



CORANGAMITE SHIRE
**RECREATION
AND OPEN SPACE
STRATEGY**
2016-2026

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

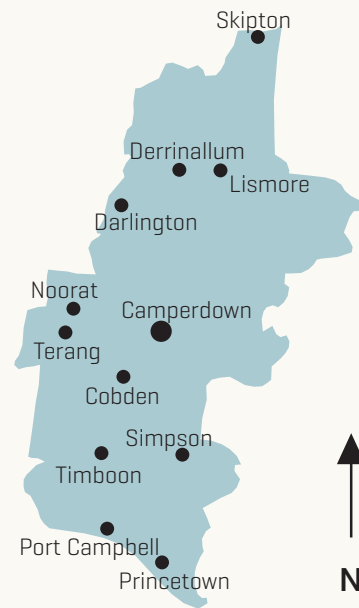
The Corangamite Recreation and Open Space Strategy guides the provision of structured and unstructured recreation activities, facilities and open spaces in Corangamite. It identifies Council's strategic priorities for sport, recreation and public open space and makes recommendations to focus Council's efforts and resources over a ten-year period to 2026.

The Strategy addresses the needs, expectations and aspirations of the Corangamite community and has the primary objective of increasing participation.

The Strategy has been based on:

- A detailed review of relevant literature.
- An analysis of demographic and recreation trends in Corangamite
- An audit of sport and recreation programs and facilities and open space in Corangamite
- Consultation with the local community and clubs, groups and agencies involved in recreation and open space provision

Corangamite Shire



SOME KEY FINDINGS

- Corangamite's population is predicted to only slightly increase over the next 20 years. Population decline is forecast in some areas
- Generally, the Corangamite community is ageing. The sport playing age cohorts across the Shire are predicted to decline significantly over the next 20 years
- Some local communities are comparatively disadvantaged
- The Corangamite community has some health concerns - overweight/obesity, social isolation and loneliness, mental health issues
- Corangamite (including all of its major towns) has a more than adequate supply of sport and recreation facilities and open space areas. There are some deficits (e.g. an indoor heated pool, recreational trails - in particular, loop trails) and, potentially, some areas of oversupply (football/cricket ovals, halls, tennis courts, outdoor pools)
- Generally, sport and recreation facilities and open space areas in Corangamite are maintained in a reasonable to good condition
- The community is the largest provider of sport and recreation in Corangamite. As such the viability, sustainability and prosperity of recreation organisations is critically important for the provision of sport and recreation in Corangamite
- There is strong participation in sport in Corangamite - Australian Rules Football and netball are particularly strong. Soccer is growing in popularity whereas participation in competition tennis is steadily declining, whilst interest in casual tennis and bowls is increasing. Participation by women in traditional male sports is also growing
- Flexibly structured activities that can fit into people's increasingly busy lifestyles, e.g. bike riding, personal training, pilates, yoga, are increasing in popularity
- Some sections of the community are still lobbying for the provision of a heated pool. The existing outdoor pools are ageing and are costly to maintain and operate. Some residents want all existing pools to remain open. Others concede that some rationalisation may be required
- The community places a strong importance on recreational trails - they want footpaths and trail networks to be extended and more loop trails constructed
- The community wants Council and other facility providers to concentrate on improving the quality of existing sport and recreation facilities and spaces
- Some reserve committees want Council's assistance in finding effective water supply solutions for their reserves



ROLE OF COUNCIL

Council's role in sport, recreation and open space provision entails promotion; planning; providing and facilitating the provision of sport and recreation opportunities; developing and maintaining sport and recreation facilities and open space areas; supporting and developing local recreation clubs, committees of management and associations; and building strong and productive relationships with other sport and recreation providers.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

COUNCIL WILL:

- Work in partnership with other providers in delivering its recreation and open space programs and services
- Advocate for the community and make decisions on the distribution of resources in the best interests of the community and Council
- Strive to achieve equity in the allocation of recreation and open space resources
- Take a proactive and planned approach to recreation and open space provision
- Give priority to asset renewal over the development of new facilities
- Provide and/or facilitate the provision of sport and recreation programs, facilities and open space areas that are sustainable



VISION

Sport and recreation opportunities in Corangamite will be diverse and encourage residents of all ages to be active and healthy. Visitors will be attracted to the Shire to participate in these opportunities.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND KEY ACTIONS

PRIORITY

Building strong and supportive partnerships between Council and other bodies involved in sport, recreation and open space provision.

ACTIONS:

- Develop strong relationships with and explore planning partnership opportunities with:
 - Local health and disability services providers and networks
 - Government and other agencies involved in recreation and open space provision and the statistical analysis of recreation participation
 - Agencies involved in land, water and environmental management
 - Peak bodies for sport in Victoria
 - Regional sports organisations and associations
 - Regional tourism bodies
 - Local environment groups, recreation clubs, committees of management, schools and private recreation providers
- Explore joint planning, programming and management activities with neighbouring councils

PRIORITY

Increasing participation in sport and recreation.

ACTIONS:

- Collaboration with relevant agencies, develop a statistical profile of recreation participation in Corangamite Shire
- In collaboration with the 'Heart of Corangamite Network', develop and implement a program plan aimed at increasing the participation of Corangamite residents in recreation activity
- Develop a website that has the core purpose of being a 'noticeboard' for facilities, programs and open spaces that provide sport and recreation opportunities
- Support the creation of walking and cycling groups across the Shire
- Continue to fund Recreation Development Initiatives that deliver on increasing participation in the Corangamite Shire
- Give consideration to installing additional facilities in parks that encourage informal play, such as rebound walls, basketball pads etc
- Review the effectiveness of Council's sport and recreation related promotion and communication processes and modify/improve the processes if required, e.g. website, newsletters, social media etc



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND KEY ACTIONS

PRIORITY

Developing strong committees and clubs.

ACTIONS:

- Continue to work with South West Sport to deliver and implement a committee of management/club development program
- Conduct or partner with other organisations to complete health check audits of all clubs and COMs in Corangamite in order to inform the management/club development program
- Continue to support the pathways offered by the South West Sports Academy and peak sports bodies for athletes to reach sporting excellence
- Continue to support clubs with the promotion of their activities
- Advise clubs and COMs about the grants register on the South West Sports Website. Provide a link on Council’s website to the webpage for the register
- Recognise the contribution of volunteers involved in recreation and open space provision and continue to devote staff resources to supporting volunteers
- Explore alternative governance models with clubs and committees of management

PRIORITY

Enhancing Council’s policy framework with respect to sport, recreation and open space provision.

ACTIONS:

- Develop a Council policy framework for recreation and open space provision. Review existing Council policies and update or develop new policies that strategically align with the Recreation and Open Space Strategy



PRIORITY

Providing high quality, optimally used, sustainable sport and recreation facilities and open spaces.

ACTIONS:

- Develop a comprehensive database on recreation facilities and open space in the Shire and link this database to Council GIS system
- Determine Council's future role and support of active recreation facilities and open spaces on Crown and other non-Council owned land
- Advocate to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning on issues pertaining to the management of facilities on Crown land reserves, including support needed for committees of management
- Identify what actions could be undertaken to increase the recreational use of the natural features in the Shire
- Pursue opportunities to optimise the use of existing recreation facilities owned by schools, health services etc
- Determine the future role of the active recreation reserves in the Shire that are no longer used for club sport and explore the potential of rationalising the provision of active recreation reserves in the Shire
- Develop a set of facility development/maintenance standards for the outdoor active recreation facilities in the Shire
- Prepare redevelopment masterplans for the active recreation reserves in the Shire
- Assess the facility implications of and develop strategies to cater for:
 - The potential growth in women's soccer, cricket and football in Corangamite and the possibility that women's only teams will form in the Shire
 - The increasing number of female umpires and referees in sporting competitions
- Consider undertaking regional sport specific development plans as participation figures necessitate
- Undertake a swimming pool facilities plan
- Produce a trails development plan



