

Errinundra to Snowy District Community Plan 2019

Community Vision:

A remote district of exceptional natural beauty, which has the infrastructure and support to provide for a safe, healthy, productive and culturally diverse experience for its community, its businesses, its visitors and environment.

Bendoc Bonang **Cabanandra** Deddick Valley **Delegate River**
Dellicknora **Goongerah** Haydens Bog **Tubbut**



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Australian Government

BUILDING OUR FUTURE



Acknowledgements

East Gippsland Shire Council and the community of the Errinundra to Snowy District acknowledges the Gunaikurnai, Monero and the Bidawal people as the Traditional Custodians of the land that encompasses East Gippsland Shire, and their enduring relationship with country. The Traditional Custodians have cared and nurtured East Gippsland for tens of thousands of years¹. We pay our respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in East Gippsland, their Elders past and present.

The community members of the Errinundra to Snowy District have made a significant contribution in the development of this plan in terms of time and kilometres travelled to meetings, in addition to the completion of the community survey. The commitment of the community to the process is testament to their passion for the future of the District.

Place Planning is a major initiative within the East Gippsland Shire Council Plan 2017 – 2021². Resources were committed to

undertake a pilot of the place based district planning process. Council officers from the Community Planning team and across a range of other departments have supported the district community planning process including the facilitation of workshops and providing information to community.

Minds@Work, an independent consultancy group, facilitated sessions and skilled up staff and community around the IDEA Model.

The importance of our partner agencies and local service providers in being involved in the process and the delivery of information workshops has been critical in understanding how we are and can all ‘work in place’.

The One Place One Plan Project was funded by the Australian Government through the Building Better Regions Fund and has been run across the Cann Valley District, Errinundra to Snowy District and Twin Rivers District.

Key Terms:

ABS:
Australian Bureau of Statistics

CFA:
Country Fire Authority

Council:
East Gippsland Shire Council

DCRG:
District Community Representative Group

DELWP:
Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning

DET:
Department of Education & Training

DHHS:
Department of Health & Human Services

ORH:
Orbost Regional Health

RRV:
Regional Roads Victoria

SES:
State Emergency Service

References:
¹ East Gippsland Shire Council Reconciliation Action Plan 2015 – 2018
² East Gippsland Shire Council Plan 2017 – 2021



Brown Mountain at sunrise
(Photo: Judy Deland)

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Other documents related to this plan:

Visual Summary of the District Community Plan

Action Plan

Community Toolkit

A Guide to Reading this Plan

The Errinundra to Snowy District Community Plan (the Plan) provides a strategic direction for the people living and working in this community and the agencies that support them. A separate Action Plan will accompany this document and be updated to reflect the achievements and changes that occur over time.

Section 1:	Section 2:	Section 3:
Introduces community and place planning, the purpose of this community plan and the previous planning work undertaken in this district. It provides details about timeline of the project, engagement activities and community participation in the journey to develop the Plan. It includes an overview of the process used to develop the Plan and the IDEA model used to support community thinking from ideas to actions.	Provides a detailed community profile of the people living in this community, drawing on demographic data and the findings from the community survey and community workshops. The history and geographical location of the district is explored, providing the context to the key assets that were mapped in the district. The community profile provides insight into the people that live in the district and what is important to them. Four outcome areas are identified and discussed in detail with the support of data gathered through the community 1. Healthy & Sustainable Environments 2. Thriving Economy 3. Safe & Healthy Communities 4. Resilient & Connected Communities	Focuses on the implementation of the Plan and how this will be undertaken. It does not have specific details about each priority and timeframe, this will be captured in the Action Plan that will be developed by the community and agencies. It will be reviewed and refined regularly to implement this District Community Plan. The future challenges and opportunities for each of the four outcome areas are explored. (see pages 30 to 33). Through the workshops, the community prioritised the 61 ideas from their Ideas Bank (see page 34) to seven ideas that were worthy of further development. These are highlighted and outlined in this section. Described as priority ideas, the role of the community, Council and partner agencies is included for each. It outlines the formation and role of a District Community Representative Group (DCRG) in monitoring and implementing the Plan.

Section 1: Development of Errinundra to Snowy District Community Plan

Introduction

Purpose of the District Community Plan

To provide a comprehensive insight into the community of the Errinundra to Snowy District, and the people who call this 'place' home. It will give community members, East Gippsland Shire Council (Council) and partner agencies an understanding of:

- The people who live in this district and their needs
- The vision the community has for itself and what it values
- How the community currently operates and supports services
- The assets, resources and strengths available in this community
- The top priorities the community wants to work on over the next five years
- The roles and responsibilities of community, Council, and partner agencies in making the plan happen
- An Ideas Bank, that community can draw on throughout the life of the District Community Plan.

This plan provides a new direction for how community, Council and partner agencies can work together to achieve positive outcomes for the people who have chosen this district as their home.

Council and other agencies have a number of strategies and plans which underpin and inform what they do. The District Community Plan (the Plan) provides a platform at a place-based level to integrate Council and agency strategies and plans with the local community priorities to achieve the best outcomes.

Separate documents accompany the Plan including an action plan that will be revisited by community, Council and partners on an annual basis (the Annual Action Plan), and a toolkit with a range of resources and information to support community, Council and partner agencies in implementing the Plan.

This district now has a District Community Representative Group (DCRG) to work together on the priorities within the Plan on behalf of all people in the district. The DCRG enables the community to coordinate and cooperate to achieve their outcomes and provide a means for Council and agencies to engage with and work alongside a group that is representative of this district.

Place Planning

Some, but not all communities in East Gippsland have had Community Plans for nearly a decade. A review of the previous Community Plans identified the need to change the way Council works with the community. This new approach is called Place Planning. Twelve districts were identified across East Gippsland, each with its own distinctive history, culture, people and natural environments.

Council was successful in obtaining a grant from the Australian Government through the Building Better Regions Fund, to pilot the development and delivery of a place-based planning approach in some of the most remote districts within the Shire. This project has brought together community and agencies to share information,

exchange ideas that will enable informed decision making about how best to meet identified needs.

Developing a comprehensive understanding of the needs of the people that live in this district is central to Place Planning. The District Community Plan brings together detailed demographic information about who the people are that make up this district, why they live where they live, what is important to them, their future aspiration for their communities and how they will work together and with key stakeholders to achieve this.

The priorities within the Plan are not a 'wish list', they are ideas that were identified by the community that have been prioritised using the 'IDEA' Model (see page 10). Prioritisation is based on the evidence gathered around the issues, challenges and opportunities within the district.

The process of creating the Plan has focused on building relationships and trust between community members and groups, Council and other key agencies. It outlines how the community will work together and live their values. The Plan establishes an agreed set of local priorities and provides evidence of local investment needs. It will inform future planning decisions and where resources can most effectively be targeted around services and infrastructure. It aims to help clarify the roles and responsibilities of the community, Council and other agencies around the identified priorities in the Plan.

Building & Learning from the Past

The Errinundra to Snowy District was known previously as the Mountain Rivers District. The members of these communities decided that the name Errinundra to Snowy was a better reflection of the environment that they live in.

The Errinundra to Snowy District Community Plan builds on previous community planning undertaken in the district. The Mountain Rivers Community Plan 2012 – 2017 set out the values of the community and the key priorities for the five years which have been revisited and revised.

A bushfire in 2014 had a significant impact in the district and subsequently affected the community's ability to implement the Mountain Rivers Community Plan. Following the bushfire, a project, 'Adaption to Recovery' was implemented between 2014 - 2016 which concentrated on building the resilience of the communities to recover after the fire event and focused on the health and wellbeing of the community members.

Achievements from 2012 to 2018 include:

- A new hall in Goongerah
- Community driven fire wood collections supporting local residents
- Continued advocacy to Regional Roads Victoria (RRV) regarding sealing of Bonang Rd
- New printer at Tubbut Neighbourhood House
- Streetscape funding invested in community facilities in Goongerah, Tubbut & Bonang
- Water crossings improved
- New satellite, 3G and 4G mobile phone coverage and internet in some areas
- Health and other agencies continued support of the annual Big Bonang Arvo
- Tubbut Neighbourhood House led the creation and distribution of a tourist map of the district and group wood collection working bees

