

GANNAWARRA SHIRE

COMMUNITY SAFETY PLAN

2012 - 2025



GANNAWARRA
Shire Council

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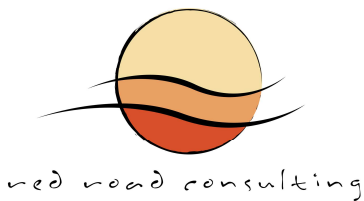
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Executive Summary

The Shire of Gannawarra is pleased to present its inaugural Gannawarra Community Safety Plan 2012-2015. The Plan outlines the activities and findings of a range of community safety planning and research activities aimed at producing an informed, collaborative and strategic framework for addressing actual and perceived community safety concerns in the Shire. The Plan's approach is to set a foundation of work and focus to 2025 (matching Gannawarra 2025's scope) while focusing on actions that will occur between 2012 and 2015. A schedule for minor action reviews and full Plan reviews between 2012 and 2025 is also suggested in the Plan, as part of a framework for strategic reflection/evaluation and planning.

The approach in summary

Safety and security are fundamental human rights. We all have the right to (and responsibility to help create) environments and communities that are and feel safe and contribute to people's health and wellbeing.

This Plan adopts a 'social model' of community safety planning that is borrowed from health planning. 'Safety' is not wholly measurable. It is complex and relates to individuals' and communities' values, experiences and expectations as much as it does to crime numbers and trends.

Crime prevention, then, is only one goal of a community safety plan, particularly in reference to the role that a Council can take around creating safer communities. This first Gannawarra Community Safety Plan aims to describe a vision of a safer Gannawarra that is people-focused, place-focused and partnership-focused and aligned with other key Gannawarra strategies, such as Gannawarra 2025.

The development of this Plan has involved a range of consultative activity and research, staged between May and July 2012 and involving approximately 100 people in a range of workshop, peer research, context auditing/review and participatory feedback processes. The direct participation of the many people (from children to older retirees), businesses and agencies who were active participants in the consultations and deliberations were invaluable to the development of this Plan and we acknowledge their time and contributions with profound thanks.

The issues in summary

The issues highlighted by a range of sources of evidence and advice sourced in the development of this Community Safety Plan are a source of general optimism about safety and perceptions of safety in Gannawarra Shire. Community and professional reflection and qualitative information supports the quantifiable evidence that Gannawarra is generally a safe place to be and one that fosters the wellbeing and security of residents and visitors.

This general contentment notwithstanding, the Plan has noted a number of issues, positive and negative, that underpin a framework of action that will respond to need, protect what is working well in the Shire and



strengthen the resilience the community has for proactively responding to future issues that might emerge.

The key issues are themed around ‘people’, ‘places’ and ‘partnerships’. The issues highlighted cover a range of actual safety (crime and accident safety) and perceptions of safety detail and underpin the strategic directions adopted to help move towards a ‘safer Gannawarra’.

The vision in summary

A ‘safer Gannawarra’ is one that moves in the same direction as the Council vision that looks to a Gannawarra Shire that is:

A vibrant, caring and prosperous community that offers social, economic and environmental sustainability for all.

In achieving a vision for a safer Gannawarra, some clear messages have emerged in terms of the ‘mission’ of Council and the community in achieving ‘safer Gannawarra’ outcomes. For example, a clear message has been that people are generally content with safety and perceptions of safety in Gannawarra and want to maintain and enhance community safety through this Plan, rather than ‘problemetise’ people, places or partnerships in Gannawarra. As a result, the Plan is one that focuses on strengthening people (individuals and community), places and partnerships and dealing proactively rather than reactively with any future community safety issues that might emerge.

To move towards this vision, the following are the broad goals the community (and this Plan) have for achieving a ‘safer Gannawarra’ by 2025:



The actions in summary

The Gannawarra Community Safety Plan outlines 18 actions within three theme areas: people, places and partnerships. These actions are suggested by the evidence and advice collected between May and July 2012 and represent a launching point for creating a 'safer Gannawarra', recognising that the Shire is and is perceived to be a relatively safe community now. The actions are as follows:

| Theme: People | Theme: Places | Theme: Partnerships |
|---|--|--|
| <i>Co-ordinate with policies aimed at supporting young people and their families in healthier and safer life choices</i> | <i>Pilot a 'safer design' gateway project to improve perceptions of safety at the Kerang Train Station</i> | <i>Partner with existing Plans (e.g. GMPHP, GYSD, etc.) in delivering programs aimed at safer places and people in Gannawarra</i> |
| <i>Develop activities and events that provide an opportunity for non-sport related involvement in the community</i> | <i>Develop 'safer design'/CPTED tools that support improved community safety through environmental design</i> | <i>Establish protocols for accessing and tracking local-specific crime data with VicPol</i> |
| <i>Develop initiatives which address the 'fear of change' in the community</i> | <i>Undertake 'safer design'/CPTED and place activation demonstration projects as opportunities arise</i> | <i>Establish 'Safer Gannawarra' working group/s, linked to existing community planning groups across the Shire</i> |
| <i>Develop a series of community events at 'hotspot' sites</i> | <i>Develop an 'Environmental Champs' program that highlights environmental safety and stewardship concepts to people</i> | <i>Scope 'best/promising practice' examples of community safety programming</i> |
| <i>Support Alternative Schoolies programs set up for young people as a diversion from anti-social school leaving activities</i> | <i>Conduct a deeper investigation into the experiences and needs concerning Farm Safety in Gannawarra</i> | <i>Establish a 'reflective practice' evaluation framework for community safety partnerships in Gannawarra</i> |
| <i>Support the establishment of community service clubs, particularly those that help retain younger people in community and promote safety</i> | <i>Provide on-going feedback into asset management processes at Council and State Government</i> | <i>Foster increasing involvement in community safety planning processes in future iterations of the Gannawarra Community Safety Plan</i> |

This inaugural framework for action seeks to protect and enhance what is already working well in Gannawarra and to establish partnerships and networks that will enable the local community to respond proactively to issues that may emerge in the future.

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Introduction

Introducing our Plan for a safer Gannawarra

This Plan is an articulation of the activities and findings of a range of community safety planning and research activities undertaken in the Shire of Gannawarra (Figure 1) in the first half 2012. The goal of this work has been to produce an informed, collaborative and strategic framework for addressing actual and perceived community safety concerns in the Shire between 2012 and 2025 (with suggested minor and major reviews staggered every 3 years). The Plan also seeks to provide strategies to enhance and protect what is working well with respect to people being and feeling safe and secure in the Shire.

The Gannawarra Community Safety Plan links to other strategic policies (particularly the Council's community vision, Gannawarra 2025) that reflect the broad aspirations for the social, environmental, cultural and economic future of the Shire. This policy integration will support and strengthen the goals of Gannawarra 2025 and inform future project activity in a way that 'makes sense' across and between policies.



Figure 1: Gannawarra Shire LGA

source: <http://www.gannawarra.vic.gov.au/play/maps/>

As the first iteration of the Gannawarra Community Safety Plan, this document also focuses on processes and outcomes that build strong foundations and capacities for local partners, from government, business, NGO agencies and the community, to work effectively together to address, mitigate and enhance safety issues in the Shire.

It is important to create a Plan that is realistic and achievable while also being creative and inspiring clever solutions to issues so that outcomes can be meaningful and sustained, particularly across what is a large rural Shire with dispersed populations (of geography and of interest). It has also been important to create a Plan that acts as a good road map for current and future staff of the Shire of Gannawarra and other agencies to use in achieving the vision the local community has for a safer community.

Our 'safer communities' philosophy

Safety and security are fundamental human rights (The UN Declaration of Human Rights 1948). We all have the right to (and responsibility to help create) environments and communities that are and feel safe and contribute to people's health and wellbeing.

Actual safety (e.g. our direct experiences of crime or accident) is a different but linked concept to perceptions of safety (e.g. our thoughts regarding the risks or likelihood of crime or accident happening).

Each is very 'real'; both actual and perceived safety affect people's quality of life in a myriad of ways and each impacts upon the social, cultural, economic and environmental health of our communities but each does require different kinds of response from communities (Begg & Boorman. 1994).

This Plan adopts a 'social model' of community safety planning that is borrowed from health planning. 'Safety' is not wholly measurable. It is complex and relates to individuals' and communities' values, experiences and expectations as much as it does to crime numbers and trends (see Figure 2). This is particularly the case in a small rural Shire where crime and other statistics are:

- a) hard to coordinate at a relevant statistical level (e.g. the LGA or smaller area)
- b) small enough that small changes get represented as large trend changes (e.g. if 2 serious crimes happen one year and 3 happen the following year, this represents a 50% increase in that crime, a statistic that is potentially alarming and potentially misrepresents community safety risks and concerns to the community).

