

LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL

RECREATION STRATEGY 2015-2020



LODDON
SHIRE

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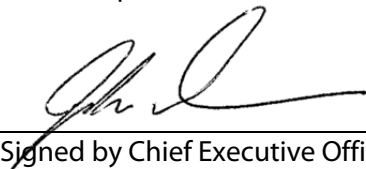
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Loddon Shire recognises the critical importance of sport and recreation to the Loddon community. It understands that sport is the social glue that can bind communities together and create strong connections between residents, which in turn helps people to create new friendships and networks and reduces social isolation.

It understands that participation in physical activity is important for people's physical and mental health and can reduce the burden of disease and its associated costs. It also understands without strong clubs and organisations and strategic partnerships with other organisations, that it would not be possible to deliver the breadth, diversity and quality of sport and recreation opportunities currently available within the Shire.

Loddon Shire also recognises that the sport and recreation landscape is constantly changing and that in order to be successful and sustainable, Council, its partners, clubs and organisations need to be informed, skilled, proactive and innovative. Issues such as droughts and floods have had a major impact on sports grounds in recent years, but have also offered opportunities to be more innovative about the way in which water is used and created opportunities for new facility developments.

Amalgamations of various sporting clubs also brings with it opportunities and challenges. It is likely, that as the population grows older and the number of people available to make up teams diminishes, that there will be more amalgamations, or alternatively, the introduction of new modified activities to adapt to the changing demographics. New cultural groups, such as the Filipino community in Pyramid Hill potentially provide opportunities to invigorate clubs with new members or provide an impetus to start new activities such as soccer.

In recent years, Loddon Shire has focussed its efforts and funding on upgrading and developing new sport and recreation facilities for each of its major towns. This systematic approach to facility development has paid big dividends, with Loddon Shire's sporting facilities now the envy of many neighbouring municipalities.

Loddon Shire residents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the majority of sport and recreation facilities available in the municipality through the community survey. It will be important, however, to ensure that these facilities are well maintained so that they reach their potential in terms of lifespan and continue to be well utilised by the community.

It will also be important to continue to upgrade existing facilities as funding becomes available to do so. Any potential new facility developments or major upgrades should be subject to a feasibility study to ensure that facilities not only meet the existing and future needs of the community, but are also sustainable to build and operate. All facilities should work towards being as welcoming, inclusive and accessible as possible.

While the development and ongoing upkeep of facilities should still remain a priority, Council should also recognise and adopt as a priority, activities and programs for local residents. It should also focus on club development as another priority, to ensure that local clubs and organisations are strong, skilled, resilient, viable and adaptive to change.

Club development is therefore a major priority of this Recreation Strategy. Rather than facilitating generic training for sport and recreation clubs and organisations, Loddon Shire wants to assist clubs and organisations to develop individual solutions to the challenges that they are facing, in areas such as governance; attracting and retaining new volunteers; fundraising; compliance; attracting and retaining players; improving accessibility; and policy development.

The Shire also recognises the critical importance of volunteers to clubs and organisations. It understands that the ways in which people choose to volunteer now, may be quite different to the traditional model where people tended to volunteer for a considerable number of years.

We therefore need to recognise these changes and provide opportunities that meet the needs of clubs / organisations and potential volunteers. Without volunteers, organised sport and recreation in Loddon Shire would struggle to exist.

Another major focus is the development of sport and recreation programs for the community. Through the community consultation undertaken as part of the Recreation Strategy, local residents voiced their desire to take part in a number of local activities such as yoga / pilates / gentle stretching classes / aerobics; dancing / line dancing /zumba; gymnastics; gym classes / personal training; martial arts, e.g. karate; walking group; volleyball; badminton; table tennis; indoor bowls; and racquet ball.

An examination of trends in the sport and recreation sector over recent years indicates that the desire of local residents for more unstructured and individual activities is consistent with that is happening elsewhere around Australia. Walking, gym / exercise classes, swimming and running are four of the most popular physical activities in both Loddon and the nation at present, and are continuing to grow. The Recreation Strategy therefore needs to respond to this change in participation.

To enable a range of new programs to be offered, Loddon Shire will encourage existing sport and recreation clubs and organisations to value add to what they already do by introducing new activities or modified versions of their activities and will also provide some Come 'n' Try days. Loddon Shire proposes to assist local residents to be trained to deliver programs for a set period of time.

Other areas that the Recreation Strategy will focus on are the continued implementation and review of existing strategies such as the Tracks and Trails Strategy; the Youth Strategy; the Aquatic Strategy; the Netball Court Strategy; and the Climate Proofing of Sports Ground Strategy.

To improve the distribution, provision and quality of play experiences, a playground strategy should also be developed. Establishing more effective communication processes with State Sporting Associations and other relevant partners, as well as better communication with clubs, are two other priorities for Loddon Shire.

A vision and a set of planning principles have been developed to guide Loddon Shire in terms of sport and recreation provision over the next five years. These are as follows:

Loddon Shire is an active, healthy and inclusive community supported by strong community clubs and a diversity of programs and accessible facilities.

To help achieve the vision of a healthy, active community supported by strong community clubs and a diversity of programs and accessible facilities, a series of planning principles have been developed.

These planning principles will guide Loddon Shire and the community when considering implementing new initiatives or facilities or when considering upgrades to facilities. Wherever possible, any sport and recreation initiatives undertaken by Loddon Shire and its partners will be:

| Planning Principle | Details |
|---|---|
| Designed to meet demonstrated community need | Community needs will be demonstrated through feasibility studies, needs assessments, master plans, surveys or other similar processes. |
| Of benefit to the community | Initiatives may provide physical health benefits to participants, may provide a safer experience, may provide opportunities for social connectedness and may provide opportunities to generate income locally. |
| Accessible for people of all abilities | Any facilities will be DDA compliant and any programs will be made as accessible as possible for people by removing as many barriers to participation as possible such as cost, transportation, time, etc. |
| Inclusive and welcoming | Any facilities will be designed to create a welcoming and inviting atmosphere, and any programs will be designed to be welcoming and inclusive of all residents. |
| Sustainable | Any facilities will be designed to be sustainable from both an environmental design and impact perspective. Any programs will be designed so that they are able to be operated locally at minimal cost and requiring minimal human resources. Wherever possible, programs will occur in partnership with other relevant organisations and agencies such as health centres, schools and existing sport and recreation clubs and organisations. |
| Multi-purpose in design | Any facility developments or upgrades should be designed to be a multi-purpose as possible, recognising the changing needs of the community over time. Where possible, facilities should be located to take advantage of economies of scale. |
| Able to offer a diversity of opportunities | The development of new or modified activities that meet the diverse needs of local residents and the changing demographics will be encouraged. |
| Cost effective | Any new facilities or facility upgrades will be cost effective to build and operate and any programs will offer value for money for local residents. |
| Designed to enhance and protect the natural environment and cultural and heritage values | Any new facilities or facility upgrades will minimise its impact on the environment and wherever possible enhance and protect the natural environment and cultural and heritage values around it. |
| Designed to reflect the unique nature of Loddon Shire | Any facility developments should reflect the unique aspects of Loddon Shire, e.g. use of local materials, references to key cultural, historical or environmental features, etc. |

Key recommendations included in this strategy are:

| Club development | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 | Club development | <p>Loddon Shire Council will fund external agencies to work on a one to one basis with 6-8 sports clubs each year to focus on issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance • Volunteer recruitment • Club management • Generating income and grants • Compliance issues • Attracting junior players • Promotion • Access and inclusion • Policy development. |
| 2 | Attracting and retaining new volunteers | <p>Research and develop programs to attract and retain new volunteers for sport and recreation clubs in Loddon Shire.</p> |
| 3 | Developing social sport and recreation activities | <p>Encourage local sports clubs to work in partnership with external providers and State Sporting Associations to develop and implement social sport and recreation activities or modified sports for community members.</p> |
| Promoting participation in physical activities | | |
| 4 | Programming and events | <p>Develop a range of shire-wide physical activity programs and events such as Come and Try Days, summer in the parks (which may include live music and movies), family BBQs at swimming pools, guided walks in forests / parks, etc. which are inclusive of all residents.</p> |
| 5 | Program leadership training | <p>Develop a program to train local residents to run various physical activities so that they can deliver these programs locally for an agreed period of time. Example activities include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yoga • Gentle exercise classes • Water aerobics • Swimming lessons • Kinder gym • Gymnastics • Circus skills • Personal training • Walking groups • Dance classes • Cycling groups • Canoeing classes • Cardio tennis |

| | | |
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| 6 | Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities | Work in partnership with the growing Filipino community of Pyramid Hill to support and link them into relevant sport and recreation opportunities. |
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Facility development

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| 7 | Facility upgrades | Continue to progressively upgrade sport and recreation facilities in line with Council's strategic planning priorities |
| 8 | Community gyms | Assist communities to develop community gyms as required. |

Climate proofing sports facilities

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| 9 | Water | Design and establish the feasibility of undertaking works to provide a more reliable water source for sport and recreation facilities in Wedderburn and Inglewood. |
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Economic development

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| 10 | Attracting events | Prepare a prospectus outlining opportunities available for a range of sporting events in the municipality (e.g. on road and off road cycling, orienteering, triathlons, water skiing, canoeing, hockey, football, netball, tennis, bowls, cricket, etc) and actively distribute this prospectus to event organisers, clubs / organisations and State Sporting organisations. |
|-----------|--------------------------|--|

Strategy development and implementation

| | | |
|-----------|--|--|
| 11 | Playgrounds | Develop a municipal playground strategy to guide provision and standard of playgrounds throughout the municipality. |
| 12 | Strategic Plans | Review and implement recommendations contained in Loddon Shire's: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Strategy • Tracks and Trails Strategy • Swimming Pool Development Plan • Climate Proofing Sports Facilities Strategy. |
| 13 | Major Recreation Reserve Master Plans | Continue to review Council's major Recreation Reserve Master Plans on a five year cycle. |

Promotion

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| 14 | Directory | Continue to maintain a directory of sport and recreation opportunities (clubs, organisations, facility hire, programs and events) available within the Shire, in both electronic and hard copy format and ensure that this directory is given to new residents as they move to the area. |
|-----------|------------------|--|

| | | |
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| 15 | Best practice | Actively promote best practice initiatives undertaken by local clubs and organisations through newsletters, newspapers, presentations, etc. |
|-----------|----------------------|---|

Communication

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|-----------|------------------------------------|---|
| 16 | Sports forum | Facilitate an annual forum whereby clubs are invited to attend to discuss specific issues of relevance to their sport and their operations (e.g. grant writing, community grants program, events, compliance, etc). |
| 17 | State Sporting Associations | Develop strong networks and partnerships with State Sporting Associations, e.g. football, netball, cricket, tennis, hockey, golf and lawn bowls, to keep informed of developments, trends and directions, and to provide feedback to these organisations on local issues. |



1 PURPOSE

The aim of the Loddon Shire Recreation Strategy 2015-2020 is to develop a framework to guide Council and its partners to ensure that their investment in sport and recreation facilities, services and programs will achieve the most effective outcomes possible for the community.

At its very core is the desire to get more people more active, so that health and wellbeing of the community will improve; so that existing facilities meet the needs of the community and their use is maximised; and so that local clubs and organisations are assisted to be as sustainable as they can be.

Through an extensive consultation process the needs and demands of the general community have been identified and an assessment of gaps and opportunities has been undertaken. An assessment of the latest trends within the sport, recreation and physical activity environment has also occurred.

Specific community needs have subsequently been incorporated into an action plan that contains a series of costed and prioritised recommendations.

1.1 Strategy requirements

Particular requirements of the strategy included:

- A report on achievements from the previous Recreation Needs Study.
- Advice around specific issues that Council may face in relation to the future provision of infrastructure and program development.
- New recommendations to guide Council for the next five years in relation to sport and recreation guiding principles, facility provision, facility management, facility maintenance, program delivery and service provision.
- Recommendations formulated from a combination of different sources including extensive community consultation, literature reviews, industry trends and demographic analysis.
- Recommendations which are relevant and achievable, given Council's existing staffing and financial resources.
- Recommendations that are costed and prioritised as high, medium or low
- An overview of Council's role in the delivery of the recommendations.

1.2 Methodology

In order to produce the strategy, the following process was utilised:

| Action | Details |
|---|--|
| Review of previous Recreation Strategy | A meeting was held with Council recreation staff to assess the previous recreation strategy to determine which recommendations were actioned and which ones were not. Results are included in the Appendix. |
| Literature review | 17 plans (+22+ extra master plans) were reviewed in order to understand the context in which sport and recreation is provided in Loddon Shire, and the policies and issues which may impact upon future provision. A summary is included in Section 3.0 and a full review contained within the Appendix. |

| Action | Details |
|---|---|
| Assessment of sport and recreation trends and issues | Using current journals, data from various sport and recreation agencies and internet research, the latest trends in sport and recreation have been documented. Refer to Section 7.0 |
| Demographic review | A demographic review of Loddon Shire to identify current population statistics and future population projections was undertaken. Refer to Section 4.0 |
| Key stakeholder interviews | Meetings were held with key stakeholders (Sports Focus and ten staff from Loddon Shire Council) to discuss issues related to sport and recreation in Loddon Shire. Results are included in the Appendix and a summary is available in Section 8.3. |
| Audit existing sport and recreation opportunities | An audit of existing sport and recreation opportunities offered in Loddon Shire was undertaken. Results are included in the Appendix and a summary is available in Section 9.3. |
| Club survey | Local sport and recreation clubs were forwarded a survey to invite them to a club workshop and also to identify their key issues. 20 surveys were returned. Results have been used to inform Section 8.1 and are included in the Appendix. |
| Club workshop | A club workshop was held at Serpentine Bowls Club on Wednesday 3 September to discuss in detail some of the key issues impacting on all clubs and organisations in the Shire. Results have been used to inform Section 8.1 and are included in the Appendix. |
| Club and SSA workshop | <p>A follow up workshop was held at the Regional Development Victoria office on Wednesday 17 September 2014, to explore some of the key issues that were identified at the club workshop and to understand the strategic directions of various State Sporting Associations (SSAs)</p> <p>This workshop further enhanced partnerships with SSAs with six organisations attending, representing regional sports assembly, AFL, netball, tennis and lawn bowls. Results have been used to inform Section 8.2 and are included in the Appendix.</p> |
| Community survey and project bulletin | <p>A community survey and project bulletin was distributed through sports clubs, neighbourhood houses, schools and various other networks in the municipality to identify key sport and recreation needs of the community. A total of 156 surveys were returned.</p> <p>Results have been used to inform Section 8.4 and are included in the Appendix.</p> |

| Action | Details |
|------------------------|--|
| Listening posts | <p>Five informal listening posts were held at the following locations throughout the Shire in order to gain an understanding of people’s sport and recreation needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mitiamo Recreation Reserve (LVFNL Grand Final Day) – Saturday 13 September 2014 • Bridgewater Bakery – Tuesday 30 September 2014 (24 people) • Inglewood Supermarket - Tuesday 30 September 2014 (11 people) • Wedderburn Supermarket – Tuesday 30 September 2014 (20 people) • Boort Show – Saturday 11 October. <p>Each person who came along to these sessions completed a survey on site. This figure has already been added to the total number of community surveys returned.</p> |

1.3 Structure of the Strategy

The Recreation Strategy is divided into two separate documents. The first document is the strategy itself and the second document is the appendix, which contains more detailed information about demographics, the literature review and outcomes of the community consultation.



2 BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

It is estimated that the cost of implementing the key components of this strategy will initially be in the order of \$56,000 per annum. It is proposed that this amount be indexed annually based upon applicable CPI rates.

Allowing for an estimated annual 5% CPI increase, the total estimated cost of the strategy to Council over the 5 year period is therefore \$309,435 .00. These costs may be reduced dependant on Councils success in attracting external grants or contributions towards identified actions listed within the strategy.

Section 4 of the strategy outlines the importance of such investment in promotion and support of local recreational opportunities. Section 10.5 provides a full list of identified actions and, where applicable, associated financial cost.

3 RISK ANALYSIS

It is not considered that there are any major risks associated with the implementation of this strategy.

Actions identified within the strategy are expected to go a long way towards improving the long term sustainability and function of many sporting clubs and facilities throughout the municipality. This is to be achieved through provision of development and training opportunities for a wide range of stakeholders.

As such any risk in respect to the strategy are considered to relate to potential lack of participation or engagement with relevant clubs, individuals or the community, thus limiting the effectiveness of benefit derived through the actions identified herein.

4 POLICY CONTEXT

A broad range of local, state and national policies and strategies were reviewed in order to understand the context in which sport and recreation is delivered in Loddon Shire now and in the future.

Information from each of these strategies is included in the appendix, and has been used to inform the recommendations contained within the action plan.

References to various documents reviewed are made throughout the Recreation Strategy. State and national level strategies articulated information about:

- facility standards, including playing surfaces, lighting and change rooms
- administration
- barriers to participation
- funding of sport
- sport and recreation trends
- the need to provide sporting opportunities for all sectors of the community
- the cost of sport's participation.

The local strategies clearly spelt out Council's agreed actions in relation to both active and passive recreation, including:

- the priorities for upgrading of sports facilities in the Shire
- the actions needed to drought proof sports facilities as much as possible
- developments required in order to encourage further cycling and walking in Loddon Shire
- initiatives to engage youth
- capital works required to upgrade outdoor swimming pools
- works required to ensure that netball courts meet Netball Victoria guidelines
- strategies to increase physical activity levels.

One of the most important documents reviewed was Loddon Shire's previous Recreation Strategy. This document was completed in 2007 and was designed to guide Council for a period of 10 years. The actions contained within the plan primarily focussed on:

- improving the sustainability of sporting clubs
- facility and infrastructure development
- grants programs
- youth development
- tracks and trails
- public halls.

Many of the 93 recommendations contained within this strategy have already been achieved, and their impact on sport and recreation facility development in particular, has been significant. Some areas where the recommendations have not yet been implemented, due to a greater focus on facility developments and upgrades were in the areas of:

- volunteer support
- implementation of programs such as Active After Schools Program
- partnership opportunities with community houses to facilitate recreation programs

Interestingly, volunteerism and programming have emerged as key areas to focus on in the new Recreation Strategy.

A detailed assessment of the achievements of the previous Recreation Strategy has also been provided within the strategy appendix.



5 OUR COMMUNITY

5.1 Location

Loddon Shire is situated in north central Victoria approximately 200km north of Melbourne and 40km North West of Bendigo. It is predominantly a rural area featuring a number of small towns such as Bridgewater, Inglewood, Wedderburn, Serpentine, Tarnagulla, Boort and Pyramid Hill.

From a landscape perspective, the Shire features forests, rolling hills, rocky outcrops, rivers, lakes and productive farmland. Main industries include agricultural activities such as dairy, horticulture, viticulture, cropping, lamb and intensive poultry and piggeries. The area is popular with bushwalkers, cyclists, water skiers, fishermen, canoeists and people who enjoy visiting wineries and the natural environment.



A brief summary of the demographic make-up of the Shire of Loddon follows¹, with a more detailed analysis included in the appendix.

5.2 Population and age

Loddon Shire comprises 7,459 people – 3,810 males and 3,649 females. The median age is 50 (compared with a median age of 37 for both Victoria and Australia). According to projections from the Victorian Government, the population of Loddon Shire is expected to grow by 0.2% per annum, or the equivalent of 57 people each year from 2016 onwards.

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011 QuickStats. Loddon (LGA). Website: http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2011/quickstat/LGA23940?opendocument&navpos=220 (Viewed 17 August 2014)

Most of this growth is anticipated in towns in the southern part of the Shire closest to Bendigo such as Bridgwater and Inglewood.

Other key facts include:

- **Age distribution:** compared with Victorian figures, Loddon Shire has a significantly lower percentage of people aged between zero and 49 years and significantly higher percentage of people aged 50 years and older (50.4% compared with 32.2% in Victoria and 32.3% in Australia).
- **Older adults:** by 2031, almost 59% of the population will be aged 50 or over, hence sport and recreation facilities and programs must be designed to cater for this age cohort.
- **Nationality:** the majority of residents were born in Australia (85.7% compared with the national figure of 69.8% and a state figure of 68.6%) and the majority of residents only speak English at home (92.8%).
- **Indigenous people:** Indigenous people make up 1.4% of the population compared with 0.7% for Victoria and 2.5% for Australia.
- **Cultural groups:** there is a growing Filipino community based in Pyramid Hill. To encourage this group to take part in a full range of community activities, extra assistance may need to be provided to encourage participation in sport and recreation activities.
- **Volunteers:** 34.1% of people over 15 years of age in Loddon Shire carried out voluntary work for an organisation in the last 12 months, compared with 17.7% for Victoria.
- **Employment:** compared with Victorian and Australian statistics, there are slightly less people working full-time, more working part-time in Loddon Shire and more people unemployed.
- **Income:** the median weekly household income is \$686 compared with the Victorian median household income of \$1,216. 43.3% of Loddon Shire households earn less than \$600 gross per week (compared with 23.8% of Victorian households) and 2.1% earn more than \$3,000 gross per week (compared with 10.4% of Victorian households).

Fees for sport and recreation activities need to take into account people's ability to pay. The provision of no cost / low cost family recreational activities will be important.

- **Lone households:** the percentage of lone households in Loddon Shire is significantly higher than for Victoria overall (32.3% compared with 24.5% for Victoria). Opportunities to create social interactions through sport and recreation will be important to prevent social isolation within sectors of the community.
- **Technology:** of the total population of Loddon, 54.1% lived in households that had home Internet access via a broadband connection, compared to 73.3% in the Loddon Mallee Region and the Victorian State average of 72.4%.

When promoting sport and recreation opportunities, it is important to note that only just over half of the households in the Shire have internet access, hence a variety of promotional tools will need to be used.

- **Physical activity:** 33.6% of people over 15 years of age do not meet current physical activity guidelines (compared with 32.1% for Victoria).
- **Obesity:** 19.7% of people in Loddon Shire are considered to be obese, compared with 17.3% for Victoria.

6 BENEFITS OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The benefits of participating in sport and recreation are well documented. Not only do individuals benefit from a health and wellbeing perspective, but the whole community benefits from a greater sense of community, economic opportunities, improvement to the environment, reduction in crime and a healthier society.

Some of the benefits that can occur through participation in sport and recreation are:

| Benefits | Individual and Community |
|----------------------------|--|
| Physical and Mental Health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced risk of colon cancer, heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure • Less likely to become overweight or obese • Improved balance and coordination, resulting in fewer falls • Stronger muscles, joints and bones • Improved confidence and self-esteem • Improved body image • Improved motor skills • Less likely to suffer from depression and anxiety • Greater sense of achievement • Reduced stress levels • Higher energy and concentration levels • Reduction in incidence and severity of illness and disability • Increased life expectancy. |
| Social | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater sense of community • Stronger, more self-reliant communities • Greater social and friendship networks • Reduced anti-social behavior and vandalism • Helps to develop shared attitudes, values and codes of behavior in the community • Breaks down barriers between different sectors of the community • Stronger family relationships. |

| Benefits | Individual and Community |
|-----------------|---|
| Economic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment in sport and recreation activities, events, venues, clubs • Improvements to local business viability through sale of sport and recreation equipment, services or programs • Reduction in health care costs – according to VicHealth, physical inactivity is estimated to cost Australia \$13.8 billion annually; and the health sector alone \$719 million². 16,178 premature deaths can be attributed to physical inactivity each year across Australia • Increases productivity of workers and reduces number of sick days (approximately 1.8 working days per employee per year are lost to physical inactivity, or the equivalent of \$458 per employee³). • Potential to attract businesses to the region if quality sport and active recreation settings, programs and services exist • Flow on benefits to tourism businesses from people participating in sport and recreation events and activities. |
| Environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of habitats, biodiversity and ecological integrity • More attractive living environments • A greater appreciation and awareness of the natural environment. |



² VicHealth (2010) Participation in Physical Activity: A Determinant of Mental and Physical Health
³ VicHealth (2010) Participation in Physical Activity: A Determinant of Mental and Physical Health

7 PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

In recent years, there has been a shift away from organised sport to more informal recreational activities that can be undertaken in small groups, alone, or at varying times of the day.

