



**Pyrenees**  
Shire Council

# Municipal Health & Wellbeing Plan

2021-25

## Health & Wellbeing Priorities

1. Increasing Healthy Eating
2. Increasing Active Living
3. Preventing All Forms of Violence

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## Acknowledgement of Country

We in Pyrenees Shire acknowledge the Traditional Owners past and present of the Wadawurung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Eastern Maar, and Wotjobaluk tribes whose land forms the Pyrenees Shire. We pay our respects to the customs, traditions and stewardship of the land by the Elders and people of these tribes.

## Our Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025

Welcome to Pyrenees Shire Council's Municipal Health & Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025. This plan sets priorities and goals to improve, promote and protect the health and wellbeing of our community and help shape our future.

This plan sets out three priority areas to focus on for the next four years:

- Increasing Healthier Eating.
- Increasing Active Living.
- Preventing All Forms of Violence.

Health is defined by the World Health Organisation as 'a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity' (2017) Health begins in the context of our everyday lives; where we live, learn, work and play. Opportunities for better health can also be found in these spaces and places. The environments where health is created need to be improved to provide conditions where people can be healthy and well. Planning for healthy built, natural, social and economic environments ensures greater success in achieving a healthy and well community.

Local government can have a direct impact on factors such as employment, municipal planning, transport, social support, access and community participation, all of which contribute to population health (VicHealth, 2015). Provision of services, maintenance of infrastructure, facilities and public open space, and the creation and enforcement of local laws and policy, are all areas where government play a key role. In addition, local government has both the authority and responsibility to fulfil a leadership and advocacy role in creating an environment where communities not only survive, but prosper (VicHealth, 2015; Department of Human Services, 2001). For these reasons local government is well placed to influence health.

Under the Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008, councils are required to prepare a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWBP) every four years, within twelve months after each general election of Council. The plan is invaluable in helping achieve our aspirations for a healthy and well community. Through the process of the plan's creation, it becomes more than words on a page; it asks us to reflect on past achievements, take stock of community identified needs, guides our work to maximise health impacts and makes us accountable for our actions. We will use this plan to continue to have conversations with the community, council departments, external stakeholders and partners, as we believe this is essential for a community where everyone can be healthy and well.

Aligning our MPHWP plan with those of Council, State Government and partnering organisations, strengthens the ability to deliver and influence health outcomes. This plan aligns with the Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023 and also links to the Victorian Outcomes Framework. This plan will also align with and support the Pyrenees Shire Council Plan 2021 -2025, of which extensive community consultation has taken place. Community prosperity will only be achieved by working together with others who live, work or otherwise are involved in the local community.

## Key Stakeholders

Consultation with the community and key stakeholders informed the priority areas of this plan. The Health and Wellbeing Plan is a collaborative effort between Council, the public and a number of organisations. Our key partner organisations include:

Grampians Pyrenees Primary Care Partnership  
Beaufort and Skipton Health Service  
Grampians Community Health  
Women's Health Grampians  
Maryborough and District Health Service  
Ballarat Community Health  
Sports Central  
Central Highlands Water

<https://www.grampianspyreneespcp.org.au/>

<http://bshs.org.au/>

<https://gch.org.au/>

<https://whg.org.au/>

<https://mdhs.vic.gov.au/>

<https://bchc.org.au/>

<https://sportscentral.org.au/>

<https://www.chw.net.au/>



## Council Plan “Shaping the Pyrenees” 2021 -2025

### Council Vision 2025

‘Sustainable and welcoming places and natural environments that create inclusive, happy and healthy connected communities.’

### Community Vision 2031

‘**Inclusive, happy and healthy connected communities**; and **sustainable and welcoming** townships, **natural environments** and rural areas.’

### By 2031 in Pyrenees Shire:

#### By 2031 in Pyrenees Shire:

The health and wellbeing of our communities is paramount.

- All Pyrenees Shire communities have facilities and services that encourage & support community connectedness, and intergenerational connections; including investing in creative arts, activities and events.
- We’re prepared for emergencies like pandemics.
- Our history is preserved, acknowledged and recorded.
- We have access to an extensive quality community / health service & facilities for all ages.
- Communities are empowered to embed social & cultural diversity in all decision making.
- Communities have facilities and activities that support exercise for physical & mental health for all ages.