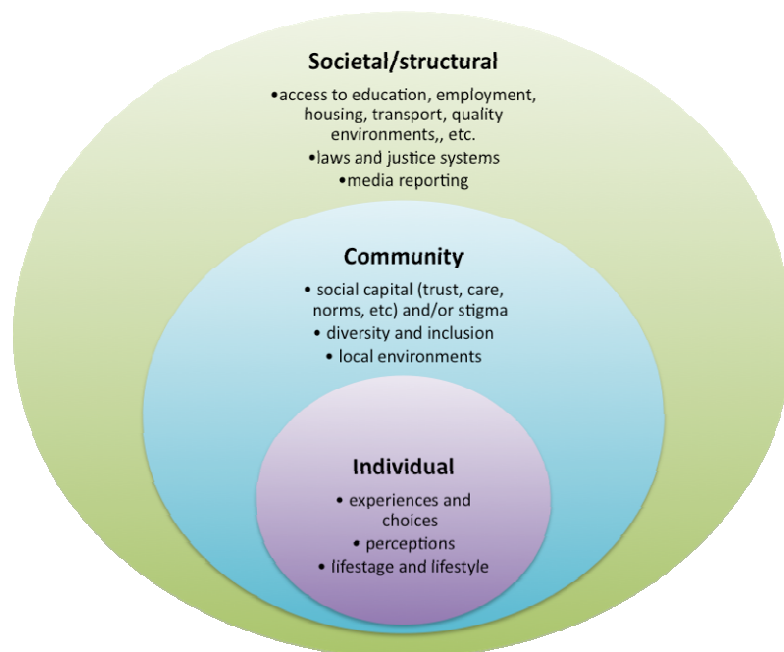


Figure 2: A 'social model' of community safety

Source: adapted from Dahlgren & Whitehead 1991

Crime prevention, then, is only one goal of a community safety plan, particularly in reference to the role that a Council can take around creating safer communities. This first Gannawarra Community Safety Plan aims to describe a vision of a safer Gannawarra that is people-focused, place-focused and partnership-focused and aligned with other key Gannawarra strategies, such as Gannawarra 2025.

Our approach to developing this Plan

Attempts have been made to weave genuine opportunities for participation (for a range of 'stakeholders') into the development of this Plan. 'Community safety', as an issue, is often complex, subjective and emotional and our approach has been to try and include a range of voices in the discussion about what is important and how best to address it.

What has emerged in this 'action learning' oriented process has led us to focus on three intertwined areas of community safety:

People – developing a broader understanding of different people, groups and organisations engaged in the community and their views and aspirations about community safety;

Places – deepening our knowledge about place, the ways in which community engage with their places and use them, the affects of things like design on how places are perceived and ways in which place can engender safer and healthier communities;

Partnerships – seeking ways to strengthen capacity and knowledge so as to facilitate pro-active strategic and/or service delivery partnerships between Council, other government, agencies, business and the community.

These three areas of inquiry were explored through a process framed by the 'Oregon Model'¹ of community visioning by focusing on the four key questions of "Where are we now?"; "Where are we going?"; "Where do we want to be?", and; "How do we get there?". The engagement processes themselves have used these visioning questions as a framework for strategic planning around community safety in Gannawarra and the Plan is organised into sections reflecting these core strategic questions.

The development of this Plan has involved a range of consultative and research activities (illustrated in Figure 3), staged between May and July 2012 and involving approximately 100 people:

1. a **context audit** aimed at scoping and consolidating recent policy and program activity in Gannawarra as well as capturing, as far as possible, a current 'snapshot' of the Shire's community and safety trends.
2. a **mini Search Conference** with core/representative stakeholders to scope preliminary content and expectations for the Community Safety Plan, launch the project, establish networks/'buy in' and endorse the consultation strategy and methods.
3. training and support for a **Peer Research Team** with internal and external/community facilitators who undertook a range of community-based consultations to inform the Community Safety Plan development and build local capacity/skills and ownership of the Plan.
4. a **number of targeted consultations** conducted by Peer Researchers and the consultant team in June 2012, including:
 - o a 'week with a camera' activity with high school students in Gannawarra.
 - o a number of focus groups with professional and community stakeholders.
 - o a 'behaviour mapping' activity aimed at cataloguing the use of 'hotspot' areas in the Shire at different times of the day and night.

¹The "Oregon Model," was presented in A Guide to Community Visioning, a handbook published by the Oregon Visions Project in 1993. Please refer to <http://www.asu.edu/caed/proceedings97/ames.html> for further detail about this community visioning technique.

5. a **participatory editing session** to review and refine the draft Community Safety Plan and ensure a final version that represents the Peer Researcher-led activities and other advice from stakeholders and relevant sources.



Figure 3: Gannawarra Community Safety Plan processes, May to July 2012

The development of this Plan is also nested within Council and State government strategic and community planning/safety strategies and it has been our intention to align this Plan with relevant policy, strategies and community-driven processes, so that it can:

- o Reflect (and build upon) past attempts to plan strategically for Gannawarra Shire, particularly in reference to strengthening communities, community safety/crime prevention and service delivery/integration.
- o Identify the attributes and problems of the area as understood by a range of people in the community, particularly enabling those who are among traditionally 'silent' or 'hard to reach' communities.
- o Encourage and support new and innovative ideas and solutions to the issues identified.

- o Build ownership, accountability and transparency amongst and for internal and external stakeholders and local communities involved, particularly through mechanisms that can provide longer-term sustainability and value.
- o This foundation material is presented as ‘a context snapshot’ in the ‘Where we are now’ section of this Plan. An understanding of ‘where we are going’ and ‘how we are going to get there’ rests on understanding ‘where we are now’, including understanding where we are at now in terms of the policy environment.

How this Plan is organised

The goal of this Community Safety Plan is to document the project’s findings and recommendations for actions in a manner that can be of use to the Council and other members of the Gannawarra community over a number of years (between 2012 and 2025) and in concert with actions that have come from other strategic processes (like Gannawarra 2025).

The Plan is organised into four main sections:

Section 1: an **introduction** to the Gannawarra community safety planning project and the purpose/format of the resulting Plan (this document).

Section 2: a discussion of **Gannawarra Shire as it is now** and the directions it is headed, in reference to community safety. This section captures critical issues and themes as emerging from the research and local deliberations on community safety in Gannawarra and begins the analysis work of this Plan.

Section 3: a consolidated vision of **where Gannawarra wants to be** in the future and an analysis of the findings as emerging from all the consultation activities and as critical to future community safety actions.

Section 4: a description of **how Gannawarra will get where it wants to be** (the vision) as described in a framework for action between 2012 and 2025. This section presents and prioritises the various ideas generated during this process for protecting and enhancing community safety in Gannawarra.

This Plan is an analysed summary document, written for the purposes of stating an emerging community safety vision and areas for action in Gannawarra Shire but we recognise that there will be other applications of the verbatim ‘raw’ consultation information (for example, in the development of other strategic planning policy or in the development of local programs). A companion Addendum that hold the more detailed, unanalysed information about what people said in this process is provided to enable this to happen.

Authorship and acknowledgements

The Gannawarra Community Safety Plan has been written by Red Road Consulting (Andrea Cook) and Wayfarer Consulting (Helen Jennings) with contribution and review by an inter-disciplinary Gannawarra Shire Council team that has acted as a planning and accountability mechanism throughout the process. Their creative ideas and thoughts on grounding this Plan in the realities of the governance and policy environment in Gannawarra were invaluable and we convey our thanks.

The project involved day-to-day project management support from the Community Sustainability team managed by Chris White. Their support in the 'logistics' of the research underpinning this work is acknowledged with gratitude.

A huge debt is owed to the community and staff Peer Researchers and advisors who helped conduct the research processes informing this Plan so skilfully and generously:

Janine Gray (Business Kerang)
Jodie Hartley (Benjeroop/Murrabit/Myall Community Planning Group)
Brent Heitbaum (Gannawarra Shire Council)
Lorraine Learmonth (Cohuna Neighbourhood House)
Yaja Nowakowski (Victoria Police)
Narelle O'Donoghue (Gannawarra Shire Council)
Tania Peters (Victoria Police)
David Pietsch (Gannawarra Shire Council)
Chris Sanders (Rotary Kerang)
Jamie Templeton (Victoria Police)
Katrina Thorne (Gannawarra Shire Council)
Kirstyn Waddingham (Kerang Children's Centre Committee)
Chris White (Gannawarra Shire Council)

Finally, the Gannawarra Community Safety Plan development would certainly not have been possible without the direct participation of the many people (from children to older retirees), businesses and agencies who were active participants in the consultations and deliberations. We acknowledge their time and contributions with profound thanks.

Where we are now

In this section, we explore a range of sources (the consultations from this process as well as key issues emerging from other processes captured in our ‘context audit’) to paint a picture of the community safety environments now. This is a snapshot of places, people and partnerships that contribute to people’s safety and feelings of safety in Gannawarra.

People

The people of Gannawarra are linked in a series of strong communities of geography and communities of interest. While the population of Gannawarra is small and dispersed, a consistent theme of this and other consultations has been the strength of the community its people.

The population of Gannawarra Shire is in decline and estimates are that, if current trends continue, the population will drop to approximately 10,800 by 2025 (Gannawarra Future Scan 2010). The largest loss is expected to be amongst working age adults (aged 24 to 60) and the only gain in relative population is expected to be amongst older retirees (aged 71 or older). Gannawarra is already significantly older in profile than the Australian average. The average age of Kerang residents is 47, ten years above the Australian average. In Cohuna, the average age is 51.

These trends will have some interplay with community safety, particularly perceptions of safety, as older people (and women) tend to have more negative perceptions of safety than younger people, even though they are less likely to be victims of crime or accident (Wekerle & Whitzman 1995).

Crime and perceptions of crime

A critical issue in the development of this Community Safety Plan has been the lack of municipality-specific crime data available from VicPolice. This is not unusual for an area just embarking on a safer communities project but it does speak to some of the ‘partnership’ issues that will be discussed in the next section.

