

LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL

Municipal Public Health Plan
2010-2013



ADOPTION OF PLAN

LEVEL: Council
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ATTACHMENTS: Nil

EVIDENCE OF APPROVAL:



Signed by Chief Executive Officer

CONTENTS

Introduction from the Mayor.....	4
About Loddon Shire	5
What is a ‘Municipal Public Health Plan’?.....	7
Why does this Municipal Public Health Plan include a ‘Heat Wave Plan’?.....	8
How did we develop the Loddon Shire Municipal Public Health Plan?.....	9
The health and wellbeing of people in the Loddon Shire.....	10
The health and community services available within the Loddon Shire	15
Implementation Plan	17
Supporting Documentation	28
Budget	29

INTRODUCTION FROM THE MAYOR

On behalf of my fellow Councillors and myself, I present the Loddon Shire Council Municipal Public Health Plan for 2010 through to 2013. Health and well being is central to our Council's vision which is that "Loddon will be a proud community leading rural Australia as a great place to live, work and visit". Loddon can only be a 'great place to live, work and visit' if we have good health and community services, and when the health and wellbeing of all residents in our Shire is being supported.

As part of development this Plan, we have carefully considered the evidence relating to health and wellbeing in our communities and spoken to 'those in the know' about health care delivery needs across our Shire. It has been reassuring to see that our communities believe Council has performed well in our delivery of health and human services over the past year. Likewise, consultations with our hospitals, community service providers and residents as part of the development of this Plan, also reflected a high level of satisfaction with health and human services in our Shire. As a Council, we want to make sure we can maintain and build on this high level of satisfaction over the coming years.

In particular, we thank the representatives from the following organisations and groups who have contributed to the development of this Plan:

- Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership
- Boort District Hospital
- Boort Resource and Information Centre
- East Loddon Senior Citizens
- Inglewood and District Health Service
- Loddon Mallee Region, Department of Health
- Northern District Community Health Service
- Pyramid Hill Community Emergency Response Team
- Pyramid Hill Neighborhood House
- Wedderburn Community House
- Wedderburn Senior Citizens Group

Our Plan builds on the strengths noted in our consultations, and ensures that we maintain our focus on delivering the health and community services (such as immunisation and maternal and child health services) in a sustainable and effective way that meets the needs of our communities. We've also reflected on our role in assisting health providers in our Shire with their delivery of primary and secondary care to our communities – and have included plans for Council to advocate strongly on behalf of these services and to assist in coordinating care and services across our many health care providers.

Whilst our Plan maintains the good work Council has done in previous years, you will see that there is a new focus on how Council can assist in minimising the risk of heat-related illnesses in some groups of people in our Shire (such as the elderly and infants) in the case of extreme heat waves. You will also see some new ideas on how Council plans to work with health and hospital providers to better recruit and retain health professionals and health services across our Shire.

Our Plan also reflects a renewed commitment to work with other health and community services in the Loddon Shire and across our region of Victoria. In particular, you will see frequent references to our involvement in the leadership committee of the Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership – a network of health and community organisations committed to working together to help improve health and wellbeing in our communities.

Local Governments face great challenges in balancing the needs of their population with the many external influences that impinge on their ability to deliver the health and wellbeing aspirations of their communities. There are also challenges in balancing the expectations and obligations of Local Government to provide health regulation and safety and their role in advocacy to assist health providers in their area to deliver high quality care.

With this Plan, we believe we offer our Loddon communities a way of improving health and wellbeing that addresses these challenges and finds a balance for all stakeholders. I commend this Plan to you, and believe its implementation will lead to improved health and well being outcomes for the residents in our communities.

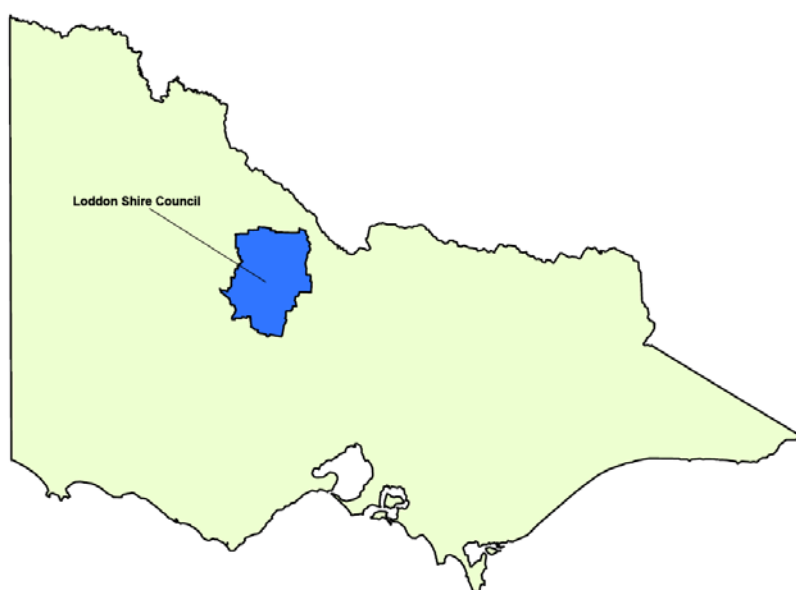
Cr. Christine Brooke



ABOUT LODDON SHIRE

The Loddon community, is many small communities – over 8000 people spread over 6700 square kilometers of rural land, in 13 townships and numerous small communities. Situated in North Central Victoria, the Loddon Shire is the eighth largest municipality by area in Victoria. Approximately half of the Shire's residents live in townships with the remaining population living in the rural areas of the municipality.

The Southern area of the Shire is part of the Goldfields region and consists of undulating farmland interspersed with grassy woodlands and extensive areas of State forest. To the north, the land is characterised by sweeping Riverine plains broken up by the significant granite outcrops at Pyramid Hill, Mount Hope and the lunettes of Boort.