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 OBJECTIVES OF RECREATION AND OPEN STRATEGY

The Recreation and Open Space Strategy provides strategic directions for the provision of structured and unstructured recreation activities and open space and recreation facilities in Corangamite. The Strategy is based on the needs, expectations and aspirations of the community and has the primary objective of increasing participation. The key objectives of the Strategy are to:

- Gain a greater understanding of the key concerns of the Corangamite community and other stakeholders about sport, recreation and open space provision
- Determine the sport, recreation and open space needs of the Corangamite community for the period 2016-2026
- Identify Corangamite Shire's key strategic directions for sport, recreation and open space provision for the period 2016-2026
- Provide a framework that will assist Council to prioritise sport, recreation and open space projects, activities and funding programs
- Develop an action plan to deliver on the Recreation and Open Space Strategy

The Recreation and Open Space Strategy will support and inform other key Council strategic plans such as the Council Plan, Health and Wellbeing Plan, Council Strategic Resource Plan and Economic Development Strategy.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

The development of the Strategy involved seven interrelated stages. These were:

1. Literature and policy review
2. Demographic and leisure trend analysis
3. Audit of recreation and open space provision
4. Community consultation
5. Preparation of Scoping paper
6. Preparation and review of Draft report
7. Preparation of Final report

1.3 KEY DRIVERS OF STRATEGY

The key drivers of the Strategy were as follows:

- Council prepared a comprehensive Recreation and Open Space Strategy in 2010. The recommendations made in this Plan have largely been implemented and new directions are now required. A number of significant strategies and masterplans have been developed by Council and external organisations since the 2010 Recreation and Open Space Strategy was produced, e.g. Council Plan, Health and Wellbeing Plan, Community Plans etc.
- The sport, recreation and open space related recommendations in these strategies and masterplans need to be reviewed and drawn together into a cohesive plan. A number of policies relating to sport, recreation and open space have also been produced. The scope, range and adequacy of these policies will need to be reviewed as part of Strategy development process.
- Corangamite Shire is undergoing demographic and social change and this change will continue over the next decade. Parts of the Shire are ageing rapidly, parts are significantly disadvantaged and parts are experiencing population decline. Council needs to understand the implications of this demographic and social change for sport, recreation and open space demand and respond appropriately.
- Council provides sport and recreation infrastructure and open space. Some items of infrastructure may adequately cater for the needs of users. Some may be under-utilised because of lack of demand, inappropriate design, poor physical condition or lack of accessibility. Some may not satisfy or respond to changes in community demand and expectations because they are inappropriately located, inflexibly or poorly designed and/or not large enough. Council's focus is on renewing existing facilities rather than providing new facilities. Therefore, Council needs to identify these deficiencies in facility provision in order to develop a considered and effective response and optimised the value to the community of its investment in sport and recreation infrastructure and open space.
- Corangamite is uniquely placed with respect to open space provision in that much of the public open space in the Shire is Crown land (i.e. owned by the State Government). Theoretically, this limits Council's responsibilities to those defined in the agreements that Council has entered into with Government (i.e. under Delegation of Authority or Section 86 Committee of Management). The implications of this are that Council is not likely to commit resources to infrastructure that it does not own or control and the community arguably has a greater role in the management and maintenance of infrastructure.
- Local communities in Corangamite are heavily involved in the provision of sport and recreation and the management and maintenance of sport and recreation facilities and open space. In order to effectively support these communities, Council needs to understand the key challenges the communities are facing and their priorities with respect to sport, recreation and open space provision.
- Corangamite Shire and other Victorian Councils are experiencing significant challenges with respect to their ability to fund programs and capital renewal and development projects. These challenges include rate capping, legislative change which can make facility construction more expensive, and growing community expectations about access to quality services, facilities and open space areas. Corangamite Shire also relies heavily on external funding to undertake sport and recreation facility development projects. In order to give priority to program and facility development projects and maximise its success in accessing external funding, Council must identify and have evidence to support its program and facility development priorities.

1.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS

For the purpose of the Strategy, the following definitions of recreation and open space have been applied:

- Recreation includes pursuits that are undertaken away from home for one's physical, social and emotional health and wellbeing. Artistic and cultural pursuits are excluded. Recreation can be structured (e.g. organised sport) or unstructured e.g. (informal play)
- Open space includes active recreation reserves, local parks, playgrounds, picnic areas, outdoor gathering spaces, linear parks, waterways, lakes, beaches and bushland/conservation areas

The term 'sport, recreation and open space provision' is used frequently in this document. This term describes all aspects of sport, recreation and open space delivery from sports competitions and recreation programs through to the construction/development of facilities and open space areas for sport and recreation.



1.5 RECREATION AND OPEN STRATEGY DOCUMENTS

The Strategy is presented in two separate volumes.

Volume 1 - Summary of Findings and Recreation and Open Space Strategy

- Outlines the aims of and methodology for the strategy planning process and the key drivers for undertaking the Strategy.
- Contains a summary of the findings of the literature review, demographic and recreation trend analysis, services/facilities audit and consultation process.
- Outlines the key implications that emerge from the research findings.
- Presents the Strategy which includes Council's vision and objectives for sport and recreation, a set of guiding principles, key strategic directions, a detailed action plan and a monitoring evaluation process.

Volume 2 - Detailed Research Findings and Township Analyses

- Presents in detail the findings of the demographic and recreation trend analysis.
- Provides in detail the outcomes of the consultation process undertaken for the Strategy.

Contains an analysis of sport and recreation and open space provision by township including the mapping of sport and recreation facilities and open areas.

- Presents a number of case studies of aspects of recreation and open space practice in other Victorian municipalities.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This section outlines the key findings of the literature review and discusses the implications of these findings for the future recreation and open space provision in Corangamite Shire.

2.1 DOCUMENTS

The following documents were reviewed:

National and State Policies and Strategies

- Play. Sport. Australia: The Australian Sports Commission's Participation Game Plan, 2015
- The Future of Australian Sport; Megatrends shaping the Sports Sector over Coming Decades, 2013 [Australian Sports Commission]
- Inquiry into Women and Girls in Sport and Active Recreation: a 5-year game plan for Victoria, 2015

Great South Coast Policies and Strategies

- Shipwreck Coast Master Plan, consultation summary, 2014
- Shipwreck Coast Master Plan, draft master plan report, 2014
- Great South Coast Regional Priorities, Great South Coast website
- Great South Coast Health and Wellbeing Profile, 2015

Corangamite Shire Strategies, Plans and Masterplans

- Council Plan 2013-2017
- Council Budgets 2015/16 and 2016/17

- Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017
- Economic Development Strategy 2011-2016
- Bicycle Strategy 2006-2011
- Trails Development Plan, 2003
- Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey, 2015 research report
- Lake Bullen Merri Management Plan, draft 2016
- Cobden Community Activity Precinct Feasibility Study, 2016
- Aquatic Facilities Study, 2001

Corangamite Shire Recreation and Open Space Policies and Township Plans

- Community Planning Infrastructure Projects, 2015
- Community Engagement, 2015
- Community Initiated Projects, 2013
- Recreation Facility Development, 2013
- Public Halls Management, 2013
- Playground Management, 2013
- Hard Court Maintenance, 2013
- Disposal of Assets, 2015
- Swimming Pool Maintenance, 2016
- Trails Management, 2013
- Social Justice Policy, 2016 [draft]
- Townships Plans for Darlington, Noorat, Princetown, Derrinallum, Lismore, Simpson, Skipton, Timboon, Terang, Cobden

2.2 KEY FINDINGS

The key findings of the literature review were as follows:

- The National Framework for Sport and Recreation has two key objectives:
 - Keeping sports relevant and viable through membership growth and good governance and management
 - Keeping Australians active and healthy through achieving an increase in participation, particularly among children
- The National Sports Agency, the Australian Sports Commission (ASC), is aiming to achieve these objectives by focusing on the following areas:
 - Building a better understanding by Government and the community of sport and recreation participation trends
 - Undertaking and supporting programs which encourage lifelong participation in physical activities
 - Building the capabilities of sporting organisations
- There is no current State policy or strategic statement about sport and recreation. However, Sport and Recreation Victoria defines its roles as: ensuring greater access to and opportunities for participation; improving the quality of community sport and recreation facilities; strengthening the capacity of sport and recreation organisations; providing an evidence base for activities in the sport and active recreation system; and reinforcing the enriching role that sport and recreation plays in people's lives
- The Australian Sports Commission has identified a number of 'megatrends in sport'. They include:
 - A growing demand for personalised sport for the purpose of health and fitness
 - Increasing participation in structured casual sport and declining participation in some regular organised sporting activities
 - A rise in lifestyle, adventure and alternative sports, particularly popular with younger generations



- A growing realisation of the importance of sport in improving population health, crime prevention and community development
- The need to constantly adapt sporting programs in response to community expectations and demographic and cultural change.
- Council's vision for the Corangamite community is that it will be vibrant, prosperous and growing. The Plan indicates that Council will achieve this vision through a number of measures including the provision of recreation opportunities that enhance the health and wellbeing of the community.
- Council acknowledges that it has a key role to play in:
 - Supporting and advocating for local recreation clubs and groups
 - Providing quality recreation facilities and program services and open space areas
 - Supporting the delivery of facilities and programs by other providers
 - Building strong relationships with the Government agencies involved in recreation provisions and the peak sports and recreation bodies
- The Corangamite community has some significant health concerns - overweight/obesity, social isolation and loneliness, poor work life balance, mental health issues. Council will help to address these issues by:
 - Providing, promoting and advocating for services and programs that create opportunities for physical activity and active participation
 - Planning for and providing well designed, safe, inclusive and accessible public infrastructure
 - Supporting the sustainability of community sport and recreation clubs/groups
 - Supporting participation in social activities that bring people together
 - Developing programs and special community events that promote healthy ageing and the contribution of older people to the wider community
- Council has a commitment to supporting social sustainability and social inclusion through working to achieve integrated and equitable outcomes for people who face barriers, to encourage their full participation in economic and community life and improve their wellbeing and quality of life
- Corangamite is characterised by many significant natural features which also attract many tourists. These include the Twelve Apostles, the Port Campbell National Park, the Otway Ranges, volcanic lakes, Mt Leura and Mt Elephant. These natural assets provide a wealth of sporting and recreational opportunities.
- A priority major project of Council is the Twelve Apostles Trail. This regional project has the potential to provide a significant walking and off-road riding facility and generate substantial economic impacts
- Council has been concentrating resources over recent years on path and trail infrastructure in accordance with the Bicycle Strategy and Trails Development Plan. In particular work has, and will continue to, focus on



on-road bike lanes within and on the outskirts of towns and between towns and the provision of bicycle parking infrastructure at key destinations.

- Council has a comprehensive suite of policies that clarify its roles and responsibilities, and expectations of the community across various aspects relating to sport and recreation facility management. These cover community infrastructure projects, recreation facility development, disposal of assets; the management of public halls, trails and playgrounds; rationalisation and renewal of playgrounds; and the maintenance of hard courts and swimming pools. Central to the position taken by Council across all policies is the significant responsibility of the community in management and maintenance of community buildings and open space areas (e.g. recreation reserves, hard courts, halls, some trails and swimming pools).
- Council has a policy which provides a transparent and accountable method for the decommissioning/disposal of Council owned assets.
- Council has implemented a community planning initiative over recent years which has seen the development of community plans for each of the townships in Corangamite. Implementation of these plans has been taking place by the communities with some significant achievements. Common themes from the plans relevant to the Recreation and Open Space Strategy include:
 - Creating a sense of place
 - Township amenity, beautification and safety

- Improved passive recreation infrastructure
- Diversification of township economies
- Provision of community infrastructure
- More opportunities for social inclusion and connectedness

2.3 IMPLICATIONS

The implications of the findings of the literature review are as follows:

- The Federal and State Governments' recreation and health policies and the recommendations in the Great South Coast Health and Wellbeing Plan are aimed at getting people more active and interested in their health and sense of wellbeing. The Recreation and Open Space Strategy should focus on these key aims.
- Council should continue to adapt its sports and recreation policies and programs in response to recreation and social trends, such as the megatrends identified by the Australian Sports Commission – e.g. growing demand for personalised, casual and adventure sports, need to adapt sports in response to demographic change.
- Consideration should be given as to how the opportunities/benefits of the Shire's natural assets (lakes, beaches, hills, forest areas) can be optimised.



3. DEMOGRAPHIC AND LEISURE TREND ANALYSIS

3.1 DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The key findings were:

- Corangamite Shire has a slightly older population and a lower median household income than the Great South Coast Region [municipalities of Moyne, Warrnambool, Corangamite, Glenelg and Southern Grampians].
- Of the seven planning areas in the Shire:
 - Camperdown has the highest estimated population – 3,317; Cobden the lowest, 1,896 people
 - Timboon and District has the youngest population and the highest proportions of children, youth and young adults. Rural Central and Rural South closely follow
 - Rural North has the oldest population and the highest proportions of middle and older middle adults and the second highest proportion of older adults. Corangamite and Terang closely follow
- There are significant differences across the planning areas in their older adult populations. One in five people in Cobden and Camperdown are aged 70+ years compared to less than one in ten in Rural South.
- There are some significant variations in the age profiles of the individual townships in the Shire. For example [note: these variations are predicted to remain over the 10-year period of Strategy]:

- Simpson’s child population as a proportion of total population is 9% higher than Lismore’s [16% compared to 7%]. Conversely, Simpson’s elderly population is much smaller [7% compared to 22%]
- Simpson’s and Timboon’s youth populations [as proportions] are much higher than other townships in the Shire
- Corangamite’s population is predicted to only slightly increase over the next 20 years – a rise of 249 to 16,595. Population increases are forecast in five planning areas - the largest in Camperdown [207 people]. Population decline is predicted in two areas – Rural North and Central.
- The 10-year age cohorts between 0-59 years are projected to decline significantly over the next 20 years both numerically and as proportions of total population. The largest decrease will be in the child population - 280 children or by 2% of the total population.
- The 60+ age cohorts are projected to increase significantly - numerically and as proportions of total population - 1,500 or by 8% of total population.

3.2 HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The Great South Coast Health and Wellbeing Profile [updated January 2015] provides ratings for Victoria, the Great South Coast Region and the LGAs in the Region for more than 100 social, health and wellbeing indicators. The ratings have been drawn from a number of sources including VicHealth reports, Community Indicators Victoria and the Victorian Population Health Survey. The Profile shows that Corangamite Shire achieved:

- Better ratings than Victoria for all measures/ characteristics except weight and obesity, visits to green space more than once per week, satisfaction with recreational facilities and satisfaction with appearance of public areas.
- Similar results to the Great South Coast for all measures/characteristics except:
 - Work-life balance, sedentary behaviour, satisfaction with recreational facilities and feeling safe walking at night where it achieves significantly better results
 - Male obesity where it achieved a much poorer result

The Profile indicates that:

- 80% of Corangamite respondents said they felt part of the community
- 50% of Corangamite respondents volunteered more than once per month
- Around 40% of respondents visited green space more than once per week
- Approximately 9% of respondents rode their bike to work in Corangamite [a much higher result than the State average of 5%]
- Life expectancy is less in Corangamite for males and females compared to Victoria
- The proportion of residents that demonstrated sedentary behaviour [sitting for more than 7 hours per day] in Corangamite was half of the Victorian average and the proportion of residents who do not meet the physical activity guidelines is significantly smaller [although it still represents around 18% of the population]
- Self-reported health status of 'excellent' or 'very good' was higher in Corangamite compared to Victoria

3.3 RECREATION TREND ANALYSIS

The key findings were:

- Participation in 'non-sport activities' in Victoria is increasing significantly. In 2012, the six most popular recreation activities of Victorians aged over 14 years were all non-sport activities - walking for exercise, fitness/gym, recreational cycling, jogging/running, swimming/diving and golf
- In terms of the major organised sports that most directly impact on Council's provision of sporting infrastructure, the most popular sports were golf, tennis, netball, basketball, Australian Rules football, cricket and soccer. Of the major organised sports, netball, basketball and soccer experienced an increase in participation rates between 2009 and 2012. However,

participation in the high profile sports of cricket and football had declined over the same period