The following table⁴ shows the most popular physical activities (organised and non-organised) for people 15 years of age and over in Victoria in 2010, compared with results from the Loddon Recreation Strategy community survey:

| Ranking | Activity | % of Participants over 15 years of age (at least once per year) | Results from Loddon Shire community survey (at least once per year) % |
|---------|---------------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | Walking (other) | 36.6 | 73.7 |
| 2 | Aerobics / fitness | 24.7 | 21.7 |
| 3 | Swimming | 13.5 | 33.9 |
| 4 | Cycling | 12.7 | 30.1 |
| 5 | Running | 12.7 | 30.7 |
| 6 | Golf | 7.3 | See * below |
| 7 | Tennis | 6.8 | See * below |
| 8 | Australian Rules Football | 5.4 | See* below |
| 9 | Basketball | 4.8 | See * below |
| 10 | Bushwalking | 4.6 | 17.9 (includes all adventure activities) |
| 11 | Netball | 3.8 | See * below |
| 12 | Cricket (outdoor) | 3.5 | See * below |
| * | Sport (not specified which one) | | 45.5 |

In Loddon Shire, participation by those who responded to the survey in walking, swimming, cycling and running are all well above the state average. Participation in sport is also high, but as the survey did not distinguish between sports, it is not possible to make a comparison with state figures.

Participation in aerobics, gym and fitness type activities was lower than the state average, presumably due to a lack of gyms and programs in the local area. A greater focus on programming and further encouragement of community gyms could see participation rates in the municipality grow considerably.

⁴ Australian Government: *Participation in Exercise Sport and Recreation – Annual Report 2010*: http://www.ausport.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/436134/ERASS_Report_2010-VIC.pdf

8 SPORT AND RECREATION TRENDS

Participation in sport and recreation activities by Loddon Shire residents has been influenced by broader social and economic trends. Some of the trends currently impacting on participation and facility developments include:

| Trend | Details |
|---|---|
| New activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • movement away from many traditional organised sports such as football, cricket, netball and tennis to more individual or small group non-organised activities, e.g. walking, aerobics, fitness classes, cycling, swimming, running, etc. • greater use of facilities by personal fitness trainers and their clients. • greater demand for lifestyle/non-traditional forms of sport, i.e. games that can be played on the street or indoors, e.g. street soccer. |
| Improved surfaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • installation of sports surfaces that help to reduce injuries and increase player comfort, e.g. sprung wooden floors, plexipave tennis courts. |
| Spectator facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • installation of improved spectator facilities, e.g. verandahs, retractable seating, shaded viewing areas. |
| Accessibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • installation of facilities to encourage participation by people of all abilities, e.g. use of ramps, unisex toilets with change tables, single storey buildings to allow for wheelchair access, Braille signs, etc. |
| Improved infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • installation of lighting or higher standard of lighting to allow games and training to take place in the evenings. |
| Environmentally Sustainable Design Features | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of environmentally responsible practices such as solar hot water, recycled water systems, etc to reduce the impact of sports facilities and their users on the environment. |
| Safety | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development or upgrading of facilities and equipment so that they meet the safety requirements of their designated sport. |
| Improved Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • master planning of recreation reserves to ensure that needs of all existing and casual users are considered in the long term – including the linking of cycling / walking paths, development of play spaces, landscaping and BBQ / picnic facilities to encourage family use of facilities. |
| Multi-Purpose Facilities and Spaces | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development of multi-use facilities and spaces which can cater for a variety of traditional activities as well as non-traditional or emerging activities, e.g. pilates, yoga, meetings, conferences, expos, markets, children’s programs, women’s day time social competitions, master’s games, etc. |

| Trend | Details |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Social Aspects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> greater emphasis on social competitions mid week during the evenings as opposed to structured competition on a Saturday afternoon. |
| School access | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> greater demands on some facilities by school groups due to the declining standard of school sporting infrastructure in some areas or the lack of facilities at some schools. |
| Events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> greater demand on sporting facilities for special events and tournaments. |
| Sporting Hubs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> co-location of several sporting facilities to form recreation precincts to maximise limited resources and to cross-market activities. |
| Value of Physical Activity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> understanding of the relationship between physical activity participation and improved health, wellbeing and social connectedness. |
| Improved Facility Standards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> expectation by the community that facilities, programs, services and management will be of a reasonably high standard. |
| Greater Availability of Facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> expectation that facilities will be available during a range of time slots throughout the week, including weeknight, early morning and weekends. |
| Electronic Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> expectation by user groups that draws, ladder, information, etc. about local sports competitions are available via the internet. |



9 COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

In order to identify key priorities for the Recreation Strategy, extensive consultation was undertaken with local sports clubs, State Sporting Associations and members of the community. A summary of the results of each of these activities follows (with a full report available in the appendix):

9.1 Club Surveys and Workshops

Surveys were forwarded to sport and recreation clubs and organisations in the municipality. Twenty surveys were returned. A workshop was held to follow up on the results of the surveys. Forty people attended this workshop. Key challenges identified by sport and recreation clubs through their surveys and the workshop are:

- attracting and retaining new volunteers
- impact of amalgamations on local clubs
- accessing appropriate equipment to cut down on volunteer workload
- accessing water to irrigate sports fields
- sustaining major events
- lack of suitable facilities
- cost of transport for players to travel to other clubs
- impact of changing demographics on players and volunteers
- compliance issues
- attracting junior players
- competition between sports
- income generation
- declining membership
- club sustainability.

9.2 Workshop with State Sporting Associations

A workshop was held on 17 September 2014 in Bendigo to provide an opportunity for the project team to provide feedback on Loddon Shire sports club issues, and to hear about the strategic directions of State Sporting Associations. In attendance were six representatives from Sports Focus, AFL, netball, tennis and bowls.

Key issues discussed at this workshop included:

- juniors dropping out of sport due to a perception that they are not skilled enough
- initiatives designed to attract and retain volunteers, including volunteer recognition programs
- recognition that people volunteer more for specific projects in a given time frame than for more general activities over a longer period of time
- modified sports that have been introduced by State Sporting Associations
- governance assistance provided by SSAs, e.g. development of job descriptions, development of portfolios, club 'health checks' and mentoring / training of committee of management members
- identification of local partners, e.g. La Trobe University and Lead On
- innovative programs to attract more members, reward existing members and to increase participation

- initiatives being introduced by SSAs to reduce administrative tasks of local clubs and associations
- recognition that there needs to be improved communication between SSAs and Local Government Authorities
- consideration of infrastructure such as lighting to enable more activities to be held in the evenings.

9.3 Key stakeholder interviews

Interviews were held with Sports Focus and ten staff from Loddon Shire Council during November 2014 to identify key issues and potential directions of the Recreation Strategy. Issues discussed in these key stakeholder interviews are:

- the need for clubs to be adaptive and proactive to ensure their on-going sustainability
- the need to complete missing links in the cycling / walking network and set aside a budget for maintenance of the network
- the need to ensure that sporting facilities and clubs are welcoming, inclusive and accessible by the general community
- consideration of one sporting precinct in each town
- the need for improved playgrounds in Loddon Shire
- the need to source water for sports grounds in towns such as Wedderburn
- the value of sporting events to Loddon Shire
- possible new activities of a more unstructured nature, e.g. running clubs, non-competitive horse riding clubs
- the value of the natural environment for sport and recreation events and activities
- the need to develop infrastructure prior to private investment occurring, e.g. establish canoe trails before a private operator will establish a canoe hire business.

9.4 Community Surveys

A community survey was developed and distributed in hard copy format or electronically to neighbourhood houses, schools and various other local clubs and organisations. Surveys were also handed out to local residents at the five listening posts held throughout the Shire (i.e. in Mitiamo, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Wedderburn and Boort).

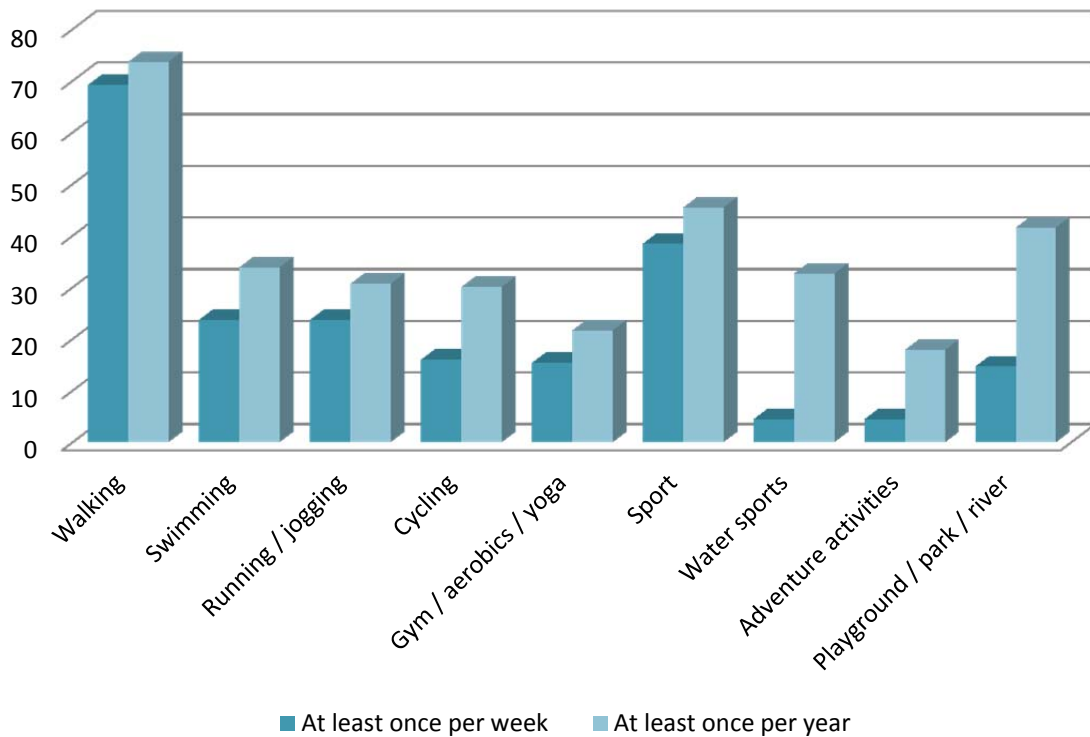
A total of 156 surveys were completed by the community. 59% of these surveys were completed by females and 41% by males. Surveys were predominantly filled out by young people between 15-19 years of age and by adults aged between 40 and 69. In terms of place of residence, survey respondents were distributed across the municipality, with the highest percentage of surveys completed by residents of Wedderburn (24%), Bridgewater (21%) and Boort (19%).

There were no surveys completed by residents of Eddington and only 1% of surveys were completed by people in each of the following towns: Dingee, Mitiamo, Newbridge and Tarnagulla.

Survey respondents were asked to identify what activities they regularly take part in, and the frequency of participation. On a weekly participation rate, walking was clearly the most popular activity, followed by sport, swimming and running / jogging.

Water sports and visiting playgrounds, parks and rivers are also popular activities, participated in by many people at least once per year, but weekly participation rates in these activities are not as high.

Percentage of local residents who take part in various physical activities at least once per week or at least once per year



| Activity | At least once per week (%) | At least once per year (%) |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Walking | 69.2 | 73.7 |
| Swimming | 23.7 | 33.9 |
| Running / jogging | 23.7 | 30.7 |
| Cycling | 16 | 30.1 |
| Gym / aerobics / yoga | 15.4 | 21.7 |
| Sport | 38.5 | 45.5 |
| Water sports | 4.5 | 32.7 |
| Adventure activities | 4.5 | 17.9 |
| Playground / park / river | 14.7 | 41.6 |

Whilst a significant number of survey respondents stated that they participate in water sports and adventure activities, their frequency of participation is much lower, e.g. monthly or once per year. When asked about the types of activities they would like to do, but don't currently do, survey respondents listed:

- swimming
- gym / yoga / pilates
- bike riding
- horse riding

as their preferred activities. The four main reasons why people do not currently undertake these activities were identified as:

- it's not available locally (42%)
- I don't have time (14%)
- I'm not fit / well enough (5%)
- it costs too much (4%).

Survey respondents were also asked to identify their level of satisfaction with sport and recreation facilities in the Shire. The facilities that local residents are most satisfied with are sports grounds (88% satisfaction rating) and sports courts (84% satisfaction rating). Facilities with the lowest level of satisfaction ratings are: playgrounds (15% dissatisfaction rating), indoor sports facilities (14%), parks and reserves (13%) and cycling / walking paths (13%).

In relation to volunteering with sport and recreation organisations, 64% of survey respondents volunteer in some capacity, often across a number of different tasks such as serving on the committee of management and also assisting with scoring, for example.

- 31% of survey respondents provide game day support, e.g. scoring or gate keeping
- 29% volunteer on a committee of management
- 23% volunteer their time to catering, working in the kiosk or assisting with functions
- 17% coach, train or instruct in a volunteer capacity.

Survey respondents were asked to identify ways in which they could be more active. Key responses were:

- more time
- more options to do things locally
- better health / fitness
- improved standard of facilities, e.g. cycling / walking tracks.

When asked how sporting clubs could be more sustainable, survey respondents provided a wide range of answers, including:

- less player payments for footballers
- more social events / functions
- year round access to recreational facilities – for social and competitive opportunities
- upgrade infrastructure
- install energy saving devices, e.g. solar panels
- create better club atmosphere – friendly, family oriented
- encourage new people to the area to join
- attract more volunteers
- retain young people as players and administrators
- less paperwork and rules
- more advertising of activities.

Facilities that survey respondents believe need to be developed or improved include:

- gym facilities
- swimming pool (heated) and swimming clubs
- more cycling / walking tracks
- indoor sports opportunities, e.g. badminton, table tennis, squash
- skate park
- water security for recreation reserves
- more lakes stocked with fish.



10 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

10.1 Physical inactivity

Issue: According to Loddon Shire’s Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, participation in sufficient exercise times and sessions by local residents is below the state average, i.e. only 57.8% of Loddon Shire residents take part in enough physical activity to maintain and achieve health benefits, compared with 63.9% of Victorians.

It must be noted however, that as many people in the community are farmers, they may be physically active for a large proportion of their day, but may not take part in other types of organised or non-organised physical activities (hence participation figures may be somewhat misleading). Further, the prevalence of overweight and obesity in Loddon is 56.5% compared to Victoria’s 49.8%.

This figure may in part be due to the fact that Loddon Shire is an ageing community with a median age of 50 compared with other communities with a median age of around 37, with weight gain often more common among older people. Given the enormous health costs of physical inactivity to all levels of government, including local government, this issue needs to be addressed through the Recreation Strategy.

Opportunity: A key component of the Recreation Strategy needs to focus on ways to encourage more people to be more active. The development of recreation programs and modified sports are seen as key tools to encourage greater levels of physical activity. The best investments for physical activity, as determined by the British Journal of Sports Medicine (2012)⁵ and Heath et al (2012)⁶ are (in no particular order):

1. Whole of **school programs** (e.g. provision of game equipment and painted markings in playgrounds to encourage physical activity).
2. **Transport policies and systems** that prioritise walking, cycling and public transport (e.g. active transport programs such as walking school bus and tools to encourage active transport to work).
3. **Urban design** regulations and infrastructure that provides for equitable and safe access for recreational physical activity and recreational and transport-related walking and cycling across the life course.
4. Physical activity and non-communicable disease prevention integrated into **primary health care** systems.
5. **Public education**, including mass media to raise awareness and change social norms of physical activity (e.g. encouraging stair use over escalator use through signage and stairwell upgrades).

⁵ The British Journal of Sports Medicine. (2012) Investments that Work for Physical Activity. British Journal of Sports Medicine, Volume 46, Issue 10, pages 709-712

⁶ Heath, Gregory W; Parra, Diana C; Sarmiento, Olga L; Andersen, Lars Bo; Owen, Neville; Goenka, Shifalika; Montes, Felipe; and Brownson, Ross C. (2012) Evidence-based Physical Activity Intervention: Lessons from Around the Globe. *The Lancet*, Volume 380, Issue 9838, pages 272-281.

6. **Community-wide programs** involving multiple settings and sectors that mobilise and integrate community engagement and resources.
7. **Sports systems and programs** that promote 'sport for all' and encourage participation across the lifespan.

10.2 Barriers to physical activity

Issue: Whilst physical inactivity is a whole of community issue and can affect anyone, those members of the community who are less likely to be active are women, older adults, people from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, people with a disability, Indigenous Australians and people with a low socio-economic status. Specific initiatives need to be implemented that take into consideration the needs of these communities and to address their barriers to participation.

Some of the barriers to participation identified through the VicHealth BE ACTIVE Framework⁷ and other documents reviewed include:

Individual level: Key factors which limit participation in physical activity by individuals include:

- lack of time
- cost of activities
- poor health
- lack of motivation
- inability to access child care
- lack of confidence or self-esteem.

Organisational and club level: Factors that may limit participation at an organisational or club level include:

- lack of inclusive policies and practices
- lack of information about opportunities available
- inadequate facilities
- clubs or organisations that do not respond to the cultural needs of certain groups.

Community level: At a community level, the following factors can have a negative impact on physical activity participation:

- inadequate facilities and areas of open space as a result of poor planning and lack of activation
- communities that are based around cars as the major form of transport
- lack of public transportation
- communities where people do not feel connected to each other.

⁷ VicHealth Be Active website: <http://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/beactive>

Societal level: At a societal level, participation can be limited if:

- people don't feel that facilities and areas of open space are safe
- people feel that spectators will make it unpleasant to participate
- people feel that it is more enjoyable to spend leisure time using technology
- there is a concern that participation as a participant or support person may lead to litigation.

Through the community survey, Loddon Shire residents identified their key barriers as:

- it's not available locally (42%)
- I don't have time (14%)
- I'm not fit / well enough (5%)
- it costs too much (4%).

Opportunity: In order to encourage greater participation in physical activity, these barriers need to be addressed. The most significant change that could be made for residents of Loddon Shire, based on survey feedback, is to provide activities locally, thereby at the same time reducing some of the other barriers such as time to travel to other locations and fuel costs. Activities also need to be provided at the appropriate level so that various fitness levels and standards of health are catered for.

10.3 Facilities

Issue: For its size and population, Loddon Shire is endowed with a good range of sporting facilities, many of which have been upgraded in recent years. These facilities include:

- sports grounds
- hard courts suitable for tennis and netball
- grass tennis courts
- bowling greens
- golf courses
- hockey fields
- swimming pools
- indoor sports courts
- community gyms.

There are also a range of recreational facilities which are used by the community for other less structured physical activities, such as:

- rivers and lakes for water skiing, canoeing and fishing
- walking and cycling paths
- parks, open space and forests
- playgrounds
- halls

An audit of sport and recreation facilities available in Loddon Shire is included in the appendix.

Quality sport and recreational facilities in an area can be a tool to attract more investment and to encourage people to move to an area. A high standard of sport and recreation facilities is therefore very important to Loddon Shire in terms of future economic investment in the municipality.

However, it is important that communities does not over-capitalise on facilities, particularly in areas where existing user groups of facilities may not be in existence within a few years due to amalgamations, lack of players / participants, changes to leagues / associations, etc.

The costs associated with maintaining sport and recreation facilities continue to rise. Feedback from clubs and key stakeholders indicates that electricity costs in particular have soared in recent years.

Residents were asked to identify their level of satisfaction with various sport and recreation facilities in Loddon Shire through the community survey. The facilities rated most highly are:

- sports grounds (88% satisfaction rating)
- sports courts (84%)
- rivers / lakes (76%)
- parks / reserves (75%).
- swimming pools (69%)
- cycling walking paths (69%)
- playgrounds (64%)

Those rated at the lower end of the scale (i.e. under a 50% satisfaction rating) include:

- skate parks (17% satisfaction rating) -the poor rating of skate parks was primarily due to the fact that many people did not have an opinion regarding the standard of these facilities, or were not able to comment as there are no skate facilities in their town.
- indoor sports facilities (47%).

These figures suggest that Loddon Shire's continual efforts to upgrade sports ovals and sports courts have been acknowledged by the community. It also demonstrates an appreciation by local residents of the natural assets in the community such as rivers, lakes, parks and reserves.

However, without a suitably resourced maintenance budget, sport and recreation facilities in Loddon Shire may fall into a state of disrepair and ultimately become underutilised as a result.

Opportunities: Areas to focus on in the future are the continued maintenance of sport and recreation facilities and the natural environment, and the setting aside of annual budgets to cover this maintenance. The continued upgrade of swimming pools, cycling / walking paths and playgrounds (according to strategic plans developed or to be developed shortly) should also be a priority.

Indoor sports facilities in Loddon Shire are predominantly the responsibility of local schools. Schools should be encouraged to seek funding to improve these valuable community assets and to open them up for greater levels of community use where appropriate.

When upgrading or developing new facilities, it is important that a feasibility study is undertaken of the proposed development to identify potential usage, construction costs, operating costs, impact on other facilities, governance arrangements, management processes, maintenance systems and budgets and any other issues which may impact on the long term sustainability of the facility.

Facilities should be developed to a scale that is suitable to the catchment area that it supports and the level and type of use it is likely to receive.

To help provide some economies of scale into the future, it is recommended that if and when the opportunity arises, sports clubs should look at relocating to one central sports hub in each town, rather than be spread across a number of sites.

This will allow for greater utilisation of both sports grounds and pavilions, sharing of costs such as electricity and cross-marketing of sports. There may even be opportunities to establish a township sports committee of management, rather than having an individual committee of management for each organisation (and often its sub-committees).

10.4 Programs

Issue: There are a limited number of recreational programs operating in Loddon Shire at present. Some of these programs include:

- FReeZA events such as live music for young people over 12 years of age
- swimming lessons and swimming programs at local outdoor pools
- a variety of classes and activities held at neighbourhood / community houses
- strength training at Inglewood Community Health
- a number of recreational activities offered by local schools for the broader community through their indoor sports centres
- Other community events such as Bridgewater Triathlon.

Local residents identified the need for additional programming through the community survey. Activities of particular interest include:

- yoga / pilates / gentle stretching classes / aerobics
- dancing / line dancing / zumba
- gymnastics
- gym classes / personal training
- martial arts, e.g. karate
- walking group
- volleyball
- badminton
- table tennis
- indoor bowls
- racquet ball

However, in order for a program to operate successfully and to be sustainable, it will need to attract enough people to make it financially viable for the instructor / trainer / coach and there will need to be enough people to undertake the activity or to make up the team/s. Other key factors include:

- it needs to be fun and social
- it needs to have instructors / trainers / coaches who are personable
- it needs to be held at times that are suitable for people
- it needs to be affordable for participants
- it needs to consider childcare options (if applicable)
- it needs to be held at a location that is accessible for people of all abilities
- it needs to be held at a location that is relatively easy to access from a transport perspective
- it needs to be targeted at the appropriate level, e.g. beginner level.

Opportunity: Consideration needs to be given to a much greater focus on programming in Loddon Shire. Where possible, existing organisations will be encouraged to value add to their existing activities by introducing new programs, e.g. swimming pool operators could be encouraged to provide water aerobics classes, additional swimming classes or swimming challenges.

Alternatively, it may be possible to train local people to offer programs to the community, with an agreement that they provide the activity for a set period of time to 'repay' their training costs. Loddon Shire would need to explore insurance and employment options under this arrangement. The establishment of partnerships with other health and sport and recreation related agencies is also important in the development of sustainable programs.

10.5 Planning

Issue: Loddon Shire has systematically undertaken recreation planning initiatives over recent years, including:

- the previous recreation strategy
- master plans for all of its major recreation reserve
- a climate proofing strategy to identify ways to reduce sports club's reliance on water
- a netball court audit to identify which courts did not meet Netball Victoria guidelines in terms of court run-off
- an aquatics strategy to identify works to improve public outdoor pools in the Shire.

These plans have been used to great effect in helping Council to source external State and Federal Government funding to upgrade facilities. As a consequence, the standard of sport and recreation facilities in the Shire at present is very good, and is the envy of many other rural municipalities.

