



# Heathcote

COMMUNITY PLAN  
2021-2025



# Introduction

Heathcote and surrounding districts is on Taungurung Country. We would like to acknowledge and extend our appreciation to the Taungurung Peoples, the Traditional Owners of the land. We pay our respects to leaders and Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and the hopes of all Taungurung Peoples.

The 2021-2025 Heathcote and District Community Plan was prepared by Advance Heathcote Inc., the community group that have led community engagement, the development and implementation of the community plan in Heathcote since 2014. Development of this plan has involved wide consultation with Heathcote community groups and community members. The plan incorporates the ideas and priorities from a wide range of local people who live in Heathcote and surrounding districts. We have used the framework developed by the City of Bendigo - Greater Bendigo Council Plan (Mir Wimbul) 2021-2025 to shape and articulate our community's needs and aspirations for continuing to grow Heathcote. The plan is the

platform for our advocacy to enhance Heathcote's liveability, future growth and development. It presents priorities identified by the Heathcote community that will be implemented over the next four years.

Successful implementation of the plan and achievement of our goals will be achieved through community members, organisations, groups, businesses and tourism working collaboratively to promote our priorities to those who can assist us, plus by taking local action.

We welcome and encourage all residents to join Advance Heathcote Inc.'s activities as we strive to work together to ensure Heathcote continues to be a vibrant and liveable community where people of diverse backgrounds and interests can access the services and activities needed to live fulfilled lives.

If you want to be involved in particular projects listed in the plan, please forward your contact details to Advance Heathcote Inc. using the links on the last page.



# Outcome 1: Lead and govern for all

A community together to achieve our shared vision.

Strategies to support leadership and good governance:

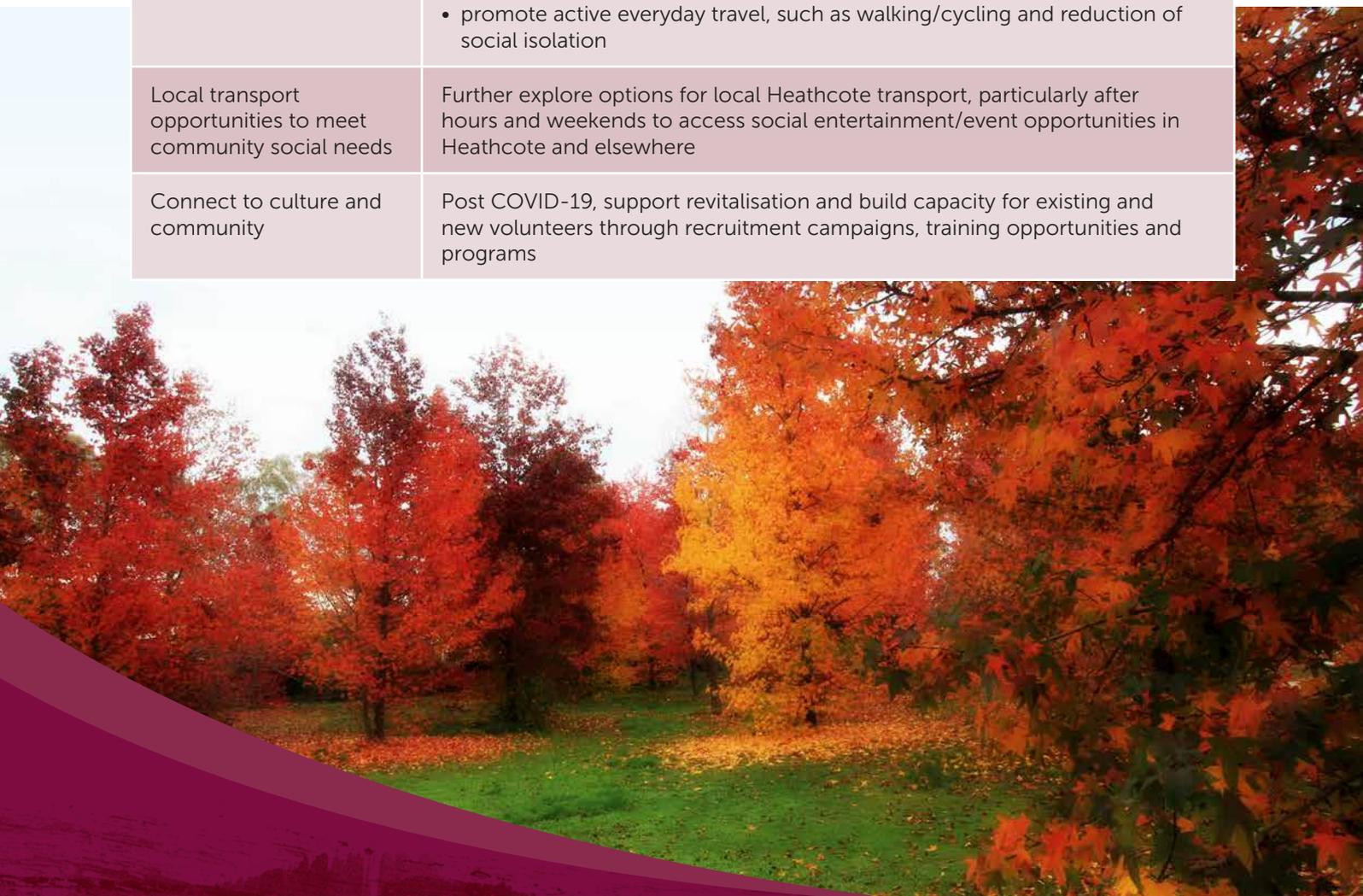
Objectives	Strategies / Actions
Build community connection through opportunities for shared communication and information exchange	Investigate a range of communication strategies and methods to improve information available to the community about events/activities and access to services
	Facilitate an annual whole-of-community services, groups, networks and clubs meeting for information exchange, review of community wellbeing and identification of emerging issues/advocacy
Advocate for priority issues to improve Heathcote's liveability	Facilitate an annual Heathcote Community Expo Day to inform our community about services, groups, clubs, networks and activities
	Use "Town Hall" style meetings to keep in touch with our community in collaboration with community partners and Council
	Provide opportunities for community members to take an active part in decision-making about the City of Greater Bendigo plans, strategies and networks
	Access the Greater Bendigo Data Co-Operative to provide local data that informs priority actions to improve Heathcote's liveability
	Engage with the Heathcote community to implement this Plan through time-limited working groups or special interest groups
Actively seek funding to implement Community Planning projects	In collaboration with relevant local groups and organisations, support the implementation of the 2019 Heathcote Township Plan actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skate Park design and upgrade to include drinking fountain, lighting, a basketball ring and additional seating</li> <li>• Prepare and commence implementation of the landscape plan for High Street Heathcote Town Centre</li> <li>• Plan and implement a program to install wayfinding signage</li> <li>• Develop a detailed long term improvement plan for the McIvor Creek from the north to south Heathcote township entrances which engages community and key stakeholders in joint activities</li> </ul>
	Work in partnership with community organisations, tourism and businesses to attain funds to implement Plan Projects
	Ensure alignment of this Community Plan with relevant local, state and federal government policies and priorities through an annual review and adjustment where necessary

## Outcome 2: Healthy, liveable spaces and places

A community where all people can live healthy, safe, harmonious lives in accessible and affordable settings.

Strategies to support the health and liveability of our community:

Objectives	Strategies / Actions
<b>Healthy and well</b> Build a healthier and resilient Heathcote and District community	Continue to advocate for implementation of local oral health programs in Heathcote and the fluoridation of the Heathcote town water supply
	Support the establishment of a Community Health Hub located on Heathcote Health Campus (to include a hydrotherapy pool and rehabilitation centre)
	Support Heathcote Health to secure funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to upgrade its Acute (Hospital) Ward and Urgent Care Centre; and</li> <li>• expand its Primary Care Centre</li> </ul>
	Encourage and facilitate individuals and community organisations to participate in research initiatives and projects that can have direct benefit for the health and wellbeing of Heathcote and District community
	Support the establishment of a site on High Street Heathcote for co-location of regional, sub-regional health and state-wide wellbeing services, including youth, mental health and prevention of gender-based violence services
<b>Safe and secure</b> Create safe and resilient communities	Initiate with Council an assessment of footpath requirements in Heathcote and develop a 10 year Footpath Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide Council with a priority map of footpath needs based on actual community consultation and requirements</li> <li>• promote active everyday travel, such as walking/cycling and reduction of social isolation</li> </ul>
Local transport opportunities to meet community social needs	Further explore options for local Heathcote transport, particularly after hours and weekends to access social entertainment/event opportunities in Heathcote and elsewhere
Connect to culture and community	Post COVID-19, support revitalisation and build capacity for existing and new volunteers through recruitment campaigns, training opportunities and programs