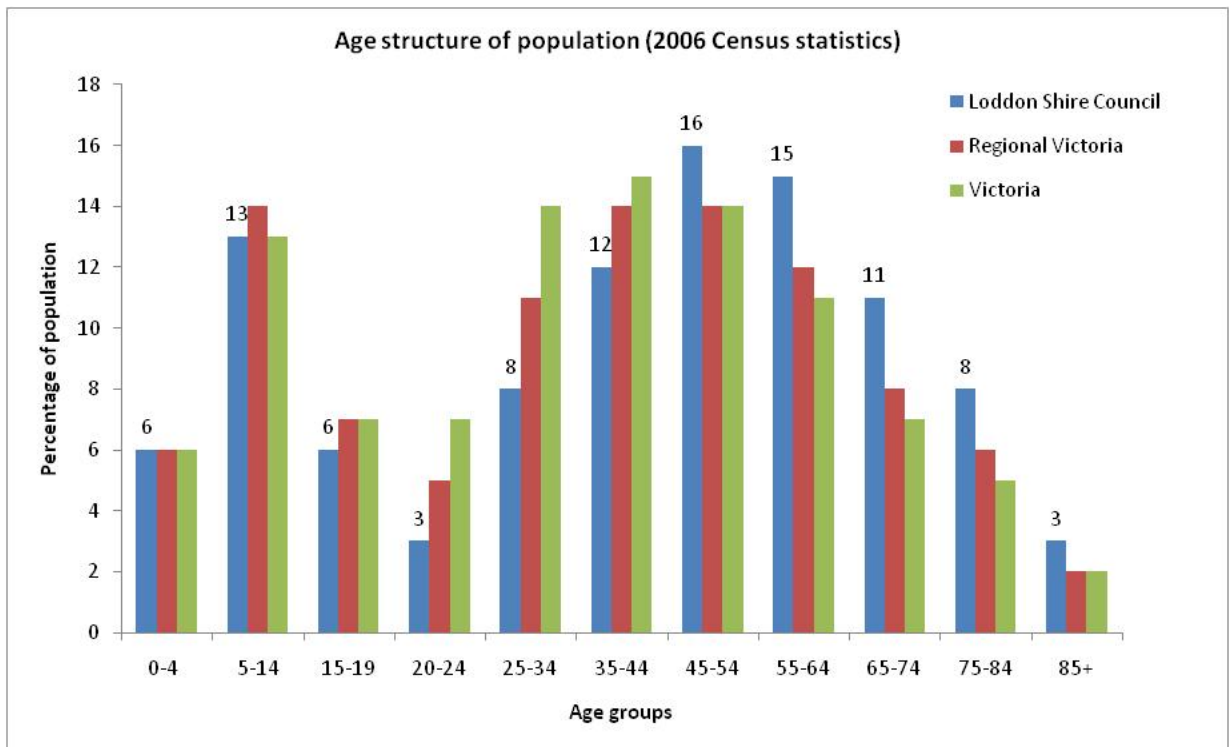


Loddon's economy is centred on the agricultural industry including traditional broad acre grain, sheep and dairy farming with more recent innovation in wine grapes, tomatoes, oil seeds, pulses, olives and fodder. Employment within the Shire tends to reflect the large agricultural industry with 39% of employed Loddon people working in the agriculture, forestry and fishing industries in 2006. The median individual income for a Loddon Shire resident in 2006 was \$324 which was lower than regional Victoria (\$399) and Victoria (\$456) – which may reflect the significantly higher proportion of people in the Shire who receive an aged pension (18.5% of Loddon Shire compared with 10.7% of Victoria).

In recent years, the continued drought, and the global financial crisis that emerged in late 2008, have provided unprecedented challenges for the Loddon Shire Council. The demographic profile of the Loddon Shire will also present significant challenges to the Council for the years ahead.

The life expectancy at birth for a male born in the Loddon Shire in 2006 is 74.4 years – the lowest ranking (age) for any local government area in Victoria (and compared to 80 years for Victoria). Females born in the Loddon Shire in 2006 fare better with a life expectancy of 83 years (in comparison to 84.3 years for the rest of Victoria). The average age of a resident in the Shire is seven years older than the Victorian average. Population forecasting suggests that this age difference is set to continue to grow and that the population of Loddon Shire overall will decrease. In 2006, 21% of the population of Loddon Shire was aged over 65 years (compared with 16% in other regional areas and 14% for Victoria). There are a number of factors leading to the relative ageing of the Loddon population being greater than in other areas, but in particular

the low birth rate and under-representation of people aged 18-49 years old in the Loddon community plays a significant role.



The ageing population will create an increased demand on health services in the Shire and will impact on Council's delivery of Home and Community Care (HACC) services and other subsidiary health and wellbeing services (like transport) that will be necessary for older people living in their homes within the Loddon Shire. With an ageing, but decreasing population, the viability of health service provision in smaller communities in the Shire will be threatened.

WHAT IS A 'MUNICIPAL PUBLIC HEALTH PLAN'?

All levels of governments in Australia plan for population health and wellbeing. Under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, every local government must prepare a four year Municipal Public Health Plan (MPHP) which is based on the health needs and health determinants of residents in the municipality. Such a Plan must include strategies aimed to maximise health and specifies how each local government will work with other organisations and agencies on public health initiatives.

All MPHPs, by definition, are based on an understanding of, and commitment to, a social model of health. A social model of health is a framework for thinking about health whereby enhancements in health and wellbeing for individuals and for communities can be achieved only through addressing the biological and medical determinants AND the economic, social and environmental determinants of ill health. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has led the development of an understanding of the 'social determinants of health and wellbeing' – those geographic, environmental, economic, social and political forces that impact on the health and wellbeing of communities and individuals. In 2003, the World Health Organisation argued that attention needs to be paid to health as 'a complete state of physical, mental and social wellbeing, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity'.

To assist local governments in their public health planning, the Victorian Government publishes the planning framework *Environments for Health*. This is a framework for planning that focuses on four environmental factors influencing health and wellbeing: the built environment, the social environment, the economic environment and the natural environment. The Loddon MPHP reflects considerations of how these environments uniquely influence the health and wellbeing of Loddon residents and how and what the Shire can do to minimise negative impacts and maximise positive impacts of these environments on health. As such, the Loddon MPHP details the broad mission of the Loddon Shire Council, its goals, objectives and priorities in relation to health and wellbeing and sets out actions for the Shire to progress (on its own or in partnership with other organisations) to improve health and wellbeing.

