

SOUTHERN
GRAMPIANS
SHIRE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN



Southern Grampians
SHIRE COUNCIL

Greater
Hamilton
ONE PLACE. MANY POSSIBILITIES



Acknowledgement of Traditional Land Owners

Southern Grampians Shire Council acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation. We acknowledge the Gunditjmara, Tjap Wurrung and Bunganditj people, the traditional custodians of the lands where we live and work. We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past and present. Southern Grampians Shire Council is committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Southern Grampians Shire Council is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of all Southern Grampians residents.

To achieve this, Council has developed the *Southern Grampians Community Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025* to focus on the strategic health and wellbeing priorities for our community while realising Council's vision of a growing, inclusive and connected community that fosters sustainability, diversity and innovation.

The Plan recognises that health and wellbeing is a whole-of-community responsibility and that Council must show leadership, provide support and work alongside partners and community members to combine our efforts.

It has been shaped by active engagement with our community and an evidence-based planning approach to understand how the Shire is performing in terms of community public health and wellbeing outcomes.



It reflects issues and opportunities identified through consultation undertaken for the *Southern Grampians 2041 Community Vision Framework* as well as additional and meaningful insights shared by representatives from key organisations, schools and partners whose views give context to the health and wellbeing challenges in our community.

The Plan is focused on delivering long-term health outcomes and recognises that behavioural change and impact takes a sustained effort over time with incremental results. It brings together the key objectives of existing Council policies, plans, strategies and external partnerships which contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of the Southern Grampians community, as well as acknowledging the significant role our key partners play in facilitating our community to be well and healthy.

The Plan has two focus areas – Healthy Communities and Liveable Communities – and 13 outcomes to be progressed over the next four years.

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Council will continue to play a central role in leading and shaping a healthy community that promotes and supports healthy lifestyles.

Outcomes

1. Southern Grampians residents live in communities that support their mental wellbeing.
2. Southern Grampians residents have access to and are eating nutritious food.
3. Southern Grampians residents participate in community life, are socially connected and connected to culture.
4. Southern Grampians residents are safe and part of a resilient community.
5. Harm caused by gambling, alcohol and other drugs is reduced across the municipality.
6. Southern Grampians residents have access to and participate in lifelong learning opportunities.
7. Southern Grampians residents are physically active at all stages of life.

LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

Council will continue to enhance the liveability of our community to make sure that Southern Grampians is a place where people want to live now and into the future.

Outcomes

1. Southern Grampians residents have access to everyday needs.
2. Southern Grampians has a growing economy that promotes diversity of local jobs.
3. Southern Grampians has a range of housing which meets community needs.
4. Southern Grampians residents have access to technology, buildings and public spaces that are well designed, and encourage community connections.
5. Southern Grampians residents have access to open spaces, pathways and trails that encourage physical activity.
6. Southern Grampians encourages sustainable practices that promote a healthy environment.

Council recognises that improving the health and wellbeing of the Southern Grampians is a whole-of-community responsibility in which Council, individuals, groups, health practitioners, community organisations, partners and local businesses all play a role.

We are committed to effectively implementing this Plan and ensuring that the health and wellbeing benefits are realised by all who live in and enjoy our community now and into the future.

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to introduce the *Southern Grampians Community Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025*.

This Plan strives to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents over the next four years to align with Council's overarching vision of a growing, inclusive and connected community that fosters sustainability, diversity and innovation.

Southern Grampians Shire Council is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of residents by maintaining and creating supportive environments through working with partners and the community. This Plan recognises that health and wellbeing is a whole-of-community responsibility and that Council must show leadership, provide support and work alongside partners and community members to combine our efforts.

The *Southern Grampians Community Public Health and Wellbeing Plan* has two focus areas – Healthy Communities and Liveable Communities – both of which align with the strategic objectives of the *Council Plan 2021-2025*, the *Victorian Government's Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023* and *VicHealth Action Agenda for Health Promotion 2019-2023*.

I would like to thank everyone involved in the development of this Plan and the community members who have engaged with us to inform it. I look forward to working with key stakeholders and the Southern Grampians community to achieve improved health, safety and wellbeing for us all.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bruach Colliton'. The signature is fluid and cursive.

Bruach Colliton
Mayor



INTRODUCTION

The Southern Grampians Community Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 is a whole-of-community plan that outlines the strategic health and wellbeing priorities for our community.

Based on engagement and evidence of the health needs, the Plan identifies goals and strategies for creating a local community in which people can maximise their own health. It is underpinned by a community and partnership approach that aims to create effective processes to support its objectives.

The Plan is focused on delivering long-term health outcomes and recognises that behavioural change and impact takes a sustained effort over time with incremental results. It brings together the key objectives of existing Council policies, plans, strategies and external partnerships which contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of the Southern Grampians community, as well as acknowledging the significant role our key partners play in facilitating our community to be well and healthy.

The *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* requires local government councils to develop a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan every four years. It is a legislative requirement for councils to play a role in protecting and promoting the health and wellbeing of their community members and includes the following objectives¹:

- + Protecting public health and preventing disease, illness, injury, disability or premature death
- + Promoting conditions in which persons can be healthy
- + Reducing inequalities in the state of public health and wellbeing.

Southern Grampians Shire Council plays a central role in leading and shaping a healthy and liveable community that promotes and supports healthy lifestyles. Council takes a population-level approach and supports residents to make choices that lead to healthy behaviours. Enhancing liveability is another key focus of the Plan to make sure that Southern Grampians is a place where people want to live now and into the future.

¹ Victorian Government, 2008, *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.

BACKGROUND

WHERE WE ARE



Southern Grampians is a vibrant and connected community in a landscape dominated by the spectacular Grampians mountain range, ancient volcanoes, tranquil rivers and waterfalls and undulating pastoral land dotted with majestic red gums. The Southern Grampians Shire spans the heart of Victoria's renowned 'Western District'.

The Shire is located 290 kilometres west of Melbourne and 500 kilometres south east of Adelaide.

With a population of almost 16,000, Southern Grampians covers an area of 6,655 square kilometres. Hamilton is the main retail and service centre supported by the outlying towns of Balmoral, Branhholme, Byaduk, Cavendish, Coleraine, Dunkeld, Glenthompson, Peshurst and Tarrington.

Agriculture, with its associated industries, is the largest employment sector, with this intensive agricultural production contributing significantly to the Victorian and Australian economies. Rich fertile soils and reliable water availability provide great opportunities for diversification. More intensive use of land (where sustainable), enhanced land management and new enterprises like mining, horticulture, viticulture and plantation timber have the potential to boost the Shire's economy and the availability of jobs. Education, health and aged care services, tourism, retail, manufacturing, research and development, meat and food processing, and engineering are also important employment sectors across the Shire.

The Southern Grampians Shire has a strong sense of community with people working together to achieve common goals and outcomes. This benefits the entire municipality and Council will continue to encourage and acknowledge the community interest in the development of the Shire.

SNAPSHOT WHO WE ARE

Population



16,134

(2020)

Gender



Male

48.7%

Female

51.3%



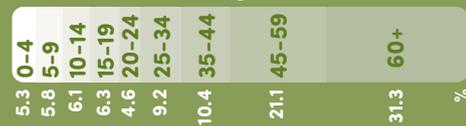
Aboriginal

and Torres Strait Island peoples

1.5%



Age



Country of Birth



Australia 84.8%

UK 2.4%, Netherlands 0.4%, India 0.4%, South Africa 0.3%, Philippines 0.3%, Other 11.4%

Dwellings 7,965



Average household size 2.3 persons

31.96%

Single person household

65.8%

Family households



Dwelling Type

Standalone house 92.5%

5.4% Medium density

Other 2.4%



Tenure

Fully owned

43%

Mortgage

27.9%

Renting

21.1%

Other

8%

Education



Bachelor or Higher Degree

13.4%

22.4%

44.7%

Diploma

8.2%

Vocational

No qualification

Employment



Full-time

54.5%

Part-time

39.3%

4.4% Looking for work

Other 1.8%



FACTORS AFFECTING OUR HEALTH

Many factors influence an individual's wellbeing and the overall wellbeing of a community.

They include the personal choices we make on a daily basis from what we choose to eat and drink to how we exercise and proactively maintain our personal health. We all have the ability to make choices but often factors beyond our control and our life circumstances such as the environment, economy, government policy and natural disasters, impact on those choices.

The World Health Organization (WHO) advises that the conditions in which people live and die are, in turn, shaped by political, social and economic forces². The social determinants of health are the social conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, play and age that influence their health³. They are the foundations from which we are able to experience the world, and they can lead to broad health inequalities. These varying circumstances can accumulate over a lifetime. They can alter health across the life course and they can be intergenerational⁴.

The social determinants of health include:

- + socio-economic status
- + early life circumstances
- + social support networks
- + education
- + employment
- + housing
- + access to fresh and healthy food
- + race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality
- + access to and use of health services
- + the liveability of the area.

These factors can affect people's health, their ability to access necessary health services, their ability to make informed choices and their life opportunities.

² Commission on Social Determinants of Health, 2008, Closing the gap in a generation: health equity through action on the social determinants of health. Final report of the Commission on Social Determinants of Health. Geneva: WHO.

³ VicHealth, 2015, VicHealth Framework for Health Equity, State of Victoria, Melbourne.

⁴ Department of Health and Human Services, 2015, Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2015-19, State of Victoria, Melbourne.



HEALTH PLANNING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Health planning is a complex task which requires the analysis of data and identification of key priorities that will improve community health and wellbeing.

Within the Southern Grampians community, we acknowledge that there are many organisations and partners that plan and deliver services that aim to improve our overall health and wellbeing. Through the municipal public health and wellbeing planning process, Council works with a wide variety of partners and community stakeholders to identifying and agree priorities. Our actions are informed and shaped by State and Federal Government policies. Drawing on relevant research, evidence and best practice knowledge, these policies provide guidance for the health and wellbeing planning for the Shire.

