We All Belong

Towards an Inclusive Mornington Peninsula 2024-2029

Mornington Peninsula Shire

Progress report 2025-2026



Acknowledgement

Mornington Peninsula Shire Council (Council) acknowledges and pays respect to the elders, families and ancestors of the Bunurong people, who have been the custodians of this land for many thousands of years. 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.

We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, multicultural communities and LGBTIQA+ people.

We respectfully acknowledge people with disability, people who are neurodivergent and carers as we strive for a more accessible and inclusive society.

Language statement

Mornington Peninsula Shire Council acknowledges that inclusive language is integral for promoting inclusion across the community. We understand that language is always changing and recognise that words have different meanings for different people. Preferences about how language is used reflect the different ways people consider their identity, experiences, and attitudes within the community.

Council is committed to continually listening to and understanding our communities' preferences and the best way to use language to promote inclusion. We have chosen to use person-first language which emphasises a person's right to an identity beyond their disability, race, gender, and/or sexuality.

Council uses the acronym LGBTIQA+ which stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning, and asexual. The plus sign acknowledges that there are other diverse gender and sexual identities which may not be covered by the letters LGBTIQA.

Contents

1.	Background	3
2.	Strategic Context	5
3.	Key Achievements by Goal	6
4.	Progress Report 2025-2026	8

1. Background

Our community is a place where people of all ages, abilities, cultures, genders and sexualities are welcomed, celebrated and provided with opportunities to thrive and reach their full potential.
'We' – All of the Mornington Peninsula community.
'All' – Regardless of age, status, race, gender, sexuality, beliefs, and disability.
'Belong' – Feel secure, supported, accepted, included, heard and valued.

This 2025-2026 Annual Report outlines how Mornington Peninsula Shire worked in partnership with community members, stakeholders and service providers to implement the *We All Belong Strategy 2024-2029* (the Strategy).

Implementation of the Strategy is coordinated by the Community Wellbeing and Inclusion team and delivered through a collaborative, whole-of-Council and whole-of-community approach. This includes partnerships across Council departments, community organisations, government agencies and community members with lived and living experience. Working together strengthens Council's ability to respond to local needs, leverage community expertise and deliver actions that support inclusion, accessibility, participation and belonging across the Mornington Peninsula.

The Strategy is built around five goals:

- **Connected**: Our community fosters strong social connections, embraces diversity and promotes equality.
- **Empowered**: Our community has opportunities to participate in community life and have their voices meaningfully heard.
- **Accessible**: Our community has access to well-designed built, social, economic, health, digital and natural environments.
- **Leading**: Our community benefits from strong advocacy, strategic partnerships and effective leadership.
- **Thriving**: Our community thrives through the delivery of programs and services across the lifespan.

The Strategy recognises the diverse and intersecting experiences of community members and includes a focus on:

- Children and young people
- Older people
- People with disability
- People from multicultural communities
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer and Asexual (LGBTIQA+) communities

To achieve the Strategy's goals, *We All Belong* outlines a series of Objectives and Actions that support inclusion, accessibility, participation and belonging across the Mornington Peninsula.

- **Objectives**: The high-level outcomes Council is seeking to achieve under each of the five strategic goals.
- **Actions**: Key initiatives and activities to be delivered during the reporting period to support achievement of the Objectives.
- **Progress Report Comment**: A summary of progress, achievements, challenges and outcomes for the reporting period.
- **Status**: Progress against each Action, indicated using a colour-coded status rating.

	Completed/Ongoing
	Monitor
	Ceased

This report recognises that many Actions contribute to outcomes across multiple population groups and reflects an intersectional approach to planning and service delivery. Actions may be delivered through targeted initiatives or through broader activities that benefit multiple communities.

Implementation is supported by regular monitoring, collaboration across Council and ongoing engagement with community members to ensure Actions remain responsive to community needs and priorities.

2. Strategic Context

The *We All Belong Strategy 2024-2029* is aligned with Council's broader strategic framework and supports the delivery of:

- Peninsula 2040: Our Shared Community Vision
- Council Plan 2025-2029
- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing priorities

The Strategy also aligns with relevant Commonwealth and Victorian legislation, policies and frameworks that promote inclusion, accessibility, participation and wellbeing across the lifespan. This includes legislation relating to disability, equal opportunity, gender equality, multicultural communities, human rights and community wellbeing.

