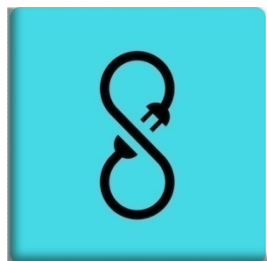
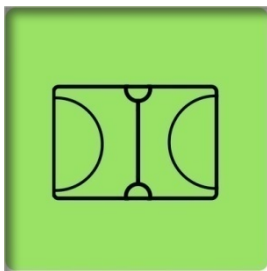


Hepburn

SHIRE COUNCIL

RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

2016-2021



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hepburn Shire Council recognises that access to quality recreation and open space opportunities and facilities are vitally important to the health and wellbeing of the community and its ongoing prosperity. This is evidenced in three of the core functions and responsibilities identified in the Council Plan:

- Active and engaged communities
- Quality community infrastructure
- Sustainable environment and a vibrant economy

This strategy provides a vision for recreation and open space in Hepburn Shire alongside five pillars that guide priorities and service delivery over the next five years. A set of key planning principles also directs the quality of delivery across the Shire.

VISION

Hepburn Shire features a diversity of quality, accessible and sustainable recreation and open space facilities supported by passionate community members.

PILLARS

- Facilities
- Community Support & Development
- Sustainability
- Utilisation & Participation
- Policy & Management

Recreation, whether it is active or passive, structured or unstructured, provides opportunities for local residents and visitors to the area to improve their fitness and this helps to protect against poor health outcomes. Participation in recreational activities can also help to bind communities together, reducing social isolation and creating higher awareness of environmental influences. Hepburn Shire has an abundance of quality recreational and open space assets, and this has added benefits associated with visitor attraction and tourism economy.

To encourage more people to be physically active, Council aims to continue to provide quality, accessible and sustainable facilities throughout the municipality. It currently provides a breadth of facilities including parks, playgrounds, nature reserves, lakes, skate parks, walking / cycling tracks, swimming pools, recreation reserves and stand alone sports facilities. However, given the changing nature of physical activity participation at a local and national level away from traditional team sports and competitions to more individualised activities, as well as the ageing of the population and the desire to reconnect with nature; future facility provision is geared more towards that which is suitable for walking, cycling, swimming, indoor exercise opportunities and being immersed in nature. Nevertheless, Council wishes to provide residents with the choice to continue to take part in traditional team sports, or modified and social versions of these sports.

Maintenance, renewal and upgrade of recreation reserves and other significant open spaces where people recreate should be guided by master plans or suitable management plans. These plans should address: existing and potential future use of these spaces, the layout of facilities, access, environmentally sustainable design initiatives, traffic management, links to walking / cycling trails, passive recreational activities and public art, for example. The development of master plans, along with the development of policies in relation to sports ground allocations, leases and licences, developer contributions, capital works contributions and play spaces, are among the first actions to be undertaken within the Strategy as they set the framework for all other works and priorities in the future.

A Hierarchy of Recreation Reserves has been developed (See Appendix A), identifying the features that would be typically found at a particular type of open space or sports ground. Further to this, a gap analysis is provided to inform equitable distribution of recreation and open space facilities across the Shire as well as the suitability of the facilities for the local population. A minimum standard for facility provision for towns within the Shire has been developed, however, it must be noted that this framework is only to be used as a guide.

It is recognised that the provision of recreation and open space in the community is not simply the sole responsibility of Council, there are many different organisations involved in some way. Clubs and organisations have a role in providing physical activities and maintaining facilities and areas of open space. State Government agencies such as Parks Victoria and Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) are key partners in the provision of parks which are used for recreational purposes such as walking and mountain bike riding. Events and activities across the Shire can also be provided for by the private sector.

During the course of research and consultation towards this strategy, many initiatives for inclusion were identified but not all have been recommended. Those initiatives that have been recommended are included in the action plan only if:

- There is evidence of the need;
- The initiative is consistent with the vision and planning principles identified in the Strategy;
- The initiative is consistent with the minimum level of facilities for a town of that size;
- The initiative is clearly a responsibility or partial responsibility of Council;
- There are likely to be sufficient resources to fund, develop and maintain the initiative;
- The initiative is a priority and likely to be achieved within the next five year period;
- The initiative has not already been incorporated into other plans where they will be actioned and reported on, e.g. Council's Walking and Cycling Strategy (2011).

Documentation of this research is provided throughout this document together with the Appendix section which also provides greater detail of existing facilities and spatial assessments.

The Action Plan for this strategy is provided as a part of this document.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Aim of the strategy

The aim of the Hepburn Recreation and Open Space Strategy is to inform Council's strategic planning, development and delivery of recreation infrastructure and services for a short, medium and long term period.

1.2 Scope

For the purpose of this strategy, Hepburn Shire has defined recreation to encompass all indoor and outdoor active sporting activities currently (or likely to be) undertaken in the Shire, as well as passive or informal recreational activities. Council has defined open space in this strategy to include places and spaces that support and encourage participation in formal or informal active and passive sport and recreational activities and programs. This will include sports grounds, leisure centres, swimming pools, parks, playgrounds and walking and cycling trails. Other forms of open space such as conservation and heritage areas (where no recreational activities are provided for or encouraged), open space set aside for utilities and services (such as power line easements) and undeveloped land are not included as part of the scope of this strategy.

1.3 Methodology

In order to obtain the information necessary to make informed decisions about the future provision of recreation and open space facilities and opportunities in Hepburn Shire, the following methodology was utilised:

Development of a project bulletin to inform the community and to provide information on how to be involved in the project.

Development of four separate community surveys to ascertain the needs of local people in relation to sport and recreation programs, services and facilities.

Review of relevant documents to understand the context in which sport, recreation and open space is provided in Hepburn Shire, and the policies and issues which may impact upon future provision.

Review of the demographic make-up of the Hepburn community to identify the profile of existing residents and to determine future population projections and areas of growth.

Assessment of state and national sport, recreation and open space trends to determine the potential impact of these issues on recreation and open space provision in Hepburn Shire

Interviews with key stakeholders such as sports clubs, State Sporting Associations and State Government departments to discuss issues related to recreation and open space in Hepburn Shire.

Community meetings in Clunes, Creswick, Daylesford and Trentham.

Basic audit of facilities and programs.

Review of existing policies, procedures and planning processes and develop recommendations to provide improvements in these areas, e.g. fees and charges, development contributions policy, capital works contribution policy, master plans, management plans, etc.

2.0 VISION, PLANNING PRINCIPLES AND PILLARS

2.1 Vision

Hepburn Shire features a diversity of quality, accessible and sustainable recreation and open space facilities supported by passionate community members

2.2 Planning principles

The following planning principles have been developed to guide the development and management of recreation and open space in Hepburn Shire. Initiatives will be considered for support providing that they:

- 1 Align with the Council Plan, relevant policies and strategic directions such as community plans, master plans and management plans and the need can be clearly demonstrated
 - 2 Increase participation in physical activity
 - 3 Are financially viable to develop and maintain and reduce the impact on volunteers
 - 4 Increase the diversity of opportunities available, are multi-purpose in design and increase accessibility for people of all abilities where possible
 - 5 Provide social and networking opportunities for the community
 - 6 Provide a safer or more comfortable experience for participants / spectators
 - 7 Minimise / reduce the impact on the environment and protect / enhance township character
 - 8 Are consistent with best practice initiatives including Universal Design and the Disability Discrimination Act as well as relevant local, regional, state or national trends.
-

2.3 Strategic Pillars for Recreation and Open Space

This strategy will identify key focus areas and priorities that will guide Council over the next five years on projects to be delivered. The outcomes of any projects or initiatives will be communicated based on how they address five key pillars. They are:



Facilities

The provision of recreational facilities and open space for structured and unstructured physical activity



Community Support & Development

Increase the capacity of the Community to provide recreational activity and opportunity



Sustainability

Adopt best practice design and sustainability principles in the implementation of facilities and open space projects



Utilisation & Participation

Facilitate participation and equality in physical activity through the provision of facilities and activities across Hepburn Shire



Policy & Management

Guide decision making in the effective management of recreation and open spaces in a clear and transparent way

3.0 CURRENT SITUATION – FUTURE ROLES

This section provides insight into the current situation in Hepburn Shire, including existing facilities, space and infrastructure, programs and events and an assessment of quality and distribution of these across the Shire. Current strategies and plans that affect this strategy are also discussed. This information along with community feedback informs the discussion on Council’s role into the future as well as the likely needs of the community for recreation and open space provision.

3.1 Existing Recreation and Open Space Provision

A variety of opportunities exist within Hepburn Shire for both active and passive recreation. Some examples include:



Figure 1: Petanque Piste in Clunes



Figure 2: Clunes Creek Walk



Figure 3: Doug Lindsay Rec Reserve, Creswick



Figure 4: Creswick Bowls Club



Figure 5: Skate park in Daylesford



Figure 6: Quarry Street Reserve, Trentham

3.1.1 Spaces, Facilities and Infrastructure

The number, size and capacity of facilities and of open spaces available for activities vary across the Shire. Natural features within or surrounding towns also affects the availability of recreation spaces for residents. For example, Creswick and Daylesford/Hepburn Springs each feature two recreation reserves, two lakes, botanic gardens, and a number of sports and play facilities. Smaller towns tend to feature fewer facilities and reserves. There are 13 recreation reserves across the Shire, two of which are on Council land; the remainder are on Crown land. Other open space areas are owned by the Crown and managed through State agencies.

3.1.2 Recreation Programs

Recreation programs run within the Shire are conducted through such organisations as Neighbourhood House and Hepburn Health Service or other not-for-profit associations. There are also a number of additional activities that are provided through private business such as, dancing, yoga, boxing and circus.

3.1.3 Events

Annual tournaments or competitions are run by a variety of organisations and may be part of a larger event or purely as a physical activity event. For instance, The ChillOut festival in 2016 included a community walk, roller derby and a bush dance. On the other hand, there are several companies that hold endurance activities in the Shire and there is a likelihood that this will continue, especially in the mountain bike area of activity. Council provides assistance to events such as this through advice on insurance, marketing and media as well as other regulatory obligations.

3.2 Quality of Open Space

There are a number of factors that contribute to the quality of open space. They include such measures as size and suitability to purpose, maintenance, safety, connectivity and accessibility along with environmental factors such as the promotion of biodiversity. The qualities of open space provision in the Shire can vary according to factors such as the availability of time and resources, how much use the site receives and climatic conditions.

Council has a schedule for the updating and maintenance of recreation and outdoor facilities and feedback from residents suggests that this should be maintained as a priority.

3.3 Distribution of Open Space

The objectives of Clause 56.05-2, Standard C13 of the Victorian Planning Provisions¹ are that the provision of open space should provide a network of well-distributed neighbourhood public open spaces providing a variety of uses. This includes access to local parks within a five minute walk (around 400m) from homes for at least 95% of residents. Along with this, access to open space of at least eight hectares within one kilometre of all dwellings that is suited to recreational uses. Other open spaces listed include linear type parks and trails along waterways or vegetation corridors.

¹ Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
http://planning-schemes.delwp.vic.gov.au/schemes/vpps/56_05.pdf

A summary of the current distribution in towns across the Shire is as follows:

Clunes

The majority of people living in Clunes have access to the linear creek, Esmond Park, the recreation reserve, the showground, playgrounds and various parks within 400 metres of their homes.

Creswick

The majority of people living in Creswick have access to various parks and playgrounds such as Doug Lindsay Reserve, Hammon Park, Melbourne University grounds, Calembreen Park, and bushland settings surrounding the town within 400metres of their homes.

