



AGENDA APPENDIX
Council Meeting
Wednesday 27 March 2013

**AGENDA ITEM FOR SEPARATE DISTRIBUTION TO COUNCILLORS AND
EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM DUE TO DOCUMENT SIZE.**

**THE ITEM IS ACCESSIBLE VIA THE COUNCIL WEBSITE OR BY
CONTACTING COUNCIL ON 03 5662 9200.**

**E.5 SOUTH GIPPSLAND SHIRE COUNCIL DRAFT MUNICIPAL PUBLIC
HEALTH & WELLBEING PLAN 2013-2017**



South Gippsland Shire Council

Draft Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017



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Health & Wellbeing Plan Project Team

Welcome to the South Gippsland Shire Council's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan for 2013 – 2017.

This document outlines strategic directions intended to inform operational plans for the Council communities and organisations of South Gippsland.

Hearing what health and wellbeing means to you, your ideas and aspirations for improved wellbeing for the South Gippsland community was inspiring.

We hope you will join with us and together we can make it real.

This Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan has been developed for the individuals, communities and organisations of South Gippsland to help plan for improved health and wellbeing for our community. An implementation plan will be developed outlining detailed actions and timelines to progress the strategies within this document. You are welcome to copy and use the information within for your planning purposes.

Public Health & Wellbeing Reference Group Representation:

- Department of Health
- Gippsland Southern Health Service
- Linda Rowley Consulting
- Salvation Army GippsCare
- South Coast Primary Care Partnership
- South Gippsland Hospital Service
- Uniting Care Gippsland
- South Gippsland Shire Council
 - Councillor Lorraine Brunt
 - *Departments* – Access & Inclusion, Aged & Disability Services, Children & Family Services, Community Strengthening, Environmental Health, Strategic Planning & Development and Youth
 - *Health & Wellbeing Project Team* – Jan Martin, Linda Rowley, Vicki Bradley, Shelley Fixter & Mel Hibbins



“Feeling energised, having good relationships, being part of the community, being able to do the things I enjoy”



Our Vision

To provide safe, supportive environments for our communities to be the healthiest they can be and to flourish.



A message from the Mayor



People living in South Gippsland enjoy the wondrous natural beauty of our surroundings, including seascapes, national parks and our mountain ranges. Complementing the natural beauty of our shire, our communities recognise their strengths in the friendliness of their neighbours, community spirit and connectedness.

Our community enjoys a level of health and wellbeing above the State average; we share common aspirations and hopes, for maintaining and improving health and wellbeing for themselves, their families and communities.

There are many factors which influence our health and wellbeing; the conditions in which we are born and live, the food we eat, our age, social status, whether we are employed, have access to transport and healthcare facilities, our level of stress and whether we feel part of the community all influence our health.

This Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan gives consideration to these factors and the opinions of community members on the elements of health and wellbeing important to them.

We recognise that significant improvements in our health and wellbeing require a collaborative approach with individuals, communities and organisations partnering to advance the health and wellbeing of our community.

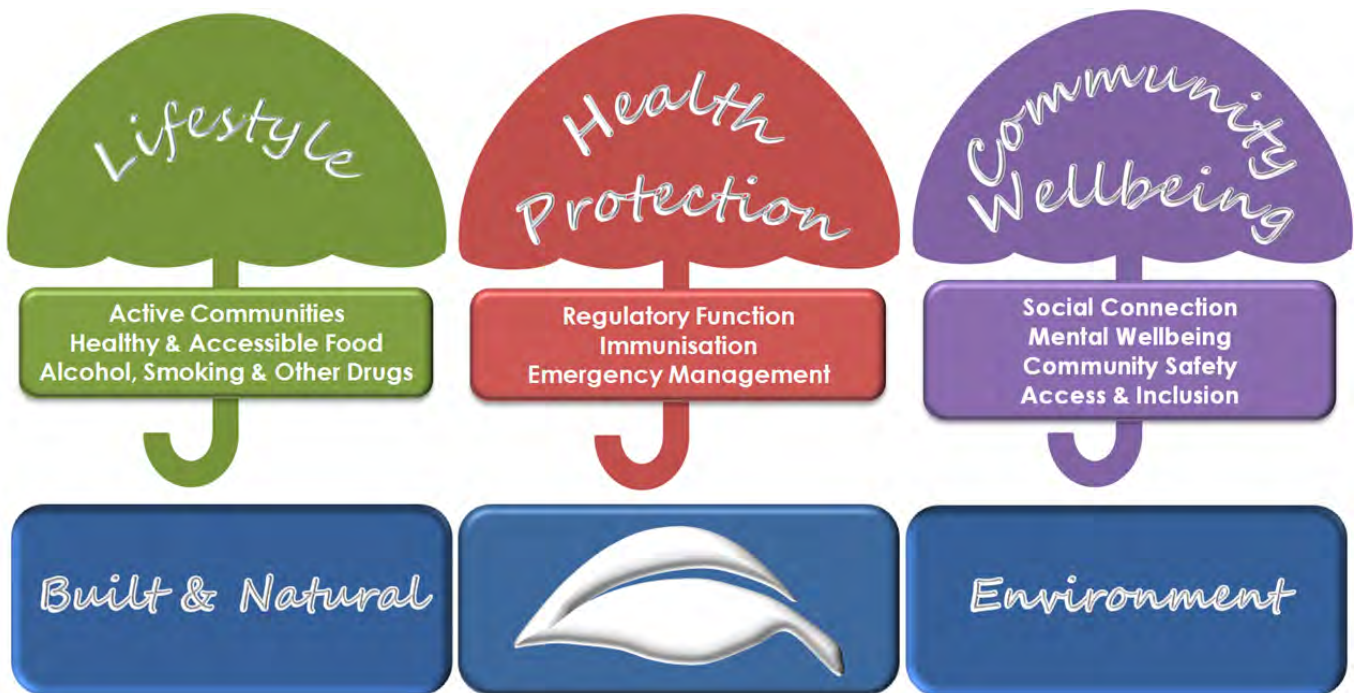
I would like to thank our community for their contribution to the plan – sharing their thoughts, ideas and aspirations. We look forward to working with you, your neighbours and communities in the implementation of this health and wellbeing plan, and together we can achieve our vision *“to provide safe, supportive environments for our communities to be the healthiest they can be and to flourish”*.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kieran Kennedy'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Cr Kieran Kennedy



Executive Summary



A Municipal Public Health & Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP) provides the basis for a strategic and integrated approach to public health planning on a Local Government area basis, and forms the key document for outlining strategies about community health and wellbeing within the governance responsibilities of Council.

Under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008, Council seeks to protect, improve and promote public health and wellbeing by creating an environment which supports the health of community members and strengthens their capacity. Council also manages and supports planning processes at a local government level and develops and implements policies and programs. Within this responsibility, Council has regard to the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan and the Climate Change Act 2010 (section 14).

This MPHWP will inform the strategic direction and planning priorities for a range of health and community organisations within South Gippsland. Achieving our vision "to provide safe, supportive environments for our communities to be the healthiest they can be and to flourish" requires collective effort from Council, organisations, government and community.

For South Gippsland Shire Council, this will be supported with an implementation plan describing actions, partnerships and timelines to achieve the strategic directions.

Taking a determinant of health approach to municipal public health and wellbeing planning requires looking broadly at the conditions and circumstances which affect the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities. The World Health Organisation¹ defines the Social Determinants of Health as:

"the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, including the health system. These circumstances are shaped by the distribution of money, power and resources

at global, national and local levels, which are themselves influenced by policy choices. The social determinants of health are mostly responsible for health inequities - the unfair and avoidable differences in health status seen within and between countries"

Approximately 400 community members were engaged in the development of this MPHWP, either by completing the MPHWP Survey, attending consultations and meetings, or speaking directly with planning staff.

Research was undertaken using a range of datasets to look at wellbeing indicators and current and emergent health and wellbeing issues within our communities.

Representatives from key health and community service organisations were brought together to explore the data and feedback from the community and add their professional opinions to the issues for South Gippsland communities. Broadly, the key issues and themes identified by community members, organisations and the data were correlated to paint a picture of our communities.

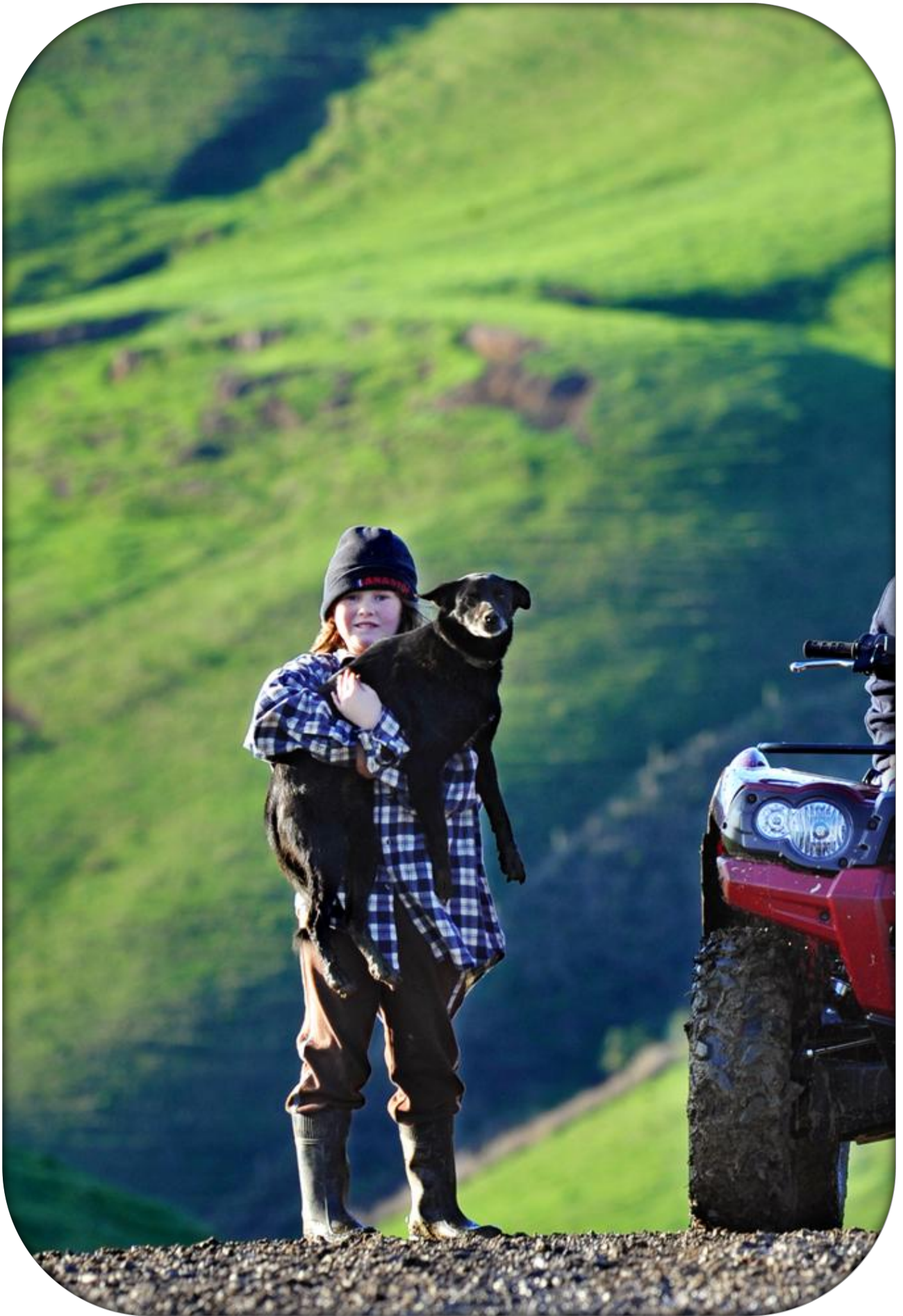
The majority of community members responding to our survey felt that they experience a higher than average level of wellbeing. However, during our consultation with community members, a number of challenges experienced by individuals on a day to day basis were raised.