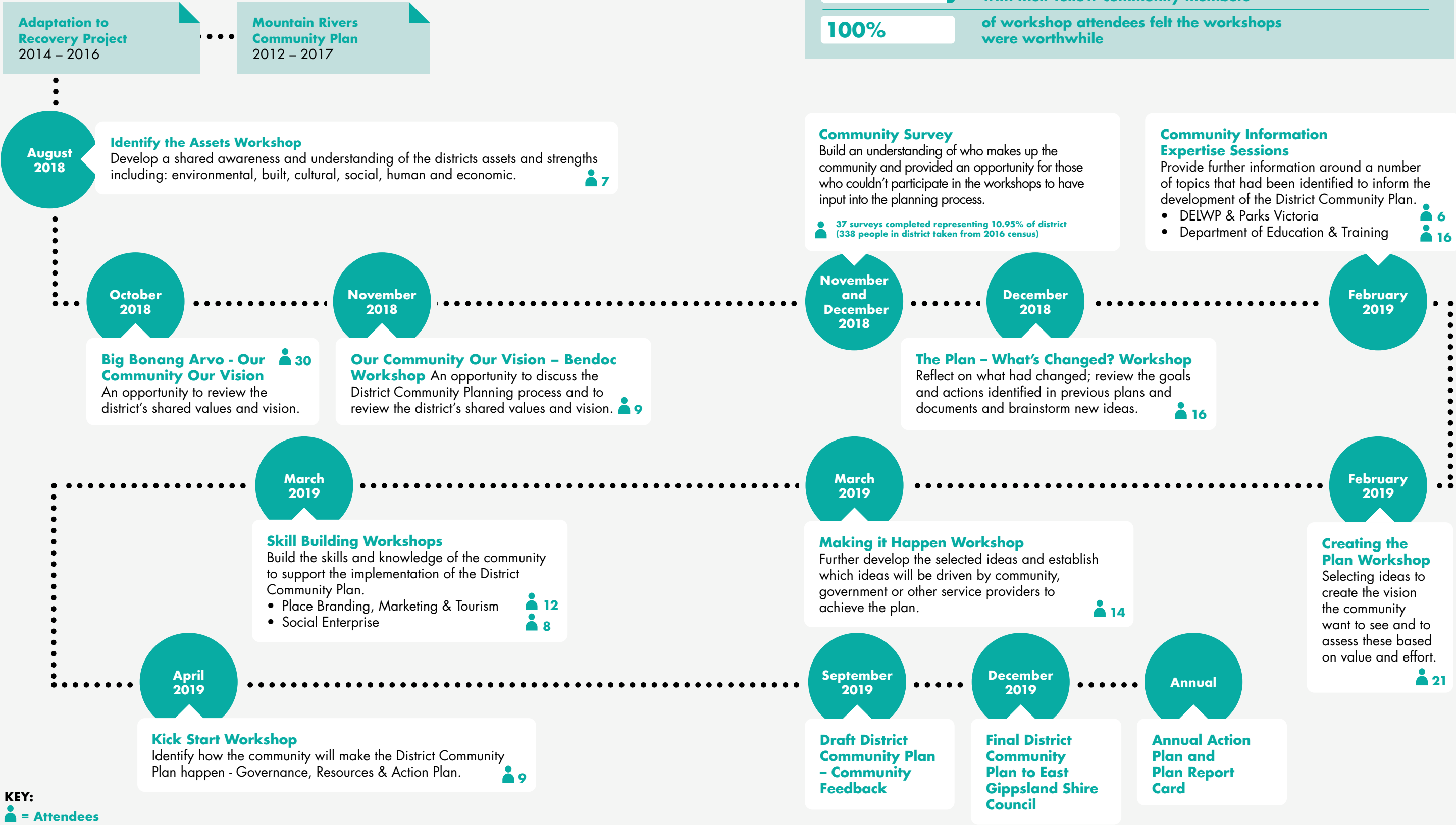
The community members involved in the development of the Errinundra to Snowy District Community Plan reflected on the things that have stopped them

in the past from achieving their outcomes in the community plan. The issues included:

- Lack of follow up by both community and agencies
- Lack of community ownership of the plan
- Distracted by other priorities and challenges of daily living
- Outcomes not identified and no quick wins/small victories
- Lack of commitment
- Lack of real consultation

To overcome the issues that have prevented the implementation of previous plans, the community felt it would be important to develop a plan which is clear and outlines the roles and responsibilities of the community and agencies. The community also indicated it would be helpful for a group to lead the District Community Plan through the establishment of the District Community Representative Group and Working Groups. Breaking the plan down into an Annual Action Plan was also identified to make it more achievable and to have an opportunity for small victories to be celebrated along the way.

How the Plan was Created

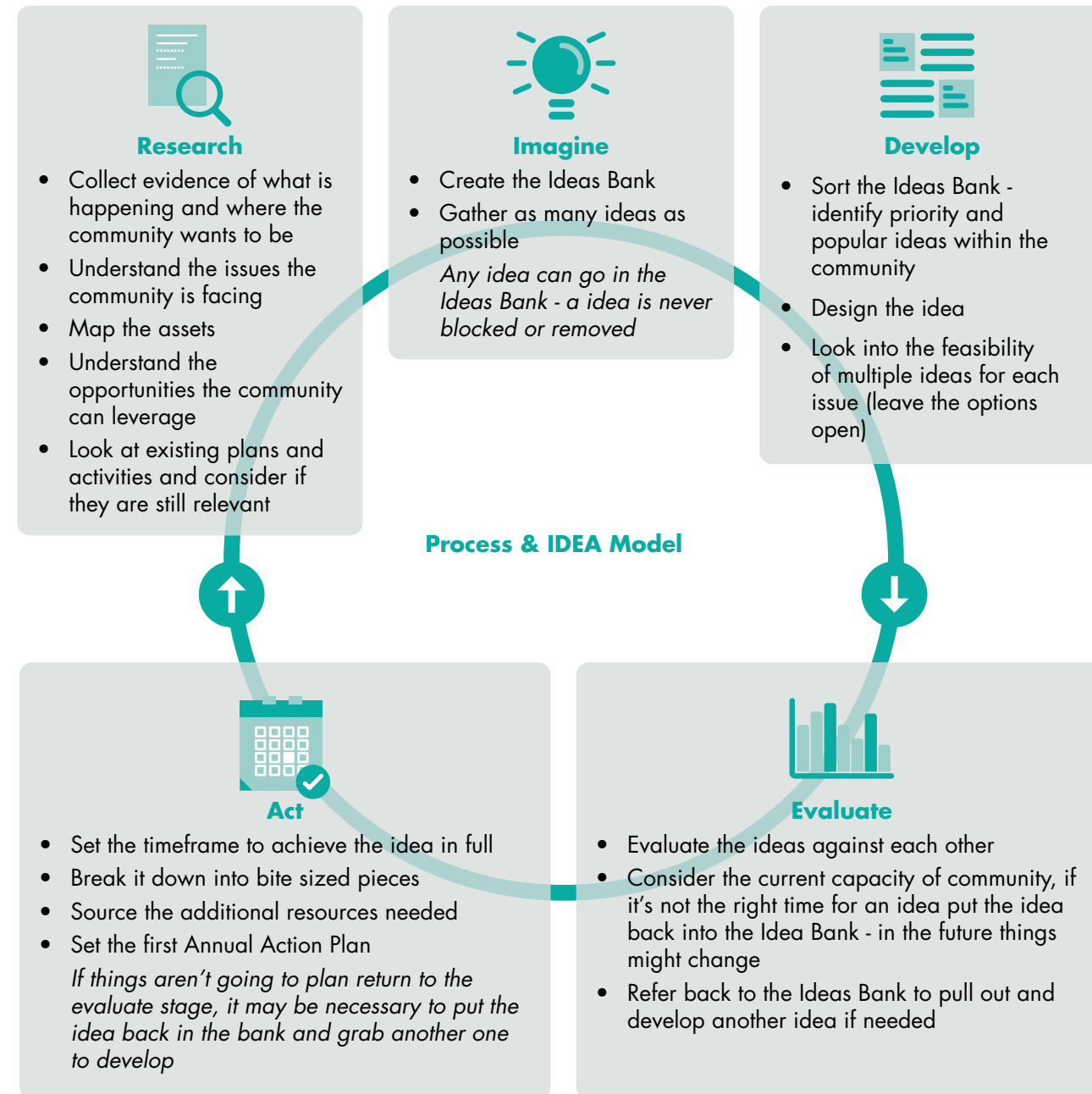


KEY:

Attendees

Process & IDEA Model

The IDEA Model is a way of helping people to think through their ideas and develop something from an idea into well thought out and planned actions.



A Community Toolkit that includes tools as well as data collected through the research stage is available by contacting Council, contact details are on the back of this document.

Section 2: Community Profile

Community Vision:

A remote district of exceptional natural beauty, which has the infrastructure and support to provide for a safe, healthy, productive and culturally diverse experience for its community, its businesses, its visitors and environment.



Community dinner at Big Bonang Arvo 2018

The District

Errinundra to Snowy is a sub-district of the Orbost District. The northern edge of the district is the border between Victoria and New South Wales and the East Gippsland and Snowy Monaro Shires. The sub-district was created given its remoteness from the Orbost township and its strong relationship with the NSW townships of Delegate and Bombala, which are the practical service towns for these communities.

The Errinundra to Snowy sub-district is an important part of the Orbost District. Mail deliveries, health and other services operate from Orbost into Errinundra to Snowy. The Orbost District has its own existing District Community Plan, which when reviewed, will revisit the relationship between these two places.

This sub-district will be referred to throughout the plan and is known by the community as a district. Access to services is determined by the road network and the distance required to travel. Due to poor road access to Orbost, residents in the northern settlements travel across the border for essential services including food, petrol, health services and other necessities. Residents of Goongerah predominantly travel to Orbost for services.