Daylesford

There are residential areas in Daylesford that are more than 400m from open space areas such as Lake Daylesford, Cornish Hill and the Wombat Hill Botanical Gardens. These spaces are well resourced and maintained. Most residents are walking distance recreation reserves, parks, gardens, lakes, playgrounds and tennis courts.

Trentham

While residents on the southern boundary of Trentham are more than 400m from recreation and open space areas in town, they do adjoin farmland and bush land to the immediate south. The majority of Trentham residents live within a 400 metre radius of the recreation reserve, golf course, tennis courts, parks, playgrounds and lakes.

Other Small Towns

The majority of other smaller towns provide open space within 400m of most people's homes.

A full list of sport and recreation facilities along with open space and reserve provision for each town is listed in Appendix A.

3.4 Political Context

There are a range of local, regional and state-wide strategies and plans that guide Hepburn Shire's operations and the way it both delivers services and allocates resources. One of these strategies, the *Hepburn Shire Council Plan 2013-17*, provides a framework to ensure that Council efficiently and effectively delivers programs, services and facilities to meet the

diverse needs of the community. The three objectives of most relevance to the Recreation and Open Space Strategy are:

- Active and engaged communities
- Quality community infrastructure
- Sustainable environment and a vibrant economy.

These three objectives have been chosen by Council in recognition of the importance of physical activity to the health and wellbeing of the community; the importance of providing quality places and spaces where people can be physically active, connect with one another and socialise. The importance of providing a sustainable natural environment for a broad range of active and passive recreational pursuits is also recognised. The *Council Plan* specifically states that it will “implement a proactive and planned approach to the maintenance, renewal and upgrade of recreation assets.” It also states that it will provide support for sport and recreation clubs into the future.

Council’s *Municipal Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-2017* particularly focuses on a number of key strategic areas including mental wellness, food security and healthy eating, economic participation and disease prevention. As part of disease prevention, it addresses the need to maintain and develop the built environment to provide opportunities for increased rates of physical activity. To help encourage this, it acknowledges the importance of quality spaces, programs and affordable exercise opportunities. It also acknowledges the need to work in partnership with relevant agencies to achieve shared objectives.

Council’s *Walking and Cycling Strategy -2011* (Currently under review) focuses on the following three key strategic directions:

- Community health and safety
- Economic prosperity
- Environmental sustainability

The plan itself identifies a range of initiatives to provide quality walking and cycling opportunities for both local residents and visitors to the area. Recommendations that are strongly supported by the community that are already included in the *Walking and Cycling Strategy* have not been included in the Recreation and Open Space Strategy.

The Shire’s *Recreation Development Policy* states that Council is committed to “assisting residents improve the health, safety and vibrancy of local communities. Council recognises that the community expects quality recreation services, programs and facilities and is seeking to work with community to continue to develop these areas.”

Various other Council documents articulate the need for recreational provision. They include the *Hepburn Shire Youth Strategy 2016-2021* and Council’s *Events Strategy (2014)* as well as assorted management plans and community plans. They also communicate the need for Council to continue to assist event organisers to plan events and the need to assist in the provision of quality infrastructure to enable opportunities for physical activity.

Some of the facility and program priorities funded in Council’s 2015/16 Budget, which are linked to its broader strategic directions include:

- Cricket pitch and netball court resurfacing;
- Playground renewal;
- Renewal and upgrade of the multi-purpose facility at Victoria Park, Daylesford and the Splash Park in Creswick;
- Calembreen Park dive tower upgrade; (Fact check please)
- Creswick mountain bike event development;
- Hepburn Shire walking cycling guide;
- Streetscape revitalisation for the towns of Clunes, Creswick, Glenlyon, Hepburn Springs and Trentham;
- Trentham sports ground playground replacement;
- Upgrade of the Newlyn netball facilities;
- Improvements at Lake Daylesford.

Several other documents provide more detailed management and master planning information for specific sites such as recreation reserves. Full details of all documents reviewed can be found in Appendix C.

3.5 Future Open Space Development Needs

Future provision and development of recreation facilities and open spaces will depend on a number of contributing factors. These include, population growth, changing population demographic and the changing needs of communities depending on what types of activities are in favour.

The population of Hepburn Shire is not expected to change dramatically, however small increases are expected in Clunes and Creswick² by way of infill development. Where greater demand for housing and new development takes place, open space networks and recreational facilities should be determined at the planning stage along with cycling and pedestrian networks. There is room for improvement in regard to connectivity between existing spaces and facilities in order for residents to better enjoy them. This means increased footpath or cycle networks, in particular to areas like Wombat Hill Botanic Garden and Lake Daylesford.

Other areas require further attention to bring them up to the desired standard. As an example, Calembreen Park in Creswick could benefit from an upgrade to the walking track, an accessible toilet, interpretive signs and further consideration to how the space can be made more appealing to families. A master plan for the site would provide guidance for future development.

The proportion of the population expected to be over 50 years of age by 2031 is 52%³. In addition to this, there may be increases in family populations through population increase.

² Central Highlands Regional Growth Plan 2014
http://www.dtpli.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/229144/Central-Highlands-Regional-Growth-Plan-May-2014.pdf

³ http://www.delwp.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/excel_doc/0004/308362/Hepburn-S_VIF2015_One_Page_Profile.xlsx (Viewed 8th January 2016)

This means that the activity and recreational needs of the population may change within communities in Hepburn Shire and such changes should be monitored.

Increases are expected in Hepburn Shire in regard to events that involve physical activity. This will be further promoted by the development or extension of suitable facilities and spaces such as the Creswick Mountain Bike Park.

3.6 Community Feedback

According to the community survey, the most popular activities currently are walking, going to the lake or river, visiting parks and playgrounds, swimming, cycling and running. As such, it could reasonably be expected that future open space facility developments will need to focus on footpaths, trails, lake / river frontages, parks and playgrounds. These are developments which can be enjoyed by family members of all ages, including grandparents.

A question was also asked concerning future sport and recreation preferences. The only additional outdoor activities mentioned were golf and soccer. Golfing opportunities are well catered for in the Shire. There was some demand expressed in Trentham for an additional sports ground to be used for soccer and potentially another netball court, however, this would need to be subjected to a feasibility study. The capacity of existing soccer facilities should be monitored to determine whether or not existing facilities are able to cater for future demands.

No other demand for additional outdoor recreation facilities were expressed by community members or key stakeholders, other than AFL Goldfields which cited the potential need for an additional junior oval in the future of Auskick continues to grow. A feasibility study would determine whether or not such an oval is necessary. The need for more space could perhaps be better met through other means such as using a school oval or better scheduling existing ovals. The preference by the majority of key stakeholders and survey respondents was to improve existing facilities rather than to develop new facilities.

As part of the consultation for the Strategy, several play related suggestions were made that could be further explored in the play space strategy when it commences. They are as follows:

- Develop a natural play space at Wombat Hill Botanical Gardens following the completion of the master plan;
- Develop a new play space at Doug Lindsay Recreation Reserve in Creswick once the master plan for this site is complete;
- Develop a new play space at Calembreen Park once the master plan for this site is complete;
- Support the Friends of Daylesford Community Park to upgrade facilities at the park and to develop a regional standard play space by adding to existing stock;
- Develop a play space at Victoria Park, Daylesford;
- Develop a new play space near the Clunes Showground;
- Develop a new play space in the southern part of Creswick;
- Install several play features along the proposed walking / cycling trail between Daylesford and Hepburn Springs and promote as a linear play trail.

There were also a number of suggestions made in relation to walking and cycling. Only those recommendations that have not already been included in other strategies (such as Council's Walking and Cycling Strategy (2011) or the Crossing Borders Tracks and Trails Plan (2013)), have been included in the Recreation and Open Space Strategy. Duplicated suggestions are listed as follows:

- Extend the trail from the RACV Resort in Creswick to Simmonds Street in partnership with the resort.
- Undertake research to determine the feasibility of developing a loop from Wombat Trail to Trentham Falls and to determine whether or not road related issues can be resolved.
- Develop a short off road township walking trail in Newlyn.
- Develop a shared off road walking / cycling trail from Lake Jubilee to Hepburn Springs via Lake Daylesford, Victoria Park and Daylesford township.
- Develop a shared off road trail suitable for walkers, cyclists and scooter riders from Blackmores Road to Fraser Street in Clunes.
- Extend the Le Gerche Trail in Creswick to the Visitor's Information Centre and improve signage.
- Commission and install sculptures along the Clunes Creek Walk.
- Continue to undertake planning and seek funding for the Creswick Mountain Bike Trails.
- Continue to undertake planning of the Daylesford to Woodend Rail Trail.
- Support the Friends of Cornish Hill to develop shared walking /cycling paths at Cornish Hill.

3.7 Council's Future Role

It is important to note that while the Recreation Department and the Parks and Gardens Department have a major portion of responsibility for recreation and open space, any one team or Department within Council will have a role to play. Hepburn Shire's role in relation to recreation and open space in the future should be around:

- Planning – undertaking strategic planning in relation to sport, recreation and open space provision;
- Provision of sport and recreation facilities – overseeing leases, licences, casual hire, and maintenance;
- Project management – managing any sport and recreation facility development;
- Club development – working in partnership with clubs to help them become stronger and more sustainable;
- Promotion – Communicating the range of physical activities available and the locations where these activities take place;
- Partnerships and networking – establishing and nurturing partnerships with appropriate organisations.

3.8 Minimum Facility Provision for Towns

The following table has been developed to provide a guide on future provision and what can reasonably be expected in towns of various sizes. This information has been developed for Hepburn Shire, taking into consideration:

- Provision and benchmarking of facilities in similar-sized towns in rural Victoria;
- The types of activities that currently occur (or may feasibly occur in the future given feedback from local residents and examining state-wide participation trends);
- Climatic conditions;
- Population growth;
- Existing facility provision within the catchment (including neighbouring towns and municipalities).

Note that some towns may already exceed these levels, or community groups or other organisations such as schools may choose to construct and maintain additional facilities. Also note that this table is simply a guide. Actual needs of towns vary considerably depending on the demographics of the town, proximity to other facilities in other towns, specific participation trends, availability of coaches/instructors for certain activities, transport availability, costs, for example. This table simply lists the level of facility development that Hepburn Shire recommends.

