



GANNAWARRA
Shire Council

SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY 2019-2023



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR	3
INTRODUCTION	4
GANNAWARRA SHIRE PROFILE	5
WHAT IS SOCIAL INCLUSION?	6
NDIS AND THE SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY	6
SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY – RELEVANT POLICIES AND LEGISLATION	7
INTERNATIONAL	7
FEDERAL	7
STATE	7
GANNAWARRA SHIRE	7
OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS	7
DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY	8
CONSULTATION	8
SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY PRIORITY AREAS	9
OUR ONGOING PRIORITIES	9
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN – ACTION PLAN 2019-2023	10
PRIORITY AREA ONE – CONNECTIVITY	10
PRIORITY AREA TWO – ECONOMIC DIVERSITY, GROWTH AND PROSPERITY	12
PRIORITY AREA THREE – SUSTAINABLE NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENTS	13
PRIORITY AREA FOUR – GOOD GOVERNANCE AND A HEALTHY ORGANISATION	15
PRIORITY AREA FIVE – STRONG HEALTHY COMMUNITIES	17
IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT	20
GLOSSARY	21
APPENDIX – SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY SURVEY DATA	22
COMMUNITY SURVEY	22
WHAT STAFF AND SERVICE PROVIDERS TOLD US	25

MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

As a Council and as members of our community, we want to ensure everyone living in our Shire feels they are included in everyday life.

Being an inclusive community can mean different things to different people. When we think about being included in our community, this can range from being able to access buildings and community spaces, joining in sport or a social occasion, or having access to support, services and work opportunities.

Inclusive communities are all these things and more. In short, an inclusive community is one where people feel valued and part of everyday life.

Through building on Council's previous Access and Inclusion Plan, the Gannawarra Shire Council Social Inclusion Strategy 2019-2023 aims to achieve this goal of everyone living in our community feeling they are included in everyday life.

Ensuring our communities are welcoming, inclusive and safe for all is listed as a strategy in the *Gannawarra Shire Council Plan 2017-2021*, under Focus Area 5 *Strong Healthy Communities*.

Within this same focus area the Social Inclusion Strategy is listed as a priority action:

Develop and implement a Social Inclusion Strategy to replace the Disability Action Plan 2012-2015

Furthermore, the key objectives of the Social Inclusion Strategy will support the Gannawarra Shire Council Plan 2017-2021 by incorporating the Plan's five key focus areas:

- Connectivity
- Economic diversity, growth and prosperity
- Sustainable natural and built environments
- Good governance and a healthy organisation
- Strong healthy communities

As part of the development of the strategy, Council asked residents, service providers and Council staff their thoughts about being included in our community, and how inclusion in our Shire could be improved. I'd like to thank everyone who helped shape the Social Inclusion Strategy 2019-2023, by providing your feedback regarding social inclusion and overall general comments.

I encourage all those in our community to join Council in helping to make our Shire inclusive to all, and build upon our strengths of people, place and pride to inspire a positive future together.



INTRODUCTION

The Social Inclusion Strategy 2019-2023 is Gannawarra Shire Council's commitment to reducing barriers for groups most at risk of being excluded from our community. These people include those with disability, who are culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD), who are Indigenous, who identify as LGBTIQ, young people, older people and community members facing socioeconomic disadvantage.

This strategy replaces Council's Access and Inclusion Plan 2012-2015, and has been developed with input from the Gannawarra Shire community, service providers and Gannawarra Shire staff.

The Social Inclusion Strategy 2019-2023 aims to improve the overall quality of life for all people living in our Shire, particularly those at risk of exclusion from everyday life. It promotes connectivity and accessibility across the Shire for all community members to fulfil their potential as equal citizens.

The strategy incorporates an implementation plan with actions to be completed across the life of the strategy. This implementation plan will take into consideration Council resources and will incorporate actions that are achievable within day-to-day Council business. This includes identifying partnership opportunities between agencies, service providers and Council staff. Additionally, the implementation plan lists priority actions identified through the Council Plan 2017-2021 relevant to the Social Inclusion Strategy.

This strategy also lists Council's ongoing priority actions, including actions from the previous Access and Inclusion Plan, as well as the Gannawarra Shire Council Plan 2017-2021.

Additionally, the Social Inclusion Strategy acknowledges the rollout of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Council's role in becoming an NDIS Service Provider and providing our community with relevant local information regarding the NDIS. The NDIS is scheduled to be implemented in the Gannawarra Shire area on 1 January 2019.



GANNAWARRA SHIRE PROFILE

Gannawarra Shire is one of Victoria's most diverse agricultural regions in the Loddon Murray region of northern Victoria. With an area of 3,736 square kilometres, Gannawarra Shire is bordered by the Murray River to the north and incorporates a variety of environments including a considerable number of lakes and wetlands, red gum forests and the Mallee.

Towns of Gannawarra include Cohuna, Koondrook, Kerang, Lake Charm, Lalbert, Leitchville, Macorna, Murrabit, Mystic Park and Quambatook. Its economic base is primarily agriculture, with some important concentrations of manufacturing. Agricultural activities include cropping, dairy, grazing, horticulture and viticulture. The main industries are agriculture and dairy product manufacturing.

The municipality is a three-hour drive from Melbourne and is close to and well connected with major regional growth areas like Bendigo and Echuca. The municipality's communities are resourceful and creative, and have proven able to adapt well to changing circumstances.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), in 2016 Gannawarra Shire:

- Had an estimated resident population of 10,563 and a median age of 49 years
- Almost 16 per cent of residents were aged 14 years and under
- Around 27 per cent of people were aged 15 to 44 years
- Almost 30 per cent of residents were aged 45 to 64 years old
- Around 27 per cent of people were aged 65 years and over
- Had a median weekly household income of \$910
- People needing assistance with core activities was 6.5 per cent
- People who provide unpaid assistance to a person with a disability was 13.2 per cent
- Those who identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander was 1.9 per cent
- Five per cent of people were born overseas
- Households where no English was spoken was three per cent
- The SEIFA index of disadvantage was 957
- The unemployment rate was 4.7 per cent

According to the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services (Gannawarra Shire Profile), the projected annual population change in Gannawarra Shire from 2014 to 2024 is the lowest in the state, while the total fertility rate is among the highest in Victoria.