Four priorities have been identified within the plan: Health Protection, Community Wellbeing and Lifestyle with the Built and Natural Environment providing the foundation (as illustrated on the previous page).

Each of these priorities has identified strategy areas providing a focus for local action toward the improvement of health and wellbeing for our communities during the 2013- 2017 period.

Our priorities broadly align with the Victorian Government's Environments for Health Framework and State and Regional health and wellbeing priorities.





Welcome to our Health & Wellbeing Plan

To provide safe, supportive environments for our communities to be the healthiest they can be and to flourish.

The function of a Council under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 is to seek to protect, improve and promote public health and wellbeing within the municipal district by:

- (a) creating an environment which supports the health of members of the local community and strengthens the capacity of the community and individuals to achieve better health
 - (b) initiating, supporting and managing public health planning processes at the local government level
 - (c) developing and implementing public health policies and programs within the municipal district
- Meeting the requirement under section 26(3) of the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* that Councils developing MPHWP's 'have regard to the *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan*'
 - Meeting requirements under section 14 of the *Climate Change Act (2010)* (section 14) which requires decision makers to have regard to climate change

This Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan provides the strategic direction for a range of organisations and communities of South Gippsland for the implementation of priorities and strategies toward creating an environment which supports the health and wellbeing of our community. Council has a lead role in the implementation of the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan. This plan aligns with the South Gippsland Council Plan and the Council and Community Planning Framework and is seen as a key strategy which guides the business of Council.



To achieve the health and wellbeing goals and aspirations of our community it will take more than one organisation. Community members, health & community services, and businesses are needed to work together so that we can have an influence on the collective health and wellbeing of our communities.



Many local health, community and Council services have contributed their experience, knowledge and expertise to the development of this plan. Organisations have pledged commitment to activities and projects which contribute to the achievement of many of the strategies outlined in this plan and ultimately creating the environment where people feel empowered and can flourish.

Almost 400 South Gippsland community members had their say in the consultation for this Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, contributing to the identification of strategies to create safe, healthy environments to foster individuals and communities to flourish throughout South Gippsland during 2013-2017.

The conversations and survey responses reflecting our communities' thinking about health and wellbeing are included in this plan. Thus, extending the work currently being undertaken and enabling the advancement of shared goals and aspirations of the community into the future.

The most recent data including: Victorian Health Surveillance, Australian Bureau of Statistics Census Data, VicHealth Community Indicators, Police statistics and Burden of Disease indicate the changes to health status and indicators of need in relation to South Gippsland community.





We have identified four priorities within the plan: Health Protection, Community Wellbeing, and Lifestyle with the Built and Natural Environment providing the foundation. Our priorities broadly align with the Victorian Government's Environments for Health Framework, which outlines four environments for action to advance public health: the natural, built, social and economic environments.

Whilst a number of strategies span across multiple priority areas, strategies were allocated to the priority area they most aligned with.

The strategy areas identified within our priorities relate broadly to the Environments for Health Framework, State and Regional priorities. Table 1 illustrates the alignment between the three frameworks.



Table 1. Integration of Health Priorities and Frameworks

Priority	Strategy	Environments for Health	State Priorities*	Regional Priorities**
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regulatory Function <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste Water Tobacco Control Food safety Immunisation Emergency Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural Built Economic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tobacco Control 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Connection Mental Wellbeing Access & Inclusion Community Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Violence Road Safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Economic Built 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental health promotion Injury Prevention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental wellbeing Sexual & Reproductive health
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active Communities Healthy & Accessible Food Alcohol, Smoking & other drugs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical activity Healthy eating Control of tobacco use Reducing misuse of alcohol and drugs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physical activity Healthy eating
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parks and reserves Playground and play spaces Biodiversity Protection Transport and community mobility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural Built 		

*Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2011 -2015

**Health Promotion Framework for Gippsland



“Being able to live in a community and enjoy the benefits of local facilities, clean air and locally grown food”

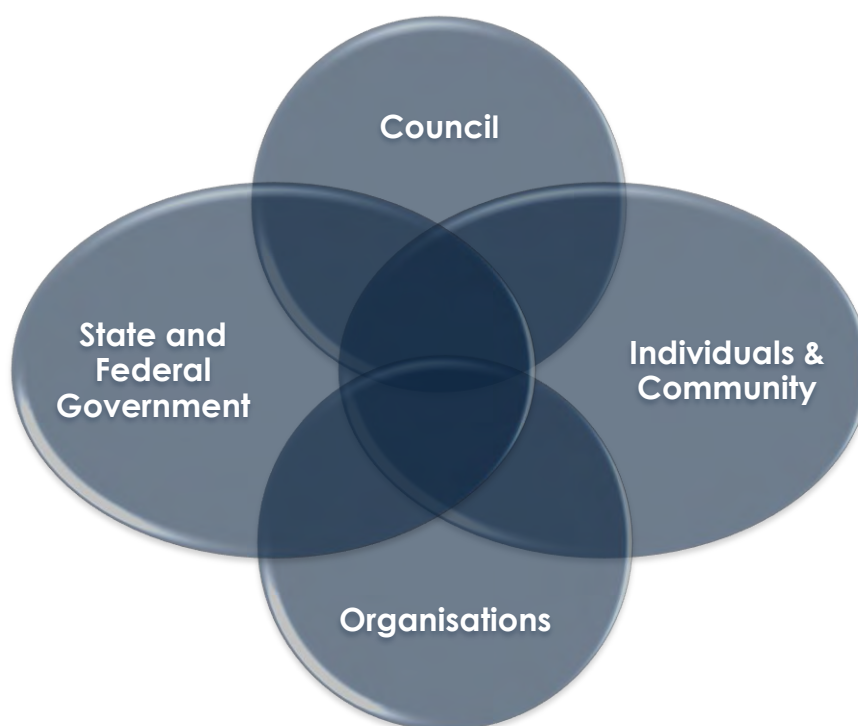
Making it a reality

Making the health and wellbeing vision for our community a reality will require a commitment from individuals, communities, organisations and Council.

The implementation of this plan will provide opportunities for individuals to become involved on a number of levels, connect with their community, engage with others, and provide the conditions by which individuals feel empowered to help themselves and their communities to flourish.

The strategic plan and associated strategies will enable plans to be implemented with partnering organisations and communities, providing guidance of operational plans for Council, and consistency of health and wellbeing planning for a broad range of organisations in South Gippsland.

This plan will provide for the delivery of flexible programs allowing us to respond to emerging community needs and arising opportunities whilst meeting the long term strategic directions.



How will we know we've made a difference?

The impact of preventative health strategies can only be measured over the long term, and may not be easily identifiable in the short term.

The diverse nature of public health interventions requires multiple measurement activities and feedback methods. Whilst the aim of the strategies outlined in this plan is to provide the environment for community health and wellbeing, there are a number of factors beyond our control which may ultimately impact on the collective health and wellbeing of our community, such as natural disasters, unemployment rates, road conditions of major highways, and informed individual's choices about their diet and physical activity

A detailed evaluation plan will be used to monitor the outcomes and progress of the plan. A Reference Group which includes representatives from Council, health and community service organisations will oversee the evaluation of the plan. We will benchmark the South Gippsland area against the Victorian and regional population health data.

Progress toward the outcomes will be reported annually to Council and the Department of Health. Feedback from individuals and communities will be sought throughout the implementation of the plan.

Our Strategic Directions

We have identified four priorities within the plan: providing the foundation. Our priorities broadly align with the Victorian Government's Environments for Health Framework, which outlines four environments for action to advance public health: the natural, built, social and economic environments.

The priority areas Health Protection, Community Wellbeing, Lifestyle and the Built and Natural Environment contain a cluster of strategies for action.

Some strategies will be the sole responsibility of Council to implement, whilst other strategies Council will contribute to in partnership with key health and community service organisations and community members.




We will participate in regional plans for oral health and sexual and reproductive health and in their implementation on a local level.



Strategic Statements

The Table below outlines Council's strategic statement for each priority.