Facilities	Large Town (over 2,000 People)	Medium Town (1000-2000 people)	Small-medium Town (500-1000 people)	Small Town (<500 people)	Detail
Sports oval and change facilities	Yes – developed to a reasonably high level.	Yes – developed to a medium level.	May be provided, but will be only developed to a basic level.	May be provided, but will be only developed to a basic level.	Facility provision needs to be guided by relevant publications including building regulations, DDA and other documents such as AFL Preferred Facilities Guidelines.
Netball Court and	Yes – several outdoor netball courts and a	Yes – one to two at each recreation reserve,	One court may be provided, preferably	One court may be provided, preferably	Netball Courts can also provide for

Facilities	Large Town (over 2,000 People)	Medium Town (1000-2000 people)	Small-medium Town (500-1000 people)	Small Town (<500 people)	Detail
Change Facilities	minimum of one indoor netball court.	preferably line marked for tennis too.	line marked for tennis too.	line marked for tennis too.	tennis with additional line marking
Tennis Court	Yes. A regional tennis facility comprising of a bank of courts and several tennis courts suitable for social use or practice.	Yes – up to three tennis courts suitable for local competitions, social use and practice.	At least one tennis court for social use or practice.	Possibly one tennis court for social use or practice.	
Bowling Green	Possibly – one to two facilities with synthetic surfaces.	Yes – one facility per town. May have a synthetic surface, but only if feasible.	Generally not provided	Generally not provided.	Where there is provision in Small-medium and small towns it is likely to be the main facility in the town.
Croquet Green	Possibly one croquet green	Generally not provided	Not provided	Not provided	
Golf Course	Possibly one golf course with irrigated putting greens	Possibly one golf course, but only sand scrape courses	Generally not provided	Not provided	
Multi-purpose playing field (e.g. soccer)	Possibly one multi-purpose playing facility.	May be provided, but only to a basic level.	Generally not provided	Not provided	Provision could be done by a school. A reasonably good playing surface is needed.
Shooting Facilities	Possibly one facility to	May be provided	May be provided	Not provided	

Facilities	Large Town (over 2,000 People)	Medium Town (1000-2000 people)	Small-medium Town (500-1000 people)	Small Town (<500 people)	Detail
	be provided				
Horse racing tracks	Possibly one facility to be provided	Generally not provided	Not provided	Not provided	
Community Centres/Halls	Yes, one or possibly more community centres / halls	Yes. May be one in town and one at a recreation reserve.	May be provided, but should only be a community centre at a recreation reserve or a hall in the town.	May be provided, but should only be a community centre at a recreation reserve or a hall in the town.	
Indoor leisure Centres	Possibly one two court stadium with gym, office, kiosk and program rooms provided.	May be provided but will generally only feature one court. May be provided or shared with a school.	Not provided.	Not provided.	Large town provision to be suited for uses such as basketball, volleyball, badminton and other indoor team sports in addition to exercise class provision.
Gymnasiums	Yes	Yes	Generally not	Not provided	Provision may be through schools, sports clubs, health agencies or the private sector.
Park	Yes – several parks to be provided, but evenly spaced throughout the town.	Yes – at least one park to be provided, preferably in a central location so that it is accessible to all.	Yes – one provided to a basic level.	Possibly one provided to a basic level.	BBQ, accessible public toilet/s and picnic facilities should be included with all provision except

Facilities	Large Town (over 2,000 People)	Medium Town (1000-2000 people)	Small-medium Town (500-1000 people)	Small Town (<500 people)	Detail
					where there is already adequate provision in small-medium and small towns.
Playground with open space for ball games	Yes – several playgrounds to be provided, but evenly spaced throughout the town. One playground should be developed to a municipal or regional level.	Yes – a local level playground should be provided within parks and also at the recreation reserve.	Yes – a local level playground should be provided within a park or at the recreation reserve.	Yes – a local level playground should be provided within a park or at the recreation reserve.	Provision should contribute to the spatial network of existing open space or recreation facilities.
Footpaths	Footpaths to be provided on at least one side of each street in town, but preferably both sides. New footpaths in the municipality to be constructed to a width suitable for shared usage.	Footpaths to be provided on at least one side of each street in town, but preferably both sides. New footpaths in the municipality to be constructed to a width suitable for shared usage.	Footpaths to be provided on at least one side of each street in town	Footpaths to be provided on at least one side of each street in town.	Seats to be placed in key locations and at regular intervals (500m apart). Footpaths on all street frontages around schools connected to the township footpath network.
Walking/cycling trails	One or more off road recreational trails that provides opportunities for walking and cycling near a creek, river, recreation reserve,	One off road recreational trail that provides opportunities for walking and cycling near a creek, river, recreation reserve,	One off road recreational trail that provides opportunities for walking and cycling near a creek, river, recreation reserve,	One off road recreational trail that provides opportunities for walking and cycling near a creek, river, recreation reserve,	

Facilities	Large Town (over 2,000 People)	Medium Town (1000-2000 people)	Small-medium Town (500-1000 people)	Small Town (<500 people)	Detail
	bushland, etc at least 5km in length, but may be much longer and may connect to other towns. Trails will feature interpretive signage, seats, etc. In areas of high use, the track should be sealed. Consideration given to a bicycle skills development area.	bushland, etc at least 5km in length. Will feature seats and may feature interpretive signage.	bushland, etc at least 2km in length.	bushland, etc at least 2km in length.	
Commuter Route for Cyclists	A clearly identified east-west and north-south route comprising of on road lanes for cycling commuters. There may also be some marked on-road cycling lanes around schools.	A clearly identified east-west and north-south route comprising of on road lanes for cycling commuters. There may also be some marked on-road cycling lanes around schools.	None	None	
Swimming Pool	Possibly one 25m – 50m outdoor pool with toddler pool could be provided in a central location.	Possibly one 25m – 50m outdoor pool with toddler pool could be provided in a central location.	Access to a pool within 20 minutes drive from homes if possible	Access to a pool within 20 minutes drive from homes if possible	
Skate parks/BMX	Possibly one skate park to be provided in a central location. One	Possibly one skate park may be provided in a central location subject	Not provided	Not provided	

Facilities	Large Town (over 2,000 People)	Medium Town (1000-2000 people)	Small-medium Town (500-1000 people)	Small Town (<500 people)	Detail
	BMX facility if demand warrants.	to demand and distance from other skate parks.			
Lakes, creeks and rivers	Possibly a fishing pontoon will be developed to enhance lakes / creeks / rivers in or close to the town.	Possibly a fishing pontoon will be developed to enhance lakes / creeks / rivers in or close to the town.	Possibly a fishing pontoon will be developed to enhance lakes / creeks / rivers in or close to the town particularly in towns with no swimming pools.	Not provided	
Informal Recreation facilities	Yes – a number of informal recreation facilities to be developed.	One to two informal recreational facilities may be provided in each town.	One informal recreational facility may be provided in each town.	One informal recreational facility may be provided in each town.	May include outdoor gym equipment, half court basketball court, down ball area, rebound wall, bocce pitch, or outdoor table tennis. All provision should be assessed dependent on the community needs.



4.0 STRATEGIC PILLARS FOR RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

4.1 FACILITIES

The provision of recreational facilities and open space for structured and unstructured physical activity

As stated, one of the roles for Hepburn Shire Council is the provision of suitable facilities and open spaces suited for various sports and recreational activities. This includes the development of strategies and master plans, the project management of facility and open space provision as well as the systematic renewal of facilities and associated infrastructure.

Community Input

Several not for profit, community based organisations directly operate, facilitate or provide facilities for assorted and various activities across the Shire. Included in these organisations is the Hepburn Health Centre which provides physical activities such as men's gym, women's gym, walking groups and exercise classes for its clients. Some football and netball clubs also provide community access to their gymnasiums.

Neighbouring Facilities

Facilities beyond municipal boundaries, such as the Ballarat Aquatic Centre (City of Ballarat) and the Kyneton Aquatic Centre (Macedon Ranges Shire) are also used by local residents.

Maintenance

Like many rural Victorian Shires, the standard of facilities and areas of open space provided and maintained by Hepburn Shire varies according to a number of factors. These can include: when they were developed, how well they have been maintained, whether or not any components have been upgraded or renewed during their lifespan, their level of use and climatic conditions.

Supporting infrastructure

Consideration needs to be given to the supporting infrastructure that is provided with sport and recreation facilities as well as public open spaces. This means items such as seats, paths, toilets and signage should be evaluated for inclusion as and when appropriate and with consideration to the surroundings.

Priorities

From a recreation perspective, the top three priorities identified by the community through the collation of all township surveys (191 surveys) are:

- Develop cycling and walking paths – 104 (54%);

- Upgrade swimming pools – 83 (43%) ;
- Provide more facilities at lakes and rivers, such as fishing platforms/pontoons, boat ramps, playgrounds, public toilets, BBQs, shelter – 81 (42%).

From an open space perspective, the top three priorities identified by the community through a municipal-wide survey are:

- Improve maintenance of open space areas - mowing, weed control, pest control, tree pruning - (56%);
- Construct play facilities, BBQs, shelters and paths in selected areas of open space – (44%);
- Enhance visual amenity of open space through appropriate tree planting, improved landscaping - (38%).

An overview of existing facilities across the Shire with commentary about potential development, upgrades and renewals is provided in Appendix A. Recommendations resulting from this review is as follows:

Action

Implement Recreation Reserve Master Plans

Implement tennis court audit actions

Implement actions from play space strategy

Assess recreation facilities against the guidelines for rationalisation to determine if there are any facilities that are no longer required

Adopt the minimum facility provision for towns proposal and work towards ensuring that all towns are provided the basic level of recreation and open space infrastructure

Utilise the capital works assessment tool as a means of prioritising facility developments and upgrades (refer to Appendix A for Assessment Tool)

Continue to implement the hard court replacement program to ensure quality and availability of hard courts and cricket pitches

Install outdoor gym circuit infrastructure in Creswick at Calembeen Park and Lake Daylesford

Renew the change facilities at the indoor leisure centre at Clunes

Retain Esmond Park in its current state (relatively undeveloped) in order to provide a diverse range of open space unstructured opportunities for the community and visitors.

Action the outcome of the Creswick pool consultation undertaken in 2016/17.

Upgrade Magic Pudding Play Ground, Creswick.

Continue to implement the Master Plan in partnership with Friends of Daylesford Community Park.

Investigate installation of a synthetic bowling green in Trentham.

4.2 COMMUNITY SUPPORT & DEVELOPMENT

Increase the capacity of the Community to provide recreational activity and opportunity.

Council has a range of facilities on Council owned, and on Crown land. Different management categories and management model agreements apply to these facilities, depending on the type of ownership. With the right agreement or management model, these groups and Council can work cooperatively to provide for and maintain sport and recreation facilities and open spaces for the community. By working with community groups under these individual models or agreements Council can provide advice and policy direction in order to increase their capacity and ownership of these facilities and spaces.

Community Input and Access

Community based organisations that manage and maintain areas of open space provide a considerable amount of 'sweat equity' or volunteer labour to specific sites. These organisations would ideally like to be able to access additional resources to assist with maintenance costs incurred. The majority of the spaces maintained and managed by these groups are owned by the Crown.

Management Models

Council currently has five sports facility management categories. They are:

1. Single-user Non Council owned facility
2. Multi-user Non Council owned facility
3. Single -user Council owned facility
4. Multi-user Council owned facility
5. Non Council facility DEWLP

Alongside this, there is a range of management models used to manage facilities across the Shire, these being:

Incorporated Association Management model

Under this model, Council has a lease with the Committee of Management. The lease specifies each party's responsibilities. The Committee of Management then has a licence agreement with sports clubs.

Section 86 Committee of Management – with Council

A Section 86 Committee is a Special Committee of Council established under Section 86 of the Local Government Act (1989) that exercises a power, or performs a duty or function of the Council that has been delegated to it through an Instrument of Delegation.

Section 86 Committee of Management – with Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)

A Section 86 Committee is a Special Committee of Council established under Section 86 of the Local Government Act (1989) that exercises a power, or performs a duty or function of the Council that has been delegated to it through an Instrument of Delegation. In this case, the agreement is with DEWLP.

Direct Licences Agreement

Under this model a direct licence between Council and the Recreation Reserve Committee of Management provides a seasonal agreement with a user group outlining fees, time period and responsibilities.

It is Council's preference for larger facilities with multiple users to operate under an Incorporated Association Model. One example of this is the Doug Lindsay Recreation Reserve, Creswick. Under this model Council has a lease with the committee which specifies each party's responsibilities. The Committee of Management licence agreement with sports clubs allows the allocation of the grounds to casual users as required. The Committee of Management is responsible for maintaining any buildings and the area immediately surrounding the building/s as specified in the agreement. Fees charged to user groups contribute to this cost. As per the lease agreement, Council is responsible for all other aspects of reserve maintenance, such as mowing.

