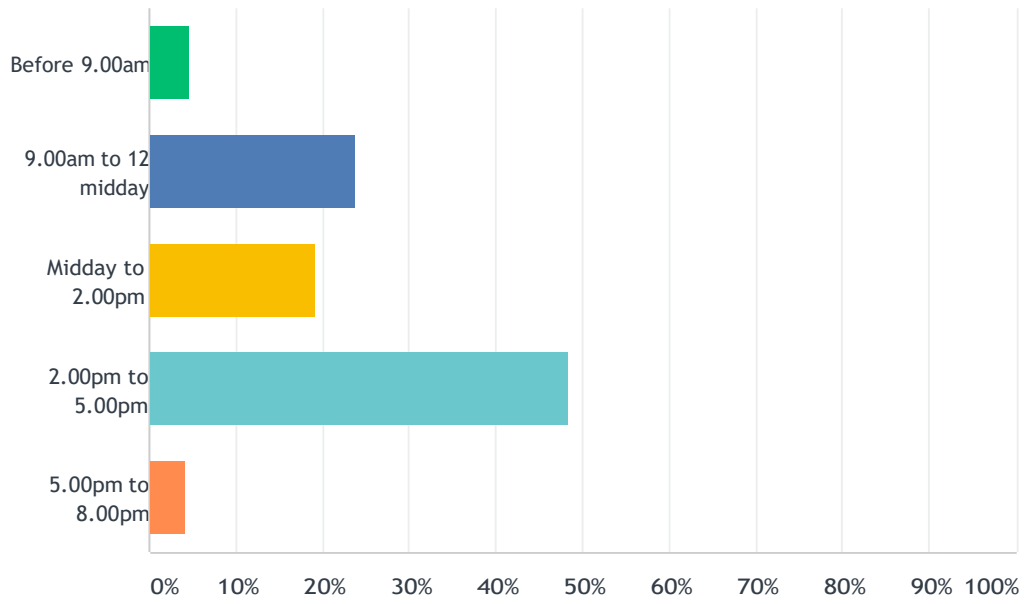
Answered: 393 Skipped: 402



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Less than 0.5 hours	3.82%	15
0.5 hours to 1 hour	21.88%	86
1 hour to 1.5 hours	34.86%	137
1.5 hours to 2 hours	24.94%	98
More than 2 hours	14.50%	57
TOTAL		393

Q8 When do you most commonly arrive at the aquatic facilities?

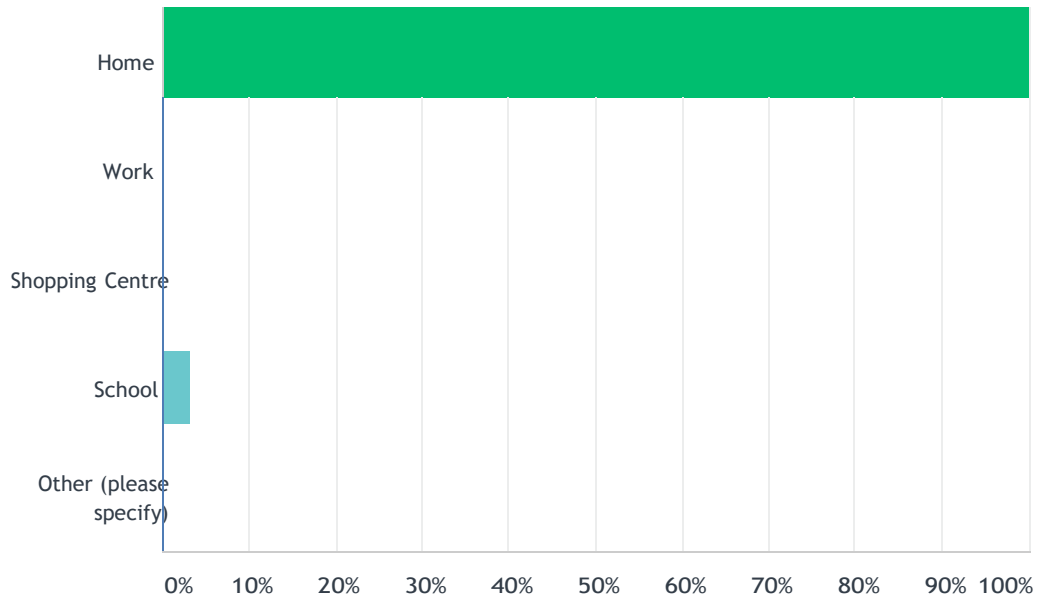
Answered: 391 Skipped: 404



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Before 9.00am	4.60% 18
9.00am to 12 midday	23.79% 93
Midday to 2.00pm	19.18% 75
2.00pm to 5.00pm	48.34% 189
5.00pm to 8.00pm	4.09% 16
TOTAL	391

Q9 Where do you normally travel from when you visit the aquatic facilities?

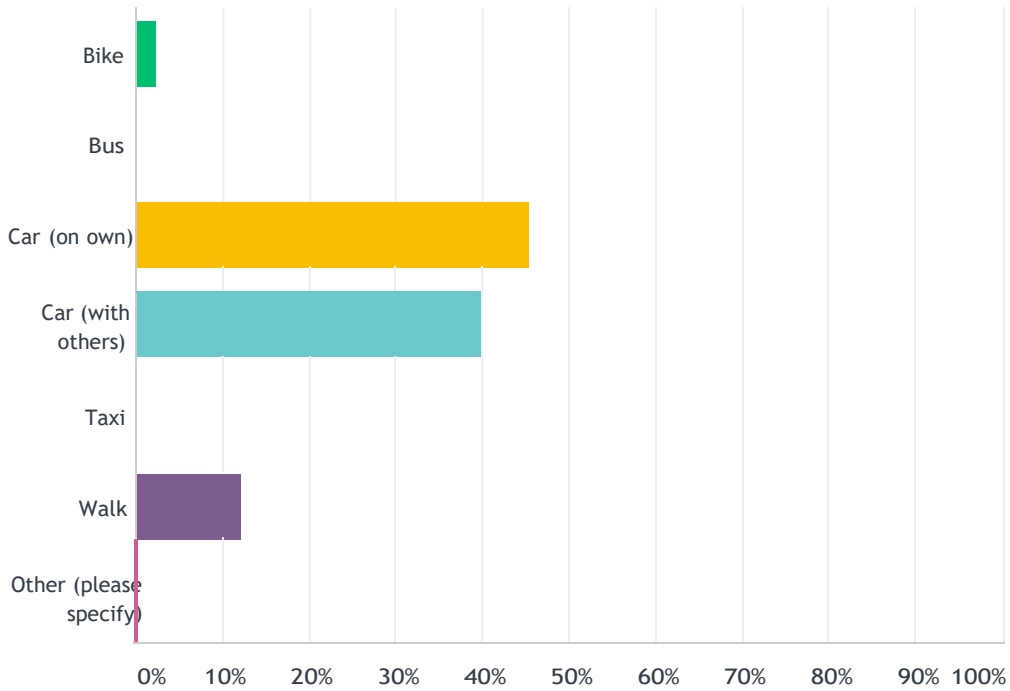
Answered: 395 Skipped: 400



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Home	93.92%	371
Work	1.77%	7
Shopping Centre	0.00%	0
School	3.04%	12
Other (please specify)	1.27%	5
TOTAL		395

Q10 How do you normally travel to the aquatic facilities?

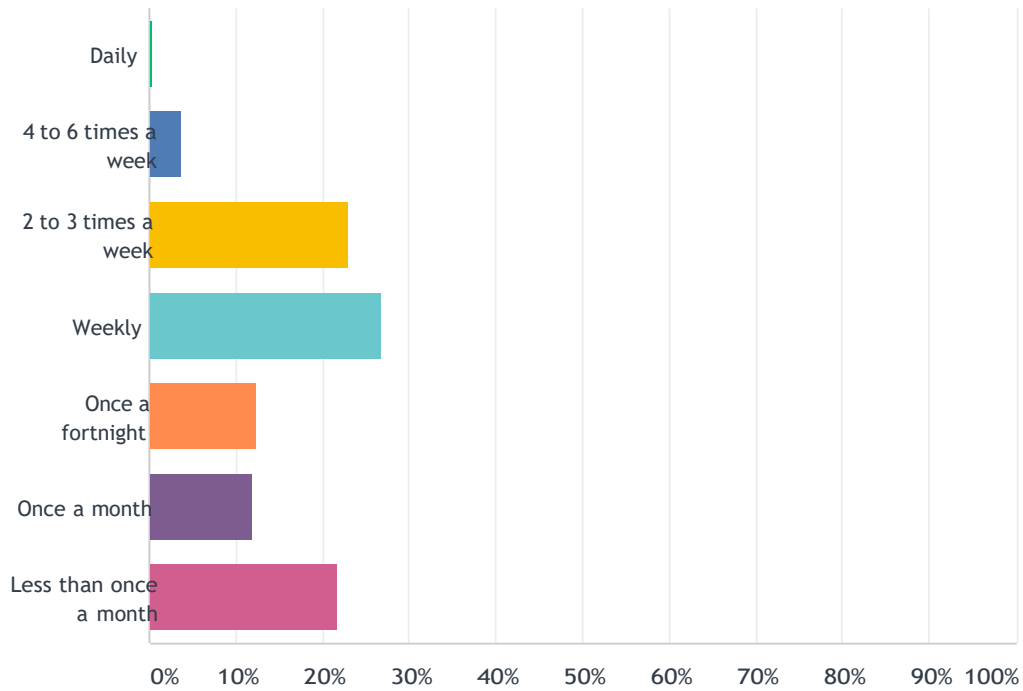
Answered: 395 Skipped: 400



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Bike	2.28%	9
Bus	0.00%	0
Car (on own)	45.32%	179
Car (with others)	39.49%	156
Taxi	0.25%	1
Walk	12.15%	48
Other (please specify)	0.51%	2
TOTAL		395

Q11 How often, on average, do you visit the aquatic facilities?

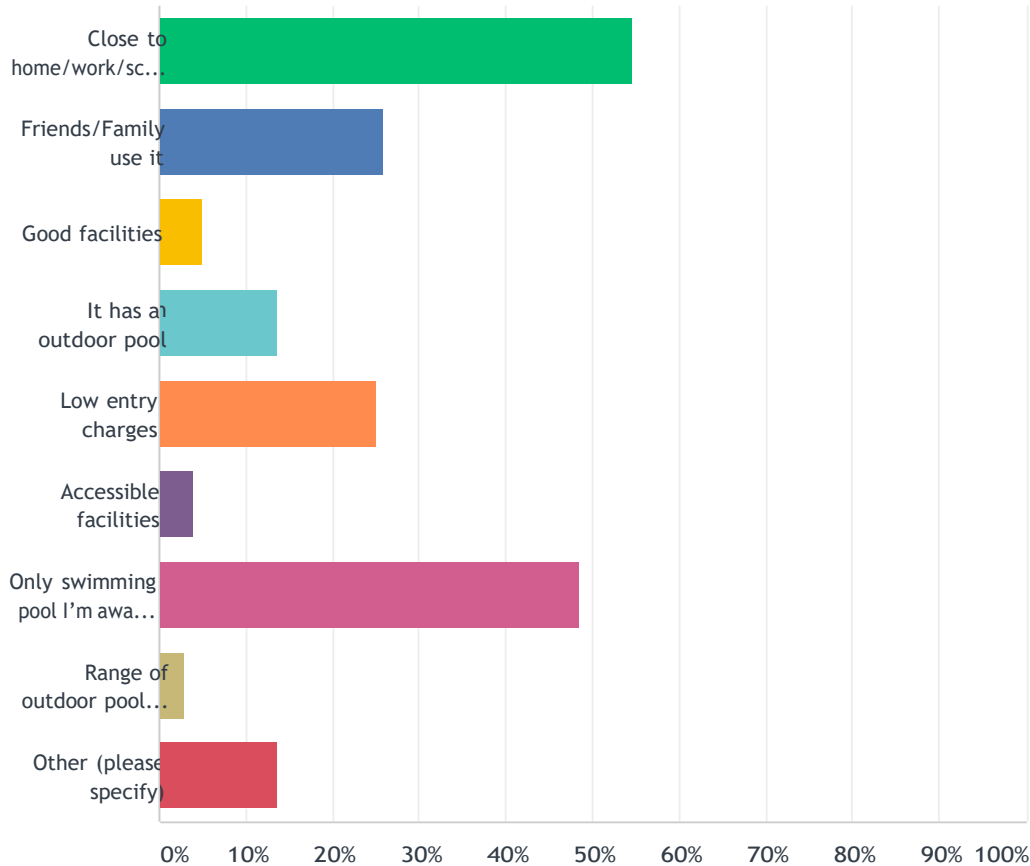
Answered: 392 Skipped: 403



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily	0.51%	2
4 to 6 times a week	3.83%	15
2 to 3 times a week	22.96%	90
Weekly	26.79%	105
Once a fortnight	12.24%	48
Once a month	11.99%	47
Less than once a month	21.68%	85
TOTAL		392

**Q12 Thinking about the Hepburn aquatic facilities you have used in the last 12 months, what are the main reasons you use these facilities?
(Please select up to 3 responses)**

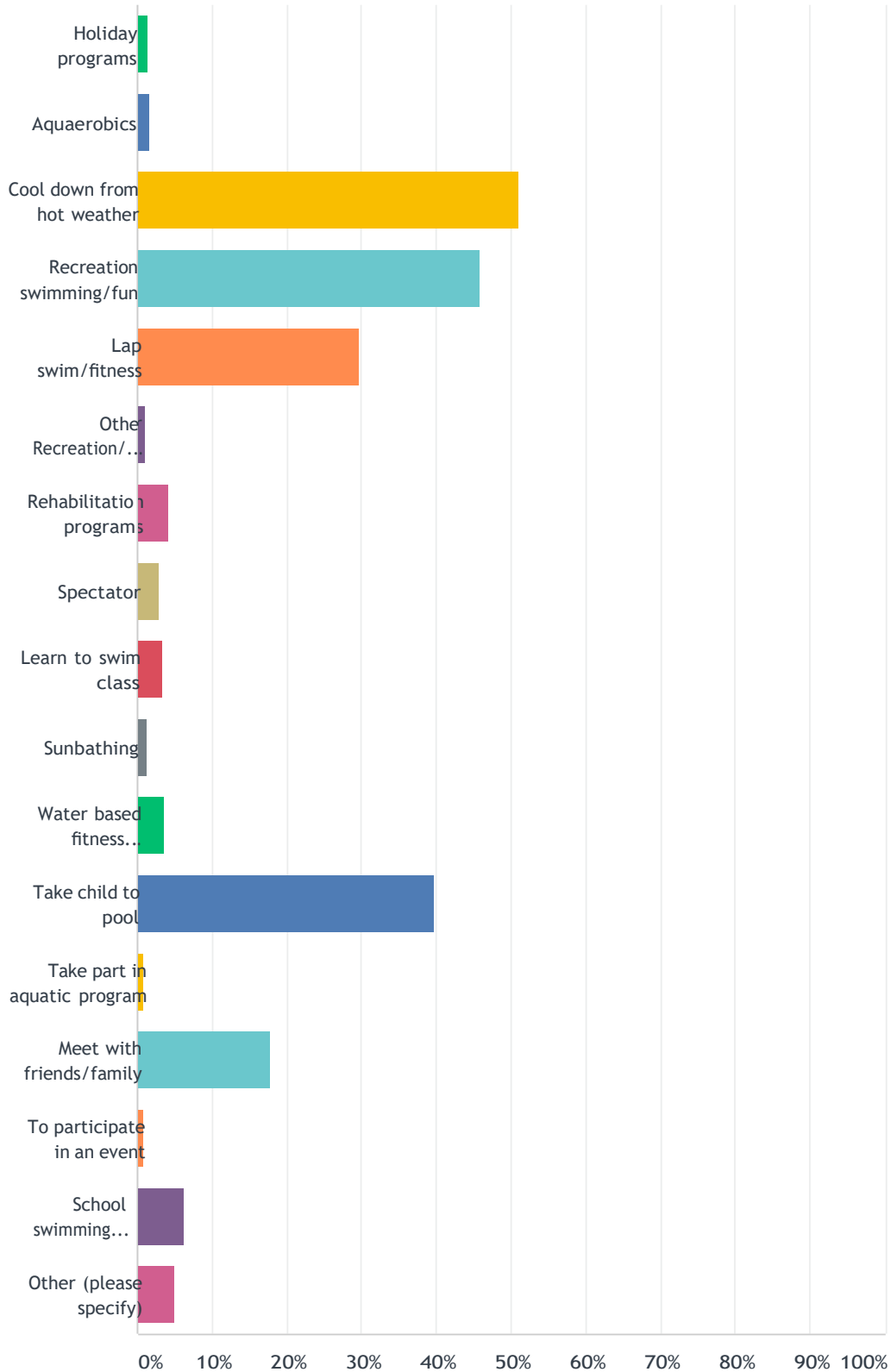
Answered: 398 Skipped: 397



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Close to home/work/school/easy to get to	54.52%	217
Friends/Family use it	25.88%	103
Good facilities	5.03%	20
It has an outdoor pool	14.07%	56
Low entry charges	25.13%	100
Accessible facilities	4.02%	16
Only swimming pool I'm aware of in the area	48.49%	193
Range of outdoor pools available	3.02%	12
Other (please specify)	13.32%	53
Total Respondents: 398		

**Q13 Thinking about the Hepburn aquatic facilities that you have used in the last 12 months, what are the main activities you usually do there?
(Please select up to 3 responses)**

Answered: 398 Skipped: 397



Aquatics Strategy – Community Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	ATTACHMENT 11.2.2 RESPONSES	
Holiday programs	1.51%	6
Aquaerobics	1.76%	7
Cool down from hot weather	51.01%	203
Recreation swimming/fun	45.73%	182
Lap swim/fitness	29.65%	118
Other Recreation/ Cultural activities	1.01%	4
Rehabilitation programs	4.27%	17
Spectator	3.02%	12
Learn to swim class	3.27%	13
Sunbathing	1.26%	5
Water based fitness activities	3.52%	14
Take child to pool	39.70%	158
Take part in aquatic program	0.75%	3
Meet with friends/family	17.84%	71
To participate in an event	0.75%	3
School swimming carnivals	6.28%	25
Other (please specify)	5.03%	20
Total Respondents: 398		

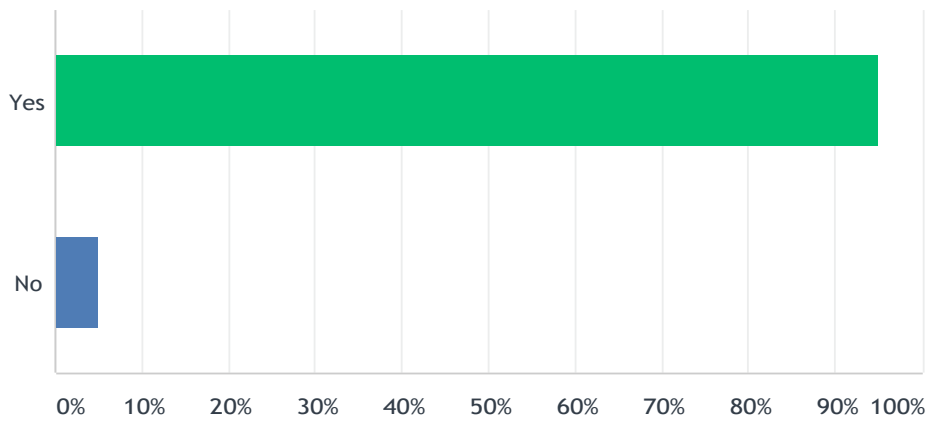
Q14 If you have not used an aquatic facility in the past 12 months, can you tell us why? (Please select up to 3 responses)

Answered: 398 Skipped: 397

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Activity not available	16.33%	65
Can't swim	1.01%	4
Cultural beliefs restrict use	0.00%	0
Don't know what is available	1.01%	4
Don't like swimming	2.51%	10
Family commitments	0.75%	3
Have and use own pool	1.01%	4
Health problems	3.77%	15
Lack of information	2.51%	10
Language difficulties	0.00%	0
No childcare available	0.25%	1
Poor disabled access	2.76%	11
No suitable facilities close by	30.40%	121
No indoor pools close by	55.78%	222
Not interested	4.02%	16
Only outdoor pools available	41.46%	165
Opening times don't suit	9.80%	39
Too busy	3.27%	13
Transport problems	1.01%	4
Unhygienic/public pools not clean	6.03%	24
Use neighbours/friends pool	0.00%	0
Work commitments	2.26%	9
Use lakes/ natural water bodies	8.54%	34
Other (please specify)	20.10%	80
Total Respondents: 398		

Q15 Would you like to make use of or greater use of aquatic facilities in the future?

Answered: 795 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	94.97%	755
No	5.03%	40
TOTAL		795

Q16 What facilities or features would encourage you to make greater use of Hepburn Shire’s aquatic facilities in the future? (Select up to 3 responses)

Answered: 755 Skipped: 40

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Cleaner more hygienic facilities	11.66%	88
Improved children’s pools/water play	10.33%	78
Health related programs (nutritionist etc.)	3.05%	23
Indoor water play/splash zone	11.52%	87
Improved kiosk and beverage offer	3.44%	26
Indoor warm water/hydrotherapy/program pool	57.75%	436
Indoor spa and saunas	20.79%	157
Waterslides/adventure rides	5.83%	44
Indoor Recreation/Leisure pools	45.17%	341
Longer opening hours	15.23%	115
Extend the swimming season	17.75%	134
Larger change rooms	0.79%	6
More family change facilities	1.72%	13
Learn to swim pool space	3.18%	24
More retail products for sale	0.00%	0
Learn to Swim Programs	10.86%	82
Health and fitness classes	16.03%	121
More car parking close to centre	0.79%	6
Variety of activities/programs	1.99%	15
Outdoor heated pools	21.85%	165
Outdoor grassed/shaded areas	2.65%	20
Training/meeting rooms	0.00%	0
Transport service to the Centre	0.53%	4
Other (please specify)	9.27%	70
Total Respondents: 755		

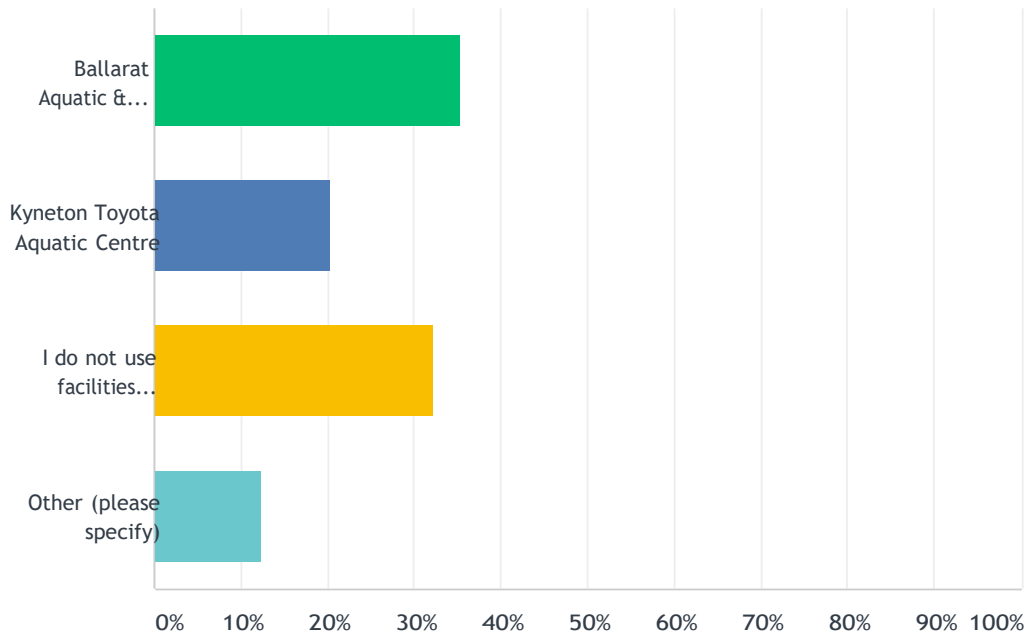
Q17 Can you tell us why you do not wish to make greater use of Hepburn Shire's aquatic facilities in the future? (Tick up to 3 responses)

Answered: 40 Skipped: 755

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Activity not available	2.50%	1
Cannot swim	2.50%	1
Cannot afford it	2.50%	1
Cultural beliefs restrict use	0.00%	0
Don't know what is available	2.50%	1
Don't like swimming	20.00%	8
Family commitments	0.00%	0
Use lakes/ natural water bodies	12.50%	5
Have and use own pool	5.00%	2
Health problems	2.50%	1
Lack of information	0.00%	0
Language difficulties	0.00%	0
No childcare available	0.00%	0
Poor disabled access	0.00%	0
No suitable facilities close by	12.50%	5
No indoor pools close by	15.00%	6
Not interested	27.50%	11
Not value for money	0.00%	0
Only outdoor pools available	7.50%	3
Opening times don't suit	2.50%	1
Too busy	12.50%	5
Transport problems	0.00%	0
Unhygienic/public pools not clean	5.00%	2
Use neighbours/friends pool	0.00%	0
Work commitments	7.50%	3
Other (please specify)	22.50%	9
Total Respondents: 40		

Q18 Do you use other aquatic facilities outside of the Hepburn Shire?

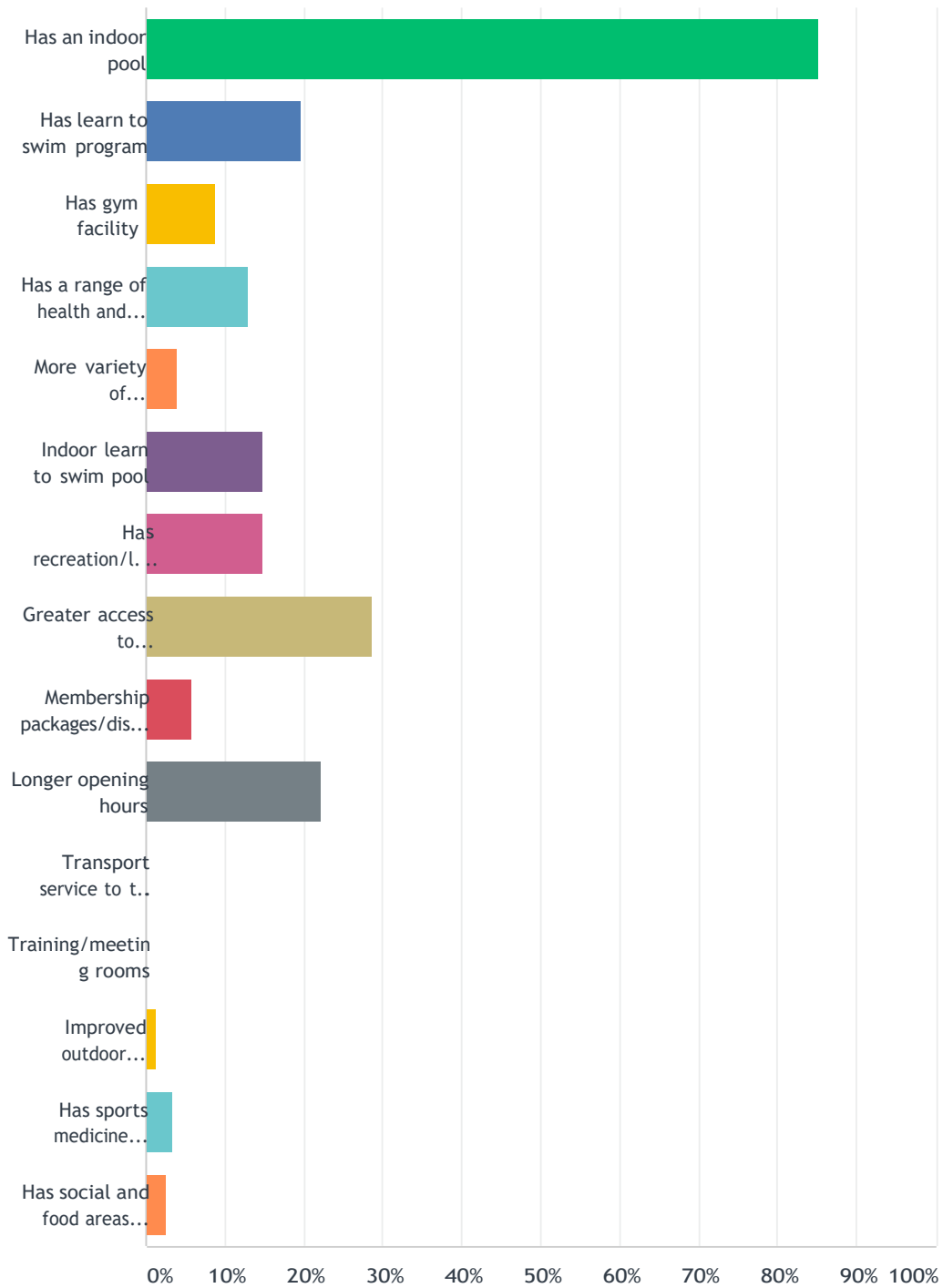
Answered: 791 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Ballarat Aquatic & Lifestyle Centre	35.27%	279
Kyneton Toyota Aquatic Centre	20.23%	160
I do not use facilities outside the Hepburn Shire	32.24%	255
Other (please specify)	12.26%	97
TOTAL		791

Q19 Why do you use these facilities?

