

Draft Report

Glenlyon and District Community Plan Review

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In 2010 the Glenlyon and District Planning Group was formed to develop a Community Action Plan. The Planning Group consisted of 17 people and represented residents from the hamlet communities of Glenlyon, Wheatsheaf, Coomoorra, Porcupine Ridge, Denver and Drummond. They engaged in a planning process and involved other residents in activities such as planning workshops.

Through these exchanges a list of 28 actions were produced and then prioritized. Priority projects were grouped within four themes; Communication, Activities/Social Connection, Environment/Heritage, Economic and Infrastructure/Services. Some priority projects were driven by groups of individuals who are documented in the Plan.

It was intended that the Community Plan would be reviewed in 12 to 18 months time; however a review has not been undertaken since the development of the Plan in May 2010.

REVIEW PROCESS

In 2018 Council committed officer resources to assist the review of the 2010 Glenlyon and District Community Action Plan.

Council's Community Development Officer met with stakeholders involved in the Glenlyon Hall Committee of Management, Glenlyon Progress Association, Glenlyon and Upper Loddon Land Care Group and Glenlyon Reserve Special Committee who provided background on the 2010 community planning process.

Following this Council's Community Development Officer scheduled three drop in sessions for people involved in the 2010 community planning process to evaluate the outcomes Action Plan. The first drop in session took place at the Glenlyon Village Market on Saturday 15 September 2018. This was followed by two drop in sessions at the Glenlyon Hall on Wednesday 19 and Thursday 20 September 2018.

20 people attended the drop in sessions and participated in a survey/interview facilitated by Council's Community Development Officer. Most people who attended had been involved in the planning process of the 2010 Glenlyon and District Community Action Plan or were aware of the planning process. Only one participant was not familiar with the Plan, but aware of key goals included.

Participants were asked to score each priority project goal outlined in the Plan out of 100. A low score would indicate that they believed a goal had not been achieved, while a high score would signify that they believed it had.

CHALLENGES AND OBSERVATIONS

Scoring goals was challenging for some participants because of the time that had been lapsed since setting the goals. Priorities for community actions can change with shifts in community demographics, advances in technology and the political and social context of the time. Some goals had lost their importance among some of the survey respondents, while others remained important and outstanding (e.g. legacy goals).

Some goals proved difficult to evaluate due to ambiguous language and a lack of explicit detail about the change or outcome desired. For example, "Protect what we have and build on it. Influence our future." scored relatively high (60%) because the goal was difficult to refute but also did not call for specific evidence. Similarly, "Community building for all, including youth" could have been reference to the need for a community facility, while also a process for community strengthening.

Some goals were duplicated and could have been clustered under an overarching objective. For example concerns about the management of noxious weeds were documented in the three different goals. Some goals were no longer relevant or applicable to survey respondents, and so no score was offered. For these goals the rating recorded has been averaged among the scores provided and not out of the overall number of survey participants.

Some goals were difficult to rate as community led outcomes because they relied on efforts of others. For example a number of survey respondents noted that the return of the general store was won because of the investment of commercial proprietors and 'Better roads and road maintenance' relied on the services provided by Council. Perhaps in these cases the focus should have been on setting achievable community led goals for advocacy or community education.

RESULTS

Priority Project Goal	Community Rating (%)	What was Achieved?	What is Outstanding?
Return of a community general store with coffee, petrol/information, central/social meeting place, mail boxes etc	80	The General Store reopened and became a foodie tourism destination.	Could be more welcoming to locals.

Better broadband, mobile phone access etc.	79	Mobile phone tower/s installed improved connection for most.	Broadband access varies. New tower/s planned to be installed may improve connection for most.
Rubbish as well as recycling collection.	78	Collection services now active for town based residents.	Residents in more rural areas rely on tip tickets.
More activities in the hall e.g. pictures, Christmas in July, international food festival, sports, exercise, cooking classes, working bees. Improve hall and support what is happening there.	77	Since the hall has opened, programming of activities has been growing.	Greater diversity in activities will attract different user groups.
Support/sustain local market.	75	The monthly village market has continued.	More stall holders and diverse offer could help activate the market and attract customers.
Communication inc website, keep everyone informed.	75	Newsletter reaches a wide distribution range. Website provides information about local community groups.	Website could be more interactive and be updated with information about community activities and events, and discussion about issues and opportunities.
Regular/monthly community events. Encourage participation by locals.	69	Dinner on the Deck and the Village Market are delivered monthly.	Greater diversity in activities will attract different user groups. Need for Open invitation policy.

