

Council and Wellbeing Plan Performance Report

2021–2025




**MORNINGTON
PENINSULA**
Shire



Mornington Peninsula Shire acknowledges the Bunurong people, who have been the custodians of this land for many thousands of years; and pays respect to their elders past and present. We acknowledge that the land on which we meet is the place of age-old ceremonies, celebrations, initiation and renewal; and that the Bunurong peoples' living culture continues to have a unique role in the life of this region.

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Mayor's Message



Being a councillor is uniquely challenging and rewarding. We are tasked with making decisions that shape our community's future, manage public resources and provide essential services. It involves a wide range of responsibilities, from town planning and public infrastructure to environmental protection and community services.

One of the main challenges councillors face is balancing the diverse and sometimes conflicting interests of residents. We must listen to different viewpoints, consider the long-term impact of our decisions, and find compromises that meet community needs.

We do this in the context of limited budgets, which require tough choices about where to allocate funds. This is particularly so in the current economic climate, where the price of labour and materials has risen substantially, an unprecedented number of State Government responsibilities have been shifted onto councils, and rate rises have been capped at below inflation for many years.

Economic constraints can complicate the development and maintenance of infrastructure, facilities, and services, such as libraries, parks, roads, and waste management. If that wasn't enough, we also need to navigate regulatory frameworks and work within state and federal policies, which can add layers of complexity to our work.

Despite these challenges, the role of councillor brings many rewards. Councillors have the opportunity to directly influence their community's quality of life and to see the positive effects of our

efforts. From building new community facilities to putting in place environmental sustainability programs, it's hugely satisfying to see how our work provides tangible benefits for our residents. The role allows us to develop constructive and rewarding relationships with residents and organizations and help foster a sense of community pride.

Local government in Australia is essential but often undervalued. We are a bridge between the community and other levels of government, addressing grassroots issues that larger government bodies might overlook. Local government enables a tailored, immediate response to community needs, as we work closely with residents to ensure a sustainable, liveable Mornington Peninsula.

As we close out the 2021-25 Council and Wellbeing Report and usher in our new 2025-2029 Council Plan, it has been an immense privilege to serve as a councillor delivering the actions listed throughout this 2021-2025 Council and Wellbeing Performance Report.

Anthony Marsh
Mayor 2024-25
Mornington Peninsula Shire

Our Shire

The Victorian Electoral Commission announced the Mornington Peninsula Shire's 2020 council election results at the 'Declaration of Election' ceremony at the Peninsula Community Theatre on 6 November 2020. The event was live streamed via Council's website.

The new Council was officially sworn in at the Annual Council Meeting 16 November 2020 where the Mayor and Deputy Mayor were also elected. Councillor Despi O'Connor was elected as Mayor with Councillor Sarah Race elected as Deputy Mayor.

The elected Councillors were:

- Briars Ward – Steve Holland, Anthony Marsh and Despi O'Connor
- Cerberus Ward – Lisa Dixon
- Nepean Ward – Hugh Fraser and Sarah Race
- Red Hill Ward – David Gill
- Seawinds Ward – Antonella Celi, Debra Mar and Kerri McCafferty
- Watson Ward – Paul Mercurio

In 2021 we welcomed Susan Bissinger to the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council. Councillor Bissinger was elected (via countback on 13 April 2021) following Councillor Hugh Fraser's

resignation on 9 March 2021. Councillor Bissinger joined Councillor Sarah Race in representing Nepean Ward.

In 2022 we welcomed Simon Brooks and Kate Roper back to the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council. Following the resignation of Councillor Kerri McCafferty on 19 December 2022, Councillor Brooks was elected (via countback on 30 January 2023) as the new Seawinds Ward Councillor, joining Councillor Celi and Councillor Mar. Councillor Roper was elected as the new Watson Ward Councillor following the resignation of Councillor Paul Mercurio on 9 December 2022.

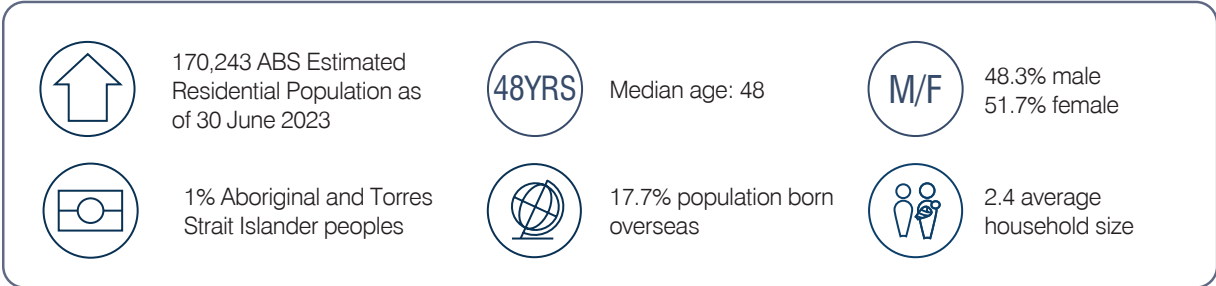
Since 16 November 2020, the following Councillors have been elected as Mayor and Deputy Mayor:

- 16 November 2021 - Councillor Anthony Marsh was elected Mayor and Councillor Lisa Dixon was elected Deputy Mayor.
- 15 November 2022 - Councillor Steve Holland was elected Mayor and Councillor Debra Mar was elected Deputy Mayor.
- 21 November 2023 - Councillor Simon Brooks was elected Mayor and Councillor Antonella Celi was elected Deputy Mayor.
- 19 November 2024 - Councillor Anthony Marsh was elected Mayor and Councillor Paul Pingiaro was elected Deputy Mayor.

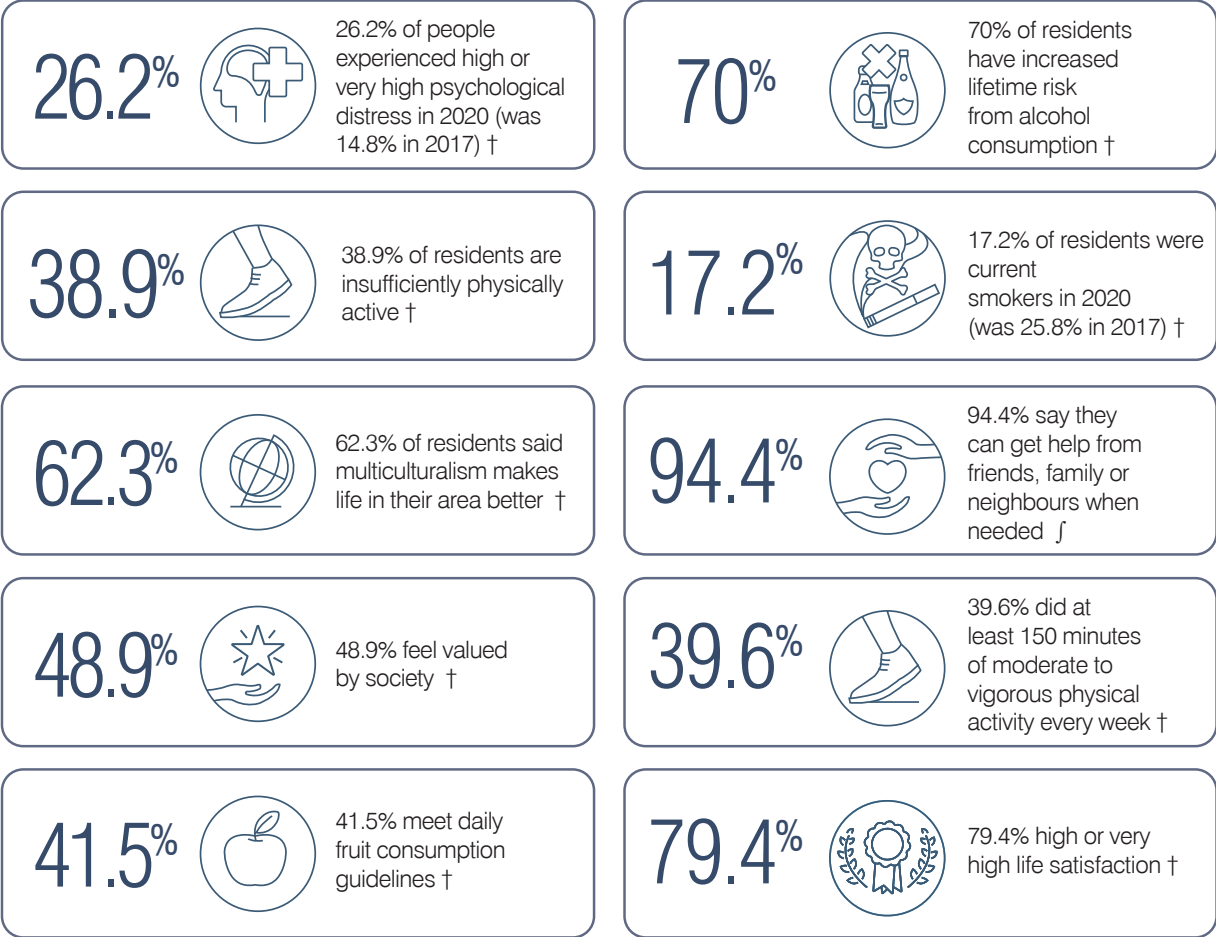
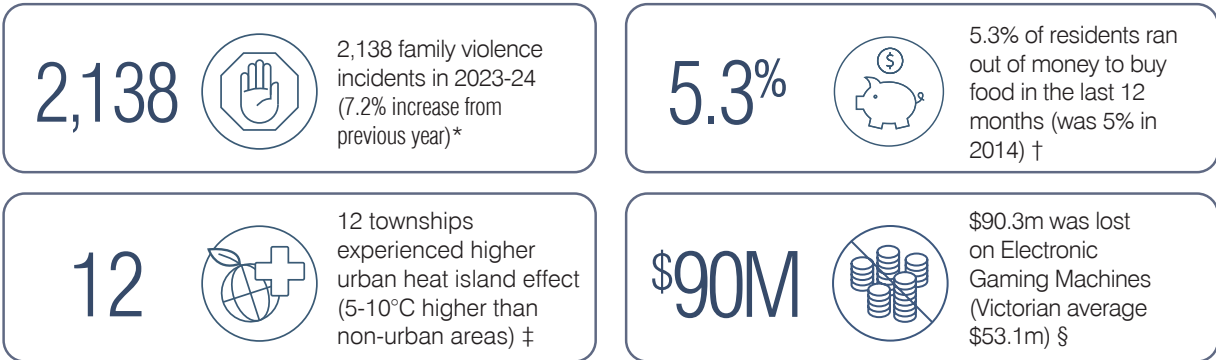




Our Community



Health and Wellbeing Snapshot



*Crime Statistics Agency 2004
 † Victorian Population Health Survey 2023
 ‡ Jesuit Social Services and RMIT University 2021
 § Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation 2024
 ¶ Community Indicators Victoria 2017

Our Current Councillors



Cr. Anthony Marsh (Mayor)
Briars Ward
0438 435 857
anthony.marsh@mornpen.vic.gov.au



Cr. Paul Pingiaro (Dep. Mayor)
Tanti Ward
0423 769 540
Paul.Pingiaro@mornpen.vic.gov.au



Cr. Kate Roper
Beek Beek Ward
0466 519 551
Kate.Roper@mornpen.vic.gov.au



Cr. Max Patton
Benbenjie Ward
0423 761 109
Max.Patton@mornpen.vic.gov.au



Cr. Patrick Binyon
Brokil Ward
0423 760 847
Patrick.Binyon@mornpen.vic.gov.au



Cr. David Gill
Coolart Ward
0437 129 016
David.Gill@mornpen.vic.gov.au



Cr. Stephen Batty
Kackeraboite Ward
0439 988 547
Stephen.Batty@mornpen.vic.gov.au



Cr. Bruce Ranken
Moorooduc Ward
0402 384 006
Bruce.Ranken@mornpen.vic.gov.au



Cr. Andrea Allen
Nepean Ward
0423 764 691
Andrea.Allen@mornpen.vic.gov.au



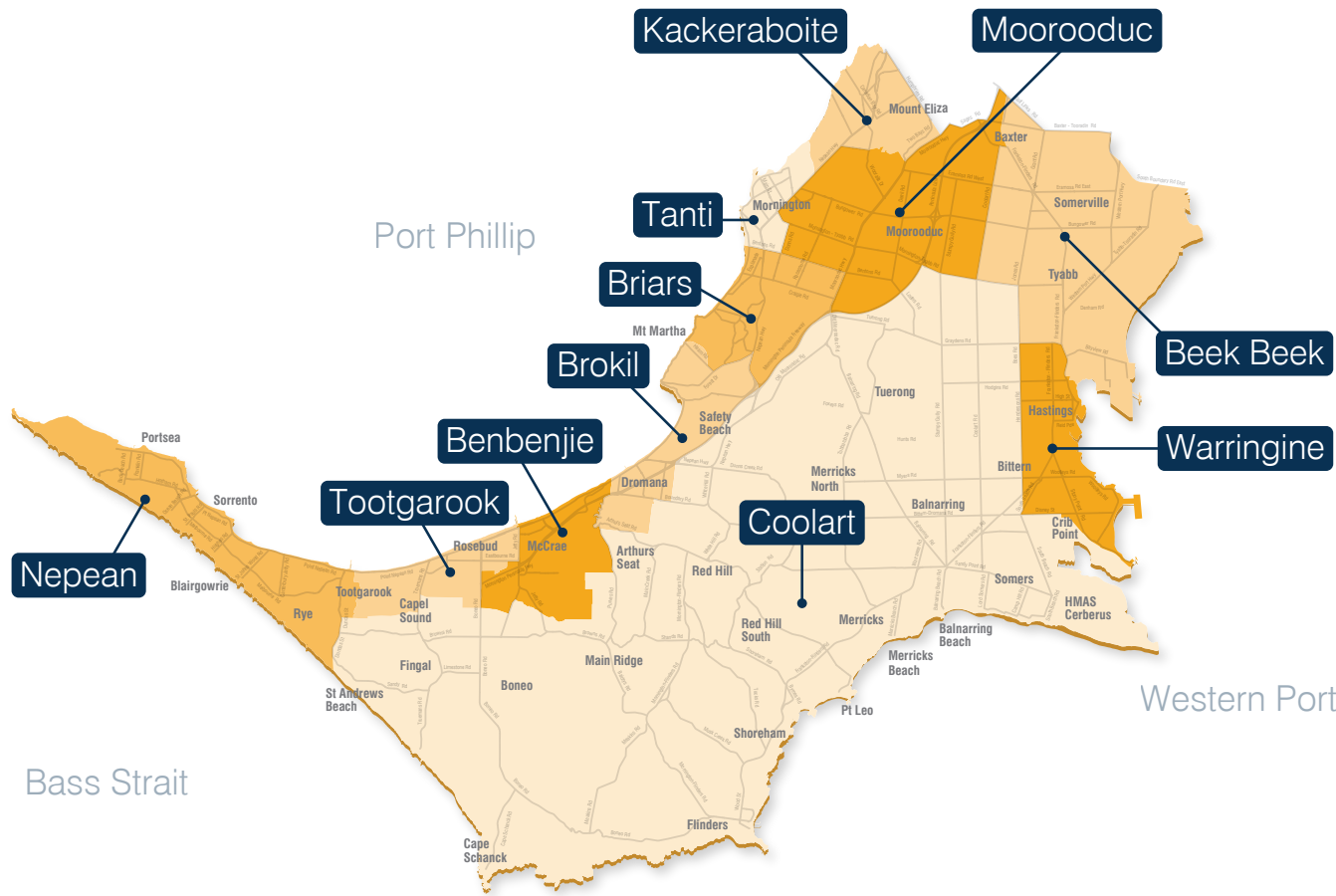
Cr. Cam Williams
Tootgarook Ward
0423 769 182
Cam.Williams@mornpen.vic.gov.au



Cr. Michael Stephens
Warringine Ward
0459 652 881
Michael.Stephens@mornpen.vic.gov.au

Our Ward Map

Mornington Peninsula Shire is divided into eleven council wards.