The Section 86 Committee Model provides committee's with delegated authority. Council is aware, however, that some recreation clubs and committees of management experience difficulties in managing and maintaining their facilities and this model has proven to be governance heavy with administration. On the other hand, Section 86 agreements with Council do provide committees with a greater capacity for assistance than a Section 86 agreement with DEWLP. Hepburn Shire Council does not discriminate between groups using facilities with Council, or with DELWP. The same level of service and assistance is provided to both.

Council wants to identify through this strategy how it can best assist clubs and committees with these responsibilities. One such action is to introduce a MOU arrangement with organisations that assist with management and maintenance of open spaces and recreation facilities. MOU agreements between Council and relevant parties will outline financial assistance and service obligations providing greater clarity and transparency in the management of facilities and spaces.

Other Funding and Support

The Shire provides a Community Grants funding program through which community organisations are able to access financial support. This funding available for is for specific projects, rather than to subsidise ongoing operational costs. Examples include groups that might clean up or weed an open space, or small infrastructure projects for community facilities.

Other organisations such as Sports Central, State Sports Associations and the State Good Sports Program offer or facilitate training to sport and recreation clubs and organisations in

areas such as food handling, first aid, coaching, responsible serving of alcohol, club liquor licensing, incorporation and healthy sporting environments.

Community Feedback

Feedback obtained from community listening posts and surveys indicate that community organisations would like more assistance from Hepburn Shire, particularly in the areas of:

- Ongoing funding to assist maintenance costs;
- Clearer understanding of roles and responsibilities around maintenance by all parties;
- Funding for capital works, equipment and events;
- Assistance in maintaining roadside verges adjacent to recreation and open spaces;
- Developing consistent signage for recreation and open space across the Shire;
- Information about grants available and preparation of grant applications;
- Assistance to develop strategic plans, management plans and master plans;
- Assistance to develop internet sites and / or use social media.

Action

Conduct an annual sporting club ideas forum to provide a platform for issues and opportunities to be shared.

Introduce a MOU arrangement with organisations that assist with management and maintenance of open spaces and recreation facilities. MOU will outline financial assistance.

Advocate to Parks Victoria and DELWP to develop quality, well signed walking/cycling tracks throughout bushland in the Shire, accompanied by suitable supporting infrastructure such as seats, picnic tables, BBQs, shelters and toilets.



4.3 SUSTAINABILITY

Adopt best practice design and sustainability principles in the implementation of facilities and open space projects

Hepburn Shire has strong organisational values around sustainability and converting to best sustainable practice in Council owned assets. The Planning Principles stated at the beginning of this document also support this intent. As such, Council will continue to perform sustainable practice in the development, provision and maintenance of sport and recreation facilities and for any open space provision. Council is committed to incorporating new technologies or innovative practice that contributes to the effective and sustainable operation of these assets.

Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD)

Environmentally Sustainable Design Principles are designed to “avoid resource depletion of energy, water and raw materials, prevent environmental degradation caused by infrastructure facilities throughout their lifecycle and create built environments that are liveable, comfortable, safe and productive.”⁴ Hepburn Shire needs to be able to quantify the expected outcomes of ESD features included in any facility development, such as water savings, energy savings, operational cost savings, emission reductions, etc. The six key principles of ESD are:

- Optimise size / existing structure potential;
- Optimise energy use;
- Protect and conserve water;
- Use environmentally preferable products;
- Enhance indoor environmental quality;
- Optimise operational and maintenance practices.

Action

Employ a range of practices that contribute to the sustainability and climate resilience of ovals in the Shire. This will take into consideration: Water source, grass types, irrigation, energy use, lighting and associated infrastructure and technology.

Explore the potential to extend the Daylesford outdoor swimming pool’s season by the use of sustainable heating technology.

⁴ Victorian Government (2015) Environmentally Sustainable Design Fact Sheet



4.4 UTILISATION & PARTICIPATION

Facilitate participation and equality in physical activity through the provision of facilities and activities across Hepburn Shire

Council can continue to support and provide for the community by ensuring fair and equitable opportunities for participation. It is understood that the ability to participate in physical activity of any sort contributes to the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors alike. Council can play a part in this through design and management of facilities and spaces that are accessible and through the promotion of opportunities and events related to sport, recreation and other physical activity.

Community Health

VicHealth states that only about one third of Victorian adults meet the current National Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines. These guidelines recommend 2 ½ to 5 hours of moderate intensity physical activity each week. Alternatively, they recommend 1 ¼ to 2 ½ hours of vigorous intensity physical activity, or an equivalent combination of both moderate and vigorous activities, each week⁵. According to surveys conducted as part of the Recreation and Open Space Strategy, 50% of the people who completed surveys as part of the Recreation and Open Space Strategy take part in seven hours or more of physical activity (although the breakdown of moderate and vigorous intensity is not known). This is at the top end of the scale regarding recommended physical activity levels. Given VicHealth's data on physical activity, we can assume that a high proportion of those people who chose to fill out the Hepburn Shire survey are already quite active.

Hepburn Shire's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (2013-17) notes that in 2013, 46.9% of local residents reported themselves as overweight or obese (compared with 48.6% for Victoria). Whilst this figure is better than the Victorian figure, it is still a concern as being overweight or obese can have significant health implications for people. One way to help reduce weight is for people to become more physically active.

There is a role for the community and for the private sector in providing physical activity, for example, dance schools and personal trainers. Informal groups of friends, neighbours or people with a common interest who undertake physical activities together such as walking, dog walking, horse riding and cycling are a part of the make-up of overall activity.

Community Health Findings

A community survey was conducted as part of the Recreation and Open Space Strategy to gain an understanding of participation in physical activity by local residents. It must be noted that the majority of people who filled out the survey are females aged between 40-69 years of age. Full survey results can be found in Appendix C and are summarised as follows:

Walking proves to be the most popular activity followed by going to the Lake/River and Swimming was identified as the most popular activity that people would like to do but

⁵ Department of Health Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines : [http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health-pubhlth-strateg-phys-act-guidelines/\\$File/FS-Adults-18-64-Years.PDF](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health-pubhlth-strateg-phys-act-guidelines/$File/FS-Adults-18-64-Years.PDF) (viewed 9 March 2016)

currently do not. Barriers to participating in activities lists *Not available locally* as the most common reason with *Time for* being listed as the second most common reason. Respondents were asked which activity they would like to be doing in 10 years time; once again, *Walking* was the most popular answer.

Young People

Young people in Hepburn Shire, through the Hepburn Youth Engagement Strategy (2015) identified a number of physical activity opportunities that they would like to be involved in, including school holiday programs and youth-led clubs and organisations operating from indoor facilities.

In order to encourage increased participation in physical activity, a multi-pronged approach needs to be undertaken by Hepburn Shire and its partners. The following table is modelled on VicHealth’s BE ACTIVE Framework, other documents and the results of consultation:

<p>Individual level</p> <p>Where possible, we need to address the barriers identified by our residents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of availability of desired activities Lack of time Lack of friends to take part in activities with Lack of suitability in terms of time Lack of suitability in terms of the standard of the activity, i.e. too easy or too hard, competitive vs. social, etc. 	<p>Organisational and club level</p> <p>Factors that may limit participation at an organisational or club level include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of inclusive practices and policies Lack of information about opportunities available Inadequate sport and recreation facilities, footpaths, halls, trails, etc Clubs or organisations that are not welcoming and don’t respond to the cultural needs of certain groups.
<p>Community level</p> <p>At a community level, the following factors can have a negative impact on physical activity participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate facilities and areas of open space as a result of poor planning and lack of activation Communities that are based around cars as the major form of transport Lack of public / community transport Communities where people do not feel connected to one another. 	<p>Societal level</p> <p>At a societal level, participation can be limited if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People don’t feel that facilities and areas of open space are safe People feel that spectators / other participants will make it unpleasant to participate People feel that it is more enjoyable spending their leisure time using technology There is a concern that participation as a participant or support person may lead to litigation.

Universal Design and DDA

To ensure that facilities in Hepburn Shire can be used by as many people as possible within the community it is important that they are designed according to Universal Design

Principles and also meet Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requirements. There are seven principles of universal design⁶ which need to be considered in the planning stage:

1. Equitable use - The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.
2. Flexibility in use - The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.
3. Simple and intuitive use – Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.
4. Perceptible information - The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.
5. Tolerance for error - The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.
6. Low physical effort - The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.
7. Size and space for approach and use - Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

Play Spaces

Best practice internationally and Victorian Planning Provisions suggests that the majority of homes in urban areas should have access to a play space within 400 metres or a five minute walk.

Hepburn Shire features 22 play spaces located at:

- Clunes (5) – skate park, The Lee Medlyn Home of Bottles, Queen Park, Caravan Park
- Creswick (4) – Apex Park (Magic Pudding), skate park, Lions Park, Park Lake Playground
- Daylesford (3) –Daylesford Community Park – includes a skate park, Jubilee Lake Reserve, Lake Daylesford Playground
- Glenlyon (1) – Recreation Reserve
- Hepburn / Hepburn Springs (2) – Hepburn Recreation Reserve and Hepburn Mineral Springs Reserve
- Lyonville (1) – Community Hall
- Newlyn (1) Community Sporting Complex
- Trentham (5) – Trentham Recreation Reserve, Trentham Park Estate, skate park, Lions Park, Trentham Sports Ground.

For spatial analysis, a series of maps have been prepared to identify gaps in play space provision. These maps are contained within Appendix B along with a summary of the spatial analysis and the gaps in play space provision. Also included is a set of recommendations for how to improve the play value of spaces in the Shire. It is recommended that this research contributes to the development of a Play Space Strategy that determines the future development of these spaces. Consideration needs to be given to the suitability of provision to the current and projected demographic of towns as well as ongoing maintenance. This

⁶ Victorian Government (2015) Universal Design Fact Sheet

strategy also needs to acknowledge the trend towards large regional or municipal level play spaces where people may spend many hours. While the value of local play spaces cannot be overlooked Hepburn Shire currently lacks the typical regional level play space that most other municipalities provide.

Action

Prepare or review master plans for the following recreation and open space reserves:

Clunes Recreation Reserve
Doug Lindsay Recreation Reserve
Calembeen Park
Wombat Hill Botanical Garden
Glenlyon Recreation Reserve
Hepburn Recreation Reserve
Trentham Recreation Reserve
Newlyn Recreation Reserve
Daylesford Recreation Reserve.

Plan facility developments and upgrades to keep up to date with best practice in relation to sport, recreation and physical activity by working with funding agencies.

Undertake a municipal play space strategy that addresses the planning and design of play spaces for Hepburn Shire with consideration to

- Policy
- Provision (spatially and demographically)
- Maintenance
- Regionally significant play space development

Review Council's dog off leash policy and undertake recommendations for specific off-leash locations.

Support neighbourhood centres to continue to provide activities such as yoga, pilates, walking groups, swimming groups and hydrotherapy classes through Council's communication channels.

Undertake tennis courts audit to inform hard court renewal and future need.

Ensure that all communications, promotions and signage for Recreation and Open Space in Hepburn is aligned with the branding and Communications strategy of HSC.

Upgrade Council's website to better inform recreation and open space opportunities to the community.



4.5 POLICY & MANAGEMENT

Guide decision making in the effective management of recreation and open spaces in a clear and transparent way.

The development of master plans and policies will provide clarity and direction in the provision, implementation and decision making around facilities and open space across the Shire. Alongside this, clear policy direction will ensure greater equity and access to recreation and open space provision for the community of Hepburn Shire as well as more effective and constructive use of resources available to Council.