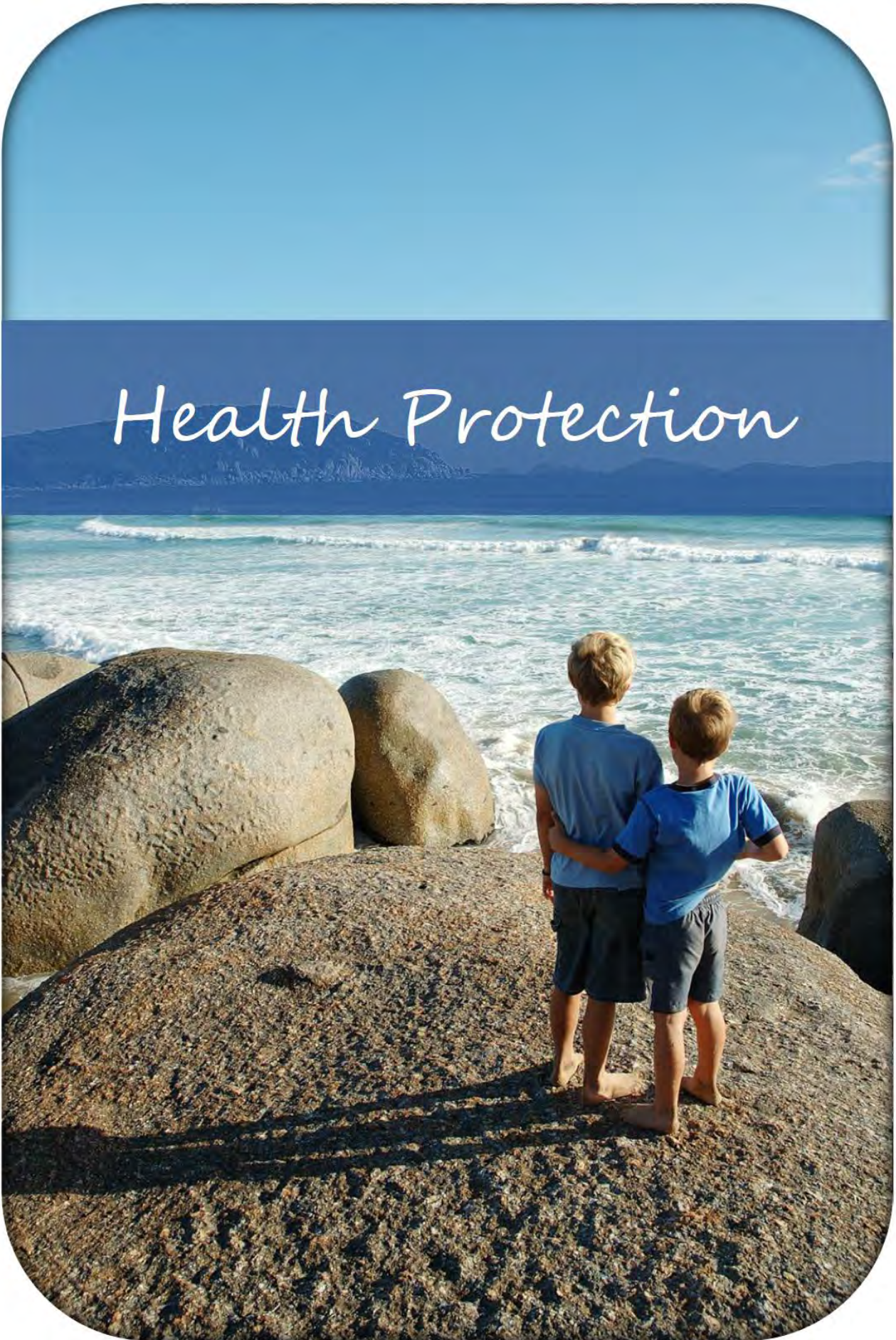
Table 2. Strategic Statements

Priority	Strategy Area	Strategic Direction
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulatory Function <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Waste Water ○ Tobacco Control ○ Food safety • Immunisation • Emergency Management 	<p>We will protect the health of our community through the implementation of policies and practices to meet legislative requirements.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Connection • Mental Wellbeing • Community Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Family Violence ○ Road Safety • Access & Inclusion 	<p>We will enhance community wellbeing by partnering to create an environment which enables and encourages access, improves community connectedness and safety.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active Communities • Healthy & Accessible Food • Alcohol, Smoking & other drugs 	<p>We will contribute to providing environments and practices which encourage healthy lifestyle choices.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parks and reserves ○ Playground and play spaces ○ Biodiversity Protection • Transport and community mobility 	<p>We will partner to develop and maintain a sustainable natural environment.</p> <p>We will ensure appropriate infrastructure is provided to support individuals to access their communities.</p>

“Feeling like this is home – a sense of belonging; a sense of contributing to where I live; having a close relationship with the ‘natural’ environment”



Health Protection





Strategy Areas

Regulatory Function

Maintaining the public health of our communities is vital. Council's contribution to the promotion, improvement and protection of public health occurs through multiple diverse activities. These include: planning processes, environmental monitoring and management, health promotion activities and more traditional public health concerns such as waste management, local laws, prevention of infectious diseases, food safety and monitoring drinking water quality.ⁱⁱ

Council has policies and practices to meet these legislative requirements, with strategic plans to ensure regulatory functions are met and services are delivered in a way which best meet the needs of the community now and into the future.

The strategies outlined in the above documents link with the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, and complement the strategies outlined within this plan.

Strategy

- To protect the health of our community through the implementation of policies and practices to meet legislative requirements.

Immunisation

Protecting the health of our community is critical in providing safe, healthy environments where all can reach their potential. Council protects the health of our community by coordinating the immunisation of people living or being educated within the South Gippsland Shire. Council also provides the mechanism for data collection, and facilitates links to other health professionals as required.

Strategy

- Work in partnership with the Department of Health to identify and respond to emergent immunisation priorities.

Emergency Management

Minimising the community's risk to the impact of natural hazards such as earthquake, pandemic disease, drought, storms, flood and fire is a key role of Council. The Municipal Emergency Management Plan seeks to minimise any adverse affects of natural hazards and provides an integrated, proactive response to community needs. Council strategies link to the State Emergency Response Plan.

Strategy

- Work with communities to build resilience through local planning.





Community Wellbeing



Strategy Areas

Social Connection

Community spirit and friendliness of people was a strength commonly identified by community members throughout our consultation. Feeling included, engaged and connected to the community was important to the people we talked with. Many individuals are active in their communities either through volunteering efforts or citizen engagement activities.

Research suggests that feeling close to and valued by other people is a fundamental human need and one that contributes to our physical health and mental wellbeing. Having close relationships which are strong, supportive and encouraging is important for all members of the community, young and old. Just as having a broad social network which promotes a sense of familiarity, connectedness and self worth is also important for our wellbeingⁱⁱⁱ.

Strategies

- Build the capacity of our community to participate in citizen engagement.
- Support events that promote community participation / social inclusion.
- Create settings and facilitate use of community infrastructure to provide opportunities for improved social connectedness.

Mental Wellbeing

South Gippsland achieved a subjective wellbeing score of 79.6 (out of 100) in the 2011 VicHealth Indicators survey, indicating a relatively high level of subjective wellbeing.

The concept of wellbeing comprises two main elements: feeling good and functioning well^{iv}. Maintaining a good level of mental wellbeing can increase our resilience so that we are better able to face life's challenges.

Mental wellbeing is not merely the absence of mental illness, but the experience of feeling able to create meaning, fulfil our potential, and to flourish in life.

Maintaining, and creating an environment to improve mental wellbeing on an individual and community basis is important to thriving communities.

Strategies

- Contribute to mental health and wellbeing strategies with an emphasis on young people and the farming community.
- Develop strategies to minimise the risk of problem gambling in South Gippsland.





Access & Inclusion

Characteristics such as socioeconomic status, health, ability, status, cultural background, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and age may influence community places and activities we have access to, or feel welcomed into.

For example:

- people in smaller towns do not have the same level of access to public transport as those in the larger towns of South Gippsland.
- people with mobility aids such as wheelchairs, mobility scooters or parents with prams may be restricted in their physical access to buildings and community amenities.
- people on lower incomes may have limited or no access to private gyms or allied health services (e.g. occupational therapy or podiatry) due to the cost and may need to wait longer for services.

This can lead to health inequalities and poorer health for some members of our community.

South Gippsland Shire Council is committed to contributing to a more inclusive environment, creating opportunities to build on the strengths of our diverse communities.

Strategies

- Demonstrate leadership and improve the participation of people with disability in community life by supporting access and inclusion for all.
- Advocate for improved access to healthcare services throughout the Shire.

Community Safety

The vast majority of South Gippsland community members perceive their community to be a safe place, and enjoy walking with others or alone throughout their communities.

Family Violence

For some community members, risk to their safety may come from within their own home environment. Family violence is the leading preventable contributor to death, disability, and illness in Victorian women aged 15-44 years.^v Council will contribute to regional family violence prevention plans and strategies implemented during 2013-2017.

Strategies

- Partner with external organisations to implement a regional “prevention of violence against women plan”.

Road Safety

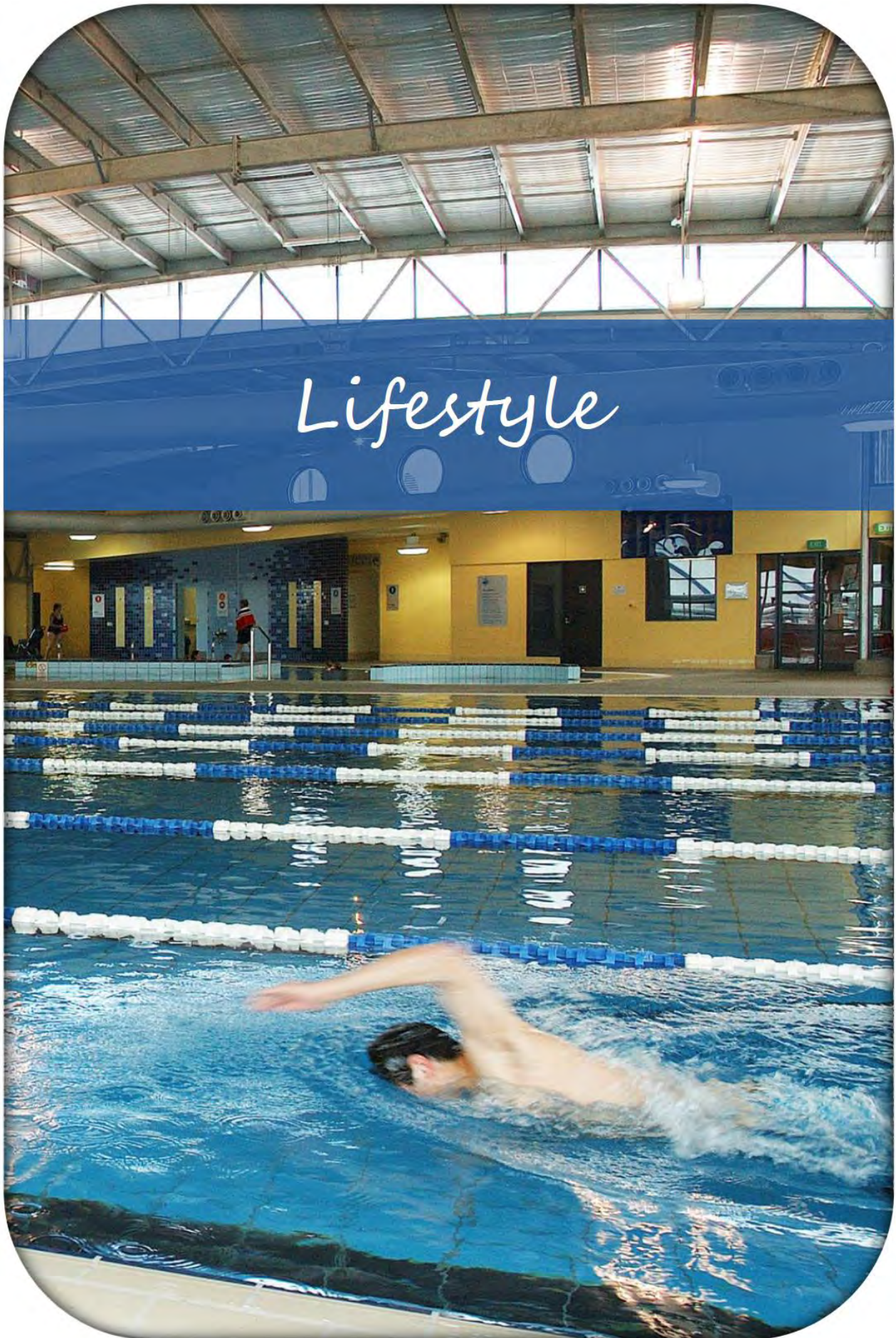
Community members are concerned with the safety of the roads within the Shire, both from the perspective of driving on the roads and pedestrian safety. The seaside communities of South Gippsland host large numbers of visitors and those with “holiday homes” take up residence in the area during the summer to enjoy the natural beauty of the area during the warmer months. Pedestrian safety is highlighted as a significant concern during this time.