Objectives	Strategies / Actions
<p><b>Liveability</b> Promote positive wellbeing across Heathcote and District community</p>	<p>Continue to procure the establishment of the Bendigo Regional Dementia Village: GILBRUK Place - Dementia Village in Heathcote</p>
	<p>Support the 2021-2024 Heathcote Health Strategic Plan strategic priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing quality health services safely</li> <li>• helping people in Heathcote and surrounds to live a healthy life</li> <li>• creating specific health services for people who are at risk of poor health</li> <li>• building resilience in Heathcote and surrounding communities</li> <li>• referring people to other health services when necessary</li> </ul>
	<p>Support the implementation of the 2020 Heathcote Community Wellbeing Action Plan, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creating and supporting existing regular drop-in community spaces for talking about or accessing mental health/wellbeing services and organisations</li> <li>• investigating the potential of a social enterprise and creating community gardens in key locations across the Heathcote and District region</li> <li>• obtaining better access to community health and wellbeing data</li> <li>• working with other groups in the community, creating more connections and engaging a community connector</li> <li>• building our community identity through sharing of community history, stories and experiences and creating places to stop and pause</li> </ul>
	<p>Support the Heathcote Health Pandemic Management Plan and wider City of Greater Bendigo pandemic relief and recovery initiatives</p>
	<p>Support local illness prevention and health promotion initiatives including those aligned with the Victorian Achievement Program, 5 Ways to Wellbeing Program and Healthy Heart of Victoria</p>
<p><b>Able to participate</b> Support participation and development for residents of all ages and abilities</p>	<p>Support the Greater Bendigo Council Plan (Mir Wimbul) 2021-2025 detailed design for the Heathcote Integrated Civic Precinct Project, in particular the expanded and more contemporary Heathcote Library to offer safe and inclusive spaces and programs for people to gather, learn and connect</p>
	<p>In 2022, conduct a Youth Forum to consult with children and young people to identify their needs, service priorities and preferred activities</p>
	<p>Advance Heathcote Inc to develop an Implementation Plan and report back to our young people, community, Bendigo Youth Council, local councillors and Council staff</p>
	<p>Investigate access to specialist health services for mothers and children</p>
	<p>Investigate access to child and family support services</p>
	<p>Investigate access to mental health services and wellbeing programs</p>
	<p>Support the City of Greater Bendigo, Murray Primary Health Network and Heathcote Health to implement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• social prescribing programs; and</li> <li>• improved access to programs and services that support local people living with chronic disease, cancer and disabilities, including improved access to allied health services and telehealth</li> </ul>
	<p>Support the Heathcote Pony Club to find improved amenities for Club activities</p>

# Outcome 3: Strong, inclusive and sustainable economy

An inclusive, sustainable and prosperous community where all people can thrive.

Strategies to support the sustainable, economic growth of our community:

Objectives	Strategies / Actions
Support the development of local and regional Dementia Initiatives	Continue to procure the establishment of Bendigo Regional Dementia Village: GILBRUK Place - Dementia Village in Heathcote offering local and regional employment opportunities and economic stimulus
	Support Heathcote Dementia Alliance activities and projects including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensuring public realm improvements are dementia friendly</li> <li>• supporting local businesses to be dementia friendly for Heathcote to be known as a "Dementia Friendly Town"</li> </ul>
Become a SMART Digital community – improve Heathcote’s digital capability	Improve Heathcote and Districts access to the Internet and mobile phone coverage
	Broaden access to community education for technology and communication training that supports vibrant daily living
Support our local businesses and industry to be strong, vibrant, grow and develop Post COVID-19	Complete the development of the Heathcote investment prospectus to provide a focus for businesses and industry to make informed decisions when advocating for and planning future development and growth
	Work closely with all sectors, including manufacturing, mining, tourism, retail, health, education, creative industries and agriculture to enhance their success and business opportunities
	Establish township "Gateways" at the northern and southern entrances into Heathcote
	Improve township signage (dementia friendly) in particular, way-finding and public toilet location signage for visitors
Major asset development	Support the Greater Bendigo Council Plan (Mir Wimbul) 2021 -2025 detailed design for the Heathcote Integrated Civic Precinct Project including consideration of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adjoining outdoor space for families and children</li> <li>• external public toilet</li> </ul>
	Support the Heathcote Show Society prepare a Masterplan for the Heathcote Showgrounds

