

CITY OF GREATER BENDIGO
ALL AGES ALL ABILITIES
FINAL ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES REPORT
OCTOBER 2019

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The City of Greater Bendigo acknowledges it is on Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Country.

We acknowledge and extend our appreciation to the Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung Peoples, as the Traditional Owners of the land the City exists on today.

We pay our respects to leaders and Elder's past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of all Dja Dja Wurrung and Taungurung People.

We express our gratitude in the sharing of this land, our sorrow for the personal, spiritual and cultural costs of that sharing and our hope that we may walk forward together in harmony and in the spirit of healing.

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INTRODUCTION

Overview

The Greater Bendigo Health and Wellbeing Plan (2017-2021) outlines the health and wellbeing priorities for the community.

The plan meets the requirements of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 and guides council's work in improving the health and wellbeing of our community.

Purpose

The purpose of the All Ages All Abilities project is to update and combine the following plans:

- Community Access and Inclusion Plan (2015-2018)
- Municipal Early Years Plan (2014-2017)
- Positive Ageing Strategy (2011-2014), and
- Acknowledge the Youth Strategy (2017 – 2021).

The All Ages All Abilities Action Plan will be a short-term plan that aligns with the timeframes of the Health and Wellbeing Plan (2017 – 2021) and therefore will have fewer actions than previous plans.

The Action Plan will take a whole of community approach to activating the priorities identified in the Greater Bendigo Health and Wellbeing Plan.

A process illustrating how the plans integrate is right.

This Report

This report summarises feedback received from community engagement, research and data analysis including policy context.

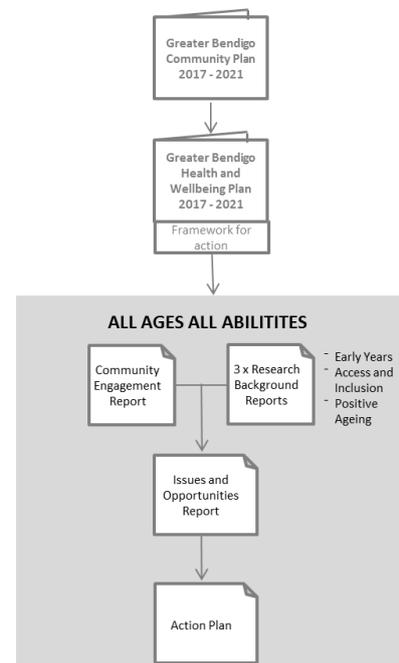
The report collates key opportunities, priorities and questions that relate to the health and wellbeing of children, young people, people with a disability and older adults in Greater Bendigo. The findings were tested and refined through a consultation process with stakeholders and the wider community to inform the development of an All Ages All Abilities Action Plan for Greater Bendigo.

The report has been developed in consultation with the key agencies, partners, stakeholders and the community.

Implementation of the All Ages All Abilities Action Plan will be monitored, with progress reports made to councillors and the community on an annual basis

The findings from this Issues and Opportunities Report will inform the development of the next health and wellbeing plan.

FIGURE 1: INTEGRATED PLANS PROCESS



GREATER BENDIGO COMMUNITY PROFILE

The City of Greater Bendigo is located in the centre of Victoria, 150 kilometres North West of Melbourne. The municipality is characterised by its rich heritage, including beautiful streets and historic buildings created from one of the world's greatest gold rushes.

Greater Bendigo's population of 116,045 residents see a strong sense of community as a key factor for living in the region and enjoy beautiful parks and green spaces; pools and water reserves, and close proximity to natural parks and reserves.

Greater Bendigo's rural areas make up about 95% of the municipal land mass and are home to almost 15% of residents.

There are 1,846 (1.7%) community members who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, whilst 8% of our population were born outside of Australia.

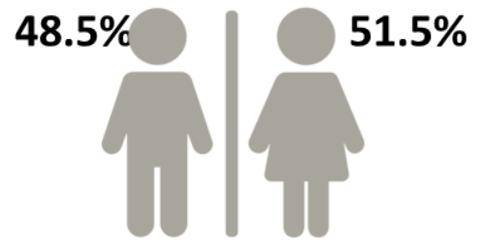
Many Greater Bendigo households are lone person households (26.3%). This is followed closely by couples with children (26.1%) and couples without children (25.3%). The number of older lone person households is higher than the Victorian average (10.8%).