The local, rural, regional, state and national contexts that have shaped the *Southern Grampians Community Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25* and which will influence its implementation over the next four years are outlined in Appendix A.

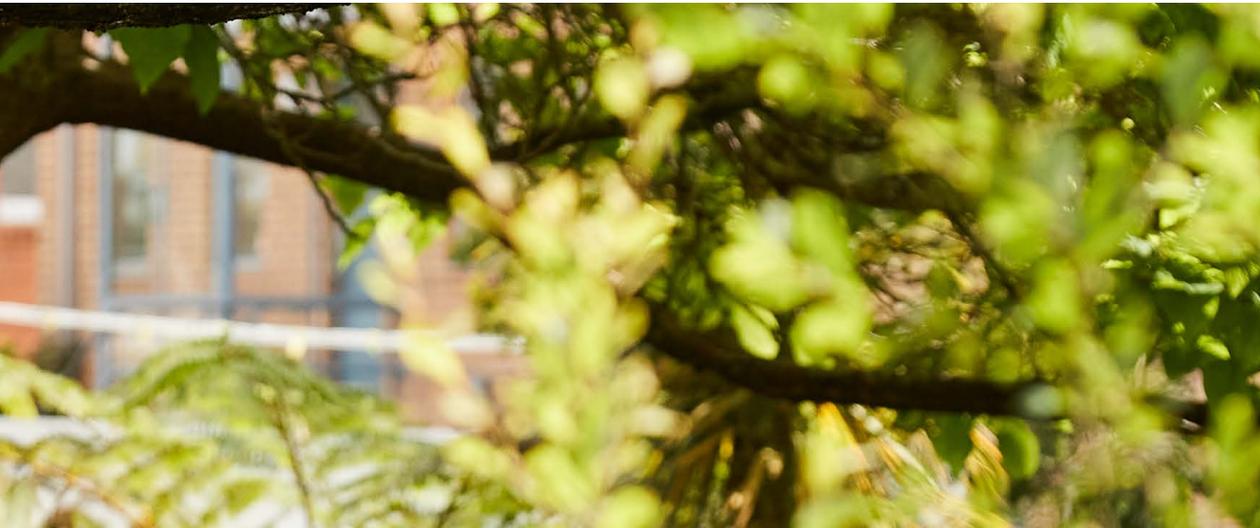
PLANNING FRAMEWORK

Council adopts a consultative planning approach.

Our framework is shown below and demonstrates the relationship between key strategies that shape Council-wide planning and services.

Figure 1 Council Planning Framework





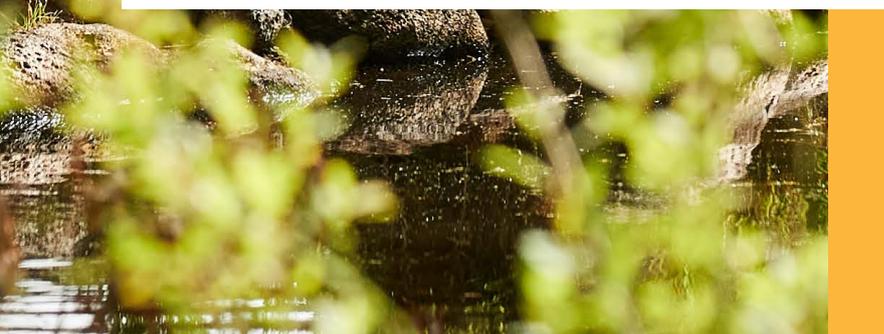
The *Southern Grampians 2041 Community Vision Framework* contains the combined aspirations of more than 488 residents from a range of backgrounds, ages and suburbs as well as representatives from 50 key stakeholders and partnership organisations. The vision was formed through a consultative process to develop shared priorities for the Shire, and underpins the outcome areas of this Community Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

It is a legislative requirement that Council produces a Council Plan every four years. The *Southern Grampians Council Plan 2021-2025* establishes priorities and sets the agenda for the current council term while keeping sight of long-term challenges and opportunities. The five key themes of the *Council Plan 2021-2025* are:

- + Support Our Community
- + Grow Our Regional Economy
- + Maintain and Renew our Infrastructure
- + Protect Our Natural Environment
- + Provide Strong Governance and Leadership.

These key themes guide a range of priority actions that Council will implement over the next four years while addressing the current health and wellbeing needs of the community.

Closely related to the *Council Plan 2021-25* and the *Community Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025* is the *Southern Grampians Shire Council Planning Scheme* which sets out policies and provisions for the use, development and protection of land in the municipality. The scheme also includes Council's vision and strategies for planning and development known as the *Municipal Strategic Statement*. The statement closely relates to the whole-of-Council plans and is an integrated approach to land use planning and neighbourhood design that creates environments that support active, engaged and conscious living. Council's aspirations cover the areas of local living, the economy, connectivity, housing, provision of community facilities, access to parks and open spaces, transport, and ways to address sustainability.



DEVELOPING THIS PLAN

To identify the key focus areas and desired outcomes for the Southern Grampians community into the future, we have considered the current health and wellbeing settings drawing on evidence presented in the *Great South Coast Rural and Regional Framework*⁵. We also have reflected on the priorities and outcomes of Council's *Community Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021*.

Our new plan has been shaped by active engagement undertaken in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Policy and Principles⁶. It reflects issues and opportunities identified through consultation undertaken for the *Southern Grampians Shire Community Vision Framework 2041* as well as additional and meaningful insights shared by representatives from key organisations, schools and partners whose views give context to the health and wellbeing challenges in our community.

ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY



154 community public health and wellbeing forum attendees



4 school sessions



10 community sessions



300+ online and hard copy postcard feedback



2 online virtual sessions



4 Southern Grampians staff engagement sessions



Southern Grampians Community Vision Framework 2041 community engagement sessions



Stakeholders consultations

⁵ Great South Coast Rural and Regional Liveability Framework data sets represent the most recent publicly available data for each measure (as at 2015) and which are consistently available across the five participating local government areas.

⁶ Southern Grampians Shire Council, 2021, Community Engagement Policy.



REVIEW OF

PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING STATUS OF THE SOUTHERN GRAMPAINS COMMUNITY

An evidence-based planning approach has been used to understand how the Shire is performing in terms of community public health and wellbeing outcomes.

Data has been collated from commonly used and trusted sources including the *Southern Grampians Your Community Profile*⁷ and highlights our performance:

- + on key public health and wellbeing indicators
- + the last time the data was collected
- + relative to others in the State
- + relative to other similar sized councils.

The implications of these findings for Council and the community are addressed in the outcomes section of this Plan.

⁷ Populas, 2021, Southern Grampians Community Profile.

Table 1 Overview of key community public health and wellbeing indicators for the Southern Grampians council area

Indicator	What was measured?	How are we currently performing?	What was it last time we measured?	How are we trending?	How do we compare to similar sized councils?
Early years	Australian Early Development Index: proportion of children vulnerable on two or more domains	14%	5.58%		
	Children fully immunised at 12-15 months	94.4%	93.7%		
	Low birthweight babies <2500g	7.7%	4.1%		
Mental health wellbeing	People diagnosed with anxiety or depression	24%	20.2%		
	Suicide rate	11.2%	12.7%		
	People with low/medium life satisfaction	28%	Not available		
Health condition	Estimates of self-assessed health	16%	14.5%		
	People with three or more chronic conditions	11%	Not available		
	People with asthma	15%	13.3%		
	Avoidable mortality	138 (ASR per 100,000)	139.6		
Risk factors	People who are sedentary (insufficient physical activity)	44%	55.2%		
	People who are obese	22%	20.9%		
	Daily smokers	9.1%	Not available		
	Smoking during pregnancy	15%	20.06%		
	People >18 years who consume more than two standard alcoholic drinks per day on average	22.1 (ASR per 100)	20.06 (ASR per 100)		
	Gambling spending per person per year	\$431	\$423		



Indicator	What was measured?	How are we currently performing?	What was it last time we measured?	How are we trending?	How do we compare to similar sized councils?
Risk factors (continued)	People >18 years with adequate vegetable intake	6%	10%		
	People who are daily consumers of sugar sweetened soft drinks	12%	18.6%		
Affordability	Highly disadvantaged neighbourhoods (ABS Statistical Area Level 1)	18%	Not available		
	Households with income below \$400 per week	42%	Not available		
	People who said that they ran out of food and couldn't afford to buy more food in the last 12 months	18%	2.4%		
Access to health services	General practitioners per 1,000 population	0.8	Not available		
	General practice clinics per 1,000 population	0.3	Not available		
	Allied health service sites per 1,000 population	1	Not available		
	Dental service sites per 1,000 population	0.2	Not available		
	People who could definitely access community services and resources	90%	Not available		
	GP attendances per 1,000 population	4308	Not Available		
	People who attended a specialist	33%	Not available		
	People who receive alcohol and drug treatment services per 1,000 population	5.1%	Not available		
	Registered mental health clients per 1,000 population	29	Not available		
	Education	People >15 years who have completed Year 12 or equivalent	36%	33.3%	
People aged 20-24 years who have completed Year 12 or equivalent		57%	56.3%		

Indicator	What was measured?	How are we currently performing?	What was it last time we measured?	How are we trending?	How do we compare to similar sized councils?
Employment	Labour force participation rate	58%	60.4%		
	Labour force participation rates for people > 65 years	8.3%	6.5%		
	People 20-24 years not employed or enrolled in education	18%	Not available		
	Unemployment rate	3.2%	3.3%		
	Youth unemployment rate	6.5%	2.76%		
Access	Households with no vehicle	4.4%	5.7%		
	Households with internet access	60%	55.3%		
Crime and violence	Crimes reported in a public place rate per 10,000	140.5	216.3		
	Family violence incidents recorded rate per 100,000	1738	1571		
Community connection	People aged 15 years and over who have volunteered	34%	32%		
	People who say they can get help from neighbours	72%	Not available		
	Member of a sports group	46%	Not available		
	People who attended a local community event	83%	Not available		
	People who believe multiculturalism makes a better place	36%	36%		
Environment	Household waste diverted from landfill	44%	42%		
	Recyclables collected per household	227kg	225kg		
	Solar installations	9.2%	7.5%		
	Active transport to work	3.2%	3.5%		



VICHEALTH PARTNERSHIP –

CONNECTYOUTH PROJECT

Youth has been identified as a focus priority in the new Council Plan.