4.5.1 Minimum Facility Provision for Towns

In order to ensure equity throughout the municipality so that all residents, regardless of where they live, have access to recreational facilities and open space in close proximity to their homes, a minimum level of facility provision has been developed for the municipality. The table provided (Appendix A/ Strategy page 16) provides a guide for future provision, in terms of what could or should realistically be provided in towns of various sizes.

4.5.2 Master Plans and Management

Master Plans

All major recreation reserves and open spaces will have their own management plans and master plans. Council has adopted plans for the following reserves:

- Lake Daylesford Reserve Management Plan;
- Jubilee Lake Reserve Management Plan;
- Hepburn Mineral Springs Reserve Management Plan;
- Calemben Park Management Plan;
- Bath Street Reserve Trentham.

The purpose of a master plan is to provide an overall development vision for a particular site, taking into consideration:

- Other relevant strategies / documents at a local, municipal, regional, state or national level;
- Demographics of the community;
- Assessment of trends and participation;
- Key features to be included on site, e.g. playgrounds, community gardens, sports fields, pavilions or shelters;
- Supporting infrastructure to be included, e.g. BBQs, seats, toilets, interpretive signage;
- The layout of the site – position of all key facilities, with due consideration paid to best practice design principles such as Healthy by Design and Safer by Design;
- Traffic management – internal roadways, external road linkages, car parking, bicycle parking, emergency access, delivery access, event parking, access to public transport;
- Pedestrian zones – internal paths, paths leading to the site;

- Wayfinding – signs within and to the site;
- Landscaping – trees, garden beds, erosion management;
- Water – irrigation systems, water storage, tanks, wetlands, run off;
- Universal Design – consideration given to Universal Design principles;
- Environmentally Sustainable Design – consideration given to ESD principles.

Management Plans

Management plans provide a more hands on approach to what needs to happen at a site from an operational perspective and who is going to do it. A management plan, therefore, needs to take into consideration:

- Roles and responsibilities of all parties if more than one organisation is involved;
- A Memorandum of Understanding if more than one organisation is involved;
- Reference to the master plan or overall vision for the site;
- A maintenance schedule or service standards in relation to irrigation, plant maintenance and any other relevant matters;
- A marketing plan if relevant;
- A list of preferred products and materials, e.g. tree types, type of trail surface, type of seat;
- Budgetary information.

Branding and Marketing

Facilities and open spaces are well utilised and appreciated by the general public, it is important that people know where these facilities and spaces are located. Currently Council's website lists:

- The location of the playgrounds available within the Shire;
- The location of Council operated swimming pools in the Shire, including entrance fees, season opening date, opening hours and policies around early and late closure;
- A list of parks, gardens and reserves;
- Copies of management plans for Lake Daylesford Reserve, Jubilee Lake Reserve, Hepburn Mineral Springs Reserve, Calemben Park and Bath Street Reserve in Trentham;
- Application forms for marriage ceremonies in Council Reserves;
- A list of the major recreation reserves in the Shire;
- Information about recreation grants;

It is important to monitor the information available through Council's website to ensure that it is up to date and relevant to the community's needs and Councils objectives.

Asset Rationalisation

Hepburn Shire, like all other municipalities in Victoria, is required by State Government to cap rate rises at 2.5%. This scenario is likely to place some pressure on the resources Council has available for a variety of programs, services and facilities. One area in which Council may choose to reduce expenditure is in the maintenance of assets that no longer effectively meet the needs of the community; instead directing funds to programs, services and facilities with a demonstrated demand.

Recreational facilities and open space may be considered for rationalisation if:

- There are serious safety issues with the site that cannot be, or cannot easily be, rectified;
- If there are compliance and / or regulatory issues that cannot be, or cannot easily be, rectified;
- The site is poorly located with limited passive surveillance or access;
- The site is not sufficient in size for its purpose;
- There is an over-supply of similar recreation facilities or open spaces in that area;
- Insufficient funding or resources (including volunteers) are available to maintain the site;
- Insufficient funding is available to upgrade or renew infrastructure;
- A lack of usage of the site (possibly due to a decline in the population in that area, a change in the demographics of that community or a new facility or space nearby that has attracted former users).

In such situations any salvageable infrastructure (i.e. in good condition and not past the end of its lifespan) should be relocated to another space nearby if possible.

4.5.3 Policies and Procedures

To assist Hepburn Shire Council to most effectively manage recreation and open space, it is important that there are a number of policies to help guide decisions and to create clear and transparent processes for all concerned. Examples of key focus areas of these policies are listed below:

[Sports Ground Allocation Policy guidelines](#)

Introduction

Hepburn Shire allocates sports grounds, reserves and facilities to Recreation Reserve Committees of Management and / or sport and recreation clubs and organisations in the municipality to enable these groups to provide physical activity opportunities for the community.

Purpose

The Sports Ground Allocation Policy will:

- Provide a fair and equitable system for allocating Council sports grounds.
- Provide Council with a tool to ensure that its decisions around sports ground allocations and fees are consistent and transparent.
- To ensure that all parties are fully aware of their responsibilities in terms of maintaining facilities.
- Allow Council to effectively manage sports ground allocations and usage levels;
- Provide a discretionary tool to vary the level of support and provision to clubs and groups according to their community. For example, gendered equity across the club, female participation levels, good sports accreditation and white ribbon program involvement.

Policy

Council will:

- Clearly articulate the terms of leases, licenses, casual use agreements to ensure that all roles and responsibilities of Recreation Reserve Committees of Management or clubs / organisations and Council are clearly spelt out.
- Direct Recreation Reserve Committees of Management and sport and recreation clubs to take responsibility for maintaining the facilities that they use.
- Assist Recreation Reserve Committees of Management to work in partnership with sports clubs to minimise operating costs.
- Assist Recreation Reserve Committees of Management to set fees according to the operational costs incurred by user groups.
- Ensure clubs that have a greater capacity to generate income direct a percentage of this into a facility renewal plan.

Commentary

- Council's preferred management model is an Incorporated Association model for all major facilities.
- Under this model, Council has a lease with the Committee of Management. The lease specifies each party's responsibilities.
- The Committee of Management has a license agreement with sports clubs and is able to allocate the grounds for casual use as required.
- The Committee of Management is responsible for maintaining the facility and the area immediately surrounding the building as specified in the agreement and charges user groups a fee to cover this cost.
- Hepburn Shire is responsible for all other aspects of the reserve, as per the lease agreement MOU.
- For smaller reserves, such as Glenlyon, a different model may need to be considered such as a direct licence between Council and the Recreation Reserve Committee of Management, a seasonal allocation with a club.
- A detailed explanation of how facilities are managed can be found in the Sports Facility Management Plan.

[Open Space Levy Policy guidelines](#)

Introduction

Under the Victorian Planning Scheme, Hepburn Shire Council is required to collect a cash or in-kind contribution from residential and commercial land developers to put towards new or upgraded infrastructure to support new land developments. The process under which these funds or in-kind contributions are collected is the Development Contribution Plans (DCPs). Hepburn Shire Council requires developers of more than two lots on a piece of land to pay a cash contribution directly to Council to the value of 5% of the site value of the land.

Purpose

The Open Space Levy Policy will:

- Identify the process for allocating funds collected towards infrastructure to support open space reserves
- Identify the process for managing and monitoring the expenditure of development contributions across the Shire
- Identify the process for reporting on the expenditure of development contributions and the delivery of agreed projects through consultation with the community.

Policy

Council will:

- Provide quality facilities for the local community that are functional, accessible, sustainable, attractive and well-utilised
- Provide new or upgraded infrastructure where it is needed
- Ensure that funds are available to develop new infrastructure or upgrade existing infrastructure when required.
- Share the cost of developing community infrastructure up to 100% dependent on the capacity of the group
- Ensure that funds collected from one community are reinvested back into that community.

Commentary

Council will commit to ensuring:

- Funds are allocated back to the town in which the development has occurred. Projects will be identified through Council's strategic planning processes and relevant community consultation. E.g. Council Plan, Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, Recreation and Open Space Strategy, Community Plans, etc.

Capital Works Contributions Policy guidelines

Introduction

Hepburn Shire acknowledges the very important role of sport and recreation clubs / organisations in the provision of a diversity of physical activity opportunities for the Hepburn Shire community. It also acknowledges the role of Friends of Groups and committees of reserves, bushland, parks and open space in the provision of conservation and informal recreational opportunities for the community. The spaces in which these activities take place periodically require upgrades to the existing infrastructure of the development of new infrastructure in order to continue to provide quality opportunities for the community.

Purpose

The Capital Work Contributions Policy will:

- Identify the types of capital works that Council is responsible for in relation to recreation and open space
- Identify the types of capital works that the community is expected to contribute funds / in-kind works to in relation to recreation and open space

- Identify the level of funding contribution Council will provide to recreation and open space capital works projects – single versus multi use facilities
- Identify the level of funding contribution the community is expected to provide to recreation and open space capital works projects– single versus multi use facilities
- Identify the role of other funding partners in the development or upgrade of recreation and open space infrastructure.

Policy

Council will:

- Direct the provision of quality facilities for the local community that is functional, accessible, sustainable, attractive and well-utilised
- Assist clubs / organisations to provide new or upgraded infrastructure
- Share the cost of developing community infrastructure with user groups, Government agencies and the private sector.

Commentary

Council will work with the community to identify clearly what Council and the community is responsible for within capital works developments.

- Council may choose to either provide some financial assistance to clubs / organisations.
- Council do not discriminate between council owned facilities or facilities based on Crown land when upgrading facilities or developing new facilities, or support funding applications submitted by these clubs/organisations.
- It should be considered that where community clubs / organisations do not have exclusive use of the site that they occupy, they should not be held to be fully responsible for the entire cost of capital works upgrades or developments. However, Council will only support upgrades or developments that are demonstrated to align with the planning principles and values listed earlier in this document.
- Any funds available in Council's budget for recreation and open space capital works will be allocated according to the highest priorities.

Play Space Policy guidelines

Introduction

Hepburn Shire acknowledges that play is one of the best tools to maximise the potential emotional, cognitive and physical development of children of all abilities. It also understands the value of play spaces in providing a space for the community to meet, socialise and get to know their neighbours. Such interactions help to strengthen community bonds and friendships and create social capital – thereby reducing the potential for social isolation, loneliness, depression and associated mental health issues.

Purpose

The Play Space Policy will:

- Ensure that play spaces are planned and designed to provide quality play experiences
- Ensure that the community is engaged in play space design
- Ensure that a diversity of play opportunities are incorporated into play spaces
- Ensure that play spaces are accessible to people of all abilities
- Ensure that play spaces are accessible by active transport from most homes
- Ensure that play spaces are safe and well maintained

Policy

Council will:

- Council will provide residences in urban areas have access to a play space at around 400m (or a five minute walk) from their homes;
- Provide play spaces that are designed according to Universal Design principles and provide access for all abilities;
- Provide a diversity of play spaces, including play space with natural features such as rocks, logs, loose play materials, grass, water; play spaces with open spaces for ball and running games; play spaces that offer challenges; and play space that offer tactile and sound experiences;
- Provide well maintained play spaces;
- Ensure that young people can be involved in planning for play spaces;
- Conduct safety inspections of play spaces;
- Provide clear guidelines around shade and fencing;
- Ensure that supporting infrastructure is provided for carers at play spaces, such as seats and paths.

Commentary

- Council will develop a play strategy to guide the provision of play space development in the municipality;
- Council commit to an annual maintenance budget for play spaces through the Council budget and work towards ensuring that there is a spatial distribution of play spaces throughout the Shire as described within document.