Socio-economic outcomes vary across the Greater Bendigo community with more than 14% living under the poverty line.

Currently 11,524 Greater Bendigo residents (12.9%) provide unpaid care to family members or others because of a disability or illness and 6,546 (5.9%) of residents report they needed assistance in their day-to-day lives due to disability, long-term health condition or old age.

By 2036 it is predicted the population will increase by 41.3%, with an additional 5,798 children aged up to 9 years, 7,758 young people aged 10 to 24 years, 11,082 aged over 65 years, and 3,100 people with a disability.

OUR POPULATION



LIFE EXPECTANCY



SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

With an ageing population there is an increase in mobility and disability issues.



Greater Bendigo community characteristics are further explored in the **Community Access and Inclusion background report**, **Early Years background report**, **Positive Ageing background report**.

The reports are available here: www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/allagesallabilities



POLICY CONTEXT

The City of Greater Bendigo has responsibilities to adhere to legislative requirements including:

- Section 26 of the Public Health and Wellbeing Act (2008) to develop a Community Plan and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan
- The Victorian Disability Amendment Act 2017 to develop a Disability Action Plan.

This Issues and Opportunities Report has been informed by international, national, state and local legislation or policy. The table (right) lists the documents considered in the development of this report.

National Disability Insurance Scheme

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) was introduced in 2016 and is the way people with disability, their families and carers are provided support. The NDIS provides about 460,000 Australians under the age of 65 with a permanent and significant disability with the support they need to live an ordinary life.

Early Childhood reforms

Through 2017/18 the Victorian Government invested \$202.1 million in early childhood services, Maternal and Child Health (MCH), and parenting supports, to help children be ready for kindergarten and school. Additional funding in 2019/2020 will supplement existing Enhanced MCH support programs to extend the hours and make services available to families with children up to three years of age.

Aged Care reforms

Through the Aged Care reforms the Federal Government strives to build a better, fairer and nationally consistent aged care system to support Australians to be prepared to live a healthy, independent, connected and safe life. At this stage the design of the new system has not been completed.

In response to the proposed reform changes, the role of the All Ages All Abilities Action Plan will be to strengthen community connection across the age ranges, inform the community about programs and support available to them, support participation and development for residents of all ages and abilities and ultimately create a healthier Greater Bendigo. Aged Care, Early Years and Disability Support Services are all growth industries and ensuring quality, compassionate and respectful support and care requires the adoption of modern practices to recruit workforces with the right attitude and skills.

International
United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights
United Nations Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities
United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child
National
The Commonwealth Disability Discrimination Act 1992
The National Disability Strategy 2010-2020
Aged Care Act 1997
Aged Care Quality Standards 2018
National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care
State
The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities
The Victorian State Disability Plan 2017-2020
The Victorian Disability Amendment Act 2017
The Victorian Carers Strategy 2018-2022
Local
Human Rights Charter 2014
City of Greater Bendigo Community Plan 2017-2021
Greater Bendigo Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017-2021
Greater Bendigo Public Space Plan 2018

HOW THE ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES REPORT WAS DEVELOPED



ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The City sought to understand the needs, issues, aspirations and priorities of residents across all ages and abilities in the municipality to inform the development of an Issues and Opportunities Report.

The Youth Strategy – Explore, Engage, Empower was launched in 2017 following intensive engagement with young people across Greater Bendigo. The strategy outlines the priority areas for young people and includes a detailed action plan. For the All Ages All Abilities project young people were engaged, however not to the same intensity as other target groups. What young people said confirmed their priorities from 2017.

Over 1,400 members of the community were engaged face-to-face through workshops, meetings, events and schools. Over 430 community members completed an online survey and over 1,000 written feedback cards were completed and displayed at the Bendigo Library.

The engagement process captured a diverse range of groups including:

- Council Advisory groups - Disability Inclusion Reference Committee, Youth Council, Positive Ageing Advisory Committee and the Farming Advisory Committee
- Primary school students from seven schools including a special needs school, two rural schools and one Senior Secondary College
- Various disability, multicultural and positive ageing groups, Bendigo & District Aboriginal Co-operative and two local neighbourhood houses
- Community members at events such as Library toddler time, Dudley House Garden Party, Zinda Festival, Heathcote Bush Market and Bendigo Community Farmers' Markets
- A Provider Agency forum was attended by 55 representatives from a range of organisations that support children, young adults, people with a disability and older adults

Greater Bendigo community engagement

Following community consultation, an All Ages All Abilities Engagement Report was prepared.