The Strategy incorporates Council's obligations under the *Disability Act 2006*, fulfilling Council's requirement to maintain and implement a Disability Action Plan through a whole-of-Council and whole-of-community approach. The Strategy supports Council's efforts to reduce barriers to access, participation and employment, promote inclusion and belonging, and foster positive community attitudes towards people with disability.

Through implementation of the Strategy, Council will continue working towards an inclusive, connected and safe Mornington Peninsula where everyone belongs.

3. Key Achievements by Goal

Connected

- Strengthened social connection through 262 First Time Parent Groups supporting 2,293 parents, 269 Supported Playgroup sessions, and 227 youth programs and activities.
- Created opportunities for older residents to connect and participate through nearly 100 Seniors Festival events, generating approximately 3,000 participations.
- Supported community participation through over 80 programs each term across two Community Houses, alongside ongoing support for more than 2,200 U3A members and 2,500 senior club members.

Empowered

- Amplified community voice through engagement with the Youth Advisory Committee, Disability Advisory Committee, Peninsula Advisory Committee of Elders, Frankston and Mornington Peninsula LGBTIQA+ Collaborative, and establishment of the Multicultural Collaborative Network.
- Fostered volunteering and community leadership by promoting 34 volunteer opportunities, delivering volunteer engagement activities, and co-designing a new volunteer recognition program.
- Increased access to employment opportunities through a mature-age employment forum attended by more than 80 people, alongside business engagement and social procurement initiatives.

Accessible

- Improved beach accessibility through beach matting at five locations, establishment of year-round access at Mount Martha Life Saving Club, and continued provision of beach wheelchairs.
- Expanded access to recreation through the Hansa C Crane accessible boating program, All Abilities Golf, and initiatives such as Sensory Hour at recreation centres.
- Increased access to information and facilities through communication boards, social stories, Easy Read resources, accessible online documents, and Equity Impact Assessments across major projects and plans.

Leading

- Celebrated diversity and inclusion through community events including the Peninsula's first local Midsumma Festival event, attracting more than 300 attendees, alongside IDAHOBIT, Harmony Week, Refugee Week, International Day of People with Disability, and World Elder Abuse Awareness Day initiatives.
- Embedded inclusion and accessibility in planning and decision making through the ongoing use of the Universal Design Reference Group and Equity Impact Assessments across key strategies, projects and services.

- Supported more than 600 parents and carers through community education initiatives focused on neurodiversity and child development, delivered in partnership with Dr Billy Garvey and the Frankston Mornington Peninsula Local Learning and Employment Network.
- Advanced advocacy on housing, inclusion, accessibility and ageing through implementation of the Triple A Housing Action Plan and partnerships with advisory committees, housing providers and community stakeholders.
- Progressed social, affordable and accessible housing outcomes through advocacy, housing projects across five sites in Mornington and Hastings, and funding proposals for 22 apartments in Rosebud for women experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Thriving

- Delivered more than 11,300 Maternal and Child Health consultations, 4,679 hours of enhanced support for families experiencing vulnerability, and 604 hours of Sleep and Settling outreach support.
- Administered 7,616 childhood vaccinations and 2,794 secondary school vaccinations, supporting community health and preventative care.
- Supported healthy ageing and independent living through social connection programs, Seniors Exercise Parks, community transport services, positive ageing initiatives, and ongoing support for older residents to remain active and connected.

4. Progress Report 2025-2026

Goal 1: Connected:
Our community fosters strong social connections, embraces diversity and promotes equality.

Outcome measures:

• Increase in the number of community members participating in inclusive arts, cultural, and sporting programs

• Increase in reported levels of social connection.