Our Aspirations

In 2021 the Shire empowered the community to help shape our future and develop a new Community Vision for the Peninsula to 2040.

The community was asked to imagine the future and answer questions such as 'What do you want life on the Mornington Peninsula to look like in 2040?'. More than 3,000 people got involved providing feedback via surveys, online workshops, township pop-ups, postcards and drawings.

An independently recruited representative community panel from across the Shire reviewed all the community feedback and referenced other council information to develop the community vision.

The Shire empowered the panel to deliver the vision to Council and committed to using it to guide the development of the council plan and other key initiatives.

The Citizen Panel presented the Mayor with the Community Vision and accompanying principles at the Council meeting on 13 July 2021.

Our shared Community Vision

Welcome (Wominjeka) to the Mornington Peninsula, bound by green spaces and sea.

We honour and pay respects to the Traditional Owners of this beautiful land – the Bunurong people. We also pay our deepest respects to their Ancestors and Elders. We are inspired to protect and enhance our distinct region that values its diverse community, environments and townships. Our community spirit thrives, with safe, accessible and inclusive spaces for all. Together we continue to create a sustainable, vibrant and prosperous future that values innovation and shared compassion.



2021-2025 Council and Wellbeing Plan

Following on from the development of the Community Vision, on 11 November 2021, the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council released its four-year Council and Wellbeing Plan, bringing together the Council Plan and Health and Wellbeing Plan for the first time, reflecting the importance of health and wellbeing in everything we deliver for our community.

Councillors carefully considered all feedback gathered in our wide-ranging community engagement process – Imagine Peninsula 2040, in the development of the Council and Wellbeing Plan.

The thoughts and ideas of our community, gathered in this process, informed the Council and Wellbeing Plan, which outlines how Council has worked toward fulfilling our community's vision for 2040. Council has regularly updated our community on the progress of the Plan through quarterly and annual reports, which are published on our website.

Mornington Peninsula Shire's Council and Wellbeing Plan 2021-2025 has the following components:

- **Themes:** Sets Council's strategic direction to work towards the Community Vision.
- **Strategic Objectives:** Outlines what the future looks like.
- The Strategies Council will put in place to reach the strategic objectives: What we will do to achieve our objectives.
- The **Strategic Indicators** that monitor the achievement of objectives: How we measure our progress.



Theme 1

Theme 2

Theme 3

A healthy natural environment and well-planned townships

Vibrant and unique townships balanced with a natural environment that is protected now and into the future, accelerating climate action and celebrating cultural heritage.

A robust, innovative and diverse economy

A community with abundant and varied education and local employment opportunities. We are open to new ideas and work with our partners to grow a strong, diverse and future-focused economy.

A flourishing, healthy and connected community

An inclusive and creative community that values safety, physical and mental health and wellbeing. A community with accessible services and transport to keep us connected.



Year in Review
2021 – 2025



Year in review

2021



Our new Council was officially sworn in at the Annual Council Meeting on 16 November 2020, shortly after emerging from our second COVID-19 lockdown that lasted 111 days, from 9 July 2020 to 27 October 2020.

With research showing close to 6,000 job losses, a 21 per cent fall in Gross Regional Product (compared with a 6.9 per cent drop for Australia) and an 11 per cent drop in employment opportunities across local businesses, the priority of our new Council became supporting our community and local businesses through the pandemic.

In February 2021 we offered relief and recovery grants to help support our community through the impacts of COVID-19. The grants were made available for immediate relief, business recovery and community recovery. We awarded close to \$238,000 to individuals, not for profit organisations, community groups and business associations.

The grants came at the end of a busy summer period during which we rolled out our outdoor dining and trading program. The program helped local businesses make the most of the busy summer period and stay COVID-safe by trading outdoors. The 2021-22 Council Budget, adopted in June 2021, added a further \$10 million package of business supports and funding to re-establish outdoor dining over the summer.

In July 2021 we presented the Mayor with the Community Vision and accompanying principles at the Council meeting. To

help shape our future and develop a Community Vision for the Peninsula to 2040, the community was asked to imagine the future and answered questions such as 'What do you want life on the Mornington Peninsula to look like in 2040?'

We had just come out of our sixth COVID-19 lockdown, 5 August 2021 to 21 October 2021, which lasted 77 days when we experienced the 29 October storm event. Across the state, Energy Minister Lily D'Ambrosio said 526,000 Victorian properties were without power at 8.30am the following day, which amounted to almost one quarter of Victorian properties. With wind damage extending from Rosebud to Portsea and Red Hill reported to be like a war zone, the storm wiped 5 per cent from our 2021-22 Budget. The \$5.1 million repair bill included \$3.5m to clean up after storms in October 2021, \$700,000 to manage increased leachate at Rye tip caused by intense rain and \$500,000 to repair a landslip at Bay Road, Mount Martha.

The Mornington Peninsula property market rose dramatically when the pandemic hit. Between March 2020 and March 2022, house values in a dozen of our coastal townships jumped by 40 per cent-plus. With housing in demand on the Peninsula, seven of the state's top eight postcodes for rental increases (between January 2020 and 2022) were on the Peninsula. In June 2021, our median house price was \$1,120,000 and our median rental price was \$520 a week. This was higher than the prices in greater Melbourne.

Major capital works delivered

- Moorooduc - Bentons Road Reconstruction
(total project value \$2,800,000)
- Safety Beach Rock Revetment Refurbishment
(total project value \$250,000)
- Yawa Aquatic Centre
(total project value \$47,400,000)
- Tuerong: RM Hooper Reserve Pavilion
(total project value \$1,290,000)
- Portsea: Police Point Cottage 6 Refurbishments (total project value \$960,000)
- Dromana Football and Netball Club – Netball Courts (\$530,000)
- Mornington: Haig Street Footpath and Accessible Parking (total project value \$100,000)
- Tyabb: Kindergarten Upgrade and Expansion (total project value \$1,477,000)
- Mornington Civic Reserve Sports Pavilion Project (total project value \$6,312,000)
- High Street Streetscape Renewal Project – Stage 4 Queen Street to Victoria Street (total project value \$1,200,000)
- Boneo Reserve Cricket Pavilion Public Toilets (total project value \$300,000)
- Rye: Elgan Avenue Coastal Biofiltration (total project value \$350,000)
- Rosebud: Olympic Reserve Cricket Net Renewal (total project value \$280,000)
- High street Streetscape Renewal Project - Laneways 3 and 4 (total project value \$600,000)
- Dromana: Codrington Street and Ligar Street Roundabout (total project value \$120,000)
- Moorooduc: Reconstruction of Benton's Road (total project value \$2,800,000)
- Rosebud: Boneo Road, Besgrove Street and Allambi Avenue Signals (total project value \$1,200,000)
- Capel Sound: Illaroo Street Path (total project value \$250,000)
- Crib Point: Crib Point Senior Sports Pavilion (total project value \$2,000,000)
- Mount Martha: Harrap Road Footpath (total project value \$600,000)
- Hastings: Blackspot Program, Hodgins Road (total project value \$230,830)
- Tootgarook: Wilkinson Street and Carmichael Street Road Upgrade (total project value \$800,000)
- Hastings: Blackspot Program, Hodgins Road (total project value \$230,830)
- Tootgarook: Wilkinson Street and Carmichael Street Road Upgrade (total project value \$800,000)

Year in review 2022



In 2022, Council doubled down on our support for local businesses, reaffirming our commitment to the Small Business Friendly Council Charter. We began a wide-ranging review of economic development and planning functions to support local businesses in driving the development of a refreshed Economic Development and Tourism Strategy. We also commenced our new Building Better Business networking events and held the inaugural Innovation Summit, exploring the many opportunities and challenges for the Peninsula’s economic development over the coming decade.

As part of our COVID-19 recovery, we created a new Mornington Peninsula Festival to help our community celebrate and reconnect. The Drift Arts and Culture Festival was held in April 2022. For 11 days over autumn, we celebrated art and music with the inaugural Festival bringing the Peninsula’s venues, places and spaces to life.

Our focus on advocacy sharpened in 2022 in the lead up to the May federal election. Mayor Councillor Anthony Marsh and our CEO John Baker met with election candidates from across the political spectrum, seeking their support to achieve our Community Vision’s advocacy goals. We presented each candidate with an information pack outlining

Council’s advocacy priorities for the Peninsula, which ranged across areas such as homelessness and affordable housing, public transport, coastal management, digital connectivity, better roads and water security.

With inflation rising to 5.1 per cent in May 2022 and the Reserve Bank of Australia’s first rate rise since November 2010, we saw tougher economic conditions and a slowdown in discretionary spending as rising borrowing and living costs affected our community. A weakening of personal finances saw a return of buyers from regional locations to the cities, cut demand for homes on the Peninsula and saw a 10 per cent reduction in prices across parts of the Mornington Peninsula. Our population also saw a slight contraction in 2022, declining 0.41 per cent in 2022 to 169,733.

With the Victorian election in November, we launched a community advocacy campaign – Shout Out for the Peninsula – encouraging our community to let local political candidates know what was important to them. We highlighted a range of issues such as the housing crisis and recycled water access, as well as the need for better public transport, safer roads and improved mobile and broadband coverage.

Major capital works delivered

McCrae Lighthouse (total project value \$1,000,000).	Blairgowrie: R Penman Reserve, Playground Upgrade (total project value \$280,000)
Narambi Reserve Junior Oval (total project value \$2,500,000).	Rosebud: Waterfall Gully Maternal and Child Health Centre (total project value \$370,000)
Hastings Boat Ramp Upgrades - stage 2 and 3 (total project value \$2.9M)	Bittern: Blackspot Program Myers/Henderson Road Roundabout (total project value \$600,000)
Somerville Active Recreation Hub (total value \$1,480,000).	Somers: Camp Hill Road, Shared Path (total project value \$600,000)
Balnarring Oval Rehabilitation (total project value \$1,010,000)	Somerville: Pottery R Jones intersections (total project value \$500,000)
Mornington: Narambi Reserve Junior Oval (total project value \$2,500,000)	Mount Eliza: John Butler Reserve Public Toilet Block (total project value \$360,000)
Crib Point: Colin Parade and Martin Street School Footpath (total project value \$250,000)	Red Hill: Red Hill Station Ground Reserve Shelter (total project value \$140,000)
Sorrento Museum Storeroom Addition (total project value \$117,000)	Safety Beach: Victoria Avenue Public Amenities (total project value \$648,436)
Red Hill: Mechanics Hall Public Toilet (total project value \$440,000)	Tootgarook: Alma-Field Street Footpath Stage 1 (total project value \$550,000)
Dromana: George Bishop Reserve, Playground Upgrade (total project value \$160,000)	Tyabb: Bunguyan Reserve Sport Pavilion Upgrade (total project value \$1,510,000)
Mornington: Emil Madsen Soccer Pitch (total project value \$800,000)	
Hastings: High Street Streetscape Project – Stage 4 Queen Street to Victoria Street and Laneway Renewal (total project value \$1,800,000)	

Year in review

2023



As we continued to emerge from the shadow of the pandemic, it was terrific to see our local businesses beginning to bounce back. A major focus area for Council was engaging with and listening to our business operators about what they need from their Shire. From that, we developed an extensive program of support designed to help our small businesses thrive and prosper. This included the inaugural Business Excellence Awards.

We celebrated Mornington Peninsula businesses at the 2023 Business Excellence Awards at RACV Cape Schanck Resort. The Awards recognised local businesses and industries that demonstrated innovation, sustainability and excellence. The Business of the Year went to Elements Eatery.

In 2023, we focussed our attention on one of our important economic sectors: agriculture, food and beverage – worth close to \$1.3 billion a year. We launched our Food Economy and Agroecology Strategy, a first for local government in Australia, which aims to position the Peninsula as a leader in regenerative farming and sustainable food production.

In August, we successfully brought our region to the attention of decision-makers in Spring Street during our

three-day expo at Queens Hall in the Victorian Parliament. We highlighted the growing issues confronting the Peninsula, including homelessness and the shortage of affordable housing. Our advocacy also brought to light some of the challenges and opportunities for government investment that exist here on the Mornington Peninsula, with a focus on unlocking the economic potential of this region.

Since its first rate rise in November 2020, the Reserve Bank of Australia has implemented 12 additional rate increases, with no changes since November 2023, taking the cash rate to 4.35 per cent. As interest rates rose and borrowing capacities decreased, house prices unexpectedly remained high as a housing supply shortfall and strong population growth offset reduced borrowing capacities.

We were also very proud and excited to have been chosen as the destination for this year's Archibald Prize tour. Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery was named as the sole Victorian venue for the 2023 tour, with the exhibition running from September to November 2023. This high-profile exhibition welcomed more than 50,000 visitors to the Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery.

Major capital works delivered

Mornington: Community Animal Shelter Refurbishment (total project value \$6,300,000 and expected to be completed September 2025)

Sorrento: Point Nepean Road/Hotham Road Intersection Improvement (total project value \$2,500,000)

Mount Martha: Balcombe Estuary – Sediment Minimisation (total project value \$550,000)

Red Hill: Merricks Road and Stanleys Road Intersection – Compact Roundabout (total project value \$1,400,000)

Tyabb: Girl Guides Hall Remediation Works (total project value \$280,000)

Shoreham: Blackspot Program Shoreham Road Safety Upgrade (total project value \$1,800,000)

Dromana: Cricket Net Renewal (total project value \$410,000)

Tyabb: Bunguyan Reserve Sport Pavilion Upgrade (total project value \$1,510,000)

Mount Eliza Blackspot program, Mount Eliza Way (total project value \$800,000)

Hastings: Olivia Way Playground (total project value \$490,000)

Rye: Iolanda Street, Drainage Improvements (total project value \$100,000)

Rosebud: Point Nepean Road Path (total project value \$80,000)

Mount Martha Skate Park (total project value \$880,985)

Mount Eliza: John Butler Reserve Play Space and Landscaping (total project value \$320,954)

Mount Eliza: Tennis Court Redevelopment, Howard Parker Reserve

Year in review

2024



In this difficult economic climate, our financial position continues to be robust. This is down to prudent financial management and our commitment to cutting costs and finding efficiencies wherever possible. While we are continually looking for new and better ways to do things and deliver cost savings, Council committed an extra \$50,000 each to the three community support centres in Rosebud, Mornington and Hastings to help our community with the cost of living. This is on top of the \$700,000 we provide the centres annually.

In response to federal government reforms, Council decided to transition out of the Home and Community Care Program for Younger People. Ongoing reforms such as the NDIS have had a huge impact on the ability of local government to deliver in-home disability services, including increasing costs and inadequate funding levels for council-provided services. Government cost shifting resulted in approximately \$38 million expenditure in operational costs in 2023-24 and \$234 million over five years.

In March 2024, Domain reported that seven of the 10 Greater Melbourne suburbs where prices rose most since 2019, were on the Mornington Peninsula, with house prices soaring by 50 per cent over the past five years. With a lack of affordable housing on the Peninsula and growing homelessness, we continued to explore ways in which

Council could act in this space, either through our Triple A Housing Plan, our Affordable Housing Development Contributions Strategy or through our advocacy to the state and federal governments.

August saw the much-anticipated opening of our new \$10.2 million multipurpose community, health and sports pavilion at Mornington's Alexandra Park and the official opening of Tounnin Wominjeka, our new \$13 million Youth Hub at Rosebud, offering a one-stop-shop for our young people on the southern Peninsula.

In early September, we experienced a severe storm that wreaked havoc across parts of the Peninsula. We took 900 calls and logged more than 600 requests for help, set up three community relief and recovery hubs and organised an impromptu 'no charge' green waste weekend for residents to help them deal with the debris.

To help manage these more frequent storm events across 190 kilometres of coastline, we started developing a long-term plan to manage coastal hazard impacts across our region through the Our Coast Our Future Strategy. The outcomes of this work will allow us to better understand the region's coastal hazards and possible implications for our local communities, now and into the future.