- In 2012, the most popular activities among Victorian children aged 5-14 years were swimming, Australian Rules football, basketball, tennis, netball and soccer. However, except for soccer, each of these sports had experienced a decline [swimming, Australian Rules football, tennis, netball] or maintained the same [basketball] participation rates since 2009. The soccer participation rate increased from 6% to 7.3% during this period
- Participation in organised but informal recreation activities such as walking, skateboarding, mountain bike riding and recreational cycling groups are growing in Corangamite, as is participation in structured health/fitness programs

3.4 IMPLICATIONS

The implications of the findings for the Recreation and Open Space Strategy are as follows:

- Generally, the Corangamite community is ageing. Council should place a special emphasis on assisting the recreation groups and facilities that support the elderly [e.g. walking groups, cycling groups, seniors exercise programs, golf clubs, bowls clubs, gardening clubs etc].
- There are significant variations in the age structures of the local communities across Corangamite - e.g. Lismore a high proportion of elderly, Simpson a high proportion of youth, Timboon a high proportion of children etc. These variations are predicted to remain over the 10-year period of the Strategy. Council should target its recreation programs and community engagement activities accordingly.
- Some local communities are comparatively disadvantaged. Sport and recreation activities should be affordable and accessible across the whole municipality but especially in the disadvantaged areas. Council should help to facilitate this in accordance with its principles of social justice, where justified.
- The sport playing age cohorts across the Shire are predicted to decline significantly over the next 20 years, both numerically and as proportions of total population. This will impact on the viability of some sporting clubs and associations, particularly in the smaller towns. Council may increasingly be called on by these organisations for support.
- Council will need to strike a suitable balance between the investment it makes in sports facilities and activities and non-sporting recreation facilities and activities.
- Council should give consideration to what actions it can take to address the issue of obesity.



4. AUDIT OF RECREATION SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES AND OPEN SPACE PROVISION

This section outlines the key findings of the audit of sport, recreation and open space provision in Corangamite Shire and discusses the implications of the findings for future provision.

4.1 RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PROVISION

The key findings are:

- Corangamite Shire has a diverse range of sport and recreation facilities and open space areas. The facilities include indoor recreation centres, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, playing fields, sports pavilions/clubrooms, shooting venue, squash courts, outdoor netball courts, tennis clubs, a bowls club, golf clubs, croquet club, community halls, velodrome, fitness centres/gyms, playgrounds, skate parks, equestrian venues, recreational trails, outdoor family/social area, lakes and bushland areas. Most of the facilities and open space areas are publicly owned (by Council, Department of Education and Training (DET), Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and clubs/associations)
- These facilities and open space areas provide for a broad and diverse range of sport and recreation activities. These activities include:
 - Outdoor sports such as football, cricket, bowls, tennis, golf, athletics, hockey, soccer and equestrian
 - Outdoor non-sporting recreation activities such as walking, cycling, running and swimming

- Indoor sports such as basketball, netball, volleyball, badminton, gymnastics, indoor soccer and squash
- Indoor non-sporting recreation activities such as dance, fitness classes and exercise groups
- Senior citizens' groups, playgroups, youth activities
- Environmental, scout groups, hobby, arts and craft groups
- Service and community clubs: Lions, RSL, Rotary and Garden Clubs

4.2 IMPLICATIONS

The implications are:

- Corangamite (including all of its major towns) has a good supply of sport and recreation facilities and open space areas. The Corangamite community had identified some deficits (e.g. an indoor heated pool, recreational trails - in particular, loop trails) and, potentially, some areas of oversupply (football/cricket ovals, halls, tennis courts, outdoor pools). These deficits and surpluses are addressed in this Strategy.
- Generally, the facilities and open space areas are maintained in a reasonable to good condition. Improvements are needed at some recreation venues e.g. better playing surfaces, lighting upgrades, pavilion renovations, playground improvements, landscape improvements. This need to improve some facilities is an important element of the Strategy.

5. CONSULTATION OUTCOMES

This section outlines the findings of the consultation process. The process involved:

- Township forums
- Surveys of residents, school students, community organisations and local recreation clubs and associations
- Interviews with school students, peak sports bodies, Council staff, officers from neighbouring Councils, regional sports assemblies and Government agencies involved in recreation provision
- Consultation with the Youth Council

5.1 RESIDENTS

The views of residents were sought via surveys and through face-to-face interviews. Surveys were also implemented with children and young people through primary and secondary schools. All surveys were implemented online and in hard copy. Residents were asked to indicate the physical activities they regularly undertake away from home, the level of involvement they have in recreation clubs or groups, their satisfaction with their current level of health and wellbeing, the activities they would like to participate but currently do not, the reasons why they do not participate in these activities and the actions that could be taken to increase the participation of Corangamite residents in sport and recreation. A summary of their comments is as follows:

Participation, involvement, health and wellbeing, interests and barriers:

- Approximately 11% of respondents indicated that they did not participate in any physical activity
- There is a notable trend of participation in sporting activities among the younger age cohorts and participation in less organised activities in the adult years
- Australian Rules football, netball, walking, basketball, swimming and running were the most popular activities undertaken by residents away from home. The large majority (75%) of respondents participated in sport and/or recreation more than once per week
- Around half of respondents were members of a sport or recreation club, group or association. 22% of respondents were or had previously been members of club committees
- Approximately 60% of respondents indicated that they were satisfied with their current level of health/fitness/wellbeing. 17% were very satisfied. 19% were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their levels of health/fitness/wellbeing
- Swimming, soccer, netball, basketball, horse riding and motorbike riding were nominated by the largest

proportions of respondents as the activities they would like to participate in most but currently do not do

- Soccer, swimming and basketball were the activities that the largest proportions of primary school aged respondents wanted to do. Netball was the activity nominated by the largest proportion of secondary school aged respondents. Gym/fitness classes/circuit and swimming were the activities most in demand among 40-59 year olds
- The main reason given for not participating in these activities was 'being too busy'. 'Poor quality / no appropriate facilities or equipment' and 'the activity being too far away' were also frequently mentioned as barriers to participation. Not feeling confident and cost were not seen as significant factors preventing respondents from participating in their desired activities

Actions that Council could take to increase participation:

- Encourage/facilitate the provision of recreation activities for all ages and levels of ability
- Place a strong emphasis on getting young people involved in sport
- Support lower profile sporting activities
- Provide fitness programs that are suitable for the elderly
- Support events (fun runs, multi-sport) that attract outside visitors and also provide opportunities for locals
- Continue to provide support and expertise to sporting groups
- Keep existing walking tracks and footpaths safe and provide sheltered seating on the trails
- Undertake the following trail works:
 - A connection from Camperdown to the bike trail
 - A track from Port Campbell to Gibson steps
 - Extension of the bike trail to Port Campbell
 - The Twelve Apostles Trail
 - A mountain bike/walking track at Lake Bullen Merri
- Construct a heated pool
- Provide shaded areas over existing pools and keep the pools open longer
- Facilitate the development of a gym/fitness facility in Simpson
- Upgrade the facilities at the Cobden Recreation Reserve
- Provide a bigger skate park in Terang
- Improve lighting at some recreation reserves
- Encourage more use of the lakes, beaches and other natural features



5.2 COMMITTEES OF MANAGEMENT AND RECREATION CLUBS

Committees of Management (COMs) and clubs were asked through surveys and forums to identify the major challenges they are facing, the support they want from Council and measures that could be taken to increase recreation participation. Their comments were as follows:

Major challenges:

- Retaining existing committee members and attracting new members
- Meeting increasing operational, maintenance and renewal costs
- Meeting governance responsibilities and managing risk
- Meeting increasing insurance costs
- Retaining players after they finish their junior years
- Retaining players who want to play in higher grade competitions
- Providing suitable facilities in the future for women's cricket and football
- Raising sufficient funds to properly run their club
- Declining population and changing demographics
- Maintaining facilities at a reasonable standard and renewing ageing infrastructure
- Maintaining playing surfaces with restricted access to water