## About Our Shire

The Pyrenees Shire area sits across traditional ownership areas of the Wadawurrung, Dja Dja Wurrung, Eastern Maar and Wotjobaluk Aboriginal peoples. Spanning between the regional centres of Ballarat and Ararat; we are a Shire of 29 communities, each with their own heritage, character and rural charm. Our towns and settlements are diverse and distinct, abundant with unique sense of place. Just over 50% of our population live within one of our 9 main towns or localities, with the remainder of the population living in rural locations. Our geographically dispersed population means that smaller townships and settlements are important hubs for community activities and social interaction. Our community markets, events and local sports clubs, are well-loved and supported.

Heritage elements from the gold rush provide opportunities for tourism, define the cultural identity of the municipality, and inform planning and development in townships. A number of European and Aboriginal heritage places are of State heritage significance, in particular a collection of heritage places within the core area of the Avoca township. However, a lack of population growth and development in some of the smaller, outlying towns has resulted in heritage assets falling into disrepair. Some heritage assets have been permanently lost through a lack of maintenance and continued use.

Our Shire is home to an abundance of craftspeople, designers, artists and makers as well as artisanal food and beverage producers.

The landscape of the Pyrenees Shire varies from the very steep hill areas of the Mt. Cole, Mt. Buangor, and Pyrenees Ranges to the undulating flat open terrain around the Natte Yallock, Stoneleigh and Streatham areas. The climate varies between the north and the south of the region. North of the Pyrenees Ranges there is a warmer, drier climate, with rainfall of about 650mm a year. South of the Pyrenees Ranges is a cooler, wetter climate with rainfall in excess of 750mm per year.

Our rural Shire supports grazing, timber and forestry, wineries and an abundance of natural resources, windfarms and renewable energy. Our rustic rural landscapes, and dramatic views of Pyrenees Ranges, are enhanced by the central Victorian light and seasonal changes in colour.

While we have a relatively small population, Pyrenees Shire Council is custodian of an extensive range of community assets that it provides to facilitate delivery of services to the community. For road assets, it has responsibility for 2,048.9km of roads varying from sealed roads to access tracks and fire-tracks, 291 bridges and major culverts; 45.39km of kerb and channel and 18.66km of footpaths.

## Our Communities

Amphitheatre, Avoca, Barkly, Beaufort Bo Peep, Brewster, Bung Bong, Burnbank, Carngham, Carranballac, Chepstowe, Chute, Cross Roads, Crowlands, Ercildoune, Eurambeen, Evansford, Eversley, Frenchmans, Glenbrae, Glenlofty, Glenpatrick, Glenshee, Hillcrest, Lake Goldsmith, Lamplough, Landsborough, Langi Kal Kal, Lexton, Lillicur, Lower Homebush, Main Lead, Mena Park, Middle Creek, Moonambel, Mortchup, Mount Emu, Mount Lonarch, Natte Yallock, Nerring, Nowhere Creek, Percydale, Raglan, Rathscar, Redbank, Shays Flat, Shirley, Snake Valley, Stockyard Hill, Stoneleigh, Tanwood, Trawalla, Warrenmang, Waterloo, Wattle Creek and Waubra.

## Pyrenees Shire Statistics

Area: 3,435 sq km

Population: 7,472

Population Change (2008-19):  
Increase 12.2% (811)

Projected Population Change  
(2016-36): Increase 5.4% (396)

Median Age: 51 yrs

Median Household Weekly  
Income: \$876 (Vic \$1,419)

In Labour Force - 15-64yrs:  
60% (Vic 72%).

Unemployment:  
4.4% (Vic 5.4%)

Number of Businesses:  
854 (2019), an increase  
from 801 (2016).



Persons Who Live Near Public  
Transport: 7.5% (Vic 73.95)

Most Common Industries of Employment:  
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing (20%)  
Health Care & Social Assistance (12%)  
Manufacturing (9%)  
Retail Trade (8%)  
Construction (7%)  
Public Administration & Safety (7%)

Consumes Alcohol at High Risk  
Levels to Health: 76% (Vic 59%).

Median Community Distance:  
17.3kms (Vic 10.5km)

Adult Daily Smoker:  
21% (Vic 12%).

Climate - Days 35C and Above:  
2 (2017), 6 (2018), 13 (2019).

Diabetes:  
Type 2 90.7% (Vic 87.1%)  
Type 1 7.4% (Vic 8.8%)  
Diabetes Breakdown by Type (2019)

Satisfaction with Life: Very High  
Male 30.9% (Vic 26.6%) Female 42.3% (Vic 27.4%)

Confirmed COVID-19 Cases: 3

Data Source – Grampians Pyrenees Primary Care Partnership Population Health & Wellbeing Profile – December 2020, prepared by Nancy Vaughan, Grampians Pyrenees Primary Care Partnership, Ararat, Victoria.