Opportunity: Council needs to continue to implement the recommendations of strategic plans and regularly review these plans. Council needs to develop a play strategy to help guide the provision, distribution and quality of play spaces throughout the municipality.

10.6 Attracting and retaining new volunteers

Issue: Sport and recreation clubs rely heavily on volunteers for all aspects of the governance and management of their activities. Without volunteers, these clubs would simply not exist. Sixty-four percent of survey respondents indicated that they have a volunteer role with a club such as scoring, helping in the canteen, watering sports fields, etc. Calivil Football Netball Club indicated that it needs a total of 40 volunteers each game day.

Over recent years, the workload of volunteers has increased due to the need to comply with relevant legislations such as GST reporting, safe handling of food, police checks, responsible serving of alcohol, the need to undertake strategic planning and policy development, etc. Whilst each of these functions arguably contributes to a safer and more effective club, it has resulted in a bigger commitment from volunteers and has also been a detractor to attracting more volunteers.

Lack of time by many people is cited as another reason why some people are reluctant to volunteer, particularly in families where both parents are in the workforce. There is also a recognition that many people choose to volunteer in different ways now. Whereas in the past they may have joined a committee of management and remained on that committee for many years, a considerable number of people now choose to volunteer for a specific event or activity, e.g. a one off or occasional working bee.

Another factor that impacts on the ability to attract new volunteers, unfortunately, can be the attitude of existing volunteers. Feedback from key stakeholders indicates that in some clubs there are number of long term volunteers who are reluctant to 'hand over the reins' to new volunteers; don't make potential new volunteers feel welcome; and have an attitude of 'it's always been done that way', and therefore an unwillingness to try new things or new ways of doing things. In order for clubs to survive, this needs to change.

Loddon Shire's Health and Wellbeing Plan also focuses on the importance of volunteerism in the community. Three key projects identified in this strategy relating to volunteers are:

- Support volunteer organisations and volunteers in community organisations to remain active within the community
- Develop and implement a volunteer recognition scheme
- List volunteer groups and organisations that use volunteers on website and provide contact details

It also recommends that young people are encouraged to become volunteers.

Opportunities: Clubs and organisations need to be welcoming and inclusive, provide job descriptions and inductions for new volunteers and perhaps provide mentoring opportunities to help new volunteers understand their roles and responsibilities. They also need to structure volunteer opportunities in such a way so that it attracts people with limited time but a willingness to be involved, e.g. specific projects or events.

The appointment of a volunteer coordinator within clubs may be beneficial. Two key groups in the community to target are young people, as they often have fresh ideas and can be quite technologically savvy, and also baby boomers as they begin to leave the workforce and are searching for activities to fill in their time.

Ideally some form of register is developed which allows people with skills and a willingness to be involved, can be matched with a club seeking specific assistance. For example, a young person who is able to develop websites could be linked up in a voluntary capacity to assist a bowls club to develop their website free of charge, as a one off form of assistance.

10.7 Attracting and retaining junior players

Issue: The decline of junior members in sports such as football where so many players are needed to field a team, from a small pool of potential players, has also been challenging for some clubs. Often talented junior athletes are drawn to larger regional centres such as Bendigo to compete at a higher level, therefore leaving gaps in the existing competition.

Calivil Football Netball Club has addressed the issue of declining junior membership by developing a partnership with South Bendigo Football Netball Club.

Opportunity: In order to ensure that junior sports competitions remain viable, sports clubs and associations need to consider options such as introduction of modified sports where the emphasis may be more on a short, fun game rather than an all day event, or the emphasis may be on a reduced number of team members required to form a team.

The development of partnerships with other clubs based in Bendigo (where there may be too many juniors for the number of teams available) should also be explored. Other clubs have encouraged juniors whose team has a bye to fill in for other teams playing that week.

10.8 Club development and governance

Issue: In addition to attracting volunteers and sufficient players, clubs are struggling with other issues such as generating sufficient income to operate a sport or recreation club. Whilst some clubs are able to generate a certain level of income through gate takings, bar sales and sponsorship, others are almost entirely reliant on player fees or event fees to assist with the upkeep of their playing surface and associated amenities and any other activities such as promotion and utility costs.

The ability to attract external funds through grants is therefore critical to the ongoing development of some clubs.

There are some clubs in Loddon Shire who only meet on an ad hoc basis and are not aware of their governance responsibilities or the contents of their constitutions. Members of these clubs need to be aware of their roles and responsibilities and actively work towards meeting these expectations.

Compliance issues such as more stringent accounting practices, policy development and other regulations have made it difficult for some clubs to operate. Not only are these tasks time consuming, but they potentially discourage some people from volunteering to be part of a club.

Opportunity: There is an opportunity for Loddon Shire to support clubs to become stronger and more sustainable by providing funding for external agencies to work with a number of clubs annually on a one on one basis to work through and address any issues that they may have. These issues may include things such as:

- Governance
- Volunteer recruitment
- Club management
- Generating income and grants
- Compliance issues
- Attracting junior players
- Promotion

- Access and inclusion
- Policy development
- Social media.

Each club will have its own particular issues; hence group training will not always be the answer. It is important that local solutions are found to address local issues.

10.9 Providing physical activity opportunities for older adults

Issue: The ageing population will continue to grow in Loddon Shire (by 2031 almost 59% of the population will be over 50 years of age), so a key challenge is to identify ways to provide physical activity opportunities for this age group.

There will be a certain percentage of older adults who will continue to play competitive sport such as tennis, golf and bowls for as long as they possibly can, however, sports which are more demanding on bodies, such as AFL football and netball, are likely to be less attractive to older adults.

Opportunities: Non-competitive and unstructured sport and recreation activities such as walking, cycling, swimming, gym programs, yoga, bushwalking, dance, etc. are likely to be more appealing to older adults, hence Loddon Shire needs to focus on providing the environments for these activities to occur, e.g. footpaths, shared cycling / walking tracks, swimming pools and various indoor centres such as halls for recreation programs.

The introduction of modified sports and facilities that have a low impact on joints (e.g. plexipave rather than asphalt on sports courts) should also be considered. As the baby boomer age group reaches retirement, it will also be important to encourage as many as possible to volunteer or continue to volunteer in sport and recreation clubs in the Shire.

10.10 Modified sports / social focus of sport and recreation

Issue: One of the most significant trends identified in Loddon Shire in recent years in relation to sport and recreation is the decline in participation, particularly in summer sports such as tennis and cricket. This was particularly noticeable during the drought when it was difficult to obtain enough water to keep sports ovals and tennis courts in reasonable condition.

Tennis Victoria and Cricket Victoria are working with local clubs to halt the decline in their respective sports and hope that by introducing new modified versions of the game for both adults and children, e.g. Fast Tennis, that they will generate renewed interest in these activities. Other sports such as AFL are also introducing modified version of their game to broaden their player base.

Bridgewater Bowls Club is a good example of a club that was able to reverse the trend of declining participation numbers by introducing week night social bowls. Hence from a membership of only five people, it now has up to 80 people playing bowls in its social competition on a regular basis.

Opportunity: It is important that all sport and recreation clubs in Loddon Shire review their practices and consider whether or not it is appropriate to offer modified version or their activities or a greater social focus in an attempt to attract new participants or to retain existing participants. It is also important for Loddon Shire to share information about successful initiatives of other clubs and associations in relation to sports participation and facility development, so that others can learn from successful initiatives locally.

10.11 Events

Issue: Sport and recreation events can be highly beneficial to communities in terms of economic contributions, development of local pride and the provision of additional activities to take part in or to watch. In order to be successful, events require many things, including a suitable location and access to facilities for the specific activity (such as roadways, trails, sports grounds, rivers, lakes, etc) as well as appropriate supporting infrastructure such as accommodation, catering, toilets and access to transportation.

The Great Victorian Bike Ride is an example of one event that has visited Loddon Shire several times in recent years, providing an economic contribution to the community. Similarly, the Bridgewater Triathlon and the annual football / netball competition itself, along with other events such as tennis tournaments help to bring in external revenue to the community.

Opportunity: Loddon Shire is blessed with a diversity of natural areas including rivers, lakes, parks / forests, quiet bush tracks as well as quiet rural roads and a broad range of good quality sporting facilities. These facilities are ideally suited to a range of different sporting events such as water skiing, canoeing, road cycling, mountain bike riding, orienteering, triathlons and sporting carnivals.

Whilst accommodation in the Shire is limited, there are opportunities to utilise recreation reserves as camp sites. Further, the newly opened Bridgewater Caravan Park can also be used to accommodate participants and spectators. Other initiatives such as Air B'n'B, farm stays, bed and breakfasts, conversion of unused farm houses, etc could all be considered as alternative forms of accommodation for events.

In order to attract events to the area, it is important to develop promotional materials to explain what opportunities there are to hold events in the area. This information should be distributed to event organisers, State Sporting Associations, individual sports, etc.



11 VISION FOR SPORT AND RECREATION IN LODDON SHIRE 2015-2020

11.1 Vision

Loddon Shire is an active, healthy and inclusive community supported by strong community clubs and a diversity of programs and accessible facilities.

11.2 Planning principles

To help achieve the vision of a healthy, active community supported by strong community clubs and a diversity of programs and accessible facilities, a series of planning principles have been developed. These planning principles will guide Loddon Shire and the community when considering implementing new initiatives or facilities or when considering upgrades to facilities. Wherever possible, any sport and recreation initiatives undertaken by Loddon Shire and its partners will be:

| Planning Principle | Details |
|---|---|
| Designed to meet demonstrated community need | Community needs will be demonstrated through feasibility studies, needs assessments, master plans, surveys or other similar processes. |
| Of benefit to the community | Initiatives may provide physical health benefits to participants, may provide a safer experience, may provide opportunities for social connectedness and may provide opportunities to generate income locally. |
| Accessible for people of all abilities | Any facilities will be DDA compliant and any programs will be made as accessible as possible for people by removing as many barriers to participation as possible such as cost, transportation, time, etc. |
| Inclusive and welcoming | Any facilities will be designed to create a welcoming and inviting atmosphere, and any programs will be designed to be welcoming and inclusive of all residents. |
| Sustainable | Any facilities will be designed to be sustainable from both an environmental design and impact perspective. Any programs will be designed so that they are able to be operated locally at minimal cost and requiring minimal human resources. Wherever possible, programs will occur in partnership with other relevant organisations and agencies such as health centres, schools and existing sport and recreation clubs and organisations. |
| Multi-purpose in design | Any facility developments or upgrades should be designed to be a multi-purpose as possible, recognising the changing needs of the community over time. Where possible, facilities should be located to take advantage of economies of scale. |
| Able to offer a diversity of opportunities | The development of new or modified activities that meet the diverse needs of local residents and the changing demographics will be encouraged. |

| Planning Principle | Details |
|---|---|
| Cost effective | Any new facilities or facility upgrades will be cost effective to build and operate and any programs will offer value for money for local residents. |
| Designed to enhance and protect the natural environment and cultural and heritage values | Any new facilities or facility upgrades will minimise its impact on the environment and wherever possible enhance and protect the natural environment and cultural and heritage values around it. |
| Designed to reflect the unique nature of Loddon Shire | Any facility developments should reflect the unique aspects of Loddon Shire, e.g. use of local materials, references to key cultural, historical or environmental features, etc. |



11.3 Key directions

The eight key directions identified as the focus of Loddon Shire's sport and recreation activities for the next five years are, to help achieve the vision are:



12 ACTION PLAN

This action plan has been prepared utilising information obtained from:

- various policy directions at a Local, State and National level
- a demographic analysis of the Loddon Shire community
- general sport and recreation trends
- feedback from local sport and recreation clubs
- feedback from State Sporting Associations and key stakeholders
- feedback from the general community.

The action plan has been divided into a number of different rows and columns.

Eight key priority areas have been developed:

1. support for sport and recreation clubs and organisations
2. promoting participation in physical activities
3. facility development
4. climate proofing sports facilities
5. economic development through sport and recreation
6. strategy development and implementation
7. promotion
8. communication.

Under each of these priority areas there are a number of issues and actions. Against each action, Council's role is identified. It is considered that every action is a high priority.

12.1 Council's role in the delivery of sport and recreation

Council's role in the delivery of sport and recreation may include any of the following four responsibilities, depending upon the specific action:

- Planner = Council undertakes the planning, scoping and setting of strategic directions around the action.
- Deliverer = Council delivers the action.
- Facilitator = Council coordinates the action and manages all of the external stakeholders.
- Supporter = Council supports other organisations to deliver the action.

12.2 Potential partners

A range of potential partners has also been identified to assist in the delivery of the actions contained within the plan. Key partners for Loddon Shire to work with in relation to sport and recreation include Inglewood Community Health, neighbourhood / community houses, schools, swimming pool contractors, La Trobe University, sports clubs and private organisations.

12.3 Resource requirements

Similarly, resource requirements have been identified. In general, most of the actions require staff time and potentially a small program budget. Facility developments however will require much greater levels of expenditure. These projects and amounts may already be identified in existing Council strategic plans, or in some instances may not yet be scoped and costed.

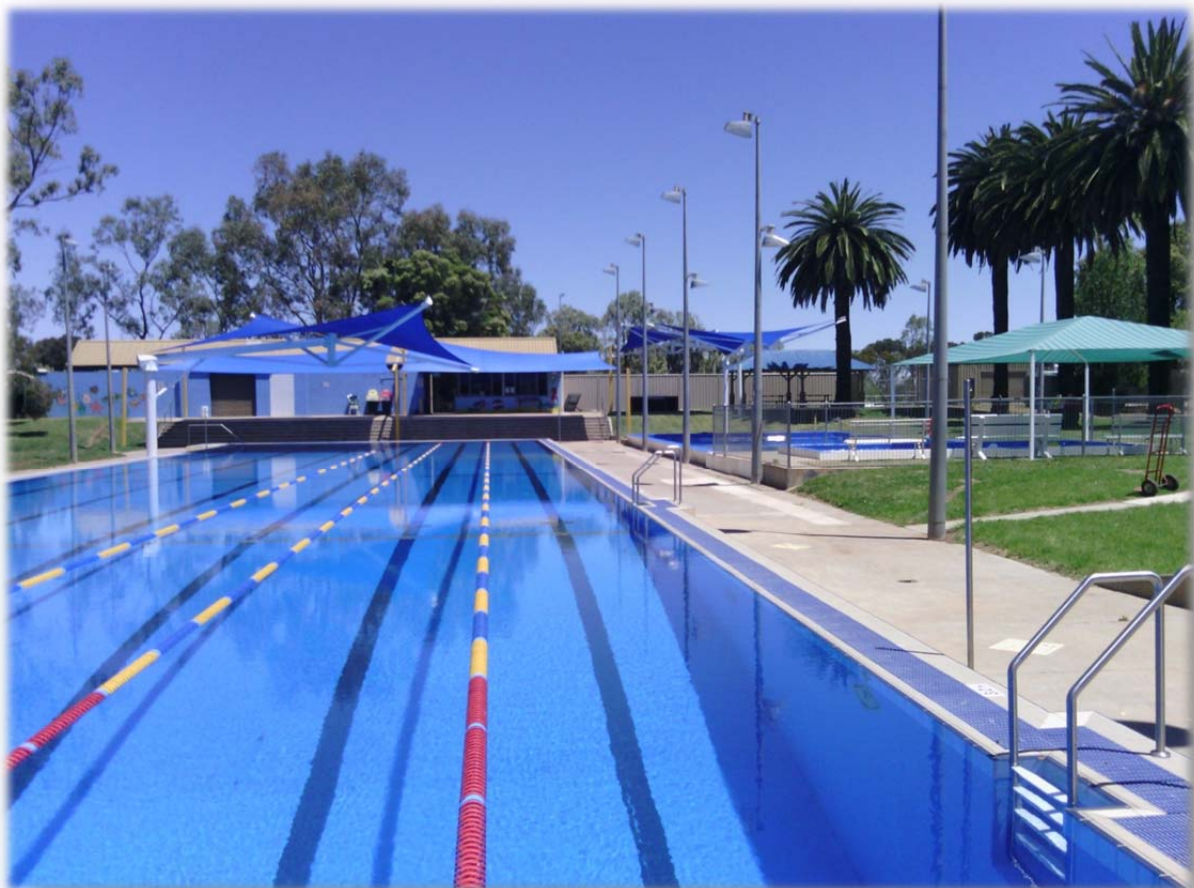
12.4 Reporting and evaluation

A series of key performance indicators have also been developed, which Council's recreation unit will need to report against to Council on a regular basis to monitor the Recreation Needs Strategy. It is recommended that an internal Council committee is established to meet several times each year, and prior to the development of Council budgets, to progress, monitor and evaluate the actions contained within the Strategy. A new Recreation Strategy should be prepared in 2020.

12.5 Relationship to Council Plan Strategic Platforms

Each action contained within the Recreation Strategy has been assessed against the seven Strategic Platforms listed in Loddon Shire's Council Plan:

1. Build a network of strong communities
2. Grow our population through appropriate development
3. Champion our agrifood enterprises
4. Make our towns liveable and memorable
5. Grow and diversify our economy
6. Support our transitioning townships
7. Connect with the next generation



| No. | Issue | Action | Council's role | Partners | Resources | KPIs | Council Plan Relationship |
|-------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|------------|---|---------------------------|
| Club development | | | | | | | |
| 1 | Club development | <p>Loddon Shire Council will fund external agencies to work on a one to one basis with 6-8 sports clubs each year to focus on issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance • Volunteer recruitment • Club management • Generating income and grants • Compliance issues • Attracting junior players • Promotion • Access and inclusion • Policy development • Social media. | Facilitator | <p>Sports clubs and organisations</p> <p>State Sporting Associations</p> <p>VicSport</p> <p>External providers</p> <p>Training agencies</p> | \$12,000 | Up to eight sports clubs are assisted each year to improve their governance and operations. | 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 |
| 2 | Attracting and retaining new volunteers | Research and develop programs to attract and retain new volunteers for sport and recreation clubs in Loddon Shire. | Planner Facilitator Deliverer | <p>Sports clubs and organisations</p> <p>Schools</p> | Staff time | Volunteer management program established. | 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 |

| No. | Issue | Action | Council's role | Partners | Resources | KPIs | Council Plan Relationship |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|--|---------------------------|
| 3 | Developing social sport and recreation activities | Encourage local sports clubs to work in partnership with external providers and State Sporting Associations to develop and implement social sport and recreation activities or modified sports for community members. | Facilitator Supporter | Local sports clubs External providers State Sporting Associations VicHealth Schools | Staff time | Additional social and modified sports are offered by local sports clubs. | 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 |
| Promoting participation in physical activities | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Programming and events | Develop a range of shire-wide physical activity programs and events such as Come and Try Days, summer in the parks (which may include live music and movies), family BBQs at swimming pools, guided walks in forests / parks, etc. which are inclusive of all residents. | Planner Facilitator Deliverer Supporter | Sports clubs and organisations Entertainers Schools | Staff time and a program budget of \$20,000 | A variety of physical activity programs and events are offered in Loddon Shire and well patronised by local residents. | 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 |
| 5 | Program leadership training | Develop a program to train local residents to run various physical activities such as yoga, gentle exercise classes, water aerobics, swimming lessons, kinder gym, gymnastics, circus skills, personal training, walking groups, dance classes, cycling groups, canoeing classes, cardio tennis, etc so that they can deliver these programs locally for an agreed period of time. | Planner Facilitator Supporter | External providers State Sporting Associations Training organisations | Staff time and training funds of \$10,000 | A number of local residents are trained each year to provide physical activity opportunities for local people. | 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 |

| No. | Issue | Action | Council's role | Partners | Resources | KPIs | Council Plan Relationship |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|---------------------------|
| 6 | Culturally and Linguistically Diverse communities | Work in partnership with the growing Filipino community of Pyramid Hill to support and link them into relevant sport and recreation opportunities. | Planner Facilitator Deliverer Supporter | Pyramid Hill Primary School Filipino community VicHealth | Staff time and \$5,000 seeding funding | The Filipino community is supported to take part in community sport and recreation activities. | 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 |
| Facility development | | | | | | | |
| 7 | Facility upgrades | Continue to progressively upgrade sport and recreation facilities in line with Council's strategic planning priorities | Planner Deliverer | Sports clubs and organisations External funding bodies | Projects individually costed | Sport and recreation facilities in the Shire are progressively upgraded when funding is available. | 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 |
| 8 | Community gyms | Assist communities to develop community gyms as required. | Facilitator Supporter | Schools Community Health Centres Sporting Clubs | Staff time | New community gyms are established as required. | 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 |
| Climate proofing sports facilities | | | | | | | |
| 9 | Water | Design and establish the feasibility of undertaking works to provide a more reliable water source for sport and recreation facilities in Wedderburn and Inglewood. | Planner Deliverer | External water engineering consultants Coliban Water | Staff time. Some external assistance may also be | Processes to develop a more reliable source of water in Wedderburn and | 4 |

| No. | Issue | Action | Council's role | Partners | Resources | KPIs | Council Plan Relationship |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|---|---|---|---------------------------|
| | | | | Goulburn Murray Water | required. | Inglewood have been designed and any recommendations identified have begun to be implemented. | |
| Economic development | | | | | | | |
| 10 | Attracting events | Prepare a prospectus outlining opportunities available for a range of sporting events in the municipality (e.g. on road and off road cycling, orienteering, triathlons, water skiing, canoeing, hockey, football, netball, tennis, bowls, cricket, etc) and actively distribute this prospectus to event organisers, clubs / organisations and State Sporting organisations. | Planner Facilitator Supporter | Event organisers Sports clubs and organisations State Sporting organisations. | Staff time | Events prospectus developed and an increase in the number of sporting events held in the Shire is recorded. | 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7 |
| Strategy development | | | | | | | |
| 11 | Playgrounds | Develop a municipal playground strategy to guide provision and standard of playgrounds throughout the municipality. | Planner Deliverer | Play Australia | \$10,000 | A municipal play strategy is developed. | 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 |
| 12 | Strategic Plans | Review and implement recommendations contained in Loddon Shire's: | Planner Facilitator Deliverer Supporter | | Staff time and budget as per individual | Recommendations from Loddon Shire plans continue to be implemented | 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 |

| No. | Issue | Action | Council's role | Partners | Resources | KPIs | Council Plan Relationship |
|------------------|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|------------|---|---------------------------|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Strategy Tracks and Trails Strategy Swimming Pool Development Plan Climate Proofing Sports Facilities Strategy Loddon Mallee Football (Soccer Strategy). | | | plans | according to their individual action plans. | |
| 13 | Major Recreation Reserve Master Plans | Continue to review Council's major Recreation Reserve Master Plans on a five year cycle. | Planner Facilitator Deliverer | Sports clubs and organisations | Staff time | Recreation Reserve Master Plans are reviewed every five years. | 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 |
| Promotion | | | | | | | |
| 14 | Directory | Continue to maintain a directory of sport and recreation opportunities (clubs, organisations, facility hire, programs and events) available within the Shire, in both electronic and hard copy format and ensure that this directory is given to new residents as they move to the area. | Planner Deliverer | Sports clubs and organisations | Staff time | The directory of sport and recreation opportunities continues to be upgraded and promoted to local and new residents. | 1, 6, 7 |
| 15 | Best practice | Actively promote best practice initiatives undertaken by local clubs and organisations through newsletters, newspapers, presentations, reward / recognition programs for volunteers, etc. | Supporter | Sports clubs and organisations Media | Staff time | Best practice initiatives of clubs and organisations are widely promoted throughout the Shire, and where | 1, 6, 7 |

| No. | Issue | Action | Council's role | Partners | Resources | KPIs | Council Plan Relationship |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|---|---------------------------|
| | | | | | | relevant, beyond Shire boundaries. | |
| Communication | | | | | | | |
| 16 | Sports forum | Facilitate an annual forum whereby clubs are invited to attend to discuss specific issues of relevance to their sport and their operations (e.g. grant writing, community grants program, events, compliance, etc). | Planner Facilitator Deliverer | Sports clubs and organisations | \$4,000 | An annual forum is conducted for sports clubs with a high level of attendance registered. | 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 |
| 17 | State Sporting Associations | Develop strong networks and partnerships with State Sporting Associations, e.g. football, netball, cricket, tennis, hockey, golf and lawn bowls, to keep informed of developments, trends and directions, and to provide feedback to these organisations on local issues. | Facilitator Supporter | State Sporting Associations | Staff time | Good working relationships are developed with relevant State Sporting Associations and regular two-way communication is undertaken. | 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 |

There was considerable interest from the community in developing an indoor heated pool, however, Loddon Shire does not have the population to sustain such a development, nor does it have the resources to construct and operate such a facility.