Support/assistance Council could provide:

- Partnering with the COMs on facility projects and recreation activities
- Helping with promotion/publicity
- Creating a recreation culture in the Shire
- Supporting COMs and club events
- Providing special support to clubs in smaller towns
- Exploring options for reducing insurance costs
- Upgrading playing surfaces
- Advocating for grants and assisting COMs and clubs with grant applications
- Acknowledging the work that the volunteers do at the COMs and clubs
- Responding promptly to requests for assistance
- Clarifying the future of the outdoor pools

Measures that could be undertaken to increase recreation participation and meet facility demand:

- Constructing more footpaths, tracks and trails [including loop trails]

- Improving the quality of recreation facilities
- Continuing the come and try program [Recreation Give-It-A-Go]
- Providing a broader range of recreation activities
- Promoting recreation activities
- Creating the right environment at clubs – not only about winning, more about enjoyment and being active

Opportunities that should be explored:

- Giving consideration to rationalising facilities so resources can be used more effectively
- Subsidising access for youth to recreation opportunities
- Establishing a pool of recreation equipment with a small rental fee
- Using social media more effectively to promote recreational opportunities
- Introducing a volunteers’ recognition program



5.3 PEAK SPORTS BODIES

Representatives of peak sporting bodies for sports in Victoria were asked through interviews to comment on the following [where relevant]:

- Participation trends in their sports in Western Victoria and the Corangamite Region
- The major changes proposed for their sports that will have implications for competition structures and facility provision
- The viability of the clubs and associations that operate in the Corangamite Shire and the major challenges they are facing
- The supply and standard of the facilities used by these clubs and associations
- The support the peak bodies would like to receive from Council

Participation trends:

- Recreational cycling, basketball and soccer are increasing in participation. Football, badminton, volleyball, little athletics, golf and cricket are relatively stable. Netball Victoria anticipates that the netball component of the football/netball leagues will remain strong but that the local associations may decline in player numbers [this is occurring in other parts of Victoria where football/netball is drawing players away from the local associations]. Participation in competition tennis and lawn bowls is declining but interest in casual tennis and bowls is increasing
- Most of the peak bodies that run weekly competitions have concerns about future participation levels in their sports, particularly in townships where populations are declining or significantly ageing
- Football, cricket and soccer confirmed that female participation in their sports in both city and rural areas is increasing
- Interest in school and community soccer is increasing

Major changes to competition structures and club profile:

- Football and cricket indicate that no major changes are currently proposed to the competition structures of the men's leagues/associations that operate in Corangamite. However, they indicated that competitions structures are regularly reviewed and it is possible there could be some changes over the next 10 years. They also said that the number of clubs could reduce with some clubs merging or folding [note: any changes to football will also impact on netball]
- Football and cricket predict that women's football and cricket teams will form in Corangamite over the next 10 years. There are already teams in Warrnambool and Hamilton. Camperdown/Cobden may have the capacity to support women's teams
- Soccer is not expecting the competition structure to change. However, it expects that existing clubs will get larger and new clubs will form, e.g. in Camperdown
- Tennis and bowls are not anticipating any changes to their competitions

Viability:

- All of the peak bodies are concerned about the viability of some of their clubs. Tennis is particularly concerned about the future of the tennis clubs in Corangamite

Issues facing clubs and associations:

- Retaining players after they finish junior competition
- Staying viable as the target population for their sport declines and their player/member numbers fall
- Losing players because their facilities are substandard or to other sports
- Attracting people to serve on committees or to coach
- Managing risk, complying with governance requirements, fundraising etc.
- Getting access to affordable water to properly irrigate playing fields

Supply and standard of the facilities used by clubs and associations:

- There is good supply of facilities in Corangamite – in general all clubs and associations are adequately catered for
- The standard of the facilities is also reasonable. Most of the facilities could be improved but there are no major facility concerns. Cricket expressed concern about the standard of the outfield at some grounds
- The peak bodies for football, netball, tennis, cricket and soccer have introduced sets of facility standards. The bodies are keen for facility providers like Corangamite Shire to upgrade their facilities, over time, to these standards

Assistance to peak bodies, associations and clubs:

- Assisting with the development and upgrade of facilities to the standards set by the peak bodies
- Supporting the sports development programs run by the peak bodies, associations and clubs – publicity, funding, venues etc.
- Recognising the contribution of volunteers
- Involving peak bodies, associations and clubs in relevant policy, planning and facility development projects
- Generally maintaining strong and positive relationships with the peak bodies, associations and clubs

5.4 COUNCIL STAFF

Council staff were asked through interviews to indicate the issues and opportunities that should be addressed in the Strategy. They suggested the following:

- Ensuring the community remains willing to and capable of fulfilling its critical role in facility management and maintenance
- The difficult funding environment
- Policy gaps, e.g. dogs in parks, personal trainers' use of parks, heatwave in community activities/events
- Council's role in trail management
- The merits of facility rationalisation
- Master planning of the major recreation reserves in the Shire
- Alternative governance models and succession planning for clubs and committees of management
- Joint planning and management initiatives with neighbouring Councils
- Internal coordination and communication
- Future provision and management of aquatic facilities
- Next phase of community planning
- Maintenance and upgrade of facilities on Crown land
- Secure water supplies for recreation assets

5.5 NEIGHBOURING COUNCILS

Councils were asked through interviews to outline the trends in recreation participation that are occurring in their municipalities, the current recreation issues they are facing, their recreation facility development plans and their level of interest in regional planning. The key findings from the interviews were as follows:

- The Councils are experiencing similar trends in recreation participation to Corangamite – major league football, cricket and netball remaining relatively strong; minor leagues not as strong, basketball strong, soccer growing, interest in women’s football and cricket growing, competition tennis and bowls struggling, casual recreation growing
- The Councils are experiencing similar issues and challenges to Corangamite – demographic change, a difficult financial environment, ageing infrastructure, increasing participation in unstructured, declining volunteerism, increasing community expectations, maintaining facilities on Crown land etc. Some of the Councils have developed innovative ways to address these issues, e.g. Golden Plains appointing a volunteer coordinator
- The delegation of management of Crown land by the State Government to Councils and the community was highlighted by all the Councils, particularly with regard to the lack of Government financial support. As a result of this, and in the context of rate-capping, some Councils have indicated that they will not be in a position to manage Crown land or support the management of Crown land by the community
- The Councils are keen to be involved in regional planning exercises and to work collaboratively on common issues. Corangamite should encourage this collaborative approach

5.6 GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND SOUTH WEST SPORT

Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV) was asked to outline what it considers should be Corangamite Shire’s priorities for recreation provision. It identified the following: supporting participation in recreation by under-represented groups; regional planning; promoting multi and shared uses of facilities; encouraging collaboration and partnership between recreation providers; optimising the use of existing recreation assets (Council and non-Council including schools and health services); promoting physical activity; supporting the provision of recreation activities by non-Council organisations.

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) was asked to indicate what assistance it can provide to local committees that manage Crown land reserves and how Council can also support these committees. It stated that DELWP supports the committees through the provision of governance advice and minor grant funding. It said that Council could also assist in these areas (governance training and assistance with maintenance and capital grants) and by acknowledging the work of the committees through a volunteer recognition programs.

South West Sport was asked about its role in recreation development and how it could assist and be assisted by Corangamite Shire. It indicated that the major focus of South West Sport is to encourage higher levels of participation in community sport and active recreation. It does this by providing direct assistance and support to local associations and sporting clubs and running club related development programs and initiatives including; educational seminars and training, the Sports Star Awards for volunteers, Volunteer Exchange Program, Access for All Abilities program and information on funding opportunities.

South West Sport has developed a strong working relationship with Corangamite Shire and wants to continue to strengthen this relationship. It wants Council to continue to promote and support its programs. It also asked that Council continues to support the pathways provided by the South West Sports Academy and other sports bodies for athletes to reach sporting excellence.