History
This area has seen significant changes in human settlement patterns, with people attracted to this place for its natural resources and beauty. A range of industries have developed over time that have created boom periods of employment followed by periods of economic decline. These have impacted the people that live in these communities, and changed the way they relate to each other across the district.

Prior to European settlement, the Bidwell people occupied what is now the border area of Victoria/ New South Wales, while the Krauatungalung people's range included the Goongerah (Egg Rock) area.

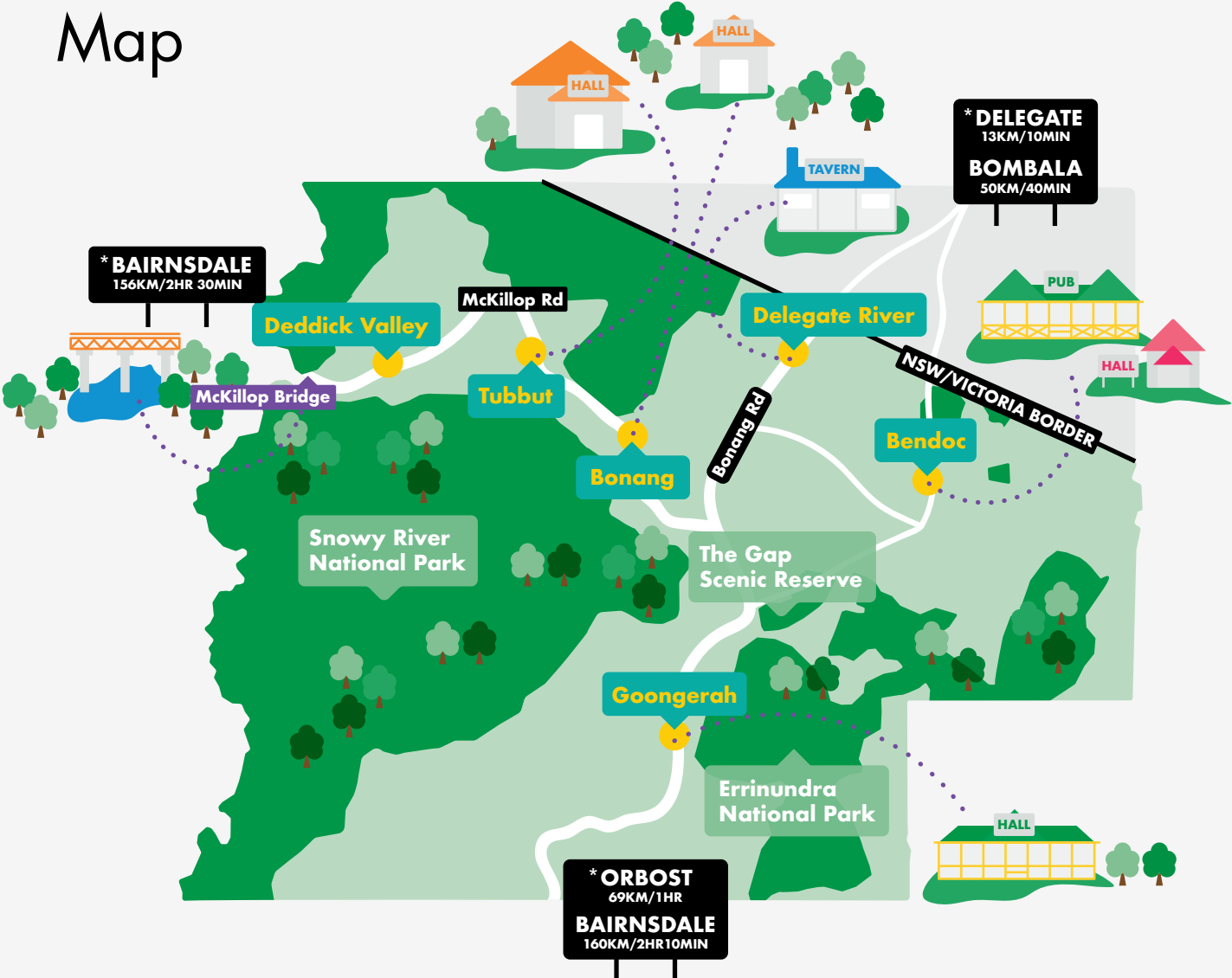
The first European settlers came south from the Monaro to establish sheep and cattle runs in the 1830s. Farming is one of the area's major economic activities. Local residents have shared stories of the early 1900's when gold and silver mining was prevalent across the district. The Mayfair and Victoria Star mines are two examples. Small settlements were created to support this economic activity. The remnants of these can still be seen today.

Forestry was the next major industry which brought large numbers of people to the area for work. Timber saw mills were established in Bendoc, Haydens Bog, Bonang, Goongerah, and Sardine Creek and operated for several decades. At the height of the industry there were 10 mills cutting hardwood timber. The bulk of timber cut was transported to Canberra and Sydney. Today no mills are commercially operational in the district.

A large number of privately owned plantations were established in the late 1980s near Tubbut and Bendoc. There was community opposition to further plantations proposed in the Deddick Valley. Some plantations were supported through government tax incentives for investors, which enabled agricultural land to be planted with soft and hard wood. This development saw a further decline in the community's population, with farm houses that once homed families and supported community services, left vacant. Many of the residents in this community opposed and continue to oppose clear felling of old growth forests.

References:
³ Bendoc Centenary Souvenir Publication (1973) cited on Bendoc Resource Centre Website 2019

District Map



*Distances from district boundary

Travel within the district (all are unsealed roads)		
Bonang to:	KM	TIME
Bendoc	40	55min
Goongerah	33	39min
Deddick Valley	47	1hr 20min
Tubbut	13	18min
Delegate River	25	28min

	Errinundra to Snowy District	East Gippsland
Population	338 (ABS 2016)	46,142 (ABS 2017)
Land area TOTAL	207,170 ha	2,093,053 ha (20,931 Km2)
Council Land Area	1 ha	
Crown Land Area	165,274 ha	
Private Land Area	41,895 ha	

District Assets

This section of the plan summarises the assets in the Errinundra to Snowy District along with issues and opportunities. It is important for the community, Council

and agencies to have a good understanding of the assets in the district and to use this to guide planning.

The assets have been grouped under the outcomes of the District Community Plan.



People

Provides a snapshot of those living in the district based on the community survey.



Healthy & Sustainable Environments

Environmental assets include air, land, water, plants, animals, mineral and energy resources that support all life and human activity.



Thriving Economy

Economic assets include current and future industries, and employment opportunities to support people to live in the district.



Safe & Healthy Communities

Assets relating to health and wellbeing include personal and community safety and access to services.



Resilient & Connected Communities

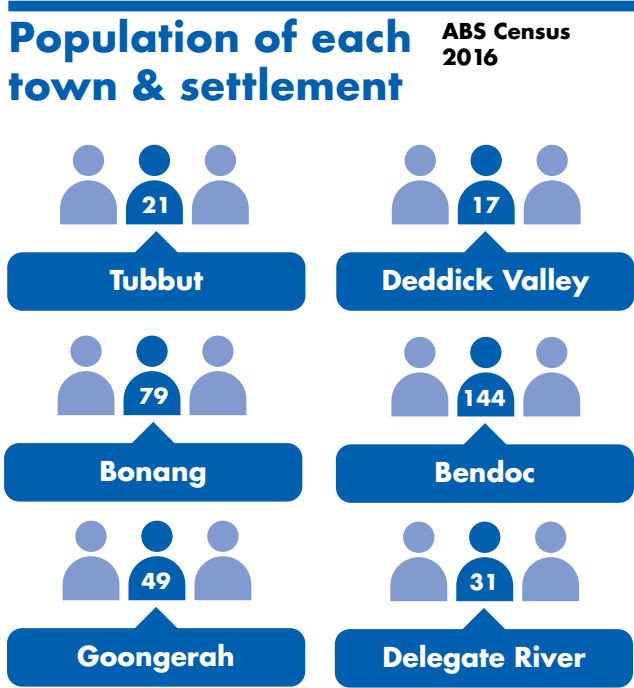
Built, social and cultural assets relate to how the district connects and communicates and the facilities which bring the community together.

People

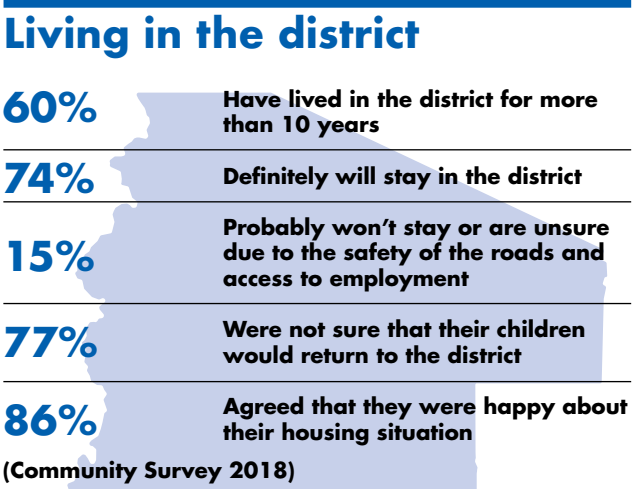


As of 2016, 338 people chose to live in this district (ABS 2016 census). Due to the small population size of the district, there are limitations to the census demographic data available.