The reports is available here: www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/allagesallabilities



WHAT THE COMMUNITY TOLD US

Key themes identified by each target group were:

Early years – Children 0-11

- More shaded play spaces and play spaces with secure fencing
- Access to open body of water e.g. a beach
- Desire for a local wildlife animal sanctuary or zoo
- More parks and green spaces
- Infrastructure to increase opportunities for physical activity i.e. cycling and walking paths, and outdoor exercise equipment
- More family friendly events
- Access to affordable healthy food options
- Increased support and shelters for homeless people
- Improved communication about networks, events and services available to the community

Young people – aged 12-25

- Increased support and services for mental health
- Improved safety perceptions for the community
- Access to employment opportunities
- Improved cycling and walking paths

People with a disability

- Improved communication about supports, networks, events and services available to the community
- Improved employment opportunities
- Infrastructure to increase accessibility e.g. walking paths, footpaths, parking

Older adults

- Increased transport support to access activities for social connection and reduced isolation
- Increased access to health services
- Improved safety perceptions for the community
- Accessible parking options
- Improved avenues for communication regarding supports, networks, events and services available to the community
- Improved cycling and walking paths
- Intergenerational activities

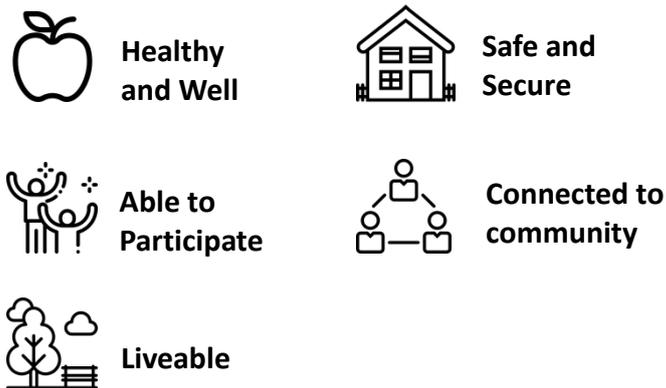
The consistency of common themes across all groups during community engagement plus those raised through the review of data supported the development for an All Ages All Abilities Issues and Opportunities Paper and Action Plan.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

In this section of the report we explore what the community said, what we know, what the City is currently doing to address those priorities, and the opportunities for future exploration.

The City of Greater Bendigo Health and Wellbeing Plan has a number of priorities across five domains. This report is aligned to these domains (see figure 2), and in no particular order, identifies the **top three priority areas** under each domain.

FIGURE 2: GREATER BENDIGO HEALTH AND WELLBEING PLAN DOMAINS



HEALTHY AND WELL

Eating well and being physically active is important to maintain and protect the longevity of good health and wellbeing.

Why is this important to Greater Bendigo?

- A key community aspiration identified in the Greater Bendigo Health and Wellbeing Plan is that members of the community have good physical and mental health supported by healthy lifestyles.
- Less than half of Greater Bendigo residents meet the weekly physical activity guidelines with many at risk of being overweight or obese.
- The daily consumption of fruit and vegetables needs to improve to ensure all residents are meeting national guidelines.
- As the population ages there is a need to create opportunities to maintain and support independence of older people, in particular as there is often an increase in disability with age.
- Mental health is a key issue for people of all ages in Greater Bendigo. Community feedback from young people and people with disabilities highlighted the need for better access to local support services, awareness programs, information and education.
- Greater Bendigo's proximity to nature and the ease of access to playgrounds, parks, gardens, lakes and forests for outdoor activities is an asset for the community.

Did you know?