Developing local identity eg website, local public arts, preserving history inc ghosts of Glenlyon, community bell and newsletter.	63	Newsletter reaches a wide distribution range. Website provides information about local community groups.	Website could be more interactive and be updated with information about community activities and events, and discussion about issues and opportunities.
Community building for all, including youth.	61	The redevelopment of the Glenlyon Hall has created a gathering place.	Greater diversity in activities will attract different user groups.
Protect what we have and build on it. Influence our future.	60		
Annual general dinner as a fundraiser.	58	Dinner on the Deck is a regular fundraiser.	If an annual fundraising dinner were to be planned, consensus on the cause is needed.
Walking and bike trails including well signed maps, trail along Loddon River, separate walking and bike trails, bike track to Daylesford and other communities. Link the reserve to the town via a walking track, upgrade track down the Loddon River.	57	Biolink Walk along the Loddon River is developing well. Plans in 2018/19 Council budget to create walking & cycling link from Coomoora to Daylesford – phase one of a broader active transport program.	Walking and cycling links between hamlets, and connections to Daylesford needed.

Use of existing CFA shed as a community space once the brigade move to their new facility eg space for youth with internet, music, films etc.	54	The shed is being used for storage and the village market.	An application for funding to refurbish the shed for community use has been submitted.
Treescape. More planting around town with work to be done by the community. Trees, maintenance of main road trees, planting on other roads, maintenance of bicentennial chestnut reserves.	53	Planting and revegetation has extended the avenue.	Need for greater knowledge of location of chestnut reserves. Revegetation needed to re-attract wildlife along Biolink Walk.
Activities to include the out-of-towners and weekenders and ways for them to connect with locals and pathways to informing new and part time residents.	52	Weekend activities, such as the village market, provide opportunities for part-time residents.	Greater volunteer involvement from part-time residents is needed in planning of activities and events.
Better roads and road maintenance.	49	Noticeable improvement in general.	Council could do more.
Sealing of roads including Springhill/Tylden Road and upgrade the single lane (Mannings Bridge) to dual carriageway.	47	Tylden Road has been sealed.	Mannings Bridge remains to be a single carriageway. Signage could be changed to better manage right of way.
Clear blackberries from Loddon Falls.	41	Landcare and Parks Victoria have been active in clearing noxious weeds at Loddon Falls.	Greater volunteer input needed. Parks Victoria needs plan for Loddon Falls.

Public transport including: bus links to Daylesford and beyond, and from Drummond and Denver to Kyneton Station and morning and afternoon link with trains and social outings, a community bus and a creative policy for all of the above	38	Community transport project was trialled. The project did not gain traction and uptake was low. The project model was bureaucratic and a burden on volunteers.	Bus connection to Daylesford and Kyneton is a growing need for commuters, young people and older adults.
Upgrade sports/recreation facilities. To include tennis, golf, netball and broader spectrum of sports/activities.	35	Noticeable improvement to grounds and facilities.	Usage of reserve could be diversified. E.g. installation of multiuse hard court for unstructured sport and play. Master plan underway.
More council support for real farms and farming.	33	Farming practice is diversifying, both in scale and product. Council is developing ways to promote the Shire's premium produce producers.	Planning scheme needs to build in greater flexibility of land use.
Clean up roadside weeds and scrub.	33		Ongoing issues. Council, VicRoads, land owners and landcare groups need to develop a coordinated approach.
Make Daylesford/Malmsbury road safer, lower speed limit.	31	Clearing of the verge has improved visibility of wildlife.	Lower speed in areas passing town (e.g. Denver) and forested areas populated by wildlife.