In the absence of that Gannawarra-specific crime data, we can look at crime trends in the region (the Western region 6 police statistics area encompassing Swan Hill, Mildura and other areas in the far north west, as well as Gannawarra) and contrast them with the state averages (see Figures 4 and 5).

Figure 4: Crime trends for categories of crimes, WD6 statistical area

| Crime | Rates per 100,000 population ² | | | |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------|----------|--------------------|
| | APR 10 - MAR 11 | APR 11 - MAR 12 | % Change | Ratio ³ |
| Crime Against the Person | 1183.5 | 1214.7 | 2.6 | 1.3 |
| Crime Against Property | 3702.5 | 3341.8 | -9.7 | 0.7 |
| Drug Offences | 428.8 | 280.3 | -34.6 | 0.9 |
| Other Crime | 1499.6 | 1318 | -12.1 | 1.5 |
| Total Crime | 6814.5 | 6154.9 | -9.7 | 0.9 |

² Rates per 100,000 population: The rate of offences per 100,000 population allows comparisons to be made across different geographical areas and across time, because the population size is taken into account in the calculation.

³ Ratio: the ratio of a Police Service Area's (PSA) crime rate per 100,000 population to the Victorian crime rate per 100,000 population. A ratio of 1 indicates that the PSA's crime rate is equal to the Victorian rate. A ratio of 2 signifies that the PSA's crime rate is double the State's; a ratio of 0.5 indicates it is half.

source: Victoria Police Corporate Statistics

Figure 5: Crime trends for selected crimes, WD6 statistical area

| Crime | Rates per 100,000 population | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|----------|-------|
| | APR 10 - MAR 11 | APR 11 - MAR 12 | % Change | Ratio |
| Robbery | 24.5 | 9.8 | ---- | 0.2 |
| Assault | 906.6 | 995.9 | 9.8 | 1.4 |
| Assault excluding family violence | 637.1 | 600 | -5.8 | 1.3 |
| Property Damage | 1178.6 | 917.2 | -22.2 | 1.1 |
| Burglary (Residential) | 223 | 292.6 | 31.2 | 0.6 |
| Burglary (Other) | 411.7 | 218.9 | -46.8 | 0.8 |
| Theft from Motor Vehicle | 306.3 | 260.7 | -14.9 | 0.3 |
| Theft of Motor vehicle | 88.2 | 122.9 | 39.4 | 0.5 |

source: Victoria Police Corporate Statistics

Community Indicators Victoria provides some further detail regarding key categorised crime rates in Gannawarra as compared to the region and the State (Figure 6).

In looking at the three charts together, we can see that crime rates (both crimes against the person and crimes against property) are lower in Gannawarra than in the region and in the State.

We can also assume, based on the first two data sets from the region, that most crimes are in decline, especially drug-related offences.

These statistics are reflected in what we've heard about crime in Gannawarra from residents and professionals. There isn't any deep concern about crime rates reflected in our discussions. Instead, people are concerned with illicit, uncivil or anti-social behaviours, such as camping in undesignated places and 'deliberate' rubbishing of the community described by Jack (age 15) in one of his 'week with a camera' images or the other examples given by focus group participants, below:

Unsavory people going into the senior citizen's centre, noise, etc

Lads hooning in cars after police have left

Urinating in the laneway (Cohuna and Kerang)

While these concerns would have some effect on perceptions of safety, Gannawarra has a better-than-average feeling about the safety of their communities (Figure 7). Figure 7 backs up comments we've heard in our consultations, including:

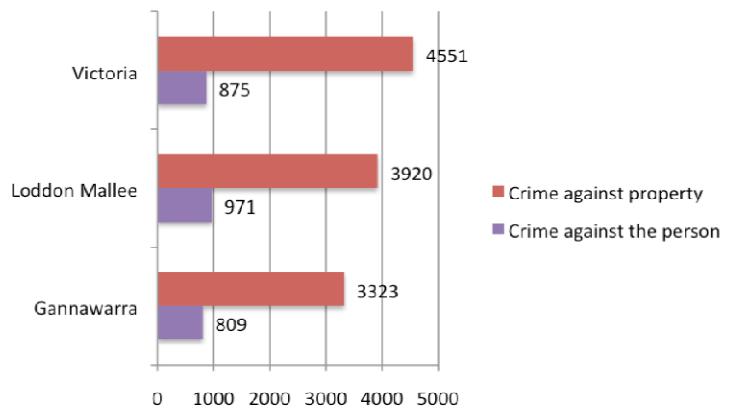


Figure 6: Comparative crime data: Gannawarra, region and state.

source: Community Indicators Victoria

[The group] generally feels safe and content with the state of things

The real perception issue might be perceptions about perceptions - concerns about being constantly bombarded with negative stats and stories about crime. There was agreement [in the group] that there needs to be work done to challenge this perception.

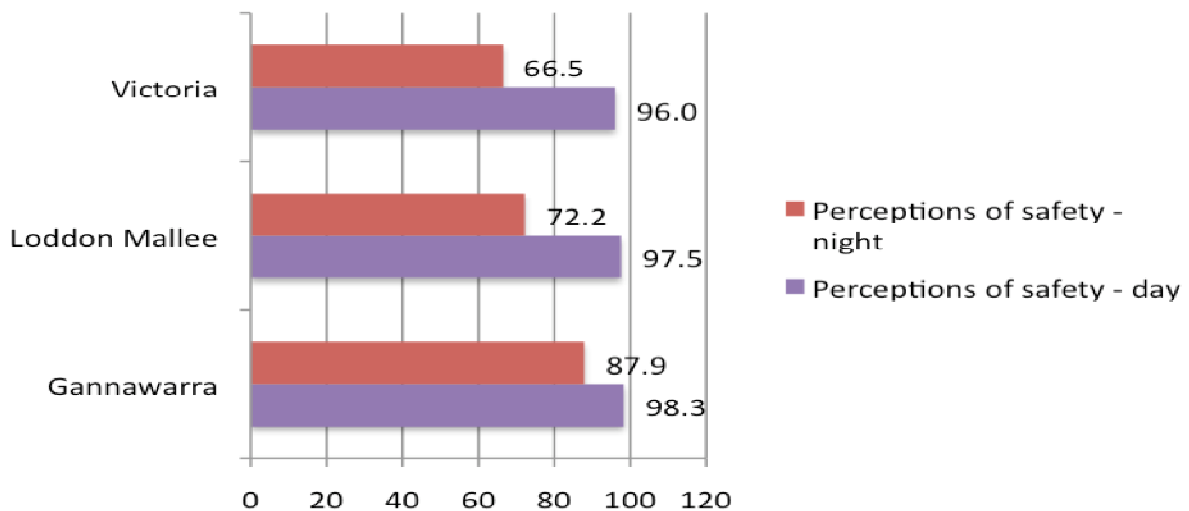


Figure 7: I would feel safe walking alone... (2007).
source: Community Indicators Victoria

A key concern highlighted in the development of this Community Safety Plan has been around resourcing existing partnerships to re-position themselves in relation to better understanding the broad indicators of crime and perceptions of crime in Gannawarra. This repositioning will enable the community to respond proactively to emerging issues, even though there is a general feeling that crime and perception of safety indicators are pretty healthy in Gannawarra at the moment.

Alcohol and drugs

People come off the train “in a bit of a sad state” (e.g. alcohol or drug affected, etc) and create a bad atmosphere for the other passengers

This statement from one workshop participant captures the impact that alcohol and drug taking can have on general perceptions of safety. More seriously, alcohol and drug abuse is associated with a range of other community issues, including violence (domestic violence, child abuse and violence aimed at others). Alcohol is the drug most implicated in violence in the public realm.

While alcohol and drug use is often ascribed to young people, one focus group participant notes:

Young people often get labelled with the drug and alcohol stigma – often when drugs are around it is older people pushing them and some adults have (and model) poor drinking culture too.

The issue of modelling drinking or drug taking behaviour was one that was discussed fairly widely and in particular by health professionals. Binge drinking is seen as an ‘accepted culture’ within the community with many parents showing little interest in stopping it, saying, “it was what we did”.

Young people identify drugs and alcohol as a critical health and safety issue for them. It was a strong theme in the Youth Strategy Document, often linked to safety and perceptions of safety (as Figure 8 illustrates).



Figure 8: Drug use and poor perceptions of safety.
source: ‘week with a camera’ participant

Wellbeing and community connection

Wellbeing is a notion that is linked to safety; personal safety and security is a contributor to people feeling healthy and well and optimistic about their own lives and the health of their community.

Community Indicators Victoria conducts surveying regarding a number of determinants of community health, safety and wellbeing. Self-reported wellbeing amongst Gannawarra residents is higher (78.5% report good/excellent wellbeing) than the Victorian average (76.4% report good /excellent wellbeing) and both exceed the estimated Australian average of 75%.

Gannawarra residents also report higher-than-state-averages in their responses to whether they feel a part of their community or not. Almost 10% more Gannawarra residents feel a part of their community than their Victorian counterparts. (see Figure 9).

This ‘connectedness’ is reflected in many comments and contributions to the development of this Plan and it cuts across ages. Megan, aged 17, for example speaks of feeling safe at her grandparents’ house because she knows the people in the area “very well” (Figure 10).