Action

Using the policy guidelines developed within the Recreation and Open Space Strategy, fully develop the following policies:

Sports Ground Allocations

Capital Works Contributions Policy

Play Space Policy

Open Space Levy Policy

Assess recreation facilities against the guidelines for rationalisation to determine if there are any facilities that are no longer required

Prepare or review master plans for the following recreation and open space reserves:

Clunes Recreation Reserve

Doug Lindsay Recreation Reserve

Calembeen Park

Wombat Hill Botanical Garden

Glenlyon Recreation Reserve

Hepburn Recreation Reserve

Trentham Recreation Reserve

Newlyn Recreation Reserve

Daylesford Recreation Reserve.

Review Council's dog off leash policy and undertake recommendations for specific off-leash locations.

Ensure that all communications, promotions and signage for Recreation and Open Space in Hepburn is aligned with the Branding and Communications Strategy of HSC.

Upgrade Council's website to better inform recreation and open space opportunities to the community.

5.0 ACTION PLAN

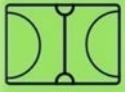
The following table provides a set of objectives and actions to guide Hepburn Shire Council in terms of the planning, development and management of recreation and open space facilities and opportunities from 2016-2021. Priorities have been developed from:

- An assessment against Council's vision and planning principles for recreation and open space;
- Community Workshops;
- An assessment of existing strategies and Reports;
- Physical audit of facilities;
- Review of existing practices and procedures;
- Assessment of best practice;
- Community Surveys;
- Interviews with Key Stakeholders;
- Demographic review;
- Analysis of existing programs;
- Examination of trends and participation rates;
- Review of available or potentially accessible resources.

Each of the actions is prioritised and identifies key partners, the resources required in order to achieve to action, the potential sources of funds and who will perform the action. Resources or costs are indicative only and are based on 2016 costs. Quotes from suppliers will need to be sourced in order to gain more accurate costing. It is anticipated that wherever possible, external funds will be sourced to help fund initiatives.

The Actions are listed according to their respective Pillar for Recreation and Open Space, as described earlier in the document.





5.1 FACILITIES Action Plan

No.	Objective	Action	Who	Partners	Funding Source	Resources	Priority	Year
1	To provide safe and accessible facilities that are well planned and well utilised	Implement Recreation Reserve Master Plans	Community & Economic Development HSC Infrastructure	Recreation Reserve Committees of Management Sports & Recreation Clubs	Sport and Recreation Victoria grants Other State and Federal grants Council budget	Staff time Cost to be determined per action	High	2,3,4,5
2	To provide safe and accessible facilities that are well planned and well utilised	Implement tennis court audit actions	Community & Economic Development	Recreation Reserve Committees of Management Sports & Recreation Clubs	Sport and Recreation Victoria grants Other State and Federal grants Council budget	Staff time	High	2,3,4,5
3	To provide a strategic approach to the planning and development of recreation and open space facilities	Implement actions from play space strategy	Community & Economic Development	Recreation Reserve Committees of Management Sports & Recreation Clubs	Council budget Sport and Recreation Victoria grants Other State and Federal grants	Staff time Cost to be determined per action	High	3,4,5
4	To provide a strategic approach to the planning and development of	Adopt the minimum facility provision for towns proposal and work towards ensuring that all	Community & Economic Development HSC	Sport and Recreation Victoria	Existing staff wages State Government	Staff time	High	1



No.	Objective	Action	Who	Partners	Funding Source	Resources	Priority	Year
	recreation and open space facilities	towns are provided the basic level of recreation and open space infrastructure	Infrastructure					
5	To provide a strategic approach to the planning and development of recreation and open space facilities	Utilise the capital works assessment tool as a means of prioritising facility developments and upgrades (refer to Appendix A for Assessment Tool)	Community & Economic Development	Internal Council staff	Existing staff wages	Staff time	Medium	1,2,3,4,5
6	To provide a strategic approach to the planning and development of recreation and open space facilities	Implement the hard court replacement program to ensure quality and availability of hard courts and cricket pitches	Community & Economic Development HSC Infrastructure	Recreation Reserve Committees of Management Netball Clubs Tennis Clubs Cricket Clubs State Sporting Associations	Council budget State Government External Funding bodies	Staff time Project quotes required per site	Medium	1,2,3,4,5
7	To increase participation in unstructured physical activity in	Install outdoor gym circuit infrastructure in Creswick at Calemben Park and	HSC Infrastructure	Sports and Recreation Clubs Committees of Management for	State Government Council budget	\$10,000 per site	Medium	3



No.	Objective	Action	Who	Partners	Funding Source	Resources	Priority	Year
	order to promote health and wellbeing benefits to the community.	Lake Daylesford		open space areas				
8	To enhance recreation and open space facilities and opportunities in Clunes	Renew the change facilities at the indoor leisure centre at Clunes	Community & Economic Development HSC Infrastructure	Clunes Recreation Reserve Committee of Management	Council budget	\$20,000	Low	5
9	To enhance recreation and open space facilities and opportunities in Clunes	Retain Esmond Park in its current state (relatively undeveloped) in order to provide a diverse range of open space unstructured opportunities for the community and visitors.	Community & Economic Development	Clunes Community Clunes Landcare & Waterways Group	Council budget	Staff time	Low	1
10	To enhance recreation and open space facilities and opportunities in	Action the outcome of the Creswick pool consultation undertaken in 2016/17.	Community & Economic Development	Sport and recreation clubs and as identified through consultation	As identified through consultation and research	Staff time initially. Outcome of consultation not yet known;	High	2



No.	Objective	Action	Who	Partners	Funding Source	Resources	Priority	Year
	Creswick					unable to determine budget at this stage.		
11	To enhance recreation and open space facilities and opportunities in Creswick	Upgrade Magic Pudding Play Ground, Creswick.	Community & Economic Development HSC Infrastructure	Creswick Community Groups	Creswick Community Bank Council budget	\$30,000	Medium	1
12	To enhance recreation and open space facilities and opportunities in Daylesford and Hepburn	Continue to work with community to implement the Master Plan in partnership with Friends of Daylesford Community Park.	Community & Economic Development	Friends of Daylesford Community Park Daylesford Community	State Government Council budget	Staff time – Cost determined by project	Medium	3
13	To enhance recreation and open space facilities and opportunities in Trentham	Investigate installation of a synthetic bowling green.	Community & Economic Development HSC Infrastructure	Trentham Bowls Club Trentham Recreation Reserve Committee	State Government Trentham Bowls Club Council budget	Staff time for feasibility and master planning	Low	5



5.2 COMMUNITY SUPPORT & DEVELOPMENT Action Plan

No.	Objective	Action	Who	Partners	Funding Source	Resources	Priority	Year
1	To strengthen the capacity of existing community organisations and clubs	Conduct an annual sporting club ideas forum to provide a platform for issues and opportunities to be shared.	Community & Economic Development	Sports & Recreation Clubs Committees of Management for open space areas	Council budget	Staff time	High	1,2,3,4,5
2	To strengthen the capacity of existing community organisations and clubs.	Introduce a MOU arrangement with organisations that assist with management and maintenance of open spaces and recreation facilities. MOU will outline financial assistance.	Community & Economic Development Corporate Services	Sports & Recreation Clubs Committees of Management for open space areas	Council budget	Staff time	Medium	1
3	To work in partnership with or advocate to other agencies to deliver recreation and open space infrastructure and opportunities	Meet twice a year with Parks Victoria, State Government, and DELWP to investigate opportunities to continue to develop quality, well signed walking/cycling tracks throughout bushland in the	Community & Economic Development	Parks Victoria Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning State Government	Council budget State Government Other external funding sources	Staff time	Low	1,2,3,4,5



No.	Objective	Action	Who	Partners	Funding Source	Resources	Priority	Year
		Shire. Accompanied by suitable supporting infrastructure such as seats, picnic tables, BBQs, shelters, toilets.						



5.3 SUSTAINABILITY Action Plan

No.	Objective	Action	Who	Partners	Funding Source	Resources	Priority	Year
1	To reduce usage of water and energy at recreation and open space reserves	Continue to employ sustainable practices that contribute to the sustainability and climate resilience of ovals in the Shire. This will take into consideration: Water source, grass types, irrigation, lighting and associated infrastructure and technology.	Community & Economic Development HSC Infrastructure	Recreation Reserve Committees of Management Sport and Recreation Clubs	Environmental Sustainability Grants Council budget State Government	Costs yet to be determined Staff time	High	2
2	To enhance recreation and open space facilities and opportunities in Daylesford and Hepburn	Investigate the potential to extend the Daylesford outdoor swimming pool's season by the use of sustainable heating technology.	Community & Economic Development	Pool Management Contractor	Council budget	Staff Time	Medium	2



5.4 UTILISATION & PARTICIPATION Action Plan

No.	Objective	Action	Who	Partners	Funding Source	Resources	Priority	Year
1	To provide a strategic approach to the planning and development of recreation and open space facilities	Ensure facility developments and upgrades keep up to date with best practice in relation to sport, recreation and physical activity by working with funding agencies.	Community & Economic Development	Sport and Recreation Victoria grants Other State and Federal grants	Existing staff wages State Government Council budget	Staff time	High	1,2,3,4,5
2	To provide a strategic approach to the planning and development of recreation and open space facilities	Undertake municipal play space strategy that addresses the planning and design of play spaces	Community & Economic Development	Play Australia Internal Council Staff	Sport & Recreation Victoria Council budget	Staff time	Medium	2
3	To increase participation in unstructured physical activity in order to promote health and wellbeing benefits to the community.	Support neighbourhood centres to continue to provide activities such as yoga, pilates, walking groups through Council's communication channels.	Community & Economic Development	Neighbourhood Centres Sports Central	Existing staff wages	Staff time	Medium	1,2,3,4,5



No.	Objective	Action	Who	Partners	Funding Source	Resources	Priority	Year
4	To provide a strategic approach to the planning and development of recreation and open space facilities.	Undertake tennis courts audit to inform hard court renewal and future needs.	Community & Economic Development	Recreation Reserve Committees of Management Tennis Clubs Tennis Victoria	Existing staff wages	Staff time	Medium	2



5.5 POLICY Action Plan

No.	Objective	Action	Who	Partners	Funding Source	Resources	Priority	Year
1	To provide a framework to guide areas of policy, procedures or specific activities	Using the policy guidelines developed within the Recreation and Open Space Strategy, fully develop the following policies: Sports Ground Allocations Capital Works Contributions Policy Play Space Policy Open Space Levy Policy	Community & Economic Development Corporate Services	Internal Council Staff	Existing staff wages	Staff time	High	1
2	To reduce the number of assets that no longer meet the needs of the community	Assess all recreation facilities against the guidelines for rationalisation to determine if there are any facilities that are no longer required	Community & Economic Development	Internal Council Staff	Existing staff wages	Staff time	Medium	2
3	To provide a strategic approach to the planning and development of	Prepare or review master plans for the following recreation and open space	Community & Economic Development	Reserve Committees of Management	State Government Committees	\$20K per plan for larger towns	High	1



No.	Objective	Action	Who	Partners	Funding Source	Resources	Priority	Year
	recreation and open space facilities	reserves: Clunes Recreation Reserve Doug Lindsay Recreation Reserve Calembeen Park Wombat Hill Botanical Garden Glenlyon Recreation Reserve Hepburn Recreation Reserve Trentham Recreation Reserve Newlyn Recreation Reserve Daylesford Recreation Reserve.		Sport and Recreation Clubs	of Management Council budget	\$10K per plan for smaller towns Staff time		
4	To provide a strategic approach to the planning and development of recreation and open space facilities	Review Council's dog off leash policy and undertake recommendations for specific off-leash locations.	Community & Economic Development	Internal Council Staff	Existing staff wages	Staff time	Medium	2