In terms of driving on local roads, many community members were concerned about the state of disrepair of their local roads (e.g. potholes) and the impact on health and safety.

Strategy

- To continue to advocate for resourcing for road safety.







Strategy Areas

Active Communities

Physical activity is a key contributor in decreasing risk of many chronic diseases.

In response to the health plan survey, many community members recognised the benefit of physical activity in improving their health and wellbeing. They were keen to see more walking and bike tracks, outdoor gyms and the opportunity for their children to be safe whilst parents are exercising.

Strategy

- Partner with external organisations to provide a range of sporting, recreational and leisure opportunities including alternative options.

Healthy & Accessible Food

Eating a balanced, nutritional diet is essential in warding off a range of preventable diseases. Limited access to nutritious and affordable food can affect physical and mental wellbeing and result in an increased risk of chronic disease.

Healthy food needs to be available, accessible and affordable so that food intake is sufficient, reliable, nutritious, safe, culturally appropriate and sustainable.^{vi}

Consumption of the recommended intake of fruit and vegetables is low in South Gippsland as it is across Victoria.

Strategy

- Promote and improve access to healthy and affordable food via a range of partnerships and activities.

Alcohol, Smoking & Other Drugs

Alcohol

Whilst the majority of our community enjoy alcohol in moderation, some individuals may use alcohol at rates which are harmful to their health.

A number of community members who responded to our survey indicated alcohol and illicit drugs may be a problem for their community. A small number of community members commented that the lack of activities and availability of transport for young people contributed to social issues including the consumption of alcohol in their community.

Strategy

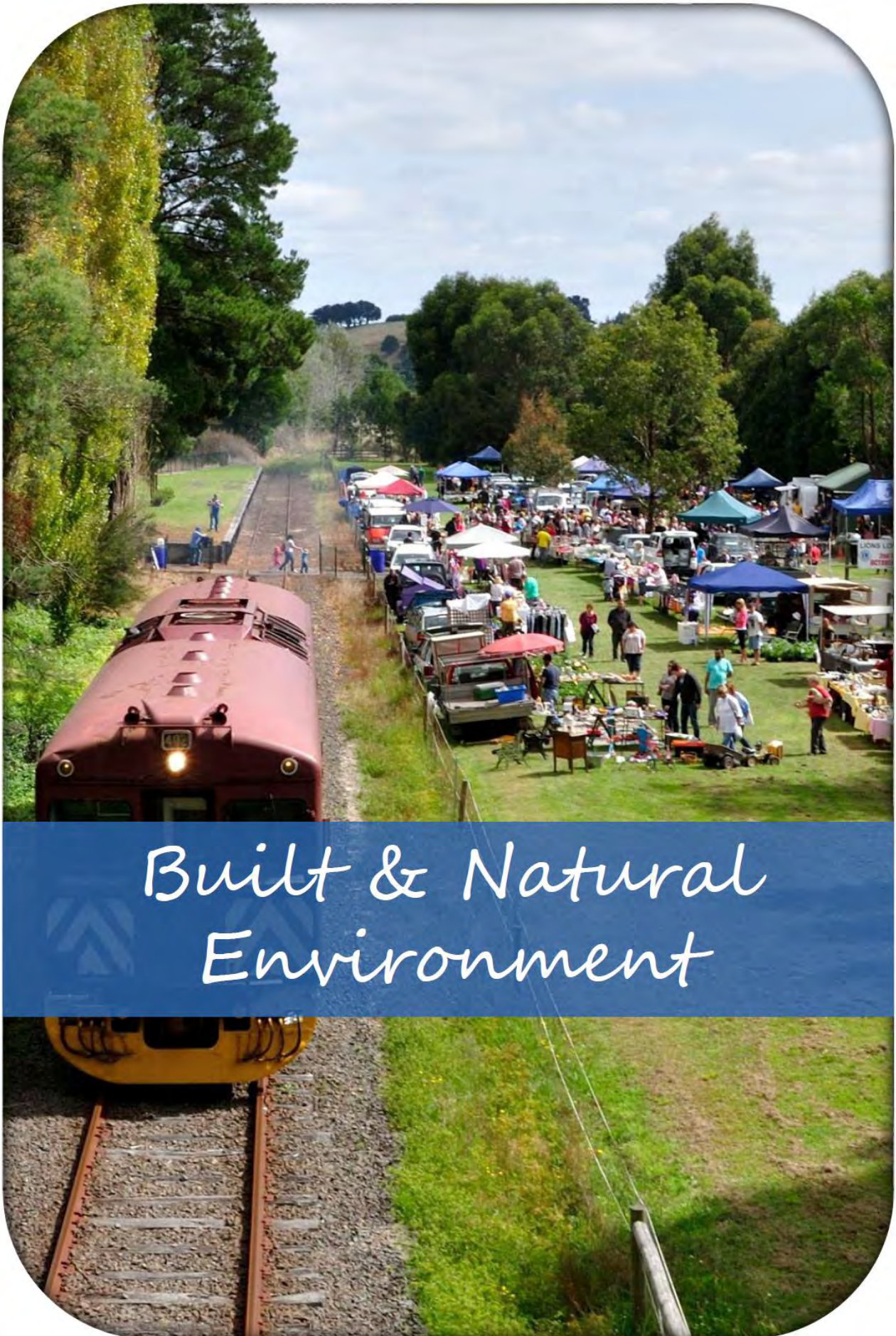
- Contribute to the promotion of safer consumption of alcohol across a range of settings.

Tobacco use

Even though the smoking rate has dropped in Victoria, smoking remains the leading preventable cause of many cancers and respiratory, cardiovascular and other diseases^{vii}.

Strategy

- Lead the promotion of smoke free environments through partnership with organisations and businesses.



Built & Natural Environment



Strategy Areas

Natural Environment

The natural and built environments provide the platform to enable many of the day to day activities which facilitate strategies to improve community wellbeing and lifestyle for our communities.

The clean air and beautiful scenery were cited by many individuals as a strength of the community in which they live. Sustainability and environmental issues were cited by many as important in promoting health and wellbeing.

Parks and Reserves

Parks and reserves generate much of our community's beauty and provide spaces where community members can relax, enjoy time with friends and family, and participate in physical activity.

Playgrounds and Play spaces

Playgrounds and play spaces which are accessible and safe provide foundations for children and families to play.

Biodiversity Protection

Conservation of natural bush is a requirement of Council in line with the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Bill 1999 and planning and development regulations.

Climate Change

Climate change will have a range of impacts that could be detrimental to the health and wellbeing of the community. In particular, vulnerable people and groups within our communities, such as older people, young children and people with an existing illness could be most impacted. Some of these impacts may be a direct result of adverse events such as bushfires, heatwaves or flood. Other impacts may be indirect and felt over a period of time.

Council is committed to aligning priorities which may be impacted by climate change to increase individual and the community's ability to adapt to these changes.

Strategies

- Collaborate with community groups, industries, State and Federal Governments to develop strategies for improved natural resource management and biodiversity outcomes.
- Develop and maintain open spaces to meet community needs now and into the future.

“Being able to walk / exercise safely and be assured that my children are safe when they are active in the community”



Transport & Community Mobility

Our community members want to be able to move around their communities. For many, particularly older people, parents with prams, people with decreased mobility, or people who wish to exercise safely, this can be problematic due to lack of footpaths or their state of disrepair.

Getting around the town & Access to transport

Getting around the town and having access to timely transport was a strong theme with community members who attended the consultations.

Transport within the town (e.g. to attend medical appointments, shopping, visit neighbours) is a challenge for individuals in areas with minimal or no public transport. Transport between towns within the region is also limited, particularly from areas such as Venus Bay and the Tarwin Lower area. Community members indicated that increased access to public transport to areas such as Yarram, Leongatha and Wonthaggi would be desirable.

Bike Paths / Rail Trails

Bike Paths / Rail Trails were identified as an important aspect of the area by a number of community members, for whom linkages between tracks, and tracks to more destinations were a priority.

Local Roads

People we met through the consultation were also vocal about the state of disrepair of local roads. There is a perception of lack of safety when travelling on the roads due to pot holes and erosion of the road surface.

The appropriate management of roadside vegetation was important for community members as it reduces mosquitoes', clears pathways for safe passage during an emergency, and enables road users a clear line of sight.

Strategies

- Advocate for improved access to transport and promote existing transport options.
- Contribute to improved infrastructure to increase active transport.
- Work with other partners to improve the road safety of all users, including pedestrians.