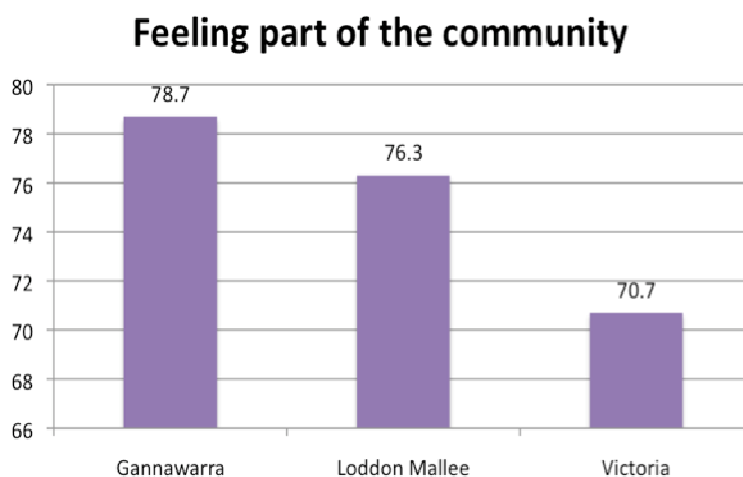


Figure 9: Feeling part of the community (2007): Gannawarra, regional and state level. source: Community Indicators Victoria



Figure 10: Knowing people and positive perceptions of safety.
source: 'week with a camera' participant

Community wellbeing and connection is a protective factor in terms of how safe people feel and Gannawarra's strengths in this area are an example of what this Community Safety Plan should seek to guard and enhance, particularly given the few comments regarding small erosions to community connectedness:

New people moving in – feeling of not knowing everyone

Don't know people as well as in the past.

Our consultations also uncovered some underlying issues related to changes in the community, often very 'philosophical' thoughts on how Gannawarra can strengthen itself, as a community, in relation to change and in relation to being empowered about differences between people and change in the community. Take for example, the following comment from one community member about anticipated future challenges to community safety:

increasing diversity and 'others' coming in (e.g. as Mildura is currently experiencing and grappling with)

A challenge for the Gannawarra community, broadly and in relation to community safety specifically, is how to maintain a sense of community belonging for all people in the Shire while actively pursuing goals of increased diversity as expressed in policies such as Gannawarra 2025. Maintaining the existing 'bonding' social capital that unites similar people in Gannawarra will be important but so too will be strengthening the 'bridging' social capital that can link different people together.

In the words of another participant in these consultations, this task may require some innovative programming that encourages community members to ponder the following:

What should people in the community expect from community? After all, there are different people in the community (loud/quiet/different/etc) and perhaps we need to focus on ways to help people understand/accept plurality and difference. We don't want to 'bland out' the community by linking community safety to us all being and behaving in narrow ways...

Opportunity for young people

Opportunities for young people, economically and culturally, are highlighted in this and other research in Gannawarra.

The Shire is an agricultural area with almost one in three (29.6%) employed in a wide range of agricultural production, from dairy production to table and wine grape production. Community safety in Gannawarra, then, is often related to the safety concerns that a largely rural and agricultural population might have: road safety, farm safety, environmental health and safety and the concerns for and about young people who may be moving off the land.

Tourism is important to the Shire as the Loddon-Murray water system lies in the area and attracts visitors who are camping, caravanning, boating, fishing, hiking and bird watching. The Mallee also attracts visitors as a unique Victorian environment. While tourism is welcome and encouraged by the local population, it can prompt community safety perceptions and concern regarding (some) visitors' behaviours, particularly around alcohol use, boating safety and the like.

In addition, an interest in and concern about the perception of safety that visitors might have of Gannawarra is evident in some responses (including young people's 'week with a camera' imagery), a consequence of trying to foster a vibrant tourism industry that might involve young people in the future.

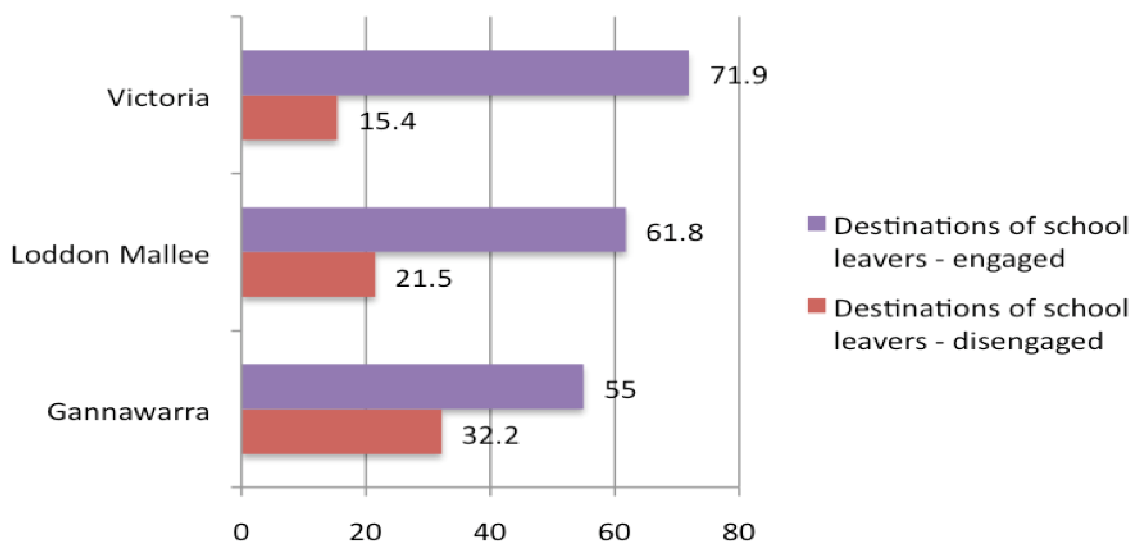


Figure 11: Engagement rates of school leavers (2007): Gannawarra, regional and state level.

source: Community Indicators Victoria

Employment rates in Gannawarra are lower than the rates in the region or the State (57.2 % in Gannawarra versus 58.3% in the Loddon Mallee region and 60.9% in the State according to Community Indicators Victoria) and employment rates can influence community belonging, perceptions of safety and actual crime rates (especially crimes against property that are associated,

for the offender, with profit). The disengagement⁴ of school leavers (see Figure 11) and the movement of young workers out of the area are key issues in other local policy; Gannawarra 2025, for example.

In addition to economic disengagement, there have been some concerns raised in this and other research on the cultural and recreational opportunities for young people and whether they are diverse and stimulating enough to divert young people away from more 'anti-social' pastimes, as expressed below.

Few activities for young people except sport

There is some risk taking behaviour – need to build on strengths and get people together also needs activities that are not sports related

Underage drinking – need education

Young boys in street after 11pm

The above comments from participants in these consultations are replicated in other policies and their consultations and point to the need to create a more vibrant social and cultural experience for young people so they are not “bored” and disengaged.

⁴ meaning those leaving secondary school who do not engage in further education, training or apprenticeship/employment

Places

The Shire of Gannawarra is a predominantly rural Victorian shire bordering New South Wales in the north of the state (see Figure 1). The population of the Shire is small (approximately 11,800), clustered in and around the following towns and township areas:

| | | |
|---------------------------|------------|-------------|
| Cohuna | Koondrook | Leitchville |
| Kangaroo Lake/Mystic Park | Lake Charm | Murrabit |
| Kerang | Lalbert | Quambatook |

Kerang is the largest town in the Shire with a population of approximately 3,900 people. Cohuna, with a population of roughly 2,300 is the second largest town in the Shire. Together, these two towns are home to almost half of the Shire's population and are a focus for many of the discussions about crime-related community safety by virtue of their size.

Safety 'hotspots'

While community safety 'hotspots' have been discussed in various consultative activities informing this Plan, we must start with the observation that people report being pretty content with the ways their places and spaces contribute to their actual and perceived safety. The Shire's rural environments, in particular, are loved by Gannawarra residents and cause little concern regarding perceptions of personal safety.

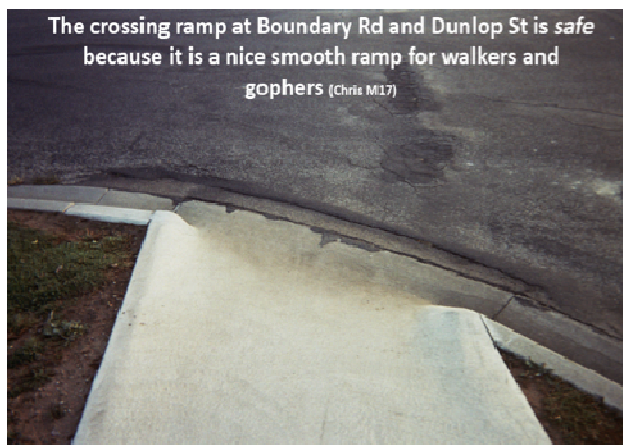


Figure 12: An example of safe infrastructure
source: 'week with a camera' participant



Figure 13: An example of unsafe infrastructure
source: 'week with a camera' participant

Accident safety, however, was a larger concern in these places and road, kerb and guttering 'hotspots' were mentioned a great deal in relation to accident safety and in terms of more general access issues. Both good examples (see Figure 12) and poor examples (see Figure 13) have been illustrated in these consultations.

The concern regarding accident safety is not misplaced. When looking at road accident trends across the region, we can see that road fatalities are almost two and a half times the Victorian rate and that there has been little change in this rate in the past 12 months (see Figure 14).