Objectives	Strategies / Actions
Attract visitors and promote diversification of the local and regional economy	Support collaborative partnerships for strong, vibrant tourism regional growth
	Expand links with the Bendigo City of Gastronomy (UNESCO Creative City) to promote Heathcote Regional food and beverage experiences
	Investigate opportunities to promote tourist related development associated with the Heathcote Golf Course (Boutique Hotel)
	Promotion of Eco and Indigenous tourism opportunities – National and State Parks; Lake Eppalock; O’Keefe Trail; outdoor experiences
	Support existing local events and festivals – Heathcote Tourism and Development Four Seasonal events, Summer of the Cellar Doors, Heathcote Wine and Food Festival, Heathcote Wine Show and O’Keefe Challenge
Support initiatives that create additional employment opportunities for local people	Support workforce development initiatives by Heathcote Health, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skilled Migration pilot</li> <li>• Care Economy CRC</li> <li>• Employed Carers Program</li> </ul>

## Outcome 4: Aboriginal reconciliation

**A community recognises and respects Aboriginal People and culture and enables the self-determination of Traditional Owners.**

**Strategies to support Aboriginal reconciliation:**

Objectives	Strategies / Actions
Respecting and celebrating our Traditional Owners, the Taungurung Peoples	Consult with the Traditional Owners, the Taungurung Peoples to assist Heathcote community to document a history of our First People’s culture and celebrate it with culturally appropriate sign-boarding/historical referencing
Creating welcoming environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	Support Heathcote Health to create a welcoming environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on the Heathcote Health Campus
Improve cultural awareness for people living and working in Heathcote and District region	Heathcote Health to provide cultural awareness training for all staff and volunteers and promote access to this training for Heathcote and District community

# Outcome 5: A climate-resilient built and natural landscape

A community featuring healthy regional landscapes and buildings that are developed with the changing climate and earth's resources in mind.

Strategies to support our built and natural environment:

Objectives	Strategies / Actions
Complete walking and cycling trails	Complete the Murchison to Heathcote Waranga Trail [listed in top 5 RDV Loddon Mallee Regionally Significant Trails priorities] for walking and cycling (incorporating the Winery Spur Trail)
	Support the extension of the Heathcote to Wallan Rail Trail
	Support completion of the walking and cycling loop around the Town Centre that connects the schools as identified in the 2019 Township Plan
Greenspace development	Support Heathcote Dementia Alliance Greenspace development connecting GILBRUK Place – Dementia Village in Heathcote to the township and the O'Keefe Rail Trail
	Extension of Hay Street to the O'Keefe Rail Trail Reserve (GILBRUK Place connection from Camp and Herriot Streets) and extension of Jennings Street to enable direct access to Hay Street along the O'Keefe Rail Trail Reserve
Improvements to local parklands	Increase public amenities in the Valley of the Liquid Ambers
Barrack Reserve Park community accessibility	Support the Heathcote Football and Netball Club request to upgrade the oval sports lighting, with the benefit of enabling activation projects to use the outdoor facility at night
	Explore opportunities to open up Barrack Park Reserve through modification /retractable fencing system (on the High Street-Park side) to provide greater access to parklands and oval and enable activation projects to encourage more people to utilise the Reserve
Eco-Tourism opportunities	Develop a detailed long-term improvement plan for the Mclvor Creek from the north to south Heathcote township entrances which engages community and key stakeholders in joint activities as identified in the 2019 Township Plan
	Liaise with City of Greater Bendigo and DELWP to maintain local Walking and Cycling Trails (Pink Cliffs and Viewing Rock) and support Nordic walking groups
	Explore the development of a local mountain bike track/air walk on Mt Ida
Reduce emissions	Advocate for installation of public electric vehicle (EV) charging station/s
Upgrade conditions of local roads	Advocate for improvements and upgrades to local roads connecting Heathcote township to its rural community

# Outcome 6: A vibrant, creative community

A community inspires a culture of creativity, activates its spaces, nurtures and supports talent, champions inclusion and access and shows the world.