Appendix 1

Organisations & Council departments contributing to the development of the Plan

Organisations	Council Departments
Gippsland Southern Health Service	Maternal and Child Health
Banksia Health Care Psychologist	Social Planning
Best Start Community Facilitator	Aged and Disability Services
Community College Gippsland	Youth
Gippsland Southern Health Service (Health Promotion)	Strategic Planning & Development
Department of Human Services (Multicultural Services Officer)	Children and Family Services
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (Adolescent Health Nurse)	Supported Playgroup Program
Gippsland Women's Health Service	Sustainability
GippSport	Community Strengthening
Milpara Community House	
Salvation Army Community Support	
South Coast Primary Care Partnership	
South Gippsland Hospital (Foster)	

Other Acknowledgements:

Images provided by:

- South Gippsland Shire Council Image Library
- Ken Fraser

Quotes in this plan are from the community survey and consultation.

Appendix 2

Snapshot of South Gippsland Health and Wellbeing

Health Protection

Immunisation

South Gippsland Shire Council provides the co-ordination of immunisation services across the Shire, under Statutory Obligation. The aim of the program is to not only protect the person who has been immunised but to protect the broader community by reducing the spread of disease. The service provides children from 0-6 years with free immunisation and achieves greater than a 93% participation rate, which is above the Victorian State average. Immunisations are provided free to secondary school students in the school environment as part of the National Immunisation Program with a 90% return rate of consents. Adult immunisations are provided for influenza, whooping cough, Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B and may incur a fee.

Community Wellbeing

Subjective Wellbeing

South Gippsland achieved a subjective wellbeing score of 79.6 (out of 100) in the 2011 VicHealth Indicators survey, indicating a relatively high level of subjective wellbeing.

The VicHealth Indicators Survey 2011 measured the subjective wellbeing of communities in Victoria, defining wellbeing as "a measure of a deep and enduring sense of satisfaction, as opposed to a momentary burst of happiness" (Australian Unity 2012). The Australian Unity Personal Wellbeing Index was used, which includes ratings on seven domains: standard of living, health, achievements in life, community connection, personal relationships, safety and future security.^{viii}

An engaging community

Compared to Victorians as a whole, data indicates that more South Gippsland community members engage with their community, with 54.5% of South Gippsland community members volunteering at least once per month (compared to 34.3 Victoria wide). 71.4% of South Gippsland community members participate in citizen engagement activities annually (compared to 50.5 Victoria wide)^x. Community spirit and friendliness of people was a strength commonly identified by community members throughout our consultation. Feeling included, engaged and connected to the community was important to the people we talked with.

Community Connections

Approximately 35% of current South Gippsland community members did not live in their current home 5 years ago, and 60% of those who have changed residence in the last 5 years have moved into South Gippsland from interstate or overseas^x.

The proportion of community members living alone is higher than the State average, with numerous small towns recording over 25% of the population living alone.

Access & Inclusion

Disability

Approximately 5,400^{xi} people with a disability reside in South Gippsland Shire, and of these, approximately 1,447 people are living with a severe or profound disability^{xii}. In addition, we also have a relatively high number of people over the age of 65 years, some of whom have reduced mobility.

Cultural Diversity

South Gippsland is home to people from diverse cultural backgrounds. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people represent approximately 0.75% of the South Gippsland population. Additionally, approximately 10% of the South Gippsland population were born overseas^{xiii}. In relation to acceptance of diverse cultures, the VicHealth 2011 Community Indicators survey indicates that a lower percentage of South Gippsland individuals are accepting of diverse cultures compared to Victoria as a whole^{xiv}.

Transport & Mobility

When we asked community members to nominate their three health and wellbeing priorities for improvement in the built environment, the top responses were getting around the town (access: ramps, footpaths and buildings), and general (seating, lighting), local roads, bike paths and access to transport.

Community Safety

General

According to the VicHealth Indicators Survey 2011 the proportion of community members feeling safe walking alone during the day is 99.4% and at night is 88.4%. This is significantly higher than the State average.

Twenty people (approximately 5%) of the people consulted in the development of the Health and Wellbeing Plan indicated that personal safety was a concern to them in their community.

South Gippsland has a lower rate (per 100,000) of total personal crimes reported than Victoria as a whole, according to Police statistics. South Gippsland also reports a lower rate of property crime (e.g. burglary and theft) at 53.6% of that for Victoria for the 2010/2011 period. Looking at crime rate trends from 2009/2010 to 2010/2011, for personal crime within South Gippsland, the proportion of assaults have increased by almost 5%, however there is no significant change in other personal crime rates.

Family Violence

The rate of family violence incidents reported for South Gippsland has increased from 2009/2010 to 2010/2011, as has the rate of charges laid. Despite the rate of reported incidents (per 100,000 population) being under the State figures, the proportion of charges being laid and Intervention Orders applied for is above the Victorian average per 100,000 population^{xv}.

The rate of family violence incidents in South Gippsland for 2010/2011 was 687 per 100,000 compared to 732 per 100,000 for Victoria. The rate of charges laid was 317 in South Gippsland and 210 per 100,000 for Victoria.

The rate of reported crimes against property was significantly lower for South Gippsland for the same period of time, compared to Bass coast and Victoria.

Road Safety

During 2010, three drivers died on South Gippsland roads due to road traffic accidents, and 43 serious injuries were reported. The vast majority of injuries were sustained by motor vehicle drivers / passengers (77%), 21% were sustained by motorcyclists and one pedestrian was injured^{xvi}.

Almost 20% of the South Gippsland population is over 65 years of age. This is approximately 1.4 times the proportion of the Victorian population aged over 65. Whilst not everyone over the age of 65 experiences limitations in their mobility, community members we spoke with were concerned about their safety crossing main roads, particularly those individuals who are not as quick on their feet nowadays.

Income

When it comes to income, almost half the households in South Gippsland have an income of less than \$1,000 per week (ABS Census 2011). Just over two thirds of residents aged 65 and over receive the aged pension (Centrelink 2009).

Lifestyle

Active Communities

It is predicted that approximately one third of South Gippsland community members over the age of 15 are physically inactive.

Almost one quarter of South Gippsland community members over the age of 18 are sitting for at least 7 hours per day^{xvii}. Self reported sitting time (a measure of sedentary behaviour) has been identified as a predictor of weight gain in women, even once energy intake and physical activity in non-work hours is taken into account^{xviii}. For those people who do exercise, the benefits of physical activity may be offset by long periods of sitting. Getting incidental exercise throughout the day is recommended^{xix} and may help in decreasing the risk of chronic disease.

When we asked community members the question "what could be done to improve your health and wellbeing?" the most common response (by 40% of respondents) was "physical activity". This indicates people are aware of the benefits of physical activity and may be motivated to increase their activity levels.

Many community members who responded to the survey spoke of difficulties exercising safely (e.g. on a walking or bike track); the desire for physical activity which could be undertaken with children present, (or having their children looked after for a short time) and advocated the benefits of "outdoor gyms" which are cost free, and can be accessed at any time of the day.

Healthy and Accessible Food

Fifty percent of South Gippsland community members do not eat the recommended amount of fruit per day, with 87% not meeting the consumption guidelines for both fruit and vegetables.^{xx} (Synthetic prediction from the Victorian Population Health Survey 2008).

Unhealthy eating and low fruit and vegetable consumption contribute to a range of health risks such as high rates of blood pressure, blood cholesterol levels and obesity.^{xxi}

Of people responding to the survey 17% said that changes to their diet would improve their health and wellbeing

Looking at why many community members do not meet the recommended fruit and vegetable consumption guidelines, the majority state that foods are too expensive, or they are unable to get the desired quality of food.^{xxii}

Alcohol, Smoking and Other Drugs

Estimates indicate that 5% of the South Gippsland population use alcohol at rates which are harmful to their health.

The VicHealth Indicators Survey 2011 measured the proportion of the population that had purchased liquor in the 7 days prior to the survey, and the amount they spent. According to this survey, 42% of South Gippsland community members had purchased liquor within the 7 days prior to the survey (compared to 36% of Victorians). South Gippsland community members also spent less per week on packaged liquor, but may have spent more than Victorians in licensed premises^{xxiii}.

Of the community members who responded to our survey 48% indicated alcohol and illicit drugs were a problem for their community. A small number of individuals commented that the lack of activities and availability of transport for young people contributed to social issues including the consumption of alcohol in their community.

Tobacco use

Even though the smoking rate has dropped in Victoria, smoking remains the leading preventable cause of many cancers and respiratory, cardiovascular and other diseases^{xxiv}.

It is estimated that up to 25% of South Gippsland males over 18 years old and 20% of South Gippsland females over 18 years old were current smokers in 2007/08.^{xxv}

The VicHealth Indicators Survey 2011 measured support for bans in outside dining areas, which was supported by 64% of South Gippsland community members, slightly less than Victoria as a whole.

Of the community members who responded to our survey 36% indicated smoking and tobacco control (e.g. smoking in public places, sales to minors) was a problem for their community.

Natural and Built Environment

Getting places

Transport disadvantage, either due to lack of public transport, or disadvantage due to the cost of maintaining a vehicle, particularly for people on a low income, is significant for many community members. This particularly impacts on youth, unemployed, young mothers, senior citizens and is felt most tangibly by those in smaller, more isolated towns. Lack of services in smaller towns (healthcare services, employment opportunities and activities for young people) coupled with inadequate inter-town transport impacts on the wellbeing of individuals and smaller communities. Young people move out of the area to find employment.

Appendix 3

Snapshot of Consultations

Council undertook a consultation process with community members from September to November 2012 to get their views on the health and wellbeing of themselves, their neighbours and communities. Community members were invited to complete a "Health and Wellbeing" survey. Council also facilitated a number of focus groups with individuals, community sectors and organisations.

Following is a snapshot of the views of community members who responded to the survey. Attachment 4 provides a more comprehensive overview of the feedback.

Community Strengths

- Community spirit (friendly, supportive, active & engaged)
- Parks / green spaces
- Clean air
- Sporting and community facilities
- Rail trails
- Environment (peaceful, open green spaces, landscape)
- Location (accessible to beach, Melbourne etc...)

What could be done to improve your health and wellbeing?