No.	Objective	Action	Who	Partners	Funding Source	Resources	Priority	Year
5	To increase awareness of recreation and open space facilities and opportunities	Review communications, promotions and signage for Recreation and Open Space in Hepburn is aligned with the Branding and Communications Strategy of HSC.	Community & Economic Development	Internal Council Staff	Council budget Existing staff wages	Staff time	Low	4
6	To increase awareness of recreation and open space facilities and opportunities	Upgrade Council's website monthly to better inform recreation and open space opportunities to the community.	Community & Economic Development	Internal Council Staff Sport and Recreation Clubs	Existing staff wages	Staff time	High	1,2,3,4,5

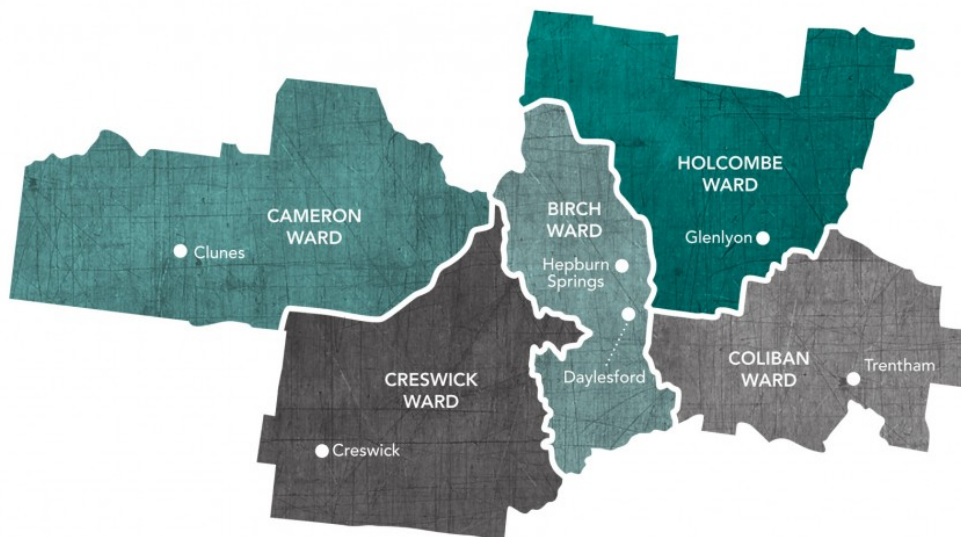


6.0 OUR COMMUNITY

The following represents the background information and research that has helped to develop and shape this strategy. Information on regional, demographic and political context is included along with an assessment of the current situation for recreation and open space in Hepburn Shire. The benefits of recreation and open space to the community are also included as research that also informs this strategy.

6.1 Our Region

Hepburn Shire is situated in central Victoria, to the north east of Ballarat. Its headquarters in Daylesford is located 112 km from Melbourne. It is 1,470km in size and its main towns include Clunes, Creswick, Daylesford, Hepburn Springs and Trentham. Prior to white settlement, the area was home to the Dja Dja Wurrung people.



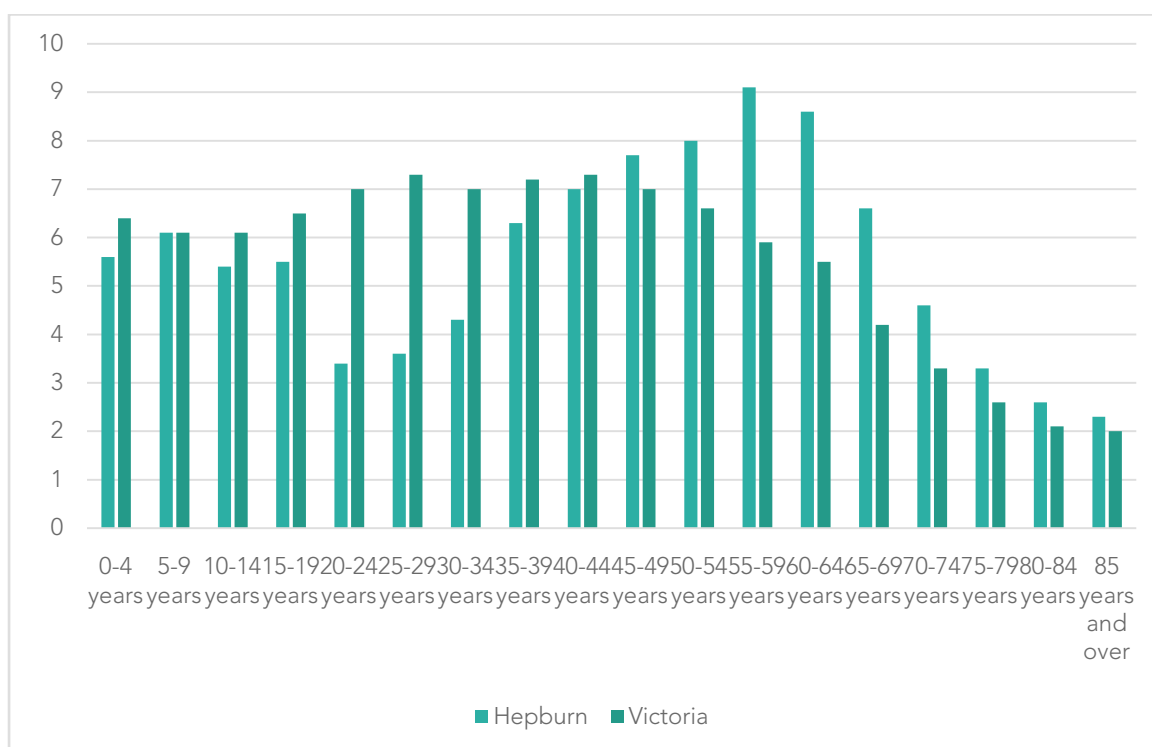
6.2 Our People

Hepburn Shire comprises 14,367 people – 48.4% male and 51.6% female. The median age is 46, compared with a median age of 37 for both Victoria and Australia.

Compared with Victorian figures, Hepburn has a similar percentage of people aged between 5 and 14 years (11.5% compared with 12.2%), a significantly lower percentage of people aged between 20 and 34 years (11.3% compared with 21.3%) and significantly higher percentage of people aged between 50 and 74 years (36.9% compared with 25.5%). More specifically the largest discrepancies lay in the ages 20 – 29 years (Hepburn has 7.3% of its population in this age group compared with 14.3% for Victoria).

Given that the majority of senior teams for sports such as football and netball, and to a lesser extent cricket, tennis and soccer are made up of people in the 20 -35 year age groupings, there are less people available locally to make up these teams at a senior level than there is at a junior level. This could result in 'importing' players from other areas;

moving younger players (15-19 years) of age into senior sports teams; changing league / association requirements so that less senior and / or reserves teams are required; having difficulties fielding teams; or amalgamating clubs.



The population and median age for each township within Hepburn Shire is contained within Table 1⁷.

Township	Population	% Female	% Male	Median Age
Daylesford	2,565	56	44	49
Hepburn	459	51	49	41
Creswick	2,942	52	48	43
Clunes	1,373	51	49	48
Trentham	1,411	51	49	48

Between 2011 and 2031 there is expected to be a net increase of 3,288 local residents, based on an annual growth rate of 1.0%. Hepburn Shire is expected to comprise of approximately 17,918 residents by 2031. An increase in the number of residents will

7

http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2011/quickstat/SSC21370?op=endocument&navpos=220 (Viewed 8th January 2016)

presumably result in increased demand for physical activities and the spaces in which physical activities occur. Rather than investing in a suite of new facilities (unless specifically warranted), it is important that existing facilities are well maintained and upgraded as required and that greater flexibility in programming / scheduling of activities is considered. At present, there is limited demand for new facilities, but some demand for upgraded or improved facilities.

By 2031, 52% of the population is expected to be over 50 years of age.⁸ An ageing population is more likely to require a range of indoor and outdoor recreational pursuits as well as social activities. They may be particularly interested in activities close to home so that they can walk or cycle there. Hence walking and cycling paths, quality lake / creek frontages, parks and off leash dog parks may need to be considered.

The majority of residents were born in Australia (81.4% compared with the national figure of 69.8% and a state figure of 68.6%) and the majority of residents only speak English at home (91.1%). At this point in time, there is unlikely to be a need to develop information about recreational activities into different community languages.

Compared with Victorian statistics, there are 8.6% less people working full-time, significantly more working part-time (37.2% in Hepburn compared to 29.6% in Victoria), more away from work (6.5% in Hepburn compared to 5.8% in Victoria) and a similar percentage unemployed.

Key employment industry sectors are cafes, restaurants and takeaway food stores (4.9%); school education (4.7%); hospitals (4.6%); Sheep, beef cattle and grain farming (4.1%) and accommodation (3.8%).

The median weekly household income is \$850 compared with the Victorian median household income of \$1,216. 34.6% of households in Hepburn Shire earn less than \$600 gross per week (compared with 23.8% of Victorian households) and 3.9% earn more than \$3,000 gross per week (compared to 10.4% of Victorian households). Given the lower than Victorian average for weekly household incomes, it is important that costs are kept to a minimum for sport and recreation activities. There may also be demand for activities that are free or low cost and close to home, e.g. parks, playgrounds, lake / creek frontages and walking / cycling trails.

A full demographic analysis is contained within Appendix C.

⁸ http://www.delwp.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/excel_doc/0004/308362/Hepburn-S_VIF2015_One_Page_Profile.xlsx (Viewed 8th January 2016)

7.0 RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

7.1 Benefits of Recreation and Open Space

The benefits of recreation and open space are well documented. Not only do individuals benefit from a health and wellbeing perspective, but the whole community benefits from a greater sense of community, economic opportunities, improvement to the environment, reduction in crime and a healthier society. Some of the benefits that can occur through participation in sport and recreation and usage of open spaces are:

<p>Social Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater sense of community Stronger, more self-reliant communities Greater social and friendship networks Enhances livability of an area Reduces anti-social behavior and vandalism Helps to develop shared attitudes, values and codes of behavior in the community Breaks down barriers between different sectors of the community 	<p>Health Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Protect(s) against a range of poor health outcomes, including cardiovascular disease, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, musculoskeletal impairments, obesity, some cancers and poor mental health."⁹ Improved balance, motor skills and coordination, resulting in fewer falls Stronger muscles, joints and bones Improved confidence, body image, self esteem and sense of achievement Less likely to suffer from depression, anxiety and stress Higher energy and concentration levels
<p>Environmental Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protects areas of conservation or cultural heritage value Contributes to water management Contributes to abatement of urban heat island effect Sequesters carbon Reduces air and noise pollution Encourages appreciation and awareness of the natural environment. 	<p>Economic Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attracts visitors and generates tourism Attracts businesses and creates employment Properties near open space generate higher market value Local business generation through sports equipment sales, services or programs Reduction in Healthcare costs¹⁰ Increases productivity of workers and reduces number of sick days¹¹

⁹ VicHealth (2015) Promoting equity in physical activity: An evidence summary

¹⁰ VicHealth (2010) Participation in Physical Activity: A Determinant of Mental and Physical Health

¹¹ VicHealth (2010) Participation in Physical Activity: A Determinant of Mental and Physical Health