Objectives	Actions	Progress Report Comment	Status
1.1 Facilitate safe and welcoming opportunities for boys/men, girls/women and gender diverse people to connect through the arts, sport, and other recreation and leisure activities.	1.1.1 Facilitate a range of Council led inclusive arts and cultural programs for all ages and abilities.	Inclusive arts and cultural programs were delivered throughout the reporting year increasing opportunities for participation, cultural connection and creative expression across the community. More than 400 residents engaged in community art activities, dementia-friendly gallery programs, youth-led creative projects and multicultural storytelling initiatives, contributing to greater social inclusion and community wellbeing. Further development of cultural storytelling initiatives will continue in future years to strengthen community voice and representation.	Ongoing
	1.1.2 Work in partnership with other levels of government, businesses, organisations and the community to increase the availability of and participation in inclusive sporting, arts and recreation activities.	Partnerships with community organisations, service providers and recreation operators expanded access to inclusive sport and recreation opportunities across the municipality. Key achievements included engagement of approximately 3,000 participantions through the Seniors Festival, ongoing support for more than 2,200 U3A members, improved beach accessibility through beach matting and beach wheelchairs at locations across the Peninsula, including year-round beach matting at Mount Martha Life Saving Club, accessible boating through the Hansa C Crane program, and continued delivery of All Abilities Golf. Collaboration with Belgravia Leisure further strengthened inclusive participation, with initiatives such as Sensory Hour becoming an ongoing feature of recreation centre programming.	Ongoing
	1.1.3 Facilitate a range of programs and events that support social connection.	A broad range of programs and events strengthened social connection, community participation and wellbeing across all life stages. During the year, Council delivered	Ongoing

		262 First Time Parent Groups supporting 2,293 parents, 38 Supported Playgroups comprising 269 sessions, and 227 youth programs and activities, alongside more than 80 programs each term at the Shire's two Community Houses. These accessible and low-cost opportunities enabled families, young people, older adults and diverse community members to build social networks, develop skills and increase their connection to the community.	
	1.1.4 Provide opportunities for community led events and initiatives supporting creative development and employability.	The Inclusive Events Guide was updated to support community-led events and initiatives to be more accessible, inclusive and welcoming. Developed in partnership with the Disability Advisory Committee and key stakeholders, the guide provides practical resources to help event organisers create safer and more inclusive experiences for community members. Future promotion of the guide will support broader adoption of inclusive event practices across the municipality.	Ongoing
	1.1.5 Improve access to Council and community events through consideration and provision of access equipment options.	Initial planning commenced to explore opportunities to improve accessibility at Council and community events. Investigations included community equipment booking systems and partnership opportunities with local businesses to increase access and availability. Further work is required to align future implementation with the Arts, Culture and Events Plan and identify sustainable delivery arrangements.	Monitor
1.2 Actively promote and celebrate community diversity and cultural pursuits across all stages of life.	1.2.1 Recognise and celebrate days of cultural significance through supporting local events and promotion.	Recognition of key cultural and community significance days strengthened visibility, understanding and celebration of diversity across the municipality. Highlights included the Peninsula's first local Midsumma Festival event, attracting more than 300 attendees, alongside IDAHOBIT, Harmony Week, Refugee Week, International Day of People with Disability and World Elder Abuse Awareness Day initiatives that fostered inclusion and community connection. Continued opportunities exist to broaden participation and embed inclusive recognition across a wider range of community settings.	Ongoing

	1.2.2 Provide support to local networks and community groups.	Strong community networks and partnerships supported greater connection, collaboration and community capacity building throughout the year. More than 2,500 senior club members were engaged through local networks, while the establishment of the Multicultural Collaborative Network created new opportunities for participation, representation and shared advocacy. Ongoing collaboration with schools, community organisations and research partners strengthened coordinated responses to community needs and supported inclusive community development outcomes.	Ongoing
	1.2.3 Amplify diverse voices through Council services and within the community to promote inclusivity.	Diverse community perspectives were amplified through structured engagement and advisory mechanisms that informed Council planning, policy development and advocacy. Ongoing support for the Disability Advisory Committee, Peninsula Advisory Committee of Elders, Frankston and Mornington Peninsula LGBTIQA+ Collaborative, and Youth Advisory Committee strengthened representation of priority population groups and created meaningful opportunities for community participation in decision-making. This work contributed to more inclusive, responsive and community-informed outcomes across the municipality.	Ongoing
1.3 Work with local businesses and community organisations to increase volunteering and employment opportunities for all.	1.3.1 Promote local volunteer opportunities increasing connection to community and providing opportunities for learning and development.	Volunteer opportunities were actively promoted across the municipality, increasing community awareness of pathways to participation, learning and social connection. Through partnerships, community promotion and engagement activities, the Shire supported local organisations to connect with prospective volunteers and strengthen community involvement. Development of a volunteer recognition program has positioned Council to further support volunteer attraction and retention in future years.	Ongoing
	1.3.2 Build capacity of local employers and community organisations to	Capacity building initiatives supported local employers and organisations to adopt more inclusive and healthy workplace practices. During the year, Council delivered a mature-	Ongoing