Major capital works delivered

- Mount Martha: Briars Culvert Bridge (total project value \$238,479)

Mount Eliza: Blackspot program, Mount Eliza Way (total value \$800,000)

Merricks: Merricks Station Grounds Upgrade (total value \$1,964,100)

Tyabb: Bunguyan Reserve Sports Field Lighting (total value \$350,000)

Somerville: Netball Court Resurfacing (total value \$132,000)

Hastings Boat Ramp Upgrades - stage 4 (total project value \$271,000)

Tuerong: Blackspot Program Hodgins/Stumpy Gully Rd Roundabout (total project value \$1,300,000)

Rosebud: Tounnin Wominjeka, Southern Peninsula Youth Hub (total project value \$13,010,000)

Rye and Tootgarook Area Wide Safety Upgrade (total project value \$1,672,927)

Flinders Community Hub Redevelopment (total project value \$6,100,000)

Capel Sound Broadway Road and Drainage Upgrade (total project value \$2,175,675)

Mount Martha Tennis Court Redevelopment (\$1,300,000)

Mornington: Civic Reserve Sports Pavilion (\$4,576,820 expected to be completed December 2024)
- Mornington: Dallas Brooks Reserve – Oval, Soccer Fields, Carpark and Playground (total project value \$6,000,000. Stage 1 completed February 2024, Stage 2 completed October 2024)

Mount Martha: Blackspot Program, Craigie Road and Osbourne Drive Compact Roundabout (total project value \$1,320,530)

Mount Martha: Briars Class A Recycled Water Project (total project value \$2,850,000 and expected to be completed December 2024)

Mount Martha: Briars Sanctuary Expansion (total project value \$2,300,000 and expected to be completed December 2024)

Dromana: Hillview Reserve – Playground and Footpath (total project value \$3,908,371 and expected to be completed September 2025)

Dromana: Dromana Recreation Reserve – New Netball Court (total project value \$900,000 and expected to be completed March 2025)

Safety Beach: Master Plan Implementation (total project value \$3,400,000 and expected to be completed November 2024)

Tootgarook: Alma-Field Street Footpath Stage 2 (total project value \$928,000)

Red Hill: Red Hill Recreation Reserve Pavilion Extension (total project value \$3,600,000)

Mornington: Alexandra Park Pavilion (total project value \$10,200,000)

Year in review

2025



In January 2025, Domain reported that the Mornington Peninsula is one of the furthest markets from its peak compared to the other Melbourne house markets. Mornington Peninsula values were down 14.3 per cent from a high in March 2022, compared to Melbourne house markets that were 6.5 per cent below their peak in March 2022.

However, with inflation falling, the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) decided to lower the cash rate on 18 February 2025. The RBA's 25-basis-point reduction to the official cash rate announced on 18 February brought it down to 4.10 per cent from 4.35 per cent. February's rate cut changed the market, fuelling renewed buyer confidence in the housing market. While the RBA left the cash rate unchanged on 1 April, the RBA stated that there were notable uncertainties about the outlook for domestic economic activity and inflation. Combined with the significant geopolitical uncertainties abroad, inflation could move in either direction.

The financial sustainability issues at the Mornington Peninsula Shire Council are serious. With diminishing state and federal funding and changes in the splits of funding to deliver a service, our expenses are growing significantly faster than our revenue sources. We lack sufficient funding for capital projects to meet our growing population's needs and to renew our infrastructure. When we look at our 10-year projections, it's clear that we are not on a financially sustainable path. However, we can address this shortfall by pulling various levers, such as continuous improvement, enhanced asset management and ensuring ratepayer value — determining what we should stop doing to better deliver services to our community.

Major capital works delivered

- Mount Eliza: Cricket Net Renewal
(total project value \$600,000)

Dromana: Dromana Recreation Reserve
– New Netball Court
(total project value \$900,000)

Rye: Danny Street Drainage Upgrade
(total project value \$115,000)

Rye: Melbourne Road and Peninsula Avenue – Raised platforms (total project value \$241,680)

Crib Point: Creswell Street Development Contributions Plan
– Water Main Extension (total project value \$300,000)

Hastings: Hastings Foreshore Fitness Equipment
(total project value \$230,000)
- Mount Martha: Dunns Road Fitness Equipment
(total project value \$250,000)

Mount Eliza: Landfill Capping Rehabilitation Works
(total project value \$2,500,000)

Dromana: Marna Reserve Pavilion Upgrade
(total project value \$750,000)

Dromana: Dromana Recreation Reserve
– Portable Changerooms
(total project value \$130,000)

Bittern: Bittern Public Toilet Renewal
(total project value \$290,000)

Our Performance

Governance

108



Council meetings from November 2020 to October 2024

4.26%



Council decisions made at meetings closed to the public: 2024 result 4.26%. Public transparency has improved from 2020's result of 9.62%

1,064



Council resolutions from November 2020 to October 2024

64



Community satisfaction with governance and leadership went from 54 in 2021 to 64 in 2024

Customer Service

We service our customers in a variety of ways.

How you engaged with us July 2023 to June 2024



140,867 Calls taken
47% of enquiries resolved at first contact



30,350 Customers visiting our Customer Service Centres



38,651 Correspondence received
73% of enquiries resolved on time
(Includes letters and emails)



85,544 Service Requests received
58% of enquiries resolved on time
(Includes Snap Send Solve requests)



16,366 Webchats
69% of enquiries resolved at first contact



4.2M Web pages viewed

66

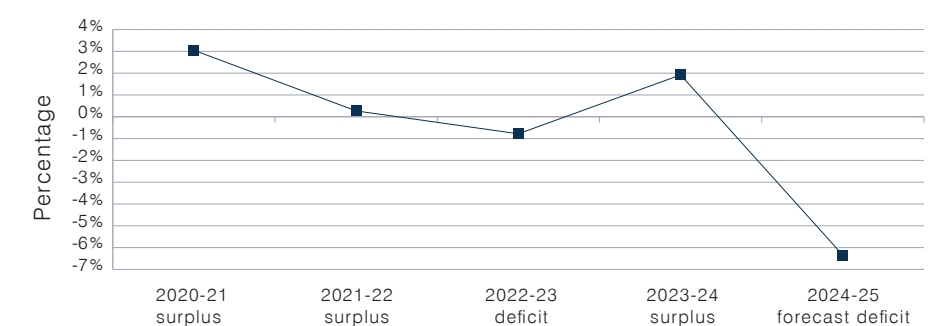


Community Satisfaction with Council Customer Service went from 70 in 2021 to 67 in 2025. This decline and the need for improved customer experience for our community has been a major focus in the second half of the Council term and resulted in the creation of our Customer Charter and Customer Strategy in 2024 (see pages 27).

Finance

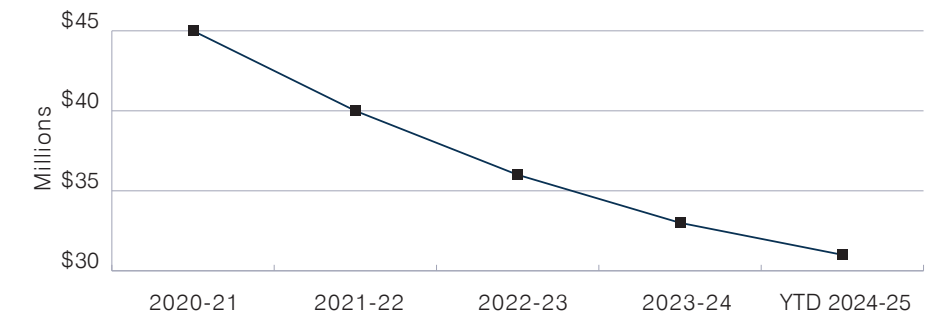
Council strives for a balanced budget, although there may be fluctuations from year to year.

Adjusted Underlying Result %



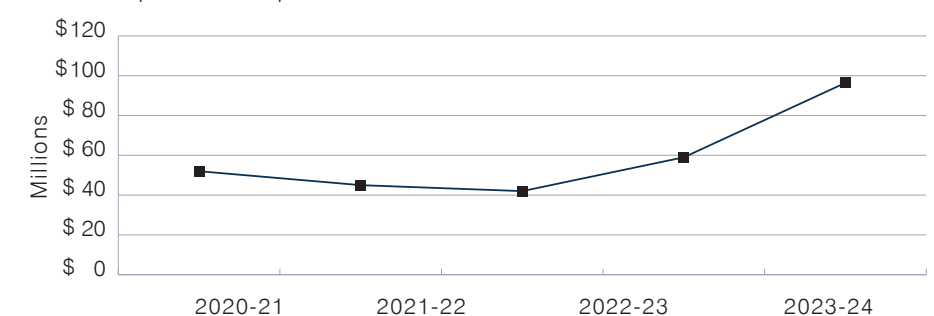
We have been able to reduce our debt by 26%

Loans and Borrowings Balance



We have continued to invest in capital works

Capital Works Expenditure



Service Delivery

We provide more than 150 services to support community members throughout their lives, and local government provides more diverse services than any other sector. This diversity of services presents challenges and requires a complex range of capabilities, systems and skills.

It is through the services delivered by Council that we support the community in reaching our shared Community Vision for the Mornington Peninsula.

Here is a snap shot of typical services delivered over each year of the past Council term.

	3,647 businesses mentored/visited		2,254 food safety inspections
	107 business associations/groups worked with		\$4.2M in grants, sponsorships and subsidies paid in support of the community
	546 planning cases resolved from 613 planning compliance cases raised		27,195 pet renewals and 4,632 new pet registrations
	1,994 planning applications determined (taken from State Government Planning Permit Activity Reporting website)		41,406 tonnes of kerbside waste diverted from landfill
	3,658 drainage pits cleaned and 22,196 inspected		575 km of beaches cleaned
	49,813 rounds of golf played		1,027,258 Community library loans
	89,745 foreshore camping nights booked		12,995 kms of streets swept
	970,378 aquatic centre visitations		1,687 kms of unsealed roads graded
	23,804 young people attending Shire delivered youth programs and activities		12,355 potholes filled from 848 requests
	9,402 vaccines administered to 4,330 infants		14,242 Maternal Child Health consultations
	40 Supported Playgroups delivered		560 Parent Groups facilitated

Transformation

During the Council term, there has been a large focus on organisational transformation to ensure that the Council can best serve our community.

We have developed a new customer charter and strategy, both of which are significant advancements that have refocused Council towards a more community-centred approach.

These initiatives were developed in response to community feedback about their experiences when dealing with the Shire. We identified improvement was needed to properly serve our community.

The Charter aims to outline our commitment to you and the standards you can expect when interacting with us, explaining how we will address your enquiries and the service standards you can expect from us.

Our Customer Strategy serves as our blueprint for putting our community at the heart of everything we do. Guiding us on how we can:

- Connect better with our customers
- Focus more on our community’s wants and needs
- Improve service delivery
- Be more open and accountable
- Increase community engagement
- Build public trust.

We also embarked on a large system overhaul, ensuring we have the technology in place to support our focus on delivering a better experience and services to our community. This new system integrates procurement, finance, customer relationship management (CRM), people and culture functions (including payroll and recruitment), project management, and other critical operations. This integration has streamlined processes and enhanced transparency, significantly improving operational efficiency and the quality of customer interactions.



Our Delivery of the
**Council and
Wellbeing Plan**



Theme 1

A healthy natural environment and well-planned townships

Strategic Objective 1.1

An accessible and unique natural environment that helps our community to be healthy and well.

Indicators

Initiatives are delivered to protect, maintain and enhance natural and cultural heritage.	2022: 4 † 2025: 6 *	Nineteen initiatives, including working alongside our Friends Groups, were delivered across the Council Term.	
Increased levels of community satisfaction with our environmental sustainability activities.	2022: 60 † 2025: 65 *		
Maintain Carbon Neutral accreditation for the Shire's Operations.	2022: Yes † 2025: No *	Council updated the Carbon Neutral Policy in 2023 to support more local carbon neutrality projects on the Peninsula. Council discontinued the Climate Emergency Plan in 2024-25 to shift focus to delivery of local tangible climate action.	
Continue to reduce carbon emissions for Shire facilities and activities and develop local carbon offset opportunities.	2022: 2 † 2025: 3 *		
Work towards the Climate Emergency Plan 2040 target of net zero emissions right across the Peninsula.	2022: 25,000 tonnes of CO2e reduced ** 2023-24: 28,616 tonnes of CO2e reduced **	Mornington Peninsula Shire achievements have resulted in a reduction of 76,116 tonnes of CO2e from 2022 to 2024. Council discontinued the Climate Emergency Plan in 2024-25 to shift focus to delivery of local tangible climate action.	
Strong community participation in the Climate Emergency Plan actions.	2022: No community participation data † 2023-24: 4,139 †	Council discontinued the Climate Emergency Plan in 2024-25 to shift focus to delivery of local tangible climate action.	

Legend for commentary

 Achieved  Attention  Ceased  Health and wellbeing priorities

Strategies

Quarterly Commentary

Strategy 1.1.1 Protect natural sites of cultural and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander significance.	 Achieved	The Shire continues to coordinate with the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation to protect natural sites and promote Bunurong heritage. We also collaborated on our Coastal and Marine Management Plan 2020-2025, coastal area maintenance and the Peninsula Trail. This included the naming of trails to ensure natural sites of cultural and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander significance are acknowledged and highlighted as part of Peninsula's Trail signage.
Strategy 1.1.2 Work with our community to raise awareness about the value of our natural environment.	 Achieved	We worked to embed sustainability and raise awareness of our natural environment through several initiatives. Highlights include hosting the Student Environmental Leadership Summit at Uncommon Folk in Main Ridge on 9 March 2023, the Nature Stewards Program – a 10-week program that allowed participants to develop skills in biodiversity care, and working with our Friends Groups to enhance the biodiversity of our local bushland and foreshore reserves.
Strategy 1.1.3 Look after our public spaces through our Open Space Strategy and site-specific plans.	 Attention	Work on the draft Open Space Strategy, which will replace the 2003 Council-adopted Strategy, is nearing completion. This new Strategy will guide the planning, provision, design and management of both existing and future open spaces over the next 15 years. The draft Strategy is expected to be available for public review in August and finalised by December 2025.
Strategy 1.1.4  Improve our trail network to achieve connection and advocate for funding.	 Achieved	In 2021-22, Council made a \$10 million commitment over the next five years towards the Peninsula Trail project. With more than \$17 million in funding committed from Council and the Victorian and Australian Governments, we were well on our way to constructing the eleven identified missing links and transforming the Peninsula into a world class cycling and walking destination. As the Victorian state election in November 2022 neared, we called on political candidates in the seats of Hastings, Mornington, and Nepean to pledge funding for our most important projects, including building one of the world's greatest walking and cycling trails. As a result of our advocacy, the 2022 Shout Out for the Peninsula campaign reached more than 157,000 people and the Baxter to Somerville missing link section of the Peninsula Trail was fully funded.