The median household income is among the lowest in the state and almost half of its population (48 per cent) had an income of less than \$400 per week. Around 14 per cent of households experienced mortgage stress and almost 22 per cent of households experienced rental stress. The percentage of people who delayed purchasing prescribed medication as they were unable to afford it, is among the highest in the state.

In terms of health, Gannawarra Shire is among the highest in the state per 1000 population for dementia, cancer and clients who received alcohol and drug treatment services.

Ninety-six per cent of people in Gannawarra Shire rated their community as an active community (the highest in the state), and 79 per cent of people had attended a local community event.

Almost 95 per cent of people rated their community as a pleasant environment and almost 78 per cent of people rated their community as good or very good for community and support groups.

10,549*

*(Censusdata.abs.gov.au, 2016)

49.8% MALE

50.2% FEMALE

MEDIAN AGE: 49

AREA: 3,736 SQ
KILOMETRES



GANNAWARRA SHIRE
VICTORIA

WHAT IS SOCIAL INCLUSION?

According to the Southern Mallee Primary Care Partnership *Building Socially Inclusive Rural Communities: A Complete Resource*, socially inclusive rural communities are those where:

- Every individual is able to feel welcome in their community and have the opportunity to fully participate in all aspects of rural community life.
- The systems and structures in communities and in organisations enable the voice of local community to guide action.
- Genuine community leadership is active and effective¹.

The Gannawarra Shire Council will continue to foster the spirit of inclusiveness. Council will seek to identify and remove barriers that people face – particularly those within the Council's immediate sphere of influence.

This commitment is reflected in the Council Plan 2017-2021, including its vision: *Building upon our strengths of people, place and pride to inspire a positive future together.*

In particular, under People the Council Plan acknowledges:

“The people who live within our communities would like to have an environment that is safe and welcoming and to know that Council supports diversity and inclusion for all by showing our dynamic and strong spirit and our relaxed atmosphere. Council believes that you would like us to provide quality services to support those most vulnerable.”

In addition, Council prides itself on ongoing cooperation and engagement with its residents and partners, and commits to the principles and requirements of all Federal and State Legislation.

NDIS AND THE SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is due to be rolled out in the Gannawarra Shire Local Government Area from 1 January 2019.

Gannawarra Shire Council has applied to become a Service Provider with the NDIS, ensuring that the most vulnerable in the community will continue to have access to services from 1 January 2019.

The Social Inclusion Strategy's action plan incorporates recognition of the roll out of the NDIS in the Gannawarra Shire, including Council's role as a Service Provider.

I support the
ndis



¹ Building Socially Inclusive Rural Communities: A complete resource, Southern Mallee Primary Care Partnership, April 2015, p8.

SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY – RELEVANT POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

INTERNATIONAL

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination

Convention on the Rights of the Child

FEDERAL

National Disability Strategy 2010-2020

Disability Discrimination Act (1992)

Age Discrimination Act 2004

Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986

Racial Discrimination Act 1975

Sex Discrimination Act 1984

STATE

A Fairer Victoria (2008)

Local Government Act (1989)

Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act (2006)

Victorian Disability Act (2006)

Victorian Equal Opportunity Act (2010)

Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2015-2019

Victorian State Disability Plan 2017 2020

GANNAWARRA SHIRE

Charter of Human Rights

Diversity Policy

Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (incorporated into the Council Plan 2017-2021)

Risk Management Policy

Positive Ageing Strategy

Children and Youth Strategy

Asset Management Strategy

Communications and Engagement Strategy 2016-2020

Strategic Tourism Plan 2015-2020

Asset Management Policy

Compliance Policy

Customer Service Charter

Gannawarra 2025

Children's Services Policy

Community Care Services Policy

For more information about these documents, visit www.gannawarra.vic.gov.au or call into Council's offices in Kerang or Cohuna.

OTHER RELEVANT DOCUMENTS

Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) Creating a More Inclusive Community for People with a Disability – A Strategic Framework for Local Government

DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY

CONSULTATION

In developing the Social Inclusion Strategy, Council consulted a wide range of stakeholders including community members, local service providers, support groups and Council staff.

COMMUNITY SURVEY

The Social Inclusion Strategy survey was available to community members from 2 July until 27 July in online and hard copy format. Hard copies of the surveys were available from Council's customer services centres, libraries and Quambatook Resource Centre. Copies of the survey were also made available at local NDIS community information sessions and mailed to Community Care Services clients. An email and survey link was also sent to families listed with the Gannawarra Children's Centre.

Promotion of the survey included media releases, local print and broadcast media, Mayoral interviews and column, online through Council's website and Council's social media channels.

One hundred and thirty-six community members responded to the Social Inclusion Strategy survey, via online and hard copy format.

WHAT ISSUES WERE RAISED IN THE COMMUNITY SURVEY?

In broad terms, issues raised included:

- The need for universal access, including accessible car parking
- Improved infrastructure, including toilets, equipment and gated parks
- Improved services and employment opportunities
- Limited transport options

- More consultation by Gannawarra Shire Council
- Support for people undertaking caring duties, including ability to get more involved in the community
- More opportunities for new members of the community to be included
- More communication and advertising regarding activities/ services in the Shire
- Education/awareness/training around disability, diversity, LGBTIQ, etc. for all people including for the community, Council and health professionals
- Events for all – including for people with disability, CALD communities and community members identifying as LGBTIQ
- Encouraging professionals and businesses to relocate and stay in the Shire, including doctors, health professionals and teachers
- More shared opportunities across all townships in the Shire

A full discussion and breakdown of the Social Inclusion Strategy survey data is provided in the Appendix.

SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY PRIORITY AREAS

The Social Inclusion Strategy implementation-action plan is divided into the following priority areas, aligning with the Gannawarra Council Plan 2017-2021:

PRIORITY AREA 1 CONNECTIVITY



PRIORITY AREA 2 ECONOMIC DIVERSITY, GROWTH AND PROSPERITY



PRIORITY AREA 3 SUSTAINABLE NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENTS



PRIORITY AREA 4 GOOD GOVERNANCE AND A HEALTHY ORGANISATION



PRIORITY AREA 5 STRONG HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



OUR ONGOING PRIORITIES

In addition to the actions outlined in the Social Inclusion Strategy Implementation-Action Plan, Gannawarra Shire Council has a number of priorities that it continues to implement on an ongoing basis.



- Deliver adequate and equitable access to services.
- Develop cross-sector partnerships.
- Improve transport connections.
- Provide training opportunities for staff and volunteers, including in accessibility and communication.
- Increase opportunities for participation in the community, including for people with disability.
- Ensure current infrastructure maintenance and upgrades meet AS1428.1-5 requirements and access and future planning and development of infrastructure meets Access for All Principles.
- Improve the accessibility of Council communications.
- Support employment opportunities and programs for people with disability.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN - ACTION PLAN 2019-2023

Where relevant, Council will seek to work in partnership, taking a place-based approach to working with the community to deliver the actions in the strategy. This includes identifying opportunities to apply for grant funding.

PRIORITY AREA ONE – CONNECTIVITY

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?	HOW WILL WE KNOW WHEN IT'S DONE?	WHEN?	COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGY ADDRESSED
Continue to partner with organisations to support community events and encourage participation.	Partnerships formed with relevant organisations.	Ongoing	Encourage connections within and between communities
Identify ways to partner with organisations to support new events which provide universal access and engagement.	Partnerships with organisations formed. Initiatives for new events considered.	Ongoing	Encourage connections within and between communities
Investigate the hire of the Marveloo portable changing places facility for local events.	Information regarding hire of Marveloo provided to event organisers.	Ongoing	Encourage and build community events
Promote availability of alternative transport options, such as the GNETS service.	Increased awareness among the community of the GNETS service and alternative transport options. Increased requests for GNETS service and other alternative transport options.	Ongoing	Improving transport connectivity within and between our communities and to the broader region
Review the Welcome to Gannawarra kit, including social inclusion options and Council services, such as Community Care Services, disability services, volunteer opportunities and community groups.	Welcome to Gannawarra kit reviewed and updated.	2020	Encourage connections within and between communities
Work with Economic Development to promote the Welcome to Gannawarra kit, including through the Gannawarra Shire website, at customer service centres, local businesses and Gannawarra Gateway.	Increased availability of Welcome to Gannawarra kit.	Ongoing	Encourage connections within and between communities

PRIORITY AREA ONE

– CONNECTIVITY

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?	HOW WILL WE KNOW WHEN IT'S DONE?	WHEN?	COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGY ADDRESSED
Continue to be involved with the Mallee Local Transport Forum partnership to advocate for improved transport options across the region.	Attend meetings of the transport forum. Support initiatives from the forum.	Ongoing	Improving transport connectivity within and between our communities and to the broader region
Improve communication access within Council services.	Communication boards available at customer service centres. Awareness campaign regarding availability of communication boards.	2019	Improve access to community and tourism information
Promote volunteering opportunities to the community.	Regular promotion of volunteer opportunities to the community through print and online methods, such as brochures, Gannawarra News, social media etc.	Ongoing	Encourage connections within and between communities

RELEVANT PRIORITY ACTIONS FROM GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

- Develop a shared events partnership program
- Work towards consolidating existing Council events
- Host a combined celebration of volunteers annually
- Bring town leadership groups together for an annual forum
- Bringing young people together for an annual forum
- Review and implement revised Advocacy Plan which includes a section on Connectivity
- Seek funding to implement digital information platforms across the Shire
- Annual increase of site visits to MyWarra.com, a virtual youth space
- Map and promote the availability of transport services to the community services through the Central Murray Regional Transport group
- Continue advocacy for improved rail services through the Central Murray Regional Transport group



PRIORITY AREA TWO

– ECONOMIC DIVERSITY, GROWTH AND PROSPERITY

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?	HOW WILL WE KNOW WHEN IT'S DONE?	WHEN?	COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGY ADDRESSED
Work with businesses to promote accessibility and inclusion for all members of the community.	Develop inclusive information kit. Facilitate training for local businesses.	Ongoing. Will be dependent upon grant funding opportunities.	Facilitate growth and diversity opportunities within the Shire
Promote Gannawarra Shire as an inclusive and welcoming community for all.	Welcome posters with statement regarding inclusivity. Brochures available from customer service centres, Gateway to Gannawarra.	Ongoing	Facilitate growth and diversity opportunities within the Shire
Develop and implement an Accessibility Events checklist as part of the development of the Gannawarra Events Guide to assist organisers of events to identify and remedy access issues.	Accessibility Events checklist to be incorporated in Gannawarra Events guide.	2020	Facilitate growth and diversity opportunities within the Shire

RELEVANT PRIORITY ACTIONS FROM GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

- Investigate the feasibility of Lifestyle Village/s within the Shire
- Implement future stages of the Kerang Town Centre Master Plan
- Support the community in its coordination and promotion of existing events
- Build on the capacity of existing events within the Shire