	employ people of all ages, abilities, gender, cultures and sexuality.	age employment forum, promoted the benefits of an age-diverse workforce, engaged local food businesses through the Best Bites program and progressed opportunities to incorporate social enterprises into procurement processes. Future work will focus on strengthening inclusive employment pathways and socially responsible purchasing practices across the municipality.	
	1.3.3 Evaluate current practices and work in partnership to connect people of all ages and abilities to employment.	Strengthened awareness of inclusive employment and accessibility through engagement with local businesses, industry events and community partnerships. The Mornington Peninsula Business Summit 2025 highlighted the benefits of accessible and inclusive workplaces and social enterprise, while collaboration with local stakeholders supported employment opportunities and workforce participation for diverse community members. Social procurement initiatives, including partnership with Happiness First at the Mornington Library Café, contributed to community capacity building and employment skill development.	Ongoing
1.4 Better understand the impact of social isolation and loneliness across the lifespan in our community.	1.4.1 Ensure gender disaggregated community engagement data is collected, analysed and shared to inform future work.	The evidence base to inform future planning and engagement was strengthened through the development of Youth Data Profiles, support for local schools to participate in the Mission Australia Youth Survey and Resilient Youth Survey, and an internal project to align demographic data collection practices across the organisation. Collaboration with Community Engagement and data teams supported improvements to the collection and use of demographic information, while training delivered through the profile.id platform built organisational capability in data analysis and evidence-based planning. These initiatives enhanced understanding of the experiences and needs of young people and priority populations across the municipality, with further work underway to strengthen the consistent collection, analysis and reporting of gender-disaggregated community engagement data.	Ongoing

	1.4.2 Regularly monitor and analyse relevant local, statewide, national and international evidence, frameworks and policy reforms.	The Shire strengthened its evidence base for planning and decision-making through the ongoing development and maintenance of the Health and Social Data Profile, incorporating data from multiple sources to inform strategic priorities and implementation of the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. Access to current demographic, health and social data supported more informed planning and service delivery across the organisation. The Shire also maintained oversight of significant government reforms, including implementation requirements under the new *Aged Care Act*, ensuring local planning and services remain responsive to legislative and policy change.	Ongoing
	1.4.3 Ensure current programs and events are evaluated to better support opportunities to combat social isolation and increase connectedness.	Strengthened understanding of social isolation, connectedness and community wellbeing through the increased use of evaluation data across community programs and events. Insights from Neighbourhood House surveys, participation data and post-event evaluations, including sense of belonging measures collected through Seniors Festival and community house programs, provided valuable evidence to inform future planning and service delivery. Work is underway to develop a consistent evaluation framework and tools across programs, which will further strengthen the Shire's ability to measure outcomes and respond to social isolation and loneliness across the community.	Ongoing

Goal 2: Empowered

Our community have opportunities to participate in community life and have their voices meaningfully heard.

Outcome measures:

• Increase in the number of volunteers across priority population groups and key life stages.

• Decrease in the number of people who report feeling unwelcome or discriminated against.

Objectives	Actions	Progress Report Comment	Status
2.1 Enhance the capability of local stakeholders to create welcoming and safe environments.	2.1.1 Deliver community awareness, education, prevention programs and events focused on anti-discrimination.	A range of education, awareness and advocacy initiatives strengthened understanding of diversity, inclusion and anti-discrimination across the municipality. Activities included World Elder Abuse Awareness Day events, ageism training, Pride and inclusive signage initiatives, promotion of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower program, recognition of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, and development of anti-discrimination resources. This work contributed to more inclusive community environments, with further opportunities to expand targeted inclusion initiatives in future years.	Ongoing
	2.1.2 Educate and support existing networks and groups on providing welcoming, safe and inclusive environments.	Partnerships with community organisations, networks and service providers supported the delivery of more welcoming, culturally safe and inclusive environments across the municipality. The Shire provided resources, accessibility tools, cultural responsiveness initiatives and collaborative support to community groups and early childhood services, helping to strengthen inclusive practice and improve participation for diverse communities. Ongoing work will focus on embedding these approaches consistently across community settings and services.	Ongoing
	2.1.3 Deliver training to local businesses and community to increase awareness of safe, welcoming and inclusive practices, co-designed with people with lived experience.	The Shire strengthened the capacity of local businesses, community organisations and community groups to create safe, welcoming and inclusive environments through training, resource development and partnership initiatives. Key achievements included delivery of ageism awareness training, ongoing engagement with local food businesses through the Best Bites program to promote healthy and inclusive community settings, and exploration of lived experience awareness training models to inform future delivery. These initiatives increased awareness of diversity,	Ongoing