5.7 IMPLICATIONS

The implications of the consultation findings are as follows:

- Council should work to increase participation in physical activity, particularly to address the proportion of Corangamite residents that are physically inactive
- The community is a significant provider of sport and recreation opportunities and many residents access activities provided by clubs, groups and organisations that are managed by local residents. Council should actively work to support these community providers
- The community highly values paths and trails for the opportunities they provide for walking, running and bike riding. Footpath and trail provision and improvements should continue to be a focus of Council
- It is likely that women’s participation in non-traditional sports will continue to increase and this will create a demand for female-friendly facilities
- Council should monitor the viability and health of competitions and sports played in Corangamite, and work with local associations to consider methods for increasing participation, where possible



6. RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE STRATEGY

This section contains the Recreation and Open Space Strategy. It outlines Council's vision and objectives for recreation and open space provision, the principles that will guide Council's involvement and investment in sport, recreation and open space and the actions that Council should take to enhance sport, recreation and open space provision.

6.1 VISION

Council's vision for sport, recreation and open space is:

'Sport and recreation in Corangamite will be diverse and will not only encourage all residents to be active for their health and wellbeing, but will attract visitors through their uniqueness and strong community involvement'.

6.2 ROLE OF COUNCIL IN RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE PROVISION

Council will be an advocate, leader, planner, thinker, facilitator, partner, collaborator researches and provider.

It will:

- Strongly promote the social, health and wellbeing benefits of participating in recreation
- Strongly support and building the capacity and sustainability of local recreation clubs, committees of management and associations
- Building strong and productive relationships with individuals and organisations involved in recreation and open space provision – participants/players, clubs, associations, private recreation providers, peak recreation bodies, neighbouring Councils and relevant State and Federal Government agencies
- Identify community needs and developing strategies to address these needs
- Plan services, facilities and spaces
- Provide recreation participation opportunities and facilitate the provision of recreation opportunities by other organisations
- Developing and maintaining recreation facilities and open space areas
- Support the provision of facilities and spaces by other organisations

6.3 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Council's involvement and investment in sport, recreation and open space provision will be guided by the following principles:

- Council will work in partnership with the community, private and non-Council providers and other levels of Government in delivering recreation and open space programs and services
- Council will advocate for the community and make decisions on the distribution of resources in the best interests of the community and Council
- Council will strive to achieve equity in the targeting of its recreation and open space resources
- Council will take a proactive and planned approach to recreation and open space provision

- Council will monitor demographic and social trends in the broader community, understand needs and demands and plan its recreation services and facilities and open space areas accordingly
- Council will give priority to asset renewal over the provision of new facilities whilst strategically targeting available funding opportunities
- Council will plan for and deliver recreation programs and facilities and open space areas in a way that can be sustained over time

6.4 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND KEY ACTIONS

The strategic priorities and key actions are listed below. A detailed action plan which expands on the key actions is provided in Table 1 on pages 23-25.

PRIORITY

Building strong and supportive partnerships between Council and other bodies involved in sport, recreation and open space provision.

Council works to a philosophy of collaboration and has developed relationships with key partners. There is also strong practice of working regionally amongst the partners and neighbouring councils. Fostering this practice is important for optimising Council's efforts and resources and will assist the successful implementation of the Strategy.

KEY ACTIONS:

- Develop strong relationships with and explore planning partnership opportunities with:
 - Local health and disability services providers and networks
 - Government and other agencies involved in recreation and open space provision and the statistical analysis of recreation participation
 - Agencies involved in land, water and environmental management
 - Peak bodies for sport in Victoria
 - Regional sports organisations and associations
 - Regional tourism bodies
 - Local environment groups, recreation clubs, committees of management, schools and private recreation providers
- Explore joint planning, programming and management activities with neighbouring councils



PRIORITY

Increasing participation in sport and recreation

There is a high level of satisfaction among the community of the range of sport and recreation facilities and activities available. There is strong participation in sport in Corangamite, which is also reflected in the broader region.

Football and netball are particularly strong. Community clubs are central to the provision of sport and play an important social role in township communities. The value of this social role is acknowledged as much as the core role of providing sporting opportunities.

However, there is a trend of increasing participation in recreational activities, and move towards flexibly structured activities that can fit into people's increasingly busy lifestyles more easily [e.g. bike riding, personal training, pilates, yoga]. This broad trend is being seen in the participation patterns and preferences of Corangamite residents. The natural environment [lakes, beaches, rivers etc] is ideal for many of these activities and is appreciated by residents and visitors for its recreational value. Council has concentrated significant attention on footpaths/trails to provide for walking and bike riding and it is suggested that this should continue as a focus. Council should also give consideration to providing other facilities in parks that will encourage play such as basketball pads, rebound wall etc.

There is also the emergence of new sporting interests, particularly amongst women participants and also for the sport of soccer. These changing preferences present challenges for community providers and Council. In particular, the implications for facilities need to be understood and considered.

Swimming is another activity for which there is notable demand – and while there are numerous pools available across the Shire, the interest from the community is for swimming year-round in an indoor, heated pool. Council is aware of this and has explored options for swimming pool provision in the past. These investigations have concluded that the provision of an indoor pool is not financially viable by a large margin which outweighs other social and recreational merits.

The characteristics of Corangamite means that there are unique traits with respect to participation in sport and recreation. These are reflected in the aged and ageing profile of residents, the exodus of young people away from the Shire for work and study, the distinct variations in age profile across townships and the small populous of townships. Participation in some sports is stagnant or even in decline and these trends can be attributed, at least in part, to the ageing of local communities. Many sports clubs and associations highlight the issue of young people moving to larger regional towns and the significant impact this has on the viability of running a sports competition. This trend is so significant that some sports have indicated it is impacting on the viability of competitions for this cohort.

The small population size is a major factor inhibiting the establishment and growth of many activities. Viability can be extremely hard to achieve when catchment populations are small. This is generally recognised by the community although it does not dampen the desire for provision. Swimming is a good case in point. This characteristic is also relevant to community providers, and highlights the need for an open mind to creative solutions which can enhance the prospects for viability of sports competitions, facility development and management of clubs.

The significant impact of technology and other competing demands for people's time was highlighted. There do not appear to be straightforward strategies for re-dressing this effect but solutions definitely need to be sought. It is understood through the consultation that health and fitness are primary drivers for people choosing to participate in sport and recreation. This is consistent with a mega-trend identified in the Australian Sports Commission research which states that, increasingly, Australians are seeking to participate in personalised forms of sport and recreation for their health and fitness benefits.

It is important to note other factors that motivate residents to participate; the opportunity for social interaction and for the sheer enjoyment of doing the activity. Conversely, time is a major barrier to participation, as are poor quality or no appropriate facilities / equipment, the opportunity is not available, and the activity is too far away. Cost was not raised as a significant factor preventing participation.



KEY ACTIONS:

- In collaboration with relevant agencies, develop a statistical profile of recreation participation in Corangamite Shire
- In collaboration with the 'Heart of Corangamite Network', develop and implement a program plan aimed at increasing the participation of Corangamite residents in recreation activity
- Continue to fund Recreation Development Initiatives that deliver on increasing participation in the Corangamite Shire
- Develop a website that has the core purpose of being a 'noticeboard' for facilities, programs and open spaces that provide sport and recreation opportunities
- Support the creation of walking and cycling groups across the Shire
- Give consideration to installing additional facilities in parks that encourage informal play, such as rebound walls, basketball pads etc.
- Review the effectiveness of Council's sport and recreation related promotion and communication processes and modify/improve the processes if required, e.g. community directory, website, newsletters, social media etc.

PRIORITY

Develop strong committees and clubs

A number of factors were highlighted from the research that suggests the provision of appropriately targeted and delivered programs and services is pertinent to Council achieving its vision for sport, recreation and open space. These include the ageing of the community and the variations in age structures across the Shire.

Council should ensure that its involvement in provision for sport and recreation must have principles of access (financial, social, physical) and social connection as core objectives. It will be particularly important to implement these objectives through recreational activities that are less formal and unstructured.