# Increasing Healthy Eating



## Outcomes:

Increase equitable access to vegetables, fruit and water; and decrease access to sugar sweetened beverages.

## Health Statistics

61 % of Residents Are Overweight  
(Vic 51%)

30% of Residents Are Obese  
(Vic 19%)

25% Residents Consumed  
Sugar Sweetened Soft Drink Daily (Vic  
10%)



Our diet and food environment has changed markedly over the past 30 years or more, with many Victorians not consuming enough of the foods and drinks required to keep us healthy (such as vegetables, fruit and wholegrain cereals) and consuming too many discretionary foods and drinks that are high in energy, saturated fat, added sugar, salt or alcohol. This change has coincided with an increase in obesity and contributed to chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, some cancers and dental caries, as well as to poor mental health.  
(Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023).



5% of Residents Did Meet  
Vegetable Consumption  
Guidelines (Vic 5%)

36% of Residents Did Meet Fruit  
Consumption Guidelines  
(Vic 43%)

3.2% of Residents Experienced  
Food Insecurity (Vic 6.2%)

Data Source – Grampians Pyrenees Primary Care Partnership Population Health & Wellbeing Profile – December 2020, prepared by Nancy Vaughan, Grampians Pyrenees Primary Care Partnership, Ararat, Victoria.

OUTCOMES (What We Want To Do)	INDICATORS/MEASURES OF SUCCESS	STRATEGIES (How We Will Do It)
Increase equitable access to fresh fruit and vegetables.	<p>Increase proportion of people who consume sufficient fruit and vegetables.</p> <p>Increase mean serves of fruit and vegetables per person.</p> <p>Decrease prevalence rate of type 2 diabetes in adults.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocate for the availability of healthy, sustainable, and safe food.</li> <li>• Work to improve food access for all through supporting the activities of the Grampians Food Alliance (GFA).</li> <li>• Continue to support Beaufort and Avoca Food Pantry (E.g., Funding).</li> <li>• Increase the number of Council run events with healthy food.</li> <li>• Promote the Healthy Choices: Food and Drink Classification Guide within Council facilities, recreation facilities, community groups and local businesses.</li> <li>• Ensure Council facilities and catering contracts are implemented based on Health Choices Food and Drinks Classification Guide – with a preference to food and drinks within the green classification.</li> <li>• Implement and support suitable training and education around healthy eating, including growing fruit and vegetables and cooking programs.</li> </ul>
Increase access to water.	<p>Review access to water at Council managed facilities/spaces.</p> <p>Increase promotion of water as the drink of choice at Council run events.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate the installation of drinking water refill stations in key public spaces.</li> <li>• Work with partner organisations to promoting water consumption messages.</li> <li>• Promotion of water as drink of choice at Council run events through provision of fillable water stations.</li> <li>• Promotion of water sales at Council managed facilities, including prominent display of water in drink fridges.</li> </ul>
Reduce access to sugar sweetened beverages.	<p>Proportion of drink fridges to contain at least 50% water.</p> <p>Proportion of drink fridges to contain 20% or less of sugar sweetened beverages. water.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the Healthy Choices: Food and Drink Classification Guide within Council facilities, recreation facilities, community groups and local businesses.</li> <li>• Work with community groups and businesses in reducing promotion of SSB's and layout of drink fridges, with preference to water.</li> </ul>

# Increasing Active Living



## Outcomes:

Increase levels of activity undertaken by Pyrenees Shire residents.  
Provide public spaces and infrastructure that encourages active living, that is safe and accessible by all.

## Health Statistics

49% of Residents Has Insufficient Physical Activity (Vic 44%)

62.2% of Males Has Insufficient Physical Activity (Vic 42.8%)

34% of Females Has Insufficient Physical Activity (Vic 45.4%)



Leading an active life improves our health and wellbeing. By moving more and sitting less we reduce the risk of ill health and all-cause mortality. That is, regular physical activity can help to prevent (and treat) many non-communicable diseases such as heart disease, some cancers, diabetes, musculoskeletal conditions and depression. Incorporating physical activity, preferably any type that you enjoy, into every day is associated with improved mental health, ageing well and increased levels of happiness. (Victorian Public Health and wellbeing Plan 2019-2023)



21% of Residents Participated Organised Activity (Vic 29%)

59% of Residents Participated Non Organised Activity (Vic 71%)

29% of Residents Did 0 Days of Physical Activity (Vic 19%)

Data Source – Grampians Pyrenees Primary Care Partnership Population Health & Wellbeing Profile – December 2020, prepared by Nancy Vaughan, Grampians Pyrenees Primary Care Partnership, Ararat, Victoria.