- Access to health and support services (GP's, allied health, bulk billing)
- Active transport (walking / bike paths, rail trails)
- Healthy and affordable food
- Transport
- Roads & Footpaths
- Community Activities

Question	Top responses
What does a high level of health and wellbeing mean for you? What will you see, hear, feel, taste, smell when you have it? (e.g. feeling energised, having good relationships, being part of the community, being able to do the things you enjoy...)	More energy Good relationships Stay in control of your life longer More time to enjoy local surroundings
What could be done to improve your health and wellbeing?	More exercise Eat healthy Stress management
What are the three things that could be changed in your community to improve health and wellbeing	Improved roads/footpaths around town More available healthcare Increased transport options to reduce isolation
Tell us your top three health and wellbeing priorities for improvement in buildings/towns/roads (the physical/built environment):	Footpaths/Roads – potholes Outdoor gym and fitness trails Bike paths
Tell us three health and wellbeing priorities for improvement in employment, training, business opportunities (the economic environment):	Education Encouragement for local business Fuel prices
Tell us your top three health and wellbeing priorities for improvement with the parks/air quality, waste management, environment (the natural environment):	Waste management Land use policies and protecting the rural nature of the area Keep roadsides clear of vegetation in times of emergency (eg fire)
Which, if any, of the following require changes to improve health and wellbeing?	Availability of fresh produce to all Walking / bike tracks Access to healthcare
Which, if any, of the following social issues are a problem for your community (check up to three that apply)	Alcohol & Illicit drugs Smoking Lack of activities for youth

Appendix 4



*South Gippsland
Shire Council*

Overview of Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Survey and Consultation Results

Part 1 - Survey Results

Survey Final Results 25 November 2011

A total of 177 South Gippsland Shire Council community members responded to the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing survey. Response/s were received from the majority of towns and localities within the Shire. Three people residing outside the shire responded to the survey (one person in Cape Paterson, Wonthaggi and Melbourne).

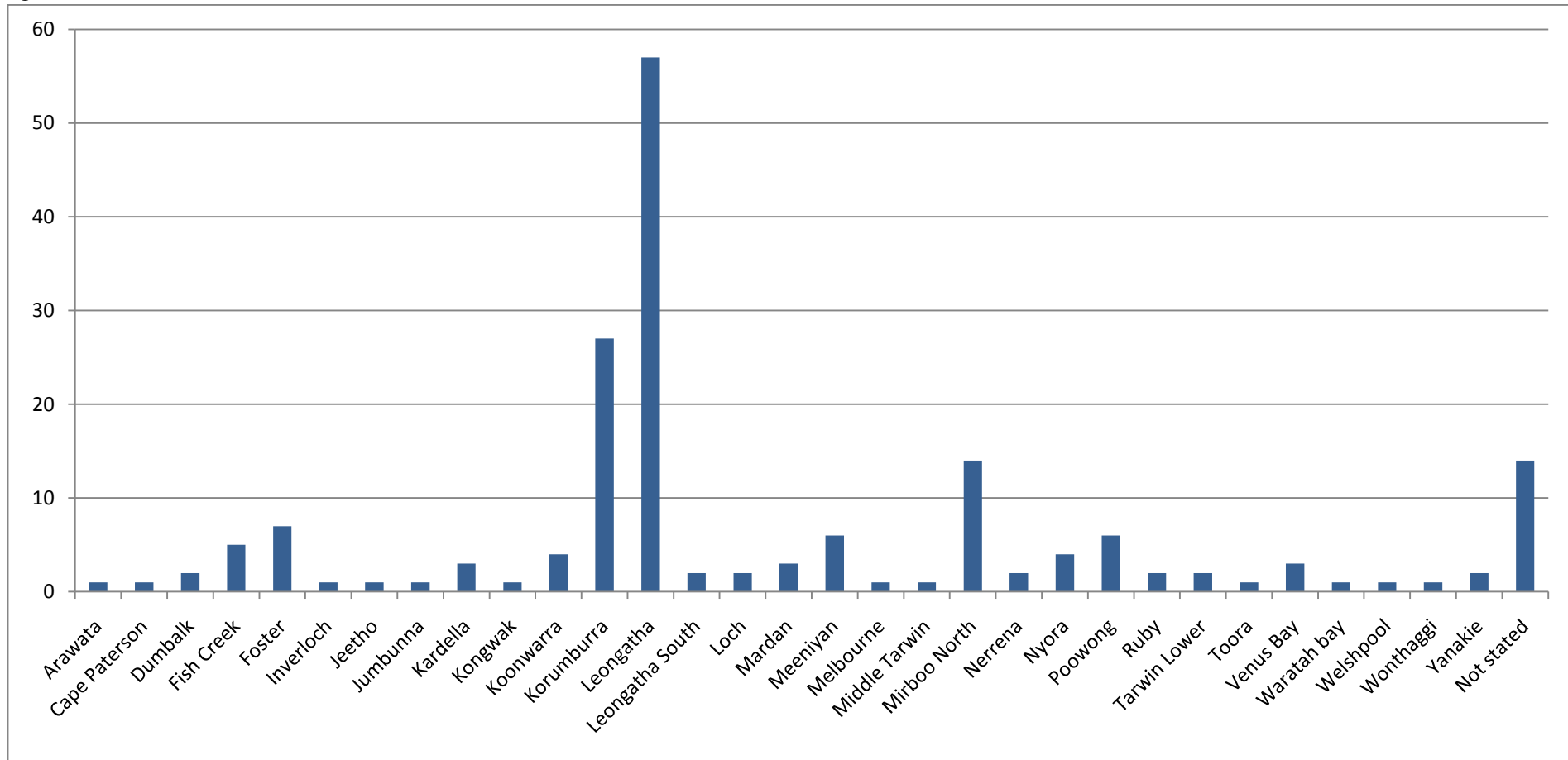
Table 1 below illustrates the number of respondents from each town:

Table 1.

Town	Number of respondents
Arawata	1
Cape Paterson	1
Dumbalk	2
Fish Creek	5
Foster	7
Inverloch	1
Jeetho	1
Jumbunna	1
Kardella	3
Kongwak	1
Koonwarra	4
Korumburra	27
Leongatha	57
Leongatha South	2
Loch	2
Mardan	3
Meeniyah	6
Melbourne	1
Middle Tarwin	1
Mirboo North	14
Nerrena	2
Nyora	4
Poowong	6
Ruby	2
Tarwin Lower	2
Toora	1
Venus Bay	3
Waratah bay	1
Welshpool	1
Wonthaggi	1
Yanakie	2
Not stated	14

Figure 1 below illustrates the number of respondents from each town / locality.

Figure 1.



Gender of Respondents

70% of respondents were female, and 28.9% were male. 1.1% of respondents chose not to state their gender.

Table 2 below illustrates the number of respondents by gender

Table 2.

Male	Female	Not stated
52	126	2

Age Range of Respondents

The majority of respondents were in the 30 – 39 years of age bracket, with people between the age of 30 and 59 representing 59.8% of responses. When compared to the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011 Census data, we see the age groups which are under/ over-represented in the responses.

Table 3 below illustrates the number of respondents in each age bracket and proportion of the population in each age bracket.

Table 3.

Age Category	Number of respondents	% of respondents	% of South Gippsland population*
11 or younger	1	0.6	14.6
12-17	10	5.6	8.4
18-25	8	4.5	7.2
26-29	12	6.8	3.6
30-39	42	23.7	10.1
40-49	33	18.6	13.4
50-59	31	17.5	15.1
60-64	8	4.5	8.0
65 or older	32	18.1	19.6
Not stated	3	1.7	0.0

* Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011 Census Data, South Gippsland LGA

How respondents rated their current level of health and wellbeing.

Just over 50% of respondents rated their level of health and wellbeing as being a little better than most, with 4% of respondents reporting their level of health as excellent. 12.4% of people responding to the survey reported their health as being below the average, as outlined in Table 4. According to the Vic Health Indicators Survey 2011, the subjective wellbeing score for South Gippsland is 79.6 compared to the Victorian average of 77.5 (range 73.7 – 82.5)

Table 4.

Health and Wellbeing rating	Number of respondents	% of respondents
1. Significantly below average	5	3.4%
2. A little bit below the average	13	9.0%
3. Average (about the same as others)	46	31.7%
4. A little better than most (could still be improved)	75	51.7%
5. Excellent (no improvement needed)	6	4.1%
Not stated	35	19.4

Respondents' thoughts on what could be done to improve their health and wellbeing.

Ten most common narrative responses to the question "What could be done to improve your health and wellbeing?" have been themed and listed below in Table 5.

Table 5.

Factor	Number of respondents
Physical activity	66
Diet (improve)	30
Walking/bike trails	12
Health & Support Services (increased access)	8
Weight loss	8
Stress reduction	8
Balance	7
Access to GP's	7
Childcare	5
Socialising	5

Data Correlates

- Physical activity

According to the Social Atlas of Health 2010, the synthetic prediction for 2007- 2008 indicates that South Gippsland LGA had a marginally higher rate of physical activity than Victoria as a whole (33.0 compared to 32.6)

- Diet

Synthetic predictions based on the 2007-2008 National Health Survey indicate that a higher proportion of persons aged 5 – 17 years in South Gippsland have a usual daily intake of two or more serves of fruit compared to persons 18 years and older (65.9% compared to 48.7%). This reflects the State trend.

Overall, the proportion of South Gippsland individuals who did not meet either fruit or vegetable consumption guidelines based on the National NHMRC guidelines (2003) is slightly lower than the regional and State predictions.

- Weight loss

Based on the National Health Survey 2007-2008, it was estimated that approximately 20% of males 18 years and over in South Gippsland are obese (with a Body Mass Index of 30 or over). All South Gippsland SLA's had a higher estimated rate of female obesity in the 18 years and over age group compared to the Victorian estimates.

- Balance

According to the Vic Health Indicators Survey 2011, 49.4% of South Gippsland respondents report adequate "work/life balance" compared to 53.1% of Victorians on average. (Victorian LGA range between 37.6 and 69.5)

39.7% of South Gippsland individuals reported "time pressure" compared to 41.3% of Victorians on average (Victorian LGA range between 53.8 and 26.5)

- Access to GP's

According to data, there are 1,111 South Gippsland residents to one full time equivalent GP workload (based on 2009 figures).

Community Strengths

The most common themes respondents identified were:

- Communities (supportive, friendly, caring, active)
- Sporting and community facilities
- Rail trails
- Environment (peaceful, open green spaces, landscape)
- Location (accessible to beach, Melbourne etc...)

Data: Vic Health Indicators Survey 2011 indicates that South Gippsland figures for community engagement (measured by volunteering more than once per month and participating in citizen engagement activities within the last year) is significantly more favourable than the Victorian average).

Respondents' ideas on what could be changed in their community to improve health and wellbeing.

The things that could be changed in the community to improve health and wellbeing which were most commonly identified by respondents are outlined in Table 6.

Table 6.