The Loddon MPHP reflects a mix of strategies that the Shire can progress to improve health and wellbeing for Loddon residents including strategies relating to:

- health protection (e.g. immunisation, water quality),
- health development (e.g. physical activity, Diabetes prevention),
- population health strategies (e.g. a focus on Seniors as a specific population group within Loddon)
- contingencies for public health emergencies (e.g. pandemic and heat-wave planning) and community capacity building (e.g. partnership work between the Shire and health and community services in Loddon Shire).

In addition, the Loddon Shire MPHP provides a detailed implementation plan for what the Loddon Shire Council plans to do to improve health and wellbeing across the Shire. It is an implementation plan that focuses on action items specific to health and wellbeing and is based on the strategic direction of the Loddon Shire Council, as outlined in the Council Plan 2009-2013.

The Loddon Shire Council has identified eight areas of major focus for their work over the next four years including economic development, climate change adaptation, housing and township amenity and beautification (all social determinants of positive health and wellbeing) as well as a specific focus on youth. The Plan assigns responsibility for each proposed action to a department of the Loddon Shire Council and identifies if and how it links with other planning processes for the Shire.

WHY DOES THIS MUNICIPAL PUBLIC HEALTH PLAN INCLUDE A 'HEAT WAVE PLAN'?

In the summer of early 2009, Victorians experienced some of the highest state-wide temperatures ever recorded. Some of the consequences of this heat wave was an estimated 374 additional deaths of Victorians and countless incidences of hospitalisations and additional health care for people whose health suffered as a result of the extreme heat. People can suffer from heat-related illnesses (such as rashes, heat stroke, heat exhaustion) or can have existing illnesses (such as Diabetes or heart diseases) worsened by the extreme heat. Climate change is expected to increase the intensity and frequency of heat waves in Victoria.

The Victorian Government operates a Heat Alert System – whereby the Department of Health notifies Local Governments if the predicted temperatures are likely to be above a particular 'threshold' of heat. The 'threshold' in the Loddon Shire is when the mean of the night-time and day-time temperatures is equal to or above 32 degrees Celsius. In the summer of 2009, there were five 'heat wave' days in the Loddon Shire with four of them falling on consecutive days in January 2009.

The Victorian Government Department of Health has published a *Heatwave Planning Guide* (DHS, 2009) to assist local governments to determine what they can do to minimise the risk of illness and death in their communities during a heat wave. The commitment of local governments to addressing the effects of heatwaves reinforces the commitment to address the issue made by the Victorian Government in their whole-of-government policy *Our Environment Our Future Sustainability Action Statement 2006*.

From studies into previous heat waves in Australia and overseas we know that the following groups of people are most vulnerable to heat-related illness or death:

- Elderly people, infants and pre-school children
- People with chronic illnesses (including Diabetes and high blood pressure) who live in the community
- People who have difficulty 'moving around'
- People who are taking particular types of medication (such as medications for some mental illnesses)
- People in low socio-economic circumstances

We also know that there are many and simple changes in behavior that people can make to reduce their chance of heat-related illness or death. There are also many different things that Local Governments and health care providers can do to help prevent heat related illnesses and death in their communities. International and Australian experts agree that a planning process for heat-waves should involve the following steps:

- Identifying vulnerable population groups
- Identifying effective strategies (for preparing for and responding to heat waves)
- Gaining cross-organisational agreement on these strategies
- Include a system to forecast extreme heat
- Implementing and activating the heat wave plan
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the heat wave plan after each summer season.

The Loddon Shire Council has decided that a response to heat-wave is in essence, an emergency response to a health and wellbeing risk in the community and as such plans for preparing and responding to a heat wave in subsequent summers should be included in the broader planning processes for health and wellbeing in the Shire. The Loddon Shire Municipal Public Health Plan therefore includes a 'heat wave plan'.

HOW DID WE DEVELOP THE LODDON SHIRE MUNICIPAL PUBLIC HEALTH PLAN?

The development of the Loddon Shire Municipal Public Health Plan occurred throughout mid-2009 under the direction of the Director of Corporate Services on behalf of the Loddon Shire Council. *Engage Consulting Australia Pty Ltd* was contracted to assist with the consultation and development of the Plan.

A key feature of the development of the Plan was the extensive consultation undertaken with the health and community service providers within the Shire and with residents within our communities. This consultation assisted us to determine what the key issues for health and wellbeing are within our Shire.

The development of the Plan included:

- A review of the information about health status and health determinants within the Loddon Shire
- An evaluation of the previous Council Municipal Public Health Plan and other Council planning documents
- A review of community feedback relating to health and wellbeing from the Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey 2009
- Consultation with all senior executives in the Loddon Shire Council
- Multiple discussions with the Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership (BLPCP) Executive Officer to synchronise the work of the BLPCP with that of the Loddon Shire Council
- Face-to-face consultations with health care and community service organisations who provide care to residents within the Shire
- A community forum to discuss health and wellbeing issues
- Two meetings with groups of senior citizens within the Shire
- A questionnaire mailed to families receiving services from the Shire run Maternal and Child Health service.

THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF PEOPLE IN THE LODDON SHIRE

Through its involvement in the the Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership (BLPCP), the Loddon Shire Council is fortunate to have access to a regularly updated 'community profile' - a publication drawing together the existing evidence base regarding population level health and wellbeing measures for the Greater Bendigo and Loddon local government areas (see BLPCP, 2009 www.blpcp.com.au). Selected evidence from the Community Profile is provided here to demonstrate that the focus of this Plan is based on established needs within the Loddon communities. In addition, information sourced from health care providers during the consultation process as part of the development of this Plan forms a level of 'evidence' of the health and wellbeing about Loddon Shire residents.

Like most rural areas of Australia, residents in the Loddon Shire experience poorer health and wellbeing outcomes than people living in the urban areas of Australia. However, despite the poorer health outcomes, Loddon Shire performs well on a number of social and community indicators that are known to contribute to 'well-being'.

Social Determinants of Health

The Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) provides a socio-economic snapshot of a geographical area based on a series of indexes measuring the social and economic conditions of an area. The SEIFA takes into account variables relating to family incomes, education levels and employment types etc. Low SEIFA values indicate areas of disadvantage and high values indicate areas of advantage.