- One in five children experience food insecurity on a daily basis
- More than half of adults are considered overweight or obese
- Only 46% of Greater Bendigo adults exercise 30 minutes or more, 4 times a week
- Only 7.6% of children eat enough vegetables
- Just over half of children eat enough fruit
- Risk of alcohol related harm is higher than the state average
- Smoking rates are higher than the state average
- More people are seeking help for drug and alcohol issues than the state average
- 45% of Australian adults are affected by mental illness
- 10-15% of older people experience depression and 10% experience anxiety

Issue	Current Activity	Opportunity
<p>1. Mental health: Sustaining good mental health is a key contributor to ensuring an engaged and healthy community. During community engagement concern about mental health was one of the strongest themes raised. Particular concern included access to services, the need to travel for treatment, and the need for support, information and awareness programs.</p>	<p>The City continues advocating to State and Federal Governments for increased mental health funding to support local services, particularly for young people and people with a disability.</p>	<p>Explore a coordinated approach to identify ways to promote mental health awareness and education, and understand the role of local government in supporting mental health.</p>
<p>2. Food insecurity: In Greater Bendigo one in five children experience food insecurity on a daily basis and more than 14% of the Greater Bendigo population lives below the poverty line.</p> <p>Food insecurity and healthy eating were concerns raised by community members of all ages and abilities.</p>	<p>Through the development of the Greater Bendigo Food Systems Strategy the City supports a healthy, local food system; helps address food insecurity and works with other organisations to promote healthy food choices.</p> <p>The City of Greater Bendigo is currently preparing an application to be appointed as Australia's UNESCO Creative City of Gastronomy.</p>	<p>Advocate to the State Government to promote, support and introduce school breakfast/ healthy eating programs at early learning centres and primary schools across Greater Bendigo e.g. Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden.</p>
<p>3. Walking and cycling: Through community feedback, improvements to cycling and walking tracks were a consistent theme raised throughout the municipality.</p> <p>The City's Active Living Census 2014 suggested that improvements to walking and cycling tracks would encourage increased physical activity and use of public space, with walking (32.2%), cycling (11.9%) and bushwalking (8.8%) the most popular year-round physical activities.</p>	<p>The 2019 Active Living Census will provide even greater insight into the health and wellbeing needs and preferences across our communities. The results will help improve local recreational facilities designed to get residents more active and help obtain funding for major health and wellbeing projects within Greater Bendigo.</p> <p>The City supports the Walking to School program encouraging local primary school children to get active by walking to school in October. In 2018 more than 33 local primary schools participated – that's over 70% of our local schools getting involved.</p>	<p>Expand the shared path network and link existing pathways to create an overall cycling and walking path network and ensure they are accessible for all abilities through the Walk Cycle Greater Bendigo Strategy.</p>

SAFE AND SECURE

People's sense of safety is influenced by factors including gender, age, ethnicity and physical ability. The time of day or night, the presence and behaviour of others and the appearance and amenity of the area are also important.

Why is this important to Greater Bendigo?

- Key community aspirations identified in the Greater Bendigo Health and Wellbeing Plan include that the Greater Bendigo community lives free from violence and abuse, is protected from environmental risks and is supported to live affordably.
- Community feedback from young people and older people emphasised the need for safe spaces to meet and gather. Young people spoke about feeling safe when events were supervised.
- The availability of affordable housing received mixed feedback during community engagement. Many felt Greater Bendigo was an affordable place to buy homes however finding rental accommodation can be challenging for renters.
- The community felt there has been an increase in homelessness in Greater Bendigo.
- Perceptions of safety are important factors influencing open space usage.
- Extreme weather events relating to climate change may impact on the safety of the community, specifically vulnerable groups such as older adults, children and people with a disability. Health impacts may include heat stress and dehydration.
- With increasing temperatures, trees play an important role in the provision of shade and respite in Council's parks, play spaces and streetscapes.

Did you know?

- Long Gully, West Bendigo, Ironbark, North Bendigo, California Gully, Eaglehawk, Eaglehawk North, Sailors Gully and Heathcote and district all appear in the top 15% of most disadvantaged Australian suburbs.
- Strathfieldsaye and Rural East are in top 10% of most advantaged suburbs in Australia.
- 21% of households with children aged 0-9 have no parents in employment, compared to state average 19%.
- 34.7% of women and 77.3% of men feel safe when walking alone at night in Greater Bendigo.
- 1 in 3 Australian women have experienced physical violence and 1 in 5 have experienced sexual violence.
- The rate of sexual offences against women in Greater Bendigo is 18.7 per 10,000 people, significantly higher than the state average of 8.5 per 10,000 people.
- The rate of family violence against women in Greater Bendigo is 117.3 per 10,000 people, higher than the state average of 72.5 per 10,000 people.
- Women with disabilities are 40% more likely to be victims of family violence. 20% of Australia's homeless population live in Victoria, 39% are aged under 25 and there has been an increase of 23% aged 55+ experiencing homelessness.