Working together with VicHealth, Council is seeking to improve outcomes for younger residents in the Southern Grampians by engaging youth, partners who work with youth, youth networks and their families to identify priorities and challenges affecting their health and wellbeing. By better understanding and recognising their needs, Council can support our younger citizens to live, grow, learn, develop, participate and remain within the region.

The CONNECTYOUTH Project is a partnership between Council and VicHealth through the Local Government Partnership Grant that will enable Council to engage with younger residents to develop and deliver the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

The objectives of the CONNECTYOUTH Project are:

- + In partnership with young people, to contribute to the development of the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and actions that will improve the health and wellbeing of Southern Grampians youth
- + To increase the Southern Grampians Shire Council's ongoing capacity and commitment to engage meaningfully with youth within the municipality
- + To ensure that a youth focus is included within all elements of strategic and service planning and decision making
- + To build systems thinking capacity within the Southern Grampians Shire Council to support, engage and develop our youth
- + To work with service providers, business and community organisations to deliver more supportive and connected services to address the health and wellbeing needs of our youth
- + To develop a successful and continual model of youth engagement that is representative of all young people who live, play, stay and visit the Southern Grampians Shire
- + To foster programs and services that can positively influence behaviour changes of children and young people in the Shire that lead to improved mental and physical health outcomes.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN 2021-2025

VISION

Southern Grampians is a growing, inclusive and connected community that fosters sustainability, diversity and innovation.

PLANNING PRINCIPLES

Accessibility

Incorporating affordability, appropriateness, availability, approachability and access for all.

Sustainability

Efficient and effective use of resources to ensure long-term effort thereby meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Connectivity

The way people, networks, services, facilities and information link.

Flexibility

The ability to adapt to changing circumstances and according to needs.

Equity

Fairness, impartiality and making adjustments to support opportunities

FOCUS AREA 1

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Outcomes

1. Southern Grampians residents live in communities that support their mental wellbeing.
2. Southern Grampians residents have access to and are eating nutritious food.
3. Southern Grampians residents participate in community life, are socially connected and connected to culture.
4. Southern Grampians residents are safe and part of a resilient community.
5. Harm caused by gambling, alcohol and other drugs is reduced across the municipality.
6. Southern Grampians residents have access to and participate in lifelong learning opportunities.
7. Southern Grampians residents are physically active at all stages of life.

FOCUS AREA 2

LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

Outcomes

1. Southern Grampians residents have access to everyday needs.
2. Southern Grampians has a growing economy that promotes diversity of local jobs.
3. Southern Grampians has a range of housing which meets community needs.
4. Southern Grampians residents have access to technology, buildings and public spaces that are well designed, and encourage community connections.
5. Southern Grampians residents have access to open spaces, pathways and trails that encourage physical activity.
6. Southern Grampians encourages sustainable practices that promote a healthy environment.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Yearly Action Plans.
2. Monitoring and Reporting Framework.
3. Evaluation Plan.

APPROACH TO IMPROVING SOUTHERN GRAMPIANS COMMUNITY PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Improving health and wellbeing is a whole-of-community responsibility in which Council, individuals, groups, health practitioners, community organisations, partners and local businesses all play a role.

In implementing the *Southern Grampians Community Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025*, we will adopt the following approaches:

- **Whole-of-Council**
- **Partnerships**
- **Human Rights**
- **Life Course**
- **Health Equity Focus**
- **Place-based Solutions.**



Whole-of-Council

This Plan brings together all of the work done within the municipality that impacts on the health and wellbeing of residents. It embraces a collaborative approach and informs, aligns with or complements a number of other Council policies, plans and strategies. Recognising these intersections, Council is also committed to working in partnership with a range of health, human services and other organisations as well as community members to identify initiatives that will enable an integrated and multi-sectoral approach.

Sharing knowledge across Council and developing a common health and wellbeing language have been identified as priorities to ensure our desired outcomes are achieved.

Partnerships

Partnerships are integral to the implementation, monitoring, reporting and evaluation of this Plan. Across the Southern Grampians community, there are many existing health and wellbeing partnerships which can be generally described as:

- + Partnerships that connect directly to the improvement of health and wellbeing.
- + Partnerships that connect through policy and agreed actions to improve health and wellbeing.
- + Partnerships that seek to improve health and wellbeing outcomes through advocacy.

Council will actively engage with partners to:

- + Collaborate in addressing identified health and wellbeing needs
- + Reflect on current established partnerships and their effectiveness
- + Clarify roles and responsibilities in partnerships
- + Develop a clearer understanding of the range of collaborations available
- + Focus on strengthening new and existing partnerships
- + Identifying new partnerships that can strengthen accountability, governance and evaluation of the Plan.



Human Rights

The Southern Grampians will foster and be guided by the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this Plan.

Southern Grampians has an important role in protecting and promoting human rights by ensuring that everyone in our community is supported to fully participate in the life of the Shire and enjoy self-determination in decisions that affect them. All people should have dignified and equitable access to information, goods, services and life opportunities as a result of good governance and democracy.

The Plan upholds the human rights of our citizens as a key principle in ensuring that all members of the population are able to participate in and benefit from the key priorities. The Plan exists for the health and wellbeing of our entire community and will ensure that all people are recognised, are fully able to participate in activities and receive appropriate services.

Council and partner organisations will work to ensure that members of our community have access to facilities, services and programs and are engaged in the decision making processes that affect their health outcomes.

Life Course

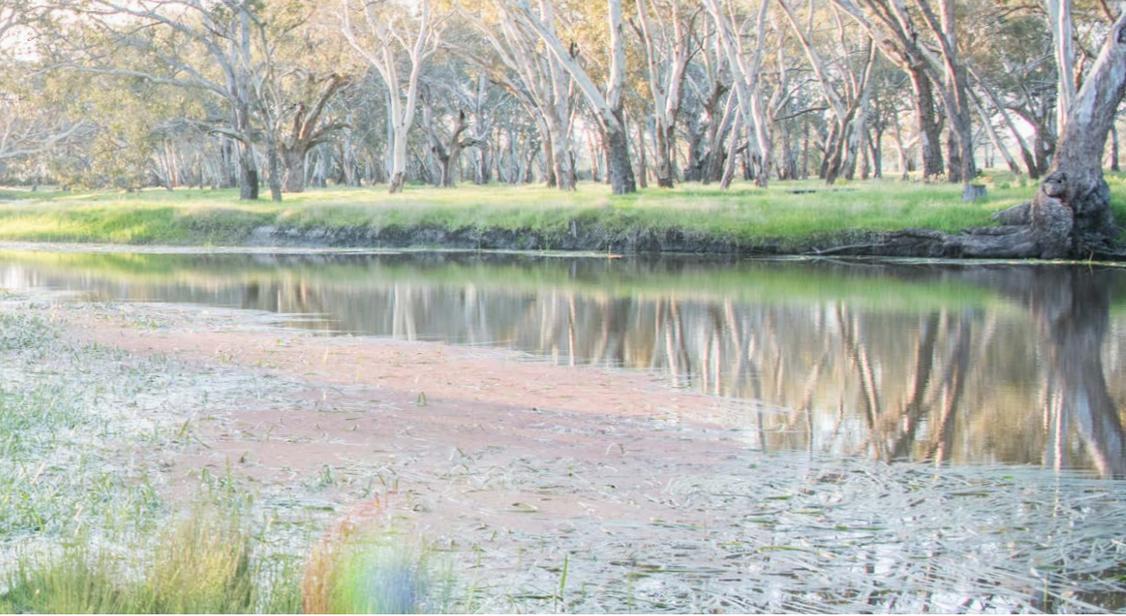
The individual health journey is not constant; it has specific needs and particularly important moments. Council recognises the different needs of our residents at different times in their lives and aims to provide the right support at the right time throughout their life course.

Consistent with the *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023*, Council adopts a life course approach to improving the population-level health and wellbeing outcomes of our community and has targeted priorities across the following stages of life:

- + Early childhood
- + Young people
- + Adults
- + Families
- + Older adults.

This Plan has a prevention focus; providing support and facilitating empowerment for the community to realise improved health outcomes at the individual and population levels.

Council provides a range of services and programs for infants and families including maternal and child health services and childhood immunisations. These services support and strengthen families.



Council works alongside youth providers in relation to all aspects of health and wellbeing to provide support in these crucial developmental years, to provide youth-friendly spaces and to assist with referrals to relevant services as needed but recognises the need to strengthen the whole-of-community response to the challenges that our younger community members are facing.

We recognise that health interventions in the early stages of life are a key determinant of positive health outcomes in following stages of the life course. This prevention focus continues in the later years through holistic approaches to healthy and active aging. The Plan will be implemented through the development of yearly action plans which will consider these age groups and the transitions between these stages of life when outlining tangible deliverables across the 13 outcome areas.