13 COSTING AND FUNDING OF ACTIONS

The following actions are those that will incur a cost to Council. A full list of actions is contained within section 12.

| Action | Cost of project | Total expected funding | Annual net cost to council (to be indexed by CPI annually) | Proposed funding source | Completion timeframe |
|--|-----------------|------------------------|--|-------------------------|----------------------|
| <p>Loddon Shire Council will fund external agencies to work on a one to one basis with 6-8 sports clubs each year to focus on issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance • Volunteer recruitment • Club management • Generating income and grants • Compliance issues • Attracting junior players • Promotion • Access and inclusion • Policy development. | \$12,000 | \$0 | \$12,000 | Council budget | Ongoing |
| <p>Develop a range of shire-wide physical activity programs and events such as Come and Try Days, summer in the parks (which may include live music and movies), family BBQs at swimming pools, guided walks in forests / parks, etc. which are inclusive of all residents.</p> | \$20,000 | \$5,000 | \$15,000 | VicHealth | Ongoing |
| <p>Develop a program to train local residents to run various physical activities such as yoga, gentle exercise classes, water aerobics, swimming lessons, kinder gym,</p> | \$10,000 | \$0 | \$10,000 | Council budget | Ongoing |

| Action | Cost of project | Total expected funding | Annual net cost to council (to be indexed by CPI annually) | Proposed funding source | Completion timeframe |
|--|-----------------|------------------------|--|-------------------------|----------------------|
| gymnastics, circus skills, personal training, walking groups, dance classes, cycling groups, canoeing classes, cardio tennis, etc so that they can deliver these programs locally for an agreed period of time. | | | | | |
| Work in partnership with the growing Filipino community of Pyramid Hill to support and link them into relevant sport and recreation opportunities. | \$5,000 | \$0 | \$5,000 | Council budget | Ongoing |
| Develop a municipal playground strategy to guide provision and standard of playgrounds throughout the municipality. | \$10,000 | \$0 | \$10,000 | Council budget | December 2015 |
| Facilitate an annual forum whereby clubs are invited to attend to discuss specific issues of relevance to their sport and their operations (e.g. grant writing, community grants program, events, compliance, etc.). | \$4,000 | \$0 | \$4,000 | Council budget | Held annually |

13.1 Five Year Budget

The adoption of this strategy will require a 5 year financial commitment from Council. It is proposed that an initial annual budget allocation of \$56,000 be provided and subsequently indexed in line with CPI over the life of the strategy. Estimated budget allocations are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table1: Estimated financial cost for implementation of the Recreation Strategy 2015-2020

| Net Annual Cost to Council | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | TOTAL |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|------------------|
| | \$56,000 | \$58,800 | \$61,740 | \$ 64,827 | \$ 68,068 | \$309,435 |

(Annual budget estimates have been escalated on the basis of a 5% CPI adjustment. Future budget allocations shall be contingent on actual CPI rate, determined annually.)

External funding agencies historically view requests for funding favourably if they are included in a strategic document.

The adoption of this strategy will be an important resource when it comes to obtaining external funds to implement actions in the strategy and will therefore reduce the financial impost on Council when implementing the identified actions.

APPENDIX

1 Demographic analysis

Location

Loddon Shire is situated in north central Victoria approximately 200km north of Melbourne and 40km north-west of Bendigo. It is predominantly a rural area featuring a number of small towns such as Bridgewater, Inglewood, Wedderburn, Serpentine, Tarnagulla, Boort and Pyramid Hill. From a landscape perspective, the Shire features forests, rolling hills, rocky outcrops, rivers, lakes and productive farmland. Main industries include agricultural activities such as dairy, horticulture, viticulture, cropping, lamb and intensive poultry and piggeries. The area is popular with bushwalkers, cyclists, water skiers, fishermen, canoeists and people who enjoy visiting wineries and the natural environment.



A brief summary of the demographic make-up of the Shire of Loddon follows⁸.

Population and Age

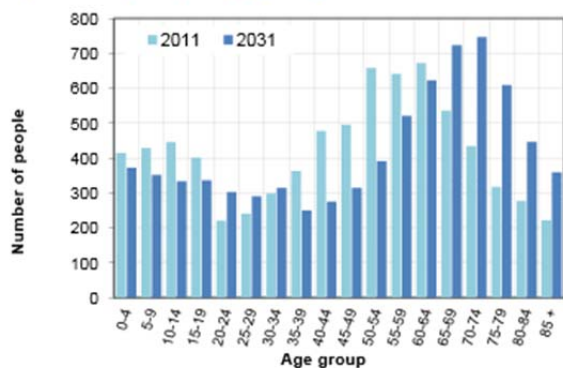
Loddon Shire comprises 7,459 people –3,810 males and 3,649 females. The median age is 50 (compared with a median age of 37 for both Victoria and Australia). According to projections from the Victorian Government, the population of Loddon Shire is expected to grow by 0.2% per annum, or the equivalent of 57 people each year from 2016 onwards. Most of this growth is anticipated in towns in the southern part of the Shire closest to Bendigo such as Bridgewater and Inglewood.

By 2031, almost 59% of the population will be aged 50 or over, hence sport and recreation facilities and programs must be designed to cater for this age cohort.

⁸ Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2011 QuickStats. Loddon (LGA). Website: http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/census_services/getproduct/census/2011/quickstat/LGA23940?opendocument&navpos=220 (Viewed 17 August 2014)

Age structures

Population by five-year age group, 2011 and 2031



Population change by five-year age group, 2011 to 2031

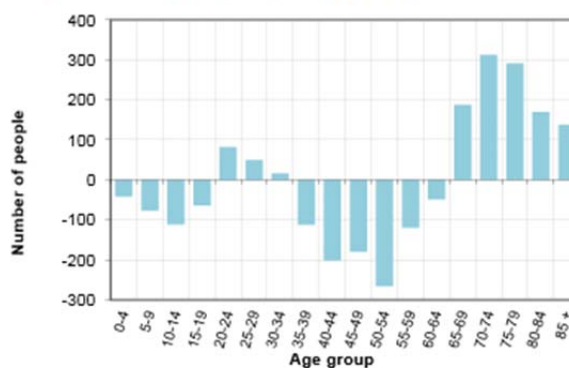


Figure 1: Source - Victoria in Future 2014

http://www.dtpli.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0017/223343/Loddon-One-Page-Profile-VIF2014.pdf

There are 2,001 families in Loddon Shire, with an average of 1.9 children. Compared with Victorian figures, Loddon Shire has a significantly lower percentage of people aged between zero and 49 years and significantly higher percentage of people aged 50 years and older (50.4% compared with 32.2% in Victoria and 32.3% in Australia).

More specifically, the biggest discrepancies lay in the ages 20-24 years (Loddon has 2.6% of its population in this age range compared with 7% for Victoria), the age 25-29 years (Loddon has 3.1% compared with Victoria's 7.3%) and between the ages of 30-34 years (3.9% compared with Victoria's 7%). In contrast, Loddon has 9.1% of its population in the age range 60-64 years, compared with 5.5% for Victoria.

Indigenous Peoples

Indigenous people make up 1.4% of the population compared with 0.7% for Victoria and 2.5% for Australia.

Sport and recreation opportunities in Loddon Shire need to be culturally appropriate and inclusive of indigenous children and their families.

Birthplace and Languages Spoken

The majority of residents were born in Australia (85.7% compared with the national figure of 69.8% and a state figure of 68.6%), with a further 2.5% of residents born in England, 0.9% born in New Zealand, 0.4% born in Germany, 0.4% born in Scotland and 0.4% born in Netherlands. The remaining 9.7% of residents were born in other countries.

There is a growing Filipino community based in Pyramid Hill. To help encourage this group to take part in community activities, extra assistance may need to be provided to encourage participation in sport and recreation activities.

The majority of residents only speak English at home (92.8%). Of those who speak languages other than English at home, the most common languages are German (0.3%), Greek (0.2%), Italian (0.2%), Dutch (0.2%), and Tagalog (0.2%).

Employment and Income

34.1% of people over 15 years of age in Loddon Shire carried out voluntary work for an organisation in the last 12 months, compared with 17.7% for Victoria, and 68.4% did unpaid domestic work compared with 69.3% for Victoria.

9,518 people were in the labour force at the time of the 2011 ABS Census. 57.9% of these people worked full-time; 30.1% worked part-time; 6.4% were away from work; and 5.7% were unemployed. Compared with Victorian and Australian statistics, there are slightly less people working full-time, more working part-time in Loddon Shire and more people unemployed.

Key employment industry sectors are sheep, beef, cattle and grain farming (26.1%); school education (4.8%); hospitals (4.4%); dairy cattle farming (4.3%) and Local Government Administration (3.3%).

The highest category of occupational types in 2011 is managers (36.8%) compared to (13.2%) in Victoria overall, followed by labourers (13.3%); professionals (10.2%); technicians and trade workers (10%); clerical and administrative workers (8.5%); community and personal service workers (7.8%); machinery operators and drivers (6.1%) and sales workers (5.6%).

The median weekly household income is \$686 compared with the Victorian median household income of \$1,216. 43.3% of Loddon Shire households earn less than \$600 gross per week (compared with 23.8% of Victorian households) and 2.1% earn more than \$3,000 gross per week (compared with 10.4% of Victorian households).

Fees for sport and recreation activities need to take into account people's ability to pay. The provision of no cost / low cost family recreational activities will be important.

Households

65.1% of households in Loddon Shire are family households (compared with 71.2% for Victoria). The percentage of lone households in Loddon Shire is significantly higher than for Victoria overall (32.3% compared with 24.5% for Victoria).

Opportunities to create social interactions through sport and recreation will be important to prevent social isolation within sectors of the community.

The most common form of family household composition is a couple family without children (51.5% compared with 36.7% in Victoria), followed by a couple family with children (35% compared with Victorian figures of 46.0%). One parent families make up 12.1% of families, compared with the Victorian figure of 15.5%).

Home ownership

There is higher home ownership (i.e. owned outright, or owned with a mortgage) in Loddon Shire (78.4% compared with 70.1% for Victoria) and a lower percentage of homes rented (16.7% compared with 26.5% for Victoria).

For those paying off homes, the median home loan repayment in Loddon Shire is \$758 per month, compared with \$1,700 for Victoria overall, and for those who are renting homes, the median weekly rental amount is \$100 compared with the Victorian median of \$277.

Transportation

There is an average of 2.1 vehicles per dwelling. Only 0.4% of employed people travelled to work by public transport on the day of the 2011 Census.

Internet access

Of the total population of Loddon, 54.1% lived in households that had home Internet access via a broadband connection, compared to 73.3% in the Loddon Mallee Region and the Victorian State average of 72.4%.

When promoting sport and recreation opportunities, it is important to note that only just over half of the households in the Shire have internet access, hence a variety of promotional tools will need to be used.

Health and wellbeing

Participation in sport and recreation can help to promote good health and wellbeing. The following table provides a snapshot of the health and wellbeing of the Loddon Shire community.

| Factor | Loddon | Loddon Mallee LGA | Victoria LGA | Comments / Source |
|--|--------|-------------------|--------------|--|
| Percentage of persons who do <u>not</u> meet physical activity guidelines. | 33.6% | 30% | 32.1% | http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/54B3D5F3939960ABCA257866001739F0/\$FILE/Loddon_external.pdf http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/CE93CD79EDDA0114CA257852000719F0/\$FILE/LoddonRegion_external.pdf |
| Percentage of persons who visit a green space at least once per week. | 37.8% | 43.8% | 50.7% | http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/54B3D5F3939960ABCA257866001739F0/\$FILE/Loddon_external.pdf http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/CE93CD79EDDA0114CA257852000719F0/\$FILE/LoddonRegion_external.pdf |
| Incidence of obesity | 19.7% | 23.3% | 17.3% | http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/54B3D5F3939960ABCA257866001739F0/\$FILE/Loddon_external.pdf http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/CE93CD79EDDA0114CA257852000719F0/\$FILE/LoddonRegion_external.pdf |

| Factor | Loddon | Loddon Mallee LGA | Victoria LGA | Comments / Source |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|--------------|---|
| Number of people per 100,000 in Loddon Shire who have cancer | 1264 | 680.9 | 522 | http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/54B3D5F3939960ABCA257866001739F0/\$FILE/Loddon_external.pdf http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/CE93CD79EDDA0114CA257852000719F0/\$FILE/LoddonRegion_external.pdf |
| Personal wellbeing | 77.7 | 79.4 | 77.5 | <p>Unity Wellbeing Index (AUWBI). Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with their lives on a number of domains resulting in an aggregated Personal Wellbeing Index ranging between 0-100.</p> <p>Normative data from the AUWBI indicates that the average Personal Wellbeing Index for Australians is approximately 75.</p> <p>http://www.communityindicators.net.au/wellbeing_reports/loddon</p> |
| Health – as excellent or very good (self-reported) | 48.7% | 55% | 54.3%. | <p>Self-Reported Health was measured in the 2007 CIV Survey. Respondents were asked to rate their health as excellent, very good, good, fair or poor.</p> <p>http://www.communityindicators.net.au/wellbeing_reports/loddon</p> |
| Could definitely get help from friends, family or neighbours when they needed it. | 90.2% | 92.4% | 91.7% | <p>http://www.communityindicators.net.au/wellbeing_reports/loddon</p> |
| Percentage of children developmentally vulnerable in two or more domains. | 10.3% LGA measure | 10.8% LGA measure | 9.5% | http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/54B3D5F3939960ABCA257866001739F0/\$FILE/Loddon_external.pdf http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/CE93CD79EDDA0114CA257852000719F0/\$FILE/LoddonRegion_external.pdf |

| Factor | Loddon | Loddon Mallee LGA | Victoria LGA | Comments / Source |
|--|--------|-------------------|--------------|--|
| Percentage of people reporting fair to poor health. | 18.4% | 15.8% | 15.9% | http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/54B3D5F3939960ABCA257866001739F0/\$FILE/Loddon_external.pdf http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/CE93CD79EDDA0114CA257852000719F0/\$FILE/LoddonRegion_external.pdf |
| Percentage of persons reporting a high/very high degree of psychological distress. | 10.6% | 11.3% | 11.1% | http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/54B3D5F3939960ABCA257866001739F0/\$FILE/Loddon_2012-v02.pdf http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/CE93CD79EDDA0114CA257852000719F0/\$FILE/LoddonRegion_external.pdf |
| Male life expectancy | 75.3 | 78.6 | 80.3 | http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/54B3D5F3939960ABCA257866001739F0/\$FILE/Loddon_2012-v02.pdf http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/CE93CD79EDDA0114CA257852000719F0/\$FILE/LoddonRegion_external.pdf |
| Female life expectancy | 83 | 83.4 | 84.4 | http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/54B3D5F3939960ABCA257866001739F0/\$FILE/Loddon_2012-v02.pdf http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/CE93CD79EDDA0114CA257852000719F0/\$FILE/LoddonRegion_external.pdf |
| Disability support pension recipients per 1,000 eligible population. | 128.2 | 86.1 | 55.7 | http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/54B3D5F3939960ABCA257866001739F0/\$FILE/Loddon_2012-v02.pdf http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/CE93CD79EDDA0114CA257852000719F0/\$FILE/LoddonRegion_external.pdf |
| Percentage of population with need for assistance with a core activity. | 7.7% | 5.8% | 5.0% | http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/54B3D5F3939960ABCA257866001739F0/\$FILE/Loddon_2012-v02.pdf http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/CE93CD79EDDA0114CA257852000719F0/\$FILE/LoddonRegion_external.pdf |

| Factor | Loddon | Loddon Mallee LGA | Victoria LGA | Comments / Source |
|---|--------|-------------------|--------------|--|
| | | | | df |
| People with severe and profound disability living in the community | 6.1% | 4.7% | 4% | http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/54B3D5F3939960ABCA257866001739F0/\$FILE/Loddon_2012-v02.pdf http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/CE93CD79EDDA0114CA257852000719F0/\$FILE/LoddonRegion_external.pdf |
| Avoidable deaths per 100,000 population in Loddon Shire for people aged between 0–74 years, due to all causes. | 211.7 | 181.9 | 148.2 | http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/54B3D5F3939960ABCA257866001739F0/\$FILE/Loddon_2012-v02.pdf http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/CE93CD79EDDA0114CA257852000719F0/\$FILE/LoddonRegion_external.pdf |
| Avoidable deaths per 100,000 population in Loddon Shire, for people aged between 0–74 years, due to respiratory diseases. | 17.7 | 11.6 | 8.4 | http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/54B3D5F3939960ABCA257866001739F0/\$FILE/Loddon_2012-v02.pdf http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/CE93CD79EDDA0114CA257852000719F0/\$FILE/LoddonRegion_external.pdf |

2 Literature review

Twenty eight plans and documents were reviewed in order to understand the context in which future recreation programs, services and facilities may be delivered in Loddon Shire. A detailed review of this literature is contained within the appendix of this report. In summary, the key issues arising from the literature review are:

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| Loddon Shire Council Plan 2013-2017 | <p>The Plan identifies seven strategic platforms which provide focus for future planning. They are: build a network of strong communities, grow population through appropriate development, champion the Shire’s agrifood enterprises, make the Shire’s towns liveable and memorable, grow and diversify the economy, support transitioning townships, and connect with the next generation.</p> <p><u>The plan identifies the following relevant aims and opportunities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an increased urban population provides an opportunity for Loddon Shire to attract families to live here on the basis of much better housing affordability and a simpler, safer and better |

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| | <p>quality of life. To succeed in this aim however, we have to improve the liveability of Loddon Shire and the quality of services available</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhanced broadband capability will allow the delivery of high levels of education, health and community support services in regional areas • the southern part of the Shire is benefiting from an overflow due to the strong real estate market in Bendigo, 'tree changers' escaping urban sprawl from Melbourne, and the retiree factor. The southern areas of the shire have the benefit of the river and more undulating countryside, which is attractive for residential and tourism use • in the south, Council needs to develop strategies to encourage, stimulate, and support population growth, tourist use and the assimilation of many new residents with potentially new ideas and values into the community. <p><u>The following were identified as strengths of the Shire:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Mediterranean climate, sporting and outdoor activities, affordable housing, proximity to Bendigo and our accessibility to Melbourne by train or road, make it a great place to live, work, visit and play • the area includes a number of natural attractions, including the river and lakes which positions the Shire well to develop a strong nature-based tourism sector. <p>One of the objectives identified by the plan is to improve the liveability of our main townships by making them attractive to existing residents, prospective residents and tourists. One of the success indicators for this objective is completion of a master plan for high use recreational amenities.</p> <p>A priority in the 2013-2017 period is to improve the appearance and functionality of recreation and public spaces. The key projects identified for this priority are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implement a capital works program for parks and gardens facilities • develop master plans for all high use recreational facilities • develop and implement a new recreation strategy. |
| Loddon Shire Recreation Strategy Plan 2007-2017 | <p>In 2007, a Recreation Strategy Plan was developed that reflects the community's vision and priorities for recreation and provides a framework for Council decision-making for recreation for the next 10 years. The Strategy Plan includes three volumes. Volume One incorporates an action plan with 93 recommendations, Volume Two details the basis of the strategy and Volume Three – Working Papers.</p> <p>The actions contained within the plan primarily focussed on:</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improving the sustainability of sporting clubs • facility and infrastructure development • grants programs • youth development • tracks and trails • public halls. <p>Many of the recommendations contained within the previous Recreation Strategy have been achieved.</p> |
| <p>Loddon Shire Tracks and Trails Strategy July 2009</p> | <p>Loddon Shire Council has commissioned a Tracks and Trails Strategy to help identify and review existing tracks and trails located within Loddon Shire; and identify a clear direction for the Shire from 2008-2013 in terms of tracks and trails provision, future development, management, maintenance and marketing.</p> <p>An audit was undertaken as part of the Strategy, which identified a number of gaps and opportunities in the tracks and trails in the shire.</p> <p><u>The gaps identified included:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • poor signage • inconsistency of track names • access issues • confusion on correct routes • varying levels and standards of maintenance • limited connections and linkages • overall lack of trails <p><u>Opportunities identified include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved marketing • understanding and appreciation of the natural environment • increased physical activity • development of events that could be run on the trails • development of a local management committee. <p><u>The following recommendations were made:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve links between trails • improve connectivity of existing trails • improve trail design (through the development of specific guidelines) • instigate a "Stop and Walk" program (aimed at encouraging motorists to stop and walk in towns) • identify potential events to encourage usage of tracks and trails • ensure interpretation opportunities are made available • improve marketing and promotion of tracks and trails • improve the coordination, management and planning of trails • provide appropriate maintenance schedules. |