		accessibility and inclusion, supporting more welcoming and equitable environments across the municipality.	
2.2 Ensure community engagement efforts are accessible, targeted and meaningful and to ensure all voices are heard.	2.2.1 Identify and address barriers preventing community members engaging with Council.	Progress was made towards creating more accessible and inclusive services through review of translation and interpreter practices, improved staff capability and the introduction of communication supports at key community locations. Communication boards, interpreter service resources and cultural responsiveness training strengthened the Shire's ability to reduce communication barriers and improve access for diverse community members. Future work will focus on implementing consistent organisational policies, tools and processes to further improve equity of access across all service areas.	Ongoing
	2.2.2 Capture and analyse the demographics of those interacting with Council to identify any gaps and guide future initiatives.	Progress was made in improving the collection and use of demographic information to support inclusive planning and decision-making. A new Youth Services data collection tool and continued development of the Mornington Peninsula Health and Social Data Profile have strengthened understanding of the people using Shire services and their needs. Future work will focus on improving how demographic information is collected and reported across the organisation to help identify underrepresented groups and inform future service delivery and community engagement.	Ongoing

	2.2.3 Ensure community engagement occurs across the life stages and represents the diversity within the community.	Community engagement activities included people from diverse backgrounds and different stages of life through youth and seniors networks, advisory committees, multicultural partnerships and targeted consultations. Key achievements included mapping multicultural stakeholders, building relationships with culturally diverse communities, and continuing to use the Universal Design Reference Group, advisory committees and Equity Impact Assessments to support inclusive planning and decision-making. This work strengthened the Shire's ability to engage with a broader range of community members. Future efforts will focus on continuing to improve inclusive engagement practices and strengthening engagement with older people and other priority groups.	Ongoing
2.3 Build community capability to identify local needs and lead change in their neighbourhoods.	2.3.1 Administer ongoing Council community grants and subsidies program to support community resilience.	Community-led initiatives were strengthened through the Shire's grants, subsidies and community support programs, enabling local organisations to respond to community needs and enhance social connection. Funding and capacity-building support benefited a diverse range of volunteer-led groups and community organisations, while promotion of grants, information sessions and affordable participation opportunities improved access for priority populations, including those experiencing financial hardship. This work contributed to a more connected, resilient and inclusive community.	Ongoing
	2.3.2 Facilitate opportunities across and within population groups to lead change and provide advice and guidance to Council.	The Shire supported community members to have a voice in local decision-making through ongoing engagement with the Frankston Mornington Peninsula LGBTIQA+ Collaborative, Peninsula Advisory Committee of Elders, Disability Advisory Committee, Youth Advisory Committee and the Multicultural Collaborative Network. These groups provided valuable insights to inform plans, policies and priorities, while helping identify barriers, emerging issues and opportunities for improvement. This work strengthened representation of diverse community voices in decision-making and will continue to support inclusive community participation and leadership.	Ongoing