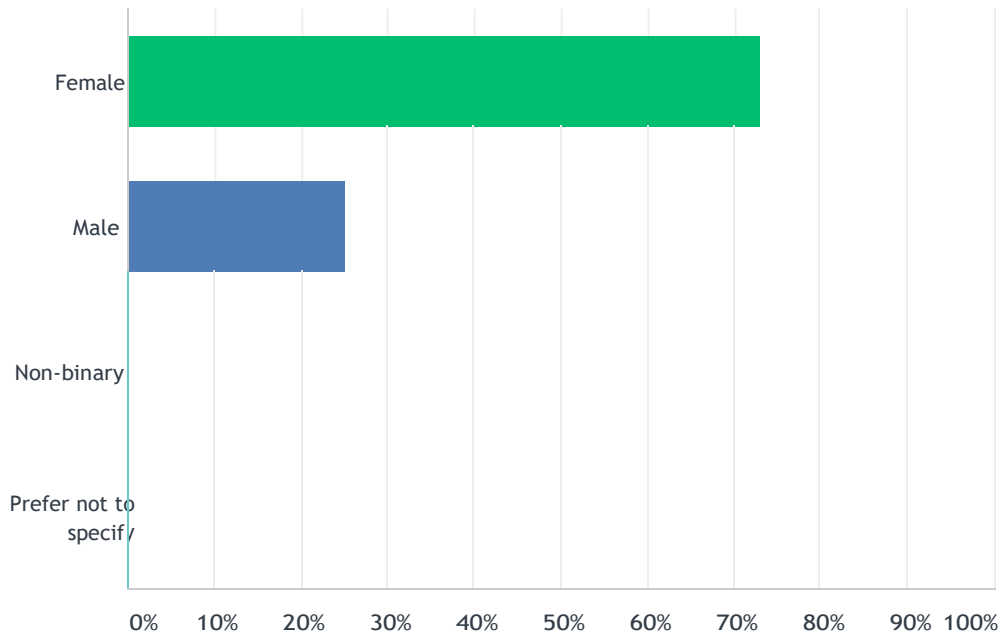
Answered: 540 Skipped: 255



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Has an indoor pool	85.19%	460
Has learn to swim program	19.63%	106
Has gym facility	8.70%	47
Has a range of health and fitness classes	12.96%	70
More variety of activities/programs	3.89%	21
Indoor learn to swim pool	14.81%	80
Has recreation/leisure pools	14.81%	80
Greater access to programs/warm water pool	28.70%	155
Membership packages/discount offers	5.93%	32
Longer opening hours	22.22%	120
Transport service to the Centre	0.19%	1
Training/meeting rooms	0.00%	0
Improved outdoor grassed/shaded areas	1.30%	7
Has sports medicine programs ie physiotherapist	3.33%	18
Has social and food areas (café)	2.59%	14
Total Respondents: 540		

Q21 Are you

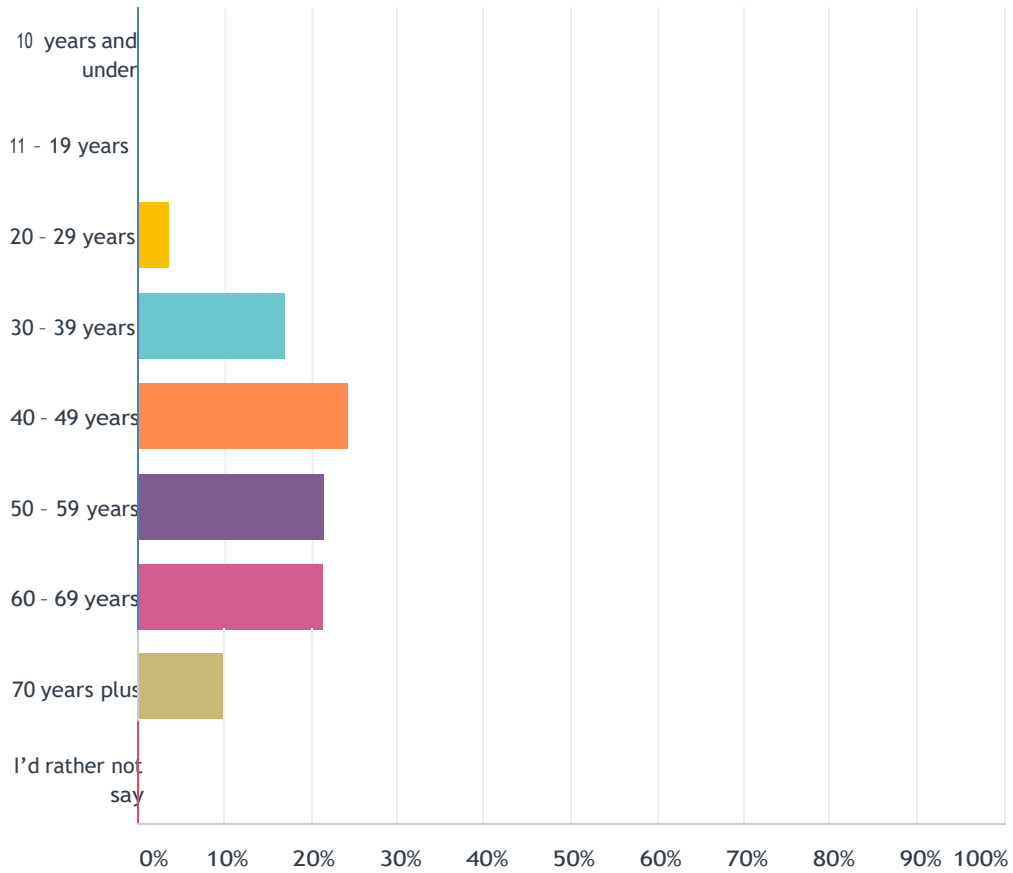
Answered: 795 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Female	72.96%	580
Male	25.16%	200
Non-binary	0.25%	2
Prefer not to specify	1.64%	13
TOTAL		795

Q22 Which age group are you in?

Answered: 794 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
10 years and under	0.00%	0
11 – 19 years	1.39%	11
20 – 29 years	3.53%	28
30 – 39 years	16.88%	134
40 – 49 years	24.31%	193
50 – 59 years	21.54%	171
60 – 69 years	21.41%	170
70 years plus	9.32%	74
I'd rather not say	1.64%	13
TOTAL		794

Q23 Which suburb/township do you live in?

Answered: 762 Skipped: 33

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Allendale	0.66%	5
Bald Hills	0.39%	3
Basalt	0.00%	0
Blampied	0.52%	4
Broomfield	1.31%	10
Bullarook	0.00%	0
Bullarto	0.66%	5
Cabbage Tree	0.13%	1
Campbelltown	0.00%	0
Clunes	3.81%	29
Clydesdale	0.00%	0
Coomoora	3.54%	27
Creswick	20.47%	156
Creswick North	2.36%	18
Daylesford	30.71%	234
Dean	0.00%	0
Denver	0.39%	3
Drummond	0.39%	3
Dry Diggings	0.13%	1
Dunach	0.00%	0
Eganstown	1.57%	12
Elevated Plains	0.39%	3
Fern Hill	0.00%	0
Franklinford	0.26%	2
Glengower	0.00%	0
Glenlyon	2.89%	22
Guildford	0.13%	1
Hepburn	4.99%	38
Hepburn Springs	5.91%	45
Kooroocheang	0.00%	0
Korweinguboora	1.31%	10
Langdons Hill	0.13%	1
Lawrence	0.00%	0

Aquatics Strategy – Community Survey

Leonards Hill	0.39%	ATTACHMENT 11.2.2	3
Little Hampton	0.26%		2
Lyonville	0.13%		1
Mollonghip	0.39%		3
Mount Franklin	1.05%		8
Mount Prospect	0.00%		0
Musk	1.44%		11
Musk Vale	2.23%		17
Newbury	0.00%		0
Newlyn	0.66%		5
Newlyn North	1.57%		12
North Blackwood	0.13%		1
Porcupine Ridge	0.52%		4
Rocklyn	0.13%		1
Sailors Falls	0.26%		2
Sailors Hill	0.52%		4
Sandon	0.00%		0
Shepherds Flat	0.00%		0
Smeaton	1.05%		8
Smokeytown	0.00%		0
Spring Hill	0.00%		0
Springmount	0.26%		2
Stony Creek	0.00%		0
Strangways	0.13%		1
Sulky	0.13%		1
Tarilta	0.00%		0
Trentham	3.81%		29
Trentham East	0.26%		2
Ullina	0.00%		0
Werona	0.00%		0
Wheatsheaf	1.31%		10
Yandoit	0.26%		2

Total	795
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Hepburn Shire Council Aquatics Strategy

DRAFT SUMMARY REPORT

February 2022

Hepburn
SHIRE COUNCIL

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The Hepburn Shire Council acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government for their funding contribution to this project.

Executive Summary

The development of the Hepburn Shire Council Aquatics Strategy commenced in April 2021 and aims to provide a 10-year priority plan to guide the future strategic direction, infrastructure development priorities, asset management and maximise participation and programming opportunities to contribute to the health, wellbeing and liveability of the communities of Hepburn Shire.

Together with the Project Consultants, Otium Planning Group, Officers have undertaken a suite of planning and community and stakeholder engagement to inform the development of the Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy.

Several key stakeholders were engaged to guide the development of the Aquatics Strategy. They include Sport and Recreation Victoria, Daylesford Indoor Aquatic Centre (DIAC) Advocacy Group, Creswick and District Aquatic Centre Advocacy Group and Central Highlands Rural Health.

The Aquatics Strategy includes:

- Strategic Review and Background Research
- Demographic Review
- Current Facilities Operational Review
- Market Research and Industry Trends
- Community Engagement Findings
- Vision
- Objectives
- Facility Hierarchy and Provision
- Strategic Recommendations and Actions.

ATTACHMENT 11.2.3

The Aquatics Strategy is consistent with the Hepburn Shire Council Plan 2021-2025 key focus area: A healthy, supported and empowered community and Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025. This includes optimising the use of public spaces to increase participation and community connections which is supported by the provision of leisure and recreation facilities such as outdoor community pools, that encourage healthy and active lifestyles to improve the health and wellbeing of the community.

The Aquatics Strategy provides market research, current operating information and broad community engagement. It provides a guide on the future strategic direction, infrastructure development priorities, asset renewal and upgrades, operational improvement and activation of aquatics provision throughout the shire.

There are a number of Strategic Direction Recommendations and Actions arising from the Aquatics Strategy including consideration of priority projects including outdoor aquatics facility upgrades assessment and outdoor pool and waterplay upgrades. These Strategic Recommendations and Actions will require further detailed planning work including feasibility, business case and funding strategy to fully understand Council's ability to fund the facility upgrades identified.

The Aquatics Strategy supports the identified need for access to an all-year-round indoor aquatics facility to support the needs of Hepburn Shire residents. The evidence that supports the need includes:

- Hepburn population demographics - the younger and older demographic profile of the Shire requires access to indoor aquatics facilities to support the key areas of learn to swim programs, therapy, aquatics programs and recreational swimming. The travel and climate conditions make it difficult for some residents to access

aquatics services in neighbouring municipalities i.e. Ballarat and Macedon Ranges.

- Identified Community Need – extensive feedback from the community engagement process identified a strong need and desire for access to a year-round aquatics facility for learn to swim programs, therapy, aquatics programs and recreational swimming.
- Current facilities barriers to participation - evidence that the existing Hepburn aquatics facilities are underutilised due to aging infrastructure, cold water temperatures, poor accessibility and facilities are not meeting identified community needs.

Further detailed planning work including feasibility, business case and funding strategy is required to fully understand Council's ability to fund, develop and operate an indoor aquatics facility.

As outlined in Recommended Strategic Direction 7.4.7 in the Aquatics Strategy further detailed investigation and the development of a feasibility study/business case is needed. The further work that needs to be undertaken includes aquatics provision options, preferred location, facility components and concept plan, capital cost estimate, financial operating model and funding strategy.

The most significant challenge for Council in determining a future indoor aquatics facility is the affordability to build and operate such a facility. This includes the ability to attract sufficient capital funding for a new facility and the ability to sustain the ongoing operational cost.



Introduction

The Hepburn Shire Council Aquatics Strategy will guide the future strategic direction, infrastructure development priorities, asset management, operational development, and activation of aquatics provision throughout the Shire over the next 10 years.

Hepburn Shire has five public aquatics facilities:

- Daylesford Outdoor Pool
- Clunes Outdoor Pool
- Trentham Outdoor Pool
- Creswick Splash Park
- Calembreen Park Toddlers Pool.

The four outdoor pools are reported to be nearing their end of life and not fit for purpose for many residents in the community. There is a growing demand and expectation from the community for access to year-round warm water facilities that cater for learn to swim programs, therapy, aquatics programs and recreational swimming. It is because of these reasons, that a long-term strategic plan for aquatics facilities provision is an important project for the Hepburn Shire Council to guide its investment strategy for the next 10-20 years.



WHY DO WE NEED AN *Aquatics Strategy?*

It is acknowledged that the current aquatics facility provision does not cater well for many ageing and younger residents and that there has been significant community advocacy for further investment in fit for purpose aquatics facilities within the Hepburn Shire over the past 10 years.

Hepburn Shire has five public aquatics facilities. Four sites are owned and operated by Council, and one is located on Crown land with Council having the role of the Committee of Management.

- Daylesford Outdoor Pool
- Clunes Outdoor Pool
- Trentham Outdoor Pool
- Creswick Splash Park
- Calembeen Park Toddlers Pool

The four outdoor pools are nearing their end of life and are not fit for purpose for many residents in the community. There is a growing demand and expectation from the community for access to year-round warm water facilities that cater for learn to swim programs, therapy, aquatics programs and recreational swimming. Hepburn also has some unique localised characteristics with a cool climate, dispersed towns with significant travel distances and limited access to public transport services. For these reasons a long-term strategic plan for aquatics provision into the future has been commissioned by Council.

There have been other references to aquatics services in previous Council strategies over the last five years including the Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2016-2021 which outlined the following actions:

- Action the outcomes of the Creswick pool consultation undertaken in 2016-17.
- Explore the potential to extend the Daylesford outdoor swimming pool's season through the use of sustainable heating technology.
- Prepare or review master plans for Calembeen Park (Creswick), Clunes Recreation Reserve and Trentham Recreation Reserve.

The Playspace Strategy 2020-2030 outlined some actions in relation to the provision of aquatics and water play features within play spaces. These included:

- That water play/aquatics play is not supported for a local level play space but may or may not be included at a municipal or regional level play space dependant on local need and site context suitability.
- A long-term action to renew the Creswick Skate and Splash Park (inclusive of outdoor fitness).



STRATEGIC LINKS

The diagram below shows the strategic links between Hepburn Shire Council’s key strategic documents, plans and policies. The Aquatics Strategy is a recommendation in the Council Plan 2021-2025.

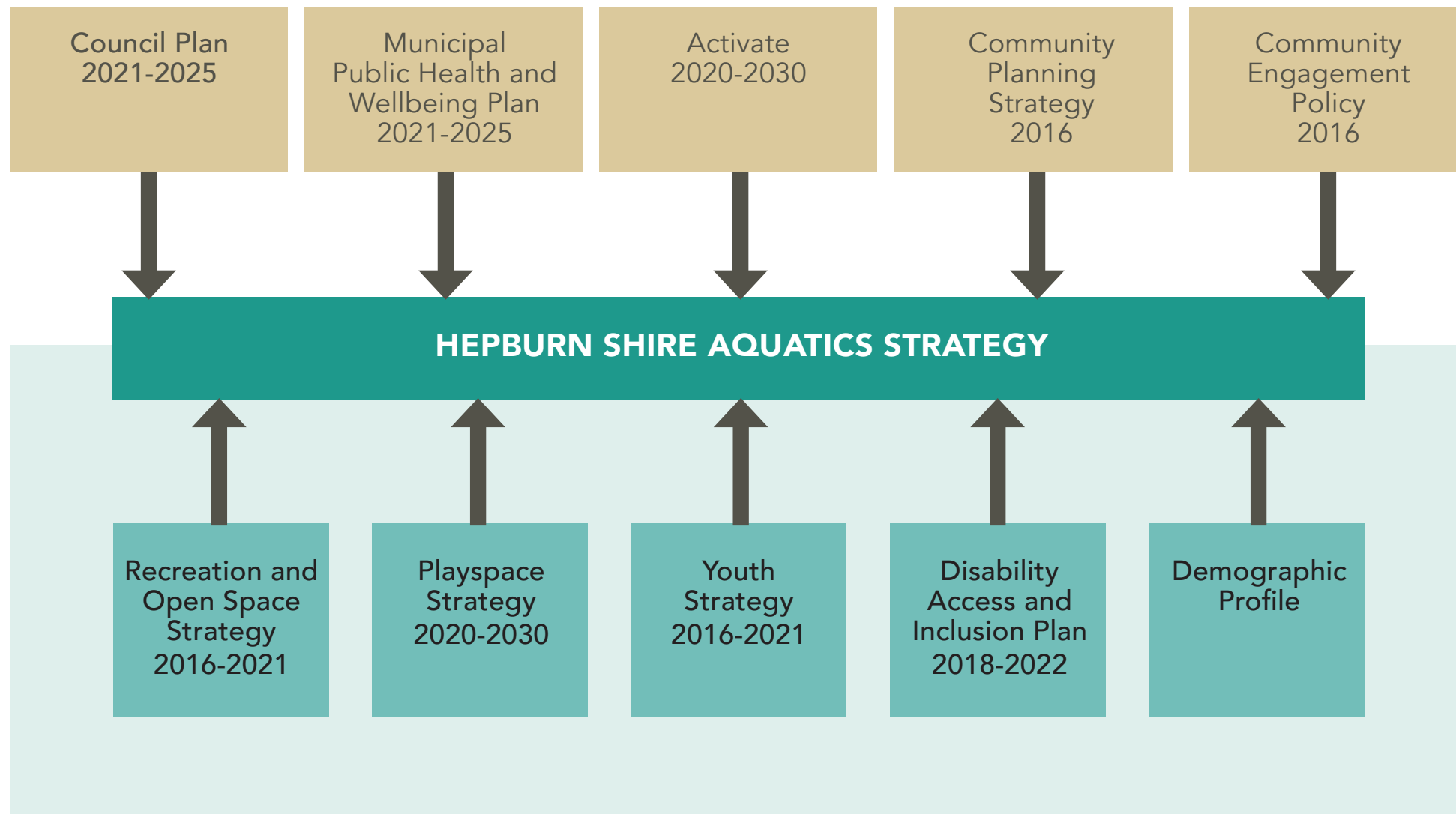


Figure 1: Strategic Links Overview

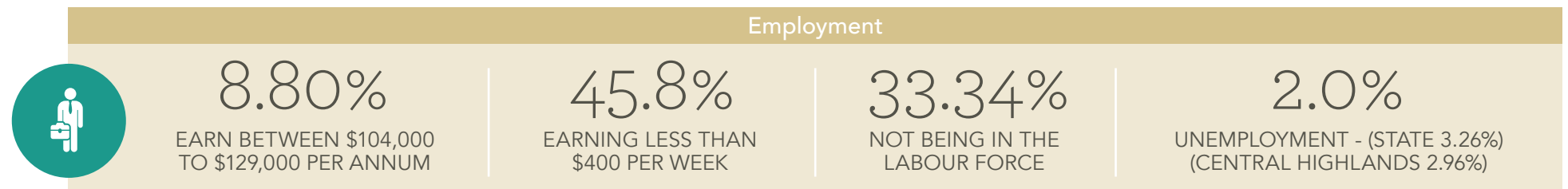
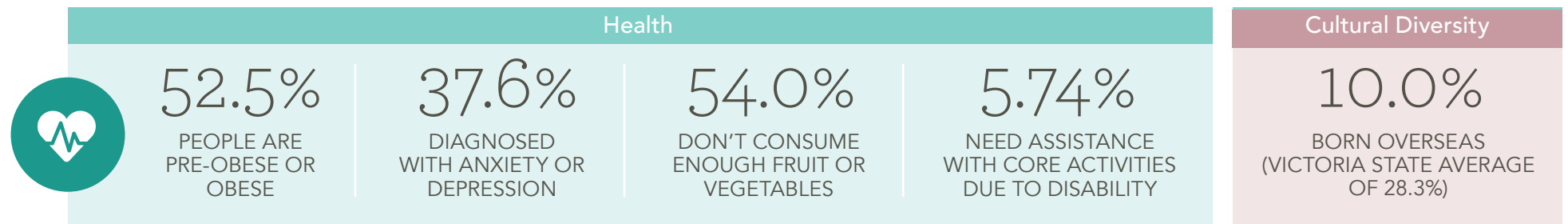
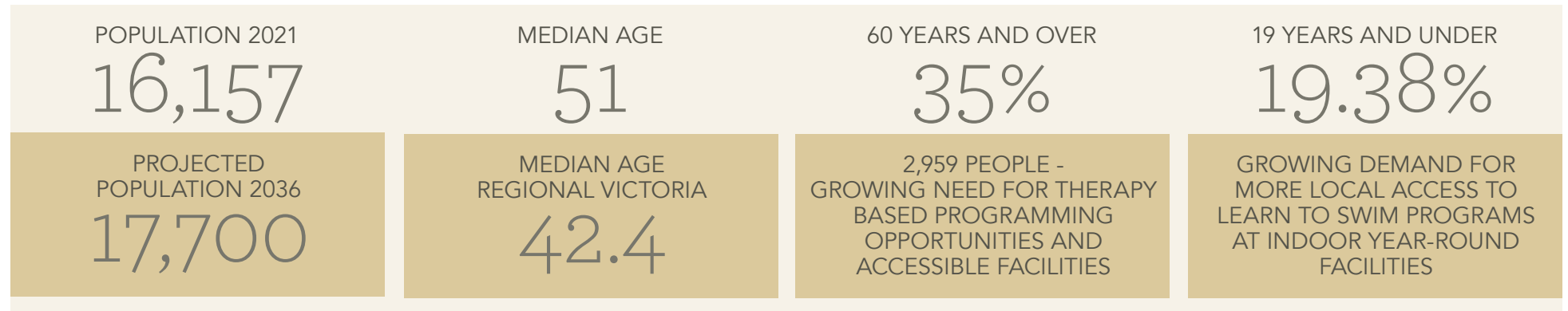
Project Area

Hepburn Shire is renowned for its heritage buildings, parks, reserves and native forests. Located in central Victoria, the Hepburn Shire includes the townships of Clunes, Creswick, Daylesford, Hepburn Springs, Trentham and many other small villages and hamlets. Within easy access to Ballarat, Bendigo and Melbourne it is a popular tourist destination for weekend visitors. The region features the Wombat State Forest, many natural lakes and water bodies and is renowned for the natural springs in Hepburn.

The central map shows the Hepburn Shire boundary in green, covering areas from Clunes in the west to Daylesford and Trentham in the east. Callout boxes with arrows point to specific aquatic facilities: Clunes Outdoor Pool (top left), Creswick Splash Park (middle left), Calembeen Park Toddlers Pool (bottom left), Daylesford Outdoor Pool (top right), and Trentham Outdoor Pool (bottom right). The map also labels various towns and roads within the shire, including Campbelltown, Ullina, Smeaton, Allendale, Hepburn Springs, Daylesford, Sailors Falls, Creswick, Lerderg, and Blackwood.

WHO IS OUR *Community*

Opportunities exist to significantly improve the health and wellbeing of Hepburn Shire residents. Aquatics and leisure facilities and programs play a key role in increasing physical activity levels, with the health, social and wellbeing benefits associated with visitation assisting in addressing some of the identified health priorities, accessible and affordable facilities and programs that are important to encourage participation



Aquatics Facilities

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT OUR FACILITIES

DAYLESFORD OUTDOOR POOL



Ownership and Management

Seasonal Pool
Owned and Managed by Council

Facilities

- Main Pool (50 metres x 6 lanes)
- Toddler Pool
- Diving board at deep end (1 metre board)
- Amenities and change rooms
- Reception, kiosk and office area
- Shade structures and grassed areas
- Plant and storerooms
- Solar heating
- Seating

CLUNES OUTDOOR POOL



Ownership and Management

Seasonal Pool
Owned and Managed by Council

Facilities

- Main Pool (25 metres x 5 lanes)
- Toddler Pool
- Amenities and change rooms
- Reception, kiosk and office area
- Shade structures and grassed areas
- Plant and storerooms
- Solar heating
- Seating

TRENTHAM OUTDOOR POOL



Ownership and Management

Seasonal Pool
Owned and Managed by Council

Facilities

- Main Pool (25 metres x 5 lanes)
- Toddler Pool
- Amenities and change rooms
- Reception, kiosk and office area
- Shade structures and grassed areas
- Plant and storerooms
- Solar heating
- Seating

CRESWICK SPLASH PARK



Ownership and Management

Seasonal Splash Pad
Owned and Managed by Council

Facilities

- Zero depth splashpad (15 metres x 10 metres) with a variety of interactive waterplay features including tipping buckets, water tunnels, and sprays
- Plant room
- Shade structures and picnic areas
- Paved and grass surrounds

CALEMBEEN PARK TODDLERS POOL



Ownership and Management

Seasonal Toddlers Pool next to Calembreen Lake
Situated on Crown Land and Managed by Council as Committee of Management
No lifeguard supervision

Facilities

- Toddlers Pool on the banks of the lake, in a fenced area
- Intermediate pool, shallow section of the main lake. This area is not chemically treated, natural water body.
- Amenities and change rooms
- Plant room
- Shade structures and picnic areas



HEPBURN AQUATICS FACILITIES OPERATING PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

The following table provides a summary of the combined operational performance of Hepburn aquatics centres across the last six years.

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	6 Year Average
Visits	18,795	14,121	15,782	11,574	25,164	19,430	17,477
Income	\$64,817	\$58,493	\$62,317	\$56,985	\$9,830	\$7,743	\$43,816
Expenditure	\$198,885	\$210,563	\$258,699	\$338,612	\$502,716	\$393,291	\$317,127
Operational Surplus / Deficit	-\$134,068	-\$152,070	-\$196,382	-\$281,627	-\$492,886	-\$385,548	-\$273,311
Income Per Visit	\$3.45	\$4.14	\$3.95	\$4.92	\$0.39	\$0.40	\$2.88
Expense Per Visit	\$10.58	\$14.91	\$16.39	\$29.26	\$19.98	\$20.24	\$18.56
Operating Cost Per Visit	\$7.13	\$10.77	\$12.44	\$24.33	\$19.59	\$19.84	\$15.68

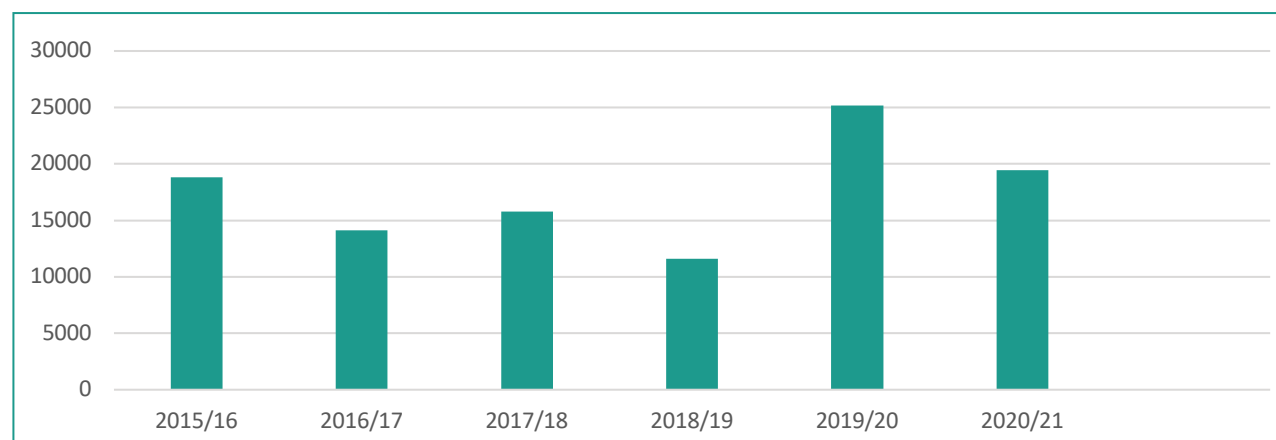
The operating indicators show:

- Visitations ranged from a high of 25,164 in 2019/20 and a low of 11,574 in 2018/19. The average annual visits were 17,477 over the six years. There was a sharp increase in visitations in the 2019/20 with the introduction of free entry for all users. Council's decision not to charge an entry fee was embraced by the community, and it was further validated from the positive feedback gained at the pop-up sessions, online survey and stakeholder consultation sessions.
- Income fluctuated between 2015/16 and 2018/19 due to weather conditions and facility closures. There was a sharp decline in revenue in 2019/20 with the introduction of the free entry policy. The only sources of income in the last two years have been kiosk sales and private bookings.
- While revenue has declined, expenditure has grown significantly over the last six years. The key factors behind this change are higher wages costs, new maintenance agreements and internal management model commencing in 2019/20.

- The operating deficit has grown by 267% over the last six years. This is due to declining revenue levels and higher operating costs as explained above.
- Despite growing usage, introducing free entry has impacted the cost per visit which has increased by 178% over the past six years reaching \$19.84 per visit in 2020/21.

The following graph shows the aggregated annual attendance data for the last six years.

Figure 2: Hepburn Aquatics Facilities Annual Attendance Summary



The attendance summary indicates the following trends:

- The graph shows an overall increase in visitations for the Hepburn council managed aquatics facilities over the past two seasons.
- The three outdoor pools attracted the highest recorded attendances of 25,164 visits in 2019/20, which was driven by a new free entry policy adopted in 2019.
- There was a slight decline in 2020/21 however each facility had a significant number of closures due to weather conditions and maintenance closures. They were also closed for five days due to COVID lockdowns.
- The lowest visitations of 11,574 was recorded in 2018/19 and highest visitations of 25,164 was achieved in 2019/20.

The following graph shows the combined financial performance for the Hepburn aquatics facilities over the last six years. This includes Daylesford Outdoor Pool, Clunes Outdoor Pool, Trentham Outdoor Pool, Creswick Splashpark and Calemben Park Toddlers Pool.

The combined financial performance summary indicates the following trends.

- Total income gradually declined between 2016/17 and 2018/19, then dropped sharply in 2019/20 after the commencement of the free entry policy adopted by Council.
- Conversely expenditure increased significantly over the same period. Expenditure increased by 153% from \$198,885 in 2015/16 to \$502,716 in 2019/20. This is attributed to higher staff costs with Council assuming the internal management of the three facilities in 2019/20. Prior to this a hybrid management model was in place with subcontracted lifeguard staff sourced through Momentum One.

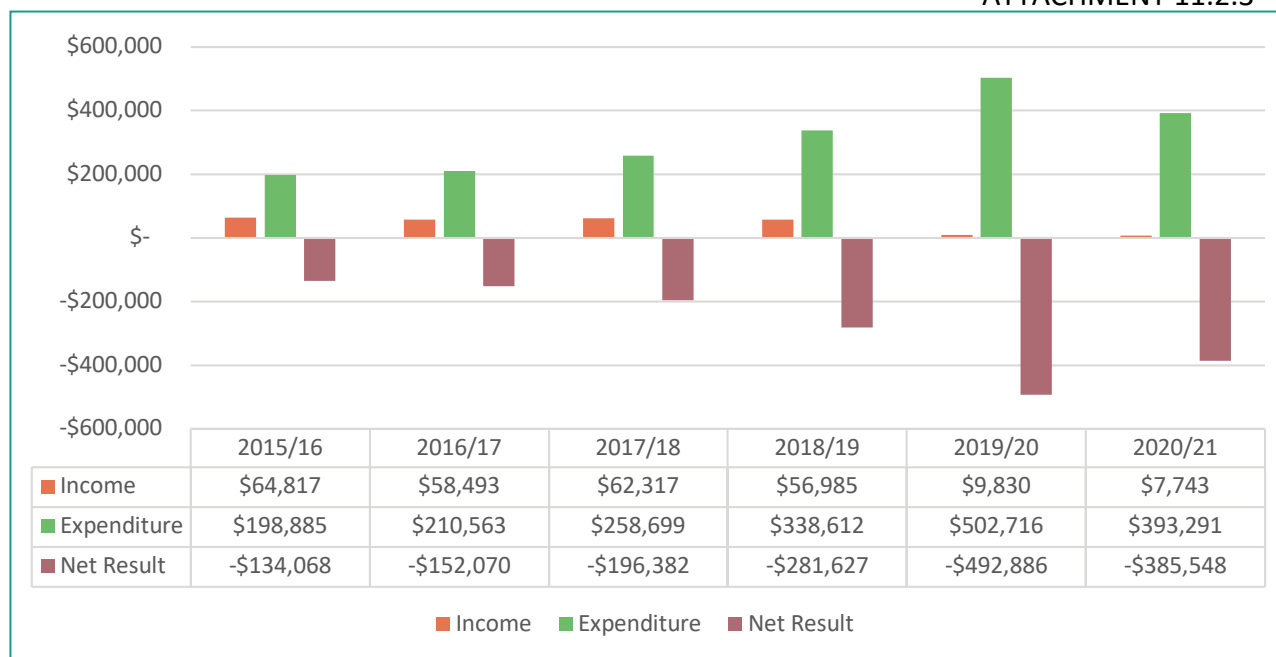


Figure 3: Hepburn Aquatics Facilities Annual Financial Performance Summary

- The net performance declined significantly over the six-year period. The operating deficit grew from a loss of \$134,068 in 2016/17 to \$492,627 deficit in 2019/20. This equates to a 267% increase in the operating subsidy to operate the outdoor pools. The key factors for the decline were the introduction of the free entry policy combined with higher staffing and maintenance costs since Council assumed the internal management control of the facilities.
- Council commenced an annual maintenance contract in 2019/20 to address numerous asset management issues across the pools. This was additional expenditure added to the net operating results, which was not included between 2016/17 and 2018/19. Council spent \$98,000 in 2019/20 and \$86,000 in 2020/21 on maintenance.
- It should also be noted that seasonal pools typically see up to 30% swing in revenue annually depending on the weather conditions, particularly during the peak summer holiday periods. An example was the 2020/21 season which had 33 days of closures at Daylesford and Trentham due to poor weather and COVID disruptions.