Issue	Current Activity	Opportunity
<p>1. The Hargreaves Mall: During community engagement many people spoke about feeling unsafe in the Hargreaves Mall and the need for a greater police presence to curb anti-social behaviour. They also believed empty shops contributed to the unsafe feel of the space.</p>	<p>Work across all City departments, and with Victoria Police and the community to improve safety in the Mall through current activation activities including the Moonlight Market, the pop-up park, and City led children's events.</p>	<p>Explore partnerships and advocacy opportunities that enhance public spaces.</p> <p>Advocate for improvements in community safety through the City Centre Activation Plan.</p>
<p>2. Safe meeting spaces: Safe and inclusive places to gather and meet was a theme raised by both young and older people. Community feedback spoke to the need for welcoming, open places where people feel comfortable to share ideas and opinions.</p>	<p>In partnership with Community Neighbourhood Houses, Libraries and Social Support Groups, promote safe places to gather and meet, and provide a supportive pathway to programs that support vulnerable members of our community.</p>	<p>Advocate for the promotion of community spaces, through the Community Buildings Policy with a focus on Community Hubs as safe places to meet.</p>
<p>3. Homelessness: During community engagement children in particular were concerned regarding the rates of homelessness in Greater Bendigo.</p>	<p>Continue to work with community groups on initiatives such as supporting Winter Night Shelters which provide crisis shelter accommodation in local churches, and the Food Relief Network, whilst also looking for new innovative solutions to solving homelessness.</p>	<p>Explore a coordinated approach to understanding the drivers of homelessness which may include social housing, family violence issues and unemployment. This will include understanding of the role of Local Government in supporting the homeless through developing an Affordable Housing Action Plan.</p>

ABLE TO PARTICIPATE

Feeling connected to the community regardless of age, gender, cultural background, abilities or relative income is important in ensuring an engaged and healthy community. This includes feeling valued for the contribution made to the community.

Why is this important to Greater Bendigo?

- A key community aspiration identified in the Greater Bendigo Health and Wellbeing Plan is that the community has the capability to participate and contribute to the economy and community life.
- Greater Bendigo children need a continued focus on language and literacy skill development. Community feedback identified a need for more programs such as library rhyme time and story times.
- Community feedback regarding employment opportunities was mixed. There are diverse employment options available however unemployment and under-employment was raised.
- Young people need assistance with the transition from education to the workforce, with opportunities for volunteering and mentoring.
- Breaking the cycle of long-term unemployment was another opportunity raised.
- People with a disability represent an untapped potential in the workforce.
- With more than 20% of the community providing unpaid assistance to a person with disability, long term illness or old age and/ or providing unpaid care for children there is a need to recognise the contribution Carers make to the Greater Bendigo economy.

Did you know?

- The proportion of children in kindergarten is lower than the state average.
- The number of Grade 3 students meeting or exceeding the benchmark for literacy is below the state average.
- 22.5% of children are vulnerable on one or more Australian Early Development Census domains.
- 12.5% of children are vulnerable on two or more Australian Early Development Census domains.
- In February 2019, Greater Bendigo's unemployment rate was 4.2% slightly lower than the national average.
- In March 2019, Greater Bendigo's youth unemployment rate was 18.3% compared to 11.1% nationally.
- People with a disability have low workforce participation rates and higher unemployment rates.
- In 2016, there were 11,524 (12.9%) carers providing unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, long term illness or old age.
- In 2016, 8,494 people provided unpaid care for children other than their own.
- The Federal and State Governments have prioritised digital health as key to improving service delivery and health outcomes, as have many healthcare providers.