A community survey was used to help to build an understanding of the people that make up the Errinundra to Snowy District. A total of 37 surveys were completed representing 10.95% of district.



Demographic representation of the community survey	
Place of residence	
Goongerah	25%
Bendoc	22%
Tubbut	6%
Bonang	14%
Cabanandra	8%
Deddick Valley	14%
Haydens Bog	3%
Delegate River	3%
Dellicknora	3%
Others	3%
Gender	
Male	36%
Female	56%
Not disclosed	8%
Age	
25 to 34	11%
35 to 49	6%
50 to 59	50%
60 to 69	25%
70 to 84	8%



Healthy & Sustainable Environments



The natural environment is one of the most significant assets for the community in the Errinundra to Snowy District. The community value its beauty and recognises its importance to their future.

The Errinundra to Snowy District is named for the many streams that trickle out of the springs and soaks of the Errinundra Plateau, shaping the valleys and eventually joining the Snowy River. The settlements are nestled in river valleys and separated by grassy plains and mountainous woodlands as diverse as the rainforests of the Errinundra and the dry white box and Cypress Pine woodlands of Deddick.

The Snowy River National Park area features some of the most stunning forest and river gorge scenery in the state, as well as the heritage-listed McKillop's Bridge. Said to be at the time the longest arc-welded steel truss road bridge in the world, the 255-metre bridge is one of the standing wonders of Australian road-bridge engineering and is a popular launching place for experienced canoeists and four-wheel drivers who wish to explore the area.

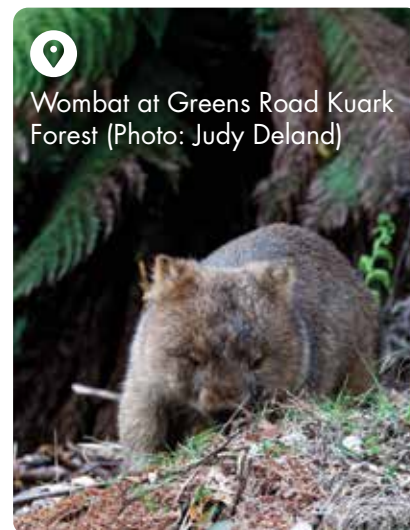
The Errinundra National Park is one of Victoria's unique natural environments. The Errinundra Plateau forms the southern extension of the Monaro Tablelands that stretch south from the Snowy Mountains of New South Wales. Errinundra's high rainfall zone is cloaked in old growth forests and rainforests and is home to some of the largest trees in Victoria. The Errinundra Plateau is ranked as a major Site of Significance due to the presence of rare plants, richness of vegetation

types, rainforests and old growth forests.⁴

The natural ecosystems are experiencing strain from feral animals such as deer, pigs, dogs and cats, and invasive grass and other species.

Additionally, East Gippsland Shire is vulnerable to inundation, fire and extreme natural events and climate change has potential to increase vulnerability. "East Gippsland's economy and communities are heavily reliant on the natural environment, both directly and indirectly. As well as supporting primary industries such as fishing, forestry and farming, the environment is a key component of the appeal of the area for tourism and makes a major contribution to the lifestyle of residents. East Gippsland is also a key reservoir of biodiversity in temperate mainland Australia.⁵ Achieving environmental sustainability in the broadest sense; that is, allowing society and economy to flourish within the capacity of the natural environment to support them, will require continual change to the way community lives and conducts business.⁵"

The Victorian Government has also identified that Gippsland will be warmer and drier in the future, which will impact the ecosystems and waterways of the district. When asked what the community felt would be the impacts of climate change within the district, survey respondents thought increased bushfire danger and water insecurity would be the most significant impacts.



Wombat at Greens Road Kuark Forest (Photo: Judy Deland)



Lace Monitor at Snowy River National Park (Photo: Judy Deland)

References:

⁴ Goongerah Environment Centre (GECO), The Wilderness Society & Environment East Gippsland (2017)

⁵ East Gippsland Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2014 – 2017

Thriving Economy



The local economy is made up of a number of small businesses including a few large-scale farms, machinery contractors and builders, accommodation providers and small niche produce growers. Services located in Bendoc include the post office, police station, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) offices and pub. Delegate River has a tavern offering food and accommodation. The provision of two Neighbourhood House services in the district also provides some part time employment. Government agencies including Parks Victoria, DELWP and VicForests base their operations for this district from Bendoc and remain the main employer in this area. DELWP Forest Fire Management have a seasonal crew of working on 6-9 month contracts based in Bendoc. Council provides local contracts for waste management services.

The majority of people travel outside the district to do grocery shopping – residents travel as widely as Canberra, Cooma, Merimbula, Bombala, Delegate, Orbost, Bairnsdale. Most try to combine their shopping with another monthly or fortnightly trip (medical or social) and shop in Bombala, Delegate and Orbost weekly. Residents in Goongerah have formed a food cooperative based out of the community centre.

Employment opportunities within the district have declined over recent years. Professional, educational, retail and hospitality jobs are limited, and the recent school closures has resulted in eight local job losses. The unemployment rate is contained due to many in the community having reached retirement age, although

underemployment is common. Half of the survey respondents go outside of the district, including over the border to access employment. 15% of the survey respondents were unsure if they would stay in the district or probably wouldn't stay due to access to employment and the safety of the roads. Half of the survey respondents also felt that they don't have access to work opportunities in the district that support the lifestyle they want. Some community members use the NBN satellite access at their homes to work remote.

An industry that has been present in the district for a long time is forestry, which previously created a large number of local jobs. Local foresters have commented on the gradual decline of this industry over the last 30 years. Limited local employment opportunities have been created from the establishment of the pine and eucalypt plantations.

Employment opportunities are a challenge for the district in terms of attracting new people. A total of 77% of the community survey respondents were not confident their children would return to the district, in large part due to the employment situation.

Both the survey and the workshop participants saw nature based tourism as an important opportunity for the district, and selected development of a strategy, identification of infrastructure and repurposing of underutilised assets as one of their top priorities. In 2019 the Victorian State Government has a number of funding opportunities to support nature based tourism.

Tourism in the Errinundra to Snowy District would take advantage of the region's remoteness, isolation and largely untouched wilderness as a drawcard for people seeking to 'unplug' and have nature based experiences. A number of underutilised existing campgrounds, tracks and roads could be mapped and maintained as car touring routes and walking tracks. Upgraded camp facilities, interpretive signage and mapping of points of interest would be required. A variety of accommodation options and tour activities would be needed which would create opportunities for individuals to operate small businesses based on sharing their place, skills and knowledge.

There are currently no commercial/retail zones within the settlements of Goongerah, Tubbut or Bonang. Landuse is something that the community has identified a need to explore and understand further to be able to optimise future opportunities around economic development in the district.

Income

One third of the respondents are unsure or think that they do not have adequate income.



Employment

41% of the respondents don't have the type & access employment they would like



54% don't have access to work opportunities in the community that support the lifestyle they want

(Community Survey 2018)

"I want to see more locals living in the community, more accommodation leading to more locals, leading to more shops, businesses and opportunities for the community"

Local Resident

"I want to live in a vibrant, financially sustainable community with safe roads and services that attract visitors and future residents"

Local Resident

"Ability to live in my community, not somewhere else, because there are no jobs"

Local Resident

"Tourism with sensitivity and heart"

Local Resident

"Rebuilt a community, through ecological and economy"

Local Residents

"I want to see the community working with government departments and organisations to develop a lively educational, innovative, econ tourism industry based on research and activities"

Local Resident



Result Creek, Bendoc
(Photo: Judy Deland)

Safe & Healthy Communities



Safety

The Errinundra to Snowy District has experienced a number of significant bush fires which will remain an ongoing challenge for the district into the future, affecting the safety of the community. The community has demonstrated strength in coming together and supporting each other during disasters. The strength of the district lies in people willing to help each other out (78% in the community survey) and there being trust in neighbours looking out for each other (84%). The community takes bushfire risk seriously and are actively working together to ensure that the community is ready for future fire events in the district.

Anecdotal evidence along with feedback in the community survey indicates that there is still an issue with residents accessing information to prepare for and manage an unexpected event. This is of concern given the recent impact of fires and ongoing risk in the area. Following the 2014 bush fires, there were a number of systems implemented which were enacted in the most recent fire. This highlighted the need for further development as they didn't address the issues previously identified by the community to maintain safety during a fire event i.e. telecommunications. The ongoing limitations around existing telecommunications infrastructure poses a threat to community members and visitors personal safety during fire events and emergencies such as road accidents.