Loddon Shire areas	SEIFA Score (based on 2006 data) (high = advantaged, low =disadvantaged)	Ranking in Victoria based on SEIFA (low ranking = more disadvantaged than other areas)
Bealiba	903	82
Boort	989	447
Bridgewater	1027	791
Bridgewater on Loddon	885	55
Calivil	1030	808
Dingee	974	341
Dunolly	868	41
Fentons Creek	972	329
Inglewood	872	45
Korong Vale	788	6 (least advantaged)
Laanecoorie	949	221
Leitchville	1008	605
Mitiamo	892	67
Mysia	980	378
Newbridge	987	436
Pyramid Hill	904	85
Rheola	912	96
Serpentine	1031	823
Shelbourne	1032	829
Tarnagulla	825	16
Wedderburn	881	50
Wychitella	961	267
Yarrawalla	1036	885 (most advantaged)

Within the Loddon Shire, there are a number of townships demonstrating a high SEIFA score (showing socio-economic advantage), however there are a number (including Korong Vale) that are considered the most disadvantaged within the state of Victoria.

Crime rates for the Loddon Shire in 2007/2008 indicate a lower rate of crime in the Shire compared to the Victorian average. Furthermore, a survey conducted by the Victorian State Government in 2006 shows that residents of the Loddon Shire felt significantly safer alone in their streets after dark than people living in Victoria and regional Victoria.

Transport issues are a considerable barrier to accessing health and community services in rural areas, and in accessing services that contribute to health and wellbeing (education, training, employment etc). Towns in the Loddon Shire have minimal public transport services with people relying on the use of private motor vehicles for travel. Transport was identified during the consultations for this Plan as a key barrier to accessing health and community services – particularly for seniors and young people living in the Loddon Shire. The issue of accessible and appropriate transport options were raised consistently by both health and community service providers and by Shire residents during the consultation process for this Plan. Improving transport options was considered to be a key factor in improving health and wellbeing.

Housing related issues are also considered social determinants of health and wellbeing – generally speaking, average household sizes (the number of people living in each dwelling) were smaller in Loddon townships and in more remote locations in the Shire. This is in line with an ageing population and demonstrates an increase in elderly people living alone in their own homes. The health and wellbeing of these people was raised as a concern in the consultations conducted during the development of this Plan, particularly in relation to their ability to access health services and their vulnerability in an extreme heat situation.

The consultations conducted during the development of this Plan demonstrated an eagerness by health care and community service providers and Shire residents for the Loddon Shire Council to address the social determinants of health and wellbeing in the Plan – with an emphasis on the issues of transport, housing (aged care in particular) and economic disadvantage in some areas of the Shire.

Measures of Community Strength

On many measures of community strength, the Loddon Shire generally scores higher than the Regional Victorian average and Victorian average. For example, based on 2006 data, 71% of Loddon residents surveyed said they volunteer (compared with only 52.5% for Regional Victoria), 64.4% said they attended community events (compared with only 53.1% for Regional Victoria) and 75.1% said that they feel valued by society (compared with only 69.3% of people in Regional Victoria). Measures of community strength are a 'protective factor' for health and wellbeing – they act to improve health and wellbeing of all within the community. The strength of the communities within the Loddon Shire was emphasised in the consultations conducted during the development of this Plan, with examples relating to 'checking' on neighbors who are known to be elderly or unwell, and assisting neighbors with transport to health services.

Child Health

Loddon Shire boasts an impressive record of maternal and child health participation for children aged under 12 months. For example, in 2006/2007 92.1% of all infants received their 4 week old child health check through the maternal and child health service. Whilst participation rates declined for the 18 month, two year and 3.5 year old health checks, this is in line with declining participation rates for these checks across all Victoria. Similarly, immunisation rates were excellent for children under 75 months of age, exceeding or similar to the Victorian average for 'fully immunised' children.

Diabetes

The extraordinarily high prevalence of Diabetes in the Loddon Shire (10.3% of the population) means that the Loddon Shire is ranked number one in Victoria in relation to Diabetes prevalence. Recent information from Diabetes Australia about the epidemic show that there has been a 108% increase in the number of people within Loddon who have been diagnosed between 2001 and 2008 – this means there is 1.1 new incidences of Diabetes diagnosed every week within the Loddon Shire. The majority of people with Diabetes in the Loddon Shire are aged over 56 years of age – with an increased rate in the over 66+ aged group.

Ambulatory care is any medical care delivered where a patient does not need to stay in hospital overnight. Hospitalisation rates for ambulatory sensitive conditions can be used as an indicator of access to and quality of primary medical care. The number one reason for hospitalisation of ambulatory sensitive care conditions for Loddon Shire residents is complications of Diabetes (33.4 per 1000 for Loddon residents compared with 21.47 per 1000 Victorian residents).

The concern about the prevalence of Diabetes, and other chronic diseases within the Shire was raised consistently throughout the consultations conducted to develop the Plan. Whilst most health care providers believed that the MPHP should focus on population groups, advocacy and how Council can work with health care providers, most were insistent that the Plan include a specific focus on Diabetes prevention and management.

Dental Conditions

Along with Diabetes, dental health is of a significant concern across the Shire. Hospitalisation admissions for ambulatory sensitive dental conditions have steadily increased over the past decade in the Loddon Mallee region. In 2004/2005 the Loddon Mallee region had the highest admission rates for dental ambulatory care sensitive conditions (ACSC) in all of Victoria. Hospital admissions for dental conditions are particularly high for children aged 0-14 years.

Across Australia, health outcomes (including dental health) are generally poorer for people living in rural areas – so the measures of poorer dental health in the Loddon Shire are not entirely unexpected. The extent of fluoridation of the water supplies across the Loddon Shire varies. Approximately half of the population live outside towns (and do not have access to fluoridated mains water supplies) and some of the mains water supplies across the Shire distribute non-fluoridated and fluoridated water of questionable taste and acceptability. The limited access to dental services within the Shire (with the exception of the public funded dental service located in Boort) is also likely to contribute to the poor dental health outcomes across the Shire.

Access to fluoridated water supplies, the palatability of existing mains water supplies and the lack of access to dental services were raised as matters of concern by health providers during the consultations for the Plan.

Chronic Disease Risk Factors

The 'SNAP' Framework is routinely used to describe the risk factors associated with developing a chronic disease – Smoking, Nutrition, Alcohol, and Physical activity.