Health Equity Focus

Health equity is based on the belief that everyone should have a fair opportunity to attain their full health potential and that no one should be disadvantaged from achieving this potential if it can be avoided⁸. For Council, this means enabling all residents to access services, opportunities and resources without discrimination, and creating settings of daily life that can be supportive of residents' health and enable them to make choices that can improve their physical health and emotional wellbeing.

The Plan applies a health equity lens to projects, initiatives and services. Aligned with the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities and through taking a life course approach, it aims to support all residents in accessing life opportunities and appropriate health services. This is complemented by focusing on a liveable community that aims to improve the liveability of the municipality and to improve places and spaces where people come together.

Place-based Solutions

Place-based or whole-of-community approaches recognise how places where people live, learn, work and play have an important role in shaping health and wellbeing. Place-based approaches are ways of developing and delivering local solutions to local problems that empower communities to find solutions to local challenges, building on local strengths that affect them⁹.

Council recognises the importance of 'our place' and our aim is to strengthen and develop opportunities to deliver effective actions to improve the health and wellbeing of our community. We acknowledge the challenges that living in rural and regional Victoria present such as distance, transport, workforce, socio-economic status and aging infrastructure.

Council will seek to work collaboratively with partners, locally and regionally, to improve place-based solutions, in particular through the *Great South Coast Rural and Regional Liveability Framework*.

⁸ VicHealth, 2016, Mental Wellbeing (MWB) LGA Action Guide, State of Victoria, Melbourne.

⁹ Murkerjee D. and Sayers M, 2016, Communities taking power: Using place-based approaches to deliver local solutions to poverty and disadvantage, Victorian Council of Social Service.

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

Southern Grampians Shire Council is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of residents by influencing the conditions needed for good health. Creating these supportive environments is a key driver of Council work and this occurs through population-level planning which aims to enable residents to make healthy lifestyle choices.

Lifestyle-related diseases such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes are complex challenges and need to be addressed in a variety of ways. Individuals who are overweight or obese have a higher risk of poor health outcomes and Council promotes active lifestyles across all life stages. Food-related initiatives educate residents about food and nutrition, food growing and increasing connections to our food cultures. Healthy eating can also help in maintaining a healthy weight and the prevention of lifestyle-related diseases.

Creating social connection with friends, family, neighbours and the community is important for enhancing social cohesion in the wider community. Council is committed to fostering opportunities for events and celebrations, meaningful forums to participate in community life and providing lifelong learning in various settings. Enhanced social cohesion can lead to increased safety, respect, inclusion and build resilience within our community.

The Plan includes a focus on respectful relationships, gender equity, prevention of violence against women and reducing harm on families from the impact of drugs, alcohol and gambling. By doing this, we will create a healthy community that supports the varying needs of all people, at different stages of life.

All of these aspects of health combine to impact on the mental health and wellbeing of individuals, with each factor affecting people in different ways. Housing, employment and access to life opportunities can also have a positive or negative impact on people's mental wellbeing. It is therefore essential that Council, partner organisations and the community are open to and supportive of mental health initiatives to ensure that people who are at-risk or experiencing issues can have them addressed effectively.

The following seven outcome areas outline how Southern Grampians Shire Council and our community will continue to support residents to make healthy lifestyle choices, manage their health effectively and enhance their wellbeing.



OUTCOME 1. Southern Grampians residents live in communities that support their mental wellbeing

Mental health is a complex area and is defined as “a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community”¹⁰. Council uses the term ‘mental wellbeing’ to discuss the concept of mental health.

A mental illness is a health problem that significantly affects how a person thinks, behaves and interacts with others. A mental illness is diagnosed according to standardised criteria and results from complex interactions between the mind, body and environment. A mental health problem also affects how a person thinks, feels and behaves, but to a lesser extent than a mental illness¹¹. Mental wellbeing and mental illness are distinct concepts but are often perceived along a continuum. Many factors that promote wellbeing are also known to protect individuals against the occurrence of mental illness¹². These protective factors include employment, educational opportunities, housing, resilience, social connection and physical health.

Data from the Victorian Public Health Survey shows that in 2017 mental health in adults and the lifetime prevalence of depression and anxiety had decreased in the Southern Grampians. However, with the impact of COVID-19, we know that our community has been facing increased challenges such as social isolation, lack of physical sport and group activity, uncertainty and financial strain.

Community engagement and feedback from community members during the consultation process for this Plan has confirmed that this outcome area is a priority and concern across all ages. Both Council and the community are committed to supporting the mental wellbeing of all individuals, families and communities at all stages of life.

Together with the community and our partners, we will work towards this outcome by focusing on the following four-year priorities:

1. We will strengthen organisational understanding of the concepts of mental health and wellbeing and how we can influence mental health and wellbeing outcomes through the services and projects we deliver.
2. We will endeavour to influence the social determinants of health at a population level through regional and local partnerships in order to support the mental health and wellbeing of residents.
3. We will support residents to understand the factors that affect their mental health and wellbeing, and support them to access relevant services.
4. We will advocate for adequate localised mental health services for the Southern Grampians.
5. We will continue to collaborate on projects and campaigns that promote the mental health and wellbeing of residents.

¹⁰ World Health Organization, 2014, Mental Health: A state of well-being.

¹¹ Department of Health, 2016, “What is Mental Illness?”.

¹² VicHealth, 2016, Mental Wellbeing (MWB) LGA Action Guide, State of Victoria, Melbourne.



OUTCOME 2. Southern Grampians residents have access to and are eating nutritious food

It is important for residents to understand the health implications of their individual food and drink choices as a healthy diet is vital for optimal growth, development and health throughout life and contributes to physical vitality, mental health and social wellbeing¹³. Maintaining healthy eating habits can be difficult and is influenced by access to nutritious food, affordability of food, safe food provision, our understanding of nutrition as well as time to source and prepare nutritious food.

*The Australian Dietary Guidelines*¹⁴ recommend that adults aged 18 years and over should consume two servings of fruit and five servings of vegetables each day. One serving of vegetables equates to half a cup of cooked vegetables or one cup of salad. One serving of fruit is one medium piece or two small pieces of fresh fruit, or one cup of chopped or canned fruit (no added sugar).



The Victorian Public Health Survey shows that only 6.9% of Southern Grampians adults and 16.6% of Southern Grampians children are eating the recommended servings of vegetables. Fruit consumption by children is better with 73.4% meeting recommended servings, but only 30.5% of adults meet the recommendations.

Access to nutritious food can be influenced by availability and affordability as well as an understanding of how to prepare nutritious foods.

Together with the community and our partners, we will work towards this outcome by focusing on the following four-year priorities:

1. We will increase food literacy, knowledge and skills of residents across the municipality.
2. We will increase access to nutritious food and foster social connection through opportunities for people to produce, exchange, sell and buy local food.
3. We will promote healthy eating across all life stages and settings.
4. We will advocate to State and Federal Governments for funding opportunities that support localised policy and action for change around access and consumption of nutritious food.

¹³ VicHealth, 2016, Healthy Eating LGA Action Guide, State of Victoria, Melbourne.

¹⁴ National Health and Medical Research Council, 2013, Australian Dietary Guidelines Summary.



OUTCOME 3. Southern Grampians residents participate in community life, are socially connected and connected to culture

Social connection and participation are important for developing and maintaining mental health and wellbeing¹⁵. Connecting with people, being inclusive of others and being active in the community can lead to feelings of belonging and fulfilment, while fostering a sense of social cohesion.

In 2017, the majority of Southern Grampian residents indicated that they felt part of the community (77.7% against the State average of 77.2%).

Community engagement and feedback during recent Council consultation processes confirmed that focusing on creating opportunities for people to connect to their community through small community events is a priority.

Social connection is important within a community and at all stages of life. Research insights into the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Southern Grampians community show our community came together, accepted new forms of social responsibility and found new and creative ways to build community spirit. However, the restriction of movement and face-to-face contact has limited community connections along with our ability to share ideas and make decisions, requiring the community to adapt¹⁶. The importance of building community connections and re-establishing connection with isolated residents post COVID-19 will be critical to achieving positive long-term mental health outcomes.

Connection to culture, maintaining cultural practices and feeling safe to identify and connect with their communities are also important priorities for our Indigenous, Torres Strait Islander and migrant residents. Sharing, learning, embracing and celebrating our community's cultural heritage is important to ensure true connection to our history and reconciliation with country and the Nation's first peoples.

Engagement with younger residents and those connected and working with them has highlighted the need to focus on providing for, connecting and supporting our youth to reduce disengagement and create pathways for employment and education.

Together with the community and our partners, we will work towards this outcome by focusing on the following four-year priorities:

1. We will plan, develop and deliver a range of leisure, cultural and recreation opportunities and events that allow all people to participate in community activities.
2. We will support and promote community-led initiatives that encourage social interaction, community engagement, connection to culture and civic participation.
3. We will increase the capacity of residents through initiatives that develop and promote local leadership and civic participation.
4. We will create opportunities to connect, support and enable our younger residents.

¹⁵ VicHealth, 2016, Mental Wellbeing (MWB) LGA Action Guide, State of Victoria, Melbourne.

¹⁶ Southern Grampians and Glenelg Primary Care Partnership, 2020, Southern Grampians and Glenelg Coronavirus Pandemic Social Recovery Advice.



OUTCOME 4. Southern Grampians residents are safe and part of a resilient community

A safe and resilient community is one that enjoys a high level of health and wellbeing. It can self-determine its capacity to respond to and recover from the effects of a changing environment and climate change or take active steps to reduce harm caused by crime.

Crime, especially family violence, has a profound effect on health and wellbeing with far reaching impacts including deteriorating physical and mental health, as well as the vulnerability associated with housing, employment, social isolation and threat of continued violence.

