

## 'Healthy People—Healthy Places'

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Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans are a statutory requirement for Victorian Councils under the *Health Act 1958* (Amended) and the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*. The plans must be prepared every four years and within 12 months after each general election of council.

In our Shire 'Healthy People—Healthy Places' is not just about fulfilling this legislative requirement and focuses on the broader social, economic, environmental and physical wellbeing of communities, and the way people in communities connect, work together and contribute to a vibrant, 'happening' place!

'Healthy People—Healthy Places' sets the overarching framework for all of the policies and partnerships that must be in place if people in the Shire are to enjoy good physical and mental health in great communities. The plan sets out the high-level policy directions for the future.

We—that means Council, the community, government and non-government agencies—are working in a coordinated and integrated way to improve the health of people and places across the Shire. In particular, we focus our efforts on six specific challenges and opportunities for healthy communities:

- planning for population change
- community strengthening and social inclusion
- healthy active transport
- physical activity and healthy eating
- better access to services
- public health and safety.

We feel keeping our community and partner organisations in the loop is important. We report on what we've done to implement the 'Healthy People—Health Places' plan by:

- reporting annually to Council
- reviewing of MPHWP Action Plan every six months
- reporting to the state government on relevant programs and services
- reporting annually to the community in local media.

Highlights of progress to date include:

- The Golden Connections Transport Project has advocated for increased transport options in the Shire. This includes three additional bus services.
- In 2009 the community transport program assisted 2,903 passengers, undertook 6,051 driving hours and travelled 122,619 km.
- The Health Planning Forum continues to engage key health and community services organisations.
- The Access and Inclusion Advisory Committee was established in 2009 and meets five times per year.
- The Health and Wellbeing Team has delivered walking groups, community meals/kitchens, increased health services, welcoming community facilities and access to some community grants.

The plan was recently reviewed and continues to identify the strategic actions and partnerships that must be in place if people in the Shire are to enjoy good physical and mental health and wellbeing as individuals and in communities.