COUNCIL'S WEATHER CLOSURE POLICY

The current Weather Closure Policy across the three outdoor pools states that during the operating season the pools close on days of 21 degrees or less.

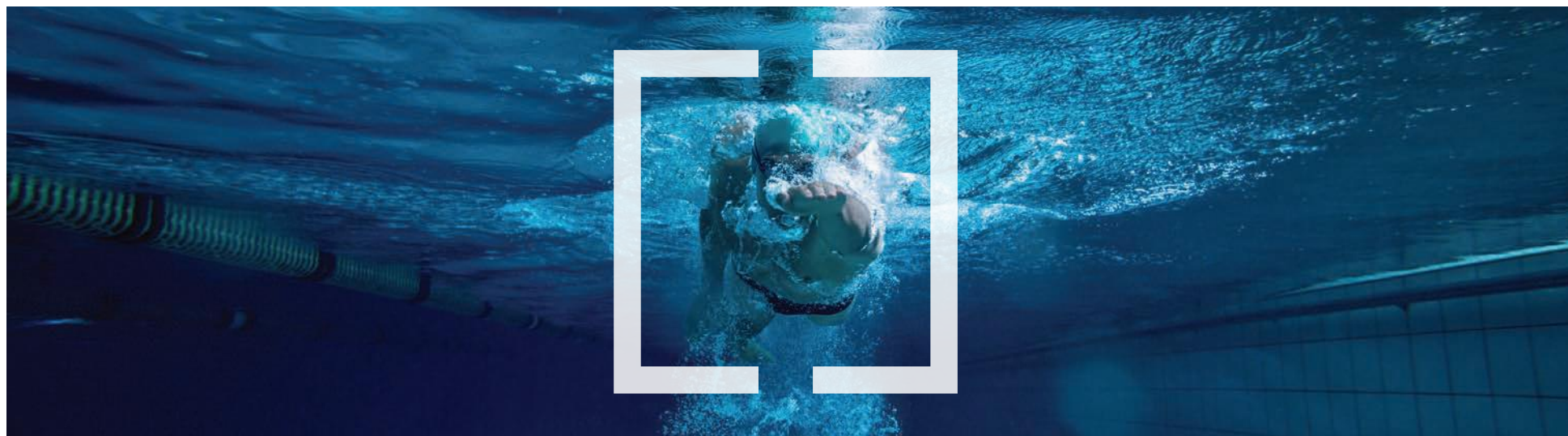
The current weather closure policy is causing high levels of frustration from the community. It was raised in stakeholder discussions, at the Community pop-up sessions and in the community survey results. The current policy is seen by the community as not providing consistent or reliable opening hours. During each season a significant number of days and hours are lost due to the closures. For example, in 2020/21 both Daylesford and Trentham closed for 33 days out of a total 92 days that the pools are officially open during summer. This indicates that the pools were closed for over 30% of the season. This is a similar trend each year.

TECHNICAL AUDITS

Asset Condition Assessments were undertaken by JWC Engineers on the five aquatics facilities. The objective of the assessments is to provide direction on the asset management and future upgrades and maintenance of the facilities to remain functional. A brief summary of the Technical Audits findings for each facility are provided.

DAYLESFORD OUTDOOR POOL

- The main pool is now likely to be some 50-60+ years old and is now only in fair condition from an aesthetic viewpoint. While nearing the end of its expected life there is still some remaining life of approximately 10-20+yrs. The remaining life will largely depend on stable ground conditions continuing to remain, and preventing reinforcement corrosion.
- The main issue is leakage. Installation of a water meter on the make-up water, and leak testing is recommended. Expansion joints are likely required to be re-sealed.
- The water treatment plant is much newer than the pool, estimated to be 20 years old, and overall, it is in reasonably good condition.
- The hypo fill area requires a spill containment parking slab for the tanker. To be constructed where the tanker now parks at the rear of the Town Hall building.
- The electrics are an ad-hoc mixture of old and new and the older boards should be replaced and possibly consolidated with other elements.
- The site is small and constrained with the only available land to the north of the main pool. There is no opportunity to expand the site.



CLUNES OUTDOOR POOL

- The main pool is now likely to be approximately 60 years old, has a low build quality and is now deteriorated to fair condition. While nearing the end of its economic life the shell remains functional and is likely to remain so for the next 15-20 years. Remaining life expectancy will largely depend on ground conditions continuing to be remain stable (and there is no indication otherwise) and continuing to manage leakage.
- As for most older pools the main issue is leakage. Installation of a water meter on the make-up water to establish a data base, and formal leak testing is recommended. Hydrostatic and dye testing should focus on the expansion joints and pipework. Expansion joints are highly likely required to be renewed and this work is in the Recommended Works table.
- The toddler's pool is a small, domestic type fibreglass pool. It is a very basic installation, in poor condition. It has a low asset value and retaining it in any redevelopment is not warranted.
- Any new toddlers pool or splash play area will need its own dedicated water treatment plant. Although site space is very limited the logical location for this is along the east boundary.
- The main water treatment plant is much newer than the pool estimated as approximately 20 years old, and overall, it is in good condition.
- The water distribution system into and from the pool has been influenced by the additional pipework to the pool installed as part of the Water Treatment Plant replacement. This presents some risk of short circuiting which could adversely affect water quality. This risk however can be mitigated, particularly on busy days, by taking water samples directly from the pool in likely dead spots i.e., not relying solely on the automatic system and managing bather numbers accordingly.
- The original pipework will remain a risk (relative to the newer pipework), as evidenced by the drainpipe/valve failure and total water loss in February 2021. There is little that can be done in terms of planned maintenance to mitigate risk of the older pipe and thus reactive maintenance can only be expected to increase over time.
- The hypo fill area requires a spill containment parking slab for the tanker. This is a significant amount of work and if the current parking spot is retained it will involve legal assessments on land ownership and use. Alternatively, it may be feasible to relocate it to inside the site. This project needs further investigation of design options and land issues before proceeding.
- The site is small and constrained. There is no opportunity to expand the site.



TRENTHAM OUTDOOR POOL

- The main pool has suffered from floor uplift at some stage which represents a technical structural failure. The resultant cracks have been repaired. While the shell is nearing the end of its economic life, it is functional and is likely to remain so for the next 10-20+ years. Remaining life expectancy will largely depend on ground conditions continuing to be remain stable (there is no indication otherwise) and continuing to manage and control leakage.
- The prime issue is leakage, even more so that at Clunes and Daylesford. Trentham has a greater leakage rate than the other two pools and this is suspected to be due to the pool uplift event/cracks many years ago. Installation of a water meter on the make-up water to establish a data base and formal leak testing is recommended. Hydrostatic and dye testing should focus on the expansion joints and pipework. Expansion joints are highly likely required to be renewed and this work is in the Recommended Works table.
- The main shade structure is in poor condition and appears to lack structural robustness. Replacement is recommended.
- The toddler's pool is quite large. It is a basic installation but still serviceable and serves its purpose.
- The main water treatment plant is much newer than the pool, estimated about 20 years old, and overall is in good condition.
- The original pipework under the concourse is a long-term risk but unfortunately there is little that can be done in terms of planned maintenance to mitigate this risk. Reactive maintenance can only be expected to increase with time until ultimately pipes will need to be replaced.
- The site is small and constrained. The only direction for expansion is further into the Reserve to the west, moving closer to Market Street.

CRESWICK SPLASH PARK

- Facility is five years old and consists of two components, the Splash Park and adjacent is the Green River.
- One Splash Park water feature has been abandoned due to poor performance/operational issues.
- Play surface is bare concrete, no soft padding, but conversely there are no climbing water features.
- All water from Splash Park drains separately to a new balance tank, then to the treatment plant. The original balance tank had to recently be supplemented with this tank, with increased volume.
- Treatment plant and feature pumps are located in two small sheds along northern boundary. Auto-dosing is installed for sodium hypochlorite and sodium bisulphate chemical treatment of water.



CALEMBEEN PARK TODDLERS POOL

- The toddlers pool structure is nearing the end of life.
- Simple and basic pool shell 12 metres x 4 metres with 250mm to 400mm depth.
- The toddlers pool abuts the lake but is separated/surrounded by a pool safety fence.
- Treatment plant is estimated at approximately 30 years old. It is a simple domestic type of sand filter system located in a very small timber shed and well away from pool.
- Disinfection is with sodium hypochlorite and pH control is with hydrochloric acid, both delivered in 15 litre containers. It does have a new water chemistry control system (1 yr. old) but no remote telemetry. Maintaining water quality is a major issue for Council staff.
- Numerous pipe blockages occur due to leaves etc. Saw-cuts in the concourse above wall nozzle inlets show that these pipes have been replaced. Pipe blockage problems appear reasonably frequent, and this could possibly be linked to poor geotechnical conditions from the proximity to the Lake.
- Leaking drain valve to lake requires investigation/repair.
- Filter backwash discharges directly out through rear wall of the plant room shed, onto ground and drains into the lake.
- There is a number of safety and compliance concerns with this pool. It is not staffed during summer which exposes Council to a level of risk for incidents. Compliance with current health department water quality regulations is a concern also as water is drawn from the lake which is filled with stormwater. There have been previous recordings of E-Coli existing in the water supply which is a significant concern for parents and toddlers using the pool.



CATCHMENT ANALYSIS

Leisure and sporting facility trends and benchmarking generally indicates that local or municipal facilities have a primary catchment radius of approximately 5km and a secondary catchment radius of 10km.

In general, approximately 75% to 85% of users will reside within a 0km to 5km radius of a facility, with the remaining 15% to 25% coming from areas within the 5km to 10km radius of the facility. Regional facilities, providing unique and varied facility components and a larger number of services will draw users from a much wider catchment than a local/municipal facility. In rural Victoria a 20km catchment area is observed for regional facilities.

The size and shape of the catchment area will be influenced by a number of factors including the range and quality of facilities and services offered, natural and built barriers i.e., freeways, travel times and the availability of competing facilities.

The Catchment Map on the following page shows:

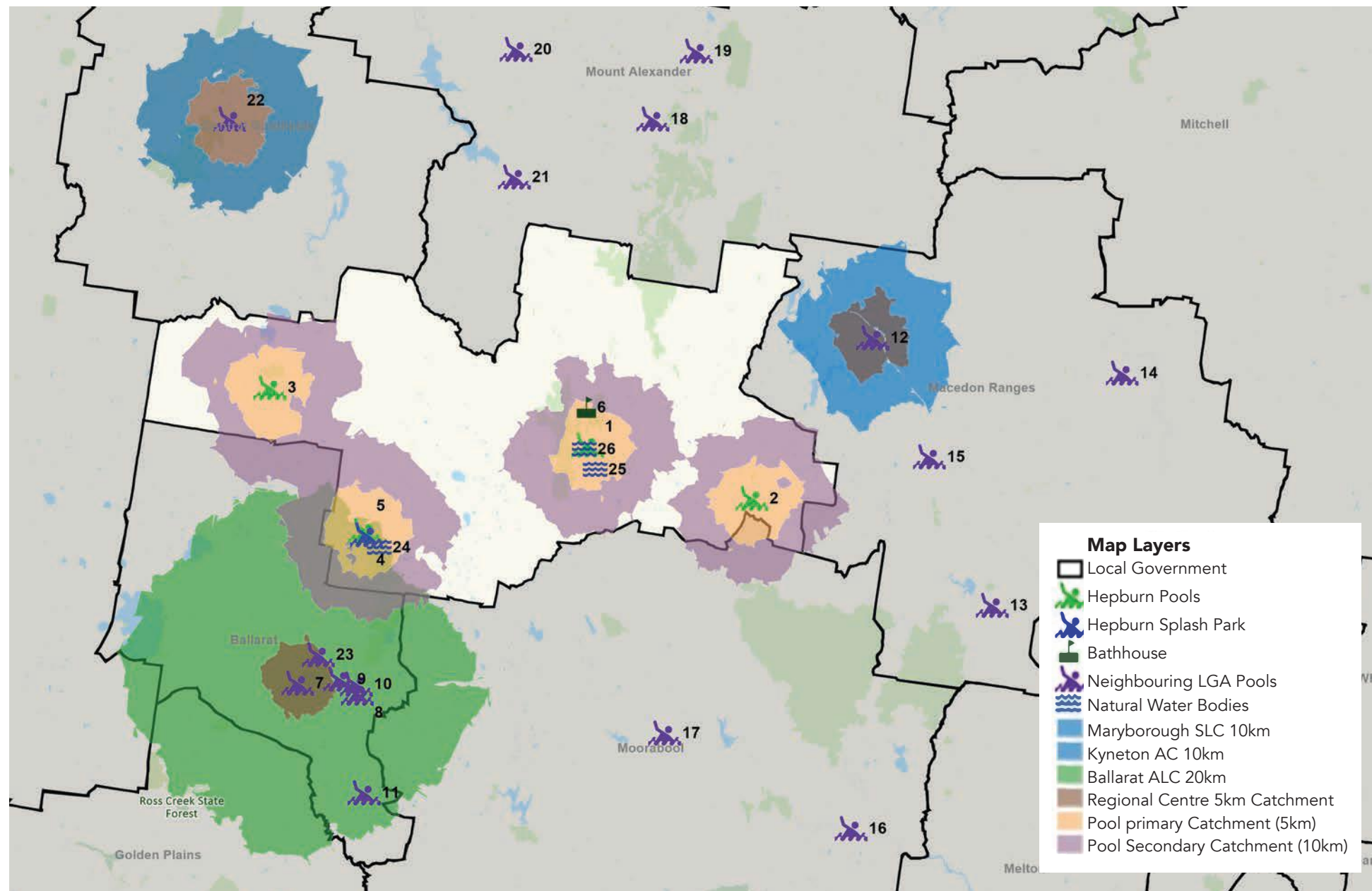
- Primary (0-5km) and Secondary (5-10km) catchment shaded zones surrounding each aquatics facility.
- The facility catchment areas of the five Hepburn aquatics facilities.
- The catchment areas for the Regional Indoor facilities surrounding the Hepburn Shire boundaries including the Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre, Kyneton Aquatics and Sports Centre and Maryborough Sports and Leisure Centre.

ATTACHMENT 11.2.3

- The three outdoor pools in Daylesford, Clunes and Trentham provide for local catchments.
- The Creswick Splash Park and Calembreen Park Toddlers Pool provide for local and sub regional catchments.
- There is an overlap of the Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre (Regional Facility) with the town of Creswick.
- Other surrounding shire outdoor pools and commercial facilities are marked on the map.



Figure 4: Hepburn Aquatics Facilities Catchment Map



WHAT HAVE OUR *Stakeholders Told Us?*

A detailed community engagement plan was developed to ensure Hepburn residents had the opportunity to provide input into the development of the draft Aquatics Strategy. The extensive consultation and engagement included:



Councillor
workshop



Stakeholder
interviews and
workshops
(9 completed)



Resident
Community
Survey
(795 responses)



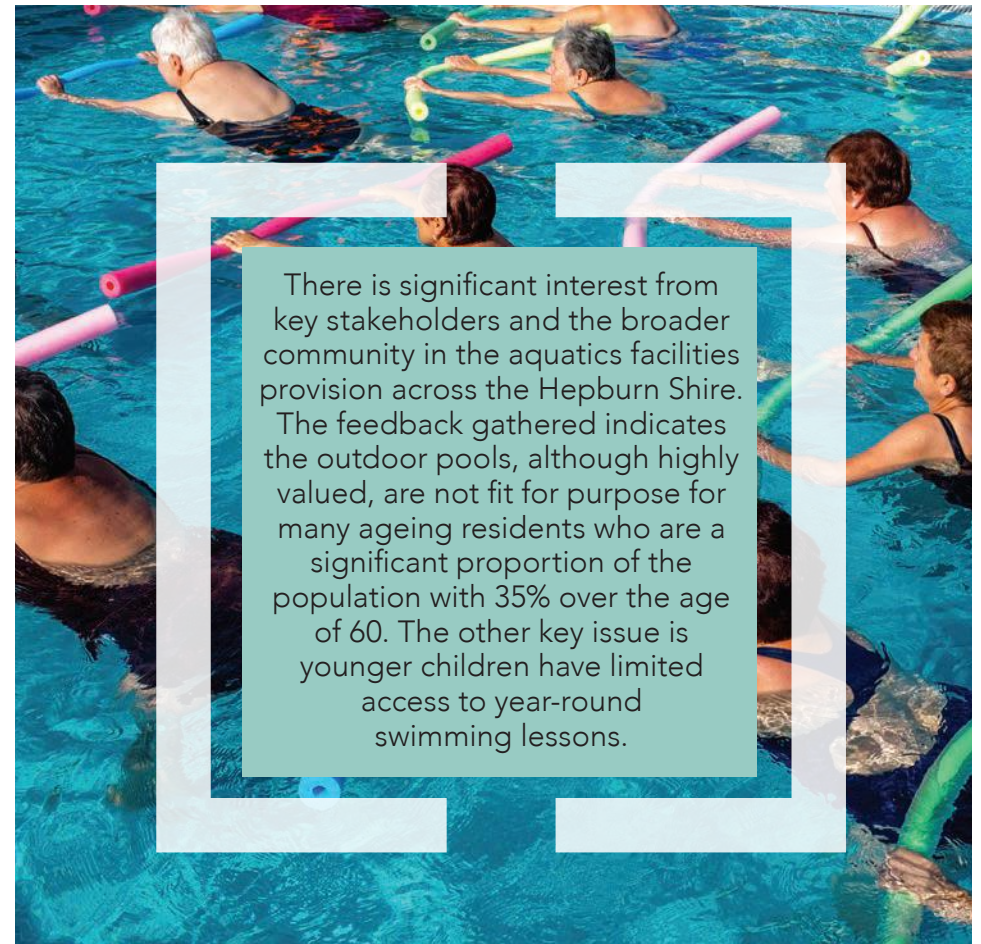
Pop up sessions
in each major
township (Approx.
150 residents
attended)



School survey
(7 school
responses)



Written
submissions
(13 submissions)



There is significant interest from key stakeholders and the broader community in the aquatics facilities provision across the Hepburn Shire. The feedback gathered indicates the outdoor pools, although highly valued, are not fit for purpose for many ageing residents who are a significant proportion of the population with 35% over the age of 60. The other key issue is younger children have limited access to year-round swimming lessons.

ATTACHMENT 11.2.3

An indoor aquatics facility is strongly supported by stakeholders and residents. There are two very active and passionate community advocacy Groups in Daylesford and Creswick that have undertaken significant lobbying, research and preliminary assessments for an indoor facility over the last ten years.

The Community Engagement Survey received significant interest with 795 residents completing the online or hard copy surveys. The majority of responses came from residents in the Daylesford, Hepburn and Hepburn Springs towns (41%) and Creswick/Creswick North areas (24%).

Close to 50% of the survey respondents stated they don't use an existing Hepburn aquatics facility.

The main reasons for not using an existing facility included lack of an indoor facility (56%), the only pools available are outdoor facilities (41%) and no suitable facilities close by (30%). Other factors such as cold-water temperature, lack of suitable programs/

activities and unsuitable opening times were also key issues for some residents not using the existing aquatics facilities.

A significant number of respondents use Indoor Aquatics facilities outside the shire. They include Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre (35%) and Kyneton Aquatics and Sports Centre (20%). The key reasons for using these Centres were the availability of indoor pools, warm water program pools and the variety of programs and activities offered.

The future improvements that would encourage greater use of aquatics facilities include provision of an indoor warm water pool, indoor recreation and leisure pools, outdoor heated pools, indoor spas and sauna, extended swimming season, health and fitness classes and longer opening hours.

Of the seven schools that responded to the school survey 75% of them use the Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre for school carnivals, swimming lessons and fun days. The Daylesford Outdoor Pool

is used by one school for a carnival and one school uses Kyneton Aquatics and Sports Centre for swimming lessons. All schools indicated they would use an indoor facility within Hepburn Shire if it was developed in the future. There is support for an indoor heated year-round facility within the shire.

Council received thirteen written submissions including seven community organisations (Daylesford Rotary Club, Daylesford Indoor Aquatic Centre Association, Daylesford Football Netball Club, Daylesford Mens Shed, Riding for the Disabled Association - Daylesford (RDA-Daylesford), Hepburn Football Netball Club, Daylesford & Hepburn United Soccer Club), one school (Daylesford Primary School) and five resident submissions. All submissions expressed strong support and need for an indoor aquatics facility that is accessible, caters for all ages and abilities, provides access to warm water programs and offers a variety of learn to swim and other aquatics programs year round.



What Industry Trends

DO WE NEED TO CONSIDER?

Aquatics and leisure facilities provide a range of values and benefits for communities including:

- Health and fitness services allowing people to enjoy the benefits of physical activity.
- The provision of safe and welcoming spaces, supporting social inclusion and a sense of connection for all members of the community.
- Opportunities to participate for recreation, competition, or sport.
- Community development that contributes to the development of social capital, helping to create links in a community.
- Positive impacts on physical and mental wellbeing.
- Water safety/education and water confidence programs that can reduce the incidence of drownings in the community.
- Fostering community pride.

The primary focus in contemporary aquatics and leisure facility design is on expanding the facility mix to include a combination of 'wet' and 'dry' options. These include spaces that accommodate a range of activities such as lap swimming, aquatics programs/learn-to-swim, adventure water, 'leisure water' with interactive water play elements, health and fitness, wellness services, multi-purpose program spaces, community meeting rooms/spaces, quality food and beverage options and improved merchandising/retail areas.

Contemporary aquatics leisure facilities are community destinations and meeting points for a range of physical and social activities. Facilities including these elements will attract the four key user markets outlined in figure 5 and are most likely to provide more reasons for people to visit and stay longer, improving health and wellbeing of the community and financial sustainability for the Centre. These types of facilities provide more reasons for people to visit and stay longer, thus facility viability is improved.

Major increases in energy and water costs in recent years (and predictions of higher energy costs into the future) require aquatics and leisure facilities to incorporate modern, environmentally sustainable features.



Community expectations about recreation, and how leisure time is used is changing. This is driven by several factors, as identified in the following table.

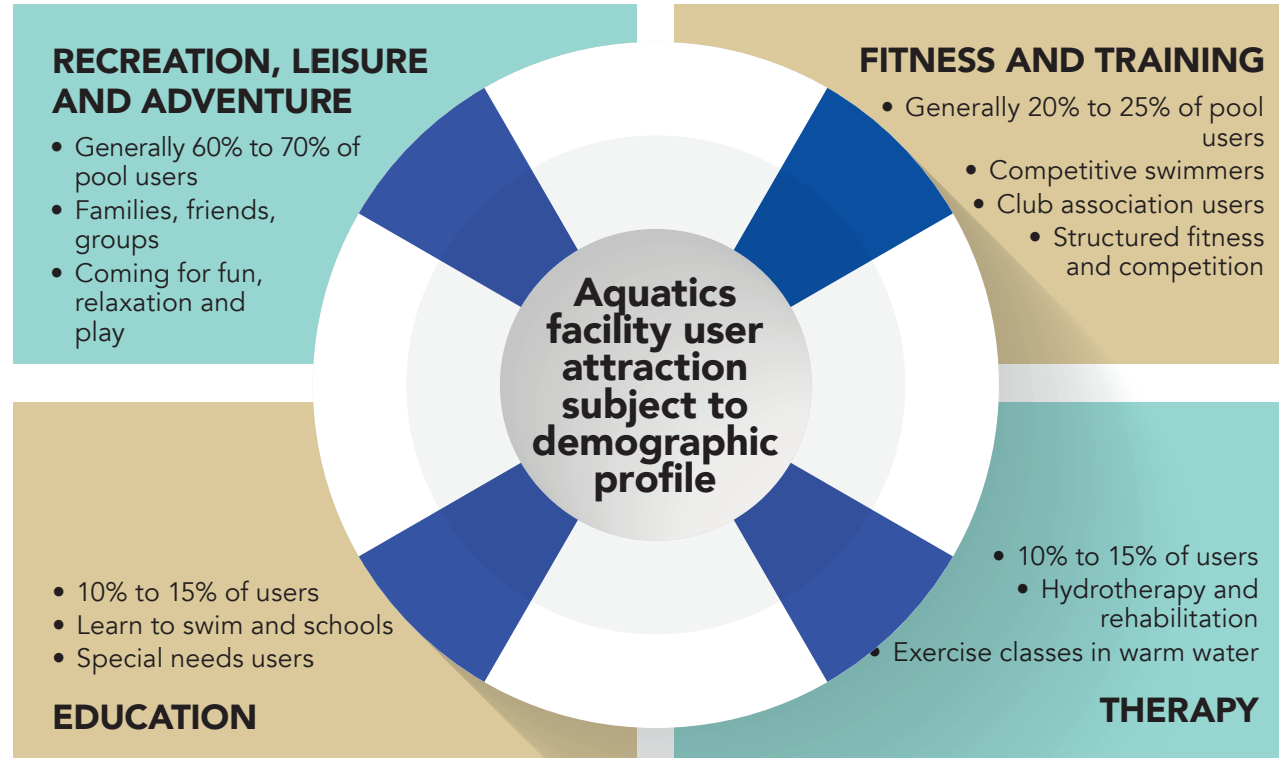
Sport and Recreation Trends	Challenges for Providers
• A gradual ageing of the population	• Consumer Expectations – low cost / long operating hours
• Flexibility in the times when people recreate	• Changing population demographics
• Increased variety in sport and recreation options	• Competition for participants
• Constraints to sport and recreation participation	• High cost of aquatics areas due to labour and service costs
• Changing employment structures, trading and work hours	• Need to operate commercial activities to help subsidise aquatics area costs
• Different people want different activities	• Maintaining and upgrading ageing and outdated facilities
• Provision of high standards and quality of facilities and services	• Need for new facilities to accommodate population growth
• Desire for activities to be affordable	• Well-trained personnel – volunteers and paid staff
• Recognition of strong links between physical activity and health	• Keeping pace with technology development
• Expectations of equity and access	• Environmentally sustainable to reduce energy and water costs
• More sustainable and environmentally friendly infrastructure	• Rate capping impact and competing priorities on Council budgets
	• Managing risk and safety



AQUATICS AND LEISURE FACILITY USAGE TRENDS

Detailed planning and comprehensive feasibility studies show targeted user profiles with the majority of aquatics facility market research indicating leisure facilities must equally cater for four distinct aquatics user markets, summarised in the figure below.

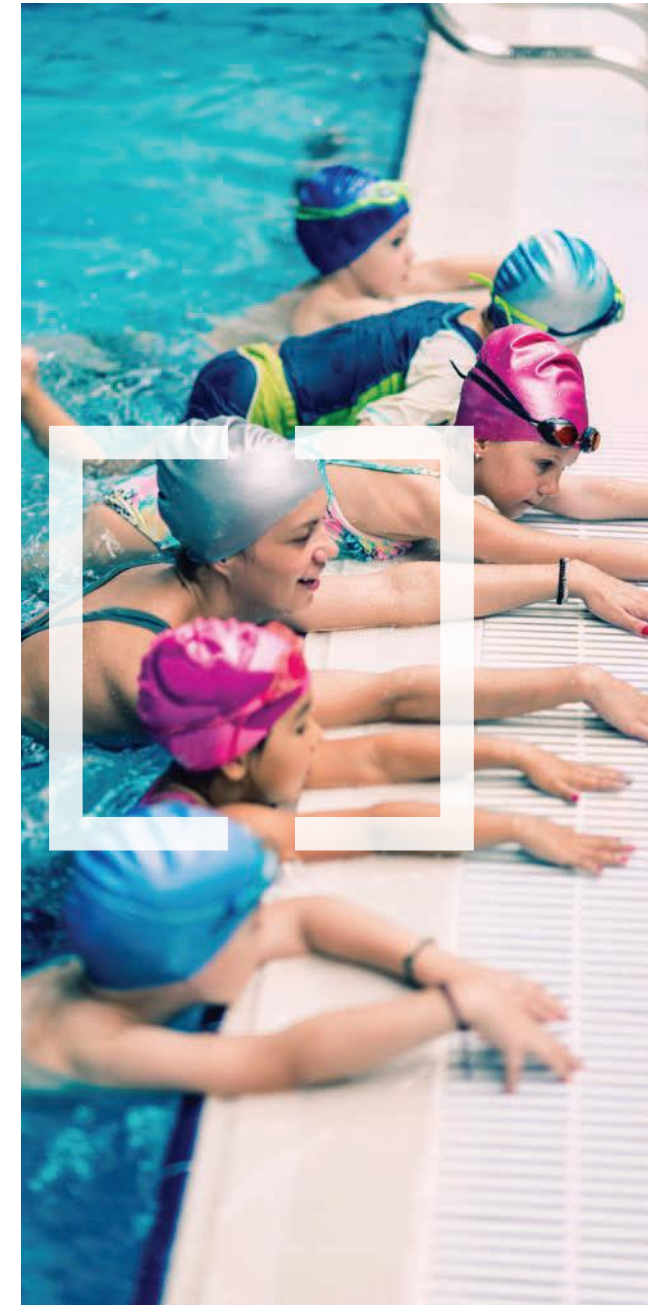
Figure 5: Main Aquatics and Leisure Facility User Markets



No aquatics facility in Hepburn Shire provides for a successful integrated aquatics and leisure facility providing a range of contemporary 'wet' and 'dry' elements that appeal to broader market segments including:

- Leisure and social
- Health and wellness
- Aquatics education and learn to swim
- Therapy and rehabilitation
- Competitive and recreational swimming
- Food/beverage and merchandise services.

Providing equitable access to aquatics and leisure facilities (and other services like health, education, cultural, recreational and other community services) in rural and regional areas is a challenge, particularly in smaller townships. Particularly with the capital and operational costs of aquatics and leisure facilities having risen significantly over the last 10 to 20 years.



Strategic Directions

AND RECOMMENDATIONS

DRAFT

The following section (Section 7 of the Aquatics Strategy) summarises the key issues identified through the market research, facility review and stakeholder engagement stages of the project. Strategic directions are proposed to address these issues together with a proposed aquatics facility network approach to meet the identified community needs.

7.1 KEY ISSUES

Aquatics facilities and services support the strategic commitment to healthy and active communities

Hepburn Shire has a number of strategies that have key objectives to improve the health and wellbeing of the community. These include the *Council Plan 2021-2025*, *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Activate 2020-2030* and the *Recreation and Open Space Strategy 2016-2021*. A key focus in each of the strategies is providing quality infrastructure that encourages active and healthy lifestyles and social inclusion opportunities.

Current aquatics facilities do not cater for all key user markets

The existing outdoor pools are aging, and do not cater for the key user markets adequately. A successful aquatics facility should cater for the following four key user markets.

1. Recreation, leisure and adventure (water play, recreational swimming, families, socialising, fun)
2. Fitness and training (training, competitive swimming, swim clubs)
3. Education (Learn to Swim, school swimming lessons and special needs programs)
4. Therapy (hydrotherapy, aqua exercise classes, rehabilitation)

There are also barriers for some of Hepburn's population demographics including older residents and young children who are seeking warmer water for learn to swim, therapy, aquatics programs and recreational swimming. These barriers include cold water temperatures, irregular opening hours due to weather closure policy, poor accessibility compliance and lack of suitable activities and programs.