PRIORITY AREA THREE

– SUSTAINABLE NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENTS

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?	HOW WILL WE KNOW WHEN IT'S DONE?	WHEN?	COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGY ADDRESSED
Undertake an audit of accessible parking across the Shire and investigate high use areas regarding availability of disabled parking.	Audit developed.	2020-2021	Managing facilities and assets now and into the future
Following an audit, develop a Parking Strategy, which also identifies and plans for the development of accessible parking in high-use areas, including any improvements required to existing accessible parking bays.	Development of a Parking Strategy.	2022-2023	Managing facilities and assets now and into the future
Make sure all new accessible parking meets guidelines AS/ NZS 2890.6-2009	AS/NZS 2890.6-2009 guidelines met.	2019-2023	Managing facilities and assets now and into the future
Actively pursue grant opportunities for infrastructure upgrades for All Abilities Access.	Grant opportunities identified and grant applications submitted.	Ongoing	Managing facilities and assets now and into the future
Council's project management framework to include input and advice from subject matter experts related to accessibility.	Project management framework includes accessibility considerations.	Ongoing	Managing facilities and assets now and into the future
Consider electric scooter and wheelchair Recharge Program within the Gannawarra community.	Increased availability of recharge outlets. Promotion of recharge outlet locations.	2019-2023	Managing facilities and assets now and into the future
When upgrading playground facilities, include All Abilities Access and design principles.	Upgraded playground facilities incorporate All Abilities Access.	Ongoing	Managing facilities and assets now and into the future
Install an entry hoist at the Kerang Exercise Pool	Hoist installed	2021	Managing facilities and assets now and into the future
Undertake Accessibility Audits at Council owned and operated Swimming Pools to reduce barriers to participation.	Audits Undertaken	2021	Managing facilities and assets now and into the future

RELEVANT PRIORITY ACTIONS FROM GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

- Celebrate our Aboriginal heritage and Ramsar Sites
- Develop and review town centre plans and gateway entrances across the Shire aligned with community profiles
- Implement future stages of the Kerang Town Centre Master Plan e.g. the area between Fitzroy Street and Victoria Street in Kerang
- Undertake a review of Council and community aquatic facilities
- Review the 'fitness for purpose assessments' of Council buildings
- Consider best practice urban design/Healthy by Design principles when developing Council initiated projects
- Accessibility lift in Council Chambers



PRIORITY AREA FOUR

– GOOD GOVERNANCE AND A HEALTHY ORGANISATION

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?	HOW WILL WE KNOW WHEN IT'S DONE?	WHEN?	COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGY ADDRESSED
Where applicable, include Universal Access and social inclusion principles in drafting new or existing strategic plans or policies.	Strategic plans and policies include Access for All principles.	Ongoing	Identify innovative opportunities that create improvements
Where appropriate, provide information about community services and events through direct mail outs, including financial statements.	Regular information sent via financial and other direct mail outs.	Ongoing	Improve the community's ability to self-access information on Council's services and programs
Partner with community organisations to promote a range of services available in Gannawarra Shire to the community, including youth, LGBTIQ, Indigenous health, people with disability, etc.	Promotion of services via online, print and broadcast media. Increased community awareness regarding services.	Ongoing	Improve the community's ability to self-access information on Council's services and programs
Provide a range of training options to staff which build on Social Inclusion philosophies and principles.	Inclusiveness and Code of Conduct training is part of induction training for new Council employees. Inclusiveness and Disability Code of Conduct training is included as part of Council's yearly training matrix for all employees.	2020 and ongoing	Identify innovative opportunities that create improvements
Utilise existing Seniors Advisory, Community Development/ Planning, Gannawarra Health and Wellbeing networks to monitor, plan, and provide advice and feedback to Council officers on accessibility and inclusion.	Inclusion of discussion as an agenda item in meetings. Increased awareness among Council officers regarding accessibility and inclusion needs.	2019-2023	Identify innovative opportunities that create improvements

PRIORITY AREA FOUR

– GOOD GOVERNANCE AND A HEALTHY ORGANISATION

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?	HOW WILL WE KNOW WHEN IT'S DONE?	WHEN?	COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGY ADDRESSED
Ensure the Social Inclusion Strategy is available on the Gannawarra Shire Council website.	Social Inclusion Strategy published on website.	Upon adoption of strategy	Improve the community's ability to self-access information on Council's services and programs
Review the community grants program to ensure that every category provides incentives to improve access and inclusion in projects.	Community grants program guidelines include statement regarding improving access and inclusion.	2020-2021	Identify innovative opportunities that create improvements
Deliver targeted community grants information sessions to community groups.	Increased awareness among community groups regarding availability of community grants.	Ongoing	Identify innovative opportunities that create improvements

RELEVANT PRIORITY ACTIONS FROM GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

- Sponsor young people to attend leadership development opportunities, e.g. Youth Parliament program, GRIP Leadership conference
- Explore funding opportunities that support programs to attract young people to the area, e.g. business incubator, scholarships etc
- Review Customer Service Charter
- Development of a Gender Equity Policy
- Continue to facilitate advisory groups and regularly meet and work in partnership with planning and community development groups across the shire
- Support the community's capacity to prepare funding applications
- Review and evaluate Community Profiles annually
- Review and implement the Communications and Engagement Strategy 2016-2020
- Develop and implement a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP)
- Support staff to volunteer in the community
- Identify opportunities for shared service work with neighbouring councils and partners