	2.3.3 Build capability of local organisations to support and respond to community need.	The Shire worked with local organisations and networks to build knowledge, share resources and strengthen responses to community needs. This included support for initiatives such as the Dying to Know Network and participation in emerging community wellbeing partnerships. These collaborations increased community capacity and encouraged more coordinated responses to health and wellbeing issues.	Ongoing
	2.3.4 Build the capacity of our population groups to be future leaders and community change agents.	Leadership opportunities were provided for young people, older adults and people with disability through advisory groups, youth leadership programs and community participation initiatives. Participants developed skills, confidence and experience in advocacy, governance and community leadership. This work supported greater community involvement in decision-making and strengthened local leadership capacity, as well as promotion of external leadership opportunities and development such as the Women with Disability leadership program.	Ongoing
2.4 Improve the efficiency of information sharing both within Council and with the community.	2.4.1 Review existing methods and determine the most effective communication channels for sharing information across the community.	The Shire continued to provide information through a range of communication channels, including newsletters, directories, printed materials and community networks. Regular updates, including the Positive Ageing Newsletter, improved access to information for older residents and community groups. Work has commenced to review communication methods to ensure information reaches a broader and more diverse audience.	Ongoing
	2.4.2 Ensure Council engagement and communication channels are inclusive of all ages and diversities.	Improvements were made to support more accessible communication, including website accessibility upgrades, communication boards, social stories and accessible versions of key documents. These initiatives helped reduce barriers for people with disability and other community members with diverse communication needs. Further work is required to consistently apply inclusive communication approaches across all channels and services.	Ongoing

Goal 3: Accessible

Our community has access to well-designed built, social, economic, health, digital and natural environments.

Outcome measures:

• Increase in the number of new infrastructure builds, retrofits, and maintenance projects that adhere to Universal Design principles and meet accessibility standards.

• Increased transport options across the Peninsula that are accessible and low cost.

• Increased use of community facilities by community members in key life stages and priority populations.

Objectives	Actions	Progress Report Comment	Status
3.1 Deliver a Universal Design approach to ensure all new infrastructure builds, retrofits and maintenance of Council owned community facilities are accessible to everyone.	3.1.1 Implement Council's Universal Design Policy.	Universal Design principles were increasingly incorporated into planning, projects and decision-making across the organisation. The Universal Design Reference Group played an important role in reviewing projects and supporting more inclusive outcomes. Further work will continue to strengthen implementation and embed consistent practice across the Shire.	Ongoing
	3.1.2 Improve accessibility of community facilities.	Accessibility improvements were delivered across a range of community facilities and services, including communication supports, accessible information, communication boards at play spaces, planning for Changing Places facilities and upgrades to community spaces. These improvements enhanced access and participation for people of all abilities. Ongoing investment and planning will continue to improve accessibility across the municipality.	Ongoing
	3.1.3 Ensure relevant Council staff are trained on Universal Design and Access standards.	Staff capability was strengthened through training, advice and collaborative projects focused on inclusive practice, accessibility and engagement with priority population groups. This increased awareness of Universal Design principles and supported more inclusive service delivery. Additional opportunities for staff training specific to Universal Design and access standards will continue to be explored.	Ongoing
3.2 Work with service providers, businesses, and community organisations to ensure they use inclusive and accessible practices.	3.2.1 Administer ongoing grants programs to support accessibility and inclusion.	Following the Council decision to cease the accessible business grant The Shire explored other opportunities through existing internal grants and external grants program.	Ceased
3.3 Deliver events and programs that prioritise	3.3.1 Undertake Equity Impact Assessments	Equity Impact Assessments were completed on a range of plans, projects and initiatives to ensure accessibility, inclusion and gender equality considerations were reflected in	Ongoing

accessibility, providing equal opportunities for participation.	on Council led services, programs and policies to promote gender equality and ensure accessibility.	decision-making. This process strengthened inclusive planning and helped identify opportunities to improve outcomes for diverse community members.	
	3.3.2 Lead and support the delivery of accessible and affordable community transport options.	The Shire continued to support community transport services and advocate for improved public transport across the Mornington Peninsula. Changes to transport services helped improve access for some residents, particularly older people and those experiencing transport disadvantage. Continued advocacy is needed to address ongoing transport gaps across the municipality.	Ongoing
3.4 Ensure all Council information is easily accessible and uses inclusive language.	3.4.1 Review and implement the Victorian Government's Inclusive Language Guide.	Initial work has commenced to review existing inclusive language guidance and identify opportunities to strengthen accessible, respectful and inclusive communication across the organisation. Planning is underway to support a consistent approach to inclusive language in Council communications, with further work required to progress implementation.	Ongoing
	3.4.2 Provide a statement of inclusion that is publicly visible.	The Shire maintained a publicly visible Statement of Inclusion on its website, reinforcing Council's commitment to a welcoming, inclusive and accessible community for all. Council also continued to promote its commitment to the World Health Organization Global Age Friendly Communities Framework through strategic planning and public communications, supporting the inclusion and wellbeing of older people across the community.	Completed

Goal 4: Leading

Our community benefits from strong advocacy, strategic partnerships and effective leadership.