The natural water bodies scattered throughout the shire are also frequently used by local residents. The use of some of these areas (particularly Calembreen Park) provide some level of health and safety risk to users. It's important to note that Calembreen Park is Crown land and controlled by the State Government Department of Environment, Water, Land and Planning (DEWLP). Hepburn Shire Council has a role as Committee of Management in the day to day operation of the site but the liability for risks and health and safety issues is the responsibility of DEWLP.

The feedback gathered from key stakeholders and the community survey support the need for contemporary indoor warm water program pool to support all year round learn to swim, therapy, aquatics programs and recreational swimming.



Facility catchment, accessibility and cold climate challenges

Hepburn Shire has some unique characteristics that make it challenging to cater for the changing needs of its townships and communities. The outdoor pools cater for a limited market given they are not contemporary year round facilities. With an aging population there is a growing need for greater access to indoor year round warm water pools with good accessibility features such as ramps and compliant change rooms.

The long travel distances between towns and poor public transport result in the existing facilities being very localised with its user catchments. Determining a potential location for indoor aquatics is challenging given the population distribution across the shire. Any future solutions will need to consider how the Hepburn facilities work as a complementary network with other neighbouring shire aquatics facilities.

The cold climate of Hepburn Shire creates some constraints (cold pools and icy roads) for accessing aquatics services. The need for flexible operating hours and warmer outdoor pool water temperatures was highlighted throughout the community engagement activities.

Asset renewal – short to medium term priorities

There are significant asset renewal, compliance and maintenance priorities across the aquatics services offered by Council that will need to be planned for over the next 10 - 20 years. This will be further impacted if Council decide to invest in modern technology solutions for more effective water heating, energy efficiency initiatives and improve accessibility compliance to pools and change rooms.

Council has recently funded the installation of a solar system at each outdoor pool, as a means of



increasing the water temperature. The technical audit has identified that the current system is inefficient due to that the volume of water. For solar systems to be effective, a larger surface area is required for the solar panels. The water temperature increase is negligible and has not improved user comfort. An option to improve this would be the installation of electric heat pumps.

Calembeen Park Toddlers Pool and broader lake precinct pose significant health and safety risks to users which need to be addressed in the short to medium term. These risk issues are also highlighted in the Calembeen Park Management Plan 2009.

Management model options review

The management of the outdoor pools has varied over the last 10 - 20 years impacting the usage and operating performance of the facilities. The pools are currently operated by Council which has increased the operating costs in the last two years due to higher wage rates of the local government award.

The operating deficit has also grown significantly since the introduction of the free entry fee which removed payment of entry fees for use of the outdoor pools. However, usage has increased dramatically which is a positive outcome in supporting residents' participation in active and healthy lifestyles.

A review of the management model options should be considered. This would include investigating the various models in the market and/or shared services model between other surrounding Councils.

Affordability of a new facility – capital and operational costs

The most significant challenge for Council in determining a future indoor aquatics facility is the affordability to build and operate such a facility. This includes the ability to attract sufficient capital funding for a new facility and more importantly the ability to sustain the ongoing operational cost.

Opportunities to ensure residents across the Shire can access aquatics services should be considered. This may include bus services or alternate models of provision i.e., supporting learn to swim businesses.

Potential Partnerships

It was evident from the key stakeholder interviews with the regional health providers that future partnerships opportunities should be further explored. This could include colocation opportunities, integrated programming and a shared focus on community health and wellbeing alliances.

Opportunities for partnerships with governments, private sector operators, schools, community organisations and commercial businesses should be explored for funding, sustainable management models and shared use/facility location opportunities.

7.2 STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the aforementioned key issues, the proposed vision and objectives of the draft Hepburn Aquatics Strategy are:

Proposed Vision

Provide sustainable, affordable and accessible aquatics facilities that brings Hepburn residents together to enjoy health, wellbeing, education and leisure experiences.

Proposed Objectives

Objective 1: Access to affordable, accessible and inclusive aquatics facilities that support participation opportunities and key program needs.

Objective 2: Existing facilities are well managed and maintained to meet current design and operational industry standards.

Objective 3: Facilitate access to a network of complementary facilities that support health and wellbeing outcomes for the community.

Objective 4: Future design of facilities will be operationally sustainable and based on contemporary design principles.

7.3 FACILITY HIERARCHY AND PROVISION

Given the diverse and dispersed characteristics of the Hepburn shire population it is proposed that the provision of aquatics facilities will be provided using a network approach. With a small population catchment providing multiple indoor aquatics facilities within the shire is not achievable or affordable for Council.

The recommended aquatics provision strategy is a combination of:

- Council owned aquatics facilities including outdoor pools, splash parks and the exploration of one future indoor facility.
- Facilities and services available from the private sector (e.g., swim schools, commercial day spas/bathhouse, private gyms and personal training studios)
- Regional and Sub Regional facilities in adjoining municipalities of Ballarat (Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre), Macedon Ranges (Kyneton Aquatics and Sports Centre) and Central Goldfields (Maryborough Sports and Leisure Centre).
- Natural water bodies including lakes, waterholes and mineral springs.

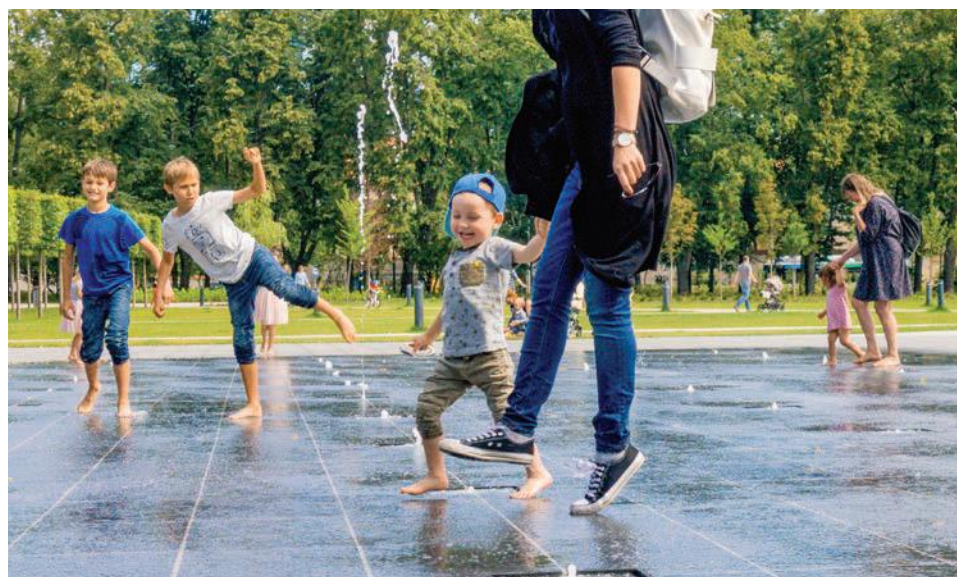
Table 1: Hepburn Shire Aquatics Facility Hierarchy

Service Hierarchy	Population Size	Typical Travel Time to the Facility	Service Level Objective
Local Local rural township catchment population	1,000 - 10,000	0 - 5 mins drive time	Provides a local aquatics experience i.e., pool or water play / leisure water Usually linked to other community facilities to share management and operation cost
District Major townships centre and district catchment population	10,000 - 40,000	5 - 10 mins drive time	Ability to provide program pool combined with water play / leisure water Consider provision of limited dry/gym facilities
Sub Regional Major township centre with highest population area servicing a municipal catchment	40,000 - 70,000	10 - 30 mins drive time	Ability to separate program and leisure water Larger dry/gym facilities Additional limited facilities
Regional Regional city catchment population servicing across municipal boundaries	70,000 - 150,000	30 - 45 mins drive time	More extensive program and leisure water Consideration of indoor 50m pool and complementary warm water pool Increased gym and program space Additional complementary amenities, food and beverage

7.4 RECOMMENDED STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The recommended future development options are based on the following localised trends:

- Need for funding investment to address the operational and technical issues identified via the detailed facility audits of the ageing facilities.
- Opportunity to integrate key facilities and service areas at one location to support year-round access to aquatics facilities to support learn to swim and therapy-based activities.
- New leisure and water play opportunities to continue to support the informal leisure/social/family markets and access to an aquatics experience in small townships.
- Consider opportunities to support indoor health and fitness programs and services.
- Improvements to disability access, amenities, improved shade, more seating and landscaping.
- Maintaining the existing pools is the priority in the immediate to medium term. However, if the cost of these works cannot be afforded over the long term, Council may be forced to close one or more of the existing pools.
- Need to consider the future management arrangements of the facilities to ensure the long-term sustainability of operations.



Based on the above the recommended strategic directions for the Hepburn Aquatics facilities is as follows:

7.4.1 Facility Upgrades - Compliance and OH&S Works

Undertake recommended upgrades identified in Technical Review audits to meet current compliance and OH&S requirements.

The key findings that support this strategy include:

- Aging assets at all sites that are reaching end of life.
- Management and mitigation of risks identified in the Technical Review Audits.
- Ensure Council meets contemporary OH&S and compliance regulations.

Action Plan

Table 2: Strategic Direction Recommendations

Proposed Recommendation	Proposed Timing	Indicative Cost Range
That funding be provided to undertake the necessary maintenance works as identified within the technical review audit at the three outdoor pools.	Short	\$350,000 - \$400,000
That funding be provided to undertake the necessary maintenance works as identified within the technical review audit at the Creswick Splash Park.	Short	\$15,000 - \$20,000
That funding be provided to undertake the necessary maintenance works as identified within the technical review audit at the Calmben Park Toddler Pool.	Short	\$50,000 - \$60,000
Total		\$415,000 – 480,000

Note Timeline Scale: Short Term 1 - 3 years, Medium Term 4 - 7 years and Long Term 8 - 10 years

7.4.2 Management and Operation

To ensure the management and operations of the facilities is financially sustainable for Council and aligned to industry trends and compliance requirements it is recommended that Council undertake a detailed assessment of the options available and associated costs and benefits for the future management of the facilities. This would include:

- **Inhouse Model**
- **External Contractor**
- **Company Limited by Guarantee**
- **Lease**

The key findings that support this strategy include:

- The increasing operational cost to Council over time under an in-house management model.
- Challenges in attracting and retaining high quality and qualified aquatics staff.
- The need for contemporary corporate systems and adequate internal expertise in aquatics.

Action Plan

Table 3: Strategic Direction Recommendations

Proposed Recommendation	Proposed Timing	Indicative Cost Range
That Council undertake an annual review of the performance of all facilities in meeting key performance measures and progress made on the strategy.	Short	Existing Resources
That Council undertake a Management Model Review to consider the costs, issues and benefits of the various options available.	Short	\$20,000 - \$30,000
That Council determine the most suitable option for the future management of the aquatics facilities and develop an implementation plan.	Short	N/A
Total		\$20,000 - \$30,000

Note Timeline Scale: Short Term 1 - 3 years, Medium Term 4 - 7 years and Long Term 8 - 10 years

7.4.3 Facility Programming and Activation

Undertake a review of the current programming of the outdoor pools. Develop and implement new programming and activation opportunities across the outdoor pools to encourage greater participation outcomes. This may include more regular aquatics programs, special events, family fun days, community partnership activities and promotions, themed activity days and increased school use.

The key findings that support this strategy include:

- Significant community feedback for more programs and activities to be offered over summer at the outdoor pools.
- Maximise the free entry to all outdoor pools to increase community use and participation.
- Create more vibrant facilities and increase participation through innovative programming and activities.

Action Plan

Table 4: Strategic Direction Recommendations

Proposed Recommendation	Proposed Timing	Indicative Cost Range
That Council undertake a review of the aquatics programming schedule for each outdoor pool.	Short	Existing Resources
That Council review the weather policy to enable greater access to the outdoor pools.	Short	Existing Resources
That Council develop and implement a programming and activation plan for each outdoor pool.	Short	\$10,000 - \$20,000
That Council undertake an annual review of the programs and seek community feedback for improvements via the annual outdoor pool survey.	Short/ Medium	N/A
Total		\$10,000 - \$20,000

Note Timeline Scale: Short Term 1 - 3 years, Medium Term 4 - 7 years and Long Term 8 - 10 years

7.4.4 Asset Management Plan

To ensure the aquatics facilities are maintained in accordance with industry standards it is recommended that Council implement an Aquatics Facilities Asset Management Plan and site specific maintenance plans for all aquatics facilities in line with Technical Assessments prepared; and align Council's operational and renewal budgets.

Action Plan

Table 5: Asset Management Recommendations

Proposed Recommendation	Proposed Timing	Indicative Cost Range
That Council implement an Aquatics Facilities Asset Management Plan and maintenance plans for all aquatics facilities in line with Technical Assessments prepared; and align Council's operational and renewal budgets.	Short	\$30,000 - \$40,000 (if out-sourced)
Total		\$30,000 - \$40,000 (if out-sourced)

Note Timeline Scale: Short Term 1 - 3 years, Medium Term 4 - 7 years and Long Term 8 - 10 years



7.4.5 Outdoor Pool Upgrades

Further investigate identified upgrade options to the three outdoor pools in Daylesford, Clunes and Trentham. This includes the provision of warmer water, amenities, plant rooms and associated infrastructure.

The key findings that support this strategy include:

- The current outdoor pools are highly regarded by the local community as important community facilities for all ages.
- The need for warm water temperature for patrons, which was consistent feedback from the community.
- The need to improve the accessibility, functionality and usage of the existing outdoor pools to cater for broader user markets

Action Plan

Table 6: Strategic Direction Recommendations

Proposed Recommendation	Proposed Timing	Indicative Cost Range
That Council undertake a cost benefit analysis of installing electric heat pumps to replace the ineffective solar heating system, to increase the water temperature for bather comfort.	Short	\$20,000 - \$30,000 (Cost Benefit Analysis Report) \$1.8M - \$2.2M (Heat pump and plant room installation)
That Council develop an asset management plan and provides the required funding in the Capital Works program for the replacement, upgrade or renewal of facility infrastructure as it reaches end of life. This includes change rooms, shelters, seating and plant room equipment.	Short/ Medium	\$1.5M - \$2.5M (Asset renewal/ upgrades)
Total		\$3.32M - \$4.73M

Note Timeline Scale: Short Term 1 - 3 years, Medium Term 4 - 7 years and Long Term 8 - 10 years

7.4.6 Water Play Upgrades

Develop concept plans and cost estimates for the addition of water play facilities at the three outdoor pools to cater for the growing expectations of different aquatics experiences for families and children. This should include consideration of the enhancement of features at the Creswick Splash Park and further investigation and exploration of the identified replacement options for Calemben Toddlers Pool to ensure compliance with industry guidelines.

The key findings that support this strategy include:

- The current outdoor pools are aging and lack contemporary water play facilities for families and children.
- Creswick Splash Park is a popular destination for families which will require renewal in the future.
- The current Calemben Toddlers Pool is an aging asset reaching end of life. It also does not comply with current Royal Life Saving Society Guidelines for Safe Pool Operation.



Action Plan

Table 7: Strategic Direction Recommendations

Proposed Recommendation	Proposed Timing	Indicative Cost Range
That Council further investigate water play options and costs for the outdoor pool sites to enhance the facilities for families and children and attract higher participation.	Short/ Medium	Existing Resources
Consideration of feasibility and concept plans for water play and toddler zone to replace the aging toddler pool infrastructure at the outdoor pool sites.	Medium	\$40,000 - \$50,000 (Feasibility and Concept Plans) \$1.8M - \$2.2M (New waterplay & plant rooms)
That Council upgrade or renew infrastructure as it reaches end of life at Creswick Splash Park. This includes Splash Park features, shelters, seating and plant room equipment.	Medium/ Long	\$150,000 - \$250,000
That Council investigate and explore options for water play experiences at Calemben Park to ensure a low risk environment for toddlers and children.	Short/ Medium	\$10,000 - \$20,000 (Scoping Study)
Total		\$2M - \$2.52M

Note Timeline Scale: Short Term 1 - 3 years, Medium Term 4 - 7 years and Long Term 8 - 10 years

7.4.7 Indoor Aquatics Facility Planning

The Aquatics Strategy identifies the need for access to an indoor all year round aquatics facility to support the needs of Hepburn Shire residents.

Further detailed planning work including feasibility, business case and funding strategy is required to fully understand Council's ability to fund, develop and operate an indoor aquatics facility. The scope of the detailed investigation should include exploring Aquatics Provision Options, Facility Benchmarking of similar size aquatics facilities within the rural and regional areas, Facility Components, Concept Plan, Capital Cost estimate, Financial Operating Model, Site Assessment, Funding Strategy (Council and External).

The evidence that supports the need is:

- Hepburn population demographics - the younger and older demographic profile of the Shire requires access to indoor aquatics facilities to support the key areas of learn to swim, therapy, aquatics programs and recreational swimming. The travel and climate conditions make it difficult for some residents to access aquatics services in neighbouring municipalities i.e. Ballarat and Macedon Ranges
- Identified Community Need – extensive feedback from the community engagement process identified a strong need and desire for access to a year-round aquatics facility for learn to swim, therapy, aquatics programs and recreational swimming.
- Current facilities barriers to participation – evidence that the existing Hepburn aquatics facilities are underutilised due to aging infrastructure, cold water temperatures, poor accessibility and facilities are not meeting identified community needs

Action Plan

Table 8: Strategic Direction Recommendations

Proposed Recommendation	Proposed Timing	Indicative Cost Range
That Council accept the identified community need for access to a year round indoor aquatics facility to support the needs of the Hepburn Shire residents.	Short	N/A
That funding be provided in the Council budget for further detailed investigation and the development of a feasibility study/business case that will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquatics provision options • Preferred location • Facility components and concept plan • Capital cost estimate • Financial operating model • Funding Strategy. 	Short	\$40,000 - \$80,000
Based on the outcome of the feasibility study and business case develop an advocacy plan to seek internal and external funding (state and federal governments) including broader partnership opportunities to support the development of an indoor aquatics centre.	Medium	\$30,000 – 40,000 (Funding and Advocacy Strategy)
Total		\$70,000 - \$120,000

Note Timeline Scale: Short Term 1 - 3 years, Medium Term 4 - 7 years and Long Term 8 - 10 years

7.4.8 Strategic Recommendations Indicative Cost Summary

The table below provides a high level summary of the total indicative cost range estimates for the Strategic Recommendations Actions outlined above.

Table 9: Strategic Recommendations Cost Indicative Range Summary

Strategic Recommendation	Indicative Cost Range
7.4.1 Facility Upgrades – Compliance and OH&S Works	\$415,000 - \$480,000 *
7.4.2 Management and Operation	\$20,000 - \$30,000 *
7.4.3 Facility Programming and Activation	\$10,000 - \$20,000 *
7.4.4 Asset Management Plan	\$30,000 - \$40,000 *
7.4.5 Outdoor Pool Upgrades	\$3,320,000 - \$4,730,000 *
7.4.6 Waterplay Upgrades	\$2,000,000 - \$2,520,000 *
7.4.7 Indoor Aquatics Facility Planning	\$120,000 - \$160,000 *
Total Indicative Cost Range	\$5,915,000 - \$7,980,000 *

**Note: Indicative costs only – estimates are likely change over time subject to timing of delivery, cost escalation, CPI and final scope of works for each project. The figures exclude contingencies and project management fees.*

Funding the implementation of the Strategic Directions Recommendations and Actions would be subject to achieving funding as part of future Council budgeting processes and seeking external partner funding opportunities where applicable.

The further work undertaken as part of Indoor Aquatics Facility Planning mentioned in Table 9 will identify the capital and operating costs associated with an Indoor Aquatics Facility. This will need to be further considered by Council at the appropriate time.

Warranties

AND DISCLAIMERS

The information contained in this report is provided in good faith. While Otium Planning Group has applied their own experience to the task, they have relied upon information supplied to them by other persons and organisations.

We have not conducted an audit of the information provided by others but have accepted it in good faith. Some of the information may have been provided 'commercial in confidence' and as such these venues or sources of information are not specifically identified. Readers should be aware that the

preparation of this report may have necessitated projections of the future that are inherently uncertain and that our opinion is based on the underlying representations, assumptions and projections detailed in this report.

There will be differences between projected and actual results because events and circumstances frequently do not occur as expected and those differences may be material. We do not express an opinion as to whether actual results will approximate projected results, nor can we confirm,

underwrite or guarantee the achievability of the projections as it is not possible to substantiate assumptions which are based on future events.

Accordingly, neither Otium Planning Group, nor any member or employee of Otium Planning Group, undertakes responsibility arising in any way whatsoever to any persons other than client in respect of this report, for any errors or omissions herein, arising through negligence or otherwise however caused.





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 www.facebook.com/hepburncouncil

DAYLESFORD

Cnr. Duke & Albert Streets,
Daylesford
8:30am – 5:00pm

CRESWICK

Creswick Hub
68 Albert Street, Creswick
8:30am – 5:00pm

TRENTHAM

13 Albert Street, Trentham
Mon, Wed, Fri 10am-5pm
Sat 10am-1pm

CLUNES

The Warehouse – Clunes
36 Fraser Street, Clunes
Mon & Thurs 10am – 6pm
Wed & Fri 10am – 4pm

Prepared by Otium Planning Group Pty Ltd

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12 EMBRACING OUR PAST AND PLANNING FOR OUR FUTURE

12.1 AWARDING OF CONTRACT HEPBU.RFT2021.06 - KERB AND CHANNEL UPGRADE OF PEARMAN ST CRESWICK DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

In providing this advice to Council as the Coordinator Engineering, I Tim Powell have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. CONFIDENTIAL - Tender Evaluation Report HEPBU.RFT2021.06 [12.1.1 - 8 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to award contract HEPBU.RFT2021.06 - Kerb and Channel Upgrade of Pearman St, Creswick.

Work under this contract involve the upgrade of Pearman Street, formalisation of drainage and the construction of pedestrian footpath links.

This segment of Pearman Street runs along the Creswick Creek between Water and Victoria Streets. The upgraded road will become one-way from Water to Victoria Street (South to North) with a provision for two-way traffic access to the CFA for emergency vehicles. The change in use is due to the limited available space to enable sufficient width to cater for both the shared path and new formalised road.

Officers have engaged with adjacent business owners, the CFA and the North Central Catchment Management Authority whilst also advertising the proposed changes with the community through social media and onsite signage. No formal submissions were received however many queries were responded to through a dedicated FAQ page on Participate Hepburn.

The proposed new footpath will ultimately connect Calembeen Park and the Creswick Community Park with the soon to be developed, Hammon Park precinct.

Additional road maintenance works in Victoria Street, adjacent to Pearman Street will be undertaken concurrently to facilitate cost efficiencies and limit the disruption to the public and traffic as much as possible.

The tender for these works were invited via public advertisement on Council's website and have been evaluated by the tender evaluation panel in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 1. Awards Contract Number HEPBU.RFT2021.06 for the fixed lump sum of \$287,015.54 (exclusive of GST) for the contract to Butler Excavations Pty Ltd;*
- 2. Approves Council Officers to make variations and additions to the Contract, in excess of the awarded lump sum contract value, within approved Officer Delegations and approved budgets and contingencies;*
- 3. Delegates the Chief Executive Officer to sign and seal the contract documents on behalf of Council.*
- 4. Resolve that the attached Tender Evaluation Report remains confidential and that the Minutes record the successful tenderer and the accepted tender price.*

MOTION

That Council:

- 1. Awards Contract Number HEPBU.RFT2021.06 for the fixed lump sum of \$287,015.54 (exclusive of GST) for the contract to Butler Excavations Pty Ltd;*
- 2. Approves Council Officers to make variations and additions to the Contract, in excess of the awarded lump sum contract value, within approved Officer Delegations and approved budgets and contingencies;*
- 3. Delegates the Chief Executive Officer to sign and seal the contract documents on behalf of Council; and*
- 4. Resolves that the attached Tender Evaluation Report remains confidential and that the Minutes record the successful tenderer and the accepted tender price.*

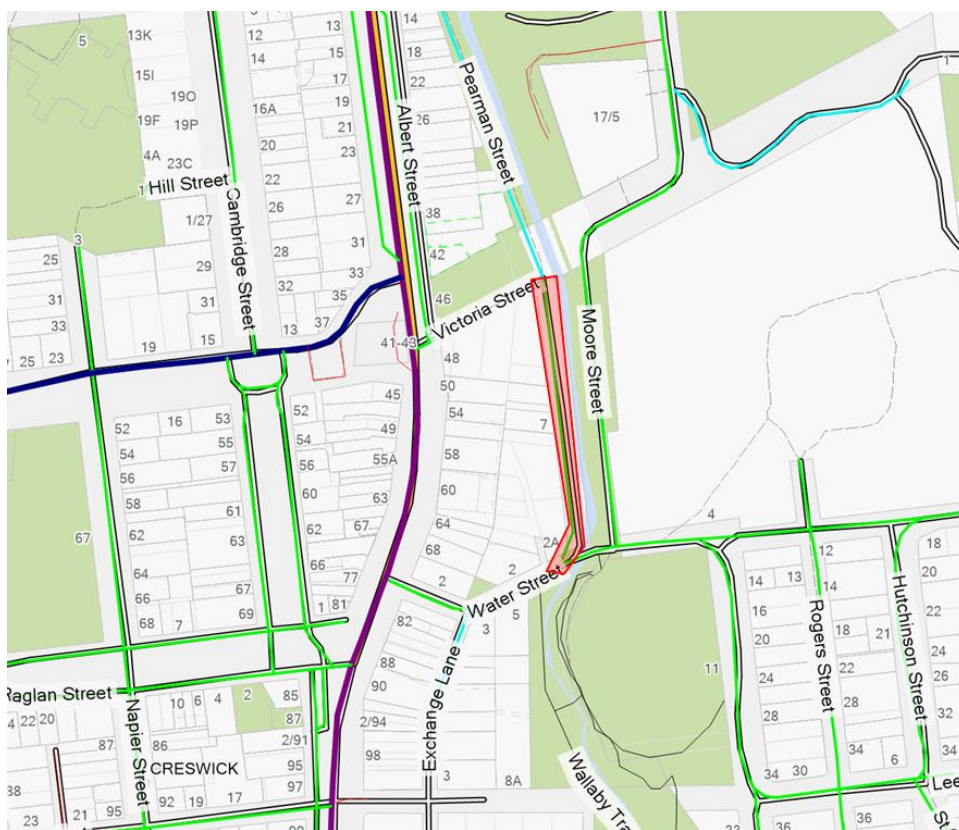
Moved: Cr Don Henderson

Seconded: Cr Tessa Halliday

Carried

BACKGROUND

As per Council's Procurement Policy, tenders were sought for the Kerb and Channel and road sealing Upgrade of Pearman St, Creswick.



This section of Pearman St runs along the Creswick Creek Levee between Water and Victoria Streets. The upgraded road will become one-way from North to South with a provision for two-way traffic access to the CFA for emergency vehicles.

A new footpath will connect Calemben Park and the Creswick Community Park with, the soon to be developed, Hammon Park precinct.

KEY ISSUES

Tenders HEPBU.RFT2021.06 - Kerb and Channel Upgrade of Pearman St, Creswick were invited via public advertisement on Council's website and in the Ballarat Courier on 23/10/2021 and tenders were received from 7 tenderers.

The tender submissions were evaluated by a panel consisting of:

Name	Title
Chair: Paul O' Leary	Project Engineer - Infrastructure
Kishan Shrestha	Engineering Officer
Tim Powell	Coordinator Engineering
Sean Ludeke	Coordinator Parks and Open Spaces

The Evaluation panel evaluated the tenderers received against the Mandatory Criteria asset out in the procurement policy.

Criteria	Weighting
Price	50%
Risk / OHS/ Quality Management	10%
Local Content	5%
Response to Specification	Pass/Fail
Experience and Qualifications	20%
Business and Financial Capacity	10%
Sustainability	5%
SUBTOTAL	100%

The outcome of the tender evaluation is detailed in the attached Confidential Tender Evaluation Report.

POLICY AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Council Plan 2017-2021

Quality Community Infrastructure

1. Responsibly manage our assets portfolio including roads and transport infrastructure, buildings, recreation and sporting facilities and public toilets by inspecting and monitoring maintenance and renewal needs. This is achieved through planning for and implementing asset renewal and upgrade programs or new facilities that meet community expectations such as hubs, streetscapes, roads and building assets.

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

New and better footpath connections reduce vehicle use by allowing safer pedestrian and cycling connections.

Existing materials will be reused onsite where possible and surplus materials earmarked for other Council projects.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Awarding of this contract carries a level of risk commensurate with medium complexity infrastructure projects. Financial risk is inherent with most infrastructure projects that can have latent conditions.

Award of the contract is approximately \$1,105.54 (0.3%) in excess of the allocated budgets and the over spend will be drawn from existing savings on other infrastructure projects.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

Apart from the financial risk referenced above, there are minimal risk implications associated with this report. The expected construction related risks shall be addressed in pre-commencement site meetings and mitigated by managing the work site and providing traffic management in accordance with AS 1742.3.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

During the design phase Council Officers engaged with adjacent business owners, the CFA and North Central Catchment Management Authority. Some material design changes were facilitated based on this stakeholder feedback.

The Community Engagement Policy - engagement matrix indicates a low level of required engagement, however formal notice of the works and the intention to change the road to one-way was posted in the government gazette, signs placed onsite and through social media. Submissions were called for a 30-day period. No formal submissions were received however many queries were responded to through a dedicated FAQ page on Councils Participate Hepburn website.

13 A DYNAMIC AND RESPONSIVE COUNCIL
13.1 HEPBURN SHIRE ADVOCACY STATEMENT
DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

In providing this advice to Council as the Grants and Projects Officer, I Kelly Lewis have no interests to disclose in this report.

This report will be presented by:

- Andrew Burgess, Director Organisational Services

ATTACHMENTS

1. HEP Advocacy Statement 2122 V 4 [**13.1.1** - 17 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This advocacy document has been drafted to align with the recently adopted Community Vision 2021 -2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025 and includes key advocacy projects in addition to shovel ready projects traditionally included in this type of document.

This advocacy document is particularly important to support Council lobbying efforts as we enter into an election cycle of both State and Federal Governments within the next 12 months and in the lead up to the 2022 budget.

The advocacy document will be updated annually to ensure it reflects further projects identified during strategic work being undertaken in the Council Plan.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. *Adopts the draft 'Hepburn Shire Council Advocacy Statement'*
2. *Acknowledges that to ensure a well-balanced portfolio of initiatives, the 'Advocacy Statement' will be reviewed annually to identify further projects from the Council Vision and Council Plan as the current and future strategic work evolves.*

MOTION

That Council:

1. *Adopts the draft 'Hepburn Shire Council Advocacy Statement'*
2. *Acknowledges that to ensure a well-balanced portfolio of initiatives, the 'Advocacy Statement' will be reviewed annually to identify further projects from the Council Vision and Council Plan as the current and future strategic work evolves.*

Moved: Cr Jen Bray

Seconded: Cr Don Henderson

Carried

BACKGROUND

Council has previously identified 'priority projects' for the purpose of advocacy to State and Federal Government. The list of projects was presented to Council at the September 2021 Ordinary Meeting of Council for adoption. At that meeting Council deferred a decision to adopt. A review of the current 'priority projects' has since been undertaken by Councillors and an evolved advocacy document drafted for adoption.

KEY ISSUES

Acknowledging the draft Community Vision 2021 -2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025 including Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, it is important to note that further Key Advocacy Projects will be identified and considered for inclusion resulting from current and future strategies, including:

- Aquatics Strategy
- Hepburn Settlement Strategy
- Sustainable Hepburn
- Hepburn Shire Master planning

All project costs are high level estimates only and will provide an indicative level of investment required by government. They do not currently contain information on any Council contributions budgeted or not budgeted, as it is expected that this will be negotiated with funding bodies depending on programs and level of investment on offer. They will however be reflected in Council's 10-year Financial Plan.