Ageing Population

A total of 83% of the survey respondents were 50 years of

age or older. The proportion of older adults (60+ years) in East Gippsland is higher than regional Victoria (ABS 2016) and whilst there is not ABS Census demographic information available at a district level due to the small population size, it is likely that this is reflective of the population in Errinundra to Snowy District.

The ageing population in the district also raises concerns around the ability of the community to continue to sustain the functions and governance required for the 17 community groups in the district, particularly the physical components required for groups such as CFA and SES.

Health

Whilst 78% of the survey respondents agreed that in general they personally had excellent general health, only 23% of the survey respondents agreed that the health and wellbeing of their community was strong. One in five respondents agreed that they had adequate access to health services in the district, with a significant proportion (78%) of the community travelling outside the district for health and medical services.

Orbost Regional Health (ORH) is the main provider of health services across the district. They also have arrangements in place with the Delegate Multi-purpose service for a visiting nurse to the northern communities. ORH runs a annual health check/information day called the Big Bonang Arvo at Bonang Hall. Attendees include emergency services, health services from Delegate Multi-purpose, ORH and dental/optometry through the Royal Flying

Doctor service, and Council. The hall committee provides a cooked dinner.

The Big Bonang Arvo is well attended and receives very positive feedback. In 2018, 90% of attendees highly rated the health & welfare advice and 70% highly rated the social contact with locals. Following strong interest at the event, the Royal Flying Doctor increased the number of visiting dental and optometry services. The community would like to extend all visiting services outside of a yearly event and are interested in accessing private rooms and reliable internet connections in existing buildings to facilitate this. This would improve continuity of care. Orbost Regional Health is currently leading a review of the current health services provided across the district.

Library

Council runs a library service to these remote communities on a fortnightly basis. The service comes directly from the Bairnsdale Library and offers access to informational, recreational and education resources. A total of 80% of survey respondents use the Council Library Bus. Approximately 60% believe the service is very important with a further 83% of respondents rating the service as excellent to satisfactory. This library service is critical in connecting these remote communities back into other Council services. The Council Officer providing this service has valuable relationships with these communities and is seen as 'the face' of the Council. The community is open to exploring a variety of ideas for the future use of

Safe & Healthy Communities



the Library Bus including a grocery run for non-perishables - or as a mobile 'pantry' (as per free food shop in Orbest) and could bring other services - Council, health, food deliveries from further afield.

Neighbourhood Houses

There are two neighbourhood houses funded across this district, one in Bendoc and one in Tubbut. The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) provide ongoing funding to employ staff at Bendoc for 15 hours per week and at Tubbut, 25 hours per week. In 2019, the Goongerah community applied for funding to develop a neighbourhood house at the hall, however were unsuccessful.

Neighbourhood Houses bring people together to connect, learn and contribute in their local community through social, educational, recreational and support activities, using a unique community development approach. Community development is about enabling communities to identify and address their own needs.

As the population has changed across this district, so has the role of the Neighbourhood Houses. These Houses provide vital community resources such as information and internet services and support to these isolated communities. The future challenge for both these services will be their ability to service all of the district.

Outreach/Information Services

Council currently provides an outreach service to this district through a service agreement on an annual basis to the Bendoc Neighbourhood House. The

purpose of this service is to provide information about Council services, planning permits, rate information, and upcoming events or activities from across the shire to people living in this district and an opportunity to provide input on Council initiatives. The Tubbut Neighbourhood house also provides support and information around council services.

The Place Planning process has identified that people in different parts of this district don't travel between the communities largely due to the road infrastructure being poor and the distances between the communities. Feedback from the community survey indicate that the provision of information regarding Council services and support could be improved. There is an opportunity to explore more flexible models of service delivery to meet the needs of these different remote communities.

Education

Over one third of the survey respondents travel outside of the district for education. The Neighbourhood Houses in Bendoc and Tubbut and the Goongerah Community Hall some training opportunities for adults such as

first aid, crafting and firearms use.

Following the closure of the Tubbut-Goongerah P-8 school in late 2018, the remaining 11 children who live in the district travel to Delegate and Bombala to attend primary school. Secondary schooling is accessed either in Bombala or Orbest but in recent years families have increasingly been leaving the district in their secondary years. Home schooling has been a popular alternative in some families in recent years, although numbers have declined with declining population in the children and young adult demographics.

"Community safety and environmental, cultural education to others from this natural resource rich area"

Local Resident



Orbest Regional Health at Big Bonang Arvo 2018

Safe & Healthy Communities



Roads and road related infrastructure

Road infrastructure is critical in this remote district. Both RRV and Council are the primary road managers, with other roads in the district managed by DELWP, Parks Victoria or private plantations. RRV are the coordinating road authority for all arterial roads, e.g Bonang Road, McKillops Road. Under the Road Management Act, they are responsible for planned inspections, response times and maintenance of these roads. The Road Management Act outlines how road authorities discharge their obligations and duties. Council is responsible for local access roads and limited access roads and related infrastructure including: bridges, culverts, drains, signage and road delineation. Council also has responsibilities for certain assets and parts of the road reserve.

Council has an obligation to provide 'inspection, maintenance and repair' on Council roads in line with the Road Management Plan. This is a statutory requirement reviewed every four years, within six months of the new Council being elected. Council has a road maintenance service contract for the whole of the shire, with the Errinundra to Snowy District covered under the north east

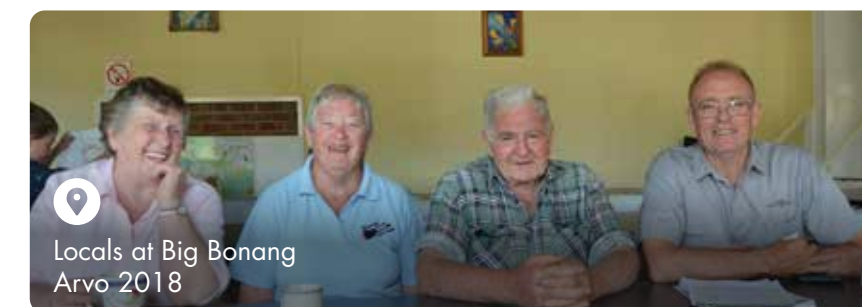
contract area. Council employs an Area Supervisor who is based in Orbest to undertake inspections and community liaison and contract oversight.

Waste

Council provides a range of waste management services. Orbest Waste Transfer station is the primary facility for the district, providing waste services including hard waste, Ewaste, green waste, and other recycling. A number of significant changes have taken place within the waste management industry, with the shire responding with the introduction of recycling services across the district.

Waste Transfer Stations are located in Bendoc and Bonang. These stations operate on a pay as you go system and are open nine hours across three days of the week. This service is contracted out, providing local employment opportunities.

The Deddick, Dellicknora, Tubbut, and Goongerah communities are serviced with split trailers offering waste and recycling services. This service is contracted out to a district-based contractor and is funded through an annual rural waste charge.



Locals at Big Bonang Arvo 2018

Safety

71% agreed that the community is a safe place to live



71% agreed that the community has a reputation for being a safe place



63% agreed that they can access information to prepare for and manage an unexpected event



Health

78% agreed that in general, they have excellent health



Only 1 in 5 respondents agreed that they have adequate access to health services in the district



23% agreed that the health and wellbeing of their community is strong



(Community Survey 2018)

"I want a sustainable, safe future for our area"

Local Resident

Resilient & Connected Communities



Safety and Connectivity

For the people living in the district, their way of life, health and livelihood relies on roads that are safe and usable. There is no public transport within the district. Bendoc Neighbourhood House provides the only community bus and organises shopping and regular trips. Roads are the life blood of this community; they connect people to their places of work, schools, businesses, friends and family. The provision of a safe road network is an essential part of any community's infrastructure. These remote communities are highly mobile due to their geographical location to undertake their daily living.

The deterioration of the road network, in particular the Bonang Road, has had a significant impact on this community's ability to travel safely beyond their homes to access essential services. The commencement of logging of private plantations across the district has significantly impacted the road surface. This issue has been prioritised by the community, with a working group established to collect information and advocate for appropriate maintenance of the Bonang Road.

Services travelling to the area from Orbest on this road include: mail delivery, ambulance, mobile library and health professionals. All are dependent on this road to be of a standard to support two-wheel drive vehicles. In early June 2019, the mail delivery service was suspended due to the state of the Bonang Road surface.

The provision of safe and reliable road infrastructure is also critical for tourism.

Social Connection

Opportunities to come together socially across the district have declined as the numbers of the people living in the area has reduced. Only 41% agreed in the community survey that the community was connected and inclusive and that everyone felt welcome.

Sporting competitions such as tennis were once a popular way for communities to socialise – communities playing against each other, however with the decline in the district population, the tennis courts are now rarely utilised. There are limited opportunities for organised sport within the district with one in five of the survey respondents travelling outside of the area for sport and leisure. The fishing club in Bendoc has a large membership and runs a range of activities throughout the year. Given the size of properties in the area, many children have their own horses and some children participate in the Delegate Pony Club.

