

Connecting Gannawarra

LEITCHVILLE & DISTRICT

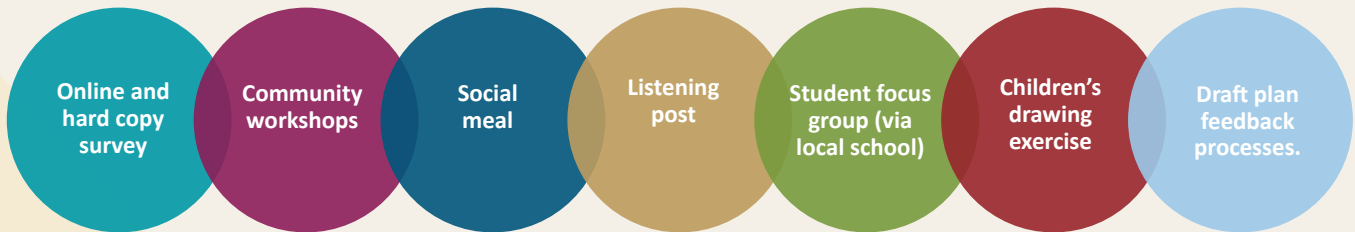
COMMUNITY PLAN
2024 – 2029



Leitchville & District Community Plan

The Leitchville & District Community Plan 2024-2029 sets out the community's vision for the next six years. Developed and owned by the community, the plan captures the community's voice for what is most important for them.

Community planning commenced in January 2023 and was completed in September 2023. Community members in and around Leitchville & District were invited to share their input into the planning process via a variety of methods:



The Leitchville & District Community Plan is a community owned plan that captures community aspirations across a broad range of areas (not just local government). This project was delivered with funding from the Agriculture-Dependent Community Resilience Project.

Our Vision

In 2029 Leitchville & District will LOOK LIKE, FEEL LIKE and HAVE:

- Thriving and self-reliant community
- A booming main street with cars everywhere
- Tidy town with community pride
- A good spread of age
- Productive, stronger and richer
- Children in the street, kids running around
- Young people have jobs and are staying/ returning to the area
- Youth are encouraged and involved
- Natural assets are celebrated
- Our sporting complex is the jewel in our crown
- Good access to health and wellbeing support
- Thriving kindergarten and school
- Manufacturing, employment and businesses are flourishing
- Modern and busy pool

Building On Past Work

The Leitchville & District Community Plan also builds on existing community plans and community consultation efforts.

The previous planning work has been reviewed and embedded into the 2024-2029 Community Plan (where relevant).

Through previous planning efforts, the community has achieved a number of actions/goals:



› Leitchville Swimming Pool lighting upgrade



› Community Activation and Social Isolation funding community activities



› COVIDSAFE outdoor activation funding

Recent consultation has identified additional opportunities which have been added to shape the plan. The community plan is a shared common format across all communities that connects with the Gannawarra Shire Council's Council Plan strategic themes.