POLICY AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

A dynamic and responsive Council

5.2 Actively communicate, inform and engage with our community about events and decision-making

5.5 Strong asset management and renewal.

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no sustainability implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Initiatives and projects identified do not currently contain information on Council contributions budgeted or not budgeted. It is expected that this will be negotiated

with funding bodies depending on program guidelines and level of investment on offer.

All endorsed projects will be considered in the Financial Plan.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications associated with this report.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Projects included for consideration were originally identified as part of previous community engagement activities including master planning, council plans and strategies. Once adopted by Council, the Advocacy Statement will be displayed and available on Council's website.

.....
**Advocacy
Statement**
.....

Hepburn
SHIRE COUNCIL



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Hepburn Shire Council acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung as the Traditional Owners of the lands and waters on which we live and work. On these lands, Djaara have performed age-old ceremonies of celebration, initiation and renewal.

We recognise their resilience through dispossession and it is a testament to their continuing culture and tradition, which is strong and thriving.

We also acknowledge the neighbouring Traditional Owners, the Wurundjeri to our South East and the Wadawurrung to our South West and pay our respect to all Aboriginal peoples, their culture, and lore. We acknowledge their living culture and the unique role they play in the life of this region.

Advocating for improved outcomes for our Shire through services improvements and capital investment is a key role for Council. Our Council will raise issues that matter to our community.

We do this by:

- Representing our community
- Telling the “Hepburn story” to government and community
- Influencing policy and decision makers
- Attracting and securing investment
- Enabling and supporting strategic partnerships
- Building Council and community capacity for advocacy
- Championing community disadvantage
- Research to inform decisions and funding applications
- Strengthening our reputation as a leader in local government, an advocate for our community and experts in our field

To help us achieve:

- Funding to implement key projects and initiatives
- A change in government policy
- Promoting social justice issues
- Stronger ties with our strategic partners
- Greater confidence and trust in Council
- A more capable and resilient community
- Strong leadership at the local, state and federal level

It is important that the advocacy agenda remains flexible and fluid, enabling Council to be responsive to changing community needs and changes in political and economic environments.

OUR VISION

Hepburn Shire – an inclusive rural community located in Dja Dja Wurrung country where all people are valued, partnerships are fostered, environment is protected, diversity supported, and innovation embraced.

Hepburn Shire Council Advocacy Statement presents Council’s key projects and initiatives and is supported by the recently adopted Community Vision 2021- 2031 and Council Plan 2021-2025 which also incorporates the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

The Community Vision and Council Plan is Council’s key strategic document and was developed with extensive and broad community engagement and consultation through a Community Deliberative Panel. Our community’s goals, aspirations and priorities have been captured and represented in five key focus areas:



A resilient, sustainable and protected environment

A responsive, adaptive, and resilient community that addresses changes to our climate and biodiversity.



A healthy supported, and empowered community

A community that values connection, supports diversity, health, and wellbeing, and is inclusive of all people and their needs.



Embracing our past and planning for the future

We acknowledge and empower the Traditional Owners and other cultures of our area to protect our historical roots while planning for future generations.



Diverse economy and opportunities

Our community is enhanced by a diverse and resilient economy that supports local aspirations through opportunity.



A dynamic and responsive council

Council and the community partner to achieve their aspirations through excellent communication and engagement, the delivery of effective services, strong financial management, and governance.

OUR SHIRE, OUR COMMUNITY

FOUR PRIORITIES WERE IDENTIFIED FOR HEALTH AND WELLBEING:



Tackling climate change and its impact on health



Increasing healthy eating



Improving mental wellbeing



Preventing all forms of violence

17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD



The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals otherwise known as the Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

“Hepburn Shire Council understands the importance of these goals and will use them to support our future planning”
Council Plan 2021-2025

Hepburn Shire is small rural Shire, with a population of 16,157. The population is projected to reach 17,700 by 2036. The Shire covers an area of 1,473 square kilometers which includes Clunes, Creswick, Daylesford, Hepburn Springs and Trentham. It also includes the villages of Glenlyon, Allendale, Kingston, Leonard’s Hill, Lyonville, Newlyn, Denver, and Smeaton, and other smaller settlements, each with their own unique identity and character. Located in central Victoria, the Shire is ideally situated within easy access to Melbourne, Ballarat, and Bendigo. It is a great place to live, work, invest and visit. The Shire is situated in the State electoral division of Ripon and Ballarat in the Federal electorate.

Hepburn Shire has a rich cultural history which began with the Dja Dja Wurrung People, the Traditional Owners and custodians of the area. Mass migration during Victoria’s gold rush era saw many cultures settle in the region, which created a distinctive architecture and culture, still present throughout the Shire today.

The Shire is renowned for its native forests, mineral springs reserves and waterways, botanical gardens, volcanic plains with rich soils, gold, and many spectacular heritage buildings. It is a popular tourist destination that has a reputation for indulgence and relaxation, festivals and outdoor recreational activities.

The Shire has a vibrant and diverse welcoming community that is well serviced by schools and childcare, recreation facilities, libraries, hospitals and shopping precincts. There is a large range of events throughout the year including markets, community run festivals, book fairs, LGBTIQ+ festivals and artisan masterclasses. With a strong arts community there are opportunities to visit artist studios, exhibitions and workshops.

COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY

The Hepburn Shire community identifies strongly with their natural environment. Council supports this vision and will continue to build strong, safe and resilient communities through emergency management preparedness to prepare for and respond to natural disasters. It will also focus on encouraging a diverse economy that is better prepared to respond to shocks, like the pandemic. Council along with its strong partnerships with government, will continue to support communities and businesses through adverse disaster events and health crisis.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC

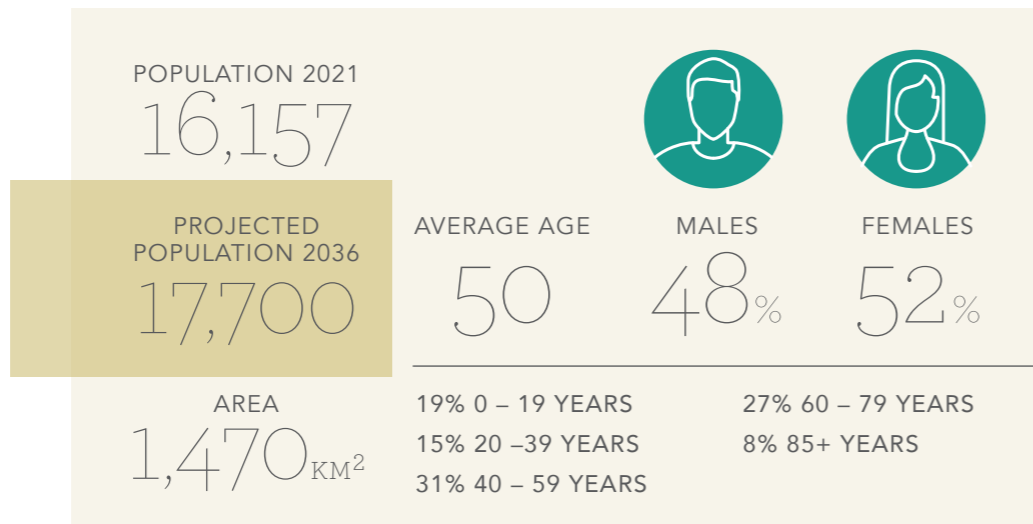
As the Shire, along with the rest of the country navigates the new COVID normal, business support, community and economic recovery will remain a high priority. Our region has been severely impacted by the pandemic, contributing to the varying challenges for businesses, especially those in the tourism and hospitality sectors.

IMPACT OF STORM EVENTS

TRENTHAM STORM - JUNE 2021 In June 2021, Trentham and the surrounding towns, including the Wombat State Forest, were severely impacted by an intense storm. Approximately 35% of the Shire’s footprint was affected with a reported 335 private properties damaged. Council assets damaged estimated cost of \$7-10M. The full extent of business impacts are still being assessed. A clean up and recovery program led by Council and Bushfire Recovery Victoria is ongoing.

CRESWICK STORM & FLOODS - JANUARY 2022 In January 2022, a massive storm front bringing flooding rains and severe hail, impacted Creswick and surrounding towns. Businesses and the community were impacted by flooding, and in particular the agricultural district of Dean, where substantial crops were lost. The full extent impacts are being assessed and Council’s clean up and recovery efforts are ongoing.

OUR COMMUNITY

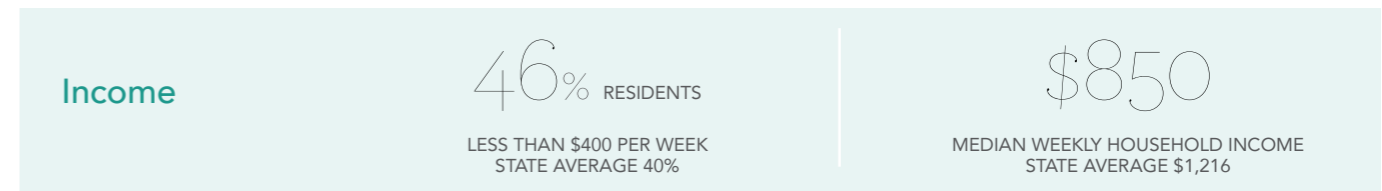
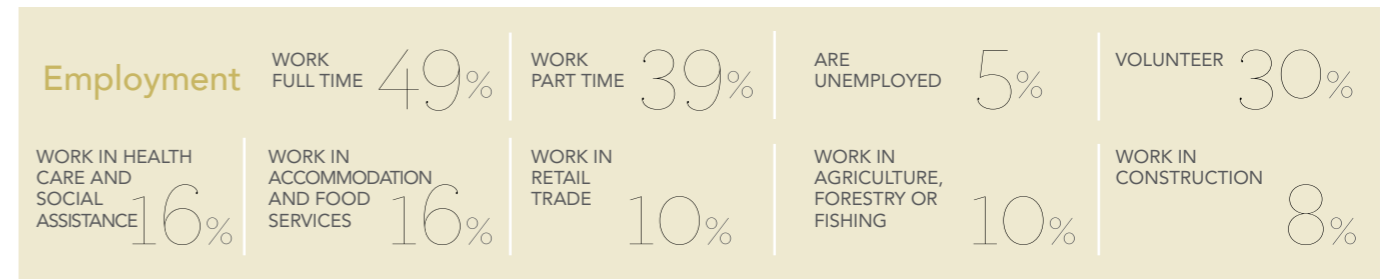
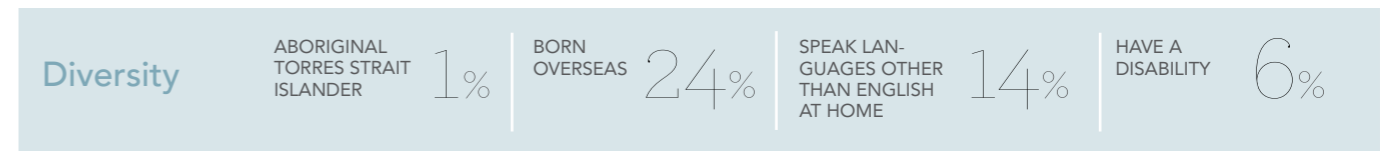


Where we live

- 25% Birch Ward
- 14% Cameron Ward
- 14% Coliban Ward
- 33% Creswick Ward
- 14% Holcombe Ward

Note: The 6% 'Have a Disability' stated above relates to 'Has need for assistance with core activities' cohort on 2016 Census Night, 2016 Census Community Profiles: Hepburn (S) (abs.gov.au). This data provides an indication of the characteristics of people who report a need for assistance as opposed to the total population prevalent of people with a profound or severe disability (based on ABS Census Dictionary 2016).

However, in 2018, according to the Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings, 2018 | Australian Bureau of Statistics (abs.gov.au), 17% of Victorians have a disability, defined as 'any limitation, restriction or impairment which restricts everyday activities and has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months'. With no data available for small areas, based on the State average and referenced against the Shire's 2018 estimated residential population of 15,810, approximately 2,687 residents potentially fall within this definition.



Top 5 Industries



KEY ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

Council has identified five focus areas in the Council Plan 2021-2025 that help work towards the aims of the Community Vision.

FOCUS AREA 1: A resilient, sustainable and protected environment



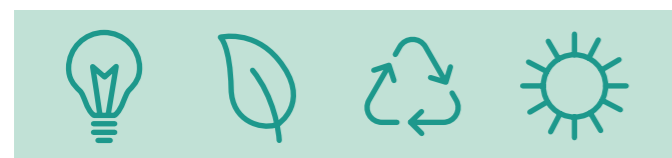
A responsive, adaptive, and resilient community that address changes to our climate and biodiversity

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE?

- 1.1 Adapt to and mitigate climate change to reach net-zero community emissions by 2030
- 1.2 Prioritise environmental management, protection, and regeneration
- 1.3 Transition to ecologically sustainable and accountable tourism
- 1.4 Develop meaningful policies and strategic partnerships that link sustainability and public health
- 1.5 Protect and regenerate the natural resources of the Shire including soils, water and ecological systems, from both current and future threats

INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS THAT WILL GET US THERE....

SUSTAINABLE HEPBURN



Together, we're creating a healthy and sustainable future for all. Hepburn is a thriving low waste, beyond zero net emissions Shire which is resilient, liveable and has high biodiversity values

The development of the Sustainable Hepburn strategy is our commitment to environmental sustainability, guiding action and investment to reduce our impact on climate change, protect and enhance biodiversity, reduce, reuse and recycle while being more climate and water resilient in the face of projected climatic changes.

It will be an ambitious but realistic strategic plan to guide Council's decisions, actions and partnerships on environmental sustainability issues with the community and government.

The scope of Sustainable Hepburn includes four key sustainable themes

- **A beyond emissions Shire** – achieve and maintain beyond zero net emissions from council activities by installing and purchasing renewable energy, increasing energy efficiency, designing for local climates, offsetting where appropriate and providing options for low fossil fuel-based activities
- **Natural environment and biodiversity** – Protect and enhance biodiversity values across the Shire through restoration of natural environmental values, appropriate land use, knowledge sharing, and improved capacity of Council
- **A low waste Shire** – Reduce waste to landfill, increase and improve recycling and extend services across the Shire for reuse of materials and develop circular economy opportunities
- **A climate and water resilient Shire** – Council's infrastructure, services and the community can adapt to the impacts of a changing climate, know what actions to take in extreme weather, are more informed about climate risk and water is valued as a vital natural resource.

The strategy will be developed utilising the skills and knowledge of our community members through the establishment of a Community Reference Group, as well as broad community engagement activities.

The Sustainable Hepburn projects and initiatives that Council will pursue are yet to be determined and will be guided by the strategic planning work to be developed during 2022. Once these actions have been identified, we will advocate for continued partnerships and funding from State and Federal government.

WESTERN VICTORIA TRANSMISSION NETWORK (WVTN) PROJECT

The WVTN project is a proposal for a new 190km overhead high-voltage transmission line between Sydnham and Bulgana in the west of the state that is required to unlock the renewable energy potential of Victoria.

Council is very supportive of renewable energy, and the importance of transmitting it to the electricity grid. However, it does not believe the WVTN Project is a quality renewable project and in fact is likely to have a more detrimental adverse impact on our community (and the wider Victorian community), than benefit. Our Shire is one of the worst effected Councils arising from this project, with both planned transmission lines of 220kv and 500kv and a 24ha terminal station being proposed within our Council area on some of the highest value agriculture land in Australia.

For this reason, Council will continue to be a strong advocate on behalf of the community against the proposed route and the size and location of the terminal station. Council will be advocating for detailed community engagement and underground placement considerations. Council will be making a strong submission to the upcoming ESS process and will also support community submissions during the process.

NET ZERO

Council unanimously declared a climate emergency in September 2019. In doing so, we joined around 1900 jurisdictions across 34 countries recognising that climate change poses serious risks to the people of Hepburn Shire, Victoria, Australia and the world.

Our response is to adapt to and mitigate climate change to reach net-zero community emissions by 2030, by aiming for an annual reduction in Council's corporate emissions, community emissions, reduction in waste to landfill, and through climate and sustainability programs. This will involve continued partnership with Hepburn's Zero Net Emissions Transition (Z-Net) to deliver on the 10-year 'Community Transition Plan' that was developed through extensive consultation with community, industry and government.

KEY ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

FOCUS AREA 2: A healthy, supported and empowered community



A community that values connection, supports diversity, health and wellbeing, and is inclusive of all people and their needs

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE?

- 2.1 Support appropriate land use and accommodate more affordable long-term housing within townships that confirms with the character of the area
- 2.2 Increase the availability and accessibility of services in the Hepburn Shire area to support liveability, health, and wellbeing
- 2.3 Optimise the use of public spaces to increase participation and community connection
- 2.4 Assist our community to increase access to healthy food to improve nutrition, reduce chronic disease, improve mental wellbeing and strengthen the local food production system
- 2.5 Improved mental wellbeing within the community

INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS THAT WILL GET US THERE....

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Council recognises that access to safe and affordable housing is an emerging and critical issue for its community and is committed to an inclusive and diverse community and will support improved community access to safe and affordable housing through:

- Advocacy to other levels of government and working in partnership with the community
- Conduct research to inform policy and strategy development and advocacy
- Development and implementation of an affordable housing policy and strategy that identifies opportunities in land-use planning and social policy domains
- Ensuring its affordable housing policy commitment is tested through community engagement and appropriately resourced to ensure effective implementation.

It is Council's strategic intent to invest in research to better understand the extent of the problem, develop a comprehensive policy and strategy and identify where it can make a difference through advocacy, partnerships, land-use planning mechanisms and potentially direct investment.

AQUATIC FACILITIES

The Hepburn Shire Aquatics Strategy (2022 -2032) is currently being undertaken and once finalised will provide a 10-year priority plan to guide future investment into the Shire's aquatic facilities. This section will be updated once the strategy is adopted by Council and projects identified will be included for further advocacy.

DAYLESFORD HOSPITAL UPGRADE

Council will advocate for access to high quality health services including outreach services through the upgrade of the 160-year-old hospital in Daylesford operated by Central Highlands Rural Health.

The range of healthcare services provided include acute, urgent care, rehabilitation, respite, palliative and community support services. The Hospital is a regional centre for dialysis and also provides a range of surgical procedures. The hospital has remained unchanged and the aging infrastructure will not be suitable to deliver services to the standards required today and future-proof the facility to continue to meet the health needs of our community for decades to come.

Currently a master plan is being developed for the site which includes the expansion of the facility to meet best practice as well as providing new broader services to the local population. Of the planned development there are four particular projects which will allow for immediate improvement in the delivery of health services.

These projects include;

- Expanded Community Health Care Centre (estimated budget \$12.5m)
- New Community Access Centre (estimated budget \$5.1m)
- Improved Residential Aged Care Facility (estimated budget \$5.2m)
- Urgent Care Centre (estimated budget \$4.1m)

HEPBURN TRANSPORT CONNECTIONS

Council will lobby government for more equitable and quality transport options for better access to schools, work and community participation that will achieve improvements in community wellbeing. It will also continue to implement the recommendations of the Hepburn Shire Local Transport Benchmarking Study.

KEY ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

FOCUS AREA 3: Embracing our past and planning for the future



We acknowledge and empower the traditional owners and other cultures of our area to protect our historical roots while planning for future generations

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE?

- 3.1 Partner with and empower our Traditional Owners and broader community to acknowledge, understand, celebrate, and preserve our area's cultures, traditions, and environs
- 3.2 Protect and enhance the existing character of our towns and rural settings through community inclusive strategic planning to strengthen planning controls on growth and development
- 3.3 Build and maintain quality infrastructure that supports and promotes liveability and active living in the community

INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS THAT WILL GET US THERE....

HEPBURN SETTLEMENT STRATEGY PHASE 1 ~ 1

Comprehensive suite of strategic planning work to secure and protect current and future environmental preservation, land use and development goals for the community.

CLUNES TOWN HALL AND POLICE COURTHOUSE ~ 2

Restoring the 1873 Town Hall to its original grandeur will not only preserve this historic building but will enable full community use to be reinstated.

DOUG LINDSAY RECREATION RESERVE, CRESWICK ~ 3

Implementing recommendations from the Masterplan, the project will enhance accessibility and safety, increase the scope and quality of active recreation contributing to community health and wellbeing outcomes.

CLUNES OPEN SPACES DEVELOPMENT

Council is undertaking the development of Masterplans for the three community public open spaces in Clunes; The Bull Milgate Reserve (Clunes Recreation Reserve); Queens Park; and Clunes Pioneers Park. The Master Planning process will help guide the future planning of sport and active recreation provision in Clunes over the next 10 years.

GLENLYON RECREATION RESERVE PAVILION ~ 4

A key priority of the Reserve's Masterplan, upgrading the pavilion will provide a welcoming and inclusive community facility and accommodate the reserve's diverse many user groups.

KEY ADVOCACY CAMPAIGNS

FOCUS AREA 4: Diverse economy and opportunities



Our community is enhanced by a diverse and resilient economy that supports local aspirations through opportunity.

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE?

- 4.1 Work in partnership to attract and retain young people in our area through the provision of improved digital connectivity, education opportunities, employment pathways, affordable housing, improved public and active transport options, and leadership opportunities
- 4.2 Advocate for improved internet infrastructure to support business, residents who work from home, students and other citizens of the Hepburn Shire area
- 4.3 Support and facilitate a diverse and innovative local economy that encourages an increase of local businesses with diverse offerings to achieve positive social, economic and environmental impacts
- 4.4 Develop and promote the circular economy to diversify our local economy and support our sustainability goals

INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS THAT WILL GET US THERE....

CRESWICK TRAILS

The Creswick Trails project will deliver 100km of purpose-built mountain bike trail, originating from the Hammon Park Trailhead, pump track and car park. The finished trail network will be one of the Shire's flagship recreation assets, attracting more visitors to the region, boosting tourism and the local economy. The network will feature a variety of trail types and ride zones, including a series of accessible trails designed and constructed specifically for riders who have limitations riding a standard, up-right, leg powered mountain bike. These adaptive trails will be the first of their kind in Victoria. The initial project is funded through a partnership between Regional Development Victoria and Council.

Further work is currently being planned such as signage; interpretation; emergency markers; Emergency Services (ESTA) mapping; and road crossing infrastructure, to ensure a safe and usable network.

DAYLESFORD TO HANGING ROCK RAIL TRAIL ~ 5

In partnership with Macedon Ranges Shire Council, the Rail Trail will build on the region's wellness brand and encourage the community and its visitors to explore and experience natural landscapes. The Rail Trail will be sustainable, accessible and promotes physical activity and social connection.

CROSSING THE DIVIDE – SPA COUNTRY RAILWAY – PLANNING AND DESIGN ~ 6

The project will plan and design a further 9km extended rail service from Bullarto to Trentham, bringing tourists into Trentham and creating a choice of full-day, half-day and 2 hour journeys and increase visitation into the town of Trentham.

HEPBURN TRAILS ACTIVATION ~ 7

Enabling the development and activation of Hepburn Shire's existing iconic tracks and trails and potential opportunity for promoting Indigenous Heritage.

MINERAL SPRINGS RESERVES DEVELOPMENT ~ 8

A program of works to develop and elevate the Shire's Mineral Springs sites that will increase tourism and community amenity.

MAJOR TOWNS STREETScape IMPROVEMENTS ~ 9

Implement streetscape improvements across six townships that will lead to the activation of spaces, promote economic activity, improve the pedestrian experience and safety, and attractiveness.

WHEELERS BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, LAWRENCE ~ 10

Repair the historic bridge to increase load limits and safety to future proof road access for the Shire's agribusinesses.

INSTITUTE OF GASTRONOMY, DAYLESFORD ~ 11

Advocate for the construction of a flagship regional education facility in partnership with William Angliss TAFE, that will attract and grow investment in the food industry, will achieve skilled workforce outcomes and support the transformation of the good food economy

ACCESS TO SECONDARY EDUCATION

Advocacy for an additional secondary school in the west of the Shire to provide choice for families and help address the high level of disengagement with young people across the Shire.

FOCUS AREA 5:
A dynamic and responsive council



Council and the community partner to achieve their aspirations through excellent communication and engagement, the delivery of effective services, strong financial management and governance

WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE?

- 5.1 Harness community expertise
- 5.2 Actively communicate, inform and engage with our community about events and decision-making
- 5.3 A sustainable and agile organisation with strong corporate governance that supports excellent operations
- 5.4 Improve staff resourcing, support and capacity building
- 5.5 Strong asset management and renewal
- 5.6 Be a leader in gender equality and equity and promote respect and safety in our community

INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS THAT WILL GET US THERE....

INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE RENEWAL AND MAINTAINENCE

Council will continue to advocate for government investment into the Shire’s infrastructure and roads through programs such as the Roads to Recovery, Black Spot and Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Programs, for our network of paths and roads in our Shire. This also includes advocacy for the return of the Country Roads and Bridges Program.

Council will pursue opportunities for co-investment for infrastructure renewal and development of our facilities and open spaces, utilising its strong partnerships with governments.

SHARED SERVICES PLANNING

Planning for a Shared Services model for Hepburn Shire Council, together with other neighbouring Councils, that will deliver greater service benefits for communities by strengthening the financial stability of all the participating Councils. The sharing of services encourages collaboration of knowledge and reduce costs and resources, so that Councils can deliver efficient and sustainable services to their communities.

OUR PARTNERS

Hepburn Shire strongly advocates for regional projects through its strong partnerships with our neighbouring LGAs, Regional Cities of Ballarat and Bendigo, State and Federal Government and Industry. These partnerships provide benefits and opportunities to our Shire’s businesses and community.

This includes, but not limited to, partnerships with:

- Central Highlands Council Groups
- Loddon Campaspe Councils Group
- Central Highlands Regional Partnership
- Regional Development Australia Grampians
- Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation
- Central Highlands Rural Health
- Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance
- Daylesford Macedon Tourism
- Hepburn Z-Net
- Hepburn Wind

REGIONAL PRIORITIES

This includes support for projects and advocacy activities in our region such as;

- Victorian Goldfields World Heritage UNESCO Bid to unlock the full potential of the Goldfields region, bringing economic diversification, jobs and investment into tourism
- Supporting the regional circular economy through the Ballarat Materials Recovery Facility which will see the establishment of organic and recyclable processing infrastructure within the region
- More community and affordable housing through the State Governments ‘Big Build’ Initiative.
- Commitment and response to adapt to and mitigate climate change through its partnerships with government, not-for-profits and industry to ensure that the lives of the community are improved.

And more broadly

- ‘Developing the Golden Triangle’ - Improved regional rail through increased freight and passenger services and reconnecting lines between Bendigo, Maryborough, Ballarat, and Geelong
- Maximising the region’s competitive advantage by capitalising on agricultural and food manufacturing with a focus on value-adding
- Realise the full benefits of digital innovation and inclusion
- Attract and educate workers to ensure that employers can thrive.

.....

Appendix: Project Information Sheets

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Hepburn Settlement Strategy – Phase 1

.....

 Hepburn Shire

 2021/22

 \$440,000 annually

 3 Jobs



ATTACHMENT 13.1.1

This will be the Shire's most comprehensive suite of Strategic Planning work in decades. Following on from the recommendations in the Planning Scheme Review, a considerable amount of Strategic Planning work is required to secure and protect current and future environmental preservation, land use, development goals for the community. The key pieces of work will be the Township Structure Plans, which also require suite of technical reports to be completed to inform and deliver them.





- Land Demand and Supply Study
- Biodiversity Strategy - flora and fauna study for township structure plans
- Aboriginal Heritage Strategy - part 1 indigenous engagement
- Agriculture and Rural Settlement Strategy - part 1 Restructure Plans
- Creswick Structure Plan - Part 1 tech reports: including Infrastructure and Services, Land Capability, Access Management, Native Vegetation Precinct Plan, and Heritage
- Community consultation for all township structure plans
- Distinctive Areas and Landscapes Study
- Hepburn Integrated Water Management Plan

✓ The entire environmental, social and economic future of the Shire of Hepburn is contingent on the successful application and delivery of the Hepburn Settlement Strategy.



FOCUS AREA 3: EMBRACING OUR PAST AND PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Clunes Town
Hall and Police
Courthouse
– Stage C

-  Clunes
-  2022/23
-  \$600,000
-  3 Jobs



Restoring the 1873 Town Hall to its original grandeur will not only preserve this historic building but will enable full community use to be reinstated. The Clunes Town Hall supports significant community events such as the annual Clunes Booktown, private functions, education programs and provides tourism opportunities with the restoration of the historically significant Courthouse. The rare example of a combined Courthouse and Town Hall is also a major attraction for Wesley College’s curriculum with history and drama classes and re-enactments of historical court proceedings.

A program of restoration works (Stage A & B) has been completed with structural underpinning of the building to secure the internal arches and wall rendering, with remedial works to the Police Courthouse, external façade painting and repairs to portico, completed in 2021.





Stage C includes repairs to the upstairs former clerical offices, upgrade of toilet facilities to meet current standards, heating, improvements to stormwater management and overall accessibility.

- ✓ Preservation of historic and iconic building
- ✓ Improve community facilities
- ✓ Supporting major events
- ✓ Supporting regional education opportunities



**FOCUS AREA 3:
EMBRACING OUR PAST AND PLANNING
FOR THE FUTURE**

Doug Lindsay
Recreation
Reserve
Masterplan
Implementation
- Stage 2

-  Creswick
-  2022/23
-  \$750,000+
-  5 Jobs



Doug Lindsay Recreation Reserve in Creswick is an active recreation reserve accommodating AFL, Netball, Soccer and Lawn Bowls activities. It also includes informal active recreation use such walking, free ball play and fitness training, and community events.

Stage One of the Masterplan implementation project is currently underway that will see the installation of CCTV / lighting, landscaping and main entrance. This was funded through the Commonwealth Government’s Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program 2020.

Stage 2 implementation will include the delivery of a water harvesting project, new playspace, and provision of outdoor fixed fitness equipment.

A future second Masterplan project will include planning for;

- Redevelopment of the community pavilion to include gender neutral change rooms to service use of the soccer pitches
- Additional parking and traffic management, and pedestrian reserve access
- Feasibility planning for a second bowling green

- ✓ Community health and wellbeing outcomes
- ✓ Significant community facility with multiple user groups
- ✓ Enhance the accessibility and safety
- ✓ Increase the scope and quality of the active recreation



**FOCUS AREA 3:
EMBRACING OUR PAST AND PLANNING
FOR THE FUTURE**



Glenlyon Recreation Reserve Pavilion

Glenlyon Recreation Reserve is a much-used reserve services Glenlyon and surrounding towns. It supports several sporting clubs, notably non-traditional, including the Riding for the Disabled, Pony Club and Adult Riding, Carriage Drivers, Gun Club, Collectors and Restorers, Landcare and various neighbours, residents and casual users. It is also home to some significant events including the New Year's Day Wood Chop.

The redevelopment of the Glenlyon Recreation Reserve is a key priority of the Glenlyon Recreation Reserve Masterplan. The redeveloped pavilion will provide universal access public amenities, upgraded meeting space and kitchen for minor catering purposes and storage to accommodate existing user groups.