Almost half of the survey respondents travel outside of the district for social activities. People will travel interstate and to 'where ever there is something on'. Survey respondents indicated that they more often go to Delegate, Bombala, Orbest and coastal towns in NSW and sometimes also go to Canberra, Melbourne and Bairnsdale.

The two Neighbourhood Houses and the community centre in the district play an important role in connecting the community. There is a desire by some to strengthen the links and connections within the distinct communities that make up this district.

Access to activities

65%

agreed that they had access to a range of arts and cultural activities within the district

51%

agreed that they had access to a range of sports and leisure activities within the district

81%

agreed that they had access to participate in social activities

Community involvement



65%

agreed that they felt valued by their local community

76%

agreed that they were proud to live in the community

44%

agreed that they could change the things they cared about in their community

49%

agreed that they got involved with most community issues

(Community Survey 2018)

Resilient & Connected Communities



Community Identity

Whilst the survey identified that there is a feeling that the district has a defined identity (75%), the feeling that there is a diversity of culture and tradition present (19%) and that the community is culturally rich and inclusive (14%) was quite low in the community survey.

Identity & diversity



75%

agreed that the district has a defined identity

42%

agreed that the community's local history is being preserved and promoted

47%

agreed that the community acknowledges traditions and celebrations

19%

agreed that a diversity of culture and tradition is present

14%

agreed that their community is culturally rich and inclusive



Locals cooking up the BBQ at Big Bonang Arvo 2018

Communication across the District

Communication systems in remote communities are critical to connect with each other and effectively distribute information throughout the community. This can be a challenge when systems such as telecommunications and postal deliveries are limited.

The roadside postal service for this district comes via Orbest three times a week, on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Two subcontractors, one from Orbest and one from Bonang, coordinate the mail delivery service across the district and to Delegate and back. Residents in the Bendoc area have access to a post office and there is a community noticeboard.

Three different community newsletters are produced on a monthly basis, with copies distributed via email and the postal service. Tubbut Neighbourhood House produce the Tubbut Tattler, the Bendoc Neighbourhood house produces the Bendoc Wheel and the Delegate Progress Association produces the Delegate Doings.

People in the Errinundra to Snowy District have a preference for finding out about things through the local community newsletters Bendoc Wheel and Tubbut Tattler (25%), email (20%), Flyers (16%) and a letter addressed to the resident (12%).

Community & relationships

84%

agreed that they could trust their neighbours to look out for their property



65%

agreed that if a stranger, someone different to them, moved into their community they would be accepted and welcomed



41%

agreed that the community is connected and inclusive; everyone feels welcome



78%

agreed that people in their community are very willing to help each other out



73%

agreed that the local community feels like home



(Community Survey 2018)

Resilient & Connected Communities



Digital communication via Facebook has also proved to be an important avenue for locals to get information about what is happening in their community.

Both the Tubbut and Bendoc Neighbourhood Houses have Facebook pages to keep the community informed about upcoming events. Goongerah has a private Facebook group which community members access.

Telecommunications

Reliable mobile phone reception continues to be an issue for people living and visiting the district. Although mobile phone services were upgraded in 2018 across Tubbut, Bonang and Cabanandra there remain a number of black spots across the district. Many residents still do not have mobile phone access. The ongoing issue of communication was identified in the survey as a significant number of respondents didn't agree that

they had access to information to prepare for and manage an unexpected event.

The provision of internet services at the Tubbut and Bendoc Neighbourhood Houses and the Goongerah Hall have proved valuable to enable community members to stay connected. The former two school campuses at Tubbut and Goongerah had high speed telecommunication access. The community has identified an opportunity to utilise this infrastructure to address the ongoing telecommunications issues experienced in these communities.

Community Groups

Community groups provide an essential service to the district and an important opportunity for people to connect with each other. There are 17 separate community and service groups operating in this district which is a significant number given the size

of the population. A total of 60% of survey respondents volunteer an average of 20 hours a month (not including wildlife carers who volunteer 24/7). In the past, there hasn't been an opportunity for the separate community and service groups to come together to plan and coordinate efforts at a district level. The creation of the representative group for this district will enable this coordination to occur.

Community groups provide an essential service to the district and an important opportunity for people to connect with each other.

In the past 5 years, respondents of the survey had

joined in a local community action to deal with an emergency

48%

taken part in a local community project or working bee

77%

Transport

60%

agreed that they have OK access to transport to allow them to do the things they want within the district



(Community Survey 2018)

"To better the community, to see more people using the Tubbut hall and facilities"

Local Resident

Community & Service Groups in the Errinundra to Snowy District June 2019

Mt Delegate CFA

Approx members: 30-40 members

Crews – Bonang, Goongerah, Bendoc

Number of meetings per year: Multiple meetings and training

Friends Of Errinundra Inc

Approx members: 19

Number of meetings per year: 2 formal meetings annually, 2 working bee / meetings

Goongerah Landcare Group

Approx members: 19

Number of meetings per year: 4 plus 4 working bees

Bonang Hall Committee

Approx members: 6

Number of meetings per year: 4

Goongerah Environment Centre Committee

Tubbut Hall & Development Association Inc

Approx members: 4

Number of meetings per year: Meets when needed

Deddick Valley Isolated Community Group Inc

Approx members: 7

Number of meetings per year: 4+

Delegate Progress Association Inc (NSW) Cross Border Sub Committee

Approx members: 6

Number of meetings per year: 6

Goongerah Hall Reserve

Approx members: 7

Number of meetings per year: Meets when needed

Deddick River Landcare Group Inc

Approx members: 3

Number of meetings per year: Meets when needed

Borderliners

No formal membership or committee

Bendoc SES

Approx members: 12

Number of meetings per year: 12

Bendoc Hall & Recreation Reserve Inc.

Approx members: 5

Number of meetings per year: 4

Bendoc Cemetery Trust

Bendoc Progress Association Inc.

Approx members: 13

Number of meetings per year: 4

Bendoc Fishing Club

Approx members: 30

Number of meetings per year: 3-5

Bendoc Memorial Park

Approx members: 5

Number of meetings per year: Meets when needed

Resilient & Connected Communities



Community Facilities & Social Infrastructure

With the changes across the district and the declining population, there has been a reduction in the use of the community facilities. Four of the communities have a hall with different ancillary amenities. These halls continue to provide important public space, offering a range of facilities for social events using BBQ and pizza oven facilities, kitchens and public bathrooms. Halls are still places where people gather and come together, however the function of these facilities has changed from the historical use for dances and badminton, to new uses such as food cooperatives, Neighbourhood Houses and internet access hubs.

The survey results reveal that the community highly value these

facilities, but that many were used rarely or never by the respondents of the survey. Whilst used to a limited degree by the majority of survey respondents, the halls and public toilets across the district were identified as important or very important by approximately two thirds of the respondents. The same amount of people felt that the facilities were in satisfactory or excellent condition. The exception was the tennis courts in the district, seen as less important by the respondents of the survey and not in a satisfactory condition.

The community survey results identified a strong desire to repurpose the halls and public land to offer camping and tourism activities. Survey respondents see this as an opportunity to leverage funds and economic development

within their communities whilst maximising the use of existing assets to maintain them for the use of the community. The Tubbut and Goongerah communities are in conversation with the Department of Education & Training (DET) through Council to explore future use of the school buildings. A summary of the ideas captured in the community survey are outlined in the table below.

There is a significant body of work needed to review the needs of the community with the existing community facilities, to develop plans for development and future re-purposing. Council is currently working with the DET around their timeframes for removal of facilities and land tenure.

Community Facilities

Facility	Current facilities and use	Ideas for future use
Bonang Hall, Public Toilets & Playground	DELWP Committee of Management Playground, outdoor pizza oven, Public toilets, notice board, public phone box Meeting venue for Representative Group, Big Bonang Arvo CFA Shed next door to Bonang Hall	- Central for a multi-campus neighbourhood house to be located that services the whole district - Casual/basic accommodation for groups - Consulting room with heating for visiting health services - Community Social Functions – dances, visiting shows, information sessions - A driver/rider revival rest point - Electric BBQ beside the existing picnic tables
Bendoc Hall & Public Toilets	Council Committee of Management Hall and Supper Room Adjacent public toilets and showers, park with basic playground with minimum usage currently	- Community social activities - movie nights, badminton, table tennis, markets, cooking classes, community dinners, education, speakers, yoga, gymnastics, health and wellbeing - Hosting music, arts and cultural events - Accommodation for tourists
Bendoc Resource Centre	Auspiced by Bendoc Progress Association Staffed Neighbourhood House- 10 hrs p/w Internet Access Community bus that provides monthly trips to Merimbula	- A meeting place and learning space - Site for U3A courses - Skype facilities for medical or specialist appointments - Local tourist information