PRIORITY AREA FIVE

– STRONG HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?	HOW WILL WE KNOW WHEN IT'S DONE?	WHEN?	COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGY ADDRESSED
Ensure people with disability are informed, connected and able to act independently, including the transformation to the National Disability Insurance Scheme.	Continue to support and provide information to the community, including NDIS information sessions. Employment of an NDIS Coordinator.	Ongoing	Ensure quality and accessible services that meet the needs of our community
Ensure people with disability have the skills and confidence they need to participate in and contribute to the community.	Gannawarra Shire to become an NDIS Service Provider.	2020	Ensure quality and accessible services that meet the needs of our community
In partnership with Gannawarra Local Agency Meeting (GLAM), ensure community services are welcoming to all members of the community, including LGBTIQ, CALD, Indigenous, elderly, youth and people with disability.	Develop a diversity statement to be included on Council publications, including services brochures.	Ongoing	Ensure our communities are welcoming, inclusive and safe for all
In partnership with GLAM, provide education and information to the community, including through programs and providers, about what it means to be inclusive.	Community education campaign regarding inclusiveness.	2020 and ongoing	Ensure our communities are welcoming, inclusive and safe for all
In partnership with GLAM promote greater inclusion of young people who are CALD, have a disability, are Indigenous or identify as LGBTIQ, when planning events and on committees.	Education campaign regarding inclusiveness.	2020	Ensure our communities are welcoming, inclusive and safe for all
Look at working with vulnerable communities to build and strengthen community resilience through arts and cultural activities.	Arts and cultural activities implemented.	2019-2023	Ensure our communities are welcoming, inclusive and safe for all

PRIORITY AREA FIVE

– STRONG HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?	HOW WILL WE KNOW WHEN IT'S DONE?	WHEN?	COUNCIL PLAN STRATEGY ADDRESSED
Continuation and expansion of Library Storytime, Rhyme Time and low-cost school holiday programs.	Expansion of Library Storytime and Rhyme Time. Implementation of low-cost school holiday program.	2019-2023	Ensure our communities are welcoming, inclusive and safe for all
Provision of supported playgroup program.	Supported playgroup program implemented.	2021	Ensure quality and accessible services that meet the needs of our community
Continuation of support for the Kerang Elders Group	Elders Group supported and projects implemented	Ongoing	Ensure our communities are welcoming, inclusive and safe for all
Development of a Welcome to Country Video in partnership with Barapa Barapa Elders	Video produced and available for use	2019	Ensure our communities are welcoming, inclusive and safe for all
Development of Reconciliation Action Plan in Partnership with GLAM Agencies and Elders	Plan developed and adopted	2019	Ensure our communities are welcoming, inclusive and safe for all



RELEVANT PRIORITY ACTIONS FROM GANNAWARRA SHIRE COUNCIL PLAN 2017-2021

- Host Gannawarra Seniors Advisory Group, Kerang Elders group, Early Years Board and Art Gathering meetings to promote a partnership approach to improve outcomes for our community
- Evaluate and advise Council regarding the Aged Care Services implementation (July 2019), identifying community risk
- Evaluate and advise Council regarding the National Disability Insurance Scheme implementation (January 2019), identifying community risk
- Advocate for better services to support the impact of drugs, alcohol and mental health in our community
- Annual quality surveys undertaken for family support and elderly support services and reported to Council
- Review and implement the Early Years Plan 2015-2018, Children and Youth Strategy 2016-2020 and Positive Ageing Strategy 2016-2020
- Seek funding to improve and develop infrastructure that encourages physical and leisure activities
- Develop a framework to guide Council decision making and support community access to sport and recreation funding opportunities
- Increase and support female participation in sport across the Shire
- Develop a Community Active and Passive Leisure Strategy
- Advocate for free access to sport and recreation opportunities for disadvantaged children
- Continue to use the 5 Ways to Wellbeing as a platform to encourage healthy lifestyles, mental health and social connections
- Develop and implement a Life-long Learning Strategy
- Council's family support services working together with partners to improve early literacy levels (communication and language) to improve lifelong learning outcomes for children
- Improve homework support for young people and tutor programs through the library service
- Install an iMac at the Kerang Library
- Advocate to education providers to provide certificate level courses in Gannawarra
- Encourage the establishment of Maker's Place concept to support collaboration, learning and a place to pursue business ideas
- Develop a plan to make playgrounds across the shire all-abilities accessible
- Implement the 'Team around the Child' model into ongoing Maternal and Child Health service delivery to better support vulnerable children and their families
- Advocate for services that provide support to Special Needs groups across our community
- Investigate opportunities to partner with local social enterprises that support Special Needs groups
- Continue to celebrate diversity within our community through a range of mediums
- Explore the opportunity to incorporate cultural heritage centres into existing Council facilities
- Maintain the Gannawarra Resilience Network
- Develop and implement a Social Inclusion Strategy to replace the Disability Action Plan 2012-2015
- Review and implement Community Safety Plan 2012-2015

IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT

Performance against the Social Inclusion Strategy Implementation Plan will be reported to Council annually. Evaluations and redevelopment of the plan will take place halfway through the life of the plan and in the final year of the plan.

Council reporting, review and evaluation will take place in accordance with the timeframes listed below:

REQUIREMENT	DUE DATE
Adoption by Council	February 2019
Annual review and report to Council	February 2020
Evaluation and redevelopment of Implementation Plan – Action Plan	August 2021
Annual review and report to Council	February 2021
Annual review and report to Council	February 2022
Evaluation and redevelopment of Implementation Plan – Action Plan	August 2023



GLOSSARY

‘Access for All’ – principles are based on all aspects of the DDA and ensure that no-one is

discriminated against directly or indirectly through the actions or inactions of Council. It also

includes equitable access and inclusion within the Council to facilities, services and employment.

This approach recognises that planning, development and implementation for these areas needs to include the whole community regardless of levels of mobility or disability.

Accessibility – The term ‘accessibility’ refers to the removal of barriers and is generally used to describe outcomes. For example, an accessible toilet is one which is modified in a way in which all members of the community can use the facility regardless of their level of ability or disability.