Figure 14: Road accident trends, WD6 statistical area (Mildura)

| | Rates per 100,000 population * | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------|---------|
| | JAN 10 - DEC 10 | JAN 11 - DEC 11 | % Change | Ratio** |
| Fatalities | 17.2 | 12.3 | --- | 2.4 |
| Total Injuries | 262.2 | 297.5 | 13.5 | 0.9 |

source: Victoria Police Corporate Statistics

Hotspots in relation to perceptions of crime or anti-social behaviours are more rarely mentioned in these consultations but they do come up in reference to the towns of Kerang and Cohuna, specifically:

Kerang train station (key issues being amenity/maintenance and its poor ‘gateway’ impression to visitors arriving by train, especially at night).

Kerang CBD (key issues being a lack of ‘activation’ after retail shops close, behaviours in and around the court on court days as illustrated in Figure 15, behaviour around licensed venues and transport issues associated with people getting home after night time activity).

Atkinson Park, Kerang (key issues being lack of activity in the interior of the park, lack of passive surveillance and possible ‘territory’ conflicts between youth facilities (the skate park) and facilities of older people (e.g. the bowls club)).

Cohuna CBD and recreation reserve (key issues being visitors’ behaviour, particularly around entertainment venues like pubs and the skate park).

Kerang neighbourhoods (key issues being enclaves of public housing, stigma, fears of dogs and of some people).



On court days in Kerang, the people hanging around the front are threatening and I feel *unsafe* (Megan F17)

Figure 15: Feeling unsafe on court days in Kerang
source: ‘week with a camera’ participant

'Active' places

The discussion about personal safety in relation to places has mostly focused on 'activation' of different public areas around the larger towns in Gannawarra. The lack of a night-time activity that isn't oriented to alcohol consumption (the pubs and clubs) means there isn't much 'legitimate' use of the public realm to provide informal surveillance and 'eyes on the street'. This can lead to more illicit or illegal things happening.

The behaviour mapping research conducted in July 2012 reinforces the lack of activity after business hours, though no evidence of anti-social behaviour was observed. While anti-social behaviour wasn't observed, we are aware of anecdotal evidence (citizen experiences or stories) of poor behaviour or perceptions of poor behaviour at some times, probably due to the lack of more 'legitimate' night time activity.

Not that 'activating' places is strictly about safety... or likely to be easy. As some point out, Gannawarra people are not night people and creating activities that suit a range of community members (especially young people), provide 'eyes on the street' and broaden the cultural and recreational opportunities for citizens may be challenging:

***I don't go out at night, but it's not because I'm scared... it's because I'm old!
(respondent at the Senior Citizens Centre).***

Difficulties aside, the urgency of activating places in ways that encourage community safety, particularly with respect to how younger people use and enjoy those places, is a priority issue in a range of consultations, this process included. In the words of one participant:

we need to understand the barriers to an evening economy and the lack of activity outside work hours. Is there a perception that main activity centres/areas are unsafe (or are they just unstimulating)?

This focus on activity and 'eyes on the street' was one of a number of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles that were raised in consultations and context auditing (see City of Toronto & Wekerle for further detail on CPTED responses at an LGA level). Other issues raised in relation to place include:

- o not being able to navigate and find one's way around easily, especially if a visitor (and the Kerang train station was a key example. People felt that a visitor arriving by train at night would have trouble finding their way out of the station and to the CBD and other parts of Kerang)
- o the contribution that poor maintenance makes to lowering perceptions of safety
- o lighting, especially around critical facilities that people do use at night such as the train station, key walking routes, some open spaces, etc.
- o avoiding (or accommodating) 'territory' conflicts in how different people use common public areas

The 'design for safety' focus on place is captured neatly in this comment by a workshop participant:

we need to explore safety reflected in building design... not creating unsafe spaces, encouraging passive overlooking, streetscape that doesn't reduce visibility, building materials that are graffiti resistant and creative/cost effective lighting design on private and public property

Access to places

In these and previous policy discussion, getting from place to place safely (access) has been highlighted.

Gopher⁵ safety was amongst the most mentioned issues to do with community safety, particularly in focus groups with older residents. In one focus group with Rotary Kerang, it was mentioned as a critical issue by nine of the participants.

The safety concerns regarding Gophers cut two ways: first, the safety risks that Gopher riders face (e.g. by driving on the road) and second, the safety risk they potentially pose to others (e.g. by driving on the footpath).

The ways in which people using Gophers can (or can't) navigate different places in the community is a litmus test to broader disability access issues and many concerns raised in the Disability Action Plan were also raised in this process, including, in the words of participants:

Poor disabled access in some buildings

Not all shops have disability access

Disability access to Council

In addition to gopher safety, the safety of children and young people on their scooters and bicycles and as pedestrians was also an issue, as is highlighted by these comments:

Kids using scooters on road

Kids on bikes and skateboards in CBD x 4

Access to Atkinson Park, from town, is very poor because of the highway

This sort of barrier also came up in the 'week with a photo' images, with some young people highlighting poor crossings and other 'hated' access points to the amenities in their communities that they enjoyed (or would enjoy if they were more accessible).

Access is not always about physical barriers. Sometimes there are systemic barriers to people accessing places. As an example, some mention was made of the over-emphasis of sport as a recreational outlet and that this wasn't accessible (in terms of being interesting) to non-sporty people. Mention was also made about the difficulties outsiders might have in accessing (in terms of being made to feel welcome) the Gannawarra community and its shared places. The Kerang train station was given as an example of ways in which outsiders may feel unwelcome simply by virtue of the lack of information on hand for a visitor.

⁵ motorised chairs/scooters

Environmental safety

Finally, there was a sub-theme of environmental sustainability in reference to community safety. This was noted in the imagery taken by secondary school students in particular and related to:

- o preventing weeds and other invasive and 'noxious' species
- o dealing with extreme weather events and global warming and protecting the community from environmental risks/harms (see Figure 16)
- o ensuring environmental conservation and 'safe' places for nature (see Figure 17)

These comments suggest the much wider perspective that people can (and do) take on what 'community safety' means. They also highlight an interesting youth focus that wasn't evident in the information gathered from adults in this process.

It also reflects an emerging community and policy interest in environmental health, wellbeing, adaptation and resilience more broadly. While this Plan may not take a lead in environmental sustainability programs and policy, some of our consultation findings certainly suggest that a role of this Plan may be to support the policies (e.g. the Municipal Public Health Plan and specific environmental planning processes) that do.



Figure 16: protecting the community against environmental risk

source: 'week with a camera' participant



Figure 17: safe places for wildlife
source: 'week with a camera' participant

Partnerships

The final area to explore is partnerships and relates to the ways in which the community is able to harness the skills, resources and knowledge of different people and groups in the community. Two critical issues cause us to focus on 'partnerships' so pointedly in this Plan.

First, community safety is a complex concept and framing effective strategies to address or enhance community safety takes multiple actors (e.g. the Council, community groups, police, urban designers, businesses, etc).

Second, Gannawarra is a small rural Shire with a small rate base, limited numbers of officers to implement strategies and a wide and dispersed area and population to deliver to. It is good practice to link policies in the best of circumstances and absolutely critical in this environment.

Building healthy and effective partnerships that can deliver on the vision and actions of this Plan will be a critical task.

Knowledge sharing and capacity building

As noted earlier, the development of this Plan has highlighted the difficulties in 'just sharing' knowledge, data and resources. Partnerships around sharing knowledge, data and resources don't just happen. They are built. They require inter-agency trust and reciprocity along with the more fundamental tasks of developing shared ideas about what data and knowledge is important to track in understanding community safety (e.g. crime statistics – which ones? community indicators – which ones? other data?). They often require formalised MOUs/protocols and mechanisms for provision of information between agencies and government departments.

Developing these partnerships is critical to having a robust and evidence-based approach to community safety in the longer term. Collaborating on the annual reporting of a set of indicators/statistics is important if only because some data sets (like the crime statistics presented earlier) are not always in a public-access form that suits need.

Positively, this first Community Safety Plan has involved a range of agency partners, each showing a commitment to developing their 'community safety' partnership and relationships. Providing some guidance in how to strengthen that fledgling partnership will be a goal for the actions proposed in this Plan.

Policy links

A part of this process has been to audit key Gannawarra plans and strategies (see Appendix A). The reasons for this are twofold: to capture past community and professional advice regarding community safety issues (broadly) in Gannawarra and to avoid 'reinventing the wheel' in terms of the actions put forward in this Plan. Where possible, actions from this Plan should support and reinforce other strategies' action plans.

The audit has focused on five of Gannawarra's key strategic plans:

- Gannawarra 2025
- Gannawarra Council Plan 2009 -2013
- Gannawarra Disability Action Plan 2012-2015
- Gannawarra Youth Strategy Document 2010-2014
- Gannawarra Municipal Early Years Plan 2011-2014

The themes that are consistent throughout the plans are in relation to some of the issues mentioned in earlier sections. For example, infrastructure is a focus (need for it to be accessible, attractive and safe) as are concerns over lack of activities, particularly for young people.

Looking specifically at Gannawarra 2025, as the Shire’s community plan, the summary ‘SWOT’ analysis in Figure 18 has been developed to capture the individual, community and structural strength and challenges in preserving and enhancing community safety in Gannawarra.