Resilient & Connected Communities



Facility	Current facilities and use	Ideas for future use
Bendoc Tennis Court	Council Committee of Management Disused Tennis Courts Large area of Open Space	- Social tennis evenings - Converted to a volleyball/basketball/badminton court - Inter district mini competitions - Vegetable garden and hot house - Level ground out behind toilet block so tourists can camp
Bendoc Public park	DELWP Committee of Management Picnic tables, signage, tourist information	
Goongerah Hall Community Centre	DELWP Committee of Management Hall, Outdoor Verandah, flat open space and outdoor chess set. Public phone box. Goongerah Good Food, GECO Kitchen, Volunteer Community Centre Community meetings	- More social activities, workshops, market, share, swap, sell meets etc. - Ecological education centre - Consulting room with heating for visiting health services - Commercial kitchen for food preparation and sales - Information for visitors
Goongerah School Site	Closure 2018 Transition from DET DELWP land Playground, Small classrooms and offices. Separate house previously used as teachers residency	- Office buildings used as meeting spaces and community hub - Art room used as workshops and to free up storage space in the hall - School house/residence be run as short-term accommodation/bnb social enterprise - Tourism activities for those visiting the district
Tubbut School Site	Closure 2018 Transition from DET DELWP land Small classrooms, playground and outdoor toilet block	- Keep children's play equipment - Connect to fibre-optic internet for access to online learning and health services - Use old classrooms as medical consulting suites when medical practitioners visit (provide level of privacy not currently possible elsewhere) or use as meeting and activity rooms - Develop the hall and old school complex into a wilderness camp - Run the old teachers residence on Willis Road as accommodation (possible social enterprise model)
Tubbut Hall	DELWP Committee of Management Hall and Supper Room Public phone box Pizza Oven and outdoor eating shelters Kiln Community lunches	- Community social activities (sport activities, cooking classes, art classes, education) - RV Stop - Camping and tourism opportunity if there were showers and cleared river access - Mini market
Tubbut Tennis Court	Disused Tennis courts	- Community garden/greenhouse - Camping space with outdoor kitchen as good barbecue and pizza oven nearby
Tubbut Neighbourhood House	Auspiced by Deddick Valley Isolated Community Group Inc Utilises building beside hall and supper room Staffed Neighbourhood House 25 hrs p/w	- Education, information - Use of internet - Could become one of a multi-campus neighbourhood house with activities in every community

Section 3: Implementing The Plan

Outcomes & Priorities

This section outlines the four outcomes the Errinundra to Snowy community wants to achieve and their priority ideas. A separate Annual Action Plan accompanies this District Community Plan and will be reviewed and updated regularly.

Determining the Outcomes

A total of 61 ideas were harvested from the workshops, previous community plan and community survey to create an Ideas Banks for the community to draw upon (See page 34). The ideas were then refined to 18 interesting ideas. Work was done to define what each idea meant to the community which was used to group the interesting ideas into the four outcome areas: Healthy & Sustainable Environments, Thriving Economy, Safe & Healthy Communities, Resilient & Connected Communities.

The community then identified the priorities that they would concentrate their energy and resources on the first 12 months, from these interesting ideas. The amount of time, resources, skills, and availability were considered to ensure energy for existing group activities was retained.



Priority projects are represented with a star.

Working Together: Roles & Responsibilities

Not all ideas can be delivered by community, many ideas need the support of agencies (i.e. government land managers) and services (i.e. health providers). Each of the priority ideas have the roles and responsibilities identified:

- Where community can do it themselves;
- Where Community and agencies work together providing support, funding, resources or advocacy;
- Where agencies take the lead, keeping community informed about the when and how.

The remaining ideas were not chosen for work in the first 12 months of 2020/2021. At the end of this period the DCRG will review the Annual Action Plan and decide whether to continue with the priority projects they are working on, or introduce additional projects from the interesting ideas already defined or the Ideas Bank.



Residents gather at Bonang Hall in 2017 to watch the Red Sunday film documenting the 2014 bushfires

Future Challenges & Opportunities

Whether it is change to the economy, environment or the community, the reality is that people will experience an increased rate and impact of change. The capacity of communities in East Gippsland to respond and adapt to these changes will be critical in order for them to achieve their vision for their communities and is the primary purpose in developing this District Community Plan.

Timber Industry

The timber industry, both government and private in the Errinundra to Snowy District will continue to change over the next five years. VicForests have an allocation of timber within state forests to be logged over this time. Logging of the private plantations is continuing. The total land area of these private plantations is estimated to be 5749 hectares which is approximately 14 % of the private land available in the district. A number of different companies currently control these plantations.

Logging of the timber resources within these communities will present challenges to the existing road infrastructure. The current logging activity in 2019 has seen up to 32 movements of trucks a day using the Bonang Road to remove the timber, which has significantly impacted the road. The state of the roads, some which have sections of unsealed road, is considered a significant safety risk by residents and visitors.

The Opportunity:

Nature Based Tourism

Top Challenges:

1. **Climate Change & Environmental Sustainability – including Natural Disasters/Events, Water Security**
2. **Service Access & Population Decline – including Ageing Population, Unemployment, Isolation**
3. **Road Infrastructure & Plantation Forestry**

(Community survey, 2018)

Bushfires

The area was greatly impacted in 2014 by bush fires. The risk of fire is an ongoing concern in the district and is compounded by the limitations in telecommunications across the district, although a recent black-spot program has seen mobile coverage extended to some areas such as Bonang. DELWP continue to provide Forest Fire Management from their Bendoc offices and depot.

Education

A dual-campus P-8 school at Goongerah and Tubbut closed in 2018. The district is part of the Delegate Primary School's designated enrolment area and in 2019 approx. 11 students lived in Victoria. The closure of the dual-campus school has had a significant impact on the community as it provided employment opportunities in the area which are limited, and the schools were a way to bring together the communities. Secondary school students access either Bombala or Orbost, however long travel times and educational preferences see families leave the district to access secondary education. Once children have left the area, they rarely return to the district due to limited social and employment opportunities.

Social Opportunities

The changes around economic activity and industry have mirrored changes in the social fabric of these communities. The social opportunities to bring community members together have changed. Structured sporting opportunities which once connected all the communities, no longer exist. Social connection across the district is now through the Neighbourhood Houses and the various community and service groups across the district. The social infrastructure such as halls and tennis courts in the district isn't reflective of this change and is no longer fit for purpose.

Economic Opportunities

The significant environmental assets located in the National Parks are seen as the next wave of economic activity through nature based tourism. The presence of old growth forests and the basic infrastructure such as campsites and walking tracks provide opportunities for further development. When asked in the community survey suggestions for future opportunities in the district, respondents overwhelmingly identified Nature Based Tourism. Local residents have embraced this with the provision of a range of complementary accommodation options to camping such as Airbnb and You Camp on private property. The challenge for people living in the Errinundra to Snowy District is to use the assets they currently have, such as their people, environment and built and social infrastructure to develop a new economy. One that will create new social connections through activities that will sustain their communities into the future.

Outcomes & Priorities

Outcome 1. Healthy & Sustainable Environments

What this means to community:

1.1 Protect the forest	- The forests of the district are a natural resource and eco-system which sustains human life. - It is a major tourism drawcard unrivalled on mainland Australia. - It is threatened by climate change and harvesting activities. - Advocate for protection and minimisation of harm on the forests.
1.2 Advocate for suitable zoning scheme	- In the past, community has experienced limitations to sub-division of land which has contributed to population growth and economic development. - The community want to explore and understand the legislation with the intent to advocate for change
1.3 Restore the environment	There are areas of existing damage to the environment which requires restoring in order to strengthen and improve the natural assets.
1.4 Care for wildlife	- Feral animals are impacting the natural ecosystems and our native and livestock animals. - Road incidents particularly from tourists and trucks are killing and injuring wildlife
1.5 Environmental/ cultural education programs	- We have the environment and the ability to learn more about our place and to share it with visitors. - Programs would be a way to get people to stop and stay, to connect us across the border, to explore, respect and protect our place.
1.6 Aboriginal language & place names	- Recognition and inclusion of first people - Seek to rectify the public record and opportunities for Aboriginal people to tell their stories and history.



A young child sits in the DELWP fire fighting vehicle at the 2018 Big Bonang Arvo

Outcome 2. Thriving Economy

What this means to community:

2.1 Explore mobile accommodation	- There are currently limited accommodation options available in the district. - Mobile accommodation provides a creative option which can move as needed.		
 2.2 Develop nature based tourism	Our unique environmental assets are an untapped resource that could provide economic growth to our district while maintaining the value of our natural environments.		
	Roles and Responsibilities		
	What community does	What community and partner agencies do together	What agencies do
	Establishment of a working group to identify what the district currently offers by way of nature based tourism (July 2019).	Development of a local nature based tourism plan.	Council: support the development of a local tourism plan. Council: advocate to State and Federal agencies, seek funding opportunities, liaise with Destination Gippsland and EG Marketing. Other agencies include Parks Vic, DELWP, Destination Gippsland, EG Marketing, Regional Roads Victoria, Regional Development Victoria (RDV).
 2.3 Enhance public facilities in National Parks	- The facilities in our Parks are currently very limited – visitors need to be self-sufficient. Will broaden our tourism market. - To maintain the ecological health of our parks through provision of toilets for people to use. - There are also currently issues with the maintenance of existing facilities.		
	Roles and Responsibilities		
	What community does	What community and partner agencies do together	What agencies do
	Community to identify priority public facilities for improvement in National Parks across the district and inform nature based tourism working group (July 2019).	Share information about the provision of priority facilities in National parks. Community groups maintain facilities in some parks via Friends of Errinundra.	DELWP/Parks Victoria: fund, maintain and develop facilities within National Parks and public camping areas Provision of funding.
2.4 Scope alternative options for a shop	- Currently there is no shop in the district, it would be important if there is an increase in tourism to provide an opportunity for community to sell local produce. - Wait until demand is driven by other activities but there is an opportunity to scope alternative models e.g. mobile.		