Estimates from the 2004/2005 National Health Survey suggest that adult men in the Loddon Shire have a higher rate of smoking than those in the rest of Victoria (a range of between 299-345 per 1000 men in Loddon compared with a rate of 259 per 1000 for men in Victoria overall). Similarly, women in the Loddon Shire also had a higher rate of smoking than the Victorian rate (between 215-277 per 1000 people in Loddon compared with 181 per 1000 in Victoria).

However, estimates of nutrition (based on fruit intake) suggest that people in the Loddon Shire have similar or better levels of nutrition to the rest of Victoria (for example between 538- 564 per

1000 people in Loddon have more than two serves of fruit per day compared with 534 per 1000 in the rest of Victoria).

Similarly, estimates of physical activity suggest that people in the Loddon Shire have similar or slightly better rates of physical activity than those living elsewhere. For example, the estimated rate of physical inactivity in Loddon Shire was between 388-394 per 1000 people compared with 379 per 1000 for Victoria and 415 per 1000 for regional Victoria.

These figures relating to physical activity and nutrition are supported by estimates of obesity levels in the Loddon Shire – showing a lower rate of obese adults in the Loddon Shire compared with Victoria and country Victoria (for example, 176-177 per 1000 Loddon residents were obese in comparison to 199 per 1000 Victorian residents and 204 per 1000 Country Victorian residents).

Feedback from the consultation processes conducted during the development of this Plan indicated that health and community service providers and residents all believed the Shire had a role to play in facilitating and promoting physical exercise – through their maintenance of sporting facilities, tracks and trails etc. The effect of drought on the water management for sporting facilities was raised as a concern – with the risk being that where sporting grounds were unable to be maintained, then the ability to promote physical activity within the community would be lessened. The Loddon Shire Council has identified their advocacy role in maintaining and improving water supplies and use to residents in the position paper “Water Security for Urban Communities”.

Information about alcohol consumption varies in quality. Statistics relating to hospitalisation of Bendigo and Loddon residents show that only 0.7% of all hospitalisations were for alcohol problems (compared with 1.0% for all Victorian residents). However, anecdotal evidence obtained from health and community service providers during the development of this Plan indicates that alcohol continues to be a ‘social’ problem for many communities within the Loddon Shire and is exacerbated by the continued drought and economic hardship faced by many within the Shire.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Much of the evidence relating to the mental health and wellbeing of people living in the Loddon Shire focuses on statistics of ‘ill-health’ (such as psychiatric hospital admissions, intentional self harm or suicide deaths) and shows that mental ill-health is not a significantly higher health problem in the Loddon Shire than other rural areas or Victoria. However, mental health and wellbeing is more than just ‘ill health’ requiring hospitalisation. There is some evidence from the 2004/2005 National Health Survey to suggest that people in the Loddon Shire have a higher rate of self-reported mental, behavioral and mood problems, and psychological distress than in other rural areas of Victoria and the Victorian average. For example, the rate of high psychological distress in people in South Loddon was 167 per 1000 compared with 119 per 1000 rural Victorian residents. The ongoing drought, closure of a number of large employers in the Shire and the ageing population will have impacted on the mental health and wellbeing of Loddon Shire residents in recent years. During the consultations conducted during the development of the Plan, there was strong support for the work of the Loddon ‘Healthy Minds Network’ – a network of health professionals and community members dealing specifically with issues of mental health and wellbeing.

Heat Wave Illness and Death

It is difficult to demonstrate with any certainty the number of additional hospitalisations and health care that were required in 2008/2009 due to heat related illness in the Loddon Shire due to the way in which health care data is 'stored and analysed'. However, these issues were canvassed with health care providers as part of the consultations for this Plan. A summary of what was reported from health care services includes:

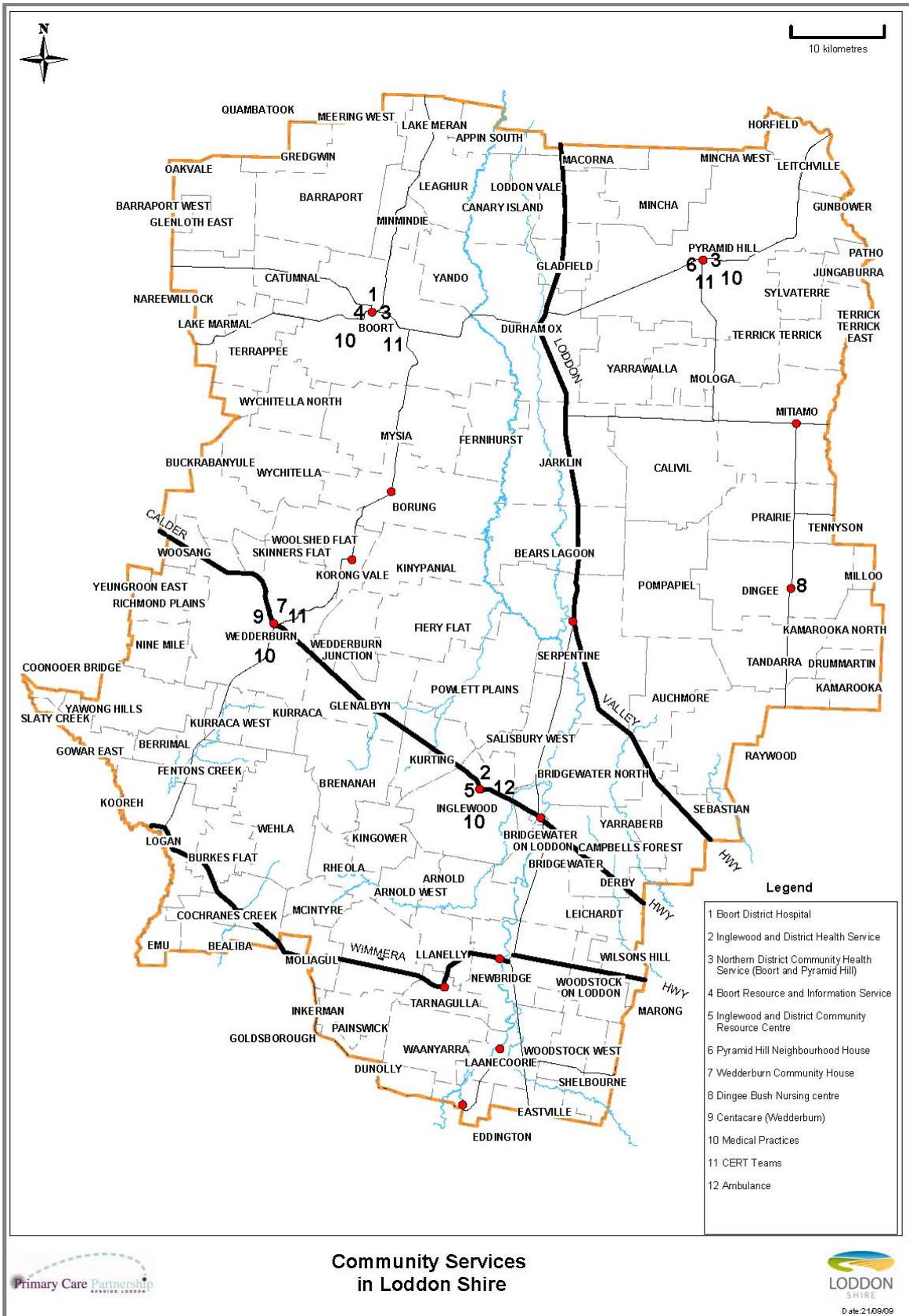
- Elderly people are 'vulnerable' to heat related illness and death, and this is particularly of concern as in the Loddon Shire as there is a relatively large proportion of aged people in the population
- People with pre-existing chronic illnesses (such as heart disease and Diabetes) are vulnerable to heat related illness and death, and this is particularly of concern as in the Loddon Shire there are relatively large numbers of individuals with chronic illness
- The reliance on tank water and the financial need to 'economise' on water and electricity by some people causes an increased risk of heat related illness and death in the Shire
- In the early summer of 2009, there were an increased number of hospitalisations in the Loddon Shire of people whose pre-existing conditions were worsened by the extreme heat
- People who have lived within the Shire for a long time and who do not have a chronic illness have a very good understanding of how to deal with extreme heat
- There are strong community networks across the Shire where people tend to 'check' on neighbors during extreme heat/weather conditions. This acts as an informal 'wellbeing check' system
- The health services in the Shire already have in place informal systems of 'wellbeing checks' with patients they know are at risk in extreme heat situations and make contact with these people during the normal course of their business
- Health and Community Care (HACC) services (and in particular delivered meals on wheels services) are in contact with a large number of elderly people in the community and are in a good position to perform 'wellbeing checks' and act as a referral mechanism in extreme heat situations.