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| <p>Loddon Shire Youth Strategy 2008-2013</p> | <p>The purpose of this strategy is to clearly define Council's role and key partnerships in providing for the needs of young people aged 13 to 25 for the next 5 years.</p> <p>Council recognises the importance of young people to the future of the Shire and the importance of working with them to make the Shire a place where they feel important, supported and safe; and where they can have choices in relation to their recreation, social, health and education aspirations.</p> <p>The following issues were identified by the steering committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community engagement and connectedness (sport, recreation, volunteering, special events and grants, young people and urban and open space environments, community awareness acceptance) • health and wellbeing (mentoring programs, physical and emotional health, mental health, economic wellbeing, housing and homelessness) • education, training and employment (gateways for sustainable communities project, work experience career pathways and local employment initiatives, school to community engagement pathways) • services, support and information (information, access to services, 18-25 year olds, leadership programs). <p>Short, medium and long term actions are identified by the Strategy.</p> <p><u>Short term actions include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maximise the sustainability of existing sports across the Shire with a particular focus on clubs that have strong programs for young people • work with local communities to investigate opportunities to establish sustainable gymnasium facilities at appropriate locations. (consideration should be given to industry innovations such as outdoor gyms) • implement the recommendations of the 2003 (Youth) Recreation/Skate Strategy (M,S,L) • work with three organisations/clubs and relevant young people to establish a model for 'youth friendly' clubs/organisations and then make this available to other organisations <p><u>Medium term actions include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support the development of alternative (indoor and outdoor) sporting opportunities e.g. soccer, badminton • facilitate discussions between local and regional agencies /organisations to expand and promote a range of Holiday Programs |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with the Service Providers Network to identify opportunities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - better provide for the health and wellbeing needs of young people - overcome barriers that young people have in accessing services, and - advocate for the health and wellbeing needs of young people. <p><u>Long term actions include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourage initiatives that engage young people in volunteering • work with schools to maximise the benefits of school-based volunteering programs to students and the community (e.g. by encouraging community involvement, identification of community projects that may be attractive to young people • actively encourage the establishment and promotion of exercise programs/classes for a range of age groups e.g. youth fitness programs • identify opportunities for increasing input by young people into civic decision making process. |
| Loddon Shire Swimming Pool Development Plan 2014-2018 | <p>The purpose of this plan is to identify required capital works and routine maintenance costs required to maintain an adequate level of safety and amenity for each of Council's five public swimming pools over a four year period 2014-2018. Recommendations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • installation of solar panels • shade structures • water play features (at three pools) • perimeter fencing (over the next four years) • pool painting (on a three year cycle) • cyclic maintenance. <p>Council's strategic planning documents identify the need to provide good quality and sustainable sport and recreation facilities. In particular the need to maintain and develop Council's public swimming pools into the future is supported by the Loddon Shire Council Plan 2013-2017, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Platform 4 - Make our towns liveable and memorable, (improve the facilities of our towns by making them attractive to existing residents, prospective residents and tourists) • Core Business 2: "Cost effectively providing the basic needs of our communities" • Core Business 5: "Developing and maintaining both built and natural assets appropriate to community priorities". <p>\$1m has been spent by Loddon Shire on upgrading public outdoor pools:</p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • change room upgrades • new filtration systems • improvements to pool structures • installation of shade sails. |
| Loddon Shire Netball Court Audit | <p>The purpose of this document was to carry out an audit of all netball courts in Loddon Shire to determine shortfalls in meeting Netball Victoria guidelines re netball courts, particularly in relation to run off areas.</p> <p>Council has progressively worked through this strategy and submitted an application in January 2015 for the final court upgrade (Boort). So far a total of \$700,000 of external funding has been received by Loddon Shire to construct 17 new netball courts at a cost of \$1.2m.</p> |
| Loddon Shire Environmental Sustainability Plan 2013-2018 | <p>The purpose of this Strategy is to guide Council through its decision making processes in planning for the future; in identifying program and project implementation priorities for the delivery of environmental sustainability outcomes. Environmental sustainability within Loddon Shire includes both the natural and built environment; and environmental, economic and social outcomes.</p> <p>One of the relevant actions contained within this plan relates to business development in the tourism area. It is to promote and enhance the profile of nature based and eco-tourism activities within the Shire through tourism literature, advertising, campaigns and seminars/presentations as well as partnering opportunities with external agencies (low priority).</p> |
| Loddon Shire Climate Proofing Loddon's Sports and Recreation Facilities Strategy 2011 | <p>The aim of this Strategy is to identify work that will assist to 'climate proof' as many sporting facilities in Loddon Shire as possible and at the same time help communities to retain their invaluable sport and recreation assets.</p> <p>The report notes that climate change has had a significant impact on the ability of sport and recreation clubs to access water to maintain sports grounds to a satisfactory standard. Rainfall levels have decreased, temperatures have increased and access to potable or irrigation water through water authorities has decreased.</p> <p>This strategy has identified a number of works to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce water use • increase the security of supply of water • reduce leakage of storage systems at sport and recreation facilities in Loddon Shire <p>Typically these works include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • installation of hard courts and removal of grass courts • resurfacing grass playing fields • upgrading irrigation systems |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • water harvesting projects, e.g. installation of water tanks • installation of water saving devices. <p>Loddon Shire Council received \$900,000 worth of external grants, and with local contributions had an amount of \$1.7m available to redevelop facilities.</p> |
| <p>Loddon Shire Building Asset Management Plan 2009</p> | <p>The specific purpose of the Asset Management Plan is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demonstrate responsible stewardship by the Council • define how the infrastructure is and will be managed to achieve the organisation's objectives • provide the basis for customer consultation to determine the appropriate levels of service • manage risk of asset failure • achieve savings by optimising whole of life costs • support long term planning. <p>Council's support for bids for external funding is subject to an adopted Recreation Reserve Master Plan to support the application. This is an absolute requirement before bids for external funding will be supported by Council. Council's Recreation Department plans to actively encourage and assist Recreation Reserve Committees of Management to produce or update Master Plans.</p> <p>Other considerations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a project proposal is supported by documented substantiated need • projects which create multi-use facility have high priority (i.e. consolidates existing buildings or functions) • renewal projects have high priority • advice from grant provider as to likelihood of project being funded • compliance with grant conditions and funding guidelines • availability of community funding • project readiness to commence. <p>As part of the Operations and Management Plan, it was determined that with regard to Recreation Buildings Council provides the same level of support for all types of sporting facility whether or not located on Council controlled land. However under this plan Council's investment in operations and maintenance in recreation buildings is limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual allocations as per "ES17 Public Hall and Reserve Allocation Policy" • allocation of Community Grants as per policy "CS3 Community Grants" • Committees of management are required to fund operations and |

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| | <p style="text-align: center;">maintenance expenditure from their own resources.</p> <p>As part of the Renewal or Replacement Plan, it was determined that with regard to Recreation Buildings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council's investment in renewal or replacement works at recreation buildings is limited as detailed in 2.11.4 Level of Service provided for Recreation Buildings under this Plan • Renewal or replacement works at Indoor Stadiums, located at district colleges, will be assessed on a case by case basis at the time of project development. |
| <p>Loddon Shire Community Access and Inclusion Plan 2013-2015</p> | <p>The Community Access and Inclusion Plan 2013-2015 has been developed to help reduce barriers for people with a disability within Loddon Shire. The Plan is underpinned by four key principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social inclusion • human rights • diversity • community engagement. <p>The objectives of the plan are to satisfy the legislative requirements of Section 38 of the Victorian Disability Act, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reducing barriers to persons with a disability accessing goods, services and facilities • reducing barriers to persons with a disability obtaining and maintaining employment • promoting inclusion and participation in the community of persons with a disability • achieving tangible changes in attitudes and practices which discriminate against persons with a disability. <p>Actions of relevance include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote accessibility and inclusion through the Community Grants Program • promote and encourage the use of the Companion Card and Victorian Carers Card throughout Loddon Shire • subject to the audit plan, implement and action prioritised works identified from above audits on Loddon Shire Council's buildings and facilities (subject to yearly budget). |
| <p>Loddon Shire Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017</p> | <p>The Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 seeks to achieve the highest attainable standard of public health and wellbeing by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protecting public health and preventing disease, illness, injury, disability or premature death • promoting conditions in which people can be healthy • reducing inequalities in the state of public health and wellbeing. |

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| | <p>This Plan identifies the Shire’s priority health and wellbeing issues and outlines an action plan that will guide the actions of Council over four years. The priorities identified and the associated goals that are of particular relevance are:</p> <p><u>Promoting social connections :</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong engagement with our community • young people are equipped for a positive future and our communities are kept young, vibrant and energised • strong resilient families with good social connections across a range of areas • positive ageing that keeps people connected with each other, supports involvement in the community and is underpinned by resilience and coping. <p><u>Increasing physical activity:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop high quality spaces and facilities that provide access and support physical activity. The Outcomes for this: improved appearance and functionality of recreation and public spaces. Indicators: completion of master plan for high use recreational facilities • reduce barriers for people, including those with a disability, accessing recreational facilities and physical activity opportunities • improved accessibility and connections between physical activity infrastructures. <p><u>Public health protection and disease prevention:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimise public and environmental health risks. <p><u>A collaborative and rational health and wellbeing system in Loddon:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local agencies work together to improve public health and wellbeing in the local community • the community and local agencies work to advocate for improved wellbeing and access to appropriate services for Loddon residents affected by mental health issues. <p><u>Some key facts:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • although there were less sedentary people in Loddon than Victoria (5.3%: 5.5%) the number of people that undertook sufficient exercise time and sessions was below Victorian rates (57.8%: 63.9%). • in 2011-12 the prevalence of overweight and obesity in Loddon was 56.5% compared to Victoria’s 49.8%. The rate of overweight males was almost 10% higher than the Victorian average. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loddon surveyed lower than Victoria on the following indicators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - access to recreational and leisure facilities - good facilities and services - community & support groups - peasant environment, nice streets, well planned, open spaces • the percentage of persons reporting a high/very high degree of psychological distress in Loddon Shire was 15.6% compared to Victoria's 11.4%, a Victorian ranking of 7 (the closer the ranking to #1 is, the greater the percentage of people with a high / very high degree of psychological distress) • in 2011 The Loddon Shire SEIFA was 934 (Loddon North 964.7 and Loddon South 922.2) ranking it at 4 in Victoria and 123 in Australia (the closer the ranking is to #1, the greater the level of socio economic disadvantage). |
| Loddon Shire Nature Tourism Plan 2011 | <p>The objective of this plan is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to promote existing nature tourism venues in the Shire • to identify areas in Loddon Shire that demonstrates potential for nature tourism • to assist in the improvement, where practical, of existing facilities • to identify potential new/expanded business opportunities in nature tourism. <p><u>The relevant objectives and actions from this plan include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to promote existing nature tourism venues in the Shire. Action: to produce brochures for individual activities, a nature activities map, annual nature-based events • to identify areas in Loddon Shire that demonstrates potential for nature tourism. Action: select 5 top priority areas to focus attention • to assist in the improvement of existing facilities where practical. <p><u>Action:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to identify sites for potential improvement; undertake a tracks and trails audit • to identify potential new/expanded business opportunities in nature tourism. Action: Loddon nature discovery tours, guided walking tours in particular areas. |
| Loddon Shire Risk Management Plan 2014 | <p>This policy provides a statement of the overall intentions and direction of the Loddon Shire Council in relation to risk management. It outlines a framework (ISO31000), a consequence criteria (ranging from insignificant to catastrophic), a likelihood criteria (ranging from almost certain to rare) and an action plan (with risk levels rated from low to very high).</p> |
| All 10 Major Recreation Reserve Master Plans | <p>Recreation Reserve Master Plans have been prepared for the nine major recreation reserves in Loddon Shire to guide future development and to identify priorities. Key recommendations from each of these master</p> |

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| | <p>plans follow. Note that High Priority recommendations are those proposed to take place in 1-3 years, High to Medium Priority Recommendations between 4-6 years, Medium Priority Recommendations between 7-9 years and Low Priority Recommendations over 10+ years.</p> <p>Boort Park</p> <p><u>High priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop a water allocation agreement for key sports facilities during restriction periods, implement formal water use monitoring and annual reporting process - construct basic facility with shelter and storage space for hockey club, install lights - install a more hard wearing grass on the sports oval that remains green over winter. <p><u>High to medium recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - install more lights for football club training purposes. <p><u>Medium priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - upgrade toilets, showers and taps to water efficient fixtures - extend social rooms to cater for club functions - construct a small shed on site to be utilised as a gymnasium - develop a female umpire change room - upgrade kitchen to better cater for club functions - upgrade public toilets. <p><u>Low priority recommendation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - install rainwater tanks. <p>Bridgewater Recreation Reserve</p> <p><u>High priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop a water allocation agreement for key sports facilities during restriction periods, implement an ongoing water use monitoring and reporting program - resurface and re-grade the oval and plant with warm season grasses - irrigation specialist to assess the current system and provide recommendations to either upgrade or replace the system - implement the recommendations provided by the irrigation specialist - proceed with the development of a groundwater source at the Recreation Reserve - construct concrete pathways and paving around the Sports |

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| | <p>Pavilion, construct verandah - construct drainage near the pavilion to reduce pooling of water.</p> <p><u>Medium priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - install two additional floodlights around the sports ground - replace mower - provide shade and protective barriers around playground equipment - install boundary fencing, particularly along the highway. <p><u>Low priority recommendation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assess the need to purchase and install a rainwater/storm water harvesting system which collects run-off from the netball / tennis courts as a back-up emergency water supply. <p>Calivil Recreation Reserve</p> <p><u>High priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - implement a formal water use monitoring and annual reporting process - investigate the sinking of a bore to provide an alternative source of water for the Recreation Reserve - resurface courts and relocate light towers to meet Netball Victoria standards. Line-mark these two courts for tennis - install a new irrigation system to reduce water use - install lights for bowls to allow night time training and games. <p><u>High to Medium priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - construct a BBQ to encourage visitors - resurface cricket practice nets <p><u>Medium priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - consider development of a campground at the Recreation Reserve - install shade sails to provide a safer and more attractive play space - re-vegetate and landscape around the entire recreation reserve to improve visual amenity of the site - consider the development of a farmer's market and alternative expos at the Recreation Reserve to increase local revenue - modify power supply to the football shed - install safety signage around play area and additional directional signage to and around the reserve. |

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| | <p><u>Low priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retain two grass courts in the short term and develop two new hard courts if demand dictates. - Install two extra light towers on the football oval - Construct a covered and paved area which links the pavilion to the change rooms - Explore the possibility of developing an Opportunity Shop in the tennis pavilion at the Reserve. <p>Inglewood Recreation Reserve</p> <p><u>High priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop a water allocation agreement for key sports facilities during restriction periods - calculate the yield of the Old Inglewood Reservoir and put in place a water allocation process - develop and implement an ongoing program of works for the Old Town Reservoir. - implement a formal water use monitoring and annual reporting process - secure water for the ground by upgrading catch drains to allow the Inglewood Reservoir to fill so that water can then be transferred to the sports complex for irrigation purposes - upgrade toilet facilities in Sports Centre - install a new irrigation system to allow more efficient use of water and plant warm season grasses to provide a better playing surface - install a range hood in the kitchen area to meet regulations - install some speed humps with signage around the sports oval. <p><u>High to Medium priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - upgrade Sports Centre to improve overall appearance and amenity - develop change facilities for netballers and female umpires – as part of the tennis pavilion - install heating and cooling in the pavilion. Cover louvre windows. <p><u>Medium priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - install more shelter, shade and seating around the Recreation Reserve - upgrade the canteen and the bar - upgrade lights for sports oval and netball courts - upgrade football / cricket showers and toilets in change rooms. |

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| | <p><u>Low priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - upgrade public toilets - develop a rebound wall to allow people to practice their tennis alone or in pairs. <p>Donaldson Park (Wedderburn)</p> <p><u>High priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - calculate the yield of the old town water supply system and put in place a water allocation process - develop and implement an ongoing program of works for Skinners Flat Reserve and Caravan Park dam - investigate potential for stormwater harvesting from Nardoo Creek - develop a water allocation agreement for key sports facilities during restriction periods - develop a new pavilion on the current site of the spectator shed. The new pavilion is to be constructed in two stages. - upgrade second netball court to meet Netball Victoria standards - extend kitchen and construct administrative space in bowls pavilion. Ensure kitchen upgrade includes provision for low water use fixtures and appliances - demolish the old tennis shed and develop an adventure / outdoor play space in this area; and also a more traditional play space near the netball courts - plant with warm season grasses to reduce water use and costs - replace two grass tennis courts with two synthetic (hard) tennis courts with lights to reduce water use and to provide for year round tennis - upgrade existing hockey irrigation system. <p><u>Medium priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - review use of harness racing in 2011 to determine future of pavilion and the track. Increase use of the pavilion, e.g. hockey change facility, cricket pavilion, community gym shared with Wedderburn P-12 College, etc. and install a DDA compliant toilet and ramp suitable for people with disabilities. <p><u>High to medium priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - install signage that reflects Council's corporate style and provides information on opportunities at the Park - improve landscaping throughout the park, to create a more attractive and welcoming environment - seal main entrance from Chapel St to improve condition of internal roadway -install two lights at the southern end of the hockey field. |

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| | <p><u>Medium priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - demolish existing sheds and build one new shed, able to provide some shelter, seating and storage for hockey equipment - decommission Hospital Street toilet block once pavilion extension is complete - render and smarten up existing public toilets near the bowls green. <p><u>Low priority recommendation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop an electronic ground booking system. <p><u>Ongoing recommendations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - continue to explore opportunities for new activities / user groups. - continue to plant trees along Nardoo Walking Track. <p>Mitchell Park (Pyramid Hill)</p> <p><u>High priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -develop a water allocation agreement for key sports facilities during restriction periods - implement a formal water use monitoring and annual reporting process - set up an agreement with Loddon Shire to access a set volume of water from the Loddon Shire’s Pyramid Hill-Boort Irrigation water share - reseal both courts and extend run-off to meet Netball Victoria standards and to improve safety for netballers - replace existing irrigation system - upgrade fire service to ensure safety of patrons in the pavilion should a fire break out - install light near playground to improve visibility of children playing in the area - install signage to warn motorists to slow down. <p><u>High to medium priority recommendation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide access for people with disabilities to top floor of the pavilion. <p><u>Medium priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - collect rainwater from clubhouse and use for toilet flushing and other non-drinking building purposes - consider replacement of turf wickets with synthetic wickets to |

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| | <p>reduce water usage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - need to install heating and cooling in the pavilion, a skylight and better acoustics - construct a verandah to the south end of the pavilion for netball spectators - improve aesthetics of the ground through ongoing planting and upkeep of more trees - seal internal road around oval and provide signage and speed humps. <p><u>Low priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - replace training lighting around the sports oval to improve visibility during training sessions - replace gate, fence and track to provide safe access for users of Mitchell Park - replace original toilet block. <p>Mitiamo Recreation Reserve</p> <p><u>High priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop an agreement with the MRWS to access water from the proposed pipeline and install rainwater tank - develop a water allocation agreement for key sports facilities during restriction periods - decommission all 5 lawn tennis courts and construct 2 new shared netball / tennis courts (which meet Netball Victoria standards) - relocate existing light poles and upgrade lighting of the courts - Improve drainage around the court area so that water does not pool on the courts - relocate entrance to pavilion further to the east to allow a car-free area around the netball / tennis and play area - survey oval and improve drainage on southern side of ground - revegetate Recreation Reserve . <p><u>High to medium priority recommendation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - construct a basic club facility to provide shelter, a toilet, a shower and storage space next to the courts. <p><u>Medium priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - implement a formal water use monitoring and annual reporting process - install sturdy cafe plastic sheeting around the verandah to increase capacity of the pavilion to cater for events - relocate the two water tanks and connect to the roof for toilet flushing. - install water efficient fixtures. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - assess the need to supplement the water supply and implement a stormwater harvesting system. <p><u>Low priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - extend pavilion by approximately 4 metres to increase capacity for events and functions and also to provide additional storage space [NOTE: This is unlikely to provide any significant benefits, hence not supported – cafe plastic sheeting is a more cost effective solution] - improve the existing irrigation system on the sports oval - upgrade light towers around the sports ground to allow football games to be held at night [NOTE: Not consistent with the grading of the ground – not supported]. <p>Newbridge Recreation Reserve</p> <p><u>High priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop a water allocation agreement for key sports facilities during restriction periods - implement a formal water use monitoring and annual reporting process - install an in-ground irrigation sprinkler system to decrease water use; decrease amount of time spent watering; and improve condition of the ground - develop a new community sports pavilion to cater for social events and to provide suitable change facilities for players and umpires; and also upgrade power. Incorporate water efficient fixtures and additional rainwater tanks - reconstruct netball courts to meet Netball Victoria standards (over existing tennis courts). <p><u>High to medium priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mentor young people to take on administrative roles on the Newbridge Recreation Reserve Committee of Management to ensure its ongoing sustainability. <p><u>Medium priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provide shade trees and a BBQ in playground / picnic area to provide a more comfortable place for people to recreate. - develop a track along reserve extending this around the top of the reserve. <p><u>Low priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fence the site to prevent sheep from causing damage - liaise with Coliban Water on potential for recycled water option if the proposal to provide a reticulated sewage system to the town goes ahead. |

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| | <p data-bbox="571 266 971 300">Pyramid Hill Tennis and Bowls</p> <p data-bbox="571 338 1067 371"><u>High priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul data-bbox="571 409 1380 1283" style="list-style-type: none"> - develop a water allocation agreement for key sports facilities during restriction periods - implement a formal water use monitoring and annual reporting process - set up an agreement with Loddon Shire to access a set volume of water from the Loddon Shire's Pyramid Hill-Boort Irrigation water share - develop two synthetic tennis courts with lights to reduce water usage and to provide year round tennis opportunities for the community and also install an in-ground irrigation system on the tennis courts to eliminate the need for flood irrigation and to more effectively irrigate the tennis courts - install a fence near the channel to prevent children from falling into the water; between the playground and the fire training track; and between the playground and the main road - erect signage from main road to direct people to the tennis courts - plant trees on the western side of the tennis / swimming pavilion to help keep players and the pavilion cooler and to provide additional shade in the car park - purchase a new motorised spraying machine to more effectively maintain the bowls greens - upgrade the bowls pavilion kitchen by installing a new oven and relocating the hand basin; and also installing new carpet throughout the pavilion. <p data-bbox="571 1321 1112 1355"><u>Medium priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul data-bbox="571 1393 1345 1637" style="list-style-type: none"> - upgrade play equipment to ensure provision for younger and middle age groups - undertake additional planting and landscaping around the tennis area, particularly at either end of the complex once the end tennis courts have been removed - install lighting at the Bowls Club to allow night time training, competitions and events. <p data-bbox="571 1675 976 1709">Serpentine Recreation Reserve</p> <p data-bbox="571 1747 1064 1780"><u>High priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul data-bbox="571 1818 1372 2020" style="list-style-type: none"> - develop a water allocation agreement for key sports facilities during restriction periods - implement a formal water use monitoring and annual reporting process - upgrade irrigation system so that it is fully automated - purchase and install a storage tank and associated pipe-work to |

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| | <p>connect to the new pipeline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - re-level, laser and resurface sports ground oval to create a more uniform playing surface - replant sports oval with warm season grasses to reduce water use - increase run-off on netball to meet Netball Victoria standards. <p><u>High to medium priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - improve landscaping around the front of the Community Centre and by planting drought tolerant species - install a new playground with a protective barrier or fence - re-route Coliban water tankers from internal road at the Reserve to an alternative / new road when accessing the treatment plant due to potential safety issues and degradation of the internal roads - consider closing off road between netball courts and the Community Centre to increase safety - widen drop off area in front of Community Centre. <p><u>Medium priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - upgrade inefficient water fixtures (toilets and taps) - develop the area behind the netball courts into a native bush land area (known as Pon Pon Reserve), featuring a shared trail with fitness stations around it - increase size of football and netball change rooms, and improve umpire change rooms, the social rooms and canteen facilities. <p>Winzar Recreation Reserve Master Plan (Dingee)</p> <p><u>High priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - develop a water allocation agreement for key sports facilities during restriction periods - implement a formal water use monitoring and annual reporting process - consider purchasing a permanent water allocation - convert one lawn tennis court to hard court to allow for year round multi-purpose use; install lights; and line mark for other sports such as netball and basketball -upgrade lighting on the bowling green. <p><u>High to medium priority recommendation:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to develop the walking track around the reserve to form a self-contained loop from Dingee and link up with Tang Tang Reserve <p><u>Medium priority recommendations include:</u></p> |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - upgrade cricket practice nets - improve condition of cricket wicket and oval - fill in the dam as water will be sourced from a pipeline in the future and a new water storage tank has been installed recently. - level ground around pavilion; repair exterior wall to match new extension; and install carpet in function area - review the adequacy of the tennis courts sprinkler system and replace or upgrade the sprinkler system if required. <p><u>Low priority recommendations include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - share a caretaker with another community to maintain sports facilities - formalise bowls club parking area with pine bollards and install lighting. |
| Loddon Mallee Regional Soccer Strategy | <p>This strategy identifies five major objectives to further develop soccer in the Loddon Mallee region. These objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participation • facility development • club support • competition and player development • profile and promotion <p><u>The strategy identifies the following that are of particular relevance:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participation in junior football (AFL) in the Shire is declining and there is increasing competition between sports such as AFL and hockey for player numbers • there are currently no soccer clubs operating in the Loddon Shire and club establishment should be evaluated in-line with the successful delivery of participation related actions • the Loddon Shire Recreation Strategy recommended the development of alternative sporting opportunities including soccer, with the potential to accommodate indoor soccer programs and activities • FFV believe it would be possible to develop a soccer club in the Loddon Shire through the introduction of development programs and working in conjunction with the BASL • Council should ensure that any future upgrades or improvements to Council reserves considers the provision of flat, unfenced and accessible spaces suitable for social and casual soccer. |
| Loddon Mallee Regionally Significant Trails Strategy | <p>The purpose of the Loddon Mallee Regionally Significant Trails Strategic Plan is to provide a clear framework to guide the Loddon Mallee Regional Manager's Forum; the Loddon Mallee Trails Network; individual Local Government Authorities; Department of Sustainability and Environment; Parks Victoria; and individual trail management groups in relation to the development of regional cycling, walking, mountain biking, horse riding and canoeing / kayaking trails throughout the Loddon Mallee region of</p> |