Strategies	Quarterly Commentary
Strategy 1.1.5  Continue putting the Climate Emergency Plan into action and build community resilience to mitigate the effects of the climate emergency. Ceased Actions: Develop the Urban Forest Strategy. Deliver the trial planting program in support of the Urban Forest Strategy.	Before the Climate Emergency Plan was discontinued on 22 April 2025, 154 (90 per cent) of the 172 tasks were in progress, ongoing or completed. Total emissions on the Mornington Peninsula were estimated to be 1,845,000 tonnes CO2-e in the 2022-23 financial year. Highlights include the Major Roads Streetlight Upgrade Project, which was expected to be completed by May 2025, resulting in annual savings of \$500,000. We also upgraded foreshore camping hot water amenities and created 278 hectares of Biolinks, planting more than 146,000 trees and shrubs. We increased the number of solar systems on Shire-operated buildings to sixty-two systems, increasing solar-generated energy to 1.493 Megawatts and avoiding 1,702 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO2-e) annually and annual savings of \$431,000. There were one hundred take ups of the Solar and Energy Bulk Buy Program (Shire and Community led) and the total number of solar installations on the Mornington Peninsula at the end of March 2025 was 25,790.
Strategy 1.1.6  Run programs to reduce the impact of the climate emergency on the health and wellbeing of our community. Achieved	As part of our 2021-22 budget, Council set aside \$500,000 to fast-track priority Climate Emergency actions. As one of our actions, we started making available Climate Action Grants, of up to \$10,000 for community projects, to help us reach the targets outlined in our climate emergency response plan, Ensuring Our Future. In support of the Plan and a greener and more sustainable Peninsula, Council introduced a 'Trust for Nature' Rate to landholders who have placed a Trust for Nature conservation covenant on their property. Over the four years, we delivered several programs to reduce the impact of the climate emergency on our community. Highlights include engaging with our community through community sustainability education activities and workshops, the Shire Gardens for Wildlife program, regenerative farming training programs and working in partnership with Repower Mornington to deliver community education events.

Strategic Objective 1.2

A healthy ecosystem, in which our coastline, bushland, wildlife and green wedge is resilient to the climate emergency and development.

Indicators			
Increased levels of community participation and satisfaction with environmental sustainability.	2022: 60 † 2025: 65 *		
Increased levels of community participation and satisfaction with waste management.	2022: 65 † 2025: 87 *		
Our community is highly engaged in the Shire's conservation and education programs	2022: 3,461 ‡ 2025: 7,535*		
Programs to protect and maintain our biodiversity and wildlife are delivered.	2022: 5 † 2025: 7 *	Twenty-two initiatives, which include Friends Groups working bees and Repower community group, were delivered across the Council Term.	
Increase in kerbside collection waste diverted from landfill.	2022: 57% § 2025: 58% ***		

Legend for commentary

Achieved

Attention

Ceased

Health and wellbeing priorities

Strategies	Quarterly Commentary
Strategy 1.2.1 Work with our community to protect native flora and fauna and coastal foreshores. Achieved Action: Review the Trial Hand Beach Cleaning Program.	We worked with our community to oppose AGL's proposed floating gas plant and pipeline at Crib Point in 2021. Council had serious concerns about the potential threats posed by the gas project to the environment of Western Port and worked with community organisations to mount a campaign against it. The decision by then Planning Minister Richard Wynne to reject the gas project on environmental grounds was met with widespread elation across the Mornington Peninsula. The Shire coordinated with the Friends Group Network to support our volunteers across hundreds of working bees to preserve and improve the biodiversity of nearby bushland and foreshore reserves. Other highlights include our Watercraft Removal Program, the implementation of the Tootgarook Wetland Management Plan, releasing a Fungi of the Mornington Peninsula Guide, and implementing our Summer Litter Prevention Strategy. To help with the extra litter that often accompanies our peak summer season we launched 'Pretty as a Picture. Leave it as you found it,' our 2021 summer anti-litter campaign. The campaign used calls to action such as #binyourlitter or #takeitwithyou across our social media channels and installed signage in high traffic tourist locations such as entrances and exits of beaches and BBQ and picnic areas. Since 2023, our Summer Litter Prevention Strategy has involved the use of QR codes to allow our community to report overflowing bins, increased the collection frequencies of public bins in high profile precincts and increased our physical litter enforcement presence and educational signage.
Strategy 1.2.2 Implement Coastal and Marine Management Plans, including the Mornington Peninsula Coastal Strategy, to look after our coastal heritage and marine wildlife. Attention Actions: Develop the Mornington Peninsula Coastal Strategy – Part A – Our Coast Our Future. Develop the Mornington Peninsula Coastal Strategy – Part B – Our Coast Our Future.	By March 2025, stages 1-4 of Our Coast Our Future, Coastal Strategy Part A had been completed with hazard maps produced and most at-risk areas identified. The public tender process for Part B of the Our Coast Our Future Coastal Strategy was also completed. Stages 5-7 of the project will involve future collaboration with the community to determine adaptation pathways for our most at risk areas. The Coastal Strategy includes important long-term plans to manage current and future coastal hazard risks and drive efficient and sustainable outcomes. The strategy is aimed to be completed in the 2025-26 financial year. The Coastal and Marine Management Plans for Flinders, Mount Eliza and Portsea were adopted by Council in May 2023. The Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action issued three grants to progress the implementation of the Coastal and Marine Management Plans over the next two years. These Plans were endorsed by the Minister for Planning. The final Hastings Foreshore Master Plan was adopted by Council in February 2023, with the plan to be implemented in stages over the next 10 years.

Strategies	Quarterly Commentary
Strategy 1.2.3 Protect the green wedge using the Green Wedge Management Plan and advocate for maintaining its special role and character. Achieved	Council adopted and submitted amendment C270 to the Minister for Planning for approval on 15 November 2022. Approved by the Minister for Planning, amendment C270 protects the Peninsula's highly valued Green Wedge from inappropriate development by rezoning eight properties located outside the Urban Growth Boundary to the Green Wedge Zone and fixing irregularities in the Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme. On 9 July 2024, we sent an advocacy letter to the Minister for Planning providing broad support for the recently released 'Planning for Melbourne's Green Wedges and Agricultural Land Action Plan (March 2024)'. However, the Action Plan lacked specific details regarding the suggested planning policies, guidelines, or controls. As a result, Council prepared an advocacy letter requesting more detail across a range of matters and will continue to engage with the State Government to protect and enhance Mornington Peninsula's Green Wedge as per the Shire's 2019 Green Wedge Management Plan. Council also advocated for stronger protections for the Shire's Green Wedge through its submission to the State Government's 'Plan for Victoria.' Council adopted a submission on 26 August 2024, which was submitted to the Minister for Planning.
Strategy 1.2.4 Protect our biodiversity and wildlife in both urban and bush settings in the face of the climate emergency by implementing the Biodiversity Conservation Plan with the community and partners. Achieved	Highlights delivered over the years from the delivery of the Biodiversity Conservation Action Plan include: • Collaborating with Trust for Nature for the selection of four Shire-owned bushland reserves for consideration of protection by conservation covenants in 2023-24. • Delivering our annual Nature's Steward Program, a 10-week program that introduced participants to the natural environment and habitat of the Mornington Peninsula. • Completing our annual biodiversity works program to control high threat environmental weeds and restore habitat across the Peninsula. • Starting the Swamp Skink Project in the Tootgarook Wetland. • Starting development of our Tree Management Policy in late 2024.

Strategies	Quarterly Commentary
Strategy 1.2.5 Implement the Domestic Animal Management Plan to promote responsible animal management. Action: Develop the Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029.	Achieved Council adopted the 2021-2025 Domestic Animal Management Plan in November 2021 and the Dogs in Public Places Policy on 25 June 2024. Highlights from the implementation of our Domestic Animal Management plan actions include collaborating with other animal shelters, rescue organisations and holding pet awareness collaboration days with Bunnings. We also launched a Free Dog and Cat Desexing initiative aimed at local pet owners over 60 years old. As part of the Implementation Plan, we rolled out signage and communication around leash free and dog prohibited areas on Mornington Peninsula Shire managed land and actively patrolled beaches and foreshores. The draft Domestic Animal Management Plan 2025-2029 has been completed and is scheduled to go to Council in June 2025, before being released for community consultation.
Strategy 1.2.6 Continue towards our goal of zero waste to landfill by 2030, by strengthening our circular economy as part of our Beyond Zero Waste Strategy. Actions: Develop a Circular Economy Hub Master Plan for Rye, Post Closure. Complete an EOI process for the Rye Landfill and Adjacent/ Buffer Land Lease and Development.	Achieved We continued working towards our goal of zero waste to landfill by 2030. In 2021-22 we rolled out our Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) collection service during the year to further divert food scraps from land fill. At the end of March 2025, we had diverted more than 61,070 tonnes of green waste from landfill since the FOGO program began. Other highlights include: - Collaborating with our community to phase out single-use plastic items in 2021-22. - Embedding recycled material into our capital works and construction through Environmental Design Principles. - Planning for the closure of Rye Landfill in 2025 and began updating our Rye Rehabilitation Plan. - Planning for the upgrade to the Rye Resource Recovery Centre.

Strategic Objective 1.3

A sustainable built environment that respects the natural environment and protects the community from the impacts of the climate emergency.

Indicators

Increase adaptation to the impacts of the climate emergency.

2022: 80% ↑
2025: 90% ¶

per cent of Climate Emergency Plan actions in progress or completed. Council discontinued the Climate Emergency Plan in 2024-25 to shift focus to delivery of local tangible climate action.



Our building and assets are constructed with environmentally sustainable design principles.

The Shire incorporates Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) into the design and construction of Council buildings and civil works. Council adopted Amendment C232morn in early 2023. The amendment introduced a new local planning policy to provide guidance for ESD on the Mornington Peninsula.



Our resilience to flood is strengthened and we have more responsible use of water on the Peninsula.

We adopted our Integrated Water Management Plan and Flood and Stormwater Strategy in 2021-22 and partnered with Melbourne Water to update flood mapping.



Legend for commentary

Achieved

Attention

Ceased

Health and wellbeing priorities

Strategies	Quarterly Commentary	
Strategy 1.3.1 Invest in renewable energy and energy efficiency programs.	Achieved	In 2022-23, Council successfully obtained \$500,000 from Round 1 of the Australian Government’s Community Battery funding. We unveiled the new Community Battery at Flinders on 29 October 2024. The battery allows the sharing of solar power across the community, with any profits going to a Community Benefit Fund to help low-income households access renewables and reduce their energy costs. Other highlights include launching the Solar Incentivisation Program to facilitate the installation of solar systems on Shire-owned tenanted facilities and starting a 12-month Virtual Energy Network pilot in 2024. The pilot project will explore opportunities to investigate ways renewable energy can save money for ratepayers and reduce emissions.
Strategy 1.3.2  Encourage responsible use of water sources on the Peninsula by implementing the Smart Water Plan.	Achieved	As part of our regional Integrated Water Management (IWM) Forums and Queen’s Hall advocacy in August 2023, we successfully advocated for priority actions to be included in the draft Dandenong and Western Port Catchment Scale IWM Action Plans. These priority projects are the Tyabb Somerville Recycled Water Scheme, Urban Forest Strategy, Major Flood Mitigation, Water Sensitive Asset Masterplan implementation and the Briars Recycled Water Scheme. Following the Queen’s Hall advocacy, we hosted a roundtable discussion with the Minister for Water, Harriet Shing, Member for Hastings Paul Mercurio MP and industry stakeholders in May 2024 on the Tyabb-Somerville Recycled Water Scheme. In September 2023, Council adopted our Wastewater Management Policy and endorsed the draft 2024-2029 Wastewater Management Plan to be released for community consultation on 25 February 2025. Following community feedback, which will inform the draft Plan, Council will consider the Plan for adoption in May 2025.
Strategy 1.3.3 Incorporate Indigenous culture in all project planning and design.	Achieved	In 2021-22 we entered a Memorandum of Understanding with the Bunurong Land Council to ensure cultural values are incorporated into the design of the Shire’s projects. Highlights of working with the Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation include: - Ensuring cultural heritage values are integrated into the detailed design of the Somerville to Baxter section of the Peninsula Trail in 2023. - Naming nine of the eleven new Shire wards in 2024. - Providing three Indigenous names for our new Southern Peninsula Youth Hub, which we took to our youth as part of a survey. They chose ‘Tounnin Wominjeka’ meaning ‘warm welcome.’

Strategies	Quarterly Commentary	
Strategy 1.3.4 Implement the Environmentally Sustainable Design Policy for Shire buildings and civil works.	Achieved	The Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) Policy for Council Buildings and Civil Works continues to guide and inform capital projects delivered by Council. These include building specifications, energy efficiency, recycled and low-carbon materials, and more. We updated our guidance for Shire buildings on installing Solar PV and batteries, EV charging, and hot water heating to align with current best practices and energy efficiency standards. This updated guidance will be launched in April 2025.
Strategy 1.3.5 Advocate for environmentally sustainable design principles to be integrated into the Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme.	Achieved	Through the Council Alliance for Sustainability in the Built Environment (CASBE), the Shire continues to advocate for incorporating Environmentally Sustainable Design (ESD) requirements into the Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme via a specific provision, rather than through ResCode (the residential development provisions). This approach is proposed in Amendment C246morn, which is still under review by the Minister for Planning. Planning Scheme Amendment C232morn was approved by the Minister for Planning on 15 November 2023. The amendment introduces an ESD Local Planning Policy into the Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme to guide Environmentally Sustainable Design outcomes.
Strategy 1.3.6  Manage stormwater and build resilience to flood as it affects our community, our environment and infrastructure.	Achieved	The Shire manages stormwater and builds resilience to flood through our updated 2021 Integrated Water Management Plan. The Plan brings together the Shire, collaborative partners, and our communities in overcoming current and future challenges in line with local and state directions and with the Flood and Stormwater strategy. In 2023 we started collaborating with Melbourne Water to update flood modelling and flood mapping to ensure predicted flood extents are based on current industry standards. As of March 2025, the flood mapping of the Peninsula was nearing completion. Highlights from our Major Projects and Capital Works program to manage stormwater and build resilience to flooding can be found in our Capital Works highlights, under each Year in Review.

Strategies

Quarterly Commentary

Strategy 1.3.7 
Revise the planning scheme with consideration to our vulnerability to flooding and bushfires and the protection of native vegetation.

 Achieved

Amendment C241morn was adopted by Council on 11 June 2024 and approved by the Minister for Planning on 5 September 2024. C241morn aims to protect and enhance the ecological values, systems and character of the Balcombe Creek Estuary and associated reserves whilst supporting existing sports, recreation and community uses in the area for a growing population.

Amendment C271morn was approved by the Minister for Planning on 9 January 2025. Amendment C271 proposed changes to planning controls affecting coastal and inland areas around Western Port Bay and the coastline bordering Bass Strait. The changes are based on recommendations from Council's adopted Western Port Coastal Villages and Surrounding Settlements Strategy (2019).

Strategy 1.3.8 
Deliver strategies to minimise the impact of the climate emergency on our built assets.

 Achieved

Actions:
Develop the Municipal Emergency Management Plan 2025-2028.

Development of the Municipal Emergency Management Plan 2025-2028 has been completed. The Plan is now active and governs how the Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee supports the community before, during and after an emergency event. The Plan is available on the Shire's website.

In 2025, we started planning for the Financing Flood Resilience Infrastructure project, which will create investment and implementation strategies to address priority flood-related risks in the south-east region. This project is a collaboration between eight local governments, led by the South East Councils Climate Change Alliance (SECCCA), and has been funded by the Federal Disaster Ready fund.

Strategic Objective 1.4

An accessible built environment that supports diverse, current and future community needs.