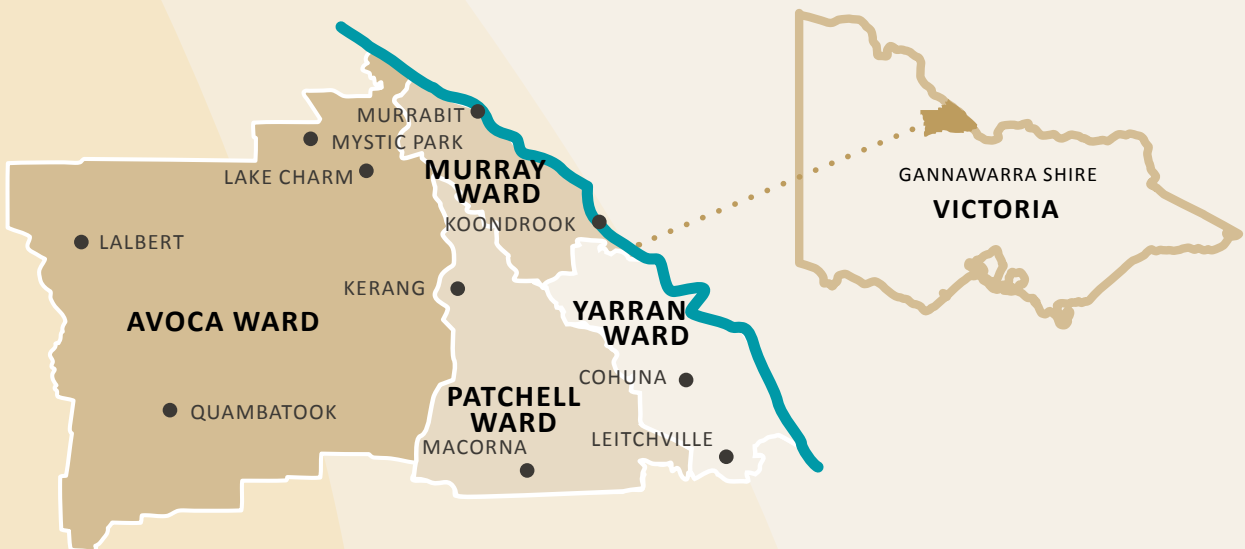
Our District

Leitchville is located 15 km from Cohuna, 50 km north-west of Echuca and 262 km from Melbourne.

KEY COMMUNITY ASSETS OF NOTE [BUILT AND NATURAL] INCLUDE THE:



The community groups and organisations, sporting clubs and social activities also greatly enrich the community.



Leitchville & District

KEY STATS & FACTS - 2021



Population
576

Male **52.8%**
Female **47.2%**
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples **2.3%**
(VIC 1.0%)
Country of birth (Australia): **89.1%** (VIC 65.0%)



Age

Median age in Leitchville: **50 years** (VIC 38 years)
Children aged 0-14 years made up **16.3%** of the population (VIC 18.0%)
and **25.8%** of the population are aged 65 years and over (VIC 16.8%)



Dwellings
275

15.8% of dwellings were unoccupied (VIC 11.1%)
\$150 / week was the median rent (VIC \$370)



Households

72.5% were family households (VIC 70.1%)
26.2% (25 people) were living in single person households (VIC 25.9%)
1.3% were group households (VIC 4.0%)
2.6% of households had no car (VIC 7.5%)



Employment

64.1% worked full-time (VIC 56.2%)
28.9% worked part-time (VIC 32.3%)
3.9% were Unemployed (VIC 5.0%)
3.9% were away from work (VIC 6.5%)



Household Income

In Leitchville **23.9%** of households had a weekly household income of less than \$650 (VIC 16.4%) and **11.0%** of households had a weekly income of more than \$3,000 (VIC 24.2%)



Health

4.5% of Leitchville residents reported three or more long-term health conditions (VIC 2.9%)

Community Consultation

Residents living in Leitchville & District were invited to share their thoughts on the strengths, challenges and opportunities for their community.

A range of strategies were selected from to ensure as many community members as possible could inform the development of the Leitchville & District Community Plan. Strategies included: an online and hard copy survey, community workshop, a listening post, a focus group, children's drawing activities and attendance at a community social meal.

The following broad community engagement was achieved:

- › 40 people filled in a survey
- › 27 key stakeholders and community members attended a community workshop
- › 13 people attended a social meal
- › 10 people attended a listening post
- › 8 children and adults participated in a focus group at the school
- › 6 children completed a drawing exercise.

Overall, a total of 104 people shared their thoughts, ideas and dreams for the future of Leitchville & District.



In Leitchville & District We Love....

The top three things survey respondents liked about their community were:

“People look out for their neighbours.”

“Visitors and newcomers are always welcome.”

“Agriculture is the foundation that this town was built on.”