Alternative formats – This terminology is about providing information in other formats for people who may have very limited or no vision at all. Alternative formats that need to be considered when catering for all levels of vision impairment include:

- Audio- either audio cassette, DVD or CD with fast forward options to skip each topic that is not of interest.
- Large print- font size minimum 16 points in non-serif fonts as described above.
- Website- organisations website need to be compliant with the international WC3 standards for web design and targeted content must be in word format (screen readers cannot read PDFs).

Australian Standards – Building standards legislation that includes ‘access to premises’ in the AS 1428.

Barrier – the term ‘barrier’ refers to an obstacle that may be encountered which restricts a person from fully participating in community life.

CALD – Culturally and linguistically diverse

Communication board – Communication boards are picture based communication aids that help people who have difficulty communicating their needs verbally or have language difficulties. They may have an alphabet, pictures of Council services or tourism venues.

DDA – Disability Discrimination Act (1992). Commonwealth Legislation which protects the rights of people with a disability in the areas of employment, education, access to premises, provision of goods, services and facilities, accommodation, buying land, activities of clubs and associations, sport and administration of Commonwealth Government laws and programs.

DID – Director Infrastructure and Development

GLAM – Gannawarra Local Agency Meeting

Hearing Loop – device installed into a room which allows people who use hearing aids to hear more clearly.

HR – Human Resources

IDPWD – International Day of People with Disability is held annually on 3 December and celebrates people’s abilities.

LGBTIQ – Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex or queer

National Relay Service (NRS)- telephone access service available to all Australians which enables communication between a standard telephone and someone who is deaf and uses TTY.

NDIS – National Disability Insurance Scheme

NDIS Service Provider – An individual or organisation delivering a support or a product to a participant of the NDIS.

Stakeholders – people who directly have an interest or are active on a particular project or topic.

Style Guide – a guide to writing, grammar and presentation and includes guidelines for considering people with vision impairment.

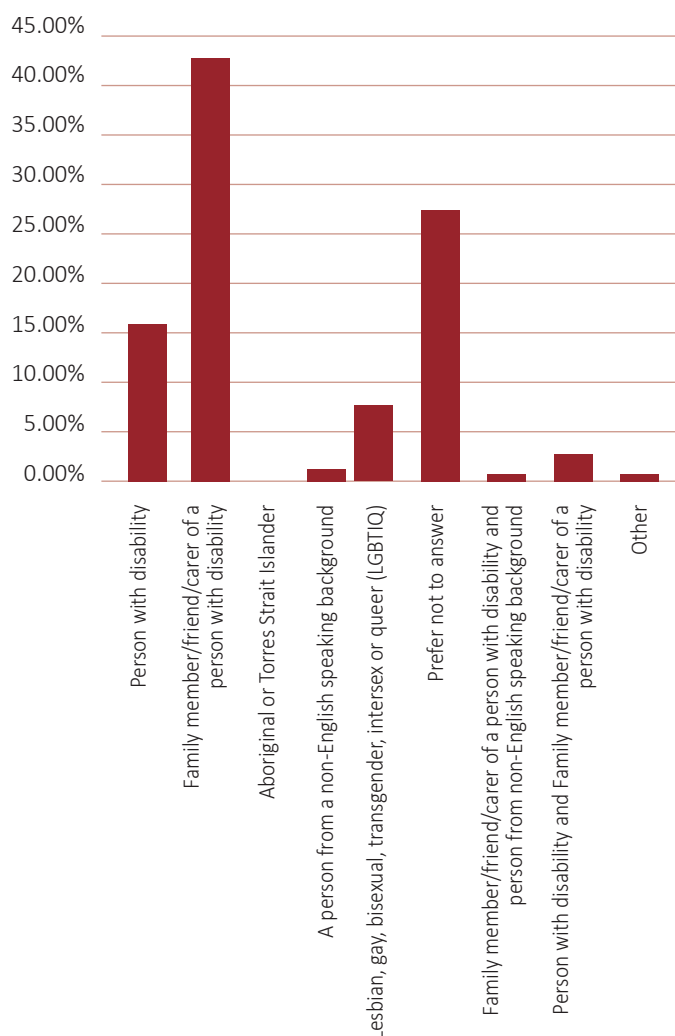
W3C – standards for website accessibility for people with a vision impairment who may use computer technology to access web information.

APPENDIX – SOCIAL INCLUSION STRATEGY SURVEY DATA

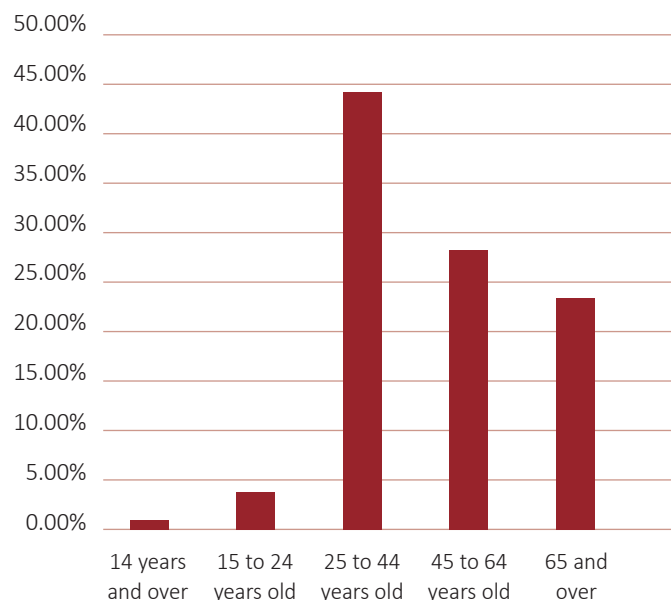
COMMUNITY SURVEY

DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE COMMUNITY SURVEY

Forty-two per cent of respondents were a family member/friend or carer of a person with disability and almost 16 per cent identified as a person with disability. Around 7.5 per cent of respondents identified as LGBTIQ and almost two per cent identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Twenty-seven per cent preferred not to answer the question.