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| | <p>Victoria.</p> <p>Of particular relevance is Captain Melville's Trail (Bridgewater-on-Loddon, Inglewood, Kingower, and Melville Caves) and the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the social and community benefits of the trail: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local residents will have access to new trails in their towns, which will bring in economic benefits from other trail users and provide an additional recreation facility for local residents. Community strengthening is possible through formation of management committees and working bees • the trail is likely to be a regionally significant trail. <p><u>The following opportunities and challenges for the trail are of particular relevance:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - linking trail related activities to annual local events (such as food and wine festivals) will improve awareness and use of the trail - the development of packages and some innovative marketing and interpretation (i.e. indigenous and bushranger history) and the naming of the trail to reflect its bushranger past may assist in attracting potential trail users from other parts of the state, and potentially internationally - challenges include accessing public transport and distance to metropolitan areas. It also does not link with other major trails - there is an opportunity to develop canoe trails, rock climbing and horse riding which would further enhance the reputation of the trail. |
| <p>AFL Victoria: Growing the Heartland: Football Facilities Development Strategy 2014:2020</p> | <p><u>Directions of AFL Victoria include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • need to adhere to AFL preferred Facilities Guidelines • consider development of two or multi-oval sites (as many single oval sites already exceed the 20-25 hours of use per week that a natural turf oval can sustain) • conversion to warm season grasses • consider installation of synthetic grass ovals • installation of lighting to a minimum of 50 lux for training and ideally 150+ lux for strategically located football venues • appropriate facility design to ensure change rooms for female players and umpires, suitable function space, universal design and ESD principles • creation of regional administration centres and hubs. |
| <p>Australian Institute of Sport Strategic Plan: 2014-2015</p> | <p>The Australian Sports Commission produced the AIS Strategic Plan 2011-2012, 2014-2015. This plan outlines four main goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased participation in sport • increased international success |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sustainable Sport • enhanced Australian Sports Commission capability to lead, partner and support. <p>In the process of its review of Australian sport, the Independent Sport Panel considered input from meetings and submissions involving more than 650 organisations and individuals. This input was consolidated into eight fundamental issues which the Panel considered needed to be addressed. Of particular relevance are the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • addressing community sport infrastructure — people and places. The Panel identified that the infrastructure of community sport — made up of both volunteers and facilities — was under threat, with no coherent approach to building community sports and the physical facilities they need • ensuring Australia’s sport sector is open to all. The Panel noted that there were groups within the community that had not participated in sport and highlighted the importance of understanding and removing existing barriers to participation through the creation of inclusive environments where participation could grow • sustaining the funding base for sport. The Panel highlighted stakeholder calls for increased funding of sport and better coordination of the funds available, recognising that there was significant capacity for improved harmonisation and allocation of government funds between agencies and levels of government. |
| <p>Australian Sports Commission and CSIRO (2013) The Future of Australian Sport – Megatrends shaping the sports sector over coming decades</p> | <p>The Australian Sports Commission (ASC), in partnership with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Centre (CSIRO) have undertaken research which identifies six key megatrends that may redefine and impact the makeup of sport over the next 30 years. These six megatrends are:</p> <p>A Perfect Fit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participation rates in individualised sport and recreation activities such as walking, cycling, aerobics, running and gym memberships has increased sharply • participation rates in many organised sports has remained steady or declined • people are less likely to commit to regular organised sporting events • people are reporting that they are increasingly busy and have time-fragmented lifestyles • expenditure on health care has risen and is forecast to continue to rise, as a result of people becoming more health conscious • people are “increasingly playing sport to get fit rather than getting fit to play sport.” <p>From Extreme to Mainstream</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lifestyle, adventure and alternative sports (such as mountain bike |

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| | <p>riding, skateboarding, rock climbing, etc.) are increasing in popularity, particularly with younger people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is a “strong lifestyle element and participants often obtain cultural self-identity and self-expression through these sports” • these sports may involve a sense of danger or thrill seeking and generally require participants to develop complex and advanced skills • these sports are heavily promoted online via YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and other forms of social media, and there is strong demand for watching such sports on TV and on the internet. <p>More than Sport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is increasing recognition that sport can provide a range of benefits such as improved physical and mental health, lower rates of obesity, lower levels of chronic illness, improved social inclusion, reduced crime rates, positive relationships with other countries. <p>Everybody’s Game</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is a need to provide appropriate sporting opportunities for all sectors of society including older adults and different cultural groups. <p>New Wealth, New Talent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the growth of population and income levels in Asia may create stronger competition in the sports arena as skill levels of athletes improves due to much higher levels of investment in sporting outcomes, but at the same time provide business opportunities for Australia in relation to sports related television, tourism, equipment, services and events. <p>Tracksuits to Business Suits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sport has become increasingly commercialised with some elite athletes earning high wages for playing, in addition to very attractive sponsorship deals • sports that offer large financial returns to players may draw these players away from other sports with less attractive conditions • in time, due to market pressures, many community based sports associations or clubs may be replaced by organisations that operate more like the private sector, i.e. with corporate structures and more formal governance systems • the cost of participating in sport continues to rise and is a barrier to participation for many people. <p>Impact of Megatrends</p> <p>The impact of each of these megatrends needs to be carefully considered when planning for the future of sport and recreation in Loddon Shire. Of particular relevance is the need to consider how the Shire can provide for individualised sports (such as personal training), extreme sports (such as parcour) and opportunities for older adults and multi-cultural groups (such as master level sports, social sports, cycling / walking paths or</p> |

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| | <p>community gardens). Pricing structures will need to be carefully considered so that sports do not 'out-price' themselves from the market, and governance structures will need to lead towards more of a business model, in line with industry trends. Council's role in this regard is to keep clubs informed of megatrends and how they can respond to them.</p> <p>Source: http://www.ausport.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0019/523450/The Future of Australian Sport - Full Report.pdf</p> |

3 Previous Recreation Strategy review

| Recommendations | Achieved? | Comments |
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| Actions Rated as priority 1 (to be implemented in years 1 – 3) | | |
| 1. Recognising the Benefits of All Types of Recreation Action: Acknowledge, support and promote the importance and benefits of both 'structured' (e.g. sport) and 'unstructured' (e.g. walking) recreation | ✓ | Ongoing |
| 2. Sustainability of Sport and Recreation in Loddon Action: Maximise the sustainability of existing sports across the Shire. | ✓ x | Drought Proofing Strategy and Master Plans will help to achieve this. No club development activities have yet occurred. |
| 9. Volunteer Support Program Action: Facilitate the development of a Volunteer Support Program for recreation clubs and organisations as part of an overall (cross service areas/regional) program. | x | Priority of the recent unit has been more on development of facilities in recent years. Need to develop a volunteer management plan. |
| 10. Volunteer Support Manual Action: Develop a Volunteer Support Manual that can be progressively added to/developed over time (roles, responsibilities, contacts, relevant Council policies etc.) | x | Have utilised existing manuals from other organisations |
| 24. Infrastructure Database and Audit Action: Prepare an integrated data base for recreation and social infrastructure that includes: - a full listing of all assets from which groups operate including those that are on land that is owned and or managed by other agencies (e.g. DSE reserves); - condition status and expected lifespan; - costs associated with compliance e.g. legislation, standards, policy); - usage numbers and frequency of use. | x | Still to do. Some information available in existing strategies. |
| 25. Infrastructure Development and Funding Policy Action: Prepare an Infrastructure Development and Funding Policy that provides the basis for future infrastructure funding. Policy should: - consider different asset types e.g. sport, tourism; - have a high priority for developments that deliver a range of benefits e.g. economic, social; - determine the level to which different infrastructure may be funded e.g. 20% for projects that achieve integration/rationalisation of buildings. | ✓ | |

| Recommendations | Achieved? | Comments |
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| <p>26. Infrastructure Upgrade</p> <p>Action: Identify an annual budget allocation for the upgrade/renewal/replacement of recreation infrastructure that addressed the priorities established in the asset and usage audit.</p> | ✓ | On a project by project basis |
| <p>28. Referral of New and Upgraded Assets to the Asset Database</p> <p>Action: Develop and formalise a process to ensure that all new and upgraded assets are referred to the asset database.</p> | ✓ | |
| <p>29. Referral of Building Applications by Sport And Recreation Groups</p> <p>Action: Develop and formalise a process to ensure that sport and recreation building applications: - are referred to relevant departments for comment; and - comply with Council policy relating to standards, compliance, amenity provision, consolidation etc.</p> | ✓ | |
| <p>30. Risk Management</p> <p>Action: Work with clubs and organisations (operating on both Council and non-Council owned land) to ensure that appropriate risk management protocols are in place.</p> | ✓ | Instruments of delegation. Change of season checks. Game day checks. |
| <p>33. Compliance of Recreation and Community Social Infrastructure</p> <p>Action: Develop a process for maximising compliance of all recreation infrastructure to relevant legislation and guidelines.</p> | ✓ | Building assessment. Netball court report. |
| <p>34. Access to Indoor School Facilities</p> <p>Action: Identify opportunities to increase use of school facilities for indoor recreation / sporting activities. Consideration should be given to: - demand for existing activities; - short-term and longer term strategies e.g. short-term = floor upgrade, longer term = expansion and upgrade of amenities; - opportunities to introduce new sports, including those that do not rely on large team / club numbers e.g. badminton; - opportunities for improving amenity (presentation, access to 'social' / tea rooms); - opportunities to support participation</p> | ✓ | Boort is the only community centre to have done this. New recreation strategy needs to have a greater emphasis on programming. |

| Recommendations | Achieved? | Comments |
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| e.g. childcare at Neighbourhood Houses / Family Day Care; - daytime activities e.g. women's programs; and - combining a number of recreation and health and wellbeing opportunities at the site. | | |
| 35. Bridgewater Lawn Bowls and Golf Clubs Action: Actively support the co-location of the Bridgewater Lawn Bowls Club and Golf Club and maximise opportunities for the redevelopment to address other community recreation/social infrastructure needs. | x | Not sufficient support to follow up. |
| 37. Swimming Pools Action: Implement the 10 year program of works to maximise the lifecycle and use of community pools. | ✓ | |
| 39. Public Toilets (Cleaning and maintenance) Action: Review cleaning and maintenance regimes to ensure consistency across the Shire. | ✓ | |
| 40. Senior Citizens Centres and Public Halls Action: Maximise access to Senior Citizens Centres and Public Halls for the whole community. | ✓ | |
| 47. Loddon River Action: Ensure that economic development opportunities associated with recreation access to the Loddon River are not jeopardised by current state and federal government negotiations relating to the River system. | x | Action was irrelevant, as this did not emerge as an issue. |
| 49. Maintenance of Waterways Action: Advocate to water management agencies to ensure that water systems are well maintained. | x | Not the responsibility of the recreation unit. |
| 50. Responsible Use of Water Action: Work with clubs and organisations to identify priorities in relation to responsible water management practices and systems and opportunities to address these. | ✓ | Drought proofing plans have been developed. |
| 51. Operational and Policy Statements for Recreation Action: Review all operational procedures and | ✓ | Have reviewed grants system, allocations, Section 86 and Council's |

| Recommendations | Achieved? | Comments |
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| policies (formal and informal) to ensure that they reflect the principles documented in the Recreation Strategy. | | strategic plan. |
| <p>52. Recreation Strategy Implementation and Review Group</p> <p>Action: Establish a cross functional team to oversee the implementation of the Recreation Strategy.</p> | ✓ | |
| <p>54. Reserve Master Planning</p> <p>Action: Review Reserve Master Plan proformas to ensure that they reflect the principles and priorities identified in the Recreation Strategy e.g. consolidation of buildings. Creation of community hubs, integration with township planning, compliance with contribution policies, referral and consultation requirements.</p> | ✓ | |
| <p>55. Manager of Recreation and Community Development</p> <p>Action: Review workload and position description of this position to ensure there is the capacity to implement the Recreation Strategy and to ensure that the position reflects the requirements of the Strategy.</p> | ✓ | |
| <p>56. Appointment of a Recreation Development Co-ordinator</p> <p>Action: Appoint a Recreation Development Co-ordinator.</p> | ✓ | New position was created. |
| <p>57. Halls and Reserves</p> <p>Action: Review the Halls and Reserves Allocation Policy in relation to level of annual allocation to clubs.</p> | ✓ | Undertaken annually |
| <p>58. Charitable Trust</p> <p>Action: Identify opportunities to establish a Charitable Trust involving financial contributions from the corporate sector, benefactors and donors for the resourcing of community projects.</p> | X ✓ | Encourage clubs and organisations to use Australian Sports Foundation (ASF). Council is registered with ASF. |
| <p>59. Consistent Club and Organisation Support Protocols</p> | ✓ | Developed |

| Recommendations | Achieved? | Comments |
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| Action: Develop a policy that clearly articulates consistent service and support levels to community groups/organisations. | | |
| 63. Programming Opportunities at Local Schools Action: Continue discussions with the YMCA to investigate opportunities for increasing programming of community (including school) facilities. | ✓ | A range of events are held, e.g. FFreeZA, Cool Schools, street art, movie making. |
| Actions rated as 'PRIORITY 2'. (Actions Identified for implementation in years 4-6) | | |
| 1. Encouragement of Alternative Sports Action: Support the development of alternative (indoor and outdoor) sporting opportunities e.g. soccer, badminton. | ✓ | Soccer strategy identified no interest in soccer. There has been interest in community gyms, walking, canoeing and mountain bike riding through trail development. |
| 5. Gymnasium Facilities Action: Work with local communities to investigate opportunities to establish sustainable gymnasium facilities at appropriate locations. | ✓ | Community gyms have been established in Wedderburn and Bort. |
| 6. Fitness/Exercise Programs Action: Actively encourage the establishment and promotion of exercise programs/classes for a range of age groups e.g. gentle exercise for older adults, youth fitness programs. | ✓ | Loddon Shire Council and Inglewood Community Health have developed a strength training program. |
| 7. Arts Hub Action: Identify the feasibility of establishing an 'arts hub' in Wedderburn. | ✓ | Loddon Arts has been established in Wedderburn. |
| 15. Active After School Programs Action: Work with schools and local clubs/organisations to identify opportunities for increasing the number of schools involved in the 'Active After Schools' program. | x | This initiative has not yet been investigated. |
| 17. Young People Action: Implement the recommendations of the 2003 (Youth) Recreation/Skate Strategy. | ✓ | |
| 18. Young People and Information | ✓ | |

| Recommendations | Achieved? | Comments |
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| Action: Increase community awareness of young people's recreation choices. | | |
| <p>21. Council Web Site Information (Short Term)</p> <p>Action: Examine opportunities for Council's website to: - more effectively promote recreation opportunities and provide information to clubs and organisations. - expand and upgrade information relating to visitor opportunities, and develop brochures that can be downloaded.</p> | ✓ | |
| <p>27. Review of the Recreation Infrastructure Works Program</p> <p>Action: Review the Program of Works for Recreation and Sport Infrastructure based on the Infrastructure Development and Funding Policy criteria.</p> | ✓ | |
| <p>31. Park, Reserve and Township Furniture Standards</p> <p>Action: Prepare a Shire wide policy for park and township furniture (including seating; lighting, security and boundary fencing; shelters etc.) that: - establishes a theme across the Shire or within townships; - is durable; - reflects community standards, aspirations and pride.</p> | ✓ | The infrastructure unit has prepared a policy around parks, reserves and township furniture standards. Council has a signage template for pools and trails. |
| <p>32. Building and Amenity Standards</p> <p>Action: Prepare a policy for sport and recreation infrastructure that: - specifies building design standards; - specifies standards relating to 'finish'; - considers impacts (streetscape, environmental, site); - requires integration with open space and neighbourhood amenity or theme (or opportunity to establish these); - requires compliance with relevant legislation and guidelines.</p> | ✓ | This is incorporated in Council's Building Asset Management Plan. Streetscape plans are currently being prepared. |
| <p>42. Integrated Trail and Footpath Strategies</p> <p>Action: Facilitate the preparation of township based plans for the development and implementation of integrated trail and footpath networks. Plans should: - be based on proformas that are consistent between townships; - identify a hierarchy of trails (h, m, l); - include recommendations for infrastructure e.g. seating, signage; - be consistent between townships; and - identify opportunities for linkages to regional and inter township trails.</p> | ✓ | Incorporated in Loddon Shire's Tracks and Trails Strategy. |

| Recommendations | Achieved? | Comments |
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| 44. Park and Open Space Maintenance Standards Action: Review park provision and maintenance protocols and standards to ensure consistency, and opportunities to increase standards of provision. | ✓ | Park and open space maintenance is the responsibility of the infrastructure unit. Recreation unit is currently reviewing playgrounds. |
| 45. Township Beautification (Landscaping and Plantings) Action: Identify opportunities to support township groups undertaking amenity improvement works through landscaping and tree planting | ✓ | Township beautification works have been identified through community plans and streetscape plan. |
| 53. Council and community planning Action: Develop a framework and relevant processes to ensure all Council and community planning projects are well integrated and appropriately resourced. | ✓ | |
| 61. Recreation Tourism Action: Identify opportunities to support the growth of the recreation-based tourism sector in the Shire | ✓ | A partnership exists with the Nature Tourism Advisory Committee and Council's tourism manager. |
| Actions rated as 'PRIORITY 3'. (Actions Identified for implementation in years 7-10) | | |
| 2. Healthy Lifestyle Groups Action: Support the establishment and promotion of 'healthy lifestyle' activity groups e.g. 'mums and prams' walking groups, 'walk and coffee' groups. | ✓ | Incorporated into Healthy Minds Network Strategic Plan and the Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan. |
| 8. Support to Arts and Cultural Activities Action: Identify and encourage opportunities to increase the profile of community and professional arts and expand participation opportunities. | ✓ | Loddon Arts has been established. Sculpture work in Boort. Street art with young people. |
| 11. 'Models'/Examples of 'Good Practice' Action: Develop models/examples of good practice that can assist clubs/organisations develop their sport/activity e.g. funding submissions, program initiatives. | ✓ | Clubs and organisations are provided with some assistance to write funding applications and are referred to Sports Focus for additional assistance. |
| 12. Young People and Volunteering Action: Encourage initiatives that engage young people in volunteering. | ✓ | Council is currently establishing a youth council and has a partnership with the |

| Recommendations | Achieved? | Comments |
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| | | Bendigo Young Professionals Network. FReeZA events offer opportunities for young people to be involved in volunteering. |
| <p>13. Travelling Volunteer Program</p> <p>Action: Investigate community interest and opportunities to establish a program that encourages people from outside the shire to volunteer with local community based projects. (Consider establishing as an industry model).</p> | <p>✓</p> <p>x</p> | <p>Most people from football clubs already come from outside the Shire and volunteer within the Shire. A greater focus on volunteerism needs to be made in the new Recreation Strategy.</p> |
| <p>14. Inter Club Management Co-operatives</p> <p>Action: Actively work with clubs/organisations to identify opportunities for clubs to develop integrated and co- operative management structures.</p> | <p>x</p> | <p>This needs to be addressed in the new strategy.</p> |
| <p>16. Community Houses</p> <p>Action: Work with Committees to maximise provision and promotion of recreation opportunities provide through Community Houses.</p> | <p>x</p> | <p>Need to identify community houses in new strategy as a key partner in relation to provision of recreational programs.</p> |
| <p>19. Increased Participation by 'Isolated Groups'</p> <p>Action: Recognise and support initiatives that encourage participation by people that are 'isolated in the community' (e.g. financially, physically).</p> | <p>✓</p> <p>x</p> | <p>Senior Citizens pick people up by bus and take them on trips, have card days, etc. Need to work with Filipino community in Pyramid Hill.</p> |
| <p>20. Holiday Programs</p> <p>Action: Facilitate discussions between local and regional agencies/organisations to expand the range of Holiday Program opportunities and promote activities.</p> | <p>x</p> | <p>Need to have better partnerships with schools and provide more programs for young people during school holidays.</p> |
| <p>22. Council Website Expansion</p> <p>Action: Seek funding to investigate the cost and requirements for hosting an interactive component of Council's website that allows clubs/organisations to update contact information and opportunity</p> | <p>✓</p> | |

| Recommendations | Achieved? | Comments |
|--|-----------|---|
| details. (Funding application would be on the basis that the outcomes would be a model that can be replicated by the industry). | | |
| 23. Website for Young People Action: Investigate community interest in establishing a 'Loddon Young Peoples' website. | x | Will be addressed through the youth council. |
| 36. Tennis Facilities Action: Identify and support opportunities for Tennis Clubs to develop integrated facilities that consider provision of infrastructure across 'districts' (hard courts, lighting) that increases participation and reduces operational costs (e.g. water, court maintenance). | ✓ | Incorporated in the Climate Proofing Sports Grounds Strategy. Smaller clubs are now playing at Pyramid Hill tennis courts, rather than playing at their own courts. |
| 38. Public Toilets (Provision and amenity) Action: Complete an audit of toilet facilities and develop a plan for upgrading, rationalising, co-locating with other facilities and/or relocating toilets facilities. (As part of assets audit) | ✓ | |
| 43. Play spaces Action: Prepare a plan for the provision of quality play spaces for ages 4-13. | ✓ | Recreation unit is currently undertaking this task. |
| 46. Access to Waterways and Water bodies Action: Prepare a strategy that identifies recreation and related tourism opportunities associated with the Loddon River and other water bodies. | ✓ | This is being addressed through the Nature Tourism Advisory Committee and through Council's tourism unit. |
| 48. Access to Water Action: Identify opportunities for innovative water access, storage and usage strategies to maximise access to water for recreation and open space purposes. | ✓ | This also needs to be a focus of the new Recreation Strategy. |
| 60. Camping Grounds and Caravan Parks Action: Prepare a strategy to maximise opportunities and improve amenity relating to caravan and camping grounds/areas. | ✓ | |
| 62. Small Business Development Initiatives | x | This needs to be a focus of the new recreation |

| Recommendations | Achieved? | Comments |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| Action: Support private providers/small business initiatives that aim at addressing service gaps in the recreation sector e.g. fitness instructors, child 'play therapists', gentle exercise for older adults. | | strategy. |

4 Audit of sport and recreation facilities

The following table lists the sport and recreation facilities available in major towns and settlements in Loddon Shire. It does not include facilities such as single tennis courts located in smaller areas, or facilities such as playgrounds, halls, indoor sports facilities, community gyms, cycling / walking tracks, pony clubs or shooting clubs.