- ✓ Provide a welcoming and inclusive community facility
- ✓ Accommodate the reserve's diverse formal and informal activities from many user groups
- ✓ Provide universal access public amenities

Glenlyon

2022/23

\$1.0M to 1.5M

7 Jobs



FOCUS AREA 3: EMBRACING OUR PAST AND PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE



Daylesford to Hanging Rock Rail Trail - Planning and Design

Building on the region's wellness brand, the Rail Trail will encourage visitors to unwind and explore the region's unique offering of dramatic scenery, food, wine and health and wellness activities, based around local mineral springs. Passing through beautiful landscapes the trail, along the former Karlsruhe-Daylesford railway, will offer a variety of quality visitor experiences only an hour from Melbourne International Airport and accessible by public transport.

The significant increase in visitors using the trail will provide huge opportunities for existing and new businesses, including farmgate produce sales. The Daylesford to Hanging Rock Rail Trail builds on the existing plans to develop the Woodend to Hanging Rock Rail Trail being developed by Macedon Ranges Shire Council.

The Daylesford to Tylden stage planning project will undertake significant, stakeholder consultation and design required to progress the project to construction and will complement the planning already undertaken by Macedon Ranges Shire for the Tylden to Hanging Rock portion of the Rail Trail.

Construction phase is estimated to be \$30M

Daylesford to Tylden

2022/23

\$1.5M

9 Jobs



FOCUS AREA 4: DIVERSE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES

- ✓ Significant increase in visitation (est. 62,5000 visits p.a.) across completed trail
- ✓ Economic benefit of \$4.1M annually
- ✓ Creating over 50 new jobs post construction
- ✓ Sustainable, accessible and promotes physical activity and social connection

Crossing the Divide – Spa Country Railway – Planning and Design

- Bullarto -Trentham
- 2022/23
- \$1.0M
- 5 Jobs



Hepburn Shire is a popular tourist destination that has a reputation for indulgence and relaxation, festivals and outdoor recreational activities.

There is an opportunity to uplift our tourism offer through an extension to the existing iconic and unique product by Daylesford Spa Country Railway, an accredited museum, which operates a vintage train service between Daylesford, Musk and Bullarto on the former Daylesford branch line. The popular tourist attraction currently journeys 9km through the picturesque Wombat State Forest and attracts over 12,000 patrons annually and contributes nearly \$1.7M to the local economy.

The project will plan and design a further 9km extended rail service from Bullarto to Trentham, bringing tourists into Trentham and creating a choice of full-day, half-day and 2 hour journeys and increase visitation into the large village of Trentham. An extension to the rail will also create an opportunity for the community to travel between Trentham and Daylesford.

- ✓ Enhancing business and creating opportunities for new tourism developments, products and employment
- ✓ Promotion and preservation of Victoria’s Rail history
- ✓ Opportunity to increase operational days and take advantage of the railway’s ability to move people through the region



**FOCUS AREA 4:
DIVERSE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES**

Hepburn Trails Activation - Business Planning

- Hepburn Shire
- 2022/23
- \$500,000
- 4 Jobs



The Hepburn Shire has many tracks and trails for walkers and cyclists. From short walks highlighting our parks and reserves, such as the mineral springs reserves to more adventurous trails, the Goldfields Track, mountain bike trails in Creswick, rail trails such as the Domino Trail in Trentham, and the future Daylesford to Hanging Rock Rail Trail development.

The project will enable further tourism development and activation through to branding, marketing and way finding and visitor interpretation signage construction activities of Shire wide walking and cycling trails. Potential early opportunities identified include Indigenous Heritage Trails products.

Included in the planning will be the identification of a strategic program to upgrade existing trails, create connections and ongoing maintenance standards, and opportunities for collaboration with stakeholder groups and public authorities.

- ✓ Development of iconic trails that highlight and celebrate the natural assets of the Hepburn Shire in a state, national and international environment
- ✓ Supporting business in developing the nature based tourism market
- ✓ Increased tourist visitation providing immediate economic activity



**FOCUS AREA 4:
DIVERSE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES**



Mineral Springs Reserves Development

The majority of Australia's mineral springs are located in Victoria and concentrated in the Central Highlands area, particularly in and round the townships of Daylesford and Hepburn Springs. These naturally occur in a diverse range of settings from ranges, waterways, forested areas and agricultural surroundings.

A program to develop our iconic Hepburn Mineral Springs sites has been identified with an aim to build upon and elevate spring sites to improve amenity, access and interpretation of their significance to Australia.

Projects identified as priority works by the Hepburn Mineral Springs Advisory Committee, include;

- Hepburn Mineral Springs Pavilion Café structure
- Central Springs Master Plan Implementation
- Park furniture upgrades, landscape improvements and various weeding programs across all mineral spring sites
- Reinstate Central Spring Reserve bores
- Hepburn Mineral Spring Reserves Development Masterplan

- ✓ Increase tourism and community amenity
- ✓ Enhance the interpretation of the iconic reserves to engage all visitors
- ✓ Provide high quality facilities suitable for regional, state and international visitors
- ✓ Ensure ongoing viability of safe mineral water from all of the springs



FOCUS AREA 4: DIVERSE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Hepburn Shire

2022/23

Up to \$2.0M

Up to 10 Jobs



Major Towns Streetscape Improvements

The project will implement the next stage of planned improvements to streetscapes across Hepburn's six major towns. The improvement works include:

Clunes – Present the historic Clunes Town Hall as a prominent and welcoming entrance to the township through heritage street lamps, trees and DDA compliant car parking

Creswick – Landscaping to create welcoming town entrances and improve traffic flows and safety for pedestrians

Daylesford – Traffic calming measures by creating green spaces through parklets and plantings to the main retail strip

Hepburn – Improve pedestrian experience with upgraded plantings, creative and safety elements

Glenlyon – Landscaping to provide shade canopy and seating outside general store and cafes and development of outdoor market square in the centre of town complete with pavilion, public amenities and BBQ

Trentham – Pedestrian safety and landscaping improvements to the main street

- ✓ Activation of spaces
- ✓ Promote economic activity
- ✓ Improve liveability and attractiveness
- ✓ Improve pedestrian experience and safety

Hepburn Shire

2023/24

\$3.0M

14 Jobs



FOCUS AREA 4: DIVERSE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES



Wheeler's
Bridge
Replacement

Wheeler's Bridge on the Creswick-Lawrence Rd in Creswick was constructed in 1900 and is the oldest Monier Arch still in service. It is classified as a local access road limited to light vehicles only, carries 97 vehicles a day and is in an agricultural zoned area. This is one of the earliest examples of reinforced concrete structures by famed Civil Engineer Sir John Monash.

The project will see this historical bridge repaired to enable its ongoing and safe use. Works will involve retaining the original arches and use them as formwork for new arches and spandrel walls. The project will strengthen and reinforce the bridge enabling continued community and agricultural vehicle access into the future.

Full design works for reconstruction of the bridge are being undertaken during 2021.

- ✓ Increase in road usability (load limits) and safety
- ✓ Heritage asset protection
- ✓ Future proof road access for agribusiness

Creswick

2022/23

\$3.0M

14 Jobs



**FOCUS AREA 4:
DIVERSE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES**



Institute of
Gastronomy
- Construction

This exciting project involves the new construction of a flagship regional facility which will act as a hub and catalyst to support the transformation of the good food economy.

The facility will comprise of infrastructure to support cutting edge and innovative educational and good food outcomes including lecture theatres, offices, student accommodation, kitchens, boning rooms, incubator spaces, food storage and a host of other facilities for culinary and agricultural education all fitted with world-class, specialised equipment.

The new Institute supported by William Angliss TAFE, will enable collaboration between education, agriculture, food production and hospitality in the Grampians region.

- Institute of Gastronomy and Good Food Initial Business Case completed in 2018 funded in partnership with William Angliss Institute, Victorian Government and Regional Development Australia Grampians
- Full Business Case Planning currently underway and will be completed in 2022

- ✓ State significant project
- ✓ Skilled workforce outcomes
- ✓ Agri-Tourism development
- ✓ Attract and grow investment in the food industry and regional Victoria
- ✓ Driver for regional economic development

Daylesford

2022/23

\$25.0M (est.)

147+ Jobs



**FOCUS AREA 4:
DIVERSE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES**



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 www.facebook.com/hepburncouncil

DAYLESFORD

Cnr. Duke & Albert Streets,
Daylesford
8:30am – 5:00pm

CRESWICK

Creswick Hub
68 Albert Street, Creswick
8:30am – 5:00pm

TRENTHAM

13 Albert Street, Trentham
Mon, Wed, Fri 10am-5pm
Sat 10am-1pm

CLUNES

The Warehouse – Clunes
36 Fraser Street, Clunes
Mon & Thurs 10am – 6pm
Wed & Fri 10am – 4pm

13.2 FACILITIES MAINTENANCE PANEL - CONTRACTS FOR PLUMBING, ELECTRICAL AND PAINTING DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DELIVERY

In providing this advice to Council as the Coordinator Facilities, I Victoria O'Halloran have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. CONFIDENTIAL - Evaluation Matrix Quotes Tenders Facilities Maintenance Panel [13.2.1 - 6 pages]
2. CONFIDENTIAL - Evaluation Matrix Quotes Tenders Facilities Maintenance (1) [13.2.2 - 6 pages]
3. CONFIDENTIAL - Evaluation Matrix Quotes Tenders Facilities Maintenance (2) [13.2.3 - 5 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council is seeking to appoint a panel of one or more suitably experienced and/or qualified Contractor(s) to manage and deliver the Facilities Maintenance Services for a term of 3-years with options for two 1-year extensions.

The Contractor(s) will be required to manage and maintain buildings in accordance with the Council's policies to meet legislative requirements, the needs of the building users/occupiers and the community.

Council undertook a public Tender process for Facilities Maintenance Services in five (5) categories and this report is to advise Council of the result of the Tender and seek approval for the tenderers to be engaged as a panel of providers by way of letter of acceptance for ongoing services confirmed through issue of purchase orders.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. *Accept all tender submissions to form the contract panel - Contract Number HEPU.RFT2021.212 in the categories of:*
 - *Plumbing & Gas Fitting Maintenance & Repairs*
 - *Electrical Maintenance & Repairs*
 - *Electrical Capital Upgrades & New Installs*
 - *Painting Services*
2. *Authorises Council Officers to provide a letter of acceptance to each tenderer confirming:*
 - *Rates as supplied have been accepted;*
 - *There is no guarantee a purchase order will be issued to each tenderer;*
 - *Should Council decide to engage services, a contract in the form of a purchase order will be issued.*
3. *Authorise Council Officers to issue standing orders and purchase orders within officer delegation, as required to the approved panel of suppliers.*

4. Resolve that the attached Tender Evaluation Reports remain confidential and that the Minutes record the successful tenderer and the accepted tender price.

MOTION

That Council:

1. *Accepts all tender submissions to form the contract panel - Contract Number HEPU.RFT2021.212 in the categories of:*
 - *Plumbing & Gas Fitting Maintenance & Repairs*
 - *Electrical Maintenance & Repairs*
 - *Electrical Capital Upgrades & New Installs*
 - *Painting Services*
2. *Authorises Council Officers to provide a letter of acceptance to each tenderer confirming:*
 - *Rates as supplied have been accepted;*
 - *There is no guarantee a purchase order will be issued to each tenderer;*
 - *Should Council decide to engage services, a contract in the form of a purchase order will be issued.*
3. *Authorises Council Officers to issue standing orders and purchase orders within officer delegation, as required to the approved panel of suppliers; and*
4. *Resolves that the attached Tender Evaluation Reports remain confidential and that the Minutes record the successful tenderer and the accepted tender price.*

Moved: Cr Don Henderson

Seconded: Cr Brian Hood

Carried

BACKGROUND

Due to the value of potential expenditure on building services maintenance over a period of 3 – 5 years, Council issued a tender to establish a Facilities Maintenance Services Panel of Contractors. The tenders were evaluated by the tender evaluation panel in accordance with Council's Procurement Policy.

Tenders for HEPBU.RFT2021.212 Request for Tender for Facilities Maintenance Services in Hepburn Shire were invited via public advertisement on the Council's website, on tenders.net, in the Ballarat Courier on 30 October 2021 and The Local on 8 November 2021. The Tender closed on 18 November 2021.

Submissions were received from nine (9) tenderers, as follows:

Plumbing & Gas fitting Maintenance & Repairs

- GI & LM Murphy

- Chubbs Gas & Plumbing Pty Ltd
- David Wheeldon Plumbing

Electrical Maintenance & Repairs /Electrical Capital Upgrades & New Installs

- Regional Electrical Contracting
- Fells Electrical
- SK Purtell

Painting Services

- JW Painting
- Argyle Maintenance Services
- Attention To Detail Painting Services

Heating, Ventilation and Air-Conditioning (HVAC) Services

- Nil applications

Stage One – Mandatory Criteria

Mandatory requirements as per the Procurement Policy apply to this Panel Tender.

Each criterion was assessed based on the following criteria.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	PRICE	20%
	RISK / OHS/ QUALITY MANAGEMENT	10%
	LOCAL CONTENT	10%
	RESPONSE TO SPECIFICATION	25%
	EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS	20%
	BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL CAPACITY	10%
	SUSTAINABILITY	5%

All submissions met the requirements set out in the Tender documents as per the confidential attached tender evaluation matrix.

The tender submissions were evaluated by a panel consisting of:

Name	Title
Chair: Victoria O’Halloran	Coordinator Facilities
Simon Mennie	Manager Facilities, Waste & Community Safety
Tristan May	Manager Operations

Stage Two – Comparative Criteria

All tenderers were assessed against the tender evaluation criteria. As a result it is recommended that all nine (9) submissions be accepted to the panel.

KEY ISSUES

Each job under the panel contract may be either a schedule of unit rates contract or a lump sum contract however there is no guarantee of work resulting from this panel contact, all contracts are non-exclusive contracts.

During the first year there shall be no adjustment to the contract charges due to rise and fall in the cost of wages or materials, nor due to rise and fall of fees, services and insurances, nor due to fluctuations in exchange.

Prior to the end of the first year the Contractor may request in writing, unit rate adjustment for the following 12-month period, and thereafter on a yearly basis if relevant, for consideration and negotiation. Such rate adjustment will be generally in accordance with industry rates unless further justification is made. The request for rate adjustment is the Contractor's responsibility and will not be "back-dated". The Contractor shall submit a separate request in writing.

Work may be commissioned through issuing a purchase order in relation to specific jobs. A contract may be used for projects with a higher level of complexity at Council's discretion.

POLICY AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Council Plan 2021-2025 Strategic Objectives

Embracing our past and planning for the future

3.3 Build and maintain quality infrastructure that supports and promotes liveability and active living in the community

Council Policy 46C - Procurement Policy

Ensure process is followed to engage compliant service providers

Section 4 – In accordance with Section 19 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council must comply with its procurement policy before entering into a contract for the purchase of goods or services or the carrying out of works.

Council Policy 9 – Council Owned & Controlled Property

Working and listening with all internal and external stakeholders for continued use

2.2 To ensure sufficient use of council owned and controlled property as well as equity in its use, maintenance and development.

2.3 To encourage committees and lessees to be self-sufficient in their management of council property.

Council Policy 15c – Asset Management Policy

Set-up systems and processes to ensure longevity in all buildings

Asset management practices impact directly on the core business of the organisation and appropriate asset management is required to achieve our strategic service delivery objectives. Sound Asset Management practices enable sustainable service delivery by integrating customer values, priorities and an informed understanding of the trade-offs between risks, costs and service performance.

Council Policy 42c) Public Building Maintenance Grant Policy

Hepburn Shire Council has the responsibility to provide its ratepayers with best value, with all services provided by Council meeting the expectations in terms of quality and cost. In providing this, all services need to be accessible, responsive to the needs of the community, considerate of the natural environment and subject to continuous improvement.

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

One of the overarching governance principles in Section 9 of the *Local Government Act 2020* is that the economic, social and environmental sustainability of the municipal district, including mitigation and planning for climate change risks, is to be promoted.

Emphasis has been made to ensure each Contractor selects items/equipment with the highest energy efficient rating, environmentally friendly and at the best price available without compromising quality.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

This RFT will allow Council to meet the requirement of Council's Procurement Policy and the *Local Government Act 2020* in the carrying out of maintenance services. It is proposed to use this RFT panel to provide reactive and preventative maintenance responses on an as needed basis, for both Capital and Operational programs including, but not limited to, the following.

Annual Capital Budgets

PJ00287 – Building Structures & Renewal Program - \$176,500 2021/22

PJ001100 – Building Efficiency Upgrades - \$50,000 2021/22

PJ00662 – Daylesford Town Hall Community Hub - \$100,000 2021/22

Annual Operational Budgets

PJ00258 – Building Maintenance - \$400,217 2021/22

RISK IMPLICATIONS

All Services / Works will be performed to best trade practice standards using competent trades people, equipment and materials.

All equipment, fittings and services will be repaired or maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations or in their absence, industry best practice. Each Contractor shall be required to give all notifications required under all relevant Acts, Regulations, Local Laws or By Laws which may be applicable to the execution of works. It also has or will obtain the necessary insurances as specified in the Request for Tender.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

There are no community or stakeholder engagement implications associated with this report.

13.3 ANNUAL PLAN 2021/2022 - QUARTER 2 UPDATE - OCTOBER- DECEMBER 2021 DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

In providing this advice to Council as the Director Organisational Services, I Andrew Burgess have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Qtr 2 Annual Plan Report - Project and Initiative Updates - 010222 [13.3.1 - 11 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The attached report provides a list of the projects included in the Annual Plan 2021/2022 and a progress comment has been provided for each project by a responsible officer.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. *Notes the Annual Plan 2021/2022 Quarter 2 updates, and;*
2. *Notes that this report will be published on Council's website*

MOTION

That Council:

1. *Notes the Annual Plan 2021/2022 Quarter 2 updates, and;*
2. *Notes that this report will be published on Council's website.*

Moved: Cr Brian Hood

Seconded: Cr Lesley Hewitt

Carried

BACKGROUND

The Annual Plan outlines the actions for 2021/2022 that will be implemented as priorities from the Council Plan 2017-2021 and Annual Budget 2021/2022. The Annual Plan was adopted by Council at its Ordinary Meeting on 20 July 2021.

The Annual Plan details to the organisation, Councillors and the community how Council will monitor progress towards actions in the Council Plan, and the quarterly progress report updates Councillors and the Community on the progress on the actions.

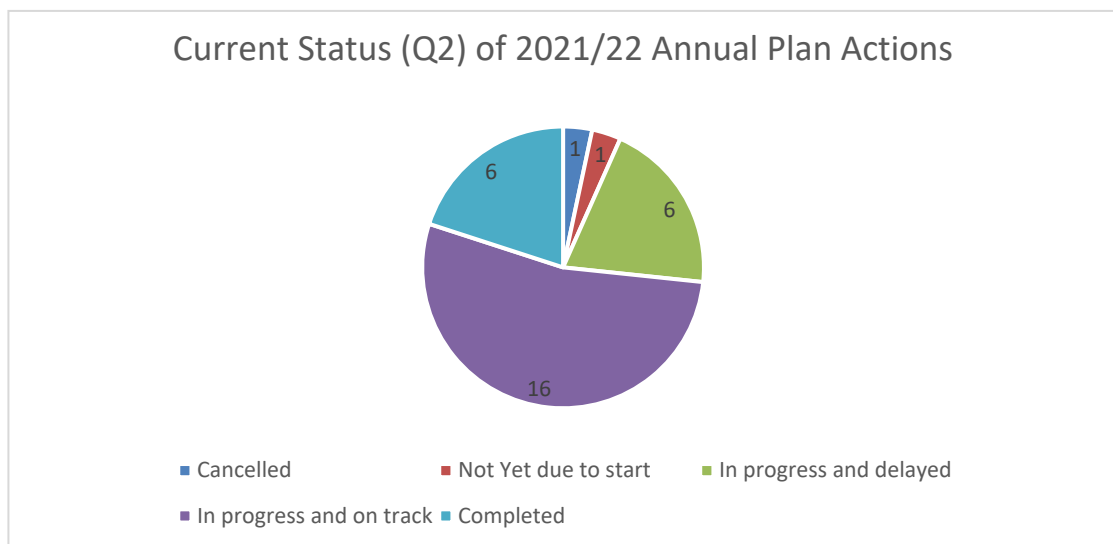
KEY ISSUES

The attached report provides a list of the projects included in the Annual Plan 2021/2022 and a progress comment has been provided for each project by a responsible officer, for the period ended 31 December 2021.

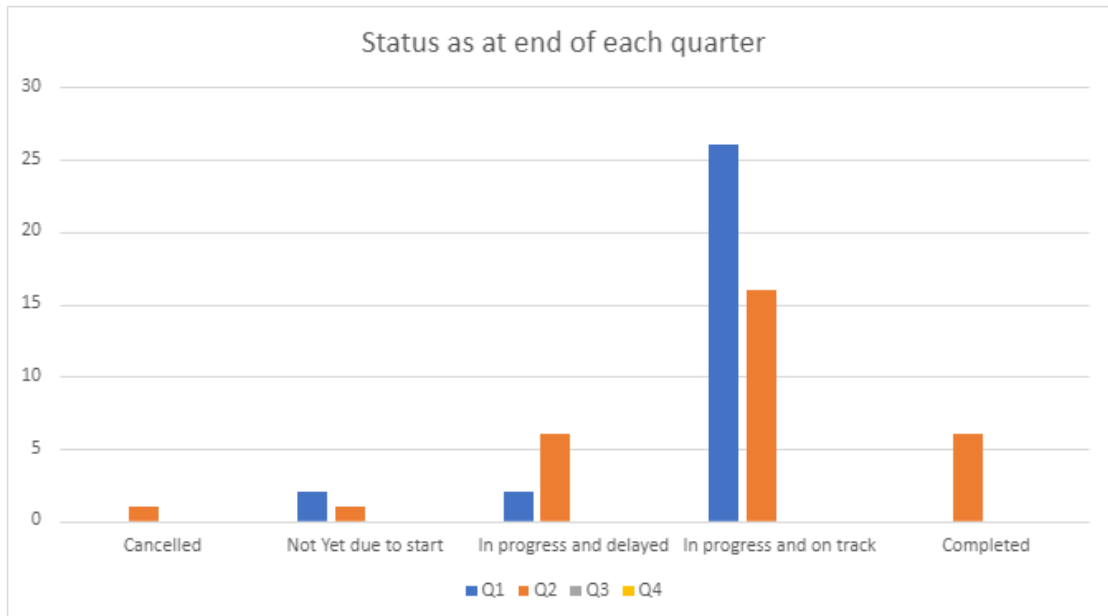
It should be noted that the Annual Plan does not include all projects to be undertaken during the year, and as it was adopted in July 2021 does not include several new actions and opportunities have been undertaken by Council, which were not included in the Plan.

Some projects have been delayed because of announcements of government funding, delays in project delivery or in recent months as a result of the impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic and resourcing issues.

The following graph provides a snapshot of the current status of projects as of 31 December 2021, excluding carry-forward projects.



Significant progress has been made on many of the projects with a significant number of projects completed over this reporting period (6 within the quarter), with the below graph providing the quarter v quarter comparison.



Snapshot Commentary:

- 6 (20%) projects are complete
- 16 (53%) listed as 'in progress and on track'.
- 6 (20%) projects listed as 'in progress and delayed' a number of these projects are ongoing and have also been impacted by procurement stages.
- 1 (3%) project listed as 'Not yet due to start'
- 1 (3%) project listed as 'Cancelled', being the Hepburn Hub at The Rex project.

POLICY AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Council Plan 2021-2025

- 3. Embracing our past and planning for the future
 - 3.3 Build and maintain infrastructure that supports liveability and activity in our community.
- 5. A dynamic and responsive Council
 - 5.2 A sustainable and agile organisation with strong corporate governance that supports excellent operations.
 - 5.3 Actively communicate, inform and engage with our community about events and decision-making.

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no sustainability implications associated with this report. Individual projects will consider sustainability implications where appropriate.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

It is anticipated that all projects listed as 'in progress and delayed' will be completed in the second half of 2021/2022 Financial Year, or if not will form part of the carry-forward process.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

No direct risk impact due to the preparation of this report. Individual projects will consider risk implications where appropriate.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Community Engagement in accordance with the adopted policy is considered on a project-by-project basis.

This update will be placed on Council's website once noted by Council.



Annual Plan Project Updates

Quarter 2 / 2021-2022 (October - December 2021)

(includes carry-forward projects 2019-20 and 2020-21)



A resilient and sustainable environment

A responsive, adaptive, and resilient community that addresses changes to our climate and biodiversity.



A healthy supported, and empowered community

A community that values connection, supports diversity, health, and wellbeing, and is inclusive of all people and their needs.



Embracing our past and planning for the future

We acknowledge and empower the Traditional Owners and other cultures of our area to protect our historical roots while planning for future generations.



Diverse economy and opportunity

Our community is enhanced by a diverse and resilient economy that supports local aspirations through opportunity.



A dynamic and responsive council

Council and the community partner to achieve their aspirations through excellent communication and engagement, the delivery of effective services, strong financial management, and governance.

2021-22 Annual Plan

A RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

Project Name	Description	Budget - 2021/22	Target Completion Date	Business Unit	Q2 Comments	Status
Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP)	Develop a 4-year plan that outlines Councils approach to animal management within the Shire.	Operational Budget	01-Dec-21	Waste, Facilities and Community Safety	<p>Council has invited community feedback and submissions about areas of interest and focus in reviewing the Domestic Animal Management Plan (DAMP) and have received approximately 500 submissions. Officers are working through these submissions in order to inform potential actions and focus areas in the development of the DAMP.</p> <p>The finalisation of the DAMP has been delayed due to workload from the multiple storms and impact of COVID on the Community Safety team. Completion is expected in June-2022 and the relevant authority has been notified and acknowledged the constraints and noted the similar challenges with a number of other Councils.</p>	In progress and delayed
Western Victoria Transmission Line	Advocate for detailed community engagement and underground construction of the proposed Western Victorian Transmission Line and complete detailed Environmental Effects Statement submission	\$50,000	01-Jun-22	Planning and Development	<p>Ongoing advocacy continues in relation to the project with regular ongoing meetings occurring between HSC and AusNet, HSC and a community working group. HSC has active involvement and input in to the Technical Reference Group (TRG). Although the workings of the TRG are currently confidential, these officers are feeding Councils concern into the group.</p> <p>The Shire has recently updated our WVTP Council webpage and have also opened a Participate Hepburn page which invites the community (particularly impacted people in the following categories 'Tourism, agriculture, social impact and heritage') to lodge their interest in upcoming community sessions and advise us of their concerns. Community sessions are scheduled for late February and an informal drop in session in mid-February. Information obtained from these sessions will inform a formal submission on the EES from Council, which is expected mid-year.</p>	In progress and on track
Sustainable Hepburn	Develop and adopt integrated strategy to include; 1. Waste Strategy, 2. Biodiversity Strategy, 3. Sustainability Strategy	Operational Budget	01-Mar-22	Waste, Facilities and Community Safety / Planning and Development	<p>Officers have developed a detailed project plan which involved significant community consultation. The project is progressing well is now expected to be finalised prior to June 2022.</p> <p>At the December Council Meeting, 25 community members were appointed to the Sustainable Hepburn Community Reference Group and all members have been advised. An independent facilitator has been appointed to facilitate the meetings.</p> <p>The first meeting is scheduled for 17 February and will continue through February and March. Community Engagement Sessions have also been scheduled for February which will also provide significant input into the development of the strategy.</p>	In progress and delayed

A HEALTHY, SUPPORTED AND EMPOWERED COMMUNITY

Project Name	Description	Budget - 2021/22	Target Completion Date	Business Unit	Q2 Comments	Status
Hepburn Hub at the Rex	Begin construction of the Hepburn Hub at the Rex to deliver improved community spaces	Carry-forward	01-Mar-22	Major Projects	At the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 23 November 2021, Council made the decision to not proceed with the Hepburn Hub at the Rex project.	Cancelled
Trentham Community Hub	Complete detailed design of the new Trentham Community Hub and progress to construction stage.	Carry-forward \$200,000	01-Jun-22	Major Projects	Following completion of the detailed design, announcements of funding and a public tender process the construction contract was awarded at the December 2021 Ordinary Meeting of Council. Construction is expected to begin in early 2022, with a 13 month construction program.	In progress and on track

Hepburn Shire Council
Quarter Two 2021-22 Annual Plan Report - Project and Initiative Updates (Oct -Dec 2021)

ATTACHMENT 13.3.1

Trentham Sportsground Reserve Pavilion Development	Complete detailed design of the pavilion redevelopment and begin construction.	Carry-forward +\$748,623	01-Sep-22	Economic Development and Recreation	Following completing of the detailed design, announcements of funding and a public tender process the construction contract was awarded at the October 2021 Ordinary Meeting of Council. Construction commenced mid-November 2021. The construction is currently on track to be completed in September 2022, this current annual plan action is complete.	Completed
Arts and Culture Strategy	Develop and adopt an Arts and Culture Strategy to set the future direction for art and culture in the Shire, in order to nurture and expand experiences.	\$40,000	01-May-22	Community Life	Following a procurement process consultants for project have been engaged to assist in the development of the project. The project is expected to commence in February 2022, and will involve community consultation	In progress and on track
Early Years Strategy	Develop and adopt a strategy that will build on the previous Hepburn Shire Healthy, Active and Safe Early Years Strategy 2015.	Carry-forward	01-Mar-22	Community Life	Following extensive community and agency consultation the draft strategy is near completion, for feedback. Officers will present to Councillors in the first quarter of 2022.	In progress and on track
Positive Ageing Strategy	Develop and implement a new Positive Ageing Strategy to focus on staying active and healthy.	Operational Budget	01-Jun-22	Community Life	Internal development of the strategy has begun. A community survey will be launched on 20th January 2022, and multiple pop up session to gain input are planned for February.	In progress and on track
LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee	Fund an Officer resource and operational budget to establish an LGBTIQA+ Advisory Committee of Council.	\$50,000	01-Dec-21	Community Life	Council has funded both a position and operational budget for 2021/22 onwards. The new Inclusion Officer commenced with the organisation in late 2021. Council has advertised through an Expression of Interest process for community members to be appointed as members of the advisory committee, which is expected to be finalised in March 2022.	In progress and on track
Walking and Cycling Strategy	Develop and adopt a Walking and Cycling Strategy 2021-2025.	\$90,000	01-Jun-22	Economic Development and Recreation	A project planning session to review the scope and consider the method of delivery for the project will commence in February 2022. It is likely this project will not be fully complete by June 2022.	Not Yet due to start

EMBRACING OUR PAST AND PLANNING FOR OUR FUTURE

Project Name	Description	Budget - 2021/22	Target Completion Date	Business Unit	Q2 Comments	Status
Hammon Park Trail Head and Bike Path	Begin construction of Hammon Park Trail Head and Bike Path, Creswick	\$750,000	01-Feb-22	Major Projects	Detailed design and construction documentation for Hammon Park Trailhead has been completed and a tender was released in December 2021. Pending a favourable tender response, award is scheduled for the February 2022 Council Meeting. Once awarded, construction will begin pending contractor availability.	In progress and on track
Reconciliation Action Plan Development	Develop and adopt our next Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)	\$29,000	01-Jun-22	Community Life	<p>The development has been delayed as officers have prioritised working through the possible renaming of the Jim Crow Creek project.</p> <p>A revised Terms of Reference for our Reconciliation Action Plan Advisory Committee was adopted by Council in September and provide a clearer understanding of the role and function of the Committee and to be more inclusive of First Nations People and the broader community.</p> <p>Development of the RAP will occur when a new Committee is in place, in the coming months.</p>	In progress and delayed

Hepburn Shire Council

Quarter Two 2021-22 Annual Plan Report - Project and Initiative Updates (Oct -Dec 2021)