In Victoria, one in three women over the age of 15 years has experienced physical violence; one in four has experienced physical or sexual violence by a partner or former partner and one in five has experienced sexual violence¹⁷. Some groups of women are disproportionately affected including those with a disability and Aboriginal women. At its core, family violence and violence against women is rooted in the inequality between women and men. When family violence occurs within the home, children are often present.

Exposure to family violence can have profound long-term effects on a child's development, mental health, behaviour and learning¹⁸. In 2019, there were 16.8 per 1,000 incidents of family violence in Southern Grampians Shire, higher than the State average of 16. The high incidence of substantiated child abuse (years 0-17) within the Southern Grampians Shire requires attention with 15.8 per 1,000 incidents compared to the State average of 6.8.

Community crime in public places can influence how safe residents feel within our community. When surveyed, 73.1% of Southern Grampians

residents said they felt safe walking alone at night compared to the State average of 53%¹⁹.

Council, together with the community and our partners, plays a key contributing role to a range of community safety measures which are paramount to promoting healthy communities including crime prevention strategies, personal safety, environmental health and safety, and preparedness to respond to disasters and emergencies. Council also focuses on community resilience by assessing and investigating public health concerns, and preparing Council staff and the community to respond to and effectively cope with the consequences of disasters and emergencies.

Together with the community and our partners, we will work towards this outcome by focusing on the following four-year priorities:

1. We will ensure that buildings and public spaces are designed considering public safety through the application of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design principles.
2. We will increase community awareness of safety in public places and crime prevention strategies.
3. We will build community resilience through supporting programs and activities that encourage equal participation and social inclusion.
4. We will promote gender equity, respectful relationships and reduction of violence.
5. We will protect public health.
6. We will work to build capacity within Council and the Community how we respond to and recover from events that effect our community such as natural disasters, emergencies and significant incidents.

¹⁷ Office of Prevention and Women's Equality, 2017, Safe and Strong A Victorian Gender Equality Strategy

¹⁸ VicHealth, 2019, Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023, State of Victoria, Melbourne.

¹⁹ Social Atlases of Australia, Public Health Information Development Unit

OUTCOME 5. Harm caused by gambling, alcohol and other drugs is reduced across the municipality

Harm caused by alcohol, tobacco and other drugs is complex, affecting not only individuals but their families, friends and communities. The impact of this harm can be seen across other areas in our health system, child and family services, family violence and law enforcement. It is an issue that spans health, wellbeing, housing, community safety, child protection and mental health.

Tobacco use is still the leading contributor to disease and death burden, increasing the risk of tobacco-related cancers, cardiovascular disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and other illnesses. The health burden of tobacco use not only affects smokers but includes those living around them. Children in smoking households are significantly more likely to suffer from respiratory conditions²⁰.

The social and health impacts of excessive alcohol, tobacco and other drugs is central to the public health. When last measured in 2017, the Southern Grampians recorded an increase of 10.5% of adults who were abstaining from alcohol. However, at-risk behaviours in relation to alcohol remain present in the community. These include occasional incidents of drinking that lead to injury as well as consuming at a consistent volume that increases lifetime risk of harm²¹. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with reports of increased alcohol consumption during lock downs will need to be taken into consideration.

Tobacco use trends are lower within the Southern Grampians than the Victorian average, however it is concerning that the highest rate of tobacco use in the Shire is among female smokers aged 18+ years who comprise 11% of users.

In 2018-19, gambling expenditure in the Southern Grampians was \$445.80 per resident per year with 7.6 gambling machines available per 1,000 residents²². Gambling is another activity strongly

associated with family violence and the nature of this association is complex. The harmful effects of gambling, particularly from electronic gaming machines, is now recognised as a distinct public health issue and has been described as “a social issue on a similar order of magnitude to major depressive disorder and alcohol misuse and dependence”²³. The harm from gambling is prevalent, serious and preventable.

Council, together with the community and our partners, will continue to address the social costs caused through gambling, excessive consumption of alcohol and other drugs, with a focus on behaviour change that challenges social norms, attitudes and beliefs.

Together with the community and our partners, we will work towards this outcome by focusing on the following four-year priorities:

1. We will advocate for local services to help individuals and families with alcohol and drug dependencies.
2. We will improve the availability of information on the social and economic impacts of problem gambling and work to increase opportunities to reduce the impact of gambling.
3. We will seek to understand the emerging trends in alcohol and other drug use as appropriate and respond to issues by working with community health organisations, police and application of liquor licensing and planning laws.
4. We will ensure effective governance of the Tobacco Act 1987 across the municipality by delivering education programs and conducting complaint investigations that promote health and preventing illness, and delivering the Sales to Minors program to encourage non-smokers, particularly young people, not to start smoking and to limit the exposure of children and young people to persuasive marketing campaigns and messages.

²⁰ Department of Health and Human Services, 2019, Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023, State of Victoria, Melbourne.

²¹ Department of Health and Human Services, 2017, Victorian Population Health Survey.

²² Victorian Commission for Gaming and License Regulation, www.vcglr.vic.gov.au/home/resources/data+and+research/data/

²³ Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, 2016, Assessing Gambling Related Harm in Victoria: A Public Health Perspective.



OUTCOME 6. Southern Grampians residents have access to and participate in lifelong learning opportunities

The opportunity to learn throughout our lives contributes to people's mental health and wellbeing. Learning may be formal or informal and can take place in settings such as child care and kindergartens, schools, higher education facilities, local training providers, vocational training, neighbourhood houses, libraries, workplaces, community spaces or in our homes. It is important to remain mentally active and this learning can give people a sense of achievement, create social connections and build confidence.

Learning may occur by trying something new, rediscovering a past interest, reading, attending a workshop or discussion, accessing important information, pursuing education and employment pathways, or sharing cultural insights or intergenerational learnings with others. Council, with the community and key partners, is committed to enabling lifelong learning for our residents.

Actively engaging in learning also fosters important social skills including friendship building, teamwork, communication skills and confidence. Southern Grampians still has a high proportion of people leaving school before Year 11 (39.4%), which is higher than the Victorian average of 26.6%²⁴. University participation is low, likely due to cost, physical location and transport options. Adults remaining within the Southern Grampians Shire who have completed Year 12 or obtained a university degree is lower than the State average, however those who had completed vocational training was 22.6%, 5.2% higher than the State average. This demonstrates the importance of a variety of opportunities to meet the needs of our community.

Similarly, early years participation in learning is high in the Southern Grampians Shire with 94% of children attending kindergarten²⁵. Through participation by Southern Grampians kindergarten providers in the program for three year-olds, our youngest residents are provided with educational opportunities that continue into later life.

Together with the community and our partners, we will work towards this outcome by focusing on the following four-year priorities:

1. We will work to ensure our residents are provided with flexible lifelong learning opportunities in the municipality through libraries, arts facilities, neighbourhood houses, learning centres, early years services and at aquatic and leisure facilities.
2. We will advocate for improved digital connection to enable greater access as well as learning and development opportunities for residents.
3. We will foster community-led learning by supporting community members and groups to develop and deliver learning opportunities for others.
4. We will advocate and look for opportunities with community organisations and training providers to deliver education and employment pathway programs for disadvantaged, at-risk and vulnerable residents.
5. We will provide free access to the internet and Wi-Fi in community places and spaces.



OUTCOME 7. Southern Grampians residents are physically active at all stages of life

The health benefits of being physically active are distinct and include improved physical health, reduced risk of developing major chronic diseases, managing body weight, developing social connections and helping to prevent and manage mental health problems²⁶. Obesity and overweight rates for Southern Grampians adults are slightly lower than the Victorian State average (50.4% adults compared to 50.8%²⁷). In 2019, the Genr8 Change project, led by the Southern Grampians Primary Care Partnership and Globe Obesity Centre, indicated that 43.1% of participating Years 2, 4 and 6 students were obese and overweight²⁸.

With a number of our residents working in heavy labour activity, sedentary behaviour by Southern Grampians adults is lower than the State average (0.9% compared to 2.5%). As a result, adults within our community are more active and sitting less than the Victorian average. Many residents choose non-organised physical activity such as walking, swimming or going for a bike ride. Participation in organised activity is less than the Victorian average with both male and female participation rates being 1.2% male and 2% lower. However, the participation rates for organised sports are higher than the Victorian average (2.9% for males and 3.8% for females).

A high proportion of Southern Grampians adults (61.6%)²⁹ are meeting physical activity guidelines whereas statistics collected from the by Globe as a part of the Great South Coast Childhood Obesity Monitoring program found that only 25.8% of Years 4 and 6 Southern Grampians students surveyed were meeting physical activity guidelines³⁰.

Council has a role in promoting physical activity which primarily occurs through our partnership with sporting groups and clubs and is complemented by a focus on promoting informal participation in sport and recreation activities across all settings. Council, with key partners, also works across the municipality to encourage residents to walk, cycle and use public transport to increase their physical activity each day.

Together with the community and our partners, we will work towards this outcome by focusing on the following four-year priorities:

1. We will provide a variety of high quality, accessible and affordable aquatic, leisure and sporting facilities to meet community needs.
2. We will encourage a diverse range of active and passive recreation activities that reflect the priorities of our diverse community.
3. We will promote the benefits of incidental exercise and of choosing sustainable modes of transport where possible.
4. We will support inclusive sports environments that promote the participation of women, juniors and priority groups.
5. We will develop and maintain partnerships with sporting clubs, associations, health agencies and service providers to enhance residents' participation in physical activities.

²⁶ VicHealth, 2016, Physical Activity LGA guide, State of Victoria, Melbourne.

²⁷ Department of Health and Human Services, 2017, Victorian Population Health Survey.

²⁸ Globe – Crooks N., Fraser P., Bliss J., Bolton K., Le H., Brown A., Allender S., Orellana L., Strugnell C., 2020, Great South Coast Childhood Obesity Monitoring System. Global Obesity Centre, Deakin.