THE HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES AVAILABLE WITHIN THE LODDON SHIRE

This Plan recognises that for some health and wellbeing issues, the Shire has direct responsibility for delivering services and in others, it is one of a number of health and community service providers and organisations that must work together. It recognises the Shire's role as an advocate to other levels of government and service providers on behalf of the communities within Loddon. The Loddon Shire delivers a range of health and wellbeing services including:

- Waste water management, including approval of new septic tank systems, investigation of failing systems, and provision of advice on grey water reuse
- Food safety premises inspections and certifications
- Monitoring of compliance with Tobacco Act 1987
- Ensuring compliance with the Health Act and Environmental Protection Act
- Works delivery of playgrounds and other recreational spaces
- Maternal and child health services (including Enhanced Maternal and Child Health Services)
- Immunisations
- Cluster management of pre-schools
- Provision of Home and Community Care
- Provision of Aged Care Packages
- Management and support of senior citizens centres
- Management of elderly residential care
- Planned Activity Groups for seniors
- Development and management of community activities (recreational activities, community events, recreational spaces) to enhance health and wellbeing
- Planning and implementation of municipality wide responses to health emergencies (through Pandemic Plans and Emergency Management Planning).

In addition to Council delivered health and community services, the Loddon Shire is fortunate to have a range of private and publicly funded health care and hospital providers spread across the Shire. However, the consultations completed during the development of this Plan emphasised a need for a more coordinated, Shire-wide planning process for the distribution of health care services across the Shire, the need for a coordinated effort to recruit and retain health care professionals, a plan for responding to the increased demand on health and community services by an ageing population and a need for greater communication between health care providers and the Shire.



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Council Vision: Loddon will be a proud community leading rural Australia as a great place to live, work and visit.

Objectives of the Loddon Shire Municipal Public Health Plan:

- To support the coordination of planning and delivery of health services in the Loddon Shire
- The health and wellbeing of children and their families are supported
- The health and wellbeing of young people within the Shire is supported
- The health and wellbeing of older people within the Shire is supported
- Health promotion measures are implemented to address the high prevalence of Diabetes
- Dental health promotion measures are implemented to address dental health outcomes
- The positive health and wellbeing effects of physical activity are maximised
- The strategic management of water is supported
- Improved transport options are supported within the Shire
- The risk of heat-related illness and death is minimised in the Shire
- The health and wellbeing of Loddon Shire residents is protected in the event of an emergency

This MPHP has been prepared at a time of broad-based health reform in Australia – the direction of which we cannot be certain at the time of endorsing this MPHP in late 2009. The incoming Commonwealth Labor Government initiated a range of reviews of the health care system in 2008/2009 including among other things a commitment to a National Primary Health Care Strategy, the establishment of a National Health and Hospital Reform Commission to advise on short and long term health reform, the creation of a National Preventive Health Taskforce and a review of the Medicare Benefits Schedule for primary care items. It is unclear how the outcomes of these reforms will affect the distribution of health care services, access to health care services and funding of health and community support services in Loddon Shire in the coming years. As such, this MPHP reflects the commitment of the Loddon Shire Council to actions to improve health and wellbeing in the Shire within the anticipated budgetary and time resources available within the coming four years. Changes to health sector funding and reform may alter the feasibility of continuing particular actions or provide Council with new opportunities to progress health and wellbeing – and as such, the feasibility of each action in this Implementation Plan will be evaluated annually.