OUTCOMES (What We Want To Do)	INDICATORS/MEASURES OF SUCCESS	STRATEGIES (How We Will Do It)
Increase levels of activity undertaken by Pyrenees Shire residents.	<p>Decrease prevalence rate of type 2 diabetes in adults.</p> <p>Reduce proportion of people overweight and obese.</p> <p>Increase proportion of people who are sufficiently physically active.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and support local exercise groups and classes for all ages.</li> <li>• Promote recreation events within the shire.</li> <li>• Encourage participation in programs that promote physical activity.</li> <li>• Support community members to organise their own active activities.</li> <li>• Work with partner organisations to promote simple active living messages.</li> <li>• Investigate how best to promote, provide and support participation in active ageing activities.</li> <li>• Increase involvement in local sporting clubs through supporting clubs to provide a welcome, all age friendly, gender equitable and healthy environment for all.</li> <li>• Implementation of Recreation and Walkability Strategies.</li> </ul>
Provide public spaces and infrastructure that encourages active living, that is safe and accessible by all.	<p>Increase proportion of people participating in organised sport</p> <p>Decrease proportion of adults sitting for seven + hrs on an average weekday</p> <p>Increase percentage of people accessing local sporting facilities and participating in sporting clubs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing upgrades and maintenance of council owned recreational facilities including swimming pools, ovals, parks and open spaces.</li> <li>• Increase accessibility within Council swimming pools.</li> <li>• Provide community grants that support upgrades and development of community recreational facilities and events.</li> <li>• Provide and promote well maintained walking tracks/trails.</li> <li>• Provide active transport pathways and linkages to promote and encourage walking and cycling around towns (inc. use of public transport).</li> <li>• Increase community members of all ages use of Victorian State Parks by providing and promoting park maps.</li> <li>• Continue to investigate the development of mountain bike trails in Pyrenees State Forest.</li> <li>• Improve active spaces through tree planting and outdoor seating.</li> </ul>

# Preventing All Forms Of Violence



## Outcomes:

All residents are treated equally with respect and dignity.  
All residents feel safe and empowered to take a stand against all forms of violence.

## Health Statistics

111 Recorded Crimes Against Persons  
(March 2019-March 2020)

74% Residents Definitely Felt Safe Walking  
Alone At Night (Regional Vic 64%, Vic 56%).

Affected Family Members  
Increase 2.3% (2018-2019)

Family violence has a profound impact on health and wellbeing - with far-reaching impacts including deteriorated physical and mental health, loss of housing, loss or limited access to employment, precarious financial security, isolation and alienation of extended family/social support and, in extreme cases, death.

(Victorian Public and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023)

Victims of Crime - Stalking, Harassment &  
Threatening Behaviour - 25  
52% Females & 48% Males (2016-2019)

Victims of Crime – Sexual Offences - 60  
77% Females & 23% Males (2016-2019)

Victims of Crime - Assault and Related Offences - 221  
54% Females & 46% Males (2016-2019)

Affected Family Members By Age  
25% (35-44yrs)  
20% (45-54yrs)  
19% (25-34yrs)  
18% (55+yrs)  
10% (0-17yrs)  
7% (18-24yrs)

Data Source – Grampians Pyrenees Primary Care Partnership Population Health & Wellbeing Profile – December 2020, prepared by Nancy Vaughan, Grampians Pyrenees Primary Care Partnership, Ararat, Victoria.

OUTCOMES (What We Want To Do)	INDICATORS/MEASURES OF SUCCESS	STRATEGIES (How We Will Do It)
All residents are treated equally with respect and dignity.	Increase in workshops throughout the shire.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Partner with stakeholder organisations to provide support and promote programs/workshops that focus on respect, equality and prevention of violence.</li> </ul>
All residents feel safe and empowered to take a stand against all forms of violence.	<p>Ongoing infrastructure upgrades in public areas including increased lighting.</p> <p>Increase in safety statistics within the shire.</p> <p>Reduction in violence statistics within the shire.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide infrastructure upgrades that strengthen safety of residents including lighting of public areas.</li> <li>Continue to support an organisation structure where taking bystander action to prevent violence is the norm.</li> <li>Continue to provide funding through Council Community Grants for safety/security upgrades for local groups/organisations.</li> <li>Consider how COVID-19 has increased the risk and prevalence of family violence. Ensure primary prevention efforts include this context and that workplace policies and procedures incorporate measures relating to COVID-19.</li> <li>Maintain our Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with WRISC to support service delivery to our residents.</li> <li>Recommit to our membership and support to the Communities of Respect and Equality (CoRE) Alliance and Charter.</li> </ul>

# Tackling Climate Change and its Impact on Health

The World Health Organisation has described climate change as the defining issue for public health in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (WHO 2015). It is an urgent challenge, with implications at the global, national and community levels. Climate change affects health in many ways – directly by the increased intensity and frequency of extreme weather events such as prolonged heatwaves, floods and bushfires, and indirectly through worsening air quality, changes in the spread of infectious diseases, risks to food safety and drinking water quality, and effects on mental health (Victorian Public and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023).