| Town | Facilities |
|--------------|--|
| Bears Lagoon | <p><u>Tennis Complex</u> The Centre is located on DSE land and managed by a DSE appointed committee of management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 grass tennis courts • Pavilion • Toilet block • Tank • Rebound wall • Seating • Playground • Sprinkler system |
| Boort | <p><u>Bowls, Croquet and Tennis Complexes</u> The Complexes are located on Crown Land and are managed by a DSE appointed Committee of Management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 lawn bowls rinks with lights • Bowls pavilion • Bowls storage shed • Bowls seats and shelters • 3 water tanks • 3 lawn croquet courts with lights • Basic croquet club house • Croquet storage shed • Croquet toilet block • Croquet seats and shelters • 14 lawn tennis courts • Tennis pavilion <p><u>Recreation Reserve</u></p> <p>The Centre is located on land owned and managed by Loddon Shire Council.</p> <p>Turf sports oval with turf cricket pitch with fully automatic irrigation system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoreboard / time keeper's box • Coaches boxes • Player shelters • Portable grandstand • Training level lights on sports oval • Ticket box • Turf hockey field |

| Town | Facilities |
|-------------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hockey storage shed • 2 netball courts (one with lights) and one warm-up 1/3 court • Netball shelters • Storage shed • Pavilion with change rooms, social rooms, kitchen, bar, toilets and secretary's office • Public toilets • Harness racing track • Steward's towers • Harness racing sheds • Cricket nets • Playground • Boort Historical Society Machinery Shed • Boort Agricultural Show sheds <p><u>Swimming Pool</u></p> |
| Bridgewater | <p><u>Bowls Club</u> Privately owned by the bowls club</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 lawn bowling rinks • club house featuring a kitchen, bar, social facility / meeting area • external toilets • storage shed • water storage tanks • shelters with seats <p><u>Recreation Reserve</u> Crown land, managed by a Committee of Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turf sports oval with synthetic cricket wicket and two lights • 2 shared flexi pave netball / tennis courts with lights • 2 flexi pave tennis courts • Cricket practice nets • Shared pavilion with water tank • Playground • Public toilets • 12,000 litre water storage tank • Scoreboard / scoring box <p><u>Swimming hole (Loddon River)</u></p> |
| Calivil | <p><u>Recreation Reserve</u> The Centre is located on Crown Land and managed by a DSE appointed Committee of Management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turf sports oval with training lights • Turf cricket pitch |

| Town | Facilities |
|------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoreboard • Timekeeper's box • Coaches boxes • Ticket box • Cricket practice nets • Pavilion shared by football, cricket and netball • Change rooms with public toilets attached, shared by football, cricket and netball • 2 netball courts with shelters • Tennis courts • Tennis club room • Bowling greens • Pavilion shared by bowls and East Loddon Senior Citizens Club • Playground • Dam • Water tanks • Car parking and internal roadways • Golf course |
| Dingee | <p><u>Recreation Reserve</u> The Reserve is located on DSE land and managed by a DSE appointed Committee of Management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 lawn bowling rinks • Shared pavilion • Tennis club rooms • 8 lawn tennis courts • Tennis court shelter • Tennis rebound wall • Sports oval with lights • Cricket practice net • Cricket club rooms • Public toilets • BBQ/picnic facilities • Pump shed • 3 water tanks • Dam • Playground • 3 Storage sheds • Car parking • Internal roads • Walking track |
| Inglewood | <p><u>Bowls Club</u> The Centre is located on Council owned land and managed by a Sect 86</p> |

| Town | Facilities |
|-------------|---|
| | <p>Committee of Management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 lawn bowling rinks with lights and automatic sprinklers • Club house with social area, kitchen, bar, toilets and ramped entrance • Storage sheds • Water storage tanks <p><u>Recreation Reserve</u> The Reserve is located on Loddon Shire Council owned land and managed by a Committee of Management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turf sports oval • Training lights for oval • Cricket practice nets • Storage shed • Coaches boxes • Scoreboard • Water tanks • Ticket box • 2 netball courts • Netball court shelter • 6 lawn tennis courts • Tennis court pavilion • Tennis court shelter • Playground and picnic area • Public toilets <p><u>Golf course</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 hole golf course • Pavilion <p><u>Swimming pool</u></p> |
| Korong Vale | <p><u>Recreation Reserve</u> The Reserve is located on Loddon Shire owned land and managed by a Sect 86 Committee of Management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 lawn tennis courts • Tennis court storage shed • Tennis court shelter • 8 lawn bowling rinks with lights • Bowls green seating • 2 water tanks • Shared pavilion • Sports oval (unused) • 2 netball courts (unused) • Playground • Car parking • Internal roads |

| Town | Facilities |
|------------------|--|
| Mitiamo | <p><u>Recreation Reserve</u> The Reserve is located on Loddon Shire owned land and managed by a Committee of Management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 lawn tennis courts • Tennis court shelter / storage shed • Pump shed • 4 water tanks • Dam (nearby) • 2 netball courts (one asphalt and one concrete) with lights • 2 netball shelters • Playground • Storage container • Ticket box • Football change room • Football / Netball pavilion • Coaches box • Timekeeper's box • Football shelters • Score board • Legend's Bar (point of sale bar and BBQ) • Car parking • Sports oval with lights • Internal roads • Cricket pitch (unused) <p><u>Golf course</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 hole golf course • Pavilion <p><u>Swimming pool</u></p> |
| Newbridge | <p><u>Recreation Reserve</u> The Centre is located on Crown Land and is managed by a DSE appointed Committee of Management. The Committee of management has license agreements with all user groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports oval • Sports oval training lights • Turf cricket wicket • Cricket practice net • Scoreboard • 2 Coaches boxes • Scorer's box • Storage shed • Administration office • Pavilion with change facilities for footballers, cricketers, |

| Town | Facilities |
|----------------------------|---|
| | <p>netballers an umpires, kitchen and kiosk and an outdoor sheltered viewing area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Netball courts • Netball court training lights • Netball court shelters • 4 Tennis courts • Tennis court pavilion • Playground • Picnic tables • Public toilets • Camping area |
| <p>Pyramid Hill</p> | <p><u>Recreation Reserve (Mitchell Park)</u> The reserve is located on Crown Land and managed by a DSE appointed Committee of Management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 sports oval with training lights • 1 shared pavilion with change facilities • Scoreboard • Coaches boxes • Ticket box • 2 netball courts • Netball shelters • Playground • Public toilets (2 blocks) • Old Machinery Club sheds <p><u>Bowls and Tennis Centre</u> The Centre is located on Crown Land and managed by a DSE appointed Committee of Management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 15 lawn tennis courts • Tennis pavilion (shared with the swimming pool) • Tennis storage shed (old pavilion) • Sand pit • Garden beds • 16 lawn bowling rinks • Bowls pavilion • Bowls storage sheds • Bowls shelters • Car parking <p><u>Swimming Pool</u></p> |
| <p>Serpentine</p> | <p><u>Recreation Reserve</u> The Reserve is located on Crown land and managed by a DSE Committee of Management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turf sports oval with lights |

| Town | Facilities |
|-------------------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoreboard • Ticket box • Time keeper's box • Shelter for football players • 2 asphalt netball courts • Shelters for netballers • Seats for netballers • Netball storage shed • Community centre with social area and change rooms for football and netball as well as a water tank • Separate social facility • Cricket nets • Public toilet block • Playground • Internal roads and car parking <p><u>Bowls and Tennis Complex</u> The Complex is located on Council Land and is managed by a Section 86 Committee of Management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 lawn bowling rinks • Shared clubhouse with 2 water tanks and an old toilet block alongside it • Bowls shelters and seats • Bowls storage shed • 5 lawn tennis courts • Tennis shelters with seats • Tennis shed with tank |
| Wedderburn | <p><u>Market Square Reserve (Cricket)</u> The Reserve is located on land owned by Loddon Shire and managed by a Sect 86 Committee of Management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports oval • 2 cricket practice nets • Pavilion used by cricket club • 2 sheds used by Engine Club • 1 shed used by Men's Shed Program • Public toilet block • Playground <p><u>Donaldson Park Recreation Reserve</u> The land on which Donaldson Park is located on is owned by Loddon Shire and the site is managed by a Section 86 Committee of Management. Sports oval with lights and scoreboard</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Netball courts with lights (2 asphalt courts – one with synthetic surface) • Hockey field |

| Town | Facilities |
|------|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tennis courts (11 lawn courts) • Bowling Green with lights (12 grass rinks) • Harness Racing Track • Football Netball Pavilion • Tennis / Bowls Pavilion • Hockey Shed • Harness Racing Pavilion • Harness Racing Tower • Horse stalls • Playground • Public toilets • Car parking and internal roads • Water tanks • Storage sheds • Shelters <p><u>Swimming pool</u></p> |

5 Community consultation

5.1 Club survey – individual responses

The five key questions asked were:

Q1. What does your club/ organisation do well?

Q2. Are there any particular trends that you have noticed in recent years which are having an impact on your sport / activities or sport and recreation in general in Loddon Shire? If so, what are these trends, and what is the impact?

Q3. What are the three key challenges facing your club / organisation at present? What impact do these challenges have, or could have, if not addressed?

Q4. Do you have any ideas on how to address these key challenges? If so, what are your ideas or solutions?

Q5. Do you have anything else that you would like to add about sport and recreation in Loddon Shire?

| Club Survey for Sport and Recreation – Loddon Shire | | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|---|--|
| Organisation | Q1. What does your club/ organisation do well? | Q2. Trends you have noticed | Q3 The three key challenges facing your club / organisation? | Q4 Ideas /solutions to address challenges | Q5. Other comments |
| Pyramid Hill Golf Club | - Great attendance at our Annual Tournament. - All other functions we run are also successful. | - Aging population of Pyramid Hill and surrounds. - We have more middle aged and older aged members. Not a lot of young ones. | - Limited numbers of members to maintain our course especially with our old machinery. - Sub-standard playing condition, less attendees at a club and tournament level. | - We require more appropriate equipment and machinery, so as to cut down on our volunteer workload. | - Have an up to date sporting calendar on the Loddon Shire website. One that is well maintained. |
| Boort Hockey Club | - Our organisation is a thriving club that has approximately 80 members. - We have a healthy membership, have worked hard to improve our | - Many clubs are finding that the community volunteer base is shrinking and finding appropriate people to organise and run clubs can at times be a challenge. This will impact | - League amalgamation. Other leagues do not have hockey. - Impending demise of numbers in smaller towns. | Unfortunately the league decision is out of our hands. We have very little influence or say. | I feel Boort has excellent sport and recreation facilities run by efficient, passionate and hardworking individuals. |

Club Survey for Sport and Recreation – Loddon Shire

| Organisation | Q1. What does your club/ organisation do well? | Q2. Trends you have noticed | Q3 The three key challenges facing your club / organisation? | Q4 Ideas /solutions to address challenges | Q5. Other comments |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|--|---|---|
| | <p>facilities and have a dedicated band of volunteers and members. We pride ourselves on being a club that is inclusive of all that are interested and aim to facilitate an organisation where individuals and families can play hockey and socialise in a safe and friendly environment.</p> | <p>on the continued success of clubs is not a concern for Boort HC at the moment.</p> | | | |
| Wedderburn Band Cricket Club | <p>- We provide a safe environment to play cricket, with very good facilities for training. Air-conditioned club rooms and we give our cricketers and the other teams a chance to play cricket on a very good turf pitch. The only turf in the association.</p> | <p>- The number of teams in our association are declining because teams are lacking numbers, both seniors and juniors. The impact may well see the end of the Upper Loddon Cricket Association. - Water supplies lowering each year, not allowing us to water the market square (our cricket oval) as we would like.</p> | <p>- Lack of water. - Upper Loddon Cricket Association numbers, club numbers, teams. - Raising funds to pay for water, power, equipment. (Coliban Water sewerage charges).</p> | <p>- We need access to untreated water (cheaper water).</p> | |
| Serpentine Bowls Club | <p>- As a volunteer group we run a small but successful bowls club, having conducted tournaments</p> | <p>- Membership numbers are decreasing due to lack of population, ageing population.</p> | <p>- Membership numbers. - Age of members. - Small town trying to support tennis, bowls,</p> | <p>- We need more involvement by younger people.</p> | <p>- Loddon Shire has been very good in support of grants etc. in the past.</p> |

Club Survey for Sport and Recreation – Loddon Shire

| Organisation | Q1. What does your club/ organisation do well? | Q2. Trends you have noticed | Q3 The three key challenges facing your club / organisation? | Q4 Ideas /solutions to address challenges | Q5. Other comments |
|--|---|--|--|--|---|
| | that attract visitors from across the Shire and beyond. | - Costs of maintenance of greens, super machinery, etc. are all going up. | football, etc. not enough to go around. | | |
| Dunolly and District Field and Game Club Inc. | - We run simulated field clay target shoots and come try days, fox drives and other pest eradication programmes in conjunction with Parks Victoria and local landholders. | Convenience. Members – they only use us as a reason for obtaining their shooter licence. Increasing costs of ammunition and expenses for running a shoot. Also the ignorance of the anti-firearm/ hunting lobby. | No permanent tenure of shooting ground. Maintenance of infrastructure and equipment. | Purchase of own land would ease the situation. Giving us more stability of a permanent home. | Not enough info regarding locations of sporting venues in shire, e.g. oval names given out but no indication of their street address. |
| Inglewood Community Sport Centre | We provide the facilities for the various sports played to a good standard. Tennis, footy, netball. | Summer sport probably struggled with numbers. I think because participants put in so much effort to winter sports, usually the same people. | The ever increasing cost of running and maintaining facilities, i.e. power, water. To be competitive at footy lots of money needed. Needs to be a cap on player payments. | Good club admin is essential. Good club culture is essential. Encouragement of participation in all sports. | The Shire are very helpful with grants, without this we would struggle. |
| Bridgewater Water Ski Club | Run water ski tournaments and junior development camps. Maintain a quality competition site. | Impact of the 2011 flood depleted our membership base however we have been able to address this and there has been an increase in interest in our sport and membership numbers over the past 2 years, this is due to the | 1. Sustaining major events. Our major event held in January is currently one of the key events to compete in in Australia. This is due to a considerable effort by our members and assistance by the shire | 1. Continue our effort with working with the Shire and our sponsors. Broaden our range of sponsorship opportunities, engage professional assistance. 2. We can only | Considering the impact of the 2011 floods on our sport in the Loddon shire we have recovered reasonably well. This has been due to a persistence of a few good members and change in direction of |

Club Survey for Sport and Recreation – Loddon Shire

| Organisation | Q1. What does your club/ organisation do well? | Q2. Trends you have noticed | Q3 The three key challenges facing your club / organisation? | Q4 Ideas /solutions to address challenges | Q5. Other comments |
|--------------|--|---|--|---|--|
| | | <p>development of a strategy that has changed direction of the club and is encouraging and promoting a local membership base which includes Bendigo and Echuca.</p> | <p>and some limited sponsorship. If these 3 elements are not maintained and we cannot hold or increase sponsorship opportunities and grants, the quality of the event will be compromised and we may lose the right to run the event. 2. Growth. The limitation of a single site facility does limit the numbers that we can cater for at both a training and competition level. 3. Limited accommodation facilities club house or home. The impact of not having a quality caravan and camping facility has limited participating to members outside any reasonable distance. The change in the shire direction with the caravan park after the</p> | <p>manage the growth to a level to ensure that appropriate usage numbers are maintained, as the facility is what it is and increasing tournament facilities will mean significant investment or encroaching on the social use of the river. 3. We hope that the Shire has provided facilities within the park for the club as promised. We are planning to work with the local bowling club to hold functions.</p> | <p>working with the Shire and the community to embrace us a sport and demonstrate that our club adds value, which will result in increased participation. My only concern is that we will there is a limit on volunteer resources over time and given the size of Bridgewater it has a limited business base that can contribute to all the sporting communities in town making attracting sponsorship to fund activities and events a significant challenge.</p> |

| Club Survey for Sport and Recreation – Loddon Shire | | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| Organisation | Q1. What does your club/ organisation do well? | Q2. Trends you have noticed | Q3 The three key challenges facing your club / organisation? | Q4 Ideas /solutions to address challenges | Q5. Other comments |
| | | | flood, has left us with no storage facilities to house our equipment or conduct club functions. If not addressed, the events that we run will not grow and our membership numbers will fluctuate. | | |
| Korong Vale Bowling Club | Organise and participate in bowls in our town for members and non-members. Our members participate in all district bowling events. | The older generation, because of lack of facilities (medical, hospitals, transport) have moved on. The younger generation have shifted, looking for employment. | We need to find new members. Keep expenses as low as possible. Keep facilities in top condition. Without support, the club will close. | Any ideas we have had, are not working. | A community bus to transport players to pennant would be helpful for bowls and tennis. It would be excellent for general community use. |
| Korong Vale Sports Centre Committee of Management | Oversees the bowling, tennis and cricket clubs as the committee of management. | The clientele which move into our smaller communities are not interested in the community or sport. Most do not socialise in the community and many are on low socio economic incomes, with quite a few children. | - Membership - Members are getting older - The young people move away for work and uni. No one left to run or convene anything. | I do not have any solutions, which we have not already tried. - Free come and try - Free barbecues. | I feel that sport in Loddon Shire is good. Most associations e.g. tennis, football, netball, etc. try to subsidise most junior sports with barbecues, fundraisers to lower the burden on parents, so unless we give everyone something for free, no one will do anything. |
| Calivil United | We offer a good, safe place | Lack of volunteers, money | - Numbers for under 17 | Aligning Clubs with | - Bike safe riding places. |

Club Survey for Sport and Recreation – Loddon Shire

| Organisation | Q1. What does your club/ organisation do well? | Q2. Trends you have noticed | Q3 The three key challenges facing your club / organisation? | Q4 Ideas /solutions to address challenges | Q5. Other comments |
|--|---|--|--|--|--|
| Football and Netball Club | for our community to play sport and socialise in a family environment. | (running costs), paperwork. | teams. If not addressed it could close down many clubs. - Volunteers (lack of). - Money – all these are the downfall. | clubs that have more players and sharing resources. For football, point system would be a great idea (money) player payments. | - Safe designated fishing spots. - Walking tracks. |
| Calivil Rec Reserve Committee of Management (CRRCOM) Calivil Lawn Tennis (CLT) Calivil Netball Club (CNC) | CRRCOM: Great ideas are put into motion. Progress! CLT: Welcomes new participants well. CNC: Encourages locals to be involved in all areas, regardless of fitness levels (i.e. involvement onto committees, fitness, training, helping out). Gets people involved and feeling a part of the club. | CRRCOM/ CLT/CNC: People are less willing to make a 'commitment' to clubs – makes it hard to have a service, stable club/ organisation. Means less people do more work. | CRRCOM: - Older generations still on committee/clubs (which is great) to keep it going. - But young don't want to be involved to take over their role. - People not wanting to commit = Less people doing more work for extended periods = burning out. | Make it very appealing to be involved. - Make it fun. -The 'voluntary' work needs to be less taxing so people <u>want</u> to get involved. | Calivil has great sporting clubs and organisations. We just need to make sure that we attract more people (young!) willing to commit to our organisations. |
| Wedderburn Bowls Club | Provide sporting activity for all ages. | Not as many people travel to tournaments – revenue is down. | - Membership - older members deceased. Not as many new members. - Water – no bowling green, no club. - Aged sport – perception that you have to be over 30 to play bowls. | Water – bowling green – synthetic green. Membership – get younger people involved – schools program. | |

| Club Survey for Sport and Recreation – Loddon Shire | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--|---|
| Organisation | Q1. What does your club/ organisation do well? | Q2. Trends you have noticed | Q3 The three key challenges facing your club / organisation? | Q4 Ideas /solutions to address challenges | Q5. Other comments |
| Bridgewater on Loddon Golf Club | Run golf tournaments. | People are getting older. Younger generation not willing to commit. | Numbers dwindling. Members ageing. | | |
| Pyramid Hill Football and Netball Club | Provide opportunity for many people to participate in both football and netball of all ages, both junior and senior ages. | Introduction of all new netball courts within all clubs in the Loddon Shire. | - Membership numbers. - People prepared to be volunteers. - Financial – money. | - Grant applications. - Fundraising. - Introduction of sport at local school. | Loddon Shire has assisted our club and others in the upgrade of their facilities. |
| Pyramid Hill Bowling Club | - Provide opportunity for people in a wide age bracket to participate in the sport of lawn bowls. - Provide opportunities for the utilisation of the club rooms and facilities for the local community. | An ageing membership. | - Membership. - Lack of youth. - All operations rely on volunteers. | The Club currently involves / encourages youthful participation through the staging of barefoot bowls evenings. Fundraising to support the club functioning and to gain external support. | The Pyramid Hill Bowling Club truly values the assistance of the Shire by grants organised by the Shire. |
| Wedderburn Football Club | We are a successful club which provides a safe and healthy family environment for junior and senior football. We encourage new members on and off the field and make all welcome as best we can. | - Mainly lack of available numbers especially in junior ranks so it is harder to field full teams. - It is hard to attract new volunteers and committee members and administrators thus putting more pressure on the current volunteer | - Our main challenge is to have enough junior players to fill available teams properly and to help with on ground roles such as boundary umpiring and water boys. Players juggling between the different options of sport on the | It is hard to address these challenges. We are losing our community core drivers through age and leaving town. They are being replaced by families who have different priorities and don't | Our sporting facilities / grounds need to be kept as the centrepieces of our towns so that we can provide the largest functioning and local social hub in our communities. Therefore maintenance and upgrading of facilities is |

Club Survey for Sport and Recreation – Loddon Shire

| Organisation | Q1. What does your club/ organisation do well? | Q2. Trends you have noticed | Q3 The three key challenges facing your club / organisation? | Q4 Ideas /solutions to address challenges | Q5. Other comments |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|--|---|
| | | <p>committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Our older membership base is slowly disappearing faster than new members are coming in, meaning less supporters around the club which in turn, means less revenue on game days. | <p>same day is also a challenge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finding core senior recruits that have high sporting and social values which we seek and have come to expect. - Having enough volunteers to run the club and support the committee. <p>All of these have the impact of diminishing all we have worked so hard to achieve.</p> | <p>necessarily require the sporting and social outlet we provide.</p> | <p>essential and not increasing the workload of the 100% volunteer based administrators and committees whilst offering support.</p> |
| <p>Kingower Cricket Club</p> | <p>We are very family focussed, both junior and seniors. We are very inclusive to females wanting to play cricket, especially juniors. We are very inclusive to all abilities wanting to play cricket, both juniors and seniors. No one is turned away. Everyone who want to play gets the opportunity to both</p> | <p>Broken families has been a big issue, where one parent has the child one week and the other parent the next. This may mean children leaving the town or the Shire every second week to visit parents. There doesn't seem a real emphasis from families on continuity in sport. It doesn't seem an issue if the child misses a week</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Families moving away from the Shire to continue schooling or for work. - Broken families and the lack of the need for continuity in a team sport atmosphere. - The lack of support for kids wanting to try-out for a football team such as Pioneers when their cricket team may be in | <p>More respect between the sporting codes, (especially football) as to sporting seasons especially in regards to struggling leagues, whether it be tennis, cricket or other sports. Better educational and employment support within the Loddon Shire to stop</p> | |

Club Survey for Sport and Recreation – Loddon Shire

| Organisation | Q1. What does your club/ organisation do well? | Q2. Trends you have noticed | Q3 The three key challenges facing your club / organisation? | Q4 Ideas /solutions to address challenges | Q5. Other comments |
|---------------------|---|--|---|---|--------------------|
| | <p>juniors and seniors. Being fair rather than achieving results is taught especially in the juniors.</p> | <p>from their sport. It becomes an issue within team dynamics and team numbers, however. Children and young adults don't seem to place a lot of importance on team sports anymore. They don't care if they miss a week or two, or only show up every so often. The 'team' approach is lost on a lot of people. For instance, we had a young man playing in our senior side and it came to semi-final time and he let us know on the Thursday night before the Saturday game that he was going to Sydney to watch 'cage fighting' and couldn't play. This had an impact on structure, but he didn't show much concern. Families moving away from the area is another issue, especially when the children get toward the end of their junior age</p> | <p>finals. They are basically told they either give up their chance for footy or give up their cricket. It is really quite disrespectful for one rich sport/ club to think it is more important than another, which has put its effort in to reaching finals only to have players told they can't play because they have footy tryouts.</p> | <p>families from moving away? How do you do this? I don't know and I'm sure the Shire is always thinking about it. Support in running administrative aspects of leagues / clubs. The Shire finding funding opportunities for several clubs at a time and providing a person to co-ordinate a group application.</p> | |

| Club Survey for Sport and Recreation – Loddon Shire | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| Organisation | Q1. What does your club/ organisation do well? | Q2. Trends you have noticed | Q3 The three key challenges facing your club / organisation? | Q4 Ideas /solutions to address challenges | Q5. Other comments |
| | | group and step up to senior age. | | | |
| Newbridge Football / Netball Club | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides a healthy environment. - A place for people to play chosen sport. - A welcoming place to be. - Happy to welcome people of other cultures. - Has a series of policies in place. - A strong set of rules and codes of conduct. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lack of young male footballers. - The cost of doing business. - Increased pressure on volunteers. - Lack of age dynamic (30-40) to take on extra responsibility. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cost – raising funds. Volunteers burn out. 2. Junior football – 10 players this year – could have no side. 3. Succession – touch to get people to take on roles with responsibility attached. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Someone of higher influence needs to tackle player payments. 2. Trialling an under-18 competition next year. 3. Persevere and indicate strongly that there won't be a club if others don't step up. | Continue to persevere to have an attractive body of water at Newbridge Recreation Reserve. Pursue funding for a Caravan dump at above. Into the future look into a possible skate ramp at the reserve. |
| Newbridge Football / Netball Club | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communicate - Relationship between football and netball is outstanding. Great to be a part of it, very rewarding. | I've noticed in our time at Newbridge the fluctuating numbers around junior members. There has certainly been a decline in junior males over the last few years but in the same period our junior female numbers have soared. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Junior footballer numbers and retaining those boys. - Parent participation – mostly they are good but if all were prepared to bring their kids to sport our numbers would be better. | Development programs for juniors, incentives for juniors and parents. Some parents don't want or can't afford to take their kids to sport, particularly if travel is involved. | |
| Inglewood Riding Club Inc. | We have a wide range of members from 14 years old to 60 years old. So, we cater for everyone. | Because horse riding is a very expensive sport / hobby, we have noticed less people willing to take it up. | Lack of members, insurance costs and fundraising. Unfortunately, there are riders who do not wish to join the club because of | None | We welcome any sport in the local area. |