Clean up crown land/roadsides of gorse and broome and other weeds.	28		Ongoing issues. Council, VicRoads, land owners and landcare groups need to develop a coordinated approach.
Specific strategies to engage youth.	19		Need greater understanding of youth population and their needs.
Overall and well thought out approach to development to preserve the uniqueness of the area.	17		Planning scheme review has not taken place. Opportunities to participate in community engagement meetings and workshops for the planning scheme will take place 2019.
A memorial wall at the cemetery (for cremation).	11		A cremation wall Glenlyon cemetery is still needed to respect people's choice.
Sustainable water solutions. Assess the current situation and effect population has on supply.	7		Land holders can continue to apply to Goulbourn Murray Water for a works licence to construct a bore for domestic and stock purposes. This is a statutory right under Section 8 of the Act.

CONCLUSION

From the point of view of the 20 people who rated the outcome of the 2010 priority goals in drop in sessions, 15 initiatives (54%) scored a rating of 50% or more. Three of these were initiatives that attracted commitment from volunteers to guide projects back in 2010. These included: 'Return of the Glenlyon store...', 'Walking and bike trails...' and 'More planning around town by the community...'. Despite these goals rating relatively high, survey respondents were conflicted in their responses because the goals encompassed more than one objective. For example, the goal for walking and cycling tracks referred to both local initiatives such as the Biolink Walk, which rated high, and municipal projects such as linkage to Daylesford, which scored poorly because no progress had been made. This was similar in the response to the goal for increased tree planting and maintenance, which divided scores on what had been achieved (e.g. extension of the avenue) and what had not (e.g. ongoing maintenance of the avenue).

Low scores applied to some goals did not necessarily reflect the resources (human and monetary) that had been put into achieving them. For example, substantial effort to improve community transport options had been committed by volunteers involved in the community bus trial. Funding had been sought and won, volunteer drivers were trained and rostered, reporting processes were adhered to; however the project's failure was not due to the community of people supporting it but the lack of passenger uptake. The score of this goal was further marred by being intertwined with aspirations for public transport connections between towns and rail networks which had not been achieved since 2010.

Similarly, projects such as the Shire Hall redevelopment and the Biolink Walk have involved many volunteer hours and resulted in strong community outcomes. Hall renovations had direct impact on space available in the district for social programming for a two year period, however the benefit of the refurbishment is already seeing programming outcomes. The Biolink Walk has established strong working relationships and leveraged funding for its expansion.

Although not captured in the survey scores, qualitative feedback via interviews indicated outcomes against a number of other goals including improvements to the Glenlyon Recreation Reserve (although not necessarily for new types of activities), mobile phone coverage (with need for improved broadband), rubbish collection (notably good for town residents but no change for those living in rural areas) and support for the monthly market at Glenlyon Hall (which begs for expansion).

The volume of goals included in the 2010 Plan set up an impossible task to achieve everything. On the whole, this has reduced the overall score of achieved goals. If one of the objectives of grass roots planning is to foster collaborative effort on tackling issues, these efforts risk becoming undone if the goals are not achievable or quantifiable. Goals scored less positively either indicate a need for ongoing work (e.g. public transport advocacy, better understanding of youth demographics and their issues) or a 'misfire' focus in the goal set (e.g. water sustainability remains a significant concern, but is hard to tackle at a community level given legislation ultimately determines licence eligibility).

NEXT STEPS

Get Involved In Developing a New Community Plan

A community information session will take place on Thursday 4 October 2018, from 8pm to 9pm for people interested in developing new community plan for Glenlyon and District. Snacks provided.

A planning workshop is also planned to take place on Saturday 13 October from 1:30pm to 5pm. BBQ on arrival. Vegetarian options provided.

Both sessions will take place at Glenlyon Hall. No need to RSVP. Everyone is welcome.

For more information please contact Rob Ball on Mob: 0417 004 983 or Email: rball@hepburn.vic.gov.au