The Pyrenees Shire Council acknowledges this link between climate change and its affect on health. As a result, Council has already made commitments to addressing climate change at a local level including being one of forty-six Victorian Councils to sign on to VECO, the Victorian Energy Collaboration, the largest ever emissions reduction project by local government in Australia. By joining this project, Pyrenees Shire Council will power all its total energy use with 100 per cent renewables, including streetlights, offices, community spaces, football and netball club rooms and lighting, pre-schools, libraries and town halls. Other commitments in the future include encouraging local businesses to consider installing electric vehicle charging stations (Already installed by Dogrock Winery), partnering with MASH (More Australian Solar Homes), that allows homeowners to easily access high quality and competitively priced solar power systems and batteries and supporting the East Grampians Rural Pipeline (EGRP) project, where a pipeline would provide water security and improved productivity for agriculture in the western edge of the municipality. Pyrenees also has windfarms established in the areas of Chepstowe, Crowlands, Stockyard Hill and Waubra.

As defined by Council's Plan 2021 2025 – Environment – Council will:

- Continue being an environmentally progressive organisation.
- Foster a climate change resilient community.
- Encourage community care of biodiversity and natural values.
- Improve waste management to reduce landfill and reduce harm to the environment.



## Improving Mental Wellbeing

Mental health is an essential ingredient of individual and community wellbeing and significantly contributes to the social, cultural, and economic life of Victoria. Feeling connected to others, being able to cope with the usual stresses of life, having the opportunity and capacity to contribute to community and being productive are all critical to mental health. (Victorian Public and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023).

With recent events of COVID-19, on top of everyday stresses, The Pyrenees Shire Council in cooperation with its supporting partners, acknowledges the need for ongoing support for improving resident's mental wellbeing. It also acknowledges the strong correlation between outcomes of active living, healthy eating and prevention of all forms of violence.

Council is committed to:

- Support communities in times of emergencies and in post-emergency recovery.
- Advocate for appropriate access to medical and allied health services.
- Deliver and support activities aimed at increasing community connections and reducing social isolation.
- Facilitate connectivity and increase accessibility through appropriate infrastructure.
- Develop a Diversity and Inclusion Strategy.
- Develop an Accessibility Strategy.
- Provide community is appropriate services for aged-care and early years services.
- Develop a youth engagement strategy to support young people to be active in our community.



## References

Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2019-2023 – Victorian State Government - August 2019.

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/publications/policiesandguidelines/victorian-public-health-wellbeing-plan-2019-2023>

Grampians Pyrenees Primary Care Partnership – Community Health and Wellbeing Profile – Nancy Vaughan - 15<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

<https://www.grampianspyreneespcp.org.au/gppcp-community-health-and-wellbeing-profile-2020/>

## Resource Links

**Pyrenees Shire Council Strategic Plans**

<https://www.pyrenees.vic.gov.au/About-Pyrenees-Shire-Council/Council-Policies-and-Publications/Strategic-Plans>

**Victorian Government – Public Health and Wellbeing Planning**

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/health-strategies/public-health-wellbeing-plan>

**VicHealth**

<https://www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/>

**Victorian Local Government Women’s Charter**

<http://www.vlga.org.au/What-were-doing/Women-in-local-government/Victorian-Local-Government-Womens-Charter>

**Promote the Healthy Choices: Food and Drink Classification Guide**

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/publications/policiesandguidelines/Healthy-choices-food-and-drink-classification-guide>

**Climate Change Act 2017**

<https://www.climatechange.vic.gov.au/legislation/climate-change-act-2017>

**Ending Family Violence: Victoria’s Plan for Change – Victorian Government**

<https://www.vic.gov.au/ending-family-violence-victorias-10-year-plan-change>

**Safe and strong: A Victorian gender Equality Strategy – Victorian Government**

<https://www.vic.gov.au/safe-and-strong-victorian-gender-equality>

**Women’s Health Grampians CoRE Program- Communities of Respect and Equity**

<http://whg.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/CoRE-Plan-Document.pdf>

<http://whg.org.au/priorities-programs/core>