Indicators

80% of annual capital works budget delivered.	2022: 93% † 2025: 94% *	
Shire asset renewal targets are met.	2022: \$23.9M renewal expenditure (target \$16.4M) † 2025: \$27.6M renewal expenditure (target \$21.2M) *	
Increased levels of satisfaction with appearance of public areas.	2022: 66 † 2025: 70 *	
Increased levels of satisfaction with recreation facilities.	2022: 67 † 2025: 80 *	
Increase in number of Shire assets that incorporate universal design principles.	Council adopted out Universal Design policy in early 2021-22. We continue to incorporate Universal Design principles into our programs, planning and service delivery.	
Initiatives delivered to decrease financial stress and homelessness in the community.	2022: 3 initiatives † 2025: 4 initiatives *	
Increased use of community facilities	2022: No community participation data † 2025: 8,316 *	

Legend for commentary

Achieved

Attention

Ceased

Health and wellbeing priorities

Strategies	Quarterly Commentary	
Strategy 1.4.1  Apply universal design principles in the construction, refurbishment and use of Shire owned facilities, public spaces and open spaces.	Achieved	We adopted our Universal Design Policy in 2022, which requires the consideration of Universal Design in all our capital works projects. Following its adoption, our Universal Design guidelines have been embedded in the Master Design Construction Standards, which will be completed in 2025.
Strategy 1.4.2 Build and maintain Shire infrastructure and facilities based on community needs and facility condition.	Achieved	Council adopted its Asset Plan 2022-32 in 2022. The Plan establishes a framework for how community assets will be managed. The plan will guide where Council invests approximately \$2.3 billion in asset management responsibly and cost-effectively over the next 10 years, ensuring we continue to deliver important services and facilities to our community. On 1 July 2024 we transitioned over to our new maintenance services contractors who will help us manage our community assets and more than 1,700 kilometres of roads. These include the Shire’s Road Corridors, Open Spaces Maintenance, Bushland Management and the Tree Management contracts. Highlights from our Major Projects and Capital Works program can be found in our Capital Works highlights under each Year in Review.
Strategy 1.4.3 Develop a Community Facilities Infrastructure Strategy, to plan for shared community facilities that meet the current and future needs of our communities.	Achieved	The Community Facilities Infrastructure Strategy was adopted by Council on 9 September 2024. In 2022-23 we identified key issues and opportunities through an audit of our community facilities, which was followed by a review of present and future needs and engagement with key stakeholders in 2023-24. The Strategy was endorsed by Council on 25 June 2024 for public exhibition and community feedback, which informed the final Strategy.
Strategy 1.4.4  Continue to implement the Triple A Housing Plan.	Achieved	The Implementation of our Triple A Housing Plan is ongoing with key actions delivered over the years. These include: - Supporting Women’s Community Shelters (WCS) in their efforts to establish women’s crisis accommodation in the Shire. As of March 2025, WCS had successfully secured a grant from the Housing Future Fund Crisis Accommodation Program, enabling them to open a refuge house on the Mornington Peninsula. - Submitting to relevant reviews and inquiries such as the Social Housing Regulation Review; The Standing Committee on Tax and Revenue inquiry into Affordable Housing in Australia and supporting the Regional Local Government Homelessness and Social Housing Charter Group’s submission on the Productivity Commission’s review of the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement. - Raising awareness during Homelessness Week as part of a national campaign.

Strategies	Quarterly Commentary	
Strategy 1.4.5 Develop an Affordable Housing Policy to facilitate contributions in private developments.	Ceased	At its meeting on 18 December 2024, Council resolved to abandon the Affordable Housing Development Contributions Strategy. All work on this strategy has ceased.
Strategy 1.4.6  Advocate to state government for additional social and affordable housing and better housing support services.	Achieved	As part of our 2022 ‘Shout Out for the Peninsula’ advocacy campaign, we placed particular focus on the housing crisis, and we asked political candidates for urgent investment in social and affordable housing and crisis accommodation. On 22 August 2023, Shire representatives participated in a public hearing for the Inquiry into the Rental and Housing Affordability Crisis in Victoria. We submitted some motions to the Australian Local Government Association annual conference to advocate for the needs of the Mornington Peninsula Community. We also met with the CEO of Homes Victoria to advocate for further support for the Mornington Peninsula. As part of our ‘Shout Out for the Peninsula’ advocacy campaign for the 2025 federal election, we delivered a dedicated video along with socials and media ads. As one of our 2024 advocacy priorities, housing and homelessness were a focus of our election campaigning.
Strategy 1.4.7  Improve our unique townships and villages by developing and maintaining accessible public spaces.	Achieved	All master plans and concept designs adhere to universal design principles, including compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act for all infrastructure projects, to improve accessibility to the Shire’s public spaces. Highlights that improved our unique townships and villages, by developing and maintaining our accessible public spaces, include: - Finalising the RW Stone Reserve Masterplan on 30 June 2024 and the delivery of the bike jumps in November 2024. - Releasing the draft David MacFarlan Reserve Masterplan Community to the community for consultation from 10 August to 21 September 2023. The Plan was adopted by Council on 23 July 2024. - Undertaking planning scheme amendment C271morn to implement our Western Port Coastal Villages and Surrounding Settlements Strategy. The Minister for Planning approved the amendment on 9 January 2025. Capital works highlights that improved our unique townships and villages can be found in our Capital Works highlights under each Year in Review.
Strategy 1.4.8 Advocate for stronger universal design guidance in the State Planning Scheme and encourage best practice for privately owned buildings.	Achieved	Universal Design is now addressed under the Victoria Planning Provisions at a State level and within the Building Regulations. The Shire will continue to monitor for future advocacy positions as appropriate.

Strategies

Quarterly Commentary

Strategy 1.4.9
Deliver actions in the Housing and Settlement Strategy and Neighbourhood Character Study to manage demand for housing and population growth.



C219morn was adopted by Council on 6 August 2024 and submitted to the Minister for Planning on 19 September 2024. The amendment provides a sustainable approach to housing on the Peninsula by directing future growth to areas close to shops, jobs, schools and public transport. It ensures all types of housing can be accommodated (homes, units, apartments and residential aged care facilities) and protects the Peninsula’s special values and character.

Shire officers are continuing to consult with the Department of Transport and Planning, which is assessing Amendment C219morn before the Minister for Planning decides whether to approve the amendment as is.

Work on the Residential Height Controls Review is ongoing, with work currently focused on developing the draft landscape assessments. Site inspections were conducted in March 2025.

Strategy 1.4.10
Protect built sites and features of cultural significance and history.



Amendment C262morn was split into two parts: Part 1 of C262morn was approved by the Minister for Planning on 25 November 2021 and Part 2 on 1 May 2022. The amendment implements Council’s adopted Heritage Review Area 3 Study by applying the Heritage Overlay (HO) to individually significant places and precincts and making other associated changes to the planning scheme.

Amendment C239morn was approved by the Minister for Planning on 21 August 2023. The amendment applies a Heritage Overlay (HO543) to part of land at 181 Bittern-Dromana Road, Merricks North containing Fenton Hall, extends the existing Heritage Overlay (HO127) over land at 39-45, and part 47-57 Marine Parade, Shoreham to capture all elements of the former Camp Buxton, and makes associated changes.

Council adopted the Heritage Review for Area 4 (Westernport and Hinterland) and Stage 5 (watchlist properties) on 11 June 2024. Amendment C302morn, which seeks to apply the Heritage Overlay to properties identified in the review, is still under review by the Department of Transport and Planning. According to advice from the Department, authorisation from the Minister for Planning to prepare the amendment for public exhibition is likely to occur by the end of June 2025.

Theme 2

A robust, innovative and diverse economy

Strategic Objective 2.1

A community that has access to world class local learning opportunities through all stages of life.

Indicators

Initiatives to increase education and employment pathways supported

2022: 4 †
2025: 7 *

Nineteen initiatives, which included partnering with Chisholm TAFE and Frankston Mornington Peninsula Local Learning and Employment Network in preparation for the Industry and Jobs Exp, were delivered across the Council Term.



Level of community participation in Shire delivered life-long learning opportunities

2022: 2,354 †
2025: 3,710 *



Legend for commentary

Achieved

Attention

Ceased

Health and wellbeing priorities

Strategies	Quarterly Commentary	
Strategy 2.1.1 Connect schools, education providers and businesses to improve social and economic outcomes.	Achieved	Staff shortages in the hospitality sector became a significant issue for our local businesses as we emerged out of one of many lockdowns in 2021. In response, we partnered with Chisholm TAFE, Frankston Mornington Peninsula Local Learning and Employment Network and the Brotherhood of Saint Laurence to create and deliver two entry-level hospitality short courses. The Shire partnered with Oakwood School in 2022 to help disengaged young people complete their schooling at our Youth centres. Introduced as part of the Small Business Festival in 2023, we worked with the Frankston Mornington Peninsula Local Employment and Skills Working Group as well as the South East Metropolitan and Peninsula Jobs Taskforce to organise a jobs expo. The jobs expo continues to be delivered to help connect schools, education providers and businesses to drive economic outcomes.
Strategy 2.1.2 Advocate for additional training and education services and centres of excellence.	Achieved	We continue to participate in the Peninsula Education Round Table meetings as part of our commitment to advocating for additional training and education services across the Peninsula. Highlights delivered: - Partnering with Chisholm TAFE to identify and advocate for business needs across the Peninsula. - Successfully securing funding from Agriculture Victoria and Council and in-kind support from three local farms - Torello, Uncommon Folk and Barragunda, to establish a small-scale farming training program in September 2023. The program guided aspiring farmers over 12 months.
Strategy 2.1.3 Work in partnership with a wide range of education providers to promote lifelong and inclusive learning opportunities.	Achieved	The Shire worked with a wide range of education providers to promote lifelong and inclusive learning opportunities through our libraries. These included a variety of programs and activities that included early years literacy, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) / STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths) and digital literacy courses to improve school readiness levels and promote social inclusion. We also provided LinkedIn Learning, Encyclopedia Britannica and Mango languages, which allows library members to learn a new language from short courses. In 2022-23, we started a new program in partnership with Youngsters (an organisation that works with secondary schools) and Mornington Secondary College to support seniors in attaining digital literacy at our Mornington Library. In partnership with School Focused Youth Service Programs (SFYS), we delivered several programs within our local primary and secondary schools. Our 2024 SFYS funded programs positively impacted 520 students and forty-two staff with 36 activities across 15 schools.

Strategic Objective 2.2

A strong food economy, promoting growth to enhance community access.

Indicators		
Participation of food businesses engaged in a diverse variety of programs and initiatives.	2022: 3 † 2025: 5 *	Fifteen initiatives, which included our Small Business Festival, the Mornington Pensinsula Agroecology Forum and the Mornington Peninsula Business Excellence Awards, were delivered across the Council Term.
Percentage of facilities and events that meet Healthy Choices Guidelines.		The Shire continues to ensure that healthy eating options are available at Shire owned and managed facilities and events as per our Healthy Food and Drink Policy which was updated in 2024.
Reduction in residents that require food relief services.		Since 2021-22, our Community Support Centres have verbally reported an increase in the demand for food relief services.
Increase our food economy contribution to our Gross Regional Product.		Our food economy continues to worth around \$1.3 billion of our Gorss Regional Product.
Number of initiatives delivered encouraging productive and sustainable use of the green wedge.	2022: 2 † 2025: 4 *	Twelve initiatives, which included launching our new Mornington Peninsula Produce website and partnering with the Westernport Catchment Landcare Network to deliver regenerative farming workshops, were delivered across the Council Term.

Legend for commentary

Achieved

Attention

Ceased

Health and wellbeing priorities

Strategies	Quarterly Commentary	
Strategy 2.2.1  Foster access to affordable local healthy food options by working with our key partners implementing our Agroecology Strategy.	Achieved	We met with the Victorian Farmers Federation Mornington Peninsula branch in 2021-22 on our draft Food Economy and Agroecology Strategy, which helped shape the final Strategy.
		We launched the Food Economy and Agroecology Strategy 2022-2028 on 3 March 2023 with more than fifty people attending. The Strategy, the first of its kind in Australia, is a collective action plan to radically transform the way food is produced on the Peninsula. It was commissioned to drive sustainable growth in the agriculture, food and beverage sectors whilst actively regenerating the land and resources on which our community depends. The Strategy looks at preserving and enhancing the region's ecology and biodiversity through agroecological approaches to farming and production. Following adoption of the Strategy, we created a Food Economy and Agroecology Strategy Taskforce to identify top projects for resourcing over the next two years. Key partners include Peninsula Health, Frankston Mornington Peninsula Local Learning and Employment Network and Mornington Peninsula Wine. Discussion highlights from the Taskforce include the Inquiry into securing the Victorian Food Supply and the launch of the new MPP website and programs aimed at connecting schools with farms.
Strategy 2.2.2 Support and foster the growth of our farmers through a variety of food business e.g., farm gates, sea gates, food trucks, local stalls and local farmers markets.	Achieved	About twenty-four local farmers and producers and 40 Melbourne based chefs networked at the inaugural Mornington Peninsula Shared Tables Food and Wine Educational Tour in November 2021. It was a fantastic opportunity for local farmers and food producers to showcase fresh seasonal food and beverages and promote the Mornington Peninsula Produce brand. The Shire brought back the Food Forum for the third year in 2023, to support and guide the region's food economy towards a prosperous, resilient, and regenerative future. The Food Forum brought together seventy individuals, including local growers, food and beverage business owners, chefs, and food enthusiasts, to discuss key issues, opportunities and knowledge gaps facing our diverse food economy here on the Peninsula.

Strategies	Quarterly Commentary	
Strategy 2.2.3  A strong food economy that supports food relief, rescue and re-distribution programs.	Achieved	The Shire continued to provide ongoing financial support to our community support centres to support relief efforts across the Peninsula. In 2023-24, Council committed an extra \$50,000 each to the three community support centres in Rosebud, Mornington and Hastings – this was on top of the \$700,000 we provide the centres annually.
Strategy 2.2.4 Continue to implement the Green Wedge Management Plan prioritising and encouraging productive use of the green wedge.	Achieved	Initiatives delivered to encourage productive use of the green wedge include: - Obtaining funding from the Port Phillip Westernport Catchment Management Authority for the 'Farmers Digging Deeper' Project in 2021-22. - Consulting with Agriculture Victoria to provide input on the National Resource Action Plan in 2022-23. In 2023-24, we prepared advocacy points for two Victorian inquiries into securing food supply and food systems. Victoria's foodbowl was the focus of a parliamentary inquiry that accepted public submissions until 26 April 2024. Our Sustainable Food Economy and Agroecology Taskforce also put forward a separate submission that highlighted the need to support Regenerative Agriculture, the shortages in training and career pathway opportunities and the need to plan for and secure strategic long-term food supply chain infrastructure, including recycled water.

Strategies

Strategy 2.2.5
Help our food businesses by delivering programs to grow a circular food economy.

Achieved

Quarterly Commentary

In October 2022, we held our inaugural Innovation Summit at the Continental in Sorrento. The event provided a creative collaborative space for invited business owners, Councillors, and Citizens' Panel members to come together and discuss the challenge of 'Revitalising the Mornington Economy through Investment, Tourism and Circular Economy.' It also celebrated the winners of the Business Excellence awards with all category winners receiving advertising packages to the value of either \$500 or \$1,000 with Mornington Peninsula Magazine or 3MP radio. The Business of the Year Award winner won a \$2,000 advertising package with Mornington Peninsula News Group and an on-air radio interview with 3MP Radio.

Highlighted programs delivered to support skill and knowledge development in the agriculture and food industries:

- Assisting GrowCorp, a philanthropic organisation in Main Ridge, on a regenerative farming demonstration, a local food system incubation project and their submission to the Victorian Government's 'On-Farm Action Plan' grant round, in 2021-22.
- Consulting with Agriculture Victoria to provide input on the National Resource Action Plan in 2022-23.
- Running a field day at Kewarra on regenerating pastures and soil in collaboration with the Victorian Farmers' Federation in 2023-24.

Strategy 2.2.6
Promote the Mornington Peninsula food economy including promoting the (MPP) brand.

Achieved

We promoted our food economy, including the Mornington Peninsula Produce (MPP) brand, through our website, social media, dedicated business website, eNewsletters, Best Bites Program and through the Red Hill Show.

More than twenty local producers came together at the 95th local Red Hill Show to create a truly local, regional presence at the Mornington Peninsula (MP) Paddock. Our newest Mornington Peninsula Produce (MPP) member was on display selling their wares with 3MP radio broadcasting live from the Show. Local food writer Richard Cornish hosted foodie interviews on the MP Paddock stage with the likes of local chef Simone Watts from Barragundah (Cape Schanck), and Paul Mercurio our guest judge for the sausage judging competition. More than 15,000 people attended the Red Hill Show on 11 March 2023.

As part of our Small Business Festival in September 2024, we held a Mornington Peninsula Produce (MPP) networking event at the festival and began preparing for a regional showcase at Little Food Market in July 2024.

Strategic Objective 2.3

A thriving entrepreneurial economy, with a vibrant tourism sector, that provides accessible employment to our diverse community.