²⁹ Department of Health and Human Services, 2017, Victorian Population Health Survey.

³⁰ Globe – Crooks N., Fraser P., Bliss J., Bolton K., Le H., Brown A., Allender S., Orellana L., Strugnell C., 2020, Great South Coast Childhood Obesity Monitoring System. Global Obesity Centre, Deakin.

LIVEABLE COMMUNITIES

Southern Grampians Shire Council is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of residents through integrated planning that delivers liveable communities.

Liveability is a concept that sums up what makes a place that people want to live now and in the future. It considers the quality of life of a place, including its economy, amenity, accessibility, environmental sustainability, health and wellbeing, equity, education and learning, and leadership³¹. Liveability refers to the degree to which communities are safe, attractive, environmentally stable and socially cohesive and inclusive³².

The *Southern Grampians Community Vision Framework 2041* introduces the concept of a 20-minute Neighbourhood through a planned Liveability Framework.

This, together with the *Great South Coast Rural and Regional Liveability Framework*, allows us to understand that our approach to creating liveable communities within Hamilton and our surrounding townships needs to have a focus that is rural and regional, rather metropolitan. It is an integrated approach to land planning, design and service provision that needs to be taken into consideration in creating liveable health and wellbeing outcomes.

Council and community aspirations cover the areas of local living, the economy, housing, provision of community facilities, access to parks and open spaces, transport and ways to address environmental sustainability.

The following six outcome areas outline how Council, together with the community and our partners, will continue to increase the liveability of the municipality and support the health and wellbeing aspirations of the community.

³¹ Fensham P, 2017, SGS Economics and Planning, Ensuring a liveability dividend from growth: A new Urban Renewal Community Compact.

³² Department of Health and Human Services, 2019, Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023, State of Victoria, Melbourne.



OUTCOME 1. Southern Grampians residents have access to everyday needs

Living in rural and regional Victoria can make access to everyday needs such as shopping, education, health care, work and play a challenge.

Southern Grampians residents are provided for locally with shopping, access to early years, primary and secondary education centres and local health services. However, community engagement has identified that improved access to specialist services such as mental health, complex health care and supported care is a high priority.

Residents have less access to health care with fewer general practitioners (0.8 per 1,000 residents compared to the State average of 1.2) and dental services (0.2 per 1,000 residents compared with 0.40). This is reflected also in Emergency Department presentations of 401.3 per 1,000 residents compared to the Victorian average of 263.0³³.

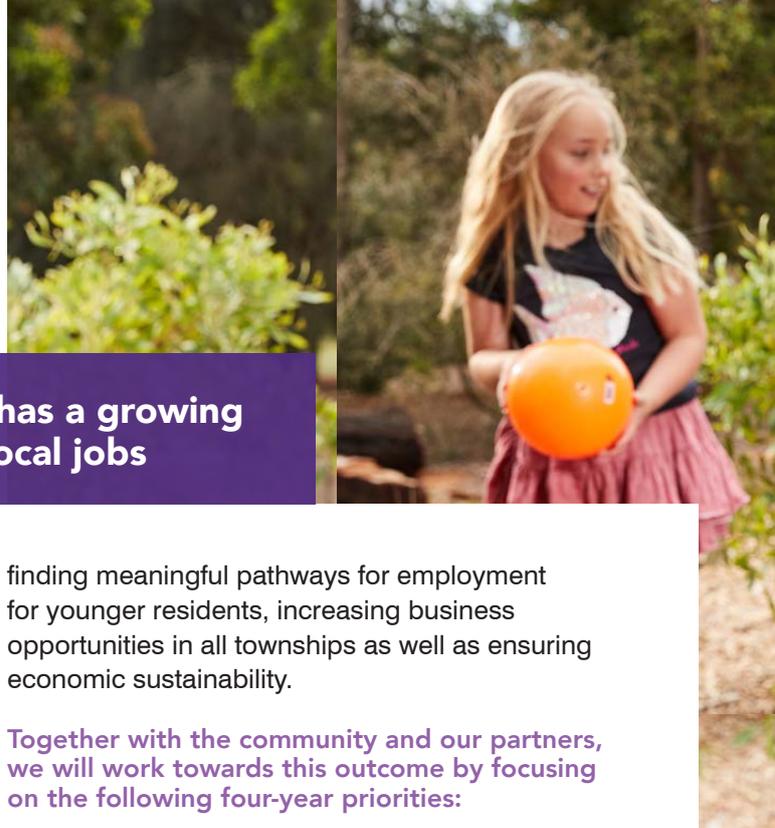
Transport options and geographic spread also make it challenging for residents to access services locally or more regionally in larger centres. However, the COVID-19 pandemic and its resulting movement restrictions resulted in major changes to the way residents accessed services and activities with alternative service provision emerging through digital connectivity. The restrictions demonstrated inequalities in access to digital technology and skills³⁴, but also highlighted the potential to increase access to services following improvements to technology.

Together with the community and our partners, we will work towards this outcome by focusing on the following four-year priorities:

1. We will support building liveable communities that provide residents with access to their daily and weekly shopping and service needs, and community interaction.
2. We will work to improve digital connectivity to all areas of the municipality.
3. We will respond to population growth and the community's need for a range of housing choices by encouraging a variety of housing developments, both private and social, to be located with good access to activity and community centres.
4. We will encourage the renewal of activity and township centres (including the beautification of streetscapes) to support increased retail activity and local economic growth, improve the pedestrian experience and provide pleasant spaces for community interaction.
5. We will attract and advocate for the provision of locally resourced services that improve the health and wellbeing of our community.

³³ LGA Community Profiles, 2015.

³⁴ Southern Grampians and Glenelg Primary Care Partnership, 2020, Southern Grampians and Glenelg Coronavirus Pandemic Social Recovery Advice.



OUTCOME 2. Southern Grampians has a growing economy that promotes diversity of local jobs

A strong local economy is important to the health and wellbeing of the community and contributes to the liveability of the municipality. Council and key partners are committed to facilitating the growth and diversity of local jobs, supporting pathways to employment and job readiness of residents. Council also plays an important role in facilitating land for employment uses and supporting industry innovation and investment, as well as protecting valuable farming land.

Supporting the growth of an economy that promotes a diversity of local jobs requires a whole-of-Council and community approach. The key policy guiding the delivery of this work is the *Southern Grampians Economic Development Strategy 2011-2021*. This strategy contains key initiatives to support a strong and vibrant economy, with participation from the broader community a critical feature. This includes investors and policy makers working together to achieve sustainable economic development goals.

The SEIFA Index of Disadvantage³⁵ which measures the relative level of socio-economic disadvantage, rates Southern Grampians at 992. While unemployment rates for Southern Grampians is low, data indicates there is a high level of disengaged youth, well above the Victorian average. Youth unemployment is at 11% (6% higher than the State average)³⁶. This reflects a lack of pathways or opportunities outside the region's traditional industries.

Community engagement process and feedback during recent Council consultation processes confirmed that the community is concerned with

finding meaningful pathways for employment for younger residents, increasing business opportunities in all townships as well as ensuring economic sustainability.

Together with the community and our partners, we will work towards this outcome by focusing on the following four-year priorities:

1. We will work to create new opportunities for sustainable investment and jobs, building on local strengths and encouraging innovation.
2. We will work in partnership with business and the community to support enterprise, to develop the skills of the local workforce and to promote Southern Grampians as a place to work, live, play and invest.
3. We will continue to adopt a whole-of-Council approach to improving economic development outcomes in the wider region, ensuring that Southern Grampians residents have access to a broad range of employment opportunities.
4. We will encourage external partners to develop and implement projects that assist jobseekers facing barriers to entering the labour market, in particular our younger residents.
5. We will support the economic viability and growth of activity centres to provide a range of locally accessible services such as shopping, commercial, cultural activities, administrative and civic centre functions, grow jobs and encourage investment.
6. As a large employer, we will ensure our employment opportunities are promoted to the Southern Grampians community.

³⁵ A SEIFA score is created using information about people and households in a particular area. This score is standardised against a mean of 1,000 with a standard deviation of 100. This means that the average SEIFA score will be 1,000.

³⁶ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016.



OUTCOME 3. Southern Grampians has a range of housing that meets community needs

Access to appropriate housing in locations close to services is important, and the freedom for residents to make choices about where they live is fundamental to creating a healthy lifestyle. The housing supply does not always reflect the needs of the community and this has been recognised by Council and the State Government. Housing costs impact negatively on many in the community, affecting people within both the rental and home ownership markets. They also have the most significant socially determined impact for those on low incomes, those suffering disadvantage and people who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless.

Southern Grampians is experiencing housing pressure with escalating house prices, high rental demand and limited access to a variety of affordable housing. This impacts our community in a variety of ways by placing financial stress on vulnerable and low income residents as well as making accommodation options for professional staff relocating to the area difficult to source.

Council is committed to working with partners to increase housing options for our community and recognises that access to safe and secure housing is a basic human right for all.

A resident focus is integral to Council planning for current and future needs, and is targeted at:

- + Increasing housing stock
- + Increasing housing density in various locations to promote greater choice
- + Reducing the financial stress on residents by influencing housing costs
- + Influencing the design of new housing to promote increased liveability
- + Advocating to government for policy reform and for greater investment in social and affordable housing.

Together with the community and our partners, we will work towards this outcome by focusing on the following four-year priorities:

1. We will ensure that policies and practices support maximum access to high-quality and appropriate housing options for its residents.
2. Recognising that housing is a fundamental human right, we will continue to advocate on behalf of the community with all levels of government, the not-for-profit and private sectors, to increase the level and availability of affordable and public housing stock.
3. We will facilitate increased density housing in accordance with growth areas identified in the planning scheme to support the viability of activity centres.
4. We will continue to increase the supply of housing that is visitable, accessible and adaptable to meet the needs of different sectors of the community.