ATTACHMENT 13.3.1

Delivery of Strategic Planning Program	Implement year 1 of Council program of strategic planning work to be delivered in accordance with financial budget allocations.	\$660,000	01-Jun-22	Planning and Development	<p>Council has an ambitious but detailed strategic planning program. The program is currently slightly behind schedule, with a detailed update to be provided to Councillors in late February on the current progress.</p> <p>Officers are currently working through the procurement of key consultants, in particular for the technical studies associated with the Creswick Structure Plan. Officers are currently working on the development of a shire wide Land Demand and Supply study, with expected completion in March 2022. This work will also provide the background and analysis for the Affordable Housing Strategy.</p> <p>Council are awaiting final Ministerial sign off of the C80 Hep planning scheme review. This final administrative process (to be gazetted) is expected in February 2022.</p>	In progress and delayed
Undertake Affordable Housing Strategic Planning	Implement year 1 of Council program of strategic planning work.	\$50,000	01-Jun-22	Planning and Development	<p>This project will build upon the findings and analysis of the shire wide Land Demand and Supply study which is due for completion in March 2022. Officers have commenced development of the project scope for the second stage of this work, which will require a consultant resource to undertake the works.</p> <p>On a regular basis, officers are meeting with interested community groups, and State Government to advocate for continued assistance to ensure increased affordable housing within the shire.</p>	In progress and delayed

DIVERSE ECONOMY AND OPPORTUNITIES

Project Name	Description	Budget - 2021/22	Target Completion Date	Business Unit	Q2 Comments	Status
Hub for Premium Produce	Undertake Year 3 (of 3) actions, focused on connecting and actively working with Premium Produce Enterprises in the Hepburn Shire and surrounding region to navigate processes, unlock opportunities, and build the ongoing capacity and skills of the sector to collectively grow and survive.	Carry-forward +\$270,000	01-Jun-22	Economic Development and Recreation	The 3-year project continued, with the following a sample of activities undertaken within the quarter: * Continued roll out of mentoring program for small scale producers with Small Business Mentoring Service. * Ongoing consultation with Primesafe, and Agriculture Victoria around policy complexity of food regulations and planning policy for the sector to navigate • First in person end of year event held on 2 December 2021 to celebrate and promote the project. Thirty people attended including Councillors, the Project Advisory Group, Farmers, Agriculture Victoria and guest speakers • Meeting with Key Stakeholders held in October to commence discussions around scoping of a Physical Hub • Online Hub further scoped to support a possible Physical Hub presence • Webinars with 30 attendees conducted on key industry topics such as grant writing tips and gaining knowledge in how to expand into agritourism • A number of on-site farm visits took place as COVID restrictions allowed.	In progress and on track
City (Region) of Gastronomy	Partner with the City of Greater Bendigo to seek opportunities for our region flowing from the City (Region) of Gastronomy initiative and continue advocacy for the planning of the Institute of Gastronomy.	Operational Budget	01-Jun-22	Economic Development and Recreation	Ongoing participation in quarterly meeting with the region. City of Greater Bendigo have completed testing of an online map featuring producers within the region, this is being rolled out in a staged approach, and currently features Bendigo producers, with the expectation that it will be further rolled out throughout the region in 2022. Next City of Gastronomy meeting being to be held in February 2022.	In progress and on track
Central Victorian Goldfields	Partner with other Council's to advocate for the World Heritage Listing of the Central Victorian Goldfields	Operational Budget	01-Jun-22	Economic Development and Recreation	On the 8 December 2021 the 13 Councils that form the partnership were represented at a launch of the project, this was held at the historic Clunes Town Hall. The launch was designed to further raise the profile of the bid. The project is awaiting advice on whether application for Regional Development Victoria's Investment Fast-Track Fund is successful, which will further progress the project.	In progress and on track
Hepburn Shire COVID Stimulus Projects Package	Deliver key COVID stimulus projects including 1. Bullarto Station Tourist Precinct, 2. Creswick Town Hall restoration and 3. Wombat Hill Botanic Gardens enhanced visitation experience.	State Government Regional Infrastructure Fund in partnership with HSC and Community partners. Total package \$2.2M	01-Jun-22	Major Projects	Bullarto Station Tourist Precinct – construction contract was awarded at the December 2022 Ordinary Council Meeting, with construction expected to begin early 2022. Creswick Town Hall restoration – Heritage Impact Statement complete and an application for Heritage Victoria approval has been submitted and expected to be determined by HV February 2022. Wombat Hill Botanical Gardens enhances visitation experience - Procurement and design are underway for the four parts to the Wombat Hill upgrades project. Procurement for construction has begun for some parts and the total project will progressively be completed. Construction will begin in coming months, and the project is planned to be completed in November 2022.	In progress and on track

A DYNAMIC AND RESPONSIVE COUNCIL

Project Name	Description	Budget - 2021/22	Target Completion Date	Business Unit	Q2 Comments	Status
Pavement Rehabilitation Program	Undertake Councils Annual road rehabilitation program of selected roads throughout the Shire.	\$1.41M	01-Jun-22	Operations	Council's 2021/22 Road Rehabilitation program includes the following large projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daylesford Clunes Rd, Smeaton - This project commenced in late August 2021 and is now complete. • Lone Hand Rd, Allendale – This project is scheduled to commence in early 2022 and expected to be finalised by May 2022. • Railway Crescent, Daylesford – This project is currently in the design phase. Construction is anticipated to commence in early 2022 and expected to be finalised by June 2022. • Orford Street, Daylesford – This project commenced in early September 2021 and is now complete. 	In progress and on track
Gravel Resheeting Program	Undertake 16 kilometers of Gravel Resheeting of roads across the Shire.	\$570,000	01-Mar-22	Operations	The annual gravel resheet program to resurface designated gravel roads was completed in late December 2021	Completed
Implementation of the Local Government Act	Implement changes as required by the Local Government Act 2020	Operational Budget	01-Jun-22	People and Governance	The majority of Local Government Act 2020 implementation is complete, with the only remaining plan that needs to be developed in 2022 is the asset management plan and this is on track for adoption by June 2022. The finalisation of the Complaints Policy, Procurement policy, CEO Remuneration and Employment Policy, Staff Code of Conduct, Recruitment Policy and Workforce Plan were finalised within the quarter.	In progress and on track
Review and Implement HSC Workforce Strategy and Plan	Develop, in accordance with the Local Government Act 2020, a Workforce Plan that describes the organisational structure of the Council and specifies projected staffing requirements for a period of at least four years.	Operational Budget	01-Dec-21	People and Governance	Officers developed a detailed HR Strategy and Workforce Plan, which is about determining and shaping the capacity and capability of the workforce that is needed to deliver the Council Plan. This was approved by the CEO in December 2021.	Completed
Develop and Implement Gender Equity Action Plan	Develop, in accordance with the Gender Equity Act 2020, a Gender Equity Action Plan. The plan will include strategies for improving gender equality in the workplace. Council will report publicly every two years on its progress.	Operational Budget	01-Mar-22	People and Governance	Preparations of the Gender Equity Action Plan (GEAP) are currently underway to be completed by 31 March 2022. Workforce data was provided and submitted to the Commissioner in December 2021 as required. The organisation has created a Project Control Group which continues to meet regularly to support the organisations understanding of gender equality and impact assessment requirements.	In progress and on track
Customer Service Strategy	Implement a Customer Service Strategy.	Operational Budget	01-Mar-22	Organisational Services	Officers have engaged and briefed a local consultant to assist in the development of the strategy. A project plan has been developed, and the strategy will be adopted by June 2022.	In progress and on track
Community Vision, Council Plan including Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.	Finalise and adopt the Community Vision, Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.	Operational Budget	01-Oct-21	Executive	The Community Vision, Council Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan was adopted by Council at a Special Meeting of Council on 26 October 2021.	Completed
Priority Projects	Continued advocacy for State and Federal Government funding of Council's adopted priority projects.	Operational Budget	01-Jun-22	Executive	Senior Officers and Councillors continue advocacy with State and Government on a regular basis. A Hepburn Shire Advocacy Statement is being prepared with the intention of seeking Council adoption at the February 2022 Ordinary Meeting.	In progress and on track

Hepburn Shire Council
 Quarter Two 2021-22 Annual Plan Report - Project and Initiative Updates (Oct -Dec 2021)

ATTACHMENT 13.3.1

Risk Management Framework Implementation	Implementation of the Risk Management Framework	Carry-forward	01-Dec-21	People and Governance	Following detailed development, and review by Councils Audit and Risk Committee, the Risk Management Framework was finalised and adopted by Council in December 2021.	Completed
Long Term Financial Plan	Adopt a Long Term Financial Plan 2021-2031	Operational Budget	01-Oct-21	Financial Services	The 10-year Financial Plan (Long Term Financial Plan) was adopted by Council at a Special Meeting on 26 October 2021.	Completed
Council Website	Modernise and upgrade website to make the site more user-friendly allowing information to be more accessible and more easily found.	\$75,000	01-Mar-22	ICT	<p>A website developer (Open Cities) has been selected. Open Cities is an MAV preferred supplier and has developed websites for councils large and small through Victoria.</p> <p>Community have been able to complete a short survey to let us know what should be considered in the development of the new website, as well as being able to nominate to participate in a session to test the site before it goes live (expected May/June 2022).</p>	In progress and delayed

Carry Forward 2020-21 Annual Plan

QUALITY COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Project Name	Description	Budget - 2021/22	Target Completion Date	Business Unit	Q2 Comments	Status
Creswick Fountain Refurbishment	Repair and reinstate the Creswick fountain to permanent use.	\$42,350	01-Jun-21	Operations	Following a detailed structural assessment it is recommended that additional works be undertaken beyond the initial scope and beyond the current available budget. Officers are seeking further advice and cost estimates prior to proceeding.	In progress and delayed
Hammon Park Facilities Upgrade	Identify further needs for the current buildings at Hammon Park Reserve and provide drawings to the level of tender issue for any proposed works.	\$50,000	01-Jan-21	Waste, Facilities and Community Safety	Licenses have been appointed and potential works to the site are being considered. Some works have been completed including fire exit lighting and upgrades to bathroom facilities. Consultation with the licensee's and users of the building are continuing to inform further works to be completed along with essential maintenance. Works are expected to be completed by June 2022.	In progress and delayed
Glenlyon Recreation Reserve Community Pavilion	Complete detailed design of the new pavilion at the Glenlyon Recreation Reserve following adoption of the masterplan and continue advocacy for government funding.	\$121,000	01-Nov-22	Economic Development and Recreation	The project has been delayed to work through potential contamination issues at the site. Project planning and procurement to engage architectural services are in progress. Architectural services engagement are expected to be undertaken in February 2022. Project delivery including Community and Stakeholder Engagement will be undertaken between March to November 2022	In progress and delayed

ACTIVE AND ENGAGED COMMUNITIES

Project Name	Description	Budget - 2021/22	Target Completion Date	Business Unit	Q2 Comments	Status
Hepburn Football Netball Club Pavilion Project	Redevelopment of the Hepburn Recreation Community Pavilion to improve universal access and create gender appropriate change room facilities.	\$544,500	01-May-21	Economic Development and Recreation	The project has been fully constructed and official opening has occurred.	Completed
Daylesford Macedon Rail Trail Feasibility Study	Complete the Daylesford to Hanging Rock Rail Trail (Daylesford to Tylden) Feasibility Project, incorporating planning of the Crossing the Divide (Spa Country Railway) project.	Carry-forward	01-Mar-21	Economic Development and Recreation	The Daylesford Macedon Rail Trail Feasibility Study with the report titled Daylesford to Tylden Rail Trail Feasibility Project incorporating an Economic Assessment of options for the extension of the Daylesford Spa Country Railway project is complete and was presented to Council in December 2021 for Council to note. Council has supported seeking grant funding for rail trail and rail extension in collaboration with key partners. If grant application is successful further work will be undertaken to progress feasibility and design.	Completed
Community Planning	Work with appointed Charter Groups to review or endorse Community Plans for Lyonville, Glenlyon and District and Hepburn/Hepburn Springs.	Operational Budget	01-May-21	Community Life	The Community Planning program and working with Charter Groups has been delayed, as resources have been targeted to Storm and COVID recovery. At the October Ordinary Meeting, Council acknowledged the Lyonville Community Plan and the contribution of community members who had worked hard to prepare it. At the meeting, Council also endorsed a Community Planning Program more broadly and community planning documents, including Community Planning Guidelines, Community Planning Policy, Community Planning Group Charter and a Memorandum of Understanding for the Community Planning Groups	In progress and delayed

VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

Project Name	Description	Budget - 2021/22	Target Completion Date	Business Unit	Q2 Comments	Status
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Artists in Residency Pilot program	Undertake as a pilot an Artist in Residency Programme utilising the Caretakers Cottage at Hepburn Mineral Springs Reserve.	Operational Budget	01-Jun-21	Community Life	The project has been delayed due to responding to COVID recovery needs. The project and artist programming will be considered as part of the development of the Arts and Culture Strategy, which is expected to be completed by mid-2022.	In progress and delayed
Hepburn Recovery and Resilience	Coordinate the Business Response and Recovery Taskforce and Community Recovery Taskforce to support and foster a coordinated response to the community's recovery.	Operational Budget	01-Jun-21	Economic Development and Recreation	Although the Taskforces are not meeting in an ongoing manner, Council is working on a number of projects that foster continued preparedness and recovery associated with the COVID pandemic.	Completed

SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

Project Name	Description	Budget - 2021/22	Target Completion Date	Business Unit	Q2 Comments	Status
Biodiversity Strategy	Finalise the delivery of the 2017-21 Biodiversity Strategy and the draft of the 2021-25 Strategy	Operational Budget	01-Jun-21	Planning and Development	Biodiversity Strategy - Assessment of strategy being developed as part of update of Strategy in 2022, which now forms part of Sustainable Hepburn. This item is completed and replaced with the adoption of Sustainable Hepburn.	Completed
Tree Management	Adoption of a Tree Management Plan and 5-Year Street Tree Strategy	Operational Budget	01-Feb-21	Operations	Tree Management Plan public submissions have been received and officers currently considering the feedback. The Plan is expected to be finalised in March 2022. A 5-year street tree strategy has been completed and will be considered for endorsement with Tree Management Plan.	In progress and delayed

Carry Forward 2019-20 Annual Plan

QUALITY COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Project Name	Description	Budget - 2021/22	Target Completion Date	Business Unit	Q2 Comments	Status
Future Water Security	Central Highlands Water partnership for Integrated Water Management (IWM)	Carry-forward	01-Jun-21	Parks and Open Spaces	Council is partnering with Central Highlands Water (Project lead) in the development of an Integrated Water Management Plan for the townships of Clunes, Creswick and Daylesford/Hepburn. The project commenced in early 2021 and has involved broad engagement with relevant service authorities and the wider community. The project is currently in the final stages with the plans expected to be finalised in February 2022.	In progress and delayed
Creswick Trails Project	Undertake a tender process and begin construction on the Creswick Trails.	Carry-forward	01-Jun-21	Major Projects	Progress continues to secure planning approval and land manager consent to construct the Creswick Trails. Once all consents are secured, procurement for the construction will take place. Council approved a Notice of decision to issue a planning permit for the development at the December 2021 Council Meeting.	In progress and delayed

ACTIVE AND ENGAGED COMMUNITIES

Project Name	Description	Budget - 2021/22	Target Completion Date	Business Unit	Q2 Comments	Status
Recreation Facilities and Management Models	Complete a study to review the current management models of Community Recreation Facilities	Carry-forward	01-Jun-23	Economic Development and Recreation	Review of the project scope will be undertaken, the revised project plan and timeframe will be communicated in mid-2022.	In progress and delayed
Recreation Facilities – Masterplans	Work with community groups to undertake and adopt masterplans for Glenlyon, Trentham, Doug Lindsay and Clunes Recreation Facilities	Carry-forward	30-Nov-22	Economic Development and Recreation	Doug Lindsay Recreation Reserve and the Trentham Recreation Reserves Masterplans have previously been adopted by Council. Officers are working through the development and community engagement for both the Glenlyon and Clunes Recreations Reserve to adoption in 2022.	In progress and delayed

SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

Project Name	Description	Budget - 2021/22	Target Completion Date	Business Unit	Q2 Comments	Status
Towards Zero Emissions Roadmap - Streetlights	Continue implementation of the towards Zero Emissions Roadmap by upgrading 133 Street lights as part of the Major Road Lighting Project.	Carry-forward	01-Jun-20	Waste, Facilities and Community Safety	The street lighting project on arterial roads is 90% complete with final LED lighting installs taking place in early 2022. A final project report is expected to be provided to Council following completion.	In progress and delayed
Waste to Energy	Construct a plant and expand the waste to energy project to full scale (pending the outcome of the current pilot project)	Carry-forward	01-Jun-20	Waste, Facilities and Community Safety	Council continues to operate the composting trial. Late 2021, batches of compost were sent for laboratory for testing for compliance with Australian Standards. The report identified some issues raised around even pasteurisation through the pile. With this information some adjustments have been made to the composting unit to improve performance. Further testing will be undertaken of the next batch to measure improvements prior to the end of the trial expected in April 2022.	In progress and delayed

A HIGH PERFORMING ORGANISATION

Hepburn Shire Council
 Quarter Two 2021-22 Annual Plan Report - Project and Initiative Updates (Oct -Dec 2021)

ATTACHMENT 13.3.1

Project Name	Description	Budget - 2021/22	Target Completion Date	Business Unit	Q2 Comments	Status
Governance Software	Purchase, install and implement software to manager and enhance Council's risk and incident management reporting including management of Council delegations	Carry-forward	01-Oct-19	People and Governance	With the Risk Management Framework finalised and implemented in December 2021 the next steps will be the exploration to procure software that is built for purpose that will house council's risk management / risk registers and incident management information.	Not yet started
Contractor Management	Continue the training and development of staff skills in relation to Contractor Management, including the rollout of an online induction system for contractors	Operational Budget	01-Mar-20	People and Governance	Contacto Management Training of staff was completed in 2021, with the planned roll out of an online induction system in 2022.	In progress and delayed

13.4 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13 DECEMBER 2021 DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

In providing this advice to Council as the Manager People and Governance, I Krysten Forte have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Draft Public Minutes - Audit and Risk Committee - 13 December 2021 [**13.4.1** - 35 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Councillors to consider advice from the Audit and Risk Committee meeting that was held on 13 December 2021.

The Audit and Risk Committee was established by Council resolution on 28 August 2020 in line with section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The Committee is made up of four independent committee members – Ms Linda McNeill (Chair), Mr Jason Young, Mr Robert Taylor and Ms Carol Pagnon.

The Councillor delegates of the Committee are Cr Drylie (Mayor), and Cr Brian Hood.

A newly instated process is that the Chair, Ms Linda McNeill prepares a cover report that is included for Councillors when the confidential meeting minutes are presented to Councillors at their Briefing meeting.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. *Receives the draft minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting that was held on the 13 December 2021; and*
2. *Notes the recommendations and resolutions of the Audit and Risk Committee that were moved at the meeting on 13 December 2021 and that are detailed in the body of this Council report.*

MOTION

That Council:

1. *Receives the draft minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting that was held on the 13 December 2021; and*
2. *Notes the recommendations and resolutions of the Audit and Risk Committee that were moved at the meeting on 13 December 2021 and that are detailed in the body of this Council report; and*
3. *Enacts the recommendation of the Audit and Risk committee regarding the Hepburn Hub at the Rex Project Update Point 14.2.4:
“That the considerations to date be well documented and show how decisions were made for the community, including lessons learnt and steps to improve future project processes.”*

Moved: Cr Jen Bray

Seconded: Cr Tessa Halliday

Lost

MOTION

That Council:

1. *Receives the draft minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting that was held on the 13 December 2021; and*
2. *Notes the recommendations and resolutions of the Audit and Risk Committee that were moved at the meeting on 13 December 2021 and that are detailed in the body of this Council report.*

Moved: Cr Don Henderson

Seconded: Cr Brian Hood

Carried

BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Audit and Risk Committee is to oversee and monitor the effectiveness of Council in carrying out its responsibilities for accountable financial management and risk, good corporate governance, provide experience in public sector management, and the maintenance of systems of internal control, and the fostering of an ethical environment.

The Audit and Risk Committee is not a delegated committee and cannot exercise statutory functions and powers of the Council under delegation, and essentially acts as an advisory body on behalf of Council.

The Audit and Risk Committee is governed by section 53 of the *Local Government Act 2020*, and operate in line with the Hepburn Shire Council Audit and Risk Committee Charter and develop a workplan to align with their obligations.

The Audit and Risk Committee meetings are closed to the public.

Officers prepare a public set of meeting minutes to be presented to the next practicable Ordinary Council Meeting that presents the recommendations of the Audit and Risk Committee for adoption. As such this report provides the Council with the recommendations from the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 13 December 2021 in preparation for its presentation at the Council meeting for February 2022.

Council is committed to the principles of transparency and accountability and provide a public set of meeting minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee that are available on Council's website for the current and previous financial year which can be found via the website link

<https://www.hepburn.vic.gov.au/our-council/about-council/arc/>.

Under Section 54 of the Local Government Act 2020, the Audit and Risk Committee must—

- (a) undertake an annual assessment of its performance against the Audit and Risk Committee Charter; and
- (b) provide a copy of the annual assessment to the Chief Executive Officer for tabling at the next Council meeting.

In line with the legislation, the Annual Assessment is provided to Councillors as an attachment to this report.

KEY ISSUES

The Audit and Risk Committee held its quarterly meeting on 13 December 2021.

The Committee passed several resolutions for consideration by the Council.

The resolutions and recommendations to Council are as follows:

Item 6 - Confirmation of Minutes

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 16 September 2021 be confirmed.

Item 8 – Matters arising from the previous meeting

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes the update on matters arising from previous meetings.

Item 9.2 - Update from Councillors

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes the update from the Mayor.

Item 9.3 - Update from the Chief Executive Officer

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes the update from the Chief Executive Officer.

Item 10.1 Internal audit

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

- 1. Receive and note the Final Report – Follow-up on status of actions addressing internal audit recommendation and submit to Council to ratify;*
- 2. Acknowledge that the findings will be combined into Council's rolling Internal Audit Register with the update to findings and status of Councils implementation as a complete internal audit register for 2021 and will be a focus of implementation; and*
- 3. Receive and note the Local Government Recent Reports and Publications document prepared by HLB Mann Judd issued regularly to local government agencies and presented to ARC for consideration; and*
- 4. Recognise and thank HLB Mann Judd for their internal audit function at Hepburn Shire Council as their contract comes to a close.*

10.2 Internal Audit Register

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

- 1. Receive and note the Internal Audit Register that provides Council's progress/ status against the following internal audits that were undertaken in the past 12 months*
 - a. Internal Audit into Accounts Payable and Credit Cards*
 - b. Rates and Revenue*
 - c. Procurement and Contract Management*

10.3 Internal Audit Contract

- 1. That the Audit and Risk Committee receive and note the report relating to the Internal Audit Function and status of the internal audit procurement process as of December 2021 and;*
- 2. That the Audit and Risk Committee Chair would welcome the opportunity to participate a hand over / onboarding and welcoming program for the internal auditors in 2022 and throughout their contract;*
- 3. Request that Management bring a Strategic Internal Audit Plan to the next Audit and Risk Committee meeting in March 2022 for consideration.*

Item 11.1 External Audit Update

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

- 1. note the Closing Report 2020-2021 Financial Report and Performance Statement for Hepburn Shire Council and Final Management Letter received from the Victorian Auditor General's Office.*
- 2. note that Crowe Australasia has been appointed by VAGO as Councils new external audit partner.*

12.1 Annual Plan 2021/2022 Quarter 1 update July – September 2021

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes the Annual Plan 2021/2022 update for Quarter 1.

12.2 Financial Report for the period ending 30 September 2021

That the Audit and Risk Committee notes:

- 1. The financial position and performance for the three months ending 30 September 2021;*
- 2. The operating and capital works project reports effective 30 September 2021; and*
- 3. That the project reports will be placed on Council's website.*

12.3 Procurement Policy 2021

The Audit and Risk Committee receive and note the Procurement Policy review as presented by Management for noting and note that the final wording in the policy note that exemptions as detailed in the policy does not override the thresholds.

13.1 Risk Management Framework

That the Audit and Risk Committee receive and note the Risk Management Framework and note that comments were made to Management for consideration for potential inclusion in the final Framework in relation to risk owners and risk escalation.

13.2 Risk Management Update – Review of Risk Event Summary Report

That the Audit and Risk Advisory Committee receives and notes the Risk Management Update - Review of Risk Event Summary Report.

13.3 Update on the Local Government Act 2020 Implementation

That:

- 1. The Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes the written and detailed verbal update provided relating to the implementation of the Local Government Act 2020.*

14.1 Project Updates – Creswick Trails Project Stage One

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes this report on the Creswick Trails Project Stage One.

14.2 Hepburn Hub at the Rex Project Update

That Audit and Risk Committee:

- 1. Receives and notes the project update report regarding the Hepburn Hub at the Rex Project;*

2. *Notes a new procurement process was undertaken and presented to Council;*
3. *Notes Council decision to:*
 - a. *not award a contract and not proceed with the project;*
 - b. *Request CEO to commence a public process to sell the Rex building*
4. *The considerations to date be well documented and show how decisions were made for the community, including lessons learnt and steps to improve future project processes.*
5. *The next steps in the Rex building and related projects be completed using strategic risk assessments and plans that are well communicated, well followed and detail how risks associated with potential outcomes will be managed.*
6. *The reports on the council building usage and staff accommodation be provided to the ARC, detailing how safe working environments will be provided to staff in the short and long term.*
7. *Related project/s will remain as standing projects on our ARC agenda, section 14, for ongoing review.*

14.3 Trentham Community Hub

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes the progress report on the progress of the Trentham Community Hub project.

16.1 Audit and Risk Committee Compliance – Audit and Risk Committee Meeting dates for 2022

1. *That the Audit and Risk Committee approves the following meeting dates for the 2022 calendar year:*
 - *Monday 28 March 2022, 1:00pm*
 - *Monday 27 June 2022, 1:00pm*
 - *Monday 26 September 2022, 1:00pm*
 - *Monday 12 December 2022, 1:00pm*
2. *That the Audit and Risk Committee approves the following Ordinary Council Meeting dates for the Audit and Risk Committee Chair to report to Council:*
 - *Tuesday 21 June 2022, 6:00pm*
 - *Tuesday 20 December 2022, 6:00pm*

16.2 Audit and Risk Committee Workplan

That:

- 1. The Audit and Risk Committee notes the Workplan as attached and continually assesses reports and discussion items that are presented to the Committee from management in line with the Audit and Risk Committee Charter and Workplan and ensure compliance to both; and*
- 2. Confirm the structure for the workplan for 2022 as attached.*

16.3 Audit and Risk Committee Annual Assessment Survey Results

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

- 1. Receive and note the survey data as collated and presented in relation to the Annual Self-Assessment Survey and take note to the comments as transcribed in the body of this report; and*
- 2. Provide any further feedback on the performance of the Audit and Risk Committee to enhance the function and management oversight of the Committee for 2022.*
- 3. The Chair and Manager People and Governance work together to report back on some of the specific matters addressed in the survey; and that the survey is sent out in advance and a subsequent follow up email is sent in the lead up to the cut-off date for the survey to remind members for completion and feedback.*

POLICY AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Council Plan 2021-2025

A dynamic and responsive Council

5.3 A sustainable and agile organisation with strong corporate governance that supports excellent operations

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no sustainability implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no major risk implications associated with this report.

The Audit and Risk Committee were duly briefed on all reports and a robust discussion was had on all items before they carried motions for each as detailed in the body of this report. Should Council disagree with any recommendations that the Audit and Risk Committee present for its consideration, then Council will need to, via a resolution of Council and in line with Council's good governance framework, state which motions Council do not accept.

If officers do not present this report to Council at the next practicable Council meeting for consideration, then there will be a breach of the Audit and Risk Committee Charter.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

There are no community or stakeholder engagement implications associated with this report. The Audit and Risk Committee, representatives from both VAGO and HLB Mann Judd (Council's external and internal auditors respectively) have been engaged and consulted on reports that relate to their function and duty to council.

All members of the Audit and Risk Committee were presented with agenda papers and full reports and were all present at the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting that was held on 13 December 2021.



HEPBURN SHIRE COUNCIL
AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING
CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

Monday 13 December 2021

Virtual Meeting
via Video Conference

1:00PM

MINUTES

Monday 13 December 2021

Virtual Meeting

via Video Conference

Commencing at 1:00PM

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1 OPENING OF MEETING

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms Linda McNeill, Ms Carol Pagnon, Mr Robert Taylor, Mr Jason Young, Cr Brian Hood, Cr Tim Drylie

COUNCIL OFFICERS PRESENT:

Mr Bradley Thomas – Chief Executive Officer
 Mr Andrew Burgess – Director Organisational Services
 Mr Bruce Lucas – Director Infrastructure and Delivery
 Ms Krysten Forte – Manager People and Governance
 Ms Kathie Fulton - Manager Financial Services
 Mr Glenn Owens - Senior Finance Advisor
 Ms Alison Breach - Project Manager
 Mr Ben Grounds – Manager Projects
 Ms Elizabeth Aitken – Project Officer

EXTERNAL ATTENDEES:

Ms Gabrielle Castree - Crowe
 Mr Kundai Mtsambiwa - HLB Mann Judd

The meeting opened at 1:03pm.

2 WELCOME AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to acknowledge and extend my appreciation for the Dja Dja Wurrung people, the traditional owners of the land that we are standing on today and all other lands represented. Today, we pay our respects to leaders and Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of all Indigenous Peoples. We express our gratitude in sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing and our hope that we may walk forward together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.

3 HOUSEKEEPING

4 APOLOGIES

Ms Leigh McCallum - Director Community and Development

5 DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil

6 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 16 September 2021 be confirmed.

MOTION

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 16 September 2021 be confirmed.

Moved: Mr Jason Young

Seconded: Mr Robert Taylor

Carried

7 MEMBER ONLY DISCUSSION

Opportunity for in camera discussion with Committee members, and internal and external auditors.

Nil

8 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The following is a list of matters arising/outstanding from previous Audit and Risk Committee Meetings. Items highlighted reflect items that have been completed and will be removed from the listing.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes the update on matters arising from previous meetings.

MOTION

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes the update on matters arising from previous meetings.

Moved: Ms Carol Pagnon

Seconded: Ms Linda McNeill

Carried

9 VERBAL REPORTS

9.1 ISSUES DECLARATION

An opportunity for Council to declare any instances of corruption, fraud and misconduct, legal action, legislative or compliance breaches that have been identified since the previous meeting.

9.2 UPDATE FROM COUNCILLORS

An opportunity for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to address with meeting with any issues or concerns they would like to raise.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes the update from the Mayor.

MOTION

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes the update from the Mayor.

Moved: Mr Jason Young

Seconded: Mr Robert Taylor

Carried

9.3 UPDATE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

In providing this advice to Council as the Chief Executive Officer, I Bradley Thomas have no interests to disclose in this report.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes the update from the Chief Executive Officer.

MOTION

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes the update from the Chief Executive Officer.