Indicators

Benchmark industry employment and identify barriers to employment		Our Economic Development and Tourism Strategy, adopted by Council on 14 May 2024, benchmarks industry employment and identifies barriers.	
Number of initiatives delivered to support Council's commitment to the Small Business Friendly Charter.	2022: 4 † 2025: 5 *	Nineteen initiatives, which included partnering with the Victorian Small Business Commission, the Small Businesses Festival, our business support grants and the Mornington Peninsula Food Forum, were delivered across the Council Term.	
Strong level of business participation in Shire delivered initiatives.	2022: 4 † 2025: 3 *	Seventeen initiatives, which included the Innovation Summit, the Best Bites Awards and an Industry Development Workshop series, were delivered across the Council Term.	
Increase in visitor yield, off-peak visitation and dispersal of visitors.	2022: 4.9 million people † 2025: 7.9 million people *		
Initiatives delivered that grow the creative economy	2022: 1 † 2025: 5 *	14 initiatives, which included the Artists in Residency program and CREATE arts programs, were delivered across the Council Term.	
Increase levels of satisfaction with lobbying and advocacy on behalf of the community.	2022: 47 † 2025: 63 *		
Increased levels of satisfaction with our business and tourism services.	2022: 58 † 2025: 72 *		

Legend for commentary

Achieved

Attention

Ceased

Health and wellbeing priorities

Strategies	Quarterly Commentary	
Strategy 2.3.1 Work closely with all sectors including hospitality, manufacturing, tourism, retail, education, health and agriculture so they are strong and grow through COVID recovery and beyond.	Achieved	The Shire held its first Innovation Summit, where business owners, Councillors and members of our Citizens' Panel came together to discuss the challenge of 'Revitalising the Mornington Peninsula economy through investment, tourism and circular economy.' In 2021, we awarded business grants to the value of \$460,000 and ramped up our Support Local campaign to encourage our community to think, spend and recommend locally. The Local Economy Booster program featured widely across local media and online channels. Three hundred and forty-three residents made 461 visits to tourism businesses, injecting \$82,788 into the local economy. From December 2021 we ran Mornington Peninsula's biggest ever giveaway – with \$47,000 worth of prizes donated by local tourism businesses plus the grand prize of a new car. This increased our opportunity to connect, engage and actively encourage more people to holiday here and support Mornington Peninsula businesses over the next few months. We joined the Hidden Sunflower Disability Awareness Program in 2022, an initiative that aims to improve the skills of businesses and organisations in supporting individuals with disabilities. We celebrated Mornington Peninsula businesses at the 2023 Business Excellence Awards at RACV Cape Schanck Resort. The awards recognise the local businesses and industries that demonstrate innovation, sustainability and excellence. The top prize of Business of the Year went to Elements Eatery. Our Small Business Festival in August 2024 offered plenty of chances to hear from industry experts, opportunities to level up skills, gain fresh knowledge about all things business and even make some valuable new connections along the way. More than seven hundred people attended events, which included topics such as the future of customers (keynote opening event), marketing, networking, workforce, creating podcasts and circular economy.
	Achieved	Council adopted the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy on 14 May 2024. Feedback gathered during the public exhibition from industry experts, local businesses and community members informed the final Strategy. Following adoption, the Shire's Economic Development Service has been gathering data and reviewing our business processes to accelerate permit delivery for businesses. Upon completion, we will consult with stakeholders to highlight the outcomes from the review that will ensure more timely service delivery for our customers.

Strategies	Quarterly Commentary	
Strategy 2.3.3 Work with the Regional Tourism Board and other key stakeholders to deliver a new Tourism Destination Management Plan.	Attention	The Regional Tourism Board will release the Visitor Services Review and the Destination Management Plan in the final quarter of the 2025-26 fiscal year.
	Achieved	One of the highlights of 2023 was exhibiting at the Asia Pacific Incentive and Meetings Event (AIME), held in Melbourne in February. AIME is the leading trade event for the meetings and event industry in Asia Pacific and was celebrating its 30th year in operation. Over two days, we met with thirty-two event organisers looking at the Mornington Peninsula as a potential destination for their next business event. The tradeshow was a great branding exercise for us, resulting in multiple briefs from potential clients. In 2024, we hosted the Harry Potter Forbidden Forest Experience at The Briars Community Forest where our community could take a walk through an enchanted woodland filled with magical creatures and moments from the Harry Potter™ and Fantastic Beasts™ series. Fifty-six million dollars was injected into our local economy as a result of hosting the Harry Potter Forbidden Forest Experience at The Briars Community Forest. Close to 160,000 people, many of them first time visitors to the Peninsula, enjoyed the experience, with a considerable proportion choosing to stay on and explore more of what our region had to offer. Due to significant public feedback and environmental concerns, Council passed a resolution on 28 May 2024 to undertake an independent review of the decision-making processes around the event. An independent Probity Review, published on 15 September 2024, identified several significant findings and observations for future event learnings but found that the process outcomes were not compromised.
Strategy 2.3.5  Support our creative economy by delivering on the Our Arts and Culture Plan.	Achieved	In May of 2022, Council launched a new Performing Arts Fund. The \$500,000 fund supports local creative organisations and individuals to develop new artistic works, grow employment opportunities, and further engage our community with the performing arts. Highlighted programs delivered to support our creative economy include: - Our Police Point Artist in Residence program. It received 174 applications for 2023, more than double the applications of 2022 with a spread of writers, designers, visual artists, artists with disability and First Nations artists. - Numerous exhibitions at the Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, including the 2023 Archibald Prize, which can be found in Strategy 3.4.5. - CREATE, an exciting and accessible arts program for our Peninsula community. The workshops included everything from drawing, sun art and ceramics to lost wax jewellery, edible cake decorations, linocut and more.

Strategies

Quarterly Commentary

Strategy 2.3.6  **Deliver on the Reconciliation Action Plan, supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses and employment opportunities.**

 Achieved

Actions delivered from our Reconciliation Action Plan over the years include:

- Celebrating National Aboriginals and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) week.
- Working with Willum Warrain and the Bunurong Land Council to explore economic development opportunities.
- Collaborating with the NBN to launch the First Nations Art Node Project. The Project covered 21 NBN node cabinets across thirteen townships with Aboriginal art wraps from six local Aboriginal groups/organisations.

Strategy 2.3.7  **Work in partnership with other levels of government and service providers to promote grants, programs and services to encourage inclusive employment and volunteering opportunities.**

 Achieved

We worked with Frankston Mornington Peninsula Local Learning and Employment Network, Brotherhood of St Laurence and Chisholm TAFE to promote inclusive employment. Monthly eNewsletters and bulletins were delivered to businesses to promote government and Mornington Peninsula Shire Council initiatives, programs, assistance and services.

Council adopted the Community Investment Funding Policy and Framework on 12 July 2022 to build community strength, resilience and resourcefulness in alignment with the Community Vision, Council and Wellbeing Plan and the Financial Plan.

The Shire organised a range of activities to promote volunteering in 2023. These included a Governance Session aimed at enhancing the capacity and capabilities of Boards of Management for eight different organisations and a pop-up volunteering engagement stall in October at Mt Martha Village. We also partnered with five volunteer organisations to engage over thirty potential volunteers for roles across the Mornington Peninsula, held a volunteer training session in October to support volunteers through organisational change at Hastings Community Hub and a Cultural Immersion Tour at Willum Warrain in November 2023.

We rolled out our new Better Impact Software Management System across our volunteer services to support the management of Shire volunteers, which is a key action of the Volunteer Policy. The implementation of our software solution was completed in early 2025.

Strategies

Quarterly Commentary

Strategy 2.3.8  **Advocate for planning system changes to support affordable housing initiatives in our townships and access to local employment for our businesses.**

 Achieved

The Shire continually advocated for affordable housing and crisis accommodation on the Peninsula. We lodged a submission into the Inquiry into Protections within the Victorian Planning Framework in 2021-22 and collaborated with Councils in the Regional Local Government Homelessness and Social Housing Charter Group.

Following Council’s resolution of 11 July 2023, Council wrote to the Minister for Planning on 15 August 2023 urging action to address the Housing Crisis in Victoria, including introducing a secondary Dwelling Code to increase the supply of affordable housing options on the Peninsula. On 14 December 2023, the Minister approved Amendment VC253 to the Victoria Planning Provisions. This amendment introduced new planning controls to make it easier to build Small Second Dwellings, otherwise known as ‘tiny houses,’ on lots with an existing dwelling. These planning controls are now included within the Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme.

On 25 February 2025, the State Government released its Plan for Victoria, which includes a specific action to ‘increase the number of social and affordable homes’. The Plan includes a revised target of 24,000 new homes on the Peninsula by 2051, which aligns with the Shire’s existing Housing and Settlement Strategy and planning scheme amendment C219morn.

Strategic Objective 2.4

A diverse economy, with green and renewable opportunities, encouraging entrepreneurship, investment and innovation.

Indicators

Increased levels of satisfaction with our business and tourism services. 2022: 58 † 2025: 72 *



Model and site identified for a Performing Arts and Cultural Precinct. A model site for a Performing Arts Centre in Hastings was identified in 2023-24. The second stage of the concept design process is on hold, awaiting direction from Council on the preferred use of the Hastings site.



Number of initiatives implemented within the Industrial Land Assessment and Rezoning Strategy and Activity Centre Strategy. We continue to work through Amendment C243morn, which is sitting with an independent planning panel for review. We also await a privately led amendment, C295morn.



Increased levels of satisfaction with lobbying and advocacy on behalf of the community. 2022: 47 † 2025: 65 *



Legend for commentary

- Achieved
- Attention
- Ceased
- Health and wellbeing priorities

Strategies

Quarterly Commentary

Strategy 2.4.1 Provide an environment where new and existing businesses are supported to grow and transition to a green economy.

Achieved

The Shire continually provided an entrepreneurship, investment and innovation environment by encouraging green and renewable opportunities. Highlights over the years:

- Hosting a Circular Economy Co-Design Workshop in Mornington in 2021-22. Facilitated by Monash University, Food and Agribusiness stakeholders were invited to take part in a breakfast workshop, which was a Phase 2 component of the 'Sparking the Circular Economy in Melbourne's Manufacturing Industry' project.
- Running a Sustainable Solutions for Your Business panel session and networking night for more than fifty local businesses in conjunction with Sustainability Victoria in 2022-23.
- Progressing the project to measure baseline agroecological farming practices on the Mornington Peninsula in 2025 – The Tool for Agroecological Performance Evaluation (TAPE) will be used to measure this in the region.

Strategy 2.4.2 Investigate and develop a Performing Arts and Cultural Precinct with a specific focus on a performing arts centre, advocating for funding opportunities.

Achieved

Considerable progress has been made on the proposed Performing Arts Centre, a key element of the broader vision for a vibrant cultural precinct in Hastings. Site investigations and technical studies—including geotechnical assessments, soil testing, and flood modelling—have been completed, and the findings are currently undergoing independent expert review. These studies will provide critical insights into site suitability and support future design and mitigation strategies.

A comprehensive traffic impact assessment is also underway, evaluating accessibility, traffic flow and parking, to ensure the site can support future development and visitation.

The Performing Arts Centre is included in our federal election Shout Out for the Peninsula campaign.

Strategy 2.4.3 Use our industrial and commercial land to aid business growth and attract new and emerging industries to help diversify our economy.

Attention

Council has reviewed all C243morn submissions and forwarded them to a Planning Panel for an independent review and recommendations. The Planning Panel hearing is set to begin in May 2025. Planning Scheme Amendment C243morn is a private initiative to establish a new technology, industry and business park at 79 and 83 Bungower Road, Somerville.

The proponents of Amendment C294morn are still completing detailed technical assessments and preparing the amendment documentation. A formal planning scheme amendment request is yet to be submitted for Council's consideration. Planning Scheme Amendment C294morn is a privately led proposal to create a new industrial precinct in Hastings.

Strategy 2.4.4
Collaborate with the community about the future role of the Port of Hastings and the surrounding port-related land.



Council continues to advocate for certainty on the Port of Hastings and its future role, including the substantial swathes of land currently zoned for port-related uses. We met with the Minister for Planning in June 2023 to advocate for a confirmed future role for the Port of Hastings and the further release of Special Use Zone 1 Port-related land.

Our Port of Hastings Advocacy Strategy is on hold while the Environmental Effects Statement (EES) work continues. The EES process for the proposed Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal is continuing and is expected to be completed by October 2025.

Following the release of Amendment C304morn by the Minister for Planning for public comment in late 2024, we prepared and submitted a submission. This is a Ministerial-led amendment that permits the additional use and development of a hydrogen production facility. This facility will operate alongside the existing hydrogen liquefaction and loading terminal located at the northeast corner of Bayview Road and Long Island Drive in Hastings. The Minister for Planning is yet to decide on Amendment C304morn.

Theme 3

A flourishing, healthy and connected community

Strategic Objective 3.1

A healthy and self-determined community where everyone feels valued, supported and safe.

Indicators

Increased levels of community satisfaction in services we provide to older people.	2022: 62 † 2025: 79 *		
Increased levels of community satisfaction for family support services we provide.	2022: 61 † 2025: 81 *		
Increase in initiatives implemented that support active living and mental health and wellbeing.	2022: 8 † 2025: 6 *	Twenty-five initiatives, which included working with BreastScreen Victoria to deliver BreastScreen Van Service and the This Girl Can campaign, were delivered across the Council Term. In addition Council supported numerous groups aiming to improve mental wellbeing	
Increase in initiatives delivered that support our diverse community	2022: 2 † 2025: 6 *	Twenty-one initiatives, which included supporting the Frankston Mornington Peninsula LGBTIQA+ Collaborative, taking part in the Walk Against Family Violence at Parliament House Steps and participating in the 16 Days of Activism campaigns, were delivered across the Council Term.	
Implement initiatives that support our Reconciliation Action Plan.		Most actions from our 2020-2022 Reconciliation Action Plan were completed in 2023. Council adopted the 2023-2026 Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan on the 3 September 2024.	

Legend for commentary

Achieved

Attention

Ceased

Health and wellbeing priorities

Strategies	Quarterly Commentary
Strategy 3.1.1  Deliver the Gender Equality Strategy in partnership with community organisations. Achieved	In February 2020, the Shire launched its first Gender Equality Strategy 2020-30, which was adopted by Council in November 2019. Highlights delivered in support of the Strategy include: - Delivering the Communities Creating Change Project' in 2021-22. The Project aimed to empower men and boys and the broader community about the pressures of living up to outdated stereotypes of manhood. Over 550 people were engaged in Unpacking the Man Box training. - Celebrating International Women's Day and promoting 16 Days of Activism annually as part of our commitment to increase gender equality and prevent violence against women and their children. We also launched the photo competition of the This Girl Can campaign in partnership with Belgravia Leisure and Peninsula Health in 2021-22. The annual campaign inspires women to get active – however, wherever and whenever they choose, without being judged. The Shire hosted a Fair Access Breakfast as part of the development program for sporting clubs and leagues in the lead up to International Women's Day 2024. The development program session covered why equality in sport matters; the state government's new Fair Access Policy Roadmap; what local clubs can do to encourage more girls and women to join their clubs and the Shire's Gender Inclusive Sports Club Toolkit.
Strategy 3.1.2  Deliver the Reconciliation Action Plan, guided by the traditional owners, respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Achieved	Our 2020-2022 Reconciliation Action Plan was finished in 2022 with most actions completed. Highlights completed: - Supporting and promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultures through a National Reconciliation Week celebration. - Developing and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, and organisations to support positive outcomes such as our Aboriginal Art Node project and adoption of the Wulum Warrain Masterplan. - Working in partnership with the Bunurong Land Council to identify and manage Aboriginal cultural heritage in our Coastal and Marine Management Plan and in the naming of trails to acknowledge and highlight sites of cultural significance. The Bunurong Land Council approved our new Reconciliation Action Plan 2024-2026 before Council's adoption on 3 September 2024. As of March 2025, the RAP is still in the process of gaining sign-off from Reconciliation Australia. The RAP is a two-year commitment requiring Council to develop and strengthen relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and engage staff and external stakeholders in Reconciliation.