- › The friendly people
- › Supportive neighbours
- › The small rural feel of our town
- › Our local businesses
- › The peace and quiet
- › The open space
- › Our community connection and pride
- › Our community spirit and pride
- › Our natural environmental assets
- › Our farming history and food producers
- › Our football/netball club
- › Our primary school and kinder
- › Our swimming pool



Key Issues/Challenges



› Ageing population



› Lack of employment opportunities



› Lack of housing/housing blocks



› Lack of things for young people to do



› Volunteering



› Maintaining and improving key community infrastructure and assets: Recreation reserve, swimming pool, roads and footpaths



› Attracting government funding



› Strengthening social connections and community involvement

A complete summary of findings from the community consultation processes can be found in the Leitchville & District Consultation Summary Report.

Our Key Priorities

Gannawarra Shire Council's 2021 - 2025 Council Plan is guided by the following Strategic Statement:

“The Gannawarra will be renowned as an Australian destination and home of choice for its liveability and unique opportunities in innovative agriculture, renewable energy and nature-based tourism.

We focus on inclusive services and assets that enhance the health and wellbeing, cultural heritage, connectivity and productivity of our communities.”

The achievement of which will be achieved through action on three goals.

Goal 1. Liveability



Enhance the wellbeing and liveability of the Gannawarra through creative infrastructure and services.

Goal 2. Growth



Grow the Gannawarra through a diverse and broad economy.

Goal 3. Sustainability



Achieve long-term financial and environmental sustainability.

The Leitchville & District Community Plan is couched within these goals of Liveability, Growth, and Sustainability. In this way the Leitchville & District Community Plan both aligns with and extends Council's strategic focus.

Goal 1. Liveability

Enhance the wellbeing and liveability of the Gannawarra through creative infrastructure and services.

LEITCHVILLE & DISTRICTS' STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND KEY ACTIONS:

1: TOWN BEAUTIFICATION AND SIGNAGE

1. Beautify town entrances and ensure good town signage.
2. Beautify streetscapes and install more seating in the main street.
3. Upgrade walking/cycling track signage.
4. Seek funding for the installation of public space artworks.
5. Work together with owners to address unsightly buildings and sites.

2: ACCESSIBLE, INCLUSIVE, SAFE AND WELL-MAINTAINED COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Activate the masterplan to develop the sporting precinct; prioritising a lighting upgrade and women's change rooms.
2. Maintain and improve roads ensuring that they safely support residents, visitors and agriculture needs and equipment.
3. Restore the Lions Park at Kow Swamp so it can be used again for swimming, picnics and BBQs.
4. Upgrade the community pool and extend opening hours.
5. Explore opportunities for service co-location at the Rural Transaction Centre.
6. Maintain and enhance walking and cycling tracks and trails.
7. Maintain and plan for footpaths that better support ageing community members.
8. Improve and maintain play spaces for children and install play equipment suitable for older children.
9. Increase recreation infrastructure and opportunities for children and young people e.g. explore developing the old tennis court to include a pump track/skate park, exercise equipment and basketball court.

Goal 1. Liveability

Enhance the wellbeing and liveability of the Gannawarra through creative infrastructure and services.

LEITCHVILLE & DISTRICTS' STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND KEY ACTIONS:

3: A HEALTHY, CONNECTED AND SERVICED COMMUNITY

1. Offer social activities, programs and events that strengthen community spirit, inclusion and connections.
2. Support initiatives that strengthen connections between neighbours.
3. Offer more events, programs and activities focussed around arts and culture.
4. Advocate for adequate GP, emergency care, chemist services and health and wellbeing and aged care service access.
5. Offer local school holiday programs/activities for children.
6. Work with health services to provide more local activities and programs for older residents.
7. Support key community services- kindergarten, primary school and library service.
8. Seek funding for video conferencing equipment for the Leitchville Rural Transaction Centre.