Outcome 3. Safe & Healthy Communities

What this means to community:

 3.1 Ensure fire protection	• Increase community safety. • Research different fuel reduction techniques to understand current practice and potential new practices.		
 3.2 Improve overall road maintenance	• Establish a standard of maintenance and management which reduces road safety issues, vehicle maintenance costs, dust and noise and wildlife deaths. • Safe roads - clean culverts, pot-hole and puncture-free roads and removing trees that come down. • Improve seasonal responsiveness • Improve directional signage and signage about road conditions and emergency events.		
	Roles and Responsibilities		
	What community does	What community and partner agencies do together	What agencies do
	Provision of feedback on condition of road. Collection of road safety data and impact on residents' safety Establish Working Group and Action Plan (July 2019).	Share information about the current state of the road and road maintenance issues and scheduled works to address maintenance issues.	Provision of Safe Roads and timely maintenance as per Road maintenance plan. RRV: Bonang Road Council: Local roads DELWP: Other roads
 3.3 Sealing of the Bonang Road	• Improve safety for residents that use the road to access key services in Orbost and beyond, and agencies that service the community. • Visitors and tourists feel safe to visit us and can contribute to our economy.		
	Roles and Responsibilities		
	What community does	What community and partner agencies do together	What agencies do
	Provision of feedback on condition of road. Collection of road safety data.	Develop a plan for the sealing of the remaining section of the road between Bonang and Goongerah.	Regional Roads Victoria: Build and maintain safe roads. Funding, planning, design and delivery of road infrastructure.
 3.4 Improve service provision	• Service provision that responds to the needs of our ageing community, people who are isolated, with disabilities and mental health issues. • Make it easier for all agencies to provide services to us and for us to access services considering road safety, travel times and online and visiting options. • Resolve the equity issue – utilise existing resources to improve service provision and channel funding to the areas that are needed.		
	Roles and Responsibilities		
	What community does	What community and partner agencies do together	What agencies do
	Provide feedback and complete surveys and share information about the need for service Establish a Working Group and Action Plan (July 2019).	Build a shared understanding of how services are currently operating and explore different service models to meet community needs.	Agencies provide service and undertake service reviews to ensure community needs are being met. This includes: health, information, library, outreach services, ORH, Gippsland Primary Health Network, Council, Neighbourhood House, RRV, Royal Flying Doctor Service, Centrelink, DHHS, Job Providers etc.

Outcome 4. Resilient & Connected Communities

What this means to community:

4.1 Improve tele-communications	• Not all residents have phone coverage which is a safety and wellbeing issue. • Telecommunications infrastructure remains inadequate during emergencies when power is lost.		
 4.2 Access to the existing fibre optic cable (at School sites)	• Current satellite and mobile internet options are slow and expensive. • Improved internet access provides new means of communication and can improve safety, as well as providing options for work and study. • Fibre Optic cables at the old school sites are an existing asset already in place.		
Roles and Responsibilities			
	What community does	What community and partner agencies do together	What agencies do
	Identify and document needs of the community and advocate to relevant authorities.	Identify the options available for the public use of the infrastructure.	DET: Complete transfer of land back to the crown. DELWP: Work with community to identify most appropriate use of the crown land. Council: Support relationship between community and agencies.
4.3 Strengthen the links with bordering communities (Cross Border Committee)	Work with our NSW neighbours in Delegate and Bombala to advocate on issues and services with a united voice.		
 4.4 Maximise use of community facilities	• Review the facilities in the district and establish how community want to use them. • Activate community spaces. • Make it easier to run community facilities. • Investigate creative enterprises and ideas for economic activity. • Community hubs.		
Roles and Responsibilities			
	What community does	What community and partner agencies do together	What agencies do
	Identify and document needs of the community and advocate to relevant authorities.	Work in partnership to understand policy and process and investigate options.	DELWP and Council work together to review facility management to meet the needs of community.

Ideas Bank

A total of 61 Ideas were harvested from the previous community plan, workshops and the community survey to create this Ideas Bank for the community to draw upon in the future.

Infrastructure

- Sealing last of Bonang road
- Roads
- Improve telecommunications
- Improve electricity grid
- Open up fibre option connections to wider community
- Roads strategy
- IT – comms
- Arts and cultural facilities
- Walking tracks
- Bike tracks
- Convert some community infrastructure into accommodation
- The school infrastructure to be maintained e.g. fibre optic

Fire Prevention

- Ecologically/scientifically based
- Fire protection

Industry

- Tourism
- Eco-tourism
- Tension between logging & the natural environment
- More jobs
- Agricultural management
- Promote area for recreation and camping

Environment

- Restore environment
- Protecting forests
- Manage wildlife
- Better utilise resources to manage the natural landscape

Education

- Environmental Education Centre
- Life-long learning

Services

- Improved service outreach
- Better health care
- Bendoc Neighbourhood House outreach
- Add a Neighbourhood House in Goongerah

Facilities

- Sort out community facilities perhaps under one committee
- Public facilities in parks

Cultural

- Understanding and celebration of local history
- Recognition of the first people
- Dances
- Arts

Community

- Sort out community facilities perhaps under one committee
- Cross border committee
- Grant planning committee
- Activate our spaces



Tree at Brown Mountain
(Photo: Judy Deland)

District Community Representative Group

The establishment of the DCRG provides a means for implementing the District Community Plan. Council is committed to supporting the community to establish this group. The purpose of the DCRG as identified by the community is to:

- Be a strong voice for the community
- Represent active groups/working groups
- Drive the District Community Plan (strategic not operational)
- Coordinate, communicate and advocacy across the district
- Coordinate relationships with agencies
- Be a sounding board and way to evaluate ideas that are put forward

The DCRG is not an operational working group (not the doing/ action), nor a committee of Council and does not tell established community groups what to do. The role of the community group nominated representative participating on the DCRG is to:

- Put a community group hat on, representing views of the group when at the DCRG, not individual views
- Two-way information. Report to their community group about what was discussed at the DCRG and report to the DCRG about activities of the community group they are representing
- The DCRG is focused on the District Community Plan outcomes and implementation, coordinating district community plan activities and relationships with agencies

Time was spent through the community planning process working with participants in the workshops to develop standards of behaviour that reflect the values that the community wish to realise. The list below reflects how the community will work with each other to implement their plan:

- Respect and won't personalize things
- Loyalty and won't judge people
- Trust
- Fun and a sense of humour
- Good communication, listen, be open minded and won't talk over each other
- Good, agreed upon processes/ efficiency

The District Representative Group includes representation of the community groups across the district as well as geographic and demographic representation. The following groups were invited as active and to provide a nominated representative to participate on the DCRG.

- Mt Delegate CFA Group
- Friends of Errinundra Group
- Goongerah Environmental Centre (GECO)
- Deddick Valley Isolated Communities Group (DVICG)
- Bonang Hall Committee
- Cross Border Sub Committee
- Goongerah Hall Committee
- Borderliners
- Bendoc Hall Committee
- Bendoc Fishing Club
- Bendoc Progress Association
- Bendoc SES
- Goongerah Landcare
- District Community Plan Working Groups

Working Groups

Working groups have been established to take carriage of the delivery of the priority projects. Working groups will have representation on the DCRG.

The membership of the working groups may include partner agencies and others in the community outside of the DCRG. The Role of a Working Group is:

- Do the doing
- Report back to the representative group and to work within the brief
- Don't expand the brief beyond the Annual Action Plan
- Make recommendations about changes to approach or the brief

Annual Action Plan

An action plan will be developed to outline the key projects and areas of focus. The Working Groups will develop the action plan for each priority idea. The action plan will outline:

- Partners/stakeholders
- Steps and actions
- Timing
- Who is responsible and the roles of different agencies or community

It will then be reviewed and accepted by DCRG. A report card will be used to provide a way of measuring achievements.

Contact us in person

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Lakes Entrance: 18 Mechanics Street

Mallacoota: 70 Maurice Avenue

Omeo: 179 Day Avenue

Orbost: 1 Ruskin Street

Paynesville: 55 The Esplanade

Bendoc: 18 Dowling Street

Buchan: 6 Centre Road

Cann River: 13 Princes Highway

Front Cover Image:

Friends of Errinundra at a working
bee in 2018 (Photo: Gary Belisini)

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