Strategies	Quarterly Commentary
Strategy 3.1.3  Deliver the Communities That Care Action Plan increasing connection for young people. Attention	Through our Communities That Care Action Plan, the Shire Peninsula promoted the health and wellbeing of children and young people on the Peninsula. As part of this approach, we hosted programs that included: - Fathering Program - Mentoring Program - Map your World - Community Speaking Series. In 2023, Council ceased its involvement with the Communities That Care (CTC) program. We redirected resources from Our CTC Action Plan to develop a broader Inclusion Strategy. The Inclusion Strategy (We All Belong) will help us realise our ambition to create equal opportunities for all our community, regardless of culture, age, gender, ability, sexuality, gender or religion.
Strategy 3.1.4  Deliver on a new lifespan strategy that will enhance the health and wellbeing of all generations. Achieved	The We All Belong (inclusion strategy) was adopted by Council on 3 September 2024. The Strategy's annual action plan is being implemented over the year. To minimise the number of wellbeing strategies in the organisation, a decision was made to develop broader inclusion and diversity strategy, We All Belong (inclusion strategy), which incorporated the Lifespan Strategy.
Strategy 3.1.5  Support and participate in local and regional programs to improve sexual and reproductive health. Achieved	A signatory to the Good Health Down South Regional Strategy, the Mornington Peninsula Shire participated in the planning and launch of the Good Health Down South 2021-2025 strategy, which was coordinated by Women's Health in the South East (WHISE) and shared with partners across the region. Highlights delivered over the years: - In partnership with WHISE, we delivered a social media campaign during Sexual Health Week in 2021-22 which received significant engagement. - Supporting BreastScreen Victoria over May and June of 2023. The mobile screening truck offered free breast screens in Rosebud over six weeks. - Delivering values-based messaging to support women on the Peninsula in 2023-24. In 2024-25, we worked with the Victorian Government to support the rollout of pad and tampon vending machines at Mornington, Hastings and Rosebud Libraries and the Southern Peninsula Community Support Centre.

Strategies

Quarterly Commentary

Strategy 3.1.6  Provide a harm minimisation approach to alcohol through our Alcohol Management Policy. Achieved

Action:
Review the Alcohol Management Policy.

Council adopted the Alcohol Harm Prevention Policy in March 2025. We are developing an implementation plan to coordinate and implement the policy throughout the organisation.

Strategy 3.1.7  Deliver the Positive Ageing Strategy promoting the respectful inclusion of older people. Achieved

We organised a Positive Ageing Summit in 2022 to assess the effectiveness of our Positive Ageing Strategy. Additionally, we conducted three community conversations in Rye, Hastings and Mornington that focused on positive ageing. The conversations captured the diverse experiences of older people on the Peninsula and identified issues that Council could advocate for or address. They also provided an opportunity for residents to connect, discover what is available in their community and learn about the latest initiatives in the positive ageing space.

Building on the momentum of 2022’s Positive Ageing Summit, we held three more ‘Positive Ageing on the Peninsula – Community Conversation’ events in November of 2023 to monitor the progress of the Shire’s Positive Ageing Strategy. Through conversations with residents with lived experience, we learnt what is working well and what needs improving to age well on the Peninsula.

Seniors Festival on the Peninsula is a month-long event that kicks off in October every year and includes activities for seniors such as open days at seniors’ clubs, concerts, and classes offered at community houses. In 2023, the festival delivered free or low-cost activities including Silver Steps, a music and dance program for seniors to improve mood, encourage socialisation and promote overall mental and physical health. We also contributed more than \$10,000 to support local organisations to deliver their unique events under the Seniors Festival umbrella.

In February of 2024, we held a planning workshop with PACE (Peninsula Advisory Committee for Elders) members that identified elder abuse, transport, housing and homelessness as key priorities for 2024. We also held a legal forum at Safety Beach Sailing Club in partnership with Peninsula Legal Services and the Respecting Seniors Network.

In September of 2024, we incorporated the Positive Ageing Strategy into the We All Belong Strategy, which promotes and supports older people across the Peninsula.

Strategies

Quarterly Commentary

Strategy 3.1.8  Carry out an Active Living Census to better understand people’s activity levels and preferences. Attention

The Active Living Census did not go ahead. Resources were redirected to a Health and Wellbeing Survey that was undertaken with local sports clubs.

As of March 2025, the Shire’s Health and Social Data Profile has been updated with a range of data sources to support the development of the Shire’s new Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. This includes Victorian Population Health Survey data recently released by the Victorian Government. Key health, social research and engagement data have been collated to be uploaded and work on our new central data system for community presentation on our website is ongoing.

Strategy 3.1.9  Healthy eating options are available at Shire owned and managed facilities and events. Achieved

The Shire worked in partnership with Deakin University in 2022-23 to use a Local Food EPI (Environmental Policy Index) which will involve a self-assessment of our policies for creating healthy, equitable and environmentally sustainable food systems.

The Shire continues to ensure that healthy eating options are available at Shire owned and managed facilities and events as per our Healthy Food and Drink Policy.

Strategic Objective 3.2

A resilient and confident community where everyone connects and is supported.

Indicators

Improve level of uptake of community support programs.

We continue to see good community uptake in our community support programs.



Community support initiatives delivered in partnership with key stakeholders.
2022: 2 †
2025: 9 *

Eighteen initiatives were implemented during the Council Term. These included promoting social connections through Chatty Café and working with DanceWize and Red Frog volunteers to ensure that schoolies could celebrate safely.



Mental health and wellbeing programs delivered in partnership with key stakeholders.
2022: 5 †
2025: 4 *

Twenty initiatives, which included partnering with the Regional Suicide Prevention Network for the annual Suicide Prevention Walk, continued support for the Chasing Change community group and Community Mental Health First Aid training, were delivered across the Council Term.



Reduction of telecommunications and internet black spots on the Peninsula.

Optus continues to rollout base stations to improve and extend mobile phone coverage as a part of their Mobile Black Spot Program.



Legend for commentary

Achieved

Attention

Ceased

Health and wellbeing priorities

Strategies

Quarterly Commentary

Strategy 3.2.1 Develop a range of community, creative and business support grants.

Achieved

The Mornington Peninsula Shire Council continued to offer a range of grants in support of our community and to ensure the Peninsula's lasting resilience and renewal. Community Investment Funding from 2021 to 2025 was more than twelve million dollars.

Strategy 3.2.2 Collaborate with our community to prepare for the climate emergency.

Achieved

In 2023, Council collaborated with the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) to deliver Energy Resilience Solutions to Flinders, Red Hill and Balnarring – three Mornington Peninsula townships considered high risk. Energy Resilience infrastructure was provided to a site in each community to enable it to act as a refuge centre or Community Hub after extreme weather events associated with climate change and/or prolonged power outages.

Please see Strategy 1.3.1 for more information on the Flinders Community Battery and Strategy 1.1.5 for projects delivered from our Climate Emergency Plan.

Strategy 3.2.3 Deliver the Shire's COVID-19 recovery program, including grants and key projects.

Completed

To help our community and business, Council allocated \$10 million to recovery in 2021-22 to reshape public spaces and services to ensure the safety of people, while also prioritising the most vulnerable in our community. We waived fees to the value of \$1 million. This provided relief across the community and business sector and to our most vulnerable. Other highlights include:

- Using \$650,000 to re-establish the Outdoor Dining and Township Activation program from October 2021 to April 2022, streamlining processes to ensure the repeat success of this initiative for our hospitality industry.
- Rolling out \$2.2 million to empower those most in need and our community with grants.
- Fast tracking \$2.2 million in capital projects to support vital infrastructure and community connections, including design of the Southern Peninsula Youth Hub and The Briars Master Plan and delivery of priority small missing link footpaths.

The COVID-19 recovery program is complete. However, the Shire continues to support small businesses and strategic industries on the Peninsula through our 10-year Economic Development and Tourism Strategy.

Strategies	Quarterly Commentary	
Strategy 3.2.4  Increase social connection and reduce social isolation in our community.	Achieved	We promoted social connections through programs like Chatty Cafe, positive ageing books clubs, Yack n Yarn, Learn to Knit, Film Club and Intergenerational Art. We ran after school programs aimed at social connection, personal development and leadership, which included Creative Catz, Skittle Squad, Drop In, Primary School Night and FReeZA. We also delivered a range of development programs, including a Fair Access Breakfast, Mental Health Awareness program, Governance and Volunteer management training and brought together families for First Time Parent Groups and Sleep and Settling information sessions.
Strategy 3.2.5  Deliver programs to prevent, recognise and respond to mental health and wellbeing concerns.	Achieved	The Mornington Peninsula Shire continues to offer a range of programs, services and grants to support our community mental health and wellbeing, including: - Supporting families through our Enhanced and Maternal Child Health services, which include referrals to family violence agencies and mental health services. - Delivered Youth Services programs, activities and events at our three youth centres, in schools and in the community. Events included R U OK day, the Suicide Prevention Walk and a skate jam at the Somerville Active Park opening in 2022-23. - Organising a monthly Men’s Mental Health Collaborative in 2023-24 to connect men to leading mental health and suicide prevention initiatives. We also delivered a series of events for Men’s Health Week with approximately two hundred community members in attendance.
Strategy 3.2.6  Develop a Community Strengthening Strategy to improve social inclusion, boost volunteering and build resilience. Action: Develop a Community Volunteer Action Plan.	Attention	Council adopted the new Inclusion Strategy (We All Belong) on 3 September 2024. To minimise the number of wellbeing strategies in the organisation, a decision was made to develop broader inclusion and diversity strategy, We All Belong (inclusion strategy), which incorporated the Community Strengthening Strategy. We are currently planning for the development of a new Community Emergency Management and Resilience Strategy. Each of these strategies focuses on building and strengthening community inclusion, connection and resilience.

Strategies	Quarterly Commentary	
Strategy 3.2.7  Support and participate in local and regional initiatives that focus on suicide prevention and positive mental health and wellbeing.	Achieved	The Shire’s Community Wellbeing team is supporting local suicide prevention initiatives through the local Suicide Prevention Network, Chasing Change, which includes assisting with planning for the World Suicide Prevention Day Walk in September each year. We offered a range of programs, services and grants to support our community mental health and wellbeing: - Introducing Skittle Squad in 2021-22, which is a social program for LGBTQIA+ young people and allies who came together at our youth centres on a weekly basis for support and fun. - Delivering Youth and Teen Mental Health First Aid training in community settings and schools. - Inviting small business owners and operators to take part in free mental health training in 2023-24. The four sessions in Rye, Mornington, Hastings and Dromana were attended by 45 local businesses. - Hosting a table at the Peninsula Voice forum on grief and loss and participating in National Grief Week in 2024-25 and coordinating the submission for Hope Week 2025.
Strategy 3.2.8  Advocate for improved telecommunication networks to ensure a strong digital connection and increase social inclusion.	Achieved	Council successfully advocated to the Victorian Government for investment to improve digital connectivity through the Connecting Victoria initiative and the NBN Regional Co-Investment Fund in 2021-22. The first funded projects saw businesses in Dromana get access to faster and more reliable fibre internet through Enterprise Ethernet services. In the lead up to the 2022 state and federal elections Council advocated to local candidates and government departments on the top ten issues and projects we believed would have the biggest impact on the Peninsula community. We released a ‘Shout out for the Peninsula’ advocacy campaign that focused on ten priorities, including Mobile Coverage.

Strategic Objective 3.3

A community in which people from all generations, backgrounds and abilities can access local services.

Indicators

Implement initiatives that enhance community inclusion and wellbeing outcomes.		Council adopted We All Belong Strategy in 2023-24 and continued to support priority populations that include LGBTIQ+, people with disability, children and young people, older people and women.	
Increase levels of satisfaction with family, older and disadvantaged support services.	2022: 55 † 2025: 72 *		
Level of community participation in programs that support our community's diverse needs.	2022: 25,000 † 2025: 30,904 *		
Implement initiatives to increase awareness and access to social and support services.	2022: 4 † 2025: 4 *	Sixteen initiatives, which included launching All Access Keys and providing monthly Saturday Maternal Health sessions, were delivered across the Council Term.	
Improved services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.	2022: 82% § 2025: 84% §	Participation in the MCH service by Aboriginal children measure.	
Shire owned assets with all-abilities entrances and facilities.		We adopted our Universal Design Policy in 2021-22 to ensure inclusive and equitable access to buildings, services, employment, information, events and public spaces.	

Legend for commentary

- Achieved
- Attention
- Ceased
- Health and wellbeing priorities

Strategies

Quarterly Commentary

Strategy 3.3.1 Remove barriers so people of all abilities can participate and access services.	Achieved	In 2021-22, the Shire launched a Business Accessibility Improvements Grant to support local businesses to be more accessible and inclusive. Five businesses received \$5,000 each to improve access and inclusion to their business. Over the summer of 2022, we rolled out our Beach Matting trials at five locations along the Port Phillip Bay side of the Mornington Peninsula, at Mothers Beach (Mornington), Mount Martha, Rosebud Jetty, Rye Pier and Sorrento. We started our first after-hours Maternal Child Health (MCH) sessions on Saturday 17 February 2024 in Mornington. These Saturday sessions have enabled parents who cannot make it to an appointment during the working week to attend an MCH consultation or a parent education session. The sessions are held monthly. We made available all new Access Keys to the Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery from 15 September 2023 (just in time for the Archibald Prize 2023 Regional Tour exhibition) and to the Rosebud Library in late 2023.
Strategy 3.3.2 Explore partnership opportunities for programs that address tobacco-related and gambling harm.	Achieved	In partnership with Peninsula Health, we have continued to roll out Smoke Free Environments signage at key settings across the municipality. Planning is underway to review our gambling policy, with the review scheduled for the final quarter of 2024-25. We aim to broaden the focus of the new policy to include the prevention of harm from electronic and online gambling.

Strategies

Quarterly Commentary

Strategy 3.3.3  **Deliver programs, services and events that engage and empower children, young people and their families.** Achieved

In 2022, we celebrated Children's Week from 22-30 October with more than 30 activities and events promoted across the Peninsula. We also saw more than 65 families participate in the Community Child Safety workshops, which were delivered in partnership with Body Safety Australia.

Other highlights over the years include:

- Successfully advocated for a \$150k Building Blocks Planning Grant in 2021-22 to support the development of a pipeline of kindergarten infrastructure and expansion projects.
- Successfully advocated for a \$330k Building Blocks Grant from the Victorian School Building Authority in 2021-22 to upgrade the facility and build a new and inclusive playground at Wallaroo Preschool, Hastings.
- Participated in First 1000 Days Australia: Early life strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families training. First 1000 Days Australia is a First Nations model aimed at strengthening all families so they can give their children the best start in life.
- On 28 February 2025, we held the Tounnin Wominjeka Youth Hub Community Open Day. The event welcomed around two hundred community members and featured live entertainment, with young people from the FReeZA program performing music and food, activities and interactive experiences.

Strategy 3.3.4  **Engage with LGBTIQA+ community members and deliver programs to support them.** Achieved

Since we co-convened the LGBTIQA+ collaborative with Frankston City Council in 2021-22, the Shire continues to support our LGBTIQA+ community and shows support by marching each year at the Midsumma Pride March, alongside Frankston City Council and the Frankston Mornington Peninsula LGBTIQA+ Collaborative. Our Community Vision makes it clear that respecting diversity and inclusiveness is central to our identity.

We delivered several programs in support of our LGBTIQA+ community:

- Supported community-led groups Rainbow Connections and Out on the Peninsula.
- Stood in solidarity with our lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning and asexual (LGBTIQA+) residents, community friends, family, allies and colleagues at flag raising ceremonies hosted at our Shire offices.
- Hosted Pride Gym and Swim nights at Yawa Aquatic Centre.