Outcome measures:

• Increased rates of diversity within Shire staff and volunteers.

• Improved local, statewide and national policies that benefit community members in key life stages and priority populations.

Objectives	Actions	Progress Report Comment	Status
4.1 Promote diversity, equity, and inclusive practices throughout Council, encompassing staff, volunteers, and our work in the community.	4.1.1 Promote a culture of inclusion and accessibility, including providing training and awareness-building materials to all staff and volunteers.	Inclusion and accessibility were promoted through staff training, awareness activities and support for advisory committees and community networks. These initiatives increased understanding of diversity, ageism, elder abuse and LGBTIQA+ inclusion across the organisation. Further work is required to implement several planned inclusion initiatives and continue building organisational capability.	Ongoing
	4.1.2 Use inclusive language in all Council written materials.	Efforts continued to improve the use of clear, inclusive and accessible language in communications and engagement activities. Staff were supported to consider the needs of diverse audiences when developing information and promotional materials. Further work is required to embed consistent inclusive language practices across the organisation.	Ongoing
	4.1.3 Promote inclusion and diversity throughout recruitment processes.	Work commenced to review language, imagery and communication approaches to better reflect the diversity of the community. These improvements aim to support more inclusive recruitment, participation and representation. Further implementation is planned for future years.	Ongoing
	4.1.4 Identify and mitigate risks to the safety of community members and groups experiencing vulnerability.	The Shire progressed work to better understand and respond to risks experienced by community members experiencing vulnerability, including LGBTIQA+ residents. Engagement with community partners informed the development of approaches to improve safety, inclusion and belonging. Further work is required to formalise and implement these arrangements.	Ongoing
4.2 Partner with and advocate to all levels of government on	4.2.1 Advocate for the rights of population	The Shire strengthened advocacy efforts through partnerships with advisory committees, community groups and stakeholders representing diverse population groups. Ongoing collaboration with the Disability Advisory Committee and	Ongoing

policy issues that relate to population groups.	groups to amplify their voices.	Peninsula Advisory Committee of Elders informed advocacy on key issues including Universal Design, prevention of elder abuse, housing and homelessness. These partnerships helped ensure lived experience and community perspectives were reflected in local advocacy priorities and discussions.	
	4.2.2 Advocate for increased social, affordable and accessible housing.	Council continued to advocate for increased social, affordable and accessible housing through implementation of the Triple A Housing Action Plan. An Annual Report on the 2024/25 Action Plan was presented to the Triple A Housing Committee and provided to all Councillors, with 100% of actions completed. Key achievements included advancing social housing opportunities across five parcels of land in Mornington and Hastings, undertaking advocacy to State and Federal Governments, partnering with the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing to improve living conditions at the Main Street Mornington site, and exploring opportunities to increase crisis and emergency housing on the Peninsula. During 2025/26, Council continued to progress housing initiatives, including a feasibility study for 320 Main Street Mornington, supporting delivery of womens housing in Hastings, and submitting a Federal Government funding application for 22 apartments in Rosebud for women experiencing or at risk of homelessness due to family violence.	Ongoing
4.3 Identify and advocate to address service gaps based on community need.	4.3.1 Provide accessible and relevant information to individuals, carers and services.	The Shire supported parents and carers through evidence-based community education initiatives, including the Supporting Your Child series with Dr Billy Garvey, which attracted more than 400 participants, and a partnership with Frankston Mornington Peninsula Local Learning and Employment Network that enabled more than 200 community members to attend a neurodiversity session with psychologist Andrew Fuller. The Shire continued to improve access to information, referral pathways and community support services through targeted programs and partnerships. Networks such as the Dying to Know Network and ongoing youth and family support services strengthened community awareness and access to assistance. Community feedback and service reviews continue to inform future advocacy and responses to identified service gaps.	Ongoing

Goal 5: Thriving

Our community thrives through the delivery of programs and services across the lifespan.

Outcome measures:

• Increased number of children, young people and families accessing services.