Issue	Current Activity	Opportunity
<p>4. Early Years learning and development: Since the Australian Early Development Census began measuring the development of Australian children in their first year of full time school, the percentage of Greater Bendigo children presenting as vulnerable on one or more developmental domains has been consistently higher than state averages.</p>	<p>Continue to work with partners to promote language and literacy improvement opportunities across Greater Bendigo.</p> <p>Through the Maternal Health Nurses support and promote the Victorian Government baby bundles for new parents which include four books for 0-2 year olds.</p>	<p>Work with the Neighbourhood Houses and Goldfields Regional Library to link vulnerable community members with existing early literacy programs.</p> <p>Work with partners to ensure infrastructure and workforce requirements are in place for the expansion of three year old kindergarten in 2022.</p>
<p>5. Mentoring and work experience: Young people expressed a need for work experience and mentoring opportunities to assist the transition from education to the workplace.</p> <p>Older people saw mentoring as a way of helping create intergenerational connection and build relationships.</p>	<p>The City continues to provide work experience and traineeship opportunities for people of all ages and abilities in Greater Bendigo.</p>	<p>In partnership with schools and working with the City's Home Support team introduce a program for older adults to visit schools and participate in activities that pass on skills and knowledge to children and young people, build relationships and increases social connection.</p> <p>Through the Greater Bendigo Economic Development Strategy create local education, training and employment pathways for school-leavers and unskilled workers.</p>
<p>Carers: Through community engagement feedback was received about needing to do more for Carers. This included Carers of people with disability, illness and old age as well as young children.</p>	<p>Through the Commonwealth Home Support Program continue to provide respite in the home care and social support for Carers to a person with a disability, long term illness or old age.</p> <p>The City continues to offer the Aged and Disability Expo connecting residents with service and support providers as well as community groups and networks.</p>	<p>The City promotes and celebrates Carers Week in conjunction with Carers Support Services, raising awareness of the valuable contribution Carers make to their families and community and highlighting the challenges Carers face.</p>

CONNECTED TO CULTURE AND COMMUNITY

Social connectedness and social inclusion are key contributors to ensuring an engaged, healthy and resilient community. Access to services and resources for people of All Ages and Abilities enhances their wellbeing and enables them to live full lives.

Why is this important to Greater Bendigo?

- A key community aspiration in the Greater Bendigo Health and Wellbeing Plan, is that the community is socially engaged, inclusive and a place where people can safely identify and connect with their culture and identity.
- Greater Bendigo residents recognised the importance of opportunities for social connections and reducing social isolation, including intergenerational activities.
- The community expressed a strong interest in taking a coordinated approach to volunteering and more formal mentoring programs.
- Feedback from older community members and people with a disability showed access to transport as a barrier to participation in events and activities.
- Community feedback emphasised the need for improved communication between Council and residents regarding projects and new initiatives.
- Through engagement the community expressed appreciation for the wide range of events hosted by the City, particularly low-cost family friendly events.

Did you know?

- In the 2016 Census more than 23% of Greater Bendigo residents (aged 15 +) volunteer compared to 19.2% in Victoria.
- The most active volunteers are aged 65-74 years old.
- The City hosts inclusive and accessible events, festivals and activities throughout the year.
- An accessible events guide provides information to help make events more inclusive for all ages and abilities.
- The voice of young people, people with a disability and older adults is represented to Council via advisory committees including the Youth Council, Disability Inclusion Reference Committee and Positive Ageing Advisory Committee.

Issue	Current Activity	Opportunity
<p>1. Voice of the community: Improved communication channels between Council and the community.</p>	<p>Continue to hear directly from young people, people with disability and older adults through Council advisory committees including the Youth Council, Disability Inclusion Reference Committee and Positive Ageing Advisory Committee.</p> <p>Continue to engage directly with diverse community groups on projects that are relevant to them.</p>	<p>The City investigates hosting an annual workshop for younger children to hear about community projects, ask questions and have input into new strategies and plans.</p> <p>Explore additional ways to improve direct and indirect communication channels and strengthen engagement practices to be inclusive of all backgrounds, cultures and abilities.</p> <p>Improved communication with people with disability by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training programs to develop understanding and awareness of the needs of people with disability • Ensuring pictures of people with disability are used in City publications • Using interactive maps to increase inclusiveness, awareness, and change attitudes.
<p>2. Family events: the community value and appreciate low cost or free family friendly events held across Greater Bendigo.</p>	<p>Continue to organise and support child friendly community events that celebrate and recognise the valuable contribution they make to our city. These events are held at low or no cost to participants and are open to all the community.</p>	<p>Through the development of the Accessible Events Guide provide information to help make events and activities more inclusive and accessible for all ages and all abilities.</p>
<p>3. Strengthen volunteerism: Greater Bendigo has high number of volunteers; however the majority are older members of the community. There is opportunity to increasing the number of volunteers from all ages and abilities groups.</p>	<p>Complete the Community Volunteering Strategy to strengthen volunteering opportunities in Greater Bendigo, enhance opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to participate, and build on the wider range of current opportunities that connect people together.</p>	<p>Develop a culture of volunteerism in the community by establishing a coordinated approach to public education and advocacy and an approach to annual events that recognise, acknowledge and celebrate volunteers.</p>

LIVEABLE

The City of Greater Bendigo is a growing community and as we grow it is important to ensure plans and services are designed to enhance the health of people in our City.