Figure 18: a ‘safer Gannawarra’ SWOT analysis
source: summarised and adapted from Gannawarra 2025

| Strengths | Things that could be improved |
|--|---|
| <p>Gannawarra is a stable, safe collection of communities with positive ‘small town’ values, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowing everyone by name Looking out for each other Pitching in when someone needs help A volunteering tradition Strong sense of belonging, Lifestyle – opportunities for walking, fishing and water supports Youth believe they can achieve their dreams here A strong volunteer culture and spirit ensures all in the community are cared for | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allied healthcare shortfalls. Transport needs for younger and older citizens. The citizens crave food, entertainment, shopping and cultural opportunities available in bigger cities. Youth have un-met entertainment needs, particularly in the evenings. Youth had concerns about having to leave the area for education/work. Adults were also concerned about this. Not well serviced with tourist amenities, including accommodation, restaurants, entertainment centres. This impacts residents’ lifestyle as well as tourism development. Concern over loss of jobs and state of infrastructure. |
| Opportunities | Challenges |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The potential exists to develop Cohuna Secondary College’s as an academic centre of excellence. Manufacturers here are well located for access to major markets, e.g. Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide. The Murrabit market story is a great case study of what a community can achieve by working together. Fantastic physical environments, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some of Victoria’s best wetlands, including Ramsar listed sites. tourism venue for water sports, fishing or nature activities. The beauty of the Mallee adds a contrast to the wetlands landscape. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demographic challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lower education level Lower average household income Higher socio-economic disadvantages based on the SEIFA. Lower ethnic diversity Gender imbalance Proximity to Bendigo, Echuca, Swan Hill offers advantages, but creates economic leakage for shops and services. Difficulties in achieving a ‘critical mass’ for health, education, transport, employment needs The small rate base and geographic spread of the shire means the shire council struggles to raise the revenue needed to adequately service roads, bridges and other |

While Gannawarra 2025 doesn't explicitly action 'community safety', there are strategy platforms in Gannawarra 2025 that are implicitly linked to community safety and to the range of issues highlighted in the previous 'places' and 'people' discussions.

For example, many of the issues raised in the 'places' discussion earlier will lead to actions in this Plan that will align very nicely with Strategy Platform 2 in Gannawarra 2025: revitalise towns into vibrant places. Others regarding environmental safety will align neatly with Strategy Platform 4: enhance environmental sustainability. Some of the youth-specific community safety issues in the 'people' discussion will help contribute to a more resilient community for young people and contribute to Strategy Platform 1: reverse decline in working population.

There are other strategic plans that are important to link to in this Community Safety Plan. Some are currently under review and some became evident as important only once we started speaking to people about their safety concerns (e.g. The regional Road Safety Strategy involving VicRoads and Gannawarra, Buloke and Loddon Shires is an example of a strategy in production and the in-review Gannawarra Domestic Animal Management Plan is an example of a strategy that has become more central due to specific animal-related issues expressed in this process).

Where we want to be

In this section, we look to the future. Here, a stated 'vision' of a safer Gannawarra is expressed, followed by a framework for action that will help the Council and the people of Gannawarra move towards this preferred future. Again, this is described in terms of the people, places and partnerships that contribute to people's safety and feelings of safety in Gannawarra.

The vision for a safer Gannawarra

Aligning with the Council vision, we see a safer Gannawarra as

A vibrant, caring and prosperous community that offers social, economic and environmental sustainability for all.

Delivering this vision, in partnership with community and agencies, will deliver the social, economic, environmental and cultural benefits to citizens, businesses and visitors that create security and strong, safer communities.

In achieving a vision for a safer Gannawarra, some clear messages have emerged:

people are generally **content with safety and perceptions of safety in Gannawarra** and want to maintain and enhance rather than 'problemetise'. Achieving the vision should be an appreciative and positive journey, not a stigmatising and negative one. People don't want to see the establishment of a Community Safety Plan fuel any negative views about safety in Gannawarra.

people want to create a safer Gannawarra in ways that **strengthen people (individuals and community), places and partnerships** and that cut across spheres of influence (from the small and individual to the large and structural).

people want **to build on existing policies and create consistency across policy and actions** and to spend time implementing and reflecting on their ideas for action rather than being engaged in perpetual planning. People, then, see this as a longer term Plan and have aligned with Gannawarra 2025 in terms of timeframes. Reviews will occur every 3-5 years to update and refine actions.

people want to **achieve the actions they have agreed to** Strategic success will rest on developing an action plan that represents local capacities, build capacities and weaves into the other 'change' work that people are engaged in delivering. Actions need to represent quality, not quantity.

people want to create a platform from which to **deal proactively rather than reactively with any future community safety issues** that might emerge. In other words, while people are generally content with safety and perceptions of safety at present, they don't want to 'rest on their laurels' and see value in actively working now to protect what is working well and guard against any challenging emerging issues.

people want **to think deeply about what community safety means** for all citizens and visitors in the community. Again, there is an impulse to be proactive and to be thinking about underlying issues that impact on safety and perceived safety.

The broad goals for a safer Gannawarra

Between now and 2025, our core 'safer Gannawarra' goals will be as follows:



People

- o Support people in making safer/healthier choices
- o Link 'people' to 'places' by providing a greater range of inclusive, safe and fun activities
- o Maintain people's general contentment with community safety
- o Mitigate stigma and negative perceptions of 'the other' and change



Places

- o Augment the Gannawarra 2025 goal of revitalising towns by providing safer design/CPTED criteria
- o Link 'people' to 'places' by 'activating' spaces
- o Promote 'access for all' principles
- o Create more protective environments re: accident safety (capital works)



Partnerships

- o Foster robust community safety partnerships to share knowledge, data and resources
- o Link and partner on shared goals through coordinating with other strategies
- o Support creative and new community partnerships that deliver community safety projects

These goals inform the framework for action that follows in the 'How we are going to get there' section of this Plan.

How we are going to get there

A framework for action

The framework for action that follows takes the community safety consultation advice generated through the peer research processes and the views and work developed collaboratively by the agency participants and the consultant to determine what can be achieved, with what resources/priority, in what timeframe and involving which ‘champions’.

The framework is oriented to the 2025 goals expressed in the previous section but does focus on actions that can occur in the shorter term. The Council and its partners will need to review and refine the action plan portion of this Plan every three to five years to ensure it remains relevant to other strategic goals, staffing capacities and various emerging funding and programming opportunities.

Very few community safety activities are within the scope of Council’s powers or resources alone, making partnerships important to all theme areas and proposed actions. For example, the business community will need to partner or take a lead in some of the place ‘activation’ aspirations and the State and potentially Federal Governments need to continue to fund appropriate services and programs related to strengthening communities.

Within these practical constraints however, there are a multitude of opportunities and the action plan aims to capture some creative ideas advocated for through this process. Focusing, at least in part, on ideas for action generated via the consultation process itself ensures a focus on ideas where negotiations have already begun (between the nominated ‘champions’ and/or others). In this way, we hope to better ensure success in achieving desired outcomes.

Explanatory notes

The actions table uses the following symbols and acronyms:

☆ champion/s

➔ connection to other policy/programming

🕒 suggested timing

💰 potential or secured funding sources

Champions

BK – Business Kerang
DoJ – Department of Justice
GSC – Gannawarra Shire Council
LMRMF – Loddon Mallee Regional Management Forum
NDCHS – Northern District Community Health Service
RK – Rotary Kerang
VicPol – Victoria Police

Policies

CPTED – Crime Prevention through Environmental Design
G2025 – Gannawarra 2025
GCP – Council Plan
GDAP – Disability Action Plan
GDG – Good Design Guidelines
GMEYP – Municipal Early Years Plan
GMPHP – Municipal Public Health Plan
GRMP – Road Management Plan
GYSD – Youth Strategy Document
KCBD – Kerang CBD Master Plan
KUDF – Kerang CBD Urban Design Framework
LMSRP – Loddon-Mallee Strategic Regional Plans
RA – ‘Railing Ahead’ Regional Strategic Priority

| Theme: People | Success will look like... | Who, How & When |
|--|--|--|
| <p><i>Co-ordinate with GYSD policies aimed at supporting young people and their families in healthier and safer life choices:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ co-ordinate the development and promotion of education opportunities for parents, caregivers and youth about the community safety issues young people face. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ increased involvement of a range of young people in civic life and decision making ▪ program/s developed to support 'at risk' youth to divert them from anti-social and illegal life choices ▪ program/s developed for parents to inspire better role modelling to children and young people ▪ Gannawarra's strategic policy regarding youth includes 'social model' community safety goals; ▪ improved cross-cultural understanding and knowledge, particularly as related to young people from different backgrounds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☆ GSC (Community sustainability), NDCHS, Youth Council and clubs 🕒 NOW onward (ongoing to 2025) ➔ G2025, GYSD \$ GSC, Victorian state government program funding, as relevant. |
| <p><i>Develop activities and events that provide an opportunity for non-sport related involvement in the community:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ activate different spaces in the Shire and provide more 'eyes on the street' to enhance community safety ▪ provide artistic and cultural diversions for the non-sport oriented community members, particularly young people ▪ help community to gather and celebrate, building social capital ▪ offer a wider range of cultural and entertainment opportunities to citizens and visitors (e.g. BBQs, markets, dances, outdoor cinema, etc) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a broader range of activities that engage and build community ▪ increased community involvement in event planning and management ▪ positive evaluation by participants, oriented to community safety perceptions where possible | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☆ GSC (Community sustainability), community, service clubs, facilities (e.g. the pool) 🕒 NOW onward (ongoing to 2025) ➔ G2025, GCP, arts and culture policy and programming \$ GSC and events funding |
| <p><i>Develop initiatives which address the 'fear of change' in the community:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ work with communities to embrace developments and projects which bring new people to the area ▪ ensure that developments and activities which result in change are subject to community consultation ▪ assist incomers to become successfully integrated into community structures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ communities which plan positively for the future and welcome change ▪ reduced community perception of social/community safety issues associated with change | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☆ GSC (Community sustainability), community, service clubs, facilities 🕒 NOW onward (ongoing to 2025) ➔ G2025, Community Plans \$ Funding programs as relevant. |