The opportunity also exists for sports to attract the 'recreational' market of participants, and there may be merit in pursuing this as a strategic opportunity for sporting clubs, given they have governance structures and management committees in place, access to facilities and the like. This may be as simple as scheduling activities for different times, modifying the rules of games to be short in duration and more socially oriented.

The community is the largest provider of sport and recreation in Corangamite. As such the viability, sustainability and prosperity of community organisations is critically important for the provision of sport and recreation in Corangamite. Council is acutely aware of this. This Strategy needs to identify ways in which Council can support community providers to support their sustainability. Of particular importance are; the recruitment and retention of volunteers, succession planning, alternative revenue streams, navigating the increasingly complex operating environment. There may be merit in considering alternative models that alleviate the community of these responsibilities and instead making space to focus on the core task of delivering appropriate, quality programs and services.

While there is a desire from the community for Council to provide more financial support, overall this is not a high expectation as the financial environment of Council is generally appreciated. However, any assistance that can be provided to community providers either as direct financial assistance through identifying grant programs, or through the reduction of other costs would be of great value.

It was evident through the consultation that the opportunity exists for greater promotion of sport and recreation activities, facilities and spaces. This would be an effective use of Council resources that could have a significant impact on increasing awareness among residents and visitors to encourage their participation.

KEY ACTIONS:

- Continue to work with South West Sport to deliver and implement a committee of management/club development program
- Conduct or partner with other organisations to complete health check audits of all clubs and COMs in Corangamite in order to inform the management/club development program
- Continue to support the pathways offered by the South West Sports Academy and peak sports bodies for athletes to reach sporting excellence
- Continue to support clubs with the promotion of their activities
- Advise clubs and COMs about the grants register on the South West Sports Website. Provide a link on Council's website to the webpage for the register
- Recognise the contribution of volunteers involved in recreation and open space provision and continue to devote staff resources to supporting volunteers
- Explore governance models with clubs and committees of management



PRIORITY

Enhancing Council's policy framework with respect to sport, recreation and open space provision

Council has worked to achieve a solid platform of plans and policies that support its activities and decision making. The opportunity exists for the existing platform to be further developed as Council's efforts in sport and recreation provision mature.

This will see Council's planning activity evolve and become more specific. Sound planning will provide Council with clear direction on specific issues that will allow it to be more targeted and prioritised with resources, which will be particularly important in the tightening financial environment.

KEY ACTIONS:

- Develop a Council policy framework, review existing Council policies and update or develop new policies that strategically align with the Recreation and Open Space Strategy. Priority – Providing high quality, optimally used, sustainable sport and recreation facilities and open spaces.

PRIORITY

Providing high quality, optimally used, sustainable sport and recreation facilities and open spaces.

One of Council's most important roles is to support the provision of recreation facilities and open spaces by other organisations. Council has comprehensive information about the facilities it owns and manages but less information about non-Council facilities and open space.

Many sport and recreation facilities in Corangamite are located on Crown land. These facilities are either managed under delegation by the community or Council with no financial support from the Crown which presents significant challenges. Some committees are seeking additional support from Council. They also want clarity on the roles and responsibilities of Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning [DELWP] in maintaining facilities on Crown land.

For its size and location, Corangamite has a more than adequate supply of recreation facilities and open space areas. There are some deficits (e.g. an indoor heated pool, recreational trails - in particular, loop trails) and, potentially, some areas of oversupply (football/cricket ovals, halls, tennis courts, outdoor pools, playgrounds). These deficits and potential areas of oversupply are addressed in this Strategy.

Soccer is growing in popularity. Currently, there is only one soccer club in Corangamite. This club operates from a facility in Scotts Creek. It is likely in the future that other clubs will form or the existing club in Scotts Creek will outgrow its facility. An analysis of soccer participation (current and potential) should be conducted and if the data warrants it, a soccer facilities plan could be developed.

Participation in competition tennis has been steadily declining in Victoria and Corangamite. Some Corangamite clubs are struggling to field teams and remain viable. Some tennis facilities are not being optimally used. Tennis Victoria is concerned about the future of tennis in Corangamite and the broader Great South Coast Region. A tennis development/facilities plan, including a demand assessment and facility review would have merit.

Some sections of the community are still lobbying for the provision of a heated pool. The existing outdoor pools are ageing and are costly to maintain and operate. Some residents want all existing pools to remain open. Others concede that some rationalisation is required. There are 25m heated pools in Colac and Warrnambool and a small pool in Cobden. The Aquatic Facilities Study undertaken by Council in 2003 found that it was not feasible to develop an indoor heated pool in Corangamite. Council may need to revisit this study and restate its position on the provision of an indoor heated pool and the future of the other pools in the Shire.

The community places a strong importance on recreational trails - they want footpaths and trail networks to be extended and more loop trails constructed. The community also wants Council and other facility providers to concentrate on improving the quality of existing sport and recreation facilities and spaces.

The peak bodies for football, netball, tennis, cricket and soccer have introduced facility standards. These bodies are keen for facility providers like Corangamite Shire to upgrade their facilities, over time, to these standards. The issue of water supply and management was raised by committees, clubs and Council officers. Anticipated future supply will be significantly less than current conditions. Consideration needs to be made now as to how reserves, parks and gardens will receive enough water. Measures will need to go beyond drought tolerant species, water collection etc.

Participation by women in traditional male sports is growing. It is likely that female football, cricket and soccer teams will form in Corangamite over the next 10 years. Also, the number of women umpiring football and soccer is growing. These trends have facility implications which Council and the community needs to be mindful of. Council is supportive of women in sport and has already begun to consider the implications of this and how it can assist to facilitate an increase in women's participation.

Strategies under consideration include encouraging greater representation of women in governance and management of sport organisations, structures (schedules, timing) that are conducive to participation by women, promotion, the design and presentation of facilities and spaces, and a welcoming and inclusive culture.

KEY ACTIONS:

- Develop a comprehensive database on recreation facilities and open space in the Shire and link this database to Council GIS system
- Determine Council's future role and support of active recreation facilities and open spaces on Crown and other non-Council owned land
- Advocate to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning on issues pertaining to the management of facilities on Crown land reserves, including support needed for committees of management
- Identify what actions could be undertaken to increase the recreational use of the natural features in the Shire
- Pursue opportunities to optimise the use of existing recreation facilities owned by schools, health services etc.
- Determine the future role of the active recreation reserves in the Shire that are no longer used for club sport and explore the potential of rationalising the provision of active recreation reserves in the Shire
- Assess the facility implications of and develop strategies to cater for:
 - The potential growth in women's soccer, cricket and football in Corangamite and the possibility that women's only teams will form in the Shire
 - The increasing number of female umpires and referees in sporting competitions
- Develop a set of facility development/maintenance standards for the outdoor active recreation facilities in the Shire
- Prepare redevelopment masterplans for the active recreation reserves in the Shire
- Develop and implement a water management plan for the active recreation reserves in the Shire
- Consider undertaking regional sport specific development plans as participation figures necessitate
- Undertake a swimming pool facilities plan
- Produce a trails development plan

6.5 IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING & EVALUATION

It is critical that the Action Plan is reviewed on a frequent, at least annual basis. This review should be a formal process. It should identify the status of the recommendations – whether they have been fully implemented, whether the recommendations are still relevant or should be disregarded or altered and whether any new actions are required. A revised Action Plan should be developed which outlines the progress to date and the actions that will be undertaken in the ensuing year. The review should be undertaken by Council's recreation team with a formal report on the progress of the Recreation and Open Space Strategy presented to Council on an annual basis.

Note: The implementation of the Action Plan may require Council to redirect existing or provide new resources to Council's recreation and open space functions.