OUTCOME 4. Southern Grampians residents have access to technology, buildings and public spaces that are well designed and encourage community connections

Community infrastructure including health, education, social, leisure and cultural facilities is an essential component of a progressive community and should meet the needs of different local communities and neighbourhoods.

Council has a vital role to play in prioritising, maintaining and renewing infrastructure to meet community needs and population demographics. Integrating social infrastructure planning with community planning will ensure facilities and services are aligned with the needs of our changing population.

In cooperation with other investment partners, Council aims to maintain and develop a network of well-located facilities that support and connect, both physically and digitally, our community in diverse areas such as arts and culture, libraries, meeting spaces, leisure and aquatic centres and early years facilities. To meet the needs of people at all stages of life, flexible and multi-purpose requirements will drive planning for new and upgraded facilities.

The design of the built environment is intrinsically linked to community safety, health and wellbeing, and environmental sustainability. Council designs and delivers streetscapes and public space improvement projects that make connections between people and places. We achieve this by improving the way individual buildings and outdoor spaces can be safe, accessible and attractive places, squares and streets.

Council embraces the concept of place-making and takes a multi-faceted approach to planning, design, management, maintenance and activation of public spaces that can be used for different types of planned and unplanned community interactions and with the aim of providing intrinsic beauty, pleasure and delight simply by being in these places.

Together with the community and our partners, we will work towards this outcome by focusing on the following four-year priorities:

1. We will ensure that community infrastructure planning will consider a growing and changing population and prioritise local access to health, education, social, leisure and cultural facilities.
2. We will encourage the design of high-quality buildings and public places that are accessible for all, safe, comfortable and welcoming for a variety of activities.
3. We will promote the provision of community infrastructure that is based on strong evidence of community need and value.
4. We will encourage the design of community facilities to allow for multi-purpose use by different groups, with the flexibility to adapt to changing needs over time.
5. We will ensure the design and location of community infrastructure contributes to a sense of place and opportunities for social connections.
6. We will explore investment partnerships to develop consolidated community facilities that enable a variety of services at the same location.



OUTCOME 5. Southern Grampians residents have access to open spaces, pathways and trails that encourage physical activity

Public open space is public land that has a leisure, sport or landscape value, habitat conservation, environmental or visual amenity function or is zoned or reserved for public parks or conservation purposes. These spaces include sports fields, conservation areas, playgrounds, recreation trails, civic spaces and public land.

The main objective of open space networks is to increase access to, and use of publicly-owned land for the benefit of the whole community.

Open space exists not only for recreation and conservation of environmental and cultural values; it is the foundation of liveability. It underpins many social, ecological and economic benefits that are essential to the healthy functioning of the environment.

Access to active transport infrastructure is an essential aspect of a liveable community. It provides Southern Grampians residents opportunities to walk and cycle, to increase physical activity, as well as the opportunity to increase connections through informal and organised activity.

Active transportation is a key way for more people to be consistently active in their daily lives and improve their health. Evidence shows that residents choose to be active where there is infrastructure such as sidewalks, bike lanes and where destinations are close together.

Our community has identified that improved infrastructure and open space that supports active participation and social connection is a priority across the Shire.

Together with the community and our partners, we will work towards this outcome by focusing on the following four-year priorities:

1. We will ensure that all Southern Grampians residents have safe and convenient access to open space for passive recreation, quiet contemplation, sport and access to nature.
2. We will provide and protect quality open space that provides a range of experiences and accessible recreational opportunities, natural and cultural heritage features, and high-quality park facilities and landscape settings.
3. We will encourage participation and recreational use of open spaces.
4. We will continue to encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport to travel to and from work, and around the municipality.
5. We will continue to enhance and connect of communities and facilities, and promote walkable access to everyday shopping and services.
6. We will continue to promote and develop walking and cycling tracks that connect community facilities, shopping strips, schools and services.





OUTCOME 6. Southern Grampians encourages sustainable practices that promote a healthy environment

A healthy environment is essential for a healthy community. Protecting our natural environment by minimising our impact is essential for ensuring long-term sustainability and addressing the increasing impacts of climate change.

Council and partners aim to ensure sustainability through balancing development and land use with environment values. The management of environmental assets to ensure biodiversity and natural habitat is essential to preserving significant ecosystems, flora and fauna that are valued by our communities.

Sustainable land use practices, environmental conservation, water management and waste management support and protect the environment. However, we must consider the increasing impacts of climate change and the associated emergency management risks and events to which our community is exposed.

Resilience is often associated with an individual's or a community's ability to adapt to the public health impacts of climate change. The World Health Organization (WHO) has described climate change as a defining issue for public health in the 21st century³⁷. Climate change has implications at global, national and community levels and impacts health and wellbeing in many ways. Increased intensity and frequency of extreme weather events, increases in public health disease, and challenges to food and water security all have the potential to impact our long-term health and wellbeing.

Southern Grampians Shire has been impacted by floods, fire and the recent pandemic. Our

community members are two times more likely to be affected by climate change, with a higher vulnerability rating than the Victorian average. Social and economic disadvantage directly influences vulnerability; 24.7% of households within our community have a total income of less than \$650 per week³⁸. Median weekly household incomes in the Southern Grampians Shire are lower than the State average. An estimated 13% of our residents are vulnerable to mortgage, fuel prices or inflation stress. Southern Grampians has high areas of disadvantage within Hamilton and outlying townships.

Climate change is having a large impact on the health and wellbeing of residents and Council is committed to environmental and sustainable practices to reduce this impact. To meet this challenge, ongoing effort is also required from residents, community groups, businesses, research institutions and other stakeholders. Building the capacity to act and respond will be critical to our shared success.

Together with the community and our partners, we will work towards this outcome by focusing on the following four-year priorities:

1. We will work together to support and protect the natural environment.
2. We will ensure sustainable waste management practices that reduce negative environmental impacts.
3. We will investigate and implement climate adaptation practices that reduce negative impacts on the environment and ensure the long term health of our community.

³⁷ World Health Organization (WHO), 2015, Keynote address at the Human Rights Council panel discussion on climate change and the right to health, WHO Director-General, Margaret Chan.

³⁸ Social Atlas of Australia, 2016.

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION

This Plan outlines the strategic health and wellbeing outcomes that Southern Grampians Shire Council, our key partners and the community will work towards over the next four years. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation are required to understand effectiveness, identify areas for improvement and learning as well as enhancing the evidence base for current and future programs and initiatives.

Council's approach will be to work with partners and the community to develop a yearly action plan that address the priorities under each outcome under the Focus Areas Healthy and Liveable Communities and support staff and partner organisations through the ongoing monitoring and advice for initiatives related to health and wellbeing.

Yearly action plans will be informed by a number of factors including:

- + Council Plan priorities
- + Council Budget
- + State and Federal Government priorities and funding opportunities
- + Funding models of key partner agencies and community organisations
- + Local resource capacity and availability.

The Monitoring and Reporting Framework will outline the outcomes, measures, baseline data, monitoring and reporting processes and deliverables over the four-year period. The baseline data will establish the current situation across the broad outcome areas and provide Council with a benchmark against which to compare future performance.

The Evaluation Plan will detail what we will evaluate as well as the rationale and process for conducting the evaluation. Council will adopt a learning approach and the intention of the evaluation will be to learn about and understand what has or has not worked over the life of the Plan. It will be important to gain a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of our engagement process, its impact on the community as well as our partnerships.

Council will also apply a learning approach to evaluating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan over its four-year period. Opportunities may include sharing information and best practices as well as workshops to discuss experiences arising from projects related to health and wellbeing.

Council is committed to effective implementing this Plan and ensuring that the health and wellbeing benefits are realised by all who live in and enjoy our community now and into the future.

Figure 2 Southern Grampians Community Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 Implementation, Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation Framework





APPENDIX A

HEALTH PLANNING AND POLICY CONTEXT

Local Context

The *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* requires local government to develop a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan every four years. It must be completed within 12 months of the general election of a new Council. According to the Department of Health, the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan must:

- + Include an examination of data about health status and health determinants in the municipal district
- + Identify goals and strategies based on available evidence for creating a local community in which people can achieve maximum health and wellbeing
- + Provide for the involvement of people in the local community in its development, implementation and evaluation
- + Specify how Council will work in partnership with the department and relevant agencies to accomplish the goals and strategies identified in the public health and wellbeing plan
- + Be consistent with the Council Plan and Municipal Strategic Statement³⁹ (s12A of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*).

³⁹ The Southern Grampians Scheme includes a local policy section that sets out Council's long-term vision and strategies to manage future growth. It guides Council's decisions about land use and development. The Municipal Strategic Statement integrates Council's planning policies for shopping centres, business and industrial areas, residential and farming zones, housing, open space network, transport network, and environmentally sustainable design.

Council works closely with and is accountable to the Department of Health for the design, implementation and reporting of the *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan* which is closely aligned to the *Council Plan 2021-25* and integrates key elements of *Council's Municipal Strategic Statement*.

Council's key community health partner, Western District Health Services, delivers programs and services to create healthy, connected communities for people at every age and stage of life. Both organisations will work together with local health service providers to improve our joint capacity to influence local and system-level change.

Regional Context

Primary Care Partnerships

The Department of Health funds 28 Primary Care Partnerships (PCPs) throughout Victoria that connect more than 800 organisations across many different sectors. PCPs collaborate by sharing skills and expertise, and aligning their efforts. They improve the health and wellbeing of communities by finding ways to enhance the health and community sector.