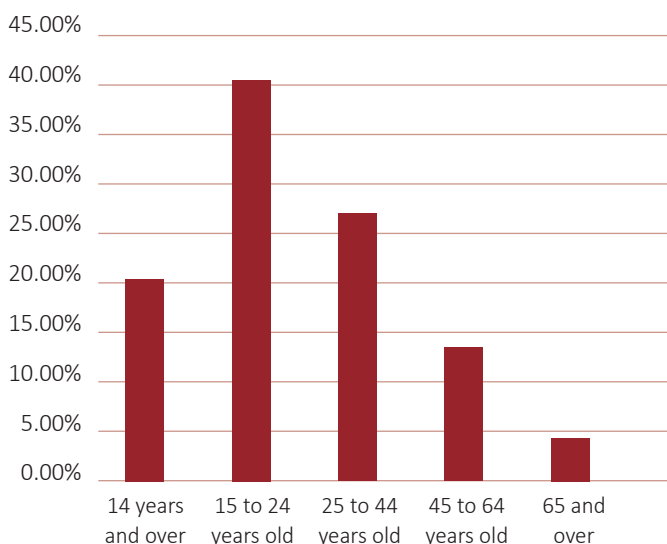
Almost half of respondents rated their financial status as “good” (48 per cent) or “fair” (24 per cent). Almost 15 per cent rated their financial status as “excellent”, while almost nine per cent rated their financial status as “poor”.



Almost 80 per cent of respondents were female and around 20 per cent male. Forty-four per cent were aged 25 to 44 years old, around 28 per cent were 45 to 64 years old and 23 per cent were aged 65 years and over. Almost four per cent of respondents were 15 to 24 years old.

HOW INCLUDED DO PEOPLE FEEL?

In terms of how included respondents felt in their local community, around 40 per cent said they felt “somewhat included” and 20 per cent felt “very included”. Twenty-two per cent felt they were “not very included” and almost 14 per cent felt “not included at all”.



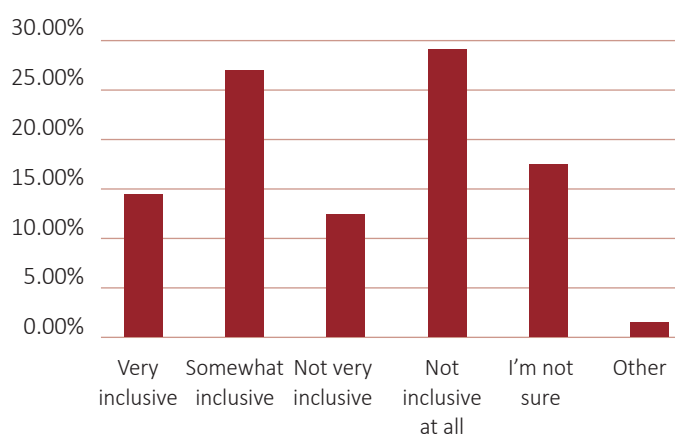
WHEN DO WE FEEL INCLUDED?

Survey respondents felt they were most included when involved in the community, be it through volunteering, events or through involvement in clubs, community groups and sporting activities.

How inclusive are we for people with disability, who speak another language, identify as LGBTIQ, Indigenous, youth, elderly or have low income?

Almost 26 per cent of surveyed community members noted that Gannawarra Shire was “somewhat inclusive” for people with disability, who speak another language, identify as LGBTIQ, Indigenous, are young, elderly or have low income.

Around 28 per cent felt Gannawarra Shire was “not inclusive at all”, almost 15 per cent felt it was “very inclusive” and almost 13 per cent felt it was “not very inclusive”. Around 17 per cent of respondents answered “I’m not sure”.



WHAT'S STOPPING INCLUSION?

Respondents identified a number of factors stopping people who were LGBTIQ, Indigenous, elderly, youth or had low income from being included in Gannawarra Shire, including:

- Discrimination and exclusion
- Ignorance, negative attitudes and people being judgemental
- Lack of support or not knowing where to go to receive support
- Lack of services and resources to meet needs
- Lack of access (such as accessible parking, transport)
- People not feeling safe to be themselves
- Limited opportunities, including employment and financial barriers
- Limited things on offer – i.e. sport-only activities or events not being held in their town
- People's lack of wanting to be included

What could help improve inclusion for everyone in our community?

Asked to name what could help improve inclusion in our community, common themes included getting involved, ensuring everyone was treated equally in terms of available services, and improved education and training (including inclusiveness training).

The need for education regarding diverse groups was also raised, such as for the Gannawarra Shire, businesses, health professionals and workers, and the general community.

Improved communication, including advertising of the availability of services (instead of relying on online promotion) was highlighted, as was the availability of one-on-one discussions with Councillors.