Area of Improvement	Number of respondents
Access to healthcare (GP's, allied health, bulk billing)	46
Active transport (walking / bike paths, rail trails)	36
Healthy and affordable food (and nutrition education)	28
Transport	24
Roads	15
Community activities	14
Footpaths	12

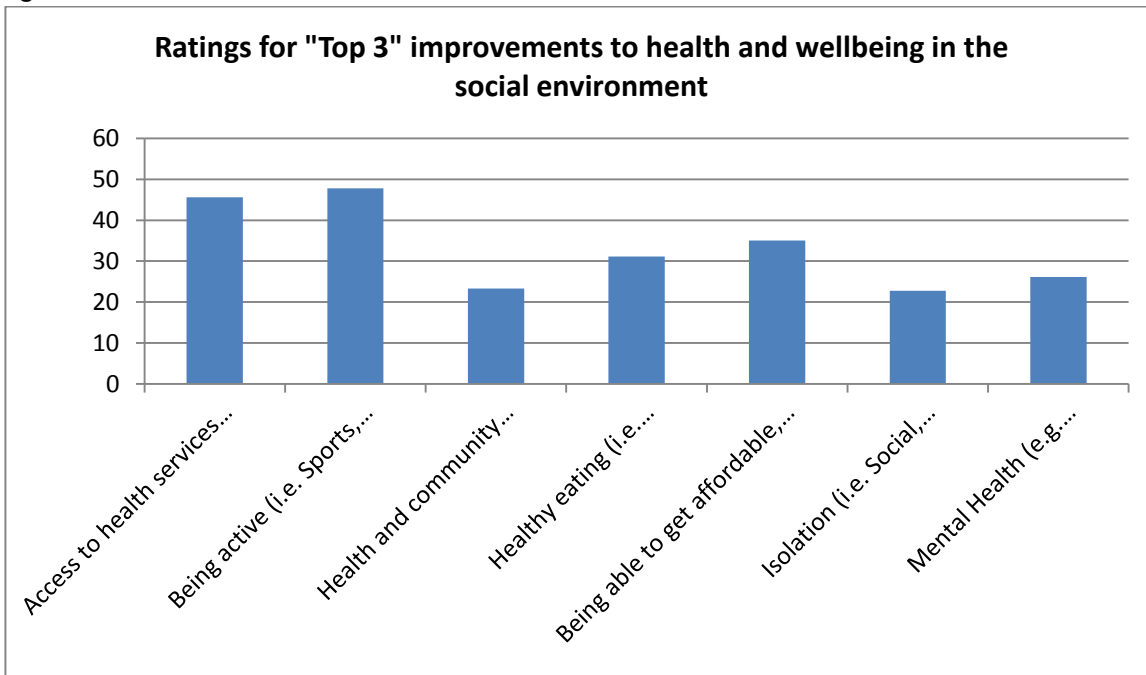
Environments for Health

The State Government, Department of Health, *Environments for Health: A systems approach to municipal public health planning* outlines four environmental dimensions which impact health at a systemic level: social, built, natural and economic. South Gippsland community members were asked to rate their top three health and wellbeing priorities for improvement in each of the environmental dimensions.

The Social Environment

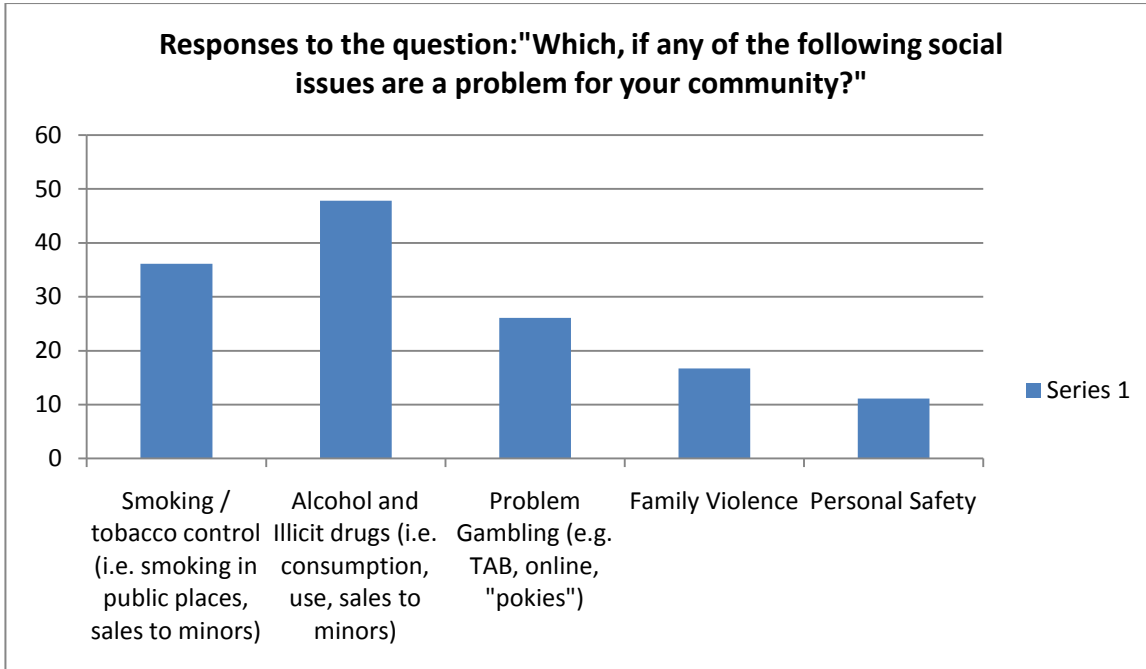
In relation to the social environment, 48% of respondents rated being active as their top priority with access to health services rated the second top priority followed by access to healthy and affordable food, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2.



48% of respondent reported alcohol and illicit drugs as a social issue, and approximately 36% identified smoking as a social issue, as illustrated in Figure 3 below.

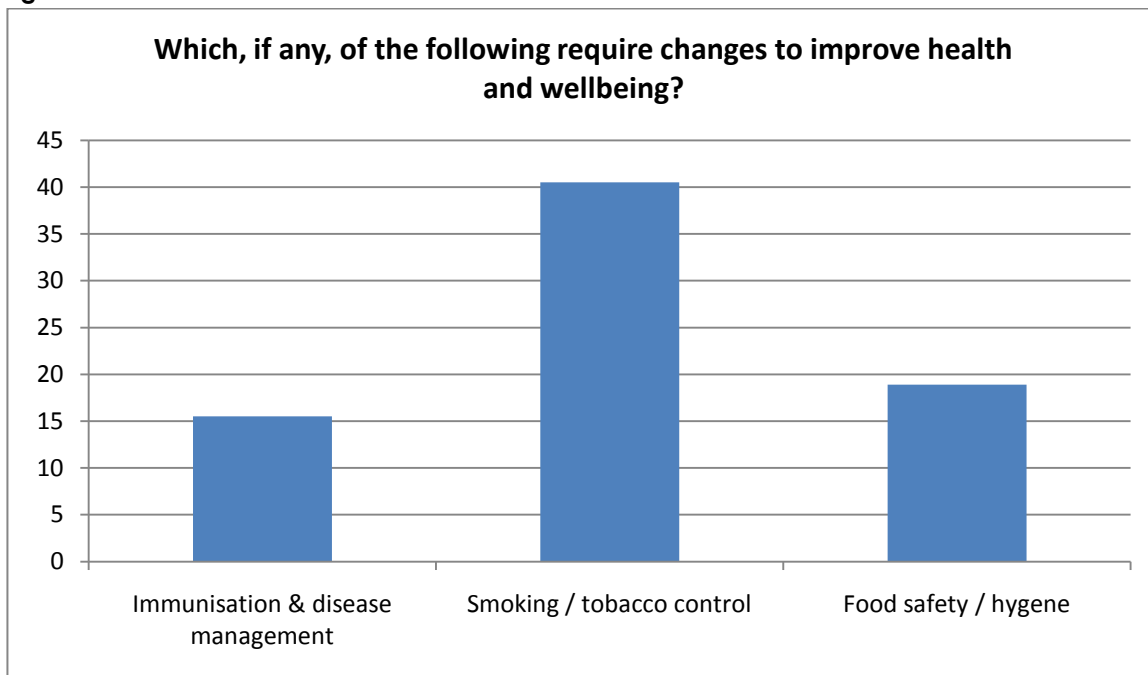
Figure 3.



Regulatory Functions

Respondents were asked to identify regulatory issues which may require changes to improve health and wellbeing. 40% of the total number of survey respondents identified smoking / tobacco control as requiring changes, as illustrated in Figure 4. This was also reflected in the narrative data.

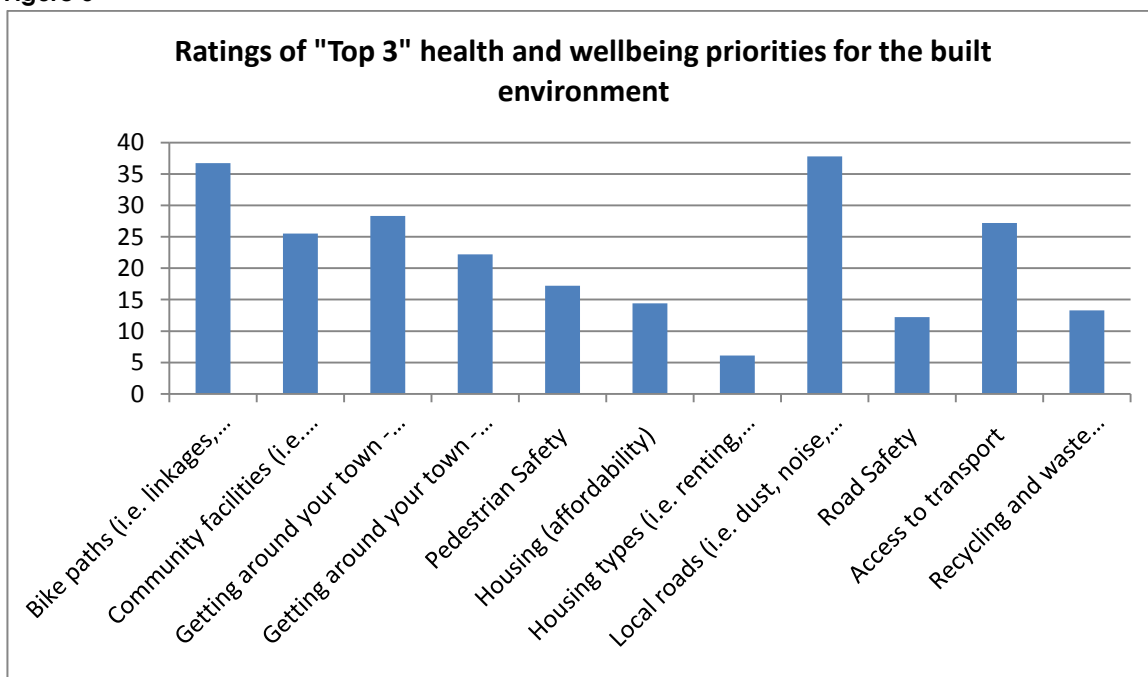
Figure 4.



