

# Community Action Plan 2010 - 2015

## Town/Community: Lexton

### 1. Background - Who we are as a community

Lexton is a progressive community with many clubs and committees. The Lexton Progress Association is the body that is striving to act as an umbrella for other clubs and committees within the community.

Lexton was established in 1845 and is the oldest township in the Pyrenees Shire. It was the closest town to the first official gold discoveries on Cameron's Sheep Run at Clunes in 1851. It was the headquarters for the form Shire of Lexton (1860 – 1994) that included the towns of Amphitheatre, Waubra and other small communities. Lexton amalgamated with the Avoca and Ripon Shires in 1994 to form the Pyrenees Shire. Lexton is a small rural community (approx. 250) on the Sunraysia Highway. It is situated at the crossroads of early Victoria where the road from Sydney to the Western District, "the Major Mitchell Line", was intersected by the road from Geelong into the Wimmera.

The main industry today is the production of fine wool, cropping and some eucalypt farming. During the first half of last century Lexton had a number of apple orchards, as well as almond and cherries being grown. Apples were exported to Europe, in particular England and Germany. There was also a timber mill in the town. Many of Lexton's residents, both men and women, were employed by squatters from the large sheep stations in the areas from the 1850s through to late last century.

Currently the community is a great mix of farmers, rural workers, professionals who commute to work in larger surrounding towns, owner-business operators and retirees. A strong group of young people and children also make up part of this small rural community.

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### 2. Our Issues

Issues and concerns have been gathered at our recent community meeting and prioritised by a survey sent out to all households within the community

The priorities are as follows:

- Mobile Phone Coverage
- Lexton Streetscape
- School Bus Stop / Recreation Area
- Lexton Town Planning
- Community Socialisation
- Rotunda at Cemetery
- Fire Refuge
- Recreation Reserve

Other issues also raised include:

- Lexton Newsletter
- Cemetery Map
- Junior Fire Brigade
- Youth
- Town Maps and Walking Tracks
- Rainbow Serpent Festival
- Road Maintenance Dump at Beaufort Rd – Blackbottom Rd Intersection
- Community Market
- Police Station
- Road to Cemetery

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**Mobile Phone Coverage:** We as a community feel strongly that poor mobile coverage in this area is detrimental to the town, its potential growth and also the large population moving through on the arterial roads right through the heart of the community. As Lexton is only 50kms or 30min from the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest city in Victoria, virtually on the outskirts, poor mobile coverage hampers communication required to manage business, personal and other activities. This poor coverage also adversely affects this rural community, forcing residents and others wishing to utilize the mobile network to purchasing more expensive hardware to receive signals and not being able to tap into cheaper sources of internet usage.

**Lexton Streetscape:** As stated in our previous community action plan, Lexton is the oldest town in the Pyrenees Shire and the closest town to the first official gold discoveries in the district. We feel the town should be presented with pride at all times. This includes curb and channelling, increased lighting in the town centre to make the town more welcoming at night and also to provide better safety in our community. Other areas that require attention include the clean up of vegetation along the highway and the pruning and trimming of overgrown trees that obstruct vision.

**School Bus Stop:** The current bus stop is at the Lexton Rural Transaction Centre, situated directly opposite the Pyrenees Hotel carpark and merely 50metres from the cross roads of two major arterial roads. There are reasonable arguments for and against having the bus stop in this location, however it is felt that the safety of the children is of the utmost importance in determining the best location.

**Youth Recreation:** While there is play equipment at the Toll Bar Park for younger children, it is felt that an area with suitable recreational equipment is lacking for the older youth in the Lexton Community.

**Lexton Town Planning:** The Lexton township requires the community to grow if we are to survive and thrive as a town in the future. It is vital that zoning within and around the town is accurate, current and relevant to the growing needs of the community as a rural township. Clear guidelines for building private residences, developing businesses and retaining farms are required. We would require input from the shire and the state planning authority to positively and enthusiastically facilitate prospective new members into the town.

**Community Socialisation:** Lexton is a small community that has a big heart. Members of our community are very diligent in working within community groups to ensure our town has all the facilities and infrastructure required to keep the community

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operating. It is vital that the community as a whole celebrates its worth together. The Progress Association is aiming to ensure the community “gets together” regularly to reinforce community values and also enjoy social activities in conjunction with the various business activities

**Rotunda at Cemetery:** As with all other towns, the local cemetery tells the story of the history of the community, the people who lived and died in Lexton and surrounding areas, and also those that came from other communities and countries to end their time at Lexton.

More and more people are interested in tracing ancestors or wanting to understand their family ties when someone they know unfortunately passes away.

The rotunda would be the ideal setting to be able to sit and read information boards on the “residents” of our cemetery. It would also be a comfortable place for the elderly or invalided while participating in funeral services at the cemetery. Or just a quiet place to contemplate.

### **Fire Refuge:**

**Recreation Reserve:** The Lexton Recreation Reserve is an integral part of the community of Lexton. It is home to a number of sporting clubs and provides a community hub to many families in the district. There is a need for overall facility upgrades, significantly upgrading the building to be able to cater for many and various groups both small and large. Other areas for improvement include lighting for the oval, further upgrade to the netball area, practice nets and a proper pitch for cricket and upgrading of the netball courts to include tennis. Not continually upgrading our facilities puts the future of sport in our town at major risk: the possibility of not being able to retain players and the continuation of youth participation. One other area that could be an economic driver for the town and the reserve would be the provision for caravan and camping facilities at the reserve.