• Improved health and wellbeing outcomes for community members in key life stages and by people in priority populations.

Objectives	Actions	Progress Report Comment	Status
5.1 Invest in and facilitate high-quality programs that support optimal health and wellbeing outcomes.	5.1.1 Attract and deliver services that focus on positive health and wellbeing outcomes.	A broad range of health, wellbeing and support services were delivered across the municipality, supporting positive outcomes for people of all ages and backgrounds. Meals on Wheels, community transport, youth wellbeing programs and LGBTIQA+ youth initiatives contributed to improved wellbeing, inclusion and access to support. These services provided both preventative and responsive supports across the community.	Ongoing
	5.1.2 Work with settings to support transitioning people through the education system to employment and further opportunities.	The Shire supported young people to remain engaged in education and transition through key life stages through school partnerships, youth hubs and targeted support programs. Co-location of Oakwood School within youth hubs continued to support student engagement, while other programs provided pathways to learning, wellbeing and participation. Changes to state-funded school programs required adaptation of service models while maintaining support for young people.	Ongoing
5.2 Ensure access to lifelong learning which will increase benefits to health, educational and social outcomes.	5.2.1 Support children and families to access high quality early childhood education and enter school as confident and involved learners.	Children and families were supported through kindergarten planning, central registration services, digital literacy programs and targeted family support initiatives. More than 2,400 children registered for kindergarten programs, while ongoing support through grandparent groups and community programs strengthened school readiness and family wellbeing. These initiatives improved access to quality early childhood learning opportunities.	Ongoing
	5.2.2 Facilitate a range of initiatives that support people to remain engaged in lifelong learning.	Lifelong learning opportunities were supported through volunteer training, grants, community houses, U3As, Men's Sheds and community organisations. Funding, training and community support initiatives enabled residents to access learning, skill development and participation opportunities throughout life. These activities contributed to increased community capacity, participation and wellbeing.	Ongoing
	5.2.3 Create and promote intergenerational educational and learning opportunities.	Intergenerational learning and connection opportunities were supported through Seniors Festival activities, Culture Fest events, grandparent programs and community-based initiatives. Activities created opportunities for different generations to learn from one another, share experiences and strengthen community connections.	Ongoing

		Further opportunities will continue to be explored and expanded in future years.	
5.3 Increase and support protective factors and reduce risk factors for the community.	5.3.1 Offer a range of intergenerational programs to promote social connectedness and mental wellbeing.	Intergenerational programs brought people of different ages together through festivals, community events and family-focused activities. Programs supported social connection, relationship building and community participation across generations. These initiatives contributed to improved wellbeing and stronger community connectedness.	Ongoing
	5.3.2 Support programs and initiatives that enable ageing in place.	A wide range of initiatives supported older residents to remain active, connected and independent within their communities. Programs included Social Outings and Connections, Seniors Exercise Parks, senior driver education, positive ageing initiatives and transport supports. Collectively, these programs enhanced safety, independence, social participation and quality of life for older people. Due to reforms in aged care there will be changes in service delivery.	Monitor
5.4 Support access to services that improve health and wellbeing outcomes.	5.4.1 Deliver and support preventive health and wellbeing initiatives.	Preventive health services supported strong health and wellbeing outcomes across the municipality. During FY2025/26, the Shire delivered more than 7,600 childhood vaccinations, 2,794 secondary school vaccinations, over 11,300 Maternal and Child Health consultations and 4,679 hours of targeted family support. These services played a critical role in supporting healthy community outcomes and early intervention.	Ongoing
	5.4.2 Strengthen partnerships with services and community organisations.	Strong partnerships were maintained across youth, family, multicultural, health and community service sectors to support coordinated responses to local needs. Networks and collaborative initiatives improved referral pathways, information sharing and service planning across the municipality. These partnerships strengthened local service systems and improved outcomes for priority population groups.	Ongoing
	5.4.3 Deliver targeted support programs for children and families.	Targeted support programs continued to provide early intervention and developmental supports for children and families experiencing vulnerability. During the year, 38 Supported Playgroups delivered 269 sessions, including dedicated programs for young parents and grandparents, while 53 in-home coaching sessions supported families with additional needs. These initiatives increased family connection, parenting confidence and access to support services.	Ongoing