The Southern Grampians and Glenelg PCP brings together local health services, professionals and community organisations across the region with the aim of improving community health and wellbeing by building strong connections and a collective approach on projects and initiatives relevant to the Southern Grampians and Glenelg communities.



Great South Coast Rural and Regional Liveability Framework Collaboration

The Southwest PCP which covers the three local government areas of Corangamite, Moyne and Warrnambool, together with the Department of Health are developing a framework with an evaluation and monitoring intelligence hub to support local governments and local service providers to conduct health and wellbeing planning and to inform the development of the *Great South Coast Rural and Regional Action Plan*.

State Context

State Health and Wellbeing Plan

The *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023* outlines the Government's high-level strategic directions that will help to improve the health and wellbeing of Victorians.

The vision is "a Victoria free of the avoidable burden of disease and injury, so that all Victorians can enjoy the highest attainable standards of health, wellbeing and participation at every age"⁴⁰. The plan includes the following 10 priorities:

- + Tackling climate change and its impact on health
- + Increasing healthy eating
- + Increasing active living
- + Reducing tobacco-related harm
- + Reducing harmful alcohol and drug use
- + Reducing injury
- + Preventing all forms of violence
- + Decreasing the risk of drug-resistant infections in the community
- + Improving mental wellbeing
- + Improving sexual and reproductive health.

The first four of these priorities have been identified by the State Government as key focus areas.

The State plan and outcomes framework⁴¹ have informed the outcome areas for the *Southern Grampians Community Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025*. Council also has used the Great South Coast Rural and Regional Liveability Framework to guide the development of indicators and measures to monitor and evaluate longer-term impacts on the Southern Grampians community.

⁴⁰ VicHealth, 2019, Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-23, State of Victoria, Melbourne.

⁴¹ Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), 2016, Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Outcomes Framework.

VicHealth Action Agenda for Health Promotion 2019-2023

The *2019-2023 Action Agenda for Health Promotion* sets out the priorities for VicHealth and identifies five strategic imperatives⁴²:

- + To increase physical activity levels of less active people, with a focus on fear of judgement experienced by women, social sport, active recreation and play, walking and active travel
- + To further reduce tobacco use, with a focus on preventing uptake among young people, supporting people to quit and reducing the appeal of tobacco products
- + To increase mental wellbeing, with a focus on positive social connections among young people and gender equality
- + To further increase access to healthy foods and drinks in Victoria with a focus on sports settings, fruit and vegetable consumption and food culture
- + To prevent harm from alcohol products, with a focus on changing risky drinking cultures and enabling environments to support low-risk drinking.

VicHealth priorities and strategies are consistent with National and State health promotion priorities and prevention frameworks.

Council has used VicHealth's local government action guides when considering the priority actions across the identified outcome areas for this Plan and will continue to seek guidance from VicHealth over the next four years.

National Context

A range of reforms and challenges will affect the Southern Grampians community. Their impact will become clearer over the next two years as the National Disability Insurance Scheme, the Aged Care Inquiry and changes in the delivery of the Commonwealth Home Support Program are implemented.

Primary Health Networks

Primary Health Networks (PHNs) were established in 2015 to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of medical services for patients, particularly those at risk of poor health outcomes, and improve coordination of care to ensure patients receive the right care in the right place, at the right time⁴³.

Southern Grampians sits within the Western Victoria PHN. Their *Strategic Directions 2020-2023*⁴⁴ aims to improve the health outcome or health care experience of people living in western Victoria by leading, respecting and connecting health services, providers and professionals. The Western Victoria PHN's key function are to:

- + support general practice and the primary health care sector
- + commission or purchase locally needed services
- + integrate local services and systems.

The Southern Grampians Shire Council will work collaboratively with the Western Victoria PHN on joint priorities and to ensure that local general practice and primary health care sectors are supported to respond to the needs and wellbeing of our community.

⁴² VicHealth, 2019, *Agenda for Action 2019-2023*, State of Victoria, Melbourne.

⁴³ Primary Health Network (PHN), 2017.

⁴⁴ Western Victoria Primary Health Network, 2021, *Strategic Directions 2021-2023*.

GREAT SOUTH COAST

RURAL AND REGIONAL LIVEABILITY FRAMEWORK



The Southern Grampians Shire together with Corangamite, Moyne, Warrnambool City and Glenelg Local Government Areas make up the Great South Coast area.

The *Great South Coast Rural and Regional Liveability Framework*, developed by the Department of Health and Southwest PCP, recognises the unique challenges and benefits experienced by rural and regional areas which need to be considered when undertaking health planning.

Investment in this framework along with a monitoring intelligence hub will be used to inform a Great South Coast Rural and Regional action plan to be achieved over the next 10 to 20 years. Partners are able to use the framework to identify and prioritise focus areas of action which will also support integrated public health and wellbeing planning.

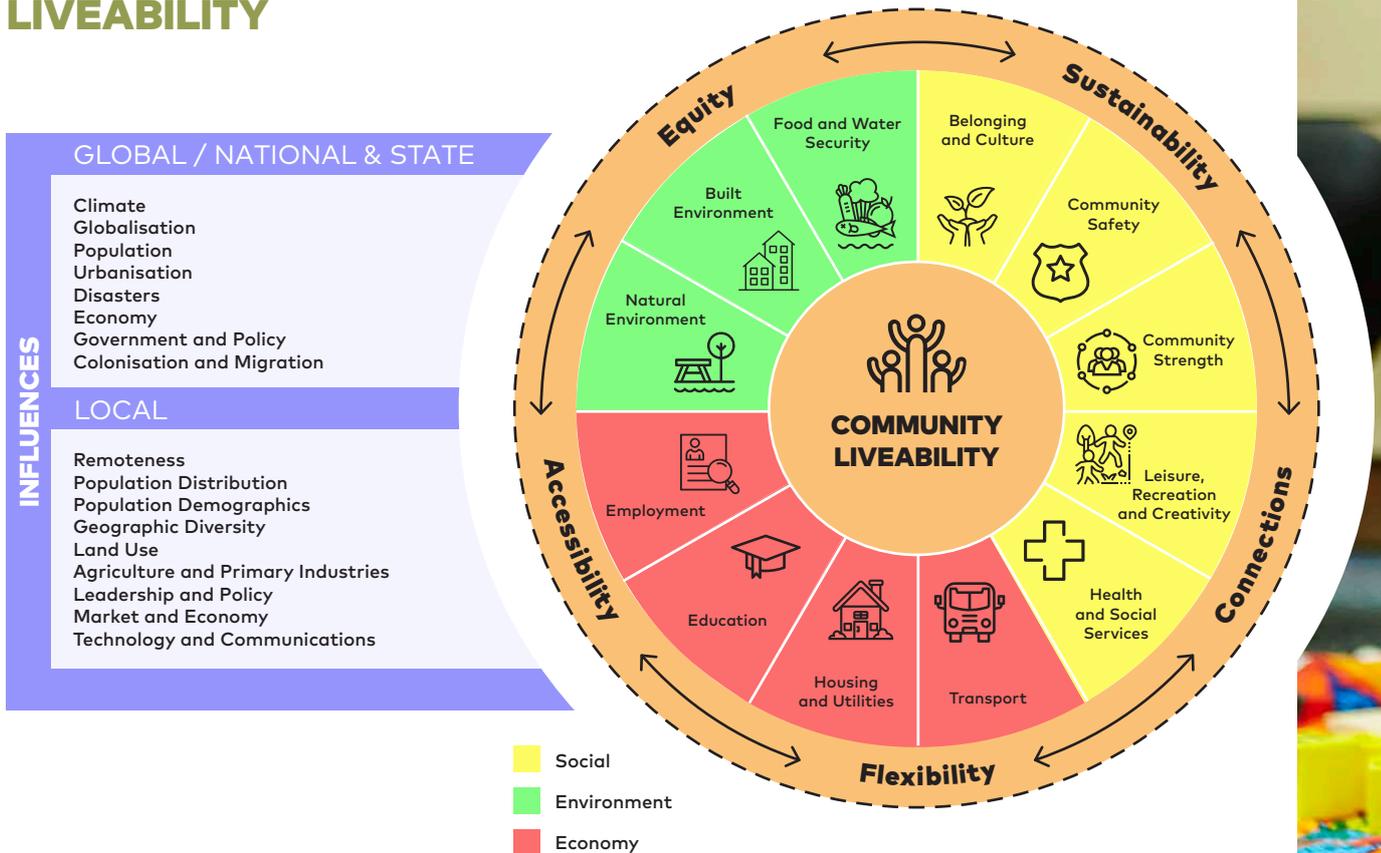
Four components of the *Great South Coast Rural and Regional Liveability Framework* interact to create liveability. They are:

1. Elements: the basic components needed for sustainable growth, development, and health and wellbeing for all. They are employment, education, housing and utilities, transport, health and social services, leisure, recreation and creativity, community strength, community safety, belonging and culture, food and water security, built environment and natural environment.
2. Principles: govern how well each element optimises liveability for different population groups. The principles are accessibility, equity, flexibility, connections and sustainability.
3. Influences: the external factors which have cascading effects on the elements and principles, affecting liveability overall. These influences can be local, state, national or global.
4. Domains: the triple bottom line which strikes a balance between social, economic and environmental needs.

Council recognises the value of this framework, supporting evidence and tools, and has used them in shaping the plan for the Southern Grampians.

Figure 3 Great South Coast Rural and Regional Liveability Framework

RURAL AND REGIONAL LIVEABILITY





Acronyms and Commonly Used Terms

Council – Southern Grampians Shire Council

Council Plan – Southern Grampians Shire Council Plan 2021-2025

The Plan/ This Plan – Southern Grampians Community Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025

PCP – Primary Care Partnership

PHN – Primary Health Network

SEIFA – Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas

WHO – World Health Organization

2021-25

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