7.2 Recreation and Open Space Trends

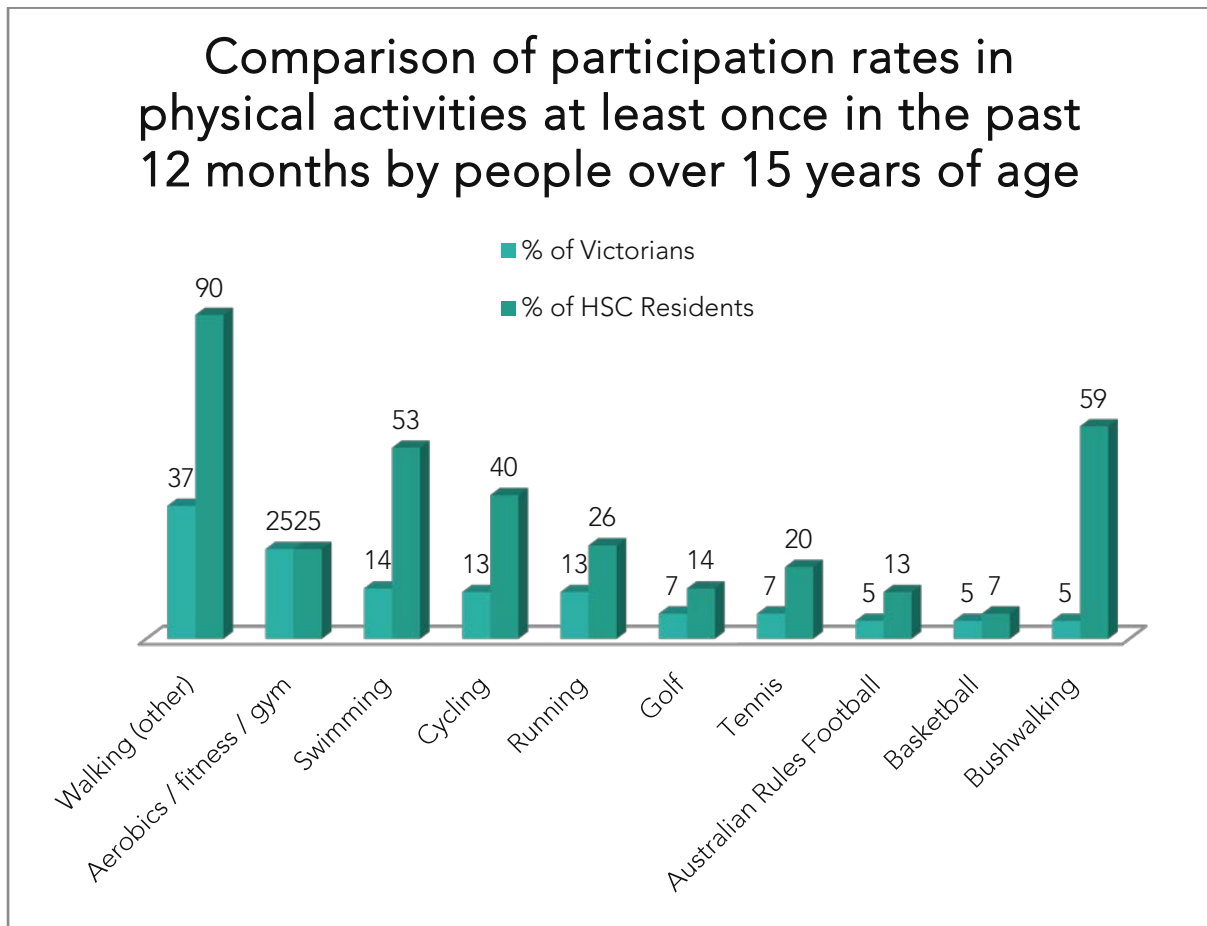
Participation in sport and recreation activities and use of open spaces by Hepburn Shire residents has been influenced by broader social and economic trends. Some of the trends currently impacting on participation, facility developments and the way open space is used include:

New Activities	<p>Movement away from many traditional organised sports such as football, cricket, netball and tennis to more individual or small group non-organised activities, e.g. walking, aerobics, fitness classes, cycling, swimming, running etc.</p> <p>Greater use of facilities by personal fitness trainers and their clients</p> <p>Greater demand for lifestyle/non-traditional forms of sport such as games that can be played indoors or outdoors, e.g. bocce, street table tennis, exercise in parks etc.</p> <p>Emergence of off leash dog parks in response to smaller back yards and the desire to connect with other dog walkers</p>
Improved Surfaces	Installation of sports surfaces that help reduce injury and increase player comfort.
Spectator Facilities	Installation of improved spectator facilities e.g. verandahs, retractable seating, shaded viewing areas.
Accessibility	Installation of facilities to encourage participation by people of all abilities, e.g. use of ramps, unisex toilets with change tables, single storey buildings to allow for wheelchair access, Braille signs, etc.
Improved Infrastructure	Installation of lighting or higher standard of lighting to allow games and training to take place in the evenings.
Environmentally Sustainable Design Features	Development of environmentally responsible practices such as solar hot water, recycled water systems, double glazed windows, wetlands, community gardens, synthetic surfaces, etc to reduce the impact of facilities / spaces and their users on the environment.
Safety	Development or upgrading of facilities and equipment so that they meet the safety requirements of their designated sport, e.g. netball court run-offs and provide adequate protection from the sun.
Improved Planning	Master planning of recreation reserves and open spaces to ensure that needs of all existing and casual users are considered in the long term – including the linking of cycling / walking paths, development of play spaces, landscaping and BBQ / picnic facilities, etc.
Multi-Purpose Facilities and Spaces	Development of multi-use facilities and spaces which can cater for a variety of traditional activities as well as non-traditional or emerging activities, e.g. pilates, yoga, meetings, conferences, expos, markets, children’s programs, master’s games, etc.
Social Aspects	Greater emphasis on social competitions mid week during the evenings as

	opposed to structured competition on a Saturday afternoon. Also a greater focus on developing social areas for BBQs and picnics.
School Access	Greater demands on some facilities by school groups due to the declining standard of school sporting infrastructure in some areas or the lack of facilities at some schools. Difficulties for the community to access some school facilities due to school council policies around school use only or distance.
Events	Greater demand on sporting facilities and public open spaces such as parks for special events and tournaments.
Sporting Hubs	Co-location of several sporting facilities to form recreation precincts to maximize limited resources and to cross-market activities
Value of Physical Activity	Understanding of the relationship between physical activity participation and improved health, wellbeing and social connectedness.
Improved Facility Standards	Expectation by the community that facilities, programs, services and management will be of a reasonably high standard.
Greater availability of facilities	Expectation that facilities will be available during a range of time slots throughout the week, including weeknight, early morning and weekends.
Electronic Communication	Expectation by user groups that draws, ladder, information, etc about local sports competitions are available via the internet.
Active Transport	Greater focus on ensuring that recreation and open space areas are connected to existing walking / cycling networks and public transport options where possible.
Connection with Nature	Greater focus on providing quality landscaping and more natural play spaces which utilise loose materials, rocks, logs etc. There may also be some interpretive activities associated with the natural features available.
Female and Cultural Participation	Constructing female change facilities for umpires Constructing female change facilities for female sports participants, either as standalone facilities at a recreation reserve or integrated into the pavilion Providing greater opportunities for female participation in sport. Providing greater profile of female sports at a state and national level. Providing single sex classes or session for women, particularly in areas where religious beliefs make it unacceptable for males and females to mix while undertaking an activity such as swimming.

7.3 Participation Rates in Physical Activity

In recent years, there has been a shift away from organised sport to more informal recreational activities that can be undertaken in small groups, alone, or at varying times of the day. The following table¹² shows the most popular physical activities (organised and non-organised) for people 15 years of age and over in Victoria in 2010, compared with results from the Hepburn Shire Recreation and Open Space Strategy community survey (which had 191 responses):



Participation in all of the activities listed in the graph above, other than aerobics / fitness / gym and basketball, are significantly higher than the state average (based on percentage), according to those who completed a survey. Other activities that are higher than the state average in Hepburn Shire, based on percentage (according to the surveys returned) are: going to the lake / river (75%), going to the playground / park (58%), yoga (24%), fishing (21%) and dancing (17%).

It is likely that the majority of people who completed the survey have an interest in physical activity and are relatively active already, as participation in the survey was voluntary. It must also be noted that the majority of people who completed the survey are female (63%) and aged between 40-69 (69%). Hence survey results may not be indicative of the broader community. Nevertheless, the information obtained shows that possibly due to the

¹² Australian Government: *Participation in Exercise Sport and Recreation – Annual Report 2010*: http://www.ausport.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/436134/ERASS_Report_2010-VIC.pdf

attractive and accessible landscape that makes up much of Hepburn Shire, walking and bushwalking are very popular activities, as are visiting lakes, rivers, playgrounds and parks and going fishing. Swimming, cycling and running all have high levels of participation, reflecting state and national participation trends in these activities. Participation in aerobics / fitness / gym on the other hand, was equal with Victorian participation rates. This lower participation rate may reflect the lack of gyms available, or the lack of awareness of gyms that are available (e.g. Creswick Campus of Melbourne University and Trentham Recreation Reserve gyms), in the Shire at present. Alternatively, had yoga (which has a participation rate of 24% by survey participants) been added to this grouping, the percentage may have been a lot higher. Dancing also rates highly among survey participants.

Based on this data, there is a need to:

- Continue to provide quality walking, running and cycling trails (including footpaths) and to provide opportunities for people to walk in natural landscapes (possibly by improving maintenance of trails, signage and amenities);
- Continue to maintain and improve the amenity of lake / river frontages;
- Continue to upgrade playgrounds and parks;
- Provide opportunities for local people to swim or enjoy aquatic activities;
- Encourage existing gyms to better promote their services;
- Support local sports clubs to remain strong and viable;
- Provide facilities such as halls or leisure centres where community based organisations or the private sector can run physical activities, e.g. yoga and dancing.

For Australian children, the top 10 organised sports (does not include other leisure activities such as bike riding) in 2012 were¹³:

Activity	Participation Rate
Swimming	18
Dancing	15
Soccer (outdoors)	14
Australian Rules Football	8
Netball	8
Basketball	8
Tennis	7
Martial Arts	6
Gymnastics	5
Cricket (Outdoor)	5

¹³ ABS (2012) Children's Participation in Sport and Leisure Time Activities – website: [http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/ABA491F2AC01415FCA257ADA000E3EAA/\\$File/4901055001_2003%20-%202012.pdf](http://www.ausstats.abs.gov.au/ausstats/subscriber.nsf/0/ABA491F2AC01415FCA257ADA000E3EAA/$File/4901055001_2003%20-%202012.pdf) (viewed 2/1/16)

Assuming that children continue to participate in these organised sports in the future and assuming that children in Hepburn Shire participate in these activities at an approximately similar rate to other young Australians, there will be a need to:

- Provide access to swimming pools or lakes and possibly swimming programs;
- Provide access to halls and programs for dancing, martial arts and gymnastics (most likely to be met through the private sector);
- Provide access to fields suitable for soccer;
- Continue to provide access to football / cricket grounds for junior football and cricket clubs; as well as courts and programs for netball, basketball and tennis.

Junior sports development programs such as Auskick, Netta, Biddy Ball, Hot Shots, Milo Cricket, etc have no doubt contributed to the continued popularity of traditional sports of football, netball, basketball, tennis and cricket, and will continue to be in demand in the foreseeable future as a way to develop skills for each of these sports.