Why is this important to Greater Bendigo?

- A key community aspiration identified in the Greater Bendigo Health and Wellbeing Plan is that the community is adaptable and resilient and has access to sustainable natural, built, social and economic environments that support and enhance health and wellbeing.
- The Greater Bendigo community loves their green spaces, parks, gardens and close proximity to nature. They also love the pools, lakes and natural water bodies.
- Community feedback emphasised the need for play spaces to be nature based, wheel chair friendly and accessible to all with complimentary facilities including shade, fences, bins, water fountains, seating and toilets.
- Community feedback from people with a disability indicated a need for buildings to be fully accessible including toilets, footpaths to have contrast for vision impaired, and accessible parking bays.
- Community feedback from our older community members suggested access to support services needed to be easier to navigate e.g. MyAgedCare.
- Public transport accessibility in Greater Bendigo is varied. Young people and those in rural communities require more services on weekends and after 9pm. Older community members want a free community bus.

Did you know?

- The City designs, constructs and maintains a range of facilities including 130 play spaces, 12 swimming pools, a splash park, 50 sporting fields, eight BMX tracks, five skate parks and a significant number of parklands where sport and leisure activities are held.
- The City has more than 130 kilometres of shared walking and cycling trails.
- There are three fully fenced 'off leash dog parks' in the municipality.
- The City has a Marveloo, a fully transportable and accessible change facility that caters for people with disabilities especially at major events.
- Greater Bendigo is a service hub for central Victoria with the Hospital, Art Gallery, Ulumbarra Theatre and the Airport providing services for the region.

Issue	Current Activity	Opportunity
<p>1. Natural play spaces: the Greater Bendigo community is very proud of its green spaces and there is opportunity to maximise the benefits of our open spaces.</p>	<p>Through the Greater Bendigo Public Space plan continue to ensure public spaces meet the needs of our community now and in the future, and continue to be an integral and enduring part of the city's image, identity and appeal.</p> <p>Through Greening Greater Bendigo, build on community sentiment that supports Greater Bendigo's parks, gardens and green spaces by promoting the physical, mental and environmental benefits of outdoor exercise.</p> <p>Continue to support and partner Greater Bendigo sporting clubs to ensure sporting activities are accessible for all, including vulnerable community members.</p> <p>Continue to host accessible and inclusive events in Greater Bendigo parks and gardens to showcase the city's green spaces.</p>	<p>Advocate for future outdoor play spaces to be designed for all ages and abilities, with features such as shade, seating and water fountains and where appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fences - Liberty swings - Stationery gym equipment
<p>2. Services navigator: In community feedback, older people in particular need assistance in knowing what services are available to support them, how to access services and where to go to find the information.</p>	<p>City Home Support and Early Years teams continue to work directly with community members to promote services and programs.</p>	<p>Work with Neighbourhood Houses and Goldfields Regional Library Corporation to develop a central hub of information that is readily available and easy to access for all members of the community.</p> <p>The City investigates ways to establish Connect Greater Bendigo as an online portal that ensures people of all ages and abilities have up to date information to help understand and navigate the range of services available.</p>
<p>3. Accessible facilities and improved footpaths: improving accessibility to infrastructure that supports the needs of people with disability, older community members and carers in our community.</p>	<p>Continue to promote Marveloo as a transportable and accessible restroom at major events and activities and maximise opportunities to increase its usage.</p> <p>Continue to advocate to State Government for funding to improve regional footpaths.</p>	<p>Promote the new Changing Place accessible facility in Hargreaves Street for people with disabilities. Highlight its benefits to individuals and families in the community and investigate opportunities to install more Changing Place facilities in the municipality.</p>

For more information contact the All Ages All Abilities Project team on

W: www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/allagesallabilities E: healthandwellbeing@bendigo.vic.gov.au