| Theme: People | Success will look like... | Who, How & When |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Develop a series of community events at “hotspot” sites (e.g. the Kerang train station) that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> activate different spaces in the Shire and provide more ‘eyes on the street’ to enhance community safety provide a better ‘gateway’ welcome to visitors arriving into Gannawarra build on the community volunteering ethos that exists in Gannawarra and provides an opportunity for people ‘at risk’ to engage more meaningfully in civic life build enterprise and economic opportunity, where possible (e.g. through market stall enterprise, fostering arts/music, etc) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a broader range of activities that engage and build community increased community involvement in event planning and management positive evaluation by participants, oriented to community safety perceptions where possible | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☆ GSC (Community sustainability), community, service clubs, facilities (e.g. the pool) 🕒 NOW onward (ongoing to 2025) ➔ G2025, GCP, specific program funding streams, as relevant 💰 GSC and events funding |
| <p>Support Alternative Schoolies programs set up for young people as a diversion from anti-social school leaving activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> support the Rotary program that takes year 12 students to Cambodia to work on community projects support/develop other opportunities as identified | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> stronger Council-community partnerships on resourcing Alternative Schoolies; positive diversion away from more harmful ‘Schoolies’ activities; increased youth participation in ‘alternative schoolies’ activities increased youth involvement in project planning and management positive evaluation by young participants, oriented to personal and community safety issues where possible | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☆ GSC (Community sustainability), RK and other service clubs, young people 🕒 NOW onward (ongoing to 2025) ➔ GYSD, GMPHP, Rotary charter 💰 in-kind support (e.g. administrative, publicity supports and the like) |
| <p>Support the establishment of community service clubs, particularly those that help retain younger people in the community and promote positive perceptions of safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> support the re-establishment of a Rotaract club for 18 to 25 year olds provide opportunities for inter-generational civic activity that link school leavers with established community members and businesses; support endeavors that build youth business and program capacities that may be retained in the community. support clubs that become self-managed and funded | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> establishment of Rotaract club with a successful shift to self-management within 5 years creative and program-delivery partnerships developed between new and existing service clubs and Council expanded social enterprise and youth citizenship opportunities for young people | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☆ BK, RK, GSC (Community sustainability), Youth Council and other young people 🕒 SOON (1-2 years) ➔ G2025, GYSD, Rotary charter 💰 Initial seed funding only - Community Grants funding? |

| Theme: Places | Success will look like... | Who, How & When |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Pilot a 'safer design' gateway project to improve perceptions of safety at the Kerang Train Station</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ improve amenity (e.g. get rid of depot materials clean it up) ▪ install signage directing people to various places (CBD, police station, etc), ▪ address sightlines and 'way finding' ▪ review the lighting and develop a lighting plan if necessary ▪ develop/negotiate a robust and maintenance plan for the area and link to Kerang CBD master planning activities ▪ generate legitimate and fun community activity (e.g. a night market, entertainment, etc) for people arriving at night | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a train station that is welcoming, consistent, attractive, sheltering, comfortable, safe and well maintained ▪ a more positive response from visitors regarding their first impressions when arriving by train ▪ reduced complaint from train station neighbours experiencing issues (e.g. the senior citizen centre) ▪ policy links to other (e.g. highway) gateway focus areas and in CBD Master Plan work ▪ commitment of capital works funding to maintain and improve the station as a gateway | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☆ GSC (Planning, Assets and Community Sustainability), service groups, community members 🕒 NOW and ONWARD (ongoing over 3-5 years) ➔ G2025, KCBD, KUDF, RA \$ KCBD funding |
| <p>Develop 'safer design'/CPTED tools that support improved community safety through environmental design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ guidelines that are oriented to local development issues ▪ fact sheets for developers/applicants ▪ specialist tools for safer design of particular uses (e.g. licensed venues) ▪ in-house training to support staff in using new guidelines | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the development of 'safer design'/CPTED tools that can apply to various planning and development projects ▪ integration of community-building '2nd generation CPTED' principles along side '1st generation' design solutions ▪ integration of guidelines into key strategic processes (e.g. the Kerang CBD Master Plan work) ▪ commitment (and skills) of planning and assets staff in assessing applications against safer design criteria | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☆ GSC (Planning, Assets and Community Sustainability), LMRMF 🕒 NOW (with application of tools ongoing to 2025) ➔ G2025, KCBD, KUDF \$ DoJ Community Safety funding and GSC |
| <p>Undertake 'safer design'/CPTED and place activation demonstration projects as opportunities arise</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the unused block on Scorseby Street (near Fitzroy Street), Kerang ▪ Alley way work in Cohuna (already underway with local service clubs) ▪ Open space/park facilities in Hastie | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ demonstrable contribution to Gannawarra 2025 goal of revitalising towns ▪ visually interesting, safe and more active spaces that people enjoy and use ▪ establishment of co- | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☆ GSC (Planning, Assets and Community Sustainability), LMRMF, service groups, community members 🕒 NOW and ONWARD (ongoing to 2025) |

| Theme: Places | Success will look like... | Who, How & When |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Court/Hawthorne Court neighbourhood other opportunities as they arise | <p>design (Council-community) processes that engender ownership and care for public spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ reduced complaint from community members experiencing hotspot-related issues (with anti-social behaviours, for example) | <p>➔ G2025, GDG, GMPHP</p> <p>\$ GSC capital works</p> |
| <p><i>Develop an ‘Environmental Champs’ program that highlights environmental safety and stewardship concepts to people using natural areas in Gannawarra:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ linking to Parks Victoria projects with young people in Gannawarra and building upon them ▪ involving young people as participants and champions ▪ highlighting youth concerns regarding environmental sustainability as a community safety concern and educating the wider community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ broader community understanding of the safety dimensions of environmental sustainability ▪ better understanding of risks by those using natural areas in Gannawarra ▪ better ‘protective behaviours’ exhibited by those using natural areas in Gannawarra ▪ increased youth involvement in planning and managing community programs aimed at environmental sustainability | <p>☆ GSC (Planning, Assets and Community Sustainability), Parks Victoria, youth groups</p> <p>🕒 NOW (ongoing to 2025)</p> <p>➔ G2025, GYSD, GMPHP</p> <p>\$ Parks Victoria (seed funding)</p> |
| <p><i>Conduct a deeper investigation into the experiences and needs concerning Farm Safety in Gannawarra:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ conduct small scale research to generate evidence around whether there is a community safety problem with accident safety on farms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ completed research that gathers qualitative and quantitative evidence regarding accidents on farms in the Shire ▪ qualitative ‘perceptions of safety’ consultation with farmers regarding farm safety ▪ recommendations, as required, reviewed and incorporated into future iterations of the Gannawarra Community Safety Plan | <p>☆ GSC (Community Sustainability), farming networks and peak bodies</p> <p>🕒 SOON (1-2 years and then embedded into the review processes for the Community Safety Plan)</p> <p>➔ G2025, GMPHP</p> <p>\$ GSC and related funding opportunities (e.g. DoJ Community Safety funding)</p> |

| Theme: Places | Success will look like... | Who, How & When |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Provide on-going feedback into asset management processes at Council and State Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advocating 'access for all' upgrading advocating critical safety-related upgrading coordinating on safer design/CPTED principles to facilities upgrades | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> reduced community complaint regarding road. kerb and guttering safety as highlighted in relation to community safety in this Plan commitment (and skills) of planning and assets staff in assessing capital works against safer design and perceptions of safety impact criteria | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☆ GSC (Assets and Community Sustainability), LMRMF, VicRoads 🕒 SOON (1-2 years and then on-going to 2025) ➔ G2025, GDAP, GRMP \$ GSC capital works and related funding opportunities |

| Theme: Partnerships | Success will look like... | Who, How & When |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Partner with existing Plans (e.g. GMPHP, GYSD, etc.) in delivering programs aimed at safer places and people in Gannawarra:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> partner on designing and implementing the 'Understanding our Youth' Survey and introduce 'community safety' focus to the survey partner on delivering climate adaptation and environmental resilience actions in concert with the GMPHP, introducing a 'community safety' dimension to these initiatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a stronger understanding of youth-specific community safety issues and aspirations an integration of 'community safety' goals with other key health and wellbeing goals better integration of key Council strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☆ GSC (Community sustainability), young people 🕒 NOW onward (ongoing to 2025) ➔ GYSD, GMPHP \$ GSC youth program funding |
| <p>Establish protocols for accessing and tracking local-specific crime data with VicPol:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> establish a MOU establish statistical focus (e.g. LGA or township), required data sets (e.g. crime types) and timeframes (e.g. annual, quarterly) for collection link to a broader set of 'community safety indicators' in the longer term | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an established data-sharing protocol between GSC and VicPol a stronger understanding of local crime patterns as distinct from regional patterns a sound database developed for observing trends in crime and being alerted to emerging concerns or problems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☆ GSC (Community sustainability), VicPol 🕒 NOW onward (ongoing to 2025) ➔ G2025 \$ VicPol/LEAP in-kind resourcing |