Strategies to support our creative community:

Objectives	Strategies / Actions
A culture of learning and connecting	Support the Greater Bendigo Council Plan (Mir Wimbul) 2021 -2025 detailed design for the Heathcote Integrated Civic Precinct Project, in particular an expanded and more contemporary Heathcote Library to offer safe and inclusive spaces and programs for people to gather, learn and connect
Live performance spaces/cultural activities	Undertake an assessment of current Heathcote community, commercial and business facilities/amenities to explore suitability of current locations for cultural performance spaces; gallery space; live theatre; movies; events; live music and communicate findings to our creative cultural community
	Post COVID-19, promote local events to offer our community cultural experiences and opportunities
Celebrate our unique heritage	Complete Town Signage Project to direct community and visitors to Heathcote's natural environment, historical and Indigenous places of significance



# Outcome 7: A safe, welcoming and fair community

A community where people are respected, safe to participate in all aspects of community life and have equitable access to the resources they need.

Strategies to support an inclusive community:

Objectives	Strategies / Actions
<b>Safe and Secure</b> Our community values gender equity and is free from violence against women	Partner with Heathcote Health, Heathcote Police, Women's Health Loddon Mallee and the Centre for Non-Violence to support and promote local initiatives relating to gender equality: The Orange Door, Women's Shed, child safety and the prevention of family violence programs
Children and young people are supported	Enable our children and young people to access facilities and services that will meet their needs and promote opportunities to reach their desired potential
Education	Examine the 2021 Census Data and revisit the feasibility of a secondary school in Heathcote in light of socio-demographic data
Be a safe community	Reinvigorate the Heathcote Safer Town Working Group and develop a comprehensive and evidence-based Heathcote and District Emergency Management Plan and Emergency Communications Plan
Provide and maintain rural infra-structure to support the safety and liveability of the Heathcote community	Support Heathcote CFA and Heathcote SES establish a fit-for-purpose Emergency Services Hub to meet current minimum building and personnel requirements. Other emergency services may also be accommodated in the new "Hub" (Ambulance Victoria, Royal Flying Doctor Service and Coast Guard)
	Support Heathcote Police establish a new Police Station to meet current minimum building and personnel requirements
	Advocate for a "whole of township" assessment to develop a plan for the construction of footpaths, cycleways, gutters and street lighting to enhance community safety and connection
Local traffic management	Advocate for an assessment and plan to respond to local traffic management issues with the City of Greater Bendigo: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• southern end of township limited car spaces to respond to increased retail businesses</li> <li>• traffic entering Heathcote Health from Camp Street (U-Turn safety issues)</li> <li>• traffic calming in High, Hospital and Camp Streets</li> </ul>
	Consultation with the City of Greater Bendigo to resolve parking issues at the southern end of High Street retail precinct



## What is community planning?

Community planning is a process undertaken by a community where they work together to explore and document what is important to them about their locality and its future. A community plan is a document that sets out these priorities and directions. Periodically, a community plan will need revision when the community has achieved the majority of the projects in the plan, community priorities change, or the timeframe has expired for the current plan.

The City of Greater Bendigo supports communities across the municipality who wish to develop and revise their own community plan. The views and priorities in each plan are those of the community members who took part in its development. They do not represent the views of the staff of the City of Greater Bendigo, or its Councillors.

Community plans are a valuable source of advice about local priorities used by local, state and federal governments and other organisations.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Advance Heathcote Inc.**

[www.advanceheathcote.com](http://www.advanceheathcote.com)

[info@advanceheathcote.com](mailto:info@advanceheathcote.com)

**City of Greater Bendigo**

[www.bendigo.vic.gov.au](http://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au)

[requests@bendigo.vic.gov.au](mailto:requests@bendigo.vic.gov.au)

03 5434 6000



CITY OF GREATER  
**BENDIGO**



Printed on FSC  
certified paper.