**Road to Cemetery:** The road to the cemetery (Cemetery Road) has suffered severely from erosion over the previous 12 – 18 months due to the heavy rains. The work done prior to the previous downpour was not sufficient to prevent it eroding again when it rained. It would be beneficial if the road was upgraded properly and sealed to prevent recurrence.

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### 3. Action Lists

Issue Responded To	Outcome Sought	Priority given to Issue	List of likely actions	Time-frames relating to actions	Who will lead the action	Who will assist	Resources needed? Cost?	How do we know it's done? How will we celebrate	How do we inform the community of progress/results? How do we evaluate?
<b>Mobile Phone Coverage</b>	Satisfactory coverage for mobiles throughout Lexton and along the Sunraysia Highway	High	Lobby Telstra and/or Politicians	3 – 12 Months	Progress Association	Progress Association Members		Response / action from Telstra.  Infrastructure installed	Progress Minutes Notice Board  Evaluation on actual increased coverage
<b>Lexton Streetscape</b>									
<b>School Bus Stop</b>	Safe area for children to catch the school bus	High	Work with parents to achieve consensus on best option	3 – 6 months	Parents of school children	Progress Association	Possible - Shelters - Warning lights - Crossing Attendants	Bus stop is in the safest location	Notice to Parents / Schools / Local Authorities Local Newspaper
<b>Youth Recreation Area</b>	Area for older children to socialize	High	Area set up with basketball ring and rebound wall	12+ months	Youth Representatives	Progress Association Shire	Designated area Sporting equipment Costing will need to be sourced	Area set up and being utilised regularly  Opening Function	Notice Board Local Newspaper

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<b>Lexton Town Planning</b>	Definitive guidelines with respect to building, industry, farming, etc. Facilitation of building within the town to grow the community	High	Continue meetings and work Town Planner and David Clark	2 years	Progress Association	David Clark Shire Goulburn Murray Water		Rezoned town plan Set of guidelines	Progress Minutes  Function to celebrate?
<b>Community Socialisation</b>	Increased community interaction not necessarily limited to group meetings	High	Activities to be planned throughout the year	Continual	Progress Association	Other groups as sponsors	Funding raised through Serpent Festival Other funding to be sourced Costs vary according to activities	Activities well attended by Lexton community	Local Newspaper  Flyers in Letter boxes  Word of mouth
<b>Rotunda at Cemetery</b>	Rotunda to provide shelter with information boards for visitors to the cemetery	Medium	Project set up by Cemetery Trust Committee to list activities required	Cemetery Trust Committee to advise	Cemetery Trust Committee	Other groups will assist with actions	Costs to be sourced	Rotunda at the Cemetery with Information Boards	Local Newspaper  Opening Presentation

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<b>Fire Refuge</b>	Work with relevant groups to determine the minimum requirements for a refuge and plan to achieve this in Lexton	Medium	Lexton Rural Fire Brigade to determine list of actions		Lexton Rural Fire Brigade	Shire Country Fire Authority	Resources and costs to be determined	Response from Lexton Rural Fire Brigade and/or Shire	Notification from Lexton Rural Fire Brigade and/or Shire
<b>Recreation Reserve</b>  Lighting / Pitch	Upgrades to lighting, pitch and other areas	Medium	Source funding opportunities and obtain relevant quotes	6-12 months	Recreation Reserve Committee of Management, Football / Netball Club, Cricket Club and other users	Shire, State Government	Costing will need to be sourced	Installation of lights. Upgrade to pitch	Notice Board, location newspaper and word of mouth

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<b>Recreation Reserve</b> Multi-Purpose Centre	Upgrade building to become a multi-purpose centre	Medium	Source funding opportunities and obtain quotes	1 – 3 years	Rec Reserve Committee of Management, Football / Netball Club, Cricket Club and other users	Shire, State Government	Costing will need to be sourced	Centre that will be able to cater to all user groups with varying needs	Notice Board, location newspaper and word of mouth
<b>Recreation Reserve</b> Camping Ground Facilities	Sites suitable for caravan groups and possible overnight stays	Medium	Source funding opportunities and obtain relevant quotes	1 – 3 years	Rec Reserve Committee of Management, Football / Netball Club, Cricket Club and other users	Shire, State Government	Costing will need to be sourced	Facilities that will encourage caravan and other groups to come to Lexton	Notice Board, location newspaper and word of mouth
<b>Recreation Reserve</b> Upgrade /expansion to Netball Court	Have two courts that are multi-functional to allow more opportunity for other users	High	Source funding opportunities and obtain quotes	12 Months	Recreation Reserve Committee of Management / other users	Shire, State Government	Costing will need to be sourced	More teams using facilities	Notice Board, location newspaper and word of mouth



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### 4. How this Community Action Plan was compiled:

A public meeting was called by the Progress Association, with representation from many clubs and community groups within the town. The public meeting was facilitated by the Shire Community **Liaison Officer** and saw a number of community issues identified and noted.

A list of issues was developed, with issues both from this meeting and the previous community action plan, and posted out to every household within the Lexton community. It was also available for others at the Lexton Rural Transaction Centre. People were asked to number their top 3 priorities from the list and return the completed form

The Lexton Progress Association collated the responses. This action plan is the result.

The Lexton Progress Association, with representation from the various community groups in the Lexton community, is the driver of this Community Action Plan and will continue to update and initiate action in the public forum in which this new plan was compiled.

#### Lexton Progress Association

*President:* Johan Debast

*Secretary:* Vera Brown

April 2010