Club Survey for Sport and Recreation – Loddon Shire

| Organisation | Q1. What does your club/ organisation do well? | Q2. Trends you have noticed | Q3 The three key challenges facing your club / organisation? costs. | Q4 Ideas /solutions to address challenges | Q5. Other comments |
|---------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|---|--------------------|
|---------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|---|--------------------|

5.2 Club surveys – summarised results

Surveys were forwarded to sport and recreation clubs and organisations in the municipality. Twenty surveys were returned. A workshop was held to follow up on the results of the surveys. Key challenges identified by sport and recreation clubs through their surveys were:

| Challenge | Details |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| Equipment | Need more appropriate equipment and machinery to cut down on volunteer workload |
| Volunteers | Hard to attract and retain volunteers, volunteer burn-out, lots of volunteers are older adults – young people reluctant to be involved or take on roles within existing structures, need to review governance at a township level |
| Amalgamations | Amalgamations of football / netball leagues will impact on hockey clubs as not all leagues incorporate hockey, some cricket associations are in danger of disappearing |
| Access to water | Access to water is declining each year as water supplies lower, need access to cheaper untreated water |
| Cost of sport | It's a challenge to pay for utilities, maintenance costs continue to rise, need to cap football player payments, Loddon Shire has been very supportive with grants, players not travelling as much due to cost of getting to tournaments, insurance costs are high, decline in participation due to cost of certain sports |
| Events | Sustaining major events – very dependent upon sponsorship, grants and volunteer effort |
| Facilities | Lack of facilities limits ability of clubs to function and attract more members |
| Transport | Cost of transport is an issue |
| Socio-demographic changes | Decrease in population in some areas and general ageing of population make it difficult to field teams, there are people moving into some towns for the cheap housing, but don't wish to be involved in sport, children living in single parent families may only be able to play sport every alternate weekend in their home town due to custody issues |
| Compliance | Too much paperwork |
| Junior participation | If football clubs are unable to field an U17 team, the whole club may fold, hard to attract enough junior players to field teams, costs to parents to transport children to games around the league |
| Competition between sports | Football and cricket activities held at the same time on occasions, e.g. football club try outs during cricket finals, asking juniors to choose one of their sports over another |

5.3 Club Workshop

Forty people representing a range of sport and recreation clubs and organisations attended a workshop on Wednesday 3 September 2014. Key issues explored at the workshop were:

| Issue | Details |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Volunteers | attracting and retaining volunteers, encouraging people to take on officer bearer roles, understanding the type of volunteerism people are interested in |
| Income generation | dealing with cost associated with compliance, need VCFL to cap payments quickly, costs are rising but very difficult to find new and reliable income streams, grants are time consuming, need a grants officer at Council |
| Compliance | too much red tape, sport is now a business, requirement to have so many permits, working with children checks, need for feasibility studies, need to reduce risk of litigation, need support from SSAs around governance |
| Declining membership | young people dropping out of sport, people not taking part in 'club' activities, need to have the conversation about amalgamation, declining population in some areas and ageing population, school linkages, move towards social activities, competition from electronic devices |
| Sustainability | question re what clubs get back from being a member of a SSA, why does each club at the same ground have to pay separate insurance cover, Auskick should be free |

5.4 Workshop with State Sporting Associations

A workshop was held on 17 September 2014 in Bendigo to provide an opportunity for the project team to provide feedback on Loddon Shire sports club issues, and to hear about the strategic directions of State Sporting Associations. In attendance were six representatives from Sports Focus, AFL, netball, tennis and bowls.

Key issues discussed at this workshop included:

| Issue | Details |
|------------------------|---|
| Participation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people may drop out of sport because they don't think that they are good enough. |
| Volunteerism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many of the existing volunteers in clubs are retired – few younger volunteers Need to try and retain young people who drop out of sport as volunteers Volunteer recognition programs are being implemented by SSAs Tennis Victoria has introduced a future leaders program for 15-18 year olds to encourage them to take on a leadership role within their local club Netball Victoria runs a leadership program for associations AFL has a recognition and rewards program Volunteers need to be given a welcome pack and a specific role Young people may only want to volunteer for a specific role, but if the experience is positive, will come back again Each club should appoint a volunteer coordinator Important to personally approach people to volunteer – they don't usually come to you to ask. |
| Modified sports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modified sports are becoming more common, e.g. 9-a-side AFL, Fast Four tennis, Hot shots for tennis, Junior Jack Attack for bowls, |

| Issue | Details |
|-----------------------|--|
| | Net Set Go for netball, Fast Five program for netball. |
| Governance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of SSAs are providing 'health checks' for clubs to examine their financial practices and positions or assisting with business planning. • Creation of position descriptions and specific portfolios for committee of management members is important • 'Club Help' is a good tool to guide governance practices • AFL has developed an Improvement Program for clubs which has a maximum of four actions • Mentoring for members of the executive can be useful, potentially using ex-club presidents • Induction for members of the committee of management is important – there are various online training tools available. |
| Partnerships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some good local partners include La Trobe University's sports management and physiotherapy students and Lead On. |
| Innovation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clubs should consider reciprocal arrangements with other clubs, e.g. tennis and golf membership, 30 day memberships, etc • Netball Victoria offers a discount card with a range of benefits for its members, administrators and canteen staff • AFL is trying to introduce a program to encourage parents to be active while their child is playing sport. |
| Compliance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SSAs recognise that systems need to be simplified for clubs, e.g. SSA taking on responsibility for taking membership payments, ground inspections done by phone, better systems for collecting netball score sheets and voting. |
| Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement that SSAs and LGAs need to communicate with each other more effectively. |
| Infrastructure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More and more sports are being played in the evenings, hence lighting of sports grounds is important. |

5.5 Key stakeholder interviews

Interviews were held with Sports Focus and ten staff from Loddon Shire Council during November 2014 to identify key issues and potential directions of the Recreation Strategy. Issues discussed in these key stakeholder interviews are:

| Issue | Details |
|--------------------------|--|
| Cycling / walking | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to fill in the missing links of cycling / walking networks • Footpath Asset Management Plan does not cover tracks and trails, therefore additional maintenance funds should be set aside for tracks and trails |
| Facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to encourage greater sharing of existing facilities, rather |

| Issue | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details |
|--------------|--|
| | <p>than building new ones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work towards each town having one sporting precinct where all facilities are located at one site • It is not just the responsibility of tenant clubs to activate facilities • Facilities should be more accessible, i.e. have a welcome feel, not be padlocked, feel part of a community • Facilities need to be used by the broader community, not just people from one or two clubs |
| Clubs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage amalgamations of clubs and committees of management • Compliance issues for sporting events can be onerous • To help sustain a sport such as junior football, consider offering a more local competition to reduce travel to other locations, merges some teams, share players between clubs, hold matches on week nights and modify the sport to 9-a-side • How much of a priority is the development of a business plan for a club? • How sustainable is it for clubs to 'import' players from other regions every week to field a team? • Clubs are very dependent on families – some are made up almost exclusively of one family • The key motivator for clubs to do something different is a crisis • How can clubs respond to the megatrends identified by Australian Sports Commission? • Clubs should focus on the priority areas listed in the Good Sports program, e.g. be smoke free, be inclusive, have healthy food in the canteen • Clubs are in a good position to promote health and wellbeing and through their structure could focus on mental health, gambling, methamphetamine usage, gender equality, domestic violence, etc. • Clubs need to be clear about where there sport is at and consider reducing the number of teams, accepting that sometimes they will go into recess for several years • Clubs need to be positioned to take advantage of funding when available, e.g. new club models, responses to megatrends, increased female participation, female friendly facilities, etc • Consider seeking assistance on a fee for service basis • Solutions for clubs may not relate to megatrends; they need to be local solutions to local problems. |
| Play | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to improve play opportunities in Loddon Shire through quality playgrounds |
| Water | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of water impacts on ability to attract major sports events |

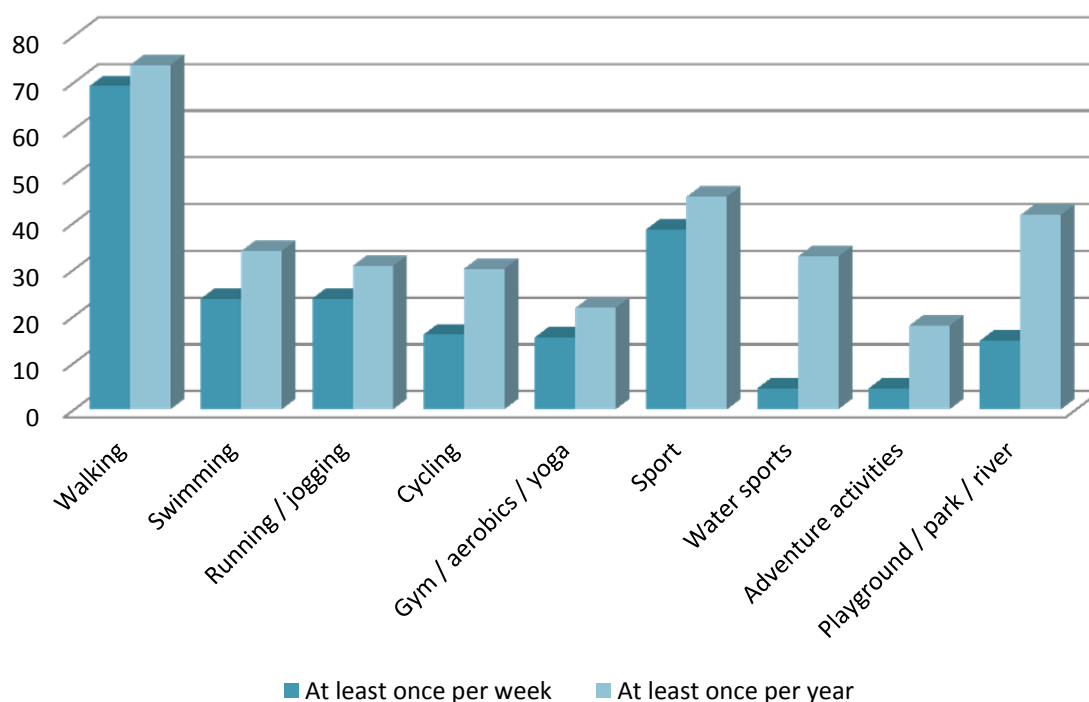
| Issue | • Details |
|----------------------------|---|
| | to towns such as Wedderburn |
| Sporting events | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity to hold more sporting events in Loddon Shire, e.g. cycling races / events, Great Victorian Bike Ride • Some of the major events in the Shire include: Veterans Cycling events, Great Victorian Bike Ride, Australian Masters Water Skiing event, Bridgewater Triathlon, Boort Triathlon, tennis tournaments, football / netball matches |
| Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is an opportunity to develop horse riding trails in Loddon Shire • Horse riding club was recently established in Wedderburn – opportunity for similar club in Pyramid Hill • There is a real growth in unstructured activities such as running clubs in other rural / regional areas • Organisations are often only able to run programs when they receive external funding • Consider developing a swimming club at Bridgewater Water Hole |
| Private investment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to establish infrastructure in order to encourage private investors, e.g. canoeing trails need to be established prior to a private operator setting up a canoe hire business |
| Natural environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great natural environment for sport and recreation activities such as walking, cycling, canoeing, horse riding, etc |

5.6 Community Surveys

A community survey was developed and distributed in hard copy format or electronically to neighbourhood houses, schools and various other local clubs and organisations. Surveys were also handed out to local residents at the five listening posts held throughout the Shire (i.e. in Mitiamo, Bridgewater, Inglewood, Wedderburn and Boort). A total of 156 surveys were completed by the community. 59% of these surveys were completed by females and 41% by males. Surveys were predominantly filled out by young people between 15-19 years of age and by adults aged between 40 and 69. In terms of place of residence, survey respondents were distributed across the municipality, with the highest percentage of surveys completed by residents of Wedderburn (24%), Bridgewater (21%) and Boort (19%). There were no surveys completed by residents of Eddington and only 1% of surveys were completed by people in each of the following towns: Dingee, Mitiamo, Newbridge and Tarnagulla.

Survey respondents were asked to identify what activities they regularly take part in, and the frequency of participation. On a weekly participation rate, walking was clearly the most popular activity, followed by sport, swimming and running / jogging. Water sports and visiting playgrounds, parks and rivers are also popular activities, participated in by many people at least once per year, but weekly participation rates in these activities are not as high.

Percentage of local residents who take part in various physical activities at least once per week or at least once per year



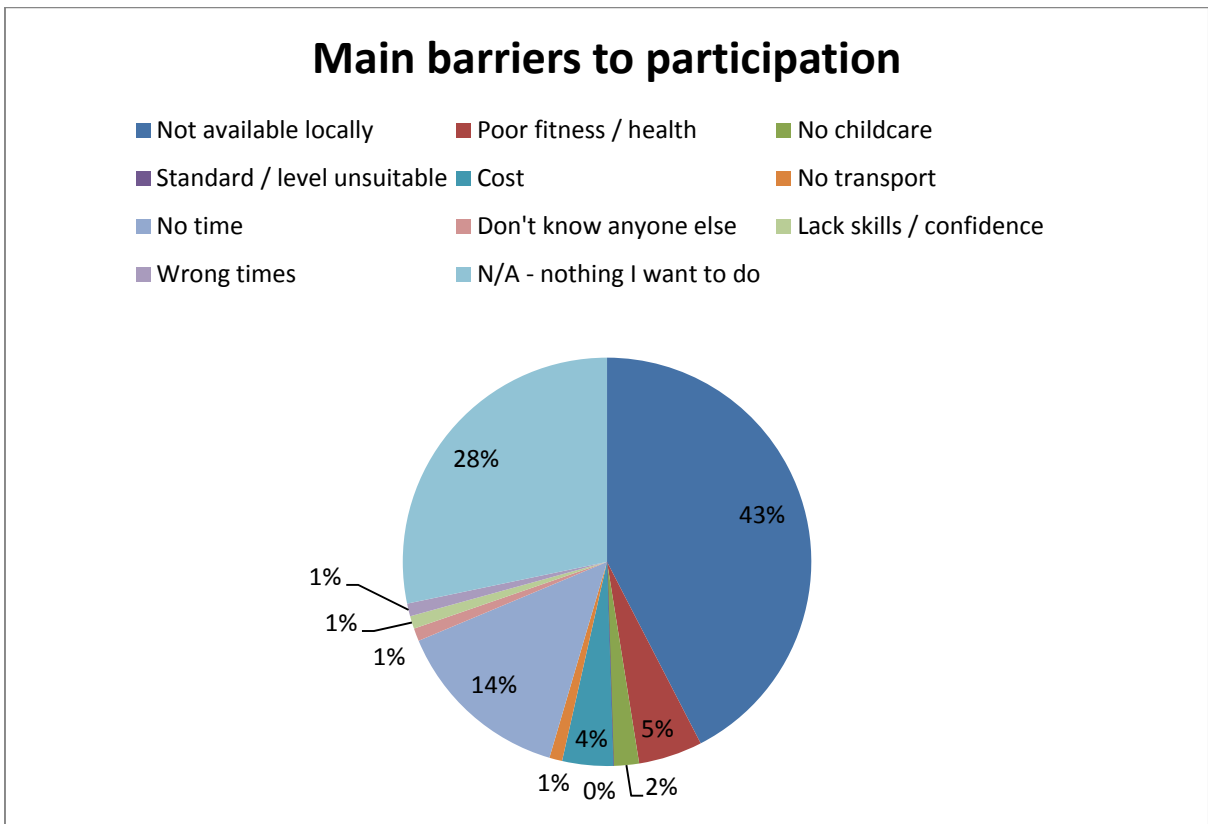
| Activity | At least once per week (%) | At least once per year (%) |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Walking | 69.2 | 73.7 |
| Swimming | 23.7 | 33.9 |
| Running / jogging | 23.7 | 30.7 |
| Cycling | 16 | 30.1 |
| Gym / aerobics / yoga | 15.4 | 21.7 |
| Sport | 38.5 | 45.5 |
| Water sports | 4.5 | 32.7 |
| Adventure activities | 4.5 | 17.9 |
| Playground / park / river | 14.7 | 41.6 |

Whilst a significant number of survey respondents stated that they participate in water sports and adventure activities, their frequency of participation is much lower, e.g. monthly or once per year. When asked about the types of activities they would like to do, but don't currently do, survey respondents listed:

- swimming
- gym / yoga / pilates
- bike riding
- horse riding

as their preferred activities. The four main reasons why people do not currently undertake these activities were identified as:

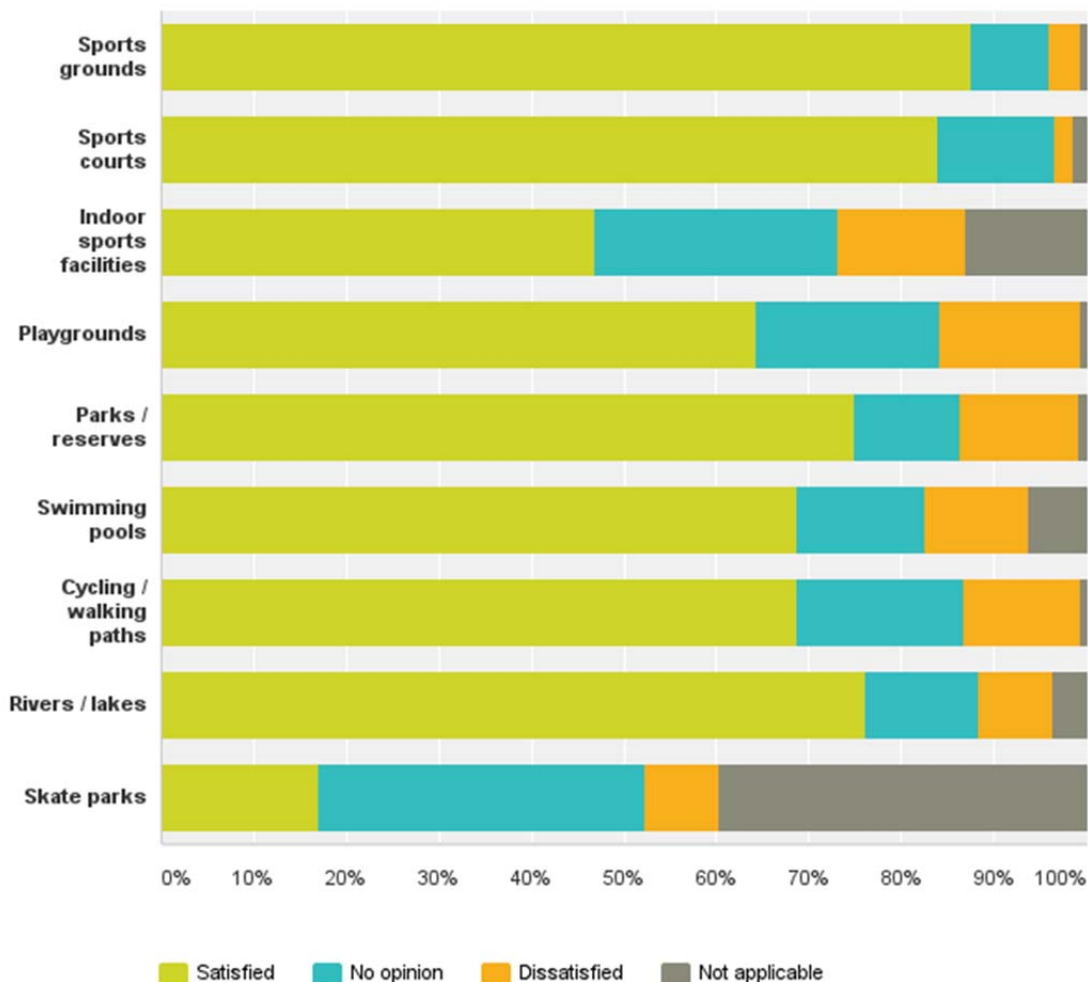
- it's not available locally (42%)
- I don't have time (14%)
- I'm not fit / well enough (5%)
- it costs too much (4%).



Survey respondents were also asked to identify their level of satisfaction with sport and recreation facilities in the Shire. The facilities that local residents are most satisfied with are sports grounds (88% satisfaction rating) and sports courts (84% satisfaction rating). Facilities with the lowest level of satisfaction ratings are: playgrounds (15% dissatisfaction rating), indoor sports facilities (14%), parks and reserves (13%) and cycling / walking paths (13%).

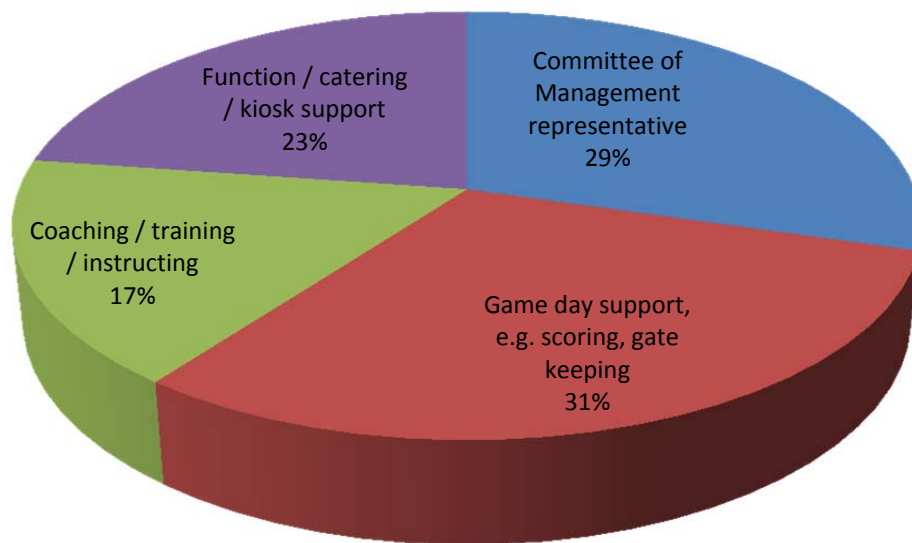
How satisfied are you with the following sport and recreation facilities and spaces in your area?

Answered: 156 Skipped: 0



In relation to volunteering with sport and recreation organisations, 64% of survey respondents volunteer in some capacity, often across a number of different tasks such as serving on the committee of management and also assisting with scoring, for example. The following table shows the breakdown of sports club volunteerism in Loddon Shire, based on the responses of the 156 survey participants:

Volunteer roles in sports clubs



Survey respondents were asked to identify ways in which they could be more active. Key responses were:

- More time
- More options to do things locally
- Better health / fitness
- Improved standard of facilities, e.g. cycling / walking tracks.

When asked how sporting clubs could be more sustainable, survey respondents provided a wide range of answers, including:

- Less player payments for footballers
- More social events / functions
- Year round access to recreational facilities – for social and competitive opportunities
- Upgrade infrastructure
- Install energy saving devices, e.g. solar panels
- Create better club atmosphere – friendly, family oriented
- Encourage new people to the area to join
- Attract more volunteers
- Retain young people as players and administrators
- Less paperwork and rules
- More advertising of activities

Facilities that survey respondents believe need to be developed or improved include:

- Gym facilities
- Swimming pool (heated) and swimming clubs
- More cycling / walking tracks

- Indoor sports opportunities, e.g. badminton, table tennis, squash
- Skate park
- Water security for recreation reserves
- More lakes stocked with fish.