The Built Environment

In relation to the built environment, roads and transport (including active transport) featured heavily in the priorities of respondents as illustrated in Figure 5 below. 37% of respondents identified local roads as their top priority, with bike paths being the second priority, access around town (footpaths etc...) the third priority, closely followed by access to transport.

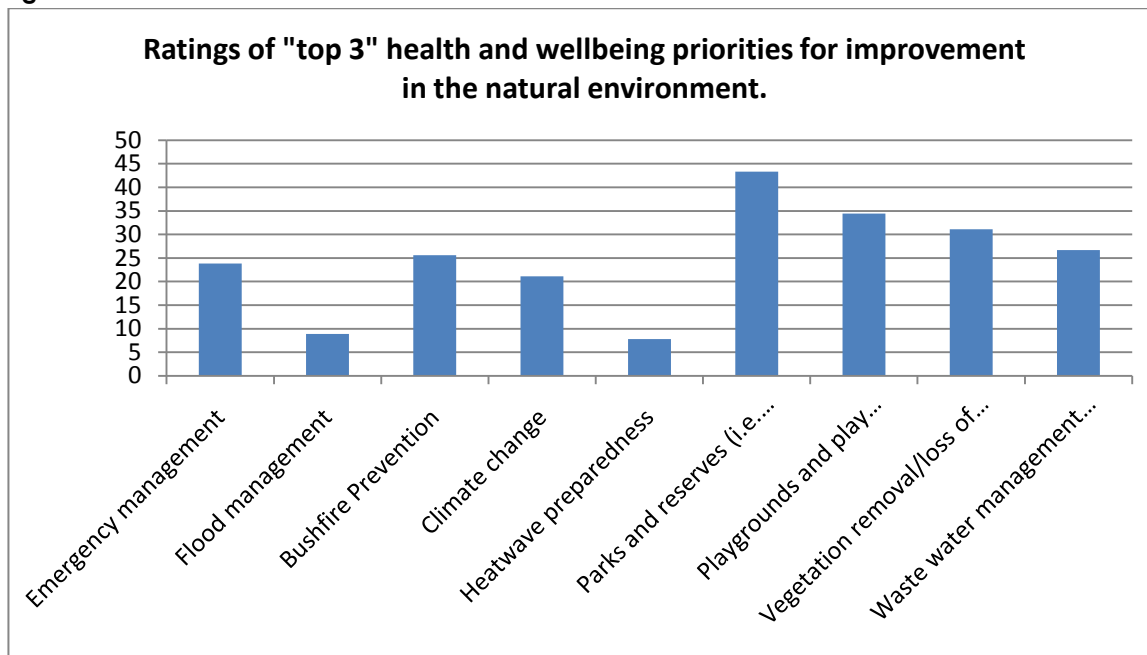
Figure 5



The Natural Environment

Figure 6 below illustrates the most commonly identified priorities in relation to the natural environment. Parks and reserves were identified as the highest priority, followed by playgrounds and play spaces, then vegetation removal/loss of biodiversity. These themes were also reflected in the narrative data.

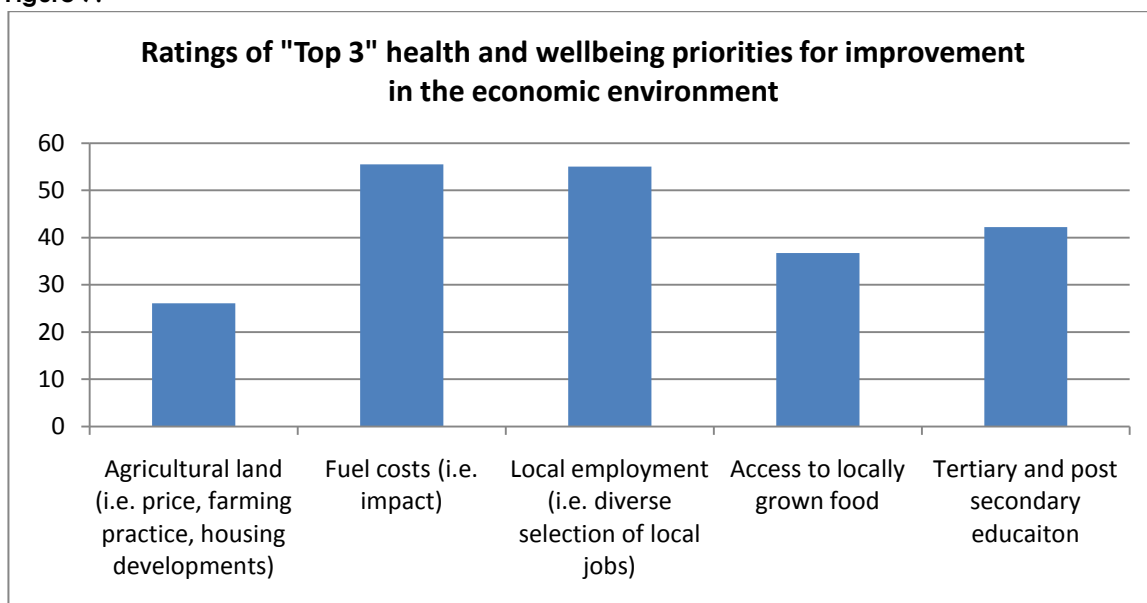
Figure 6.



Economic Environment

With respect to the economic environment, the impact of fuel costs was prioritised marginally higher than local employment, both identified as priorities by over 50% of survey respondents. Tertiary and post secondary school education was also a priority for over 40% of respondents, as outlined in Figure 7.

Figure 7.



Part 2 - Community Consultations

Consultations were conducted with the following:

- South Gippsland Shire Council Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee
- Gippsland Hills County Women's Association Group
- Tarwin Lower "Friday Friendship" Group
- Foster Planned Activity Group

The following meetings were also attended:

- South Gippsland Town Progress meeting
- Playgroup cluster meeting
- Men's Shed cluster meeting

Common themes emerging from the consultations mirrored the priorities as identified by survey respondents.

Community Strengths were identified as:

- Friendly and helpful community
- Great location (beach/ rivers)
- Fresh air
- Community groups (e.g. sporting clubs, friendship groups)

Factors to improve health and wellbeing include:

- Transport
 - bus to regional areas e.g. Wonthaggi, Yarram, Leongatha;
 - community / Council car or bus with drivers
 - Taxi (no service in Foster)
- Access to medical and healthcare services (e.g. Tarwin Lower /Venus Bay is serviced by a GP for 5 hours per week, and they are not taking any more patients. For existing patients, there is a 3 week wait; others need to go to Wonthaggi).
- Infrastructure (e.g. Council paying for post boxes etc....)
- Roads
- Social inclusion (more activities)
- People in smaller communities (e.g. Tarwin Lower / Venus Bay) have a low median income and high median age. They have a fixed income and rising costs.
- One "go to" point in each town (e.g. community hub / community house /citizen advice bureau)

Highest priorities for the **social environment** include:

- Outdoor exercise stations
- Social inclusion (activities for people over 65 years of age e.g. dances, bingo etc...)
- Support for people with mental health issues
- Activities for young people (e.g. 15 – 25 year olds)
- Utilisation of community assets (e.g. halls, meeting rooms etc...)

Highest priorities for the **built environment** include:

- Transport
- Getting around the town
 - Footpaths
 - Accessing shops / pubs
 - Street lighting
 - Seats too low
 - Building a garage for motor scooters "gofers" so community members can independently access the bus
- Roads (pot hole repair)
- Pedestrian safety (crossing main roads)
- Signage on rail trails (e.g. distance to next stop / seat / toilets),

Highest priorities for the **natural environment** include:

- Cutting back tea tree (from corners, nature strip, signs etc...) to make roads safer
- Bushfire preparedness. For Venus Bay / Tarwin Lower community members, there is no safe meeting place. For Venus Bay community members, there is only one road in and out. Power is cut in severe bushfire warning, which leaves people without pumps and air conditioning, placing them at risk.
- Flood management.
- Heatwave preparedness. Local services (e.g. Foster hospital) monitor their clients in a heatwave; however there is no broad strategy for ensuring public safety during a heatwave (e.g. community members who are not involved with local services might "slip through the cracks". Suggested "register" to be developed and led by the Council to ensure safety of all community members during heatwaves.

Highest priorities for the **economic environment** include:

- Fuel costs (local outlet has a monopoly on the area and prices are high)
- Employment
- Viability / sustainability of townships (concern for Toora which is seen as a "dying" community)

Part 3 - Service Provider Forum

A service provider forum was held on the 3rd December 2012 for Council staff and organisations providing services to South Gippsland communities (including regional and local services).

Twenty eight people attended the forum, representing a diverse range of organisations, sectors and business units, including private providers (e.g. private psychologist), community service organisations, health, education providers, federal and State government, and Council Officers.

Data relating to the health and wellbeing of people living in South Gippsland was discussed as was feedback from consultations.

Service providers were encouraged to discuss how the data and community consultation feedback relates to their experience and knowledge of the area, and identify any themes / issues which were not evident throughout the consultation.

Broadly, service providers felt the umbrella priority areas identified by the Reference Group reflected their experience and knowledge of the area, and the issues facing their client groups.

There was strong correlation between service provider identification of issues and the data / feedback from consultations.

The priority issues identified which were under-represented in the community consultation feedback included:

- Youth issues (e.g. activities, engaging with education and employment)
- Teenage pregnancy in certain localities
- Family Violence
- Oral health
- Transport (this was identified in the consultations)

These issues were discussed in the forum, and further work is being undertaken to obtain information on the topics above.

Service providers and Council staff then identified roles and actions they could take in contributing to the public health and wellbeing of South Gippsland community members. There was a strong alignment between how service providers see their role and the priorities identified through the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing planning, with each service provider / Council department identifying multiple points of engagement and operational actions they can implement in relation to the umbrella areas identified for the municipal public health and wellbeing plan.

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