TABLE 1 - RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE STRATEGY: ACTION PLAN

NO.	ACTION	PRIORITY
BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS & RELATIONSHIPS		
1	<p>Continue to support, build strong relationships and/or, where appropriate, develop partnerships with the following organisations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Local health services providers and networks, e.g. Heart of Corangamite Network, South West Health Care, Timboon and District Healthcare Services, local disability recreation providers and local mental health services etc · Government agencies involved in recreation and open space planning and provision, e.g. Sport and Recreation Victoria (SRV), Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), Parks Victoria etc · Relevant agencies involved in land, water and environment management, e.g. Corangamite Catchment Management Authority · Peak bodies for sport and recreation in Victoria, e.g. AFLVic, Netball Victoria, Cycling Victoria, Cricket Victoria etc · Regional sports organisations and associations, e.g. South West Sports, school zone sport coordinator, Hampden Football Netball League etc · Local environment groups, sport and recreation clubs, committees of management and local schools 	Short
2	<p>Continue to build strong relationships with Corangamite’s neighbouring Councils and other Great South Coast Councils, and explore opportunities for joint advocacy, planning, programming and management activities, e.g. swimming pool management</p>	Short
3	<p>Continue to support the pathways offered by the South West Sports Academy and peak sports bodies for athletes to reach sporting excellence</p>	Ongoing
4	<p>In collaboration with other recreation providers in Corangamite and Great South Coast Region, continue to explore opportunities to deliver innovative sport and recreation participation activities</p>	Ongoing



NO.	ACTION	PRIORITY
INCREASING ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN RECREATION		
5	In collaboration with relevant agencies, develop a statistical profile of sport and recreation participation in the Shire. This profile should contain the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · A census of player numbers in local sporting clubs broken down by sport/activity, place of residence, gender and age [updated on an annual basis] · Participation numbers in sport and recreation activity with questions based on the ABS 2012 survey into 'Participation in Sport and Physical Activity' [to be undertaken every 3 years]. 	Short
6	In collaboration with the 'Heart of Corangamite Network', develop and implement a program plan aimed at increasing the participation of Corangamite residents in recreation activity. The plan should also identify necessary resources and responsibilities. Consider the significant variations in the age structures and levels of disadvantage of the local communities, now and projected, across the Shire when developing the plan and target the activities in the plan accordingly. Give special emphasis in the plan to the elderly, youth and isolated residents.	Short
7	Work with early years' and youth providers to promote participation in sport and active recreation.	Short
8	Continue to fund recreation initiatives that seek to convert the casual participants in these programs to permanent participants in club activities.	Short
9	Continue to identify and fund initiatives that seek to increase casual participation in sport and recreation to prevent obesity and encourage women and girls' involvement.	Ongoing
10	Work with health care providers and private fitness providers to develop sustainable walking and cycling groups across the Shire.	Short
11	Review the effectiveness of Council's sport and recreation related promotion and communication processes and modify/improve the processes if required, e.g. community directory, website, newsletters, social media etc.	Short
12	Develop a section of Council's website that has the core purpose of being a 'noticeboard' for facilities, programs and open spaces that provide sport and recreation opportunities to provide information on what exists, how contact can be made with individual providers. The website could be a platform for the promotion of all sport and recreation events and activities occurring in Corangamite and could have the potential to be branded [e.g. 'Corangamite Give-It-A-Go'].	Short
13	Partner with relevant agencies, to prepare marketing collateral on the major trails in Corangamite and distribute through tourism channels for visitors and to residents.	Medium
14	Identify what actions could be undertaken to increase the recreational use of the natural features [lakes, waterways, hills and beaches] in the Shire. Consider events, trails and adventure sports. Promote these opportunities.	Medium
15	Work with State Sporting Associations to explore implementation opportunities of modified sport.	Medium
16	Pursue opportunities to optimise the use of existing recreation facilities in the Shire owned by schools, health services and other key providers.	Medium
17	Give consideration to installing additional facilities in parks that encourages informal play such as rebound walls, basketball pads etc	Medium
DEVELOPING AND SUPPORTING STRONG COMMITTEES AND CLUBS		
18	Continue to work with South West Sport on the development and implementation of a program to upskill committees of management in the areas of governance, management, risk management, financial management, retaining and attracting committee members, forward planning, effective communication and promotion strategies and other key operational issues. Conduct or partner with other organisations to complete health check audits of all clubs and COMs in Corangamite in order to inform the management/club development program.	Short
19	Advise clubs and COMs about the grants register on the South West Sports Website. Provide a link on Council's website to the webpage for the register.	Short
20	Recognise the contributions made to the community by volunteers involved in the management of sport and recreation facilities and operation of clubs, e.g. nomination of local volunteers for recognition in the peak body volunteer awards days and South West Sports Star Awards.	Short
21	Work with clubs and committees of management that have viability concerns and assist them to improve their governance / management arrangements through exploring alternative models that optimise local resources.	Medium

NO.	ACTION	PRIORITY
ENHANCING COUNCIL'S POLICY FRAMEWORK		
22	Develop a Council policy framework, review existing Council policies and update or develop new policies that strategically align with the Recreation and Open Space Strategy.	Medium
23	Develop a framework of current challenges in recreation and health and wellbeing in the Corangamite Shire to guide discussion in the next phase of community planning.	Short
PROVIDING HIGH QUALITY, OPTIMALLY USED, SUSTAINABLE RECREATION FACILITIES AND OPEN SPACE		
24	Develop a database on sport and recreation facilities, open space and trails in the Shire that links to Council's GIS system.	Medium
25	Advocate to Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) relating to the future management, maintenance of sport and recreation facilities on Crown land reserves. In particular, confirm DELWP's future level of involvement in supporting Crown land committees of management and the maintenance of Crown land reserves.	Short
26	Determine Council's future role and support of active recreation facilities and open space on Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and other landholders land.	Medium
27	Explore opportunities to maximise the use of active recreation facilities and open space across the Shire through shared use. Consider rationalisation of infrastructure where appropriate in order to optimise resources.	Ongoing
28	Develop a set of facility development/maintenance standards for the outdoor active recreation facilities in the Shire. These standards should cover the following – signage, car parking, fencing, playing field/courts surface, irrigation systems, spectator facilities (seating, public toilets, sheltered areas), cricket wickets/nets, field and court lighting, player and umpire change rooms and amenities (including facilities for females), medical facilities, social/kiosk area, administration areas and storage. Use the facility standards developed by the AFL, Cricket Australia, Netball Victoria, Football Federation Victoria and Tennis Victoria as a guide in developing these standards.	Short
29	Prepare redevelopment masterplans for the active recreation reserves in the Shire. The masterplanning process should: 1. Identify the current and future role of the reserves. 2. Assess the current and future demand for the sporting and other facilities at the reserves. 3. Audit the condition/design of the facilities at the reserves against the facility standards identified in Action 28. 4. Review the maintenance regimes for the reserves against the maintenance standards identified in Action 28. 5. Identify the works required to provide for demand and meet the standards identified in Steps 4 and 5. 6. Produce a plan which lists the recommended works at the reserves and indicates the priorities and costs of and potential funding sources for the works.	Medium
30	Develop and implement a water management plan for the active recreation reserves in the Shire. The plan should identify what temporary and permanent measures are required to provide an effective and reliable water supply for the reserves.	Medium
31	Undertake a swimming pool facilities plan. The plan should make recommendations about the future provision of swimming facilities in the Shire. It should include and make recommendations about the future operation, upgrade and management of the existing pools in the Shire.	Short
32	Review trail provision in the Shire including identifying any current plans to upgrade or extend existing footpaths and trails. Upgrade exiting trails and develop new trails in accordance with facility development/ maintenance standards set out in the Barwon South West Guidelines for trail planning, design and management.	Short
33	Consider undertaking regional sport specific strategies and development plans based on the outcomes of Action 5, e.g. a soccer strategy, golf strategy, lawn bowls strategy. These plans should investigate and make recommendations about the following: - The current and future competition structures in the Great South Coast Region. - The likely demand for facilities in Corangamite Shire over the next decade and beyond. - The plans of neighbouring Councils to provide facilities. - The role that Council should play in the development and support of the sport in Corangamite. - The facilities required in Corangamite and the best location and design standards for these facilities. - The cost and timing of developing these facilities and potential funding sources.	Medium
34	Continue to pursue development of the Twelve Apostles trail.	Short



**CORANGAMITE
SHIRE**

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