Moved: Mr Jason Young

Seconded: Mr Robert Taylor

Carried

Mr Kundai Mtsambiwa - HLB Mann Judd entered the meeting at 2:00pm

10 INTERNAL AUDIT

10.1 INTERNAL AUDIT – FINAL REPORT - FOLLOW-UP ON STATUS OF ACTIONS ADDRESSING INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS & HLB ISSUED PUBLICATIONS DOCUMENTATION DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

In providing this advice to the Audit and Risk Committee as the Manager People and Governance, I Krysten Forte have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. HSC Follow Up Review Final Report [**10.1.1** - 60 pages]
2. Local Government Recent Reports and Publications November 2021 [**10.1.2** - 17 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Audit and Risk Committee to review the findings from the recent and final internal audit review as undertaken by HLB Mann Judd – Follow up of Internal Audit findings.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. *Receive and note the Final Report – Follow-up on status of actions addressing internal audit recommendation and submit to Council to ratify;*
2. *Acknowledge that the findings will be combined into Council's rolling Internal Audit Register with the update to findings and status of Councils implementation as a complete internal audit register for 2021 and will be a focus of implementation; and*
3. *Receive and note the Local Government Recent Reports and Publications document prepared by HLB Mann Judd issued regularly to local government agencies and presented to ARC for consideration; and*
4. *Recognise and thank HLB Mann Judd for their internal audit function at Hepburn Shire Council as their contract comes to a close.*

MOTION

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. *Receive and note the Final Report – Follow-up on status of actions addressing internal audit recommendation and submit to Council to ratify;*

2. *Acknowledge that the findings will be combined into Council's rolling Internal Audit Register with the update to findings and status of Councils implementation as a complete internal audit register for 2021 and will be a focus of implementation; and*
3. *Receive and note the Local Government Recent Reports and Publications document prepared by HLB Mann Judd issued regularly to local government agencies and presented to ARC for consideration; and*
4. *Recognise and thank HLB Mann Judd for their internal audit function at Hepburn Shire Council as their contract comes to a close.*

Moved: Mr Jason Young

Seconded: Cr Brian Hood

Carried

Mr Kundai Mtsambiwa - HLB Mann Judd left the meeting at 2:10pm

10.2 INTERNAL AUDIT REGISTER AS AT DECEMBER 2021 DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

In providing this advice to the Audit and Risk Committee as the Manager People and Governance, I Krysten Forte have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Internal Audit Recommendations - December 2021 [10.2.1 - 4 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Audit and Risk Committee to present to the Audit and Risk Committee an update on the internal audits that were undertaken in the past 12 months, detailing the agreed findings and Council's progress made against each respective finding.

The Internal Audit Register details the implementation of the findings against the three audits of:

- Accounts Payable and Credit Cards
- Rates and Revenue
- Procurement and Contract Management.

Attached to this report is the current internal audit register.

Once the Draft Report - Follow-up on status of actions addressing internal audit recommendation is adopted by Council then those findings will form the Register and be one source of truth in relation to findings that Council should work towards implementing.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. *Receive and note the Internal Audit Register that provides Council's progress/status against the following internal audits that were undertaken in the past 12 months*
 - a. *Internal Audit into Accounts Payable and Credit Cards*
 - b. *Rates and Revenue*
 - c. *Procurement and Contract Management*

MOTION

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. *Receive and note the Internal Audit Register that provides Council's progress/ status against the following internal audits that were undertaken in the past 12 months*

a. *Internal Audit into Accounts Payable and Credit Cards*

b. *Rates and Revenue*

c. *Procurement and Contract Management*

Moved: Mr Jason Young

Seconded: Cr Brian Hood

Carried

10.3 INTERNAL AUDIT CONTRACT – UPDATE ON REQUEST FOR QUOTE PROCESS DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

In providing this advice to the Audit and Risk Committee as the Manager People and Governance, I Krysten Forte have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

- Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Audit and Risk Committee to be updated on the procurement process undertaken to engage in an internal audit contract for Hepburn Shire Council.

HLB Mann Judd who have been Council's internal auditors previously have finished their contract with Council as of December 2021.

A Request for Quote procurement process was undertaken in October 2021.

A tender Panel has been established and the Panel have determined a preferred internal audit supplier.

The next steps to conclude the procurement process and award the contract are to follow, and in 2022 work will be undertaken with the Audit and Risk Committee, the successful internal auditors and the Executive Leadership Team to set the Strategic Internal Audit Plan.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee receive and note the report relating to the Internal Audit Function and status of the internal audit procurement process as of December 2021.

MOTION

- 1. That the Audit and Risk Committee receive and note the report relating to the Internal Audit Function and status of the internal audit procurement process as of December 2021 and;*
- 2. That the Audit and Risk Committee Chair would welcome the opportunity to participate a hand over / onboarding and welcoming program for the internal auditors in 2022 and throughout their contract;*
- 3. Request that Management bring a Strategic Internal Audit Plan to the next Audit and Risk Committee meeting in March 2022 for consideration.*

Moved: Ms Carol Pagnon

Seconded: Mr Robert Taylor

Carried

Discussion and findings for note:

- The audit and risk committee members discussed with management whether it was appropriate for an independent member of the audit and risk committee to participate in the evaluation panel for future internal audit contracts.
- Consideration and discussion took place in relation to whether this was an appropriate process, and a recommendation was made to management that a report be brought to a future audit and risk committee meeting benchmarking the comparison of other evaluation panels for internal audit contracts and whether other councils appoint an audit committee member to the evaluation panel for internal audit contracts.

Suspension of Standing Orders

That the Audit and Risk committee suspend standing orders for a refreshment break.

M Cr Hood

S Jason Young

CARRIED

The meeting was suspended at 2.25pm.

Resumption of Standing Orders

That the Audit and Risk Committee resume standing orders.

M Robert Taylor

S Jason Young

CARRIED

The meeting resumed at 2.35pm

Kathie Fulton and Glenn Owens entered the meeting at 2:36pm

11 EXTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE

11.1 EXTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

In providing this advice to the Audit and Risk Committee as the Director Organisational Services, I Andrew Burgess have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. 2020-21 Closing Report – Hepburn Shire Council – Final [11.1.1 - 20 pages]
2. 2020-21 Final Management Letter – Hepburn Shire Council – Final [11.1.2 - 10 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide the Audit and Risk Committee with:

- the final Closing Report relating to the 2020-2021 Financial Report and Performance Statement
- the final Management Letter and
- advise of appointment by VAGO of new external audit partner Crowe Australasia as Councils external auditor.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. note the Closing Report 2020-2021 Financial Report and Performance Statement for Hepburn Shire Council and Final Management Letter received from the Victorian Auditor General's Office.
2. note that Crowe Australasia has been appointed by VAGO as Councils new external audit partner.

MOTION

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. *note the Closing Report 2020-2021 Financial Report and Performance Statement for Hepburn Shire Council and Final Management Letter received from the Victorian Auditor General's Office.*
2. *note that Crowe Australasia has been appointed by VAGO as Councils new external audit partner.*

Moved: Mr Robert Taylor

Seconded: Cr Brian Hood

Carried

12 FINANCIAL REPORTING**12.1 ANNUAL PLAN 2021/2022 - QUARTER 1 UPDATE - JULY - SEPTEMBER 2021
DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES**

In providing this advice to the Audit and Risk Committee as the Director Organisational Services, I Andrew Burgess have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Annual Plan 2021/2022 - Quarter 1 update - July - September 2021 - Ordinary Meeting of Council - 23 N [12.1.1 - 19 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The attached report provides a list of the projects included in the Annual Plan 2021/2022 and a progress comment has been provided for each project by a responsible officer.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes the Annual Plan 2021/2022 update for Quarter 1.

MOTION

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes the Annual Plan 2021/2022 update for Quarter 1.

Moved: Mr Robert Taylor

Seconded: Mr Jason Young

Carried

12.2 FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 30 SEPTEMBER 2021 DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

In providing this advice to the Audit and Risk Committee as the Senior Accountant, I Paul Brumby have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Financial Report for the period ending 30 September 2021 [**12.2.1** - 22 pages]
2. Statement of Capital Works as at 30 September 2021 [**12.2.2** - 7 pages]
3. Operational Projects Report as at 30 September 2021 [**12.2.3** - 4 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report combined with the attachments is to provide assurance that Council is prudently managing its financial affairs in an open and transparent way, in order to meet the requirements of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

The report and attachments form a package which gives a comprehensive picture of Council's financial performance and current financial state, in comparison to the revised budget (inclusive of carry forwards from 2020/2021) adopted by Council. It includes a summary of Council's financial performance and position for the 2021/2022 financial year up until 30 September 2021, and an update on each operational and capital project as at 30 September 2021.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee notes:

1. *The financial position and performance for the three months ending 30 September 2021;*
2. *The operating and capital works project reports effective 30 September 2021; and*
3. *That the project reports will be placed on Council's website.*

MOTION

That the Audit and Risk Committee notes:

1. *The financial position and performance for the three months ending 30 September 2021;*
2. *The operating and capital works project reports effective 30 September 2021; and*
3. *That the project reports will be placed on Council's website.*

Moved: Mr Robert Taylor
Seconded: Ms Carol Pagnon
Carried

Kathie Fulton left the meeting at 2:50pm

12.3 PROCUREMENT POLICY 2021 DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

In providing this advice to the Audit and Risk Committee as the Manager People and Governance, I Krysten Forte have no interests to disclose in this report.

This report will be presented by:

- Krysten Forte, Manager Governance and Risk
- Glenn Owens, Senior Finance Advisor

ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Procurement Policy 2021 - v 2.3 - 30 November 2021 [12.3.1 - 23 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Section 108 of the *Local Government Act 2020* commenced on 1 July 2021, and, amongst other things, it requires Council to adopt a Procurement Policy by 31 December 2021.

Therefore, the Procurement Policy 2021 was prepared, and it is attached.

It specifies the principles and procedures which apply in respect of the purchases of goods, and services by the Council, including the carrying out of works.

It includes the legislative requirements as well as good practice requirements.

MOTION

The Audit and Risk Committee receive and note the Procurement Policy review as presented by Management for noting and note that the final wording in the policy note that exemptions as detailed in the policy does not override the thresholds.

Moved: Mr Robert Taylor

Seconded: Ms Linda McNeill

Carried

13 RISK MANAGEMENT

13.1 RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

In providing this advice to the Audit and Risk Committee as the Manager People and Governance, I Krysten Forte have no interests to disclose in this report.

This report will be presented by:

- Krysten Forte, Manager People and Governance
- Gabrielle Castree, Associate Partner, Risk Consulting, Crowe Australasia

ATTACHMENTS

1. Audit and Risk Committee Agenda 13 December 2021 - Risk Management Framework - v 1.2 - 06 December 2 [13.1.1 - 31 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Risk Management Framework (RMF) has been written to document Council's approach to managing risk. It is attached.

The RMF is divided into three sections, which are built around three Focus Areas:

Focus Area 1: Key Policy Drivers

Focus Area 2: Risk Management Workplan (the **workplan**)

Focus Area 3: Risk Management Process (the **guidelines**)

The RMF is a comprehensive document that specifies:

1. The commitment to risk management in terms of principles, risk appetite, objectives, key performance indicators, accountabilities, resources, implementation, and evaluation.
2. The workplan that will develop and improve Council's level of risk maturity and drive continuous improvement.
3. The guidelines for a consistent method of identifying, assessing and evaluating risk including recording, reporting, monitoring and reviewing risk.

The RMF recognises that Council's approach to risk management is (a) dynamic and (b) operates across the five elements of risk culture, risk governance, risk resources, risk process and risk assurance.

13.2 RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE - REVIEW OF RISK EVENT SUMMARY REPORT DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

In providing this advice to Audit and Risk Committee as the Manager People and Governance, I Krysten Forte have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

- Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide the Audit and Risk Committee with an update on high and urgent risk areas and incidents including fraud, injuries and claims.

In order for the Audit and Risk Committee to be informed about areas of focus or concern, this report provides a summary of any fraud and protected disclosure events, incidents and urgent risks.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Advisory Committee receives and notes the Risk Management Update - Review of Risk Event Summary Report.

MOTION

That the Audit and Risk Advisory Committee receives and notes the Risk Management Update - Review of Risk Event Summary Report.

Moved: Mr Robert Taylor

Seconded: Mr Jason Young

Carried

13.3 UPDATE ON THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2020 IMPLEMENTATION DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

In providing this advice to the Audit and Risk Committee as the Manager People and Governance, I Krysten Forte have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment CEO Rem and Employment Policy Briefing 7 December 2021
[13.3.1 - 45 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for the Audit and Risk Committee to be provided with a written and verbal update on Council's progress with respect to the implementation of the *Local Government Act 2020*. The detail to the report will be presented verbally by Chief Executive Officer and the Manager People and Governance.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. *The Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes the written and detailed verbal update provided relating to the implementation of the Local Government Act 2020.*
2. *The Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes and provides comment to the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy as required to be prepared in line with the Local Government Act 2020.*

MOTION

That:

1. *The Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes the written and detailed verbal update provided relating to the implementation of the Local Government Act 2020.*

Moved: Mr Robert Taylor

Seconded: Ms Linda McNeill

Carried

2. The Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes and provides comment to the CEO Employment and Remuneration Policy as required to be prepared in line with the Local Government Act 2020.

Moved: Mr Robert Taylor

Seconded: Mr Brian Hood

Carried

Alison Breach and Elizabeth Aitken entered the meeting at 4:00pm

14 PROJECT UPDATES**14.1 CRESWICK TRAILS PROJECT UPDATE****DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

In providing this advice to the Audit and Risk Committee as the Project Manager - Creswick Trails, I Alison Breach have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

- Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Creswick Trails Project.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes this report on the Creswick Trails Project Stage One.

MOTION

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes this report on the Creswick Trails Project Stage One.

Moved: Cr Brian Hood

Seconded: Mr Jason Young

Carried

14.2 HEPBURN HUB AT THE REX PROJECT UPDATE - OUTCOME OF COUNCIL MEETING 23 NOVEMBER 2021
DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

In providing this advice to the Audit and Risk Committee as the Director Infrastructure and delivery, I Bruce Lucas have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide a project update:

- To provide an appropriate level of information to allow the Audit and risk Committee to properly monitor the progress of the project against the Project Plan as amended by Council on 15 June 2021.
- To acquit Council's resolution that management provide periodic reporting on the progress of the Hepburn Hub at the Rex.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That Audit and Risk Committee:

1. *Receives and notes the project update report regarding the Hepburn Hub at the Rex Project;*
2. *Notes a new procurement process was undertaken and presented to Council;*
3. *Notes Council decision to:*
 - a. *not award a contract and not proceed with the project;*
 - b. *Request CEO to commence a public process to sell the Rex building*

MOTION:

That Audit and Risk Committee:

1. *Receives and notes the project update report regarding the Hepburn Hub at the Rex Project;*
2. *Notes a new procurement process was undertaken and presented to Council;*
3. *Notes Council decision to:*
 - a. *not award a contract and not proceed with the project;*
 - b. *Request CEO to commence a public process to sell the Rex building*
4. *The considerations to date be well documented and show how decisions were made for the community, including lessons learnt and steps to improve future project processes.*
5. *The next steps in the Rex building and related projects be completed using strategic risk assessments and plans that are well communicated, well followed and detail how risks associated with potential outcomes will be managed.*

6. The reports on the council building usage and staff accommodation be provided to the ARC, detailing how safe working environments will be provided to staff in the short and long term.

7. Related project/s will remain as standing projects on our ARC agenda, section 14, for ongoing review.

Moved: Robert Taylor
Seconded: Jason Young
Carried

14.3 TRENTHAM COMMUNITY HUB DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

In providing this advice to the Audit and Risk Committee as the Project Manager, I Elizabeth Atkin have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Trentham Community Hub is a priority Council project that has been in development for a number of years. The draft Final Concept Design was the subject of the most recent, large community engagement process that displayed the draft Final Concept Design and described how the design responds to the feedback from the previous engagement. The concept design is now finalised and Council endorsed the Final Concept Design with a resolution at the Council Meeting on the 15 June 2021.

Additionally, the Victorian Government recently announced \$3.5M funding for the project, which allows the progression of the project to construction stage.

In June 2021, the concept design was adopted by Council and the project moved into a phase of detailed design.

In October 2021 the documentation package was released to the market as a request for tender. Following a four-week tender period a single submission was received and evaluated. An evaluation report and Council report are being prepared for consideration at the December Ordinary Council meeting.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes the progress report on the progress of the Trentham Community Hub project.

MOTION

That the Audit and Risk Committee receives and notes the progress report on the progress of the Trentham Community Hub project.

Moved: Cr Brian Hood

Seconded: Mr Jason Young

Carried

Alison Breach and Elizabeth Aitken left the meeting at the meeting at 4.10pm

15 LEGISLATIVE COMPLIANCE**15.1 GENDER EQUALITY ACT 2020 IMPLEMENTATION
DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES**

In providing this advice to the Audit and Risk Committee, as the Manager People and Governance, I Krysten Forte have no interests to disclose in this report.

This report will be presented by:

- Krysten Forte

ATTACHMENTS

- Nil

INTRODUCTION

This is a placeholder for a verbal update to the Audit and Risk Committee on Council's progress in relation to the implementation of the *Gender Equality Act 2020* and the organisations broader commitment to gender equality organisational and community wide.

16 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE COMPLIANCE
16.1 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING DATES FOR 2022
DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

In providing this advice to the Audit and Risk Committee as the Manager People and Governance, I Krysten Forte have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

- Nil

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Audit and Risk Committee to review and approve meeting dates for the 2022 calendar year and reporting dates to Council at its Ordinary Council meetings.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

1. *That the Audit and Risk Committee approves the following meeting dates for the 2022 calendar year:*
 - *Monday 28 March 2022, 1:00pm*
 - *Monday 27 June 2022, 1:00pm*
 - *Monday 12 September 2022, 1:00pm*
 - *Monday 12 December 2022, 1:00pm*
2. *That the Audit and Risk Committee approves the following Ordinary Council Meeting dates for the Audit and Risk Committee Chair to report to Council:*
 - *Tuesday 21 June 2022, 6:00pm*
 - *Tuesday 20 December 2022, 6:00pm*

MOTION

1. *That the Audit and Risk Committee approves the following meeting dates for the 2022 calendar year:*
 - *Monday 28 March 2022, 1:00pm*
 - *Monday 27 June 2022, 1:00pm*
 - *Monday 26 September 2022, 1:00pm*

- *Monday 12 December 2022, 1:00pm*
- 2. *That the Audit and Risk Committee approves the following Ordinary Council Meeting dates for the Audit and Risk Committee Chair to report to Council:*
 - *Tuesday 21 June 2022, 6:00pm*
 - *Tuesday 20 December 2022, 6:00pm*

Moved: Mr Robert Taylor

Seconded: Ms Linda McNeill

Carried

16.2 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE WORKPLAN - DISCUSSION FOR WORKPLAN FOR 2022 DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

In providing this advice to the Audit and Risk Committee as the Manager People and Governance, I Krysten Forte have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Audit and Risk Committee Workplan 2021 [16.2.1 - 2 pages]
2. Draft Audit and Risk Committee Workplan 2022 [16.2.2 - 2 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Audit and Risk Committee to continually assess and work towards meeting the objectives of the Audit and Risk Committee Workplan as attached to this report.

The Workplan was presented to the Audit and Risk Committee at its meeting in February 2021 and adopted. It was ratified by Council thereafter.

The Workplan provides for a way forward for meeting structure and reports and items that management should work towards preparing and presenting to the Committee in line with good governance and statutory obligations of the Local Government Act 2020 and the Audit and Risk Committee Charter.

The 2021 Workplan is attached.

A replicated Workplan as similar to the structure for 2021 for the forthcoming year - 2022 is presented in Draft form relating to meeting dates for 2022 for ARC's review is attached.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. *The Audit and Risk Committee notes the Workplan as attached and continually assesses reports and discussion items that are presented to the Committee from management in line with the Audit and Risk Committee Charter and Workplan and ensure compliance to both; and*
2. *Confirm the structure for the workplan for 2022 as attached.*

MOTION

That:

1. *The Audit and Risk Committee notes the Workplan as attached and continually assesses reports and discussion items that are presented to the*

Committee from management in line with the Audit and Risk Committee Charter and Workplan and ensure compliance to both; and

2. *Confirm the structure for the workplan for 2022 as attached.*

Moved: Mr Robert Taylor

Seconded: Ms Linda McNeill

Carried

16.3 AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE ANNUAL ASSESSMENT SURVEY RESULTS DIRECTOR ORGANISATIONAL SERVICES

In providing this advice to the Audit and Risk Committee as the Manager People and Governance, I Krysten Forte have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. ARC Self Assessment Survey 2021 - Results [**16.3.1** - 3 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Audit and Risk Committee to be presented with the Annual Performance survey data that was collected after a survey was undertaken with councillor delegates and independent members who represented the Committee throughout 2021.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. *Receive and note the survey data as collated and presented in relation to the Annual Self-Assessment Survey and take note to the comments as transcribed in the body of this report; and*
2. *Provide any further feedback on the performance of the Audit and Risk Committee to enhance the function and management oversight of the Committee for 2022.*

MOTION

That the Audit and Risk Committee:

1. *Receive and note the survey data as collated and presented in relation to the Annual Self-Assessment Survey and take note to the comments as transcribed in the body of this report; and*
2. *Provide any further feedback on the performance of the Audit and Risk Committee to enhance the function and management oversight of the Committee for 2022.*
3. *The Chair and Manager People and Governance work together to report back on some of the specific matters addressed in the survey; and that the survey is sent out in advance and a subsequent follow up email is sent in the lead up to the cut off date for the survey to remind members for completion and feedback feedback.*

Moved: Mr Robert Taylor

Seconded: Cr Brian Hood

Carried

17 NEW BUSINESS

An opportunity for the Chair or independent members to bring forward any new business to discuss.

The ARC recommend the continuation of council meetings to be live streamed to Council's website and archived as per current practice.

18 CORRESPONDENCE

An opportunity for the Chief Executive Officer to table or note any significant correspondence that Council has received since the last meeting.

Nil

19 NEXT MEETING

The next Audit and Risk Committee meeting will be held on Day 29 March 2022. The location of the meeting will be determined at a later date based on restrictions due to COVID-19. The in-camera session for committee members will commence at 1.00pm, with officers and external attendees joining the meeting from 1:30pm.

20 CLOSE OF MEETING

The Meeting closed at 4:20pm.

13.5 APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS - MINERAL SPRINGS RESERVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE DIRECTOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND DELIVERY

In providing this advice to Council as the Director Infrastructure and Delivery, I Bruce Lucas have no interests to disclose in this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Terms Of Reference Mineral Springs Reserve Advisory Committee October 2021 [13.5.1 - 4 pages]

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to appoint community members to the Mineral Springs Reserves Advisory Committee (MSRAC) for a period of three years.

OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION:

That Council:

1. *Appoints the following community representatives to the Mineral Springs Reserves Advisory Committee for a period of 3 years expiring on January 31 2025.*
 - *Lisa Rodier*
 - *Bill Guest*
 - *Nathan Lundmark*
 - *Brenden Loton*
 - *David Moore*
2. *Acknowledges the involvement and input provided by community members during the previous term of the Mineral Springs Advisory Committee and formally notes its appreciation.*

MOTION

That Council:

1. *Appoints the following community representatives to the Mineral Springs Reserves Advisory Committee for a period of 3 years expiring on 31 January 2025.*
 - *Lisa Rodier*
 - *Bill Guest*
 - *Nathan Lundmark*
 - *Brenden Loton*
2. *Acknowledges the involvement and input provided by community members during the previous term of the Mineral Springs Advisory Committee and formally notes its appreciation.*

Moved: Cr Juliet Simpson

Seconded: Cr Brian Hood
Lost

MOTION

That standing orders be suspended.

Moved: Cr Lesley Hewitt
Seconded: Cr Jen Bray
Carried

Standing orders were suspended at 8:04pm.

MOTION

That standing orders be resumed.

Moved: Cr Don Henderson
Seconded: Cr Lesley Hewitt
Carried

Standing orders resumed at 8:20pm.

BACKGROUND

The current Mineral Springs Reserves Advisory Committee (MSRAC) was appointed for a period of 3 years expiring on the 31 January 2022.

The role of MSRAC Committee is to provide advice to Council to assist Hepburn Shire Council plan for, prioritise and implement maintenance works and major projects across designated Mineral Springs Reserves within the given parameters and funding opportunities. These include:

- To provide input and advice to Council, Council Officers, Consultants and Land Managers on major projects and maintenance needs and schedules.
- To provide input and advice to Council, Council Officers, Consultants and Land Managers on future needs and strategic planning for Mineral Springs Reserves across Hepburn Shire including long term improvement programs.
- To assist in sourcing and securing grant funding.
- To include interpretive signage for bridges and pathways through the reserves.

KEY ISSUES

Council invited nominations for community representatives to join the committee from the 17 December 2021 until the 17 January 2022 via Council's Participate

Hepburn platform, the December edition of Hepburn Life, the 20 December edition of 'the Local' and various posts on Council's Facebook page.

Nominees were asked to provide details of their relevant interest or experience in Mineral Springs Reserves or landscape management and their previous involvement in community groups.

Council received five nominations for positions on the Committee:

- Bill Guest
- Lisa Rodier
- Nathan Lundmark
- Brenden Loton
- David Moore

Bill Guest, Lisa Rodier and Nathan Lundmark have actively served on the Committee for the past 3 years and have expressed interest in remaining on the Committee for a further 3 year term. David Moore and Brenden Loton are new nominations.

Each of the nominees has demonstrated their commitment to the selection criteria set out on the nomination form and listed below:

- Demonstrated understanding of community needs.
- Interest in mineral springs reserves and /or reserve management.
- Ability to work as part of a team and be solution focussed.
- Involvement in other community organisations.
- General background and reason for nomination.

The current Terms of Reference identify a 3 year term and detail the membership of the MSRAC to comprise of:

- Hepburn Shire Councillor (1)
- Council Officer – Director Infrastructure and Delivery (1)
- Council Officer – Parks & Open Space Coordinator (1)
- Community Panel Members (3-5)
- DELWP Representative (1)
- Representation from the Dja Dja Wurrung.

Nominee Name	Details submitted
Bill Guest (Hepburn Springs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of MSRAC since 2014 and previous member of the HMSR Advisory Committee. • Member of Hepburn Bathhouse Business & Community Liaison Group. • Inaugural member of the Friends of HMS. • Involved in the development of reserve management

	<p>plan and master plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retired from Australian Defence Force. • Passionate about conservation management of the reserves and health of the mineral springs.
Lisa Rodier (Creswick)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of MSRAC since 2014. • Passionate about conservation management of the reserves and health of the mineral springs. • Very keen to see current projects come to fruition. • Professional experience working in Community Health (CHRH) and Forest & Ecosystem Science. • Bachelor Degree in Business. • Diploma in Conservation Land Management. • Previous work with Rotary and Lions events.
Nathan Lundmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member of MSRAC from 2019 - 2022 • Qualifications in Heritage and Interpretive Tourism • Current volunteer at the Daylesford Information Centre. • Previous member of numerous working technical parties and community-based management committees. • Currently involved with the Tourist Railway • Good connection between the public and Council via the VIC.
Brenden Loton	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term resident of Daylesford and keen to see Daylesford's reputation as a tourist destination grow. • Involvement in the community & Children's education. • Currently on U3A • Former soldier and recently a project manager with Department of Defence.
David Moore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interest in preserving local groundwater, mineral springs and the development of the Integrated Water Management Strategy being coordinated by CHW.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFA Musk Brigade member since 2008 and ex CFA Benalla member. • Member of POW (Protect our Water Group in Musk). • Joint designer of draft Central Springs Recreational Area. • Advocate for retention of Heritage Pavillion & 1929 Hydro Electric Turbine at Lake Daylesford. • Save our Rex building and Daylesford Cinema community Group. • Bachelor and Master of Architecture with thesis on 'Computer Generated Holography' used in studying 3D shape of aquifers and understanding of groundwater availability. • Previous work with Rotary • Various other community groups.
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The nominees provide a good blend of experience and expertise which provides consistency with some ongoing membership along with new members bringing new ideas and input and all nominations are recommended to be appointed to the committee.

With regards to representation from Dja Dja Wurrung and DELWP, Council will formally invite representatives from these agencies to participate in the advisory committee however noting that historically, attendance has been on an as needs basis.

POLICY AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

Council Plan 2021 - 2025

A resilient, sustainable and protected environment.

1.2 Prioritise environmental management, protection and regeneration.

A healthy, supported and empowered community.

2.3 Optimise the use of public spaces to increase participation and community connection.

Embracing our past and planning for the future

3.3 Build and maintain quality infrastructure that supports and promotes liveability and active living in the community.

A dynamic and responsive Council

5.1 Harness community expertise

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

The implications of this report have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The MSRAC will play an important role in advising Council on conservation management, strategic planning and long term improvement programs for eight public mineral spring's reserves managed by Council.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications associated with this report.

COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Council advertised for community representatives to be involved in the Mineral Springs Reserves Advisory Committee from the 17 December 2021 until the 17 January 2022.

MINERAL SPRINGS RESERVES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

DATE AMENDED: October 2021

DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: September 2024

RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: Director Infrastructure and Delivery

Introduction

Council is committed to working with the community to develop and plan delivery of maintenance and capital improvement works for all Mineral Springs Reserves that Council is responsible for managing across the municipality.

Purpose

The Mineral Springs Reserves Advisory Committee (MSRAC) will provide advice to assist Hepburn Shire Council plan for, prioritise and implement maintenance works and major projects across all Mineral Springs Reserves within the given parameters and funding opportunities.

Scope

- To provide input and advice to Council, Council Officers, Consultants and Land Managers on major projects and maintenance needs and schedules.
- To provide input and advice to Council, Council Officers, Consultants and Land Managers on future needs and strategic planning for Mineral Springs Reserves across Hepburn Shire including long term improvement programs.

▶ TERMS OF REFERENCE

- To assist in sourcing and securing grant funding.
- To include interpretive signage for bridges and pathways through the reserves.

The Mineral Springs Reserves considered by this advisory committee are:

- Hepburn Mineral Spring Reserve, Hepburn
- Central Springs Reserve, Lake Daylesford, Daylesford
- Houston Street Springs, Daylesford
- Thomas Springs, Franklinford
- Glenlyon Recreation Reserve, Glenlyon
- Woolnoughs Road Mineral Spring Reserve, Holcombe
- Jubilee Lake Reserve, Daylesford
- Leitches Creek Spring Reserve, Daylesford

Principles

The MSRAC will act as an advisory body to Council and make recommendations to Council for consideration. Final decision making will rest with Council.

Meetings

Meetings will be held on a four month cycle and will generally be aligned with:

- Councils budget development process – December/January
- Project planning and scheduling – April/May
- Financial reporting – August /September

Committee support will be provided by a nominated Council officer.

Chair

The Chair will be the nominated Councillor appointed to the committee.

▶ TERMS OF REFERENCE

Committee Term

Each term of the committee will be 3 years.

There will be a spill of positions at the end of each committee term.

Members of Committee

Councillor membership of the MSRAC will generally be as listed below however other officers maybe requested to attend for specific purposes. Councillor membership is by agreement of Councillors. Permanent members will be:

- Hepburn Shire Councillor (1)
- Council Officer – Director Infrastructure and Delivery (1)
- Council Officer - Parks & Open Space Coordinator (1)
- Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) (1)
- Community Panel Members (3 – 5)
- Representation from the Dja Dja Wurrung.

Legal Coverage for Members of Committee

Council's Insurance provides indemnity coverage for members of Council Committees who are acting on behalf of Council in good faith and in accordance with the relevant terms of reference.

Quorum

For voting purposes, a quorum will consist of 50% plus 1 of the designated committee membership.

▶ TERMS OF REFERENCE

Reporting

The MSRAC will forward minutes of meetings and any recommendations on all projects to be noted by Council at an Ordinary Meeting of Council. Council officers will facilitate reporting requirements.

14 CLOSE OF MEETING

The Meeting closed at 8:21pm.