| Theme: Partnerships | Success will look like... | Who, How & When |
|---|---|--|
| <p>Establish ‘Safer Gannawarra’ working group/s, linked to existing community planning groups across the Shire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ establish roles and tasks for the working group/s ▪ outline relationship to community safety planning groups and other decision-making mechanisms at Council | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ establishment of the working group/s ▪ improved understanding of local (e.g. township-specific) experiences and expectations regarding community safety ▪ increased community involvement in strategy decision-making and implementation ▪ improved perceptions of safety based on better information about crime and safety filtering out to citizens | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☆ GSC (Community Sustainability), VicPol, existing community planning groups, other interested citizens and groups (e.g. Licensee Accords) 🕒 NOW onward (ongoing to 2025) ➔ G2025, GCP 💰 GSC community planning groups |
| <p>Scope ‘best/promising practice’ examples of community safety programming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ task the newly emerging community safety partnerships with this scoping as a way to develop capacity and build knowledge ▪ support future Community Safety Plan reviews and action planning with a ‘database’ of creative and effective ideas that might be tailored to local need and expertise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the development of a ‘best/promising practice’ resource that supports partners’ action planning ▪ improved cross-disciplinary knowledge of what works to address community safety and perceptions of safety ▪ improved programming on crime, community safety and perceptions of safety being delivered to citizens | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☆ GSC (Community Sustainability), VicPol, existing community planning groups, other interested citizens and groups (e.g. Licensee Accords) 🕒 SOON (1-2 years and then ongoing to 2025) ➔ G2025, GCP 💰 GSC community planning groups |
| <p>Establish a ‘reflective practice’ evaluation framework for community safety partnerships in Gannawarra:</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ an established evaluation framework and schedule for community safety activities in Gannawarra ▪ strengthened capacities amongst Safer Gannawarra partners for undertaking critical evaluation and planning tasks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☆ GSC (Community sustainability) and future ‘Safer Gannawarra’ partners 🕒 LATER (3-5 years, for next Plan review period) ➔ GCP 💰 GSC, DoJ funding for Community Safety Plan development |

| Theme: Partnerships | Success will look like... | Who, How & When |
|--|--|--|
| <i>Foster increasing involvement in community safety planning processes in future iterations of the Gannawarra Community Safety Plan</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ more citizen involvement in the next strategic review of the GCSP ▪ evolving and deepening understanding of citizen and agency experiences, and expectations of community safety strategies ▪ stronger and more effective community safety planning partnerships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☆ GSC (Community sustainability) and future 'Safer Gannawarra' partners 🕒 LATER (3-5 years, for next Plan review period) ➔ GCP 💰 GSC, DoJ funding for Community Safety Plan development |

Reviewing this Plan and the framework for action

This inaugural Gannawarra Community Safety Plan has been developed to align with Gannawarra 2025. The Council and community have been clear that this sort of alignment is important so that there is policy consistency in the Shire and so that it is easier to navigate the policy environment in Gannawarra.

It will be important, however, to review this Plan and update the actions being pursued by the local community on a more regular basis. The following review schedule is recommended:

| | |
|------------------------------|------|
| Minor action review: | 2016 |
| Full review | 2019 |
| Minor action review | 2022 |
| Full review and Plan redraft | 2025 |

The schedule suggested enables the Gannawarra community time to succeed in the implementation phases of creating a 'safer Gannawarra' while also recognising that strategic plans need to be revisited as communities and circumstances change.

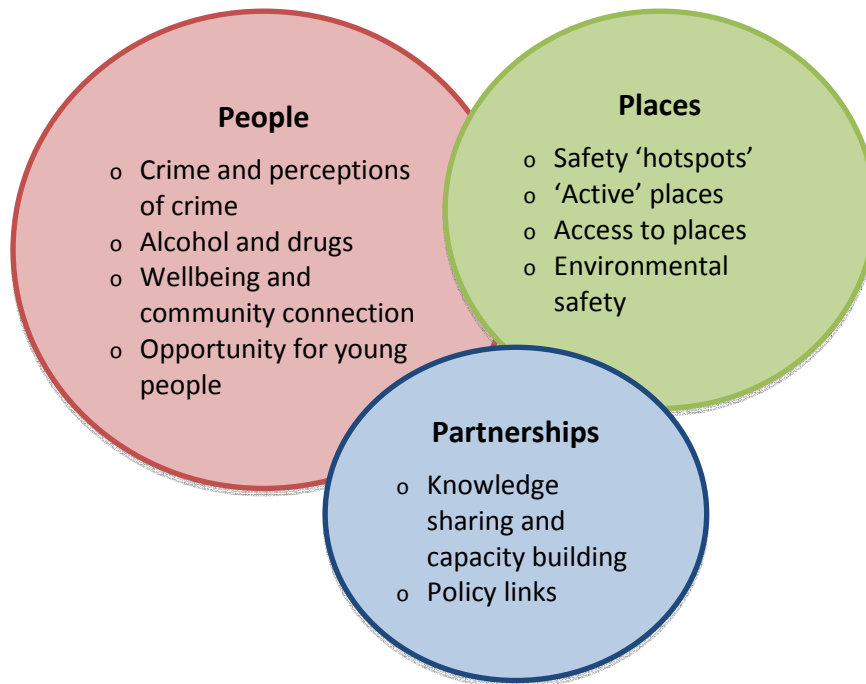
Conclusions

The issues highlighted by a range of sources of evidence and advice sourced in the development of this Community Safety Plan are a source of general optimism about safety and perceptions of safety in Gannawarra Shire. Community and professional reflection and qualitative information supports the quantifiable evidence that Gannawarra is generally a safe place to be and one that fosters the wellbeing and security of residents and visitors.

This general contentment notwithstanding, the Plan has noted a number of issues, positive and negative, that underpin a framework of action that will respond to need, protect what is working well

in the Shire and strengthen the resilience the community has for proactively responding to future issues that might emerge.

The key issues are themed around 'people', 'places' and 'partnerships'.



The issues highlighted cover a range of actual safety (crime and accident safety) and perceptions of safety detail and underpin the strategic directions adopted to help move towards a 'safer Gannawarra'.

A 'safer Gannawarra' is one that moves in the same direction as the Council vision that looks to a Gannawarra Shire that is:

A vibrant, caring and prosperous community that offers social, economic and environmental sustainability for all.

In achieving a vision for a safer Gannawarra, some clear messages have emerged:

- o people are generally **content with safety and perceptions of safety in Gannawarra** and want to maintain and enhance rather than 'problemetise'.
- o people want to create a safer Gannawarra in ways that **strengthen people (individuals and community), places and partnerships**.
- o people want to **build on existing policies and create consistency across policy and actions** and to spend time implementing and reflecting on their ideas for action.
- o people want to **achieve the actions they have agreed to**. Strategic success will rest on developing an action plan that represents local capacities.
- o people want to create a platform from which to **deal proactively rather than reactively with any future community safety issues** that might emerge.

- o people want **to think deeply about what community safety means** for all citizens and visitors in the community.

To move towards this vision, the Gannawarra Community Safety Plan outlines 18 actions within three theme areas: people, places and partnerships.

These actions are suggested by the evidence and advice collected between May and July 2102 and represent a launching point for creating a 'safer Gannawarra', recognising that the Shire is and is perceived to be a relatively safe community now. The actions are as follows:

Theme: People

Co-ordinate with GYSD policies aimed at supporting young people and their families in healthier and safer life choices

Develop activities and events that provide an opportunity for non-sport related involvement in the community

Develop initiatives which address the 'fear of change' in the community

Develop a series of community events at 'hotspot' sites

Support Alternative Schoolies programs set up for young people as a diversion from anti-social school leaving activities

Support the establishment of community service clubs, particularly those that help retain younger people in the community and promote positive perceptions of safety

Theme: Places

Pilot a 'safer design' gateway project to improve perceptions of safety at the Kerang Train Station

Develop 'safer design'/CPTED tools that support improved community safety through environmental design

Undertake 'safer design'/CPTED and place activation demonstration projects as opportunities arise

Develop an 'Environmental Champs' program that highlights environmental safety and stewardship concepts to people using natural areas in Gannawarra

Conduct a deeper investigation into the experiences and needs concerning Farm Safety in Gannawarra

Provide on-going feedback into asset management processes at Council and State Government

Theme: Partnerships

Partner with existing Plans (e.g. GMPHP, GYSD, etc.) in delivering programs aimed at safer places and people in Gannawarra

Establish protocols for accessing and tracking local-specific crime data with VicPol

Establish 'Safer Gannawarra' working group/s, linked to existing community planning groups across the Shire

Scope 'best/promising practice' examples of community safety programming

Establish a 'reflective practice' evaluation framework for community safety partnerships in Gannawarra

Foster increasing involvement in community safety planning processes in future iterations of the Gannawarra Community Safety Plan

This inaugural framework for action seeks to protect and enhance what is already working well in Gannawarra and to establish partnerships and networks that will enable the local community to respond proactively to issues that may emerge in the future.

This Plan has also been developed to align with Gannawarra 2025 to coordinate policy activities in Gannawarra and align resources allocated to capital and programming expenditure. It will be important, however, to review this Plan and update the actions being pursued by the local community on a more regular basis.

Finally, we would once again like to convey our thanks to the people who have contributed their time, energy and ideas to this Plan. We hope that the various Gannawarra residents and the Council, agency and business representatives who participated in this process can recognise their 'voice' in the Plan and in the actions suggested to support a safer Gannawarra.

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