ACTION	PART OF COUNCIL RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION REFLECTED IN OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS	2010	2011	2012	2013
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Objective 1: To support the coordination of planning and delivery of health services in the Loddon Shire						
1.1 Participate on the Executive Committee of the Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership – in line with a new BLPCP Partnership agreement	Director Corporate Services	BLPCP Strategic Plan 2009-2012	X	X	X	X
1.2 Facilitate a six-monthly strategic health planning discussion with the CEOs of health services within the Loddon Shire	Chief Executive Officer		X	X	X	X
1.3 Map the range of health and wellbeing services and care available within the Loddon Shire	Director Corporate Services	BLPCP Strategic Plan 2009-2012	X			
1.4 Provide consultation feedback to the Victorian Department of Health on the development of a State Public Health and Wellbeing Plan	Director Corporate Services		X	X		
1.5 Distribute the Loddon Council Municipal Public Health Plan, Pandemic Plan, Municipal Early Years Plan and other relevant planning documents to the BLPCP Secretariat for forwarding to BLPCP member organisations.	Director Corporate Services	BLPCP Strategic Plan 2009-2012	X	X	X	X
1.6 Develop a position statement on health care	Director Corporate Services	Loddon Shire Council Plan 2009-2012	X			
1.7 Develop and implement a Community Access and Inclusion Plan 2012-2016	Rural Access Project Officer			X	X	X

ACTION	PART OF COUNCIL RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION REFLECTED IN OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS	2010	2011	2012	2013
1.8 Include information about available health and community services in "New Residents Packs"	Director Corporate Services	Loddon Shire Council Plan 2009-2012	X	X	X	X
1.9 Publish the Loddon Shire Municipal Public Health Plan 2010-2013 on the Loddon Shire website	Director Corporate Services		X			
1.10 Annually review progress made against the actions in the Loddon Shire Municipal Public Health Plan 2010-2013 and report to Council	Director Corporate Services		X	X	X	X
Objective 2: The health and wellbeing of children and their families are supported						
2.1 Deliver maternal and child health services across the Shire	Manager Community Services		X	X	X	X
2.2 Undertake marketing/communication campaign to increase participation in the 3.5 year old key 'ages and stages' maternal and child health service visit	Manager Community Services		X	X		
2.3 Deliver an immunisation program across the Shire	Manager Community Services		X	X	X	X
2.4 Develop a Municipal Early Years Plan 2009-2012	Manager Community Services	Loddon Shire Council Plan 2009-2012	X			
2.5 Support planning for the Victorian Government policy requirement for <i>Achieving Universal Access to Early Childhood Education</i> in the Loddon Shire	Manager Community Services		X			

ACTION	PART OF COUNCIL RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION REFLECTED IN OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS	2010	2011	2012	2013
2.6 Contribute to the research and documentation of the current roles and membership of Children's Services partnerships and alliances being conducted by the BLPCP	Manager Community Services	BLPCP Strategic Plan 2009-2012	X	X		
2.7 Contribute to the development of a Greater Bendigo and Loddon specific children's services guide to capture universal, support and regulatory children's services	Manager Community Services	BLPCP Strategic Plan 2009-2012	X	X		
2.8 In collaboration with the BLPCP, conduct a feasibility study in the Loddon Shire on options for co-locating specialist/visiting health services at existing children's services and recommend options for improving access to health services for children living in the Loddon Shire.	Manager Community Services	BLPCP Strategic Plan 2009-2012	X	X		
Objective 3: The health and wellbeing of young people within the Shire is supported						
3.1 Work with the BLPCP to investigate and implement a local online youth hub that acts as a gateway to other websites containing positive lifestyle information	Manager Community and Recreational Development	BLPCP Strategic Plan 2009-2012 Loddon Shire Council Youth Strategy 2009	X	X	X	
3.2 Work with the BLPCP to investigate, document and distribute best practice "Arts in Health" programs that result in the wellbeing of young people and communities.	Manager Community and Recreation Development	BLPCP Strategic Plan 2009-2012	X	X		

ACTION	PART OF COUNCIL RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION REFLECTED IN OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS	2010	2011	2012	2013
3.3 Continue to convene the Healthy Minds Network	Director Corporate Services		X	X	X	X
3.4 Ensure that the Healthy Minds Network considers issues relating to, and strategies to address, mental health and wellbeing in young people	Director Corporate Services Manager Community and Recreational Development	Loddon Shire Council Youth Strategy 2009	X	X		
3.5 Work with schools and local clubs/organisations to identify opportunities for increasing the number of schools involved in the 'Active After Schools' program	Manager Community and Recreation Development	Loddon Shire Council Youth Strategy 2009		X		
3.6 Conduct a needs assessment to identify barriers that prevent young people from accessing health and wellbeing services and develop strategies to address these barriers	Manager Community and Recreation Development	Loddon Shire Council Youth Strategy 2009		X	X	
Objective 4: The health and wellbeing of older people within Shire is supported						
4.1 Develop an Aged & Disability Strategy for the Shire	Manager Community Services	Loddon Shire Council Plan 2009-2013	X			
4.2 Work with the BLPCP to ensure information about the Loddon Shire Council aged care services is updated and maintained on the ConnectingCare website	Aged and Disability Services Coordinator	BLPCP Strategic Plan 2009-2012	X	X	X	X

ACTION	PART OF COUNCIL RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION REFLECTED IN OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS	2010	2011	2012	2013
4.3 Work with the BLPCP to ensure that Shire run Home and Community Care Providers will have e-referral capability.	Aged and Disability Services Coordinator	BLPCP Strategic Plan 2009-2012	X	X		
4.4 Contribute to the development of a local interagency protocol and referral pathway for addressing elder abuse in Greater Bendigo and Loddon Shire	Aged and Disability Services Coordinator	BLPCP Strategic Plan 2009-2012	X	X	X	
4.5 Seek funding for a needs analysis research project to determine the demand in Loddon for independent living units and/or supported accommodation in Loddon (contingent on external funding grant)	Manager Community Services	Loddon Shire Council Active Ageing Plan 2009-2011	X			
4.6 Work with the BLPCP to conduct a feasibility study of expanding and implementing different options for independent living for older people in Greater Bendigo and Loddon	Manager Community Services	BLPCP Strategic Plan 2009-2012	X	X		
4.7 Identify how Council can encourage the development of independent living options and supported accommodation for older people in Loddon	Director Economy and Community	Draft Loddon Housing Strategy	X	X		
4.8 Prepare a position statement on the future management and growth of retiree and aged accommodation within the Shire	Director Economy and Community	Draft Loddon Housing Strategy	X	X		