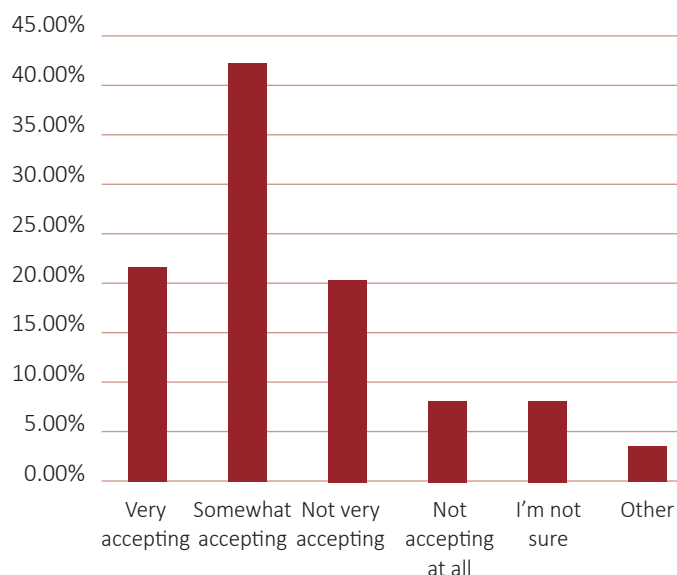
Further themes identified among the surveys were:

- More entertainment facilities/special activities/community events (rather than just sports-related events).
- Increased job and formal education opportunities
- Improved public transport
- Better visibility among community leaders, including Council and businesses
- Better physical access, such as accessible parking (particularly within the townships of Cohuna and Kerang, including the Kerang hospital) and pedestrian crossings
- Accessible swing for parks (Kerang and Cohuna)
- Raising of rainbow flag/stickers/flags on shops

How accepting are we of people with disability, who speak another language, identify as LGBTIQ, Indigenous, youth, and elderly or have low income?

Forty-one per cent of those surveyed felt the local community was “somewhat accepting” of people with disability, who speak another language, identify as LGBTIQ, are Indigenous, young, elderly or have low income.

Twenty-one per cent felt the local community was “very accepting”, while 20 per cent noted that the local community was “not very accepting”. Around seven per cent of surveyed felt the local community was “not accepting at all”.



WHAT HAS BEEN PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCE OF COMMUNITY ACCEPTANCE?

Common themes identified in the responses from community members regarding their experience of community acceptance were:

- Very good/felt accepted/people friendly and welcoming
- Not good/poor/not felt accepted
- Not accepted due to sexuality
- Incorrect assumptions about a person/judgemental
- Positive Indigenous affairs/celebrations
- Lack of acceptance due to being new to area/ethnic background/disability
- Education required (particularly about diversity, disability, etc.)
- Acceptance through sport/social clubs/community groups

HOW COULD COMMUNITY ACCEPTANCE BE IMPROVED?

Respondents identified a number of ways community acceptance could be improved in Gannawarra Shire. This included Council leading by example, as well as positive leadership in the community – such as sporting teams supporting LGBTIQ programs and initiatives.

Other responses pointed to a need for better resources, improved communication and promotion of inclusive services.

Respondents also identified the need for community consultation, better education and awareness regarding diversity (including education in schools, retirement homes and neighbourhood houses) and more facilities and events.

Other ways nominated to improve community acceptance included:

- Visible welcoming signs at all events and venues
- Visits by locals to inform newcomers of clubs
- Publishing of success stories
- Change of attitude/less judgemental/be more accepting/treat everyone equally
- Improved access
- Improved funding,
- Learning from engagement with our Indigenous community
- Increased contact with different cultures and people

WHAT IS BEING DONE OUTSIDE GANNAWARRA SHIRE REGARDING SOCIAL INCLUSION THAT WE COULD LEARN FROM?

When asked to provide examples of initiatives around social inclusion that survey participants had seen or heard from outside the Shire, responses included better awareness and embracement of disability and diversity, and education/awareness programs, courses and workshops.

Listening to people and treating them with respect, opportunities for social activities, involvement of youth, consultation and encouraging growth were also themes identified by respondents.

Additionally, respondents named facilities such as safe spaces, inclusiveness parks and sensory parks, as well as access to services including special schools and visiting specialists, and sexual health services.

Events in other municipalities were highlighted by a number of survey participants, such as street markets, pride football games, LGBTIQ events, family fun days, days for people with disability and inclusive days.

In terms of these events held in other municipalities, respondents specifically identified:

- Swan Hill Rural City Council's Harmony Day
- Hepburn Shire's Daylesford ChillOut Festival
- Pyramid Hill Fiesta in Loddon Shire
- Headspace Ballarat and Indigenous Community Centre Fun Day
- Campaspe Shire Council's Reconciliation Week

WHAT STAFF AND SERVICE PROVIDERS TOLD US

In general, half of the Gannawarra Shire staff felt the community was “somewhat inclusive”, while around 27 per cent felt it was “not very inclusive”. Eighteen per cent of staff felt the Gannawarra Shire community was “very inclusive”.



In terms of inclusiveness in Gannawarra Shire for people with disability, who speak another language, identify as LGBTIQ, are Indigenous, young, elderly or have low income, 36 per cent of staff said it was “somewhat inclusive”. Equally, 36 per cent of staff said it was “not very inclusive”. Almost 14 per cent said it was “very inclusive”.

Similar to the community survey, themes identified by staff and service providers regarding how this could be improved included education and training (such as inclusiveness and community engagement training), and wider advertising and promotion of services and events.

Being friendly and approachable, better access to specialist services and welcoming new residents to the community (such as providing information regarding clubs, groups and services available in the Shire) was also suggested. Promotion of inclusiveness through community groups and sporting clubs was also identified.

In relation to community attitudes towards people with disability, who speak another language, identify as LGBTIQ, are Indigenous, young, elderly or have low income, there was a mix of responses. These responses varied from perceiving the community as very accepting, to identifying some members of the community as harbouring negative perceptions towards these groups.

Other respondents stated that community attitudes are improving, in particular acceptance among the younger generation. A lack of support for the LGBTIQ community was also identified among some survey participants.

In terms of helping improve community attitudes, staff and service providers acknowledged the need to have more people of diversity working and living in the community, including community leadership roles.

Education and awareness, inclusive programs and teaching, bringing people together, greater involvement with community groups, and providing more opportunities for people from these groups to become involved with local events, was also identified.



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