4: SUPPORT, RESOURCE AND REDUCE WORKLOAD ON VOLUNTEERS

1. Adopt contemporary and flexible volunteering approaches to actively encourage new volunteers, especially younger and new residents.
2. Seek advocacy support from Council to support volunteer sustainability.

5: PROMOTE AND CELEBRATE HISTORY AND HERITAGE AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

1. Protect and maintain local heritage.
2. Explore ways to promote and celebrate local history and heritage, including farming and irrigation history.
3. Promote Aboriginal history.
4. Promote our natural assets and opportunities for passive recreation such as fishing, bird watching, photography, rock climbing etc.

Goal 2. Growth

Grow the Gannawarra through a diverse and broad economy.

LEITCHVILLE & DISTRICTS' STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND KEY ACTIONS:

1: A GREAT PLACE TO VISIT

1. Enhance and promote tourism in Leitchville & District.
2. Develop and promote natural environmental assets e.g. Mount Hope, Kow Swamp and Gunbower Island.
3. Develop a Mount Hope nature walk.
4. Investigate opportunities for enhancing Kow Swamp- a viewing platform and visitor information centre.
5. Develop a walking/cycle track out to Kow Swamp.
6. Promote and develop the Leitchville Travellers Rest (caravan free camp area).
7. Promote photography of the natural environment.
8. Investigate the opportunity to become a part of the canoe trail.

2: A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY

1. Attract local business and industry that will build the local economy and increase employment.
2. Actively explore opportunities for developing the old cheese factory site.
3. Explore social enterprise opportunities that can boost local employment for residents and young people.
4. Encourage agricultural development and advocate for the needs of the agricultural sector.
5. Explore fuel depot opportunities/schemes/models that could offer a local fuel supply.
6. Promote businesses in Leitchville & District and strengthen the 'buy/support local' culture.
7. Advocate for improved mobile phone and internet services for Leitchville & District.

Goal 2. Growth

Grow the Gannawarra through a diverse and broad economy.

LEITCHVILLE & DISTRICTS' STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND KEY ACTIONS:

3: POPULATION STABILITY/GROWTH

1. Undertake town planning to identify and plan for future town growth/residential development.
 2. Work together with Gannawarra Shire Council to increase available housing blocks in Leitchville & District.
 3. Promote the primary school and grow student enrolments.
 4. Explore opportunities to capitalise on remote/hybrid working trends.
 5. Promote the liveability of Leitchville & District.
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Goal 3. Sustainability

Achieve long-term financial and environmental sustainability.

LEITCHVILLE & DISTRICTS' STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS AND KEY ACTIONS:

1: INCREASED RENEWABLE ENERGY

1. Investigate community solar schemes that could support community members to increase their use of renewable energy.

2: PROTECT AND IMPROVE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

1. Maintain trees and control weeds on Council, Crown and Private Land.
2. Protect natural environmental assets, e.g. Kow Swamp, Mount Hope, Gunbower Island.

3: PREPARE AND RESPOND TO A CHANGING CLIMATE

1. Build community resilience and reduce the vulnerability of communities to extreme weather events (fire, flood and heat).
2. Offer community education on emergency risks and how to prepare.

4: WASTE REDUCTION

1. Explore ways to reduce household and business waste.
2. Advocate for a yearly hard rubbish collection.
3. Advocate for green waste collection.
4. Apply for Leitchville to be the Recycling Depot location for the Container Deposit Scheme.
5. Adopt circular economy principles and systems to reduce waste and landfill.

Putting Our Plan Into Action

Implementation of the Leitchville & District Community Plan will be led by the Leitchville Progress Association in partnership with Gannawarra Shire Council.

Community members and relevant key community stakeholders will be invited to inform projects and activities and work together on shared priorities. Yearly progress updates on community priorities and activities will be provided to the wider community.

If you would like to get involved contact Michael Walker on: 0477 999 692.