ACTION	PART OF COUNCIL RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION REFLECTED IN OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS	2010	2011	2012	2013
4.9 Seek funding for a joint project between a Senior Citizen Centre and Neighborhood House to provide social and/or recreational programs for older people in Loddon (contingent on external funding grant)	Aged and Disability Services Coordinator	Loddon Shire Council Active Ageing Plan 2009-2011		X		
4.10 Provide Home and Community Care (HACC) services across the Shire	Aged and Disability Services Coordinator		X	X		
4.11 Advertise to Shire residents the availability of Home and Community Care (HACC) services for eligible residents	Aged and Disability Services Coordinator		X	X		
4.12 Provide Aged Care Packages to eligible Shire residents	Aged and Disability Services Coordinator		X	X	X	X
Objective 5 : Health promotion measures are implemented to address the high prevalence of Diabetes						
5.1 Participate in prevention and management initiatives developed by the Loddon Chronic Disease Diabetes Group	Manager Community Services	BLPCP Strategic Plan 2009-2012	X	X	X	X
5.2 Continue to fund and operate the Diabetic Sharps Container Program	Manager Environmental Health		X	X	X	X
5.3 In collaboration with the BLPCP, conduct two better health self management programs in the Loddon Shire for people with Chronic Disease	Manager Community Services	BLPCP Strategic Plan 2009-2012	X	X	X	

ACTION	PART OF COUNCIL RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION REFLECTED IN OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS	2010	2011	2012	2013
Objective 6: Dental health promotion measures are implemented to address dental health outcomes						
6.1 Provide feedback to the Loddon Mallee Region Department of Health for the development of a region-wide Oral Health Plan	Director Corporate Services		X			
6.2 Advocate to water providers/authorities to improve the quality of drinking water within the Shire.	Chief Executive Officer	Position Paper: Water Security for Urban Communities		X	X	X
Objective 7: The positive health and wellbeing effects of physical activity are maximised						
7.1 Participate in the BLPCP Physical Activity Consortium and facilitate the development of an annual implementation plan for the promotion of physical activity for young people.	Manager Community and Recreational Development	BLPCP Strategic Plan 2009-2012	X	X	X	X
7.2 Conduct a marketing campaign to ensure that both local residents and visitors are aware of tracks and trails in the Shire and are encouraged to use them	Manager Community and Recreation Development	Loddon Tracks and Trails Strategy Draft Report	X	X		
7.3 Undertake an access audit of township trails to identify areas which may need to be modified to provide improved access to people of all abilities	Manager Community and Recreation Development Rural Access Project Officer	Loddon Tracks and Trails Strategy Draft Report			X	

ACTION	PART OF COUNCIL RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION REFLECTED IN OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS	2010	2011	2012	2013
7.4 Seek funding applications for recreational programs and/or equipment specifically for older people in the Shire	Manager Community Services	Loddon Shire Council Active Ageing Plan 2009-2011	X	X	X	X
7.5 Identify ways for the Home and Community Care (HACC) Team to encourage clients to become more active	Aged and Disability Services Coordinator	Loddon Shire Council Active Ageing Plan 2009-2011	X			
7.6 Work with local communities to investigate opportunities to establish sustainable gymnasium facilities at appropriate locations in the Shire	Manager Community and Recreation Development	Loddon Shire Council Youth Strategy 2009	X	X		
Objective 8: The strategic management of water is supported						
8.1 Conduct a review of the Waste Water Management Plan to ensure that it is consistent with the Small Towns Strategy (once adopted)	Director Operations		X	-		
8.2 Promote messages about safe use of grey water for gardening to residents	Manager Environmental Health		X	X	X	X
Objective 9: Improved transport options are supported within the Shire						
9.1 Investigate the specific transport needs of older people and identify services to meet those needs	B-Line Transport Connections Coordinator	Loddon Shire Council Active Ageing Plan 2009-2011	X			
9.2 Examine the feasibility of more efficient use of existing transport services and options.	B-Line Transport Connections Coordinator	Loddon Shire Council Active Ageing Plan 2009-2011	X			

ACTION	PART OF COUNCIL RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION REFLECTED IN OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS	2010	2011	2012	2013
Objective10 : The risk of heat-related illness and death is minimised in the Shire						
10.1 Notify all health and community service providers within the Shire of heat wave risks each time a heat alert from the Victorian Government Department of Health is received	Manager Community Services		X	X	X	X
10.2 Notify summer sporting associations (bowls, tennis and cricket) within the Shire of heat wave risks each time a heat alert from the Victorian Government Department of Health is received	Manager Community Services					
10.3 Conduct a community awareness campaign of the risks of extreme heat and preventative methods in November and December of each year in collaboration with local health and community service providers	Manager Community Services		X	X	X	X
10.4 Facilitate 'heat wave' education for all HACC and Maternal and Child Health staff in November and December of each year in collaboration with contracting companies	Manager Community Services Aged and Disability Services Coordinator		X	X	X	X
10.5 During HACC visits to homes of clients between October and March, HACC staff will provide advice on avoiding the impacts of heat wave	Aged and Disability Services Coordinator					
10.6 If Council HACC staff visit homes of clients on heat wave days, they will provide 'wellbeing checks' and referral to health providers as necessary	Aged and Disability Services Coordinator		X	X	X	X

ACTION	PART OF COUNCIL RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION	ACTION REFLECTED IN OTHER PLANNING DOCUMENTS	2010	2011	2012	2013
10.7 During the first home visit between October and March, Maternal and Child Health Service will provide clients with advice on avoiding the impacts of heat wave	Manager Community Services		X	X	X	X
10.8 Evaluate the effectiveness of the heat wave plan in consultation with health and community services in Loddon Shire in each March or April each year	Manager Community Services		X	X	X	X
Objective 11: The health and wellbeing of Loddon residents is protected in the event of an emergency						
11.1 Develop a Loddon Shire Municipal Pandemic Plan	Manager Community Services		X			
11.2 Implement, when necessary, the Loddon Shire Pandemic Plan	Manager Community Services	Loddon Shire Municipal Pandemic Plan	X	X	X	X
11.3 Implement, when necessary, the health and medical component of the Loddon Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan	Manager Community Services	Loddon Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan	X	X	X	X
11.4 Advocate to the telecommunications companies for Shire-wide mobile phone coverage	Chief Executive Officer	Loddon Shire Council Plan 2009-2012	X	X	X	X

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

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BUDGET

The actions outlined in the Implementation Plan will be delivered with the current level of staff and financial resources.