Strategies

Quarterly Commentary

Strategy 3.3.5  **Support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members to self determine community services and programs as required.** Achieved

In 2021-22, Council adopted the Willum Warrain Masterplan and committed to increasing the leased area of the Gathering Place to facilitate the Masterplan. The Masterplan supports the implementation of the association's vision and significant growth of the organisation's membership, staffing and the extensive development of the grounds.

We commenced the Rurdinin Identity project in 2022-23, a brand-new pilot program designed in partnership with Headspace and Western Port Secondary College, to support disengaged Indigenous youth.

In 2023-24, the Shire supported this year's annual Koorie Youth Summit at the Willum Warrain Aboriginal gathering place in Hastings. More than 250 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander secondary students from thirty schools attended the Youth Summit to help connect our Indigenous youth to their culture.

In 2024-25, the Shire's Reconciliation Inclusion Officer met with members of the Bunurong Land Council on Country to discuss potential partnership initiatives to implement the Shire's new Reconciliation Action Plan.

Strategy 3.3.6  **Advocate for more local services to meet current and future community needs.** Achieved

The Mornington Peninsula Shire continues to take every opportunity to advocate on behalf of our community.

In the lead up to the 2022 state and federal elections, Council advocated to local candidates and government departments on the top 10 issues and projects we believed would have the biggest impact on the Peninsula community. We released a 'Shout out for the Peninsula' advocacy campaign focusing on Homelessness, Peninsula Trail, Performing Arts Centre, Public Transport, Recycled Water, Road Safety, Rosebud Hospital Upgrade and Mobile coverage.

In 2023, we took our advocacy priorities direct to State politicians at Parliament House with a three-day expo in Queen's Hall. By going to Parliament House, we took our community's message directly to the decision-makers to ensure we were heard above 78 other councils across Victoria.

With the 2025 federal election looming, we launched our second Shout Out for the Peninsula campaign. We identified four projects that align with federal government responsibilities, addressing urgent needs and delivering significant benefits to our community. These included Homelessness Services, a new Performing Arts Centre, Peninsula Trails and Save Rosebud Hospital.

We also organised a community Federal Election Forum. The election forum provided federal candidates an opportunity to present their vision and priorities for the Mornington Peninsula, address key community concerns and respond to audience-submitted questions.

Strategic Objective 3.4

A community with vibrant arts, culture, sport and recreational opportunities that foster connections and participation across generations, backgrounds and abilities.

Indicators

Increase level of satisfaction with community and cultural activities and services.	2022: 62 † 2025: 79 *	
Increase participation in arts, cultural, sport and recreational initiatives delivered.	The Shire continued see good participation across our arts, culture, sport and recreational initiatives	
Increase participation in our diverse services and programs.	2022: 25,000 † 2025: 30,904 *	
Increase signature events on the Peninsula that utilise local talent.	We launched our inaugural arts festival Drift in 2021-22 and again in 2023 to help Peninsula arts and music recover, post COVID. In 2023-24, we hosted the Harry Potter Forest Experience to over 160,000 visitors.	

Legend for commentary

Achieved

Attention

Ceased

Health and wellbeing priorities

Strategies

Strategy 3.4.1  Achieved
In partnership with our community, using Universal Design Principles, improve access to and promote cultural, sport and recreational opportunities.

Quarterly Commentary

Since adopting our Universal Design policy in early 2022 we have collaborated closely with our community and consultants to improve access to and promote cultural, sport and recreational opportunities, including:

- Officially opening Yawa Aquatic Centre on Monday 15 November 2021. Our newest aquatic facility, featuring a 50-metre pool, won the prestigious award for ‘Community Facility of the Year’ at the 2022 Parks & Leisure Australia National Awards of Excellence.
- Launching our new accessible hoist at Hastings Pontoon to enable wheelchair users to transfer safely from the pontoon into a boat.
- Supporting Belgravia Leisure’s ‘All Abilities Day’ at Civic Reserve on 7 December 2022. One hundred participants from seven user groups participated in activities such as tennis, table tennis, gymnastics and basketball.
- Holding a Family Fun Day at Crib Point Pool in January, which saw around 150 people participate in recreational swimming and aqua Zumba classes.
- Finalising our draft Sports Capacity Plan. We are reviewing the final draft before taking it to a briefing of Council on 24 June 2025. The Strategy is expected to be adopted by the end of July. Community feedback informed the final Plan.

Strategy 3.4.2  Achieved
Implement the Shire’s Our Arts and Culture Plan, creating an environment in which the arts thrive.

We have reviewed the actions completed under the Arts and Culture Strategy 2020-2024, those currently ongoing, and those that can be carried forward to the new five-year Strategy. Highlights delivered from the Plan include:

- Reopening our Peninsula Community Theatre building. The building now features an upgraded audio–visual system that can be managed by hirers from an iPad, reducing the need for an AV technician to be on site during an event.
- Relaunching ARTREK, which allows some of our public art to come to life using our augmented reality app.
- Relaunching the Mount Martha House Museum display.

As of March 2025, the development of the Peninsula Creative Culture Strategy has been paused as we explore the potential to integrate events, arts, culture, and other related plans and strategies. This pause will allow us time to ensure all cultural initiatives align with broader community development goals, fostering more sustainable and impactful outcomes.

The Public Art Policy is due to go to Council on 25 June 2024.. Please see Strategy 2.3.5 for more information on the activities delivered as part of Our Arts and Culture Plan..

Strategies

Quarterly Commentary

Strategy 3.4.3 
Engage with culturally and linguistically diverse communities to share and protect cultural heritage, beliefs, traditions and stories.

 Achieved

As part of our core identity and values, we are committed to promoting and celebrating culturally and linguistically diverse communities on the Peninsula. This includes celebrating and promoting National Aboriginals and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week every year.

Other highlights include:

- Facilitating an Early Years Yarning Circle in 2021-22 in partnership with Department of Education Koorie Engagement Support Officers and Frankston City Council.
- Collaborating with the Willum Warrain Aboriginal Association and the Western Port Biosphere Reserve Foundation to organise a Healing Country community planting event in Hastings in 2022-23.

In 2024, we invited community members to come together for our first-ever Our Multicultural Festival on 16 March 2024. Held in the lead-up to this year’s Harmony Week and Cultural Diversity Week (18-24 March), this colourful family-friendly event celebrated the diverse cultures and communities that are represented on our Peninsula. A vibrant celebration of cultural diversity, 386 community members took part in interactive activities, captivating performances and diverse cultural displays, engaged with the popup multicultural library and enjoyed culinary delights, coffee and gelato.

In early 2025, Culture Fest 2025 celebrations took place from 17 to the 23 March, bringing together the community in a range of events to mark Harmony Week. This included Rhythm & Flavours, a live Q & A event on racism and discrimination, and a cultural walk.

Strategy 3.4.4 
Implement a Library Strategy to provide accessible services and programs for our diverse community.

 Achieved

The Our Library Strategy 2024-2029 was adopted by Council on 16 April 2024. The Strategy was developed using insights from last year’s customer satisfaction survey and released for community consultation between 29 September and 10 November 2023.

The deliverables in the Strategy are being used to guide our services, collection, programs, and team development goals. Programs and services continue to be offered for all age groups, including early years, school-aged children, young adults, adults and older adults.

Our Library Van (OLiV) started in early 2025 and as demand increased, we started reviewing the number of stops our new library van makes to ensure more people have access to our mobile library.

Strategies

Quarterly Commentary

Strategy 3.4.5 
Support and deliver inclusive events and festivals.

 Achieved

As part of our COVID-19 recovery, we created a new Mornington Peninsula Festival to help our community celebrate and reconnect. Our first Drift Arts and Culture Festival took place in April 2022. For 11 days over autumn, the Peninsula celebrated art and music with the inaugural DRIFT Arts Festival, bringing venues, places, and spaces to life with performances, music, visual arts, film, public art installations, multimedia and projections, writing and literature.

To continue our economic recovery, we launched our second Drift Arts and Culture Festival launched in March 2023. The festival supported almost one hundred events across live music, visual arts, dance, theatre, circus, cabaret, writing and literature, multimedia installations and more over 10 days.

The Archibald Prize 2023 officially landed in Mornington, attracting more than 2,000 visitors over the opening weekend. The exhibition kicked off with an exclusive opening event on Thursday 14 September where artists, politicians, councillors, and community members enjoyed a preview of the works of art. More than 50,000 visitors visited the exhibition.

Councillors and local government officers from around Australia came together on the Mornington Peninsula for the Australian Local Government Women’s Association (ALGWA) 2023 National Conference. The conference, held at the RACV Cape Schanck Resort, was an opportunity for women working in local government to network, share experiences, participate in meaningful and career-orientated workshops, and learn from the many high-calibre presenters and panellists. A one-day trade show held during the conference promoted local businesses, with guests able to sample and purchase a range of products, including fresh produce, beers and wine, health foods and confectionery.

We also provided a safe environment for Mornington Peninsula Schoolies to keep young people safe while they celebrate each year. With Rye a popular destination among many school leavers for years, our Schoolies Hub allowed school leavers to dance the night away in an age-appropriate environment, supported by the Shire’s Youth Services team, DanceWize and Red Frog volunteers.

Strategic Objective 3.5

A community that is well connected through sustainable, accessible and integrated transport options.

Indicators

Improve condition of local roads and footpaths and increase community satisfaction.	2022: 51 † 2025: 59 *		
Improve parking facilities and increase levels of community satisfaction.	2022: 56 † 2025: 67 *		
Number of initiatives delivered to support a connected community.	We held discussions with the Department of Transport on the implementation of more frequent and direct public transport, leading to the introduction of two new bus routes, and adopted our Pedestrian Access Strategy to better link our existing footpath network.		
An increase in new and upgraded footpaths, bike lanes and trails so they are accessible and encourage active transport.	2022: 12,640 † 2025: 1,927 *		
Progress on peninsula bike safe trial for Victoria on the Mornington Peninsula.	Our RideSafe Strategy has been included in the upcoming Integrated Transport Strategy as an action.		

Legend for commentary

- Achieved
- Attention
- Ceased
- Health and wellbeing priorities

Strategies

Quarterly Commentary

Strategy 3.5.1  Advocate for more accessible and frequent public transport services, including connected pathways, trails, buses and trains for the Mornington Peninsula.	Achieved	In the lead up to the 2022 state and federal elections Council advocated to local candidates and government departments on the top ten issues and projects we believed would have the biggest impact on the Peninsula community. We released a 'Shout out for the Peninsula' advocacy campaign focusing on the Peninsula Trail, Public Transport and Road Safety. Our residents sent 4,000 emails to candidates, viewed our candidate forums more than 3,600 times and visited our 'Shout Out' webpages more than 13,000 times. As a result of Council advocacy and the success of our Better Buses campaign, a cross-Peninsula bus connecting Hastings and Mornington via Tyabb was announced in 2022-23. The Minister for Public Transport announced an extra \$36.4 million in the 2023-24 budget to deliver the service as part of Victoria's Bus Plan. As part of the State Government's 2024-25 budget for improved bus and ferry services across the state, a further \$6.7 million was announced. The budget also outlined building new bus stop infrastructure for bus routes across Hastings and the Mornington Peninsula.
Strategy 3.5.2  An accessible built environment that supports diverse, current and future community needs.	Achieved	The Visitor Paid Parking Pilot was launched on 1 December 2023 and concluded on 14 September 2024. The pilot explored sharing the cost of maintaining our foreshore assets by asking visitors to contribute to their upkeep. The Pilot was active at three Mornington Peninsula foreshore carparks with visitors planning to park at Schnapper Point (Mornington), Sunnyside (Mount Eliza) or Flinders Pier. The Mount Eliza Parking Precinct Plan was adopted by Council on 3 September 2024. The Strategy report was updated as per Council's recommendation and is now available on our website. In 2025, work on the development of the Shire's Parking Management Policy had begun.
Strategy 3.5.3  Deliver on the Pedestrian Access Strategy, creating safe, accessible and connected pedestrian networks.	Achieved	In 2022-23, the Shire successfully secured matched funding from the Victorian Government for three missing link footpaths. The paths connect bus stops to healthcare centres, a primary school and childcare centres and are located on Tanti Avenue, Nepean Highway and Craigie Road. Council adopted our Pedestrian Access Strategy on 27 February 2024. The strategy includes an updated footpath construction priority list based on revised criteria that address safety and vulnerable residents. Community consultation, from 15 September to 5 November 2023, along with the findings from an assessment of our 690-kilometre network of footpaths, informed the strategy and its priority list. Please see our capital works under each Year in Review for a list of footpath highlights delivered.

Strategies

Quarterly Commentary

Strategy 3.5.4
Advocate for an expansion of the electric vehicle charging network and promote the use of electric vehicles.



In 2021-22, the Shire partnered with South East Councils Climate Change Alliance and four neighbouring Councils to continue work on the development of an Electric Vehicle Charging Roadmap for the South East.

We supported the Repower Mornington Peninsula EV day in Mount Martha on 18 March 2023. The event attracted a crowd of four hundred people and a great variety of EVs with the majority of exhibitors' private owners who were able to share their experience of transitioning to an EV. Electric Vehicle cars on display included BYD, Tesla, Kia, Nissan, Polaris and BMW.

We also partnered with Repower Red Hill to hold their inaugural 'Repower Your Lives Expo at the 2024 Red Hill Show. The Expo showcased electric vehicles (EV's), electric farm machinery and home appliances to help the community on their electrification journey.

The transition to EVs for our pool vehicle fleet has stalled due to our current infrastructure, which is at full capacity and limited to our current EV fleet. As a result, we started replacing our old internal combustion engine fleet vehicles with mild hybrid light commercial vehicles from 2025 as needed.

Strategy 3.5.5 
Implement the Towards Zero Road Safety Strategy in our continued commitment to zero road deaths and serious injuries towards 2050.



The Safer Speed Trial was launched in December 2019 to reduce road trauma and saw the speed limit on 33 Shire-managed, high risk sealed rural roads reduced to 80 km/h. The Mornington Peninsula has had a long history of high rates of road trauma and experienced the equal highest number of road deaths of Victoria's 79 municipalities in the lead up to the trial. At the 22 November 2022 Council Meeting, Council resolved to apply to the Victorian Department of Transport to make the 80 km/h speed limits permanent on all the 33 roads.

The Mornington Peninsula Shire's Safer Speeds Project was recognised in two categories at the Australian Road Safety Awards held in Parliament House Canberra, in June 2023. The project won the Rural and Remote Programs Award and was then announced as the overall winner with the Founder's Award.

Work on the Speed Limit Action Plan is progressing well. A significant amount of work, including data analysis, has been completed and we are collaborating with the Department of Transport and Planning and Road Safety Victoria. The Plan is expected to be completed by the end of June 2025.

Strategies

Quarterly Commentary

Strategy 3.5.6
Deliver on the new Integrated Transport Strategy to create a connected, accessible and sustainable transport network.



We started developing the Integrated Transport Strategy in September of 2024. We held a Cycling Workshop in September with key stakeholders across the Peninsula to start planning and mapping the key cycling network. Community consultation was open for four weeks and finished on 17 December 2024. Community feedback will shape and inform the Strategy. The Strategy is due to adopted by Council towards the end of 2025.

Strategy 3.5.7 
Deliver on the new RideSafe Strategy to create a safe and accessible cycling network that accommodates the needs of all users.



We have started developing our new RideSafe Strategy, which will be incorporated into the overarching Integrated Transport Strategy as an action plan. Feedback from community consultation undertaken in late 2024 is helping to shape the Strategy. Stakeholder workshops are planned for the final quarter of 2025-26, before the draft Integrated Transport Strategy is finalised for release for public exhibition between July and September of 2025. The Strategy is expected to be adopted by December 2025.

* 2025 Mornington Peninsula Shire Annual Report
† 2022 Mornington Peninsula Shire Annual Report
‡ 2023 Mornington Peninsula Shire Annual Report
§ Know Your Council Website
¶ Remplan Economy website
** Mornington Peninsula Shire Climate Progress Reporting
*** YTD 2025 Local Government Performance Reporting Framework results

