

Buchan and District Community Plan 2011-16

Incorporating

- Buchan • Buchan East • Buchan South
- Black Mountain • Murrindal • Timbarra
- Glenmore • Gelantipy
- W Tree and Wulgulmerang
- Cani Creek • Gillingall
- Butchers Ridge • Suggan Buggan



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Our Place

It is thought that the name Buchan was taken from an Aboriginal word Bukkan-mungie, to which various meanings have been ascribed. One interpretation is 'place of grass bag' and another is a 'place of rocks with holes in them'.

The Buchan Caves and Buchan Caves Reserve are major natural features of the district. They attract a large number of tourists.

The spectacular limestone-rich valleys and hills are home to the Snowy and Buchan Rivers and numerous waterfalls, gorges and historic bridges. Whilst Buchan is best known for its famous spectacular underground caves, its history goes back much further to evidence of megafauna found in local fossils.

Following the arrival of Europeans, the township grew as closer settlement of the farming land meant more demand for services. As settlement spread, sheep and cattle grazing increased and in 1901, the first cattle sales were held in Buchan.

Some commercial quarries operated in the early 1900s, with marble from the quarries used in the construction of the Murrumbidgee Park homestead, the Shrine of Remembrance and State Library in Melbourne, in other buildings throughout the state and as far off as London. From the 1950s, a Buchan quarry also produced crushed lime for agriculture, paper manufacture and other uses.

Following the Second World War, two large sawmills operated in Buchan, providing employment for the township. However, since the 2003 and 2006 fires only one small mill now operates in Buchan South.

This Community Plan is supported through *OurPlace, OurPlan, OurFuture*, a shire-wide project being progressively rolled out to all East Gippsland communities.

In 2010-11, the project was introduced to the Omeo, Buchan and District, Metung-Nungurner and Twin Rivers District communities to develop community plans.

Community planning will occur through the *OurPlace, OurPlan, OurFuture* program in other areas of the shire during the coming years, and will become an ongoing cycle of planning and implementation across the whole shire.

More information about *OurPlace, OurPlan, OurFuture* can be found at www.eastgippsland.vic.gov.au

Our Plan

The people of Buchan and District have a strong sense of "place, community and values".

- We value the natural environment, our lifestyle and community assets.
- We see opportunities for improvement in infrastructure and the planning and provision of services.
- Our main concerns are being able to care for an ageing population and young people and striking a balance between urban growth and preservation of natural assets.

OurPlace, OurPlan, OurFuture

Buchan's greatest resource is its cohesive and vibrant community, which is supported by volunteers and a mix of people who combine to give this district its unique character.

The Buchan and District community has been working in partnership with the Council for some time and some projects have already been completed, with others in development.

Projects recently completed

Streetscape works in Buchan Township:

Visitors to Buchan Caves who arrived by bus were not going into the town for refreshments because there was nowhere to stop. Parking facilities have now been provided for buses and cars. New seating and an all-abilities pathway now link the park to the town.

Projects being developed

A shared pathway:

Exploratory work is underway to extend the existing pathway linking Buchan Kindergarten to the main street, and on to Buchan Primary School.

Buchan heritage group is developing a trail which features significant sites around the Buchan township and throughout the district, with a view to displaying this information on a central noticeboard in Buchan's main street.

Funding applications for major upgrades to the Buchan Mechanics Hall are being considered.

There is a shire-wide review of waste management services underway.

What’s in this plan for our District?

This document contains information about some ideas and aspirations that have been jointly agreed to by people who have an interest in Buchan and District, to give voice to our community.

These ideas have come through open community consultations and have been refined by a planning group made up of community members. The Buchan and District Community Planning Group has been working together with Council, to identify present and future priorities and develop projects that will help our community to grow and prosper.

As well as providing a great picture of how Buchan and District can develop sustainably and meet future economic and environmental challenges, the Community Plan will be a source document for the community, Council and other organisations. It is supported by a living document outlining project work that will be regularly reviewed and updated, and will help us direct our time, efforts and resources to the things that matter most to us.

What do we hope to achieve?

The ideas that inform this plan have come from residents of Buchan and District through ongoing community engagement.

Three community forums were held to explore the concepts of Strategic Community Planning, Future Scenario Planning and stakeholder contribution, during which residents were able to express their aspirations and concerns. These forums were:



- Community Consultation Meeting as outlined in the Community Consultation Report July 2010.
- The Buchan and District ‘Our Livelihood’ Forum – 16 March 2011.
- Buchan and District Scenario Planning Workshop – 13 April 2011.

All of this information has been collated and presented in tabled reports for general distribution. These reports and community responses are available on the East Gippsland Shire Council website.

The Buchan and District Community Planning Group has undertaken the role of progressing the ideas put forward by the community and facilitating planning activity with individuals and stakeholder groups.

Our Future

The people of Buchan and District want to:

- Continue to develop as a *caring, friendly and safe community*. We will prioritise the upgrading of our key community buildings - the Recreation Pavilion and the Buchan Mechanics Hall – so that they are able to function to the highest standard in times of emergency and also cater for our cultural, recreational and celebratory needs. We will prioritise support for young people to work and thrive in our community and for our ageing population to remain living well and independently.
- *Retain our cultural identity while being able to adapt to environmental change*. We will strive towards sustainable farming, timber and tourism industry development and prosper through diversification. We will support the restoration of the Butter Factory and other cultural assets and support innovative economic options, fostering a vibrant, creative population.
- *Appreciate our natural environment and market this as our greatest asset*. We will support projects that aim to protect our wilderness areas and encourage non-invasive tourism. We will support the development of walking and cycling tracks that link our visitor attractions and improve connectivity for local people.
- *Value quality education and lifelong learning opportunities*. We will support our schools in increasing and improving their Early Years service provision, and in making flexible childcare services available for working parents. We will support our young people to develop their own projects. We will work towards obtaining improved Library Outreach Services, and support the increased provision of locally available courses through the Buchan Neighbourhood House.

What do we Plan to do next?

The tables contained within the ‘Strategies and Actions’ section of this document provide a condensed version of the objectives, strategies and actions that have been compiled and agreed by the Buchan and District Community Planning Group.

The next stage in implementing the Community Plan will be to further prioritise strategies and actions identified and develop projects.

More detail is available at the Buchan Valley Roadhouse, via Council’s website at www.eastgippsland.vic.gov.au or at the Buchan community website <http://buchan.vic.au/community-groups/communityplan>.

Our Future: Strategies and Actions

Highlighted strategies have been identified as priority actions that have received community focus and strategic consideration:

Liveability

An active, healthy and safe community with services that support community diversity and connectivity.

Objectives	Strategies and Actions
To have safety in times of emergency and support in times of recovery.	● <i>Improve community access and safety in Buchan township. Investigate ways of improving the access to and safety of roadways.</i> ● Undertake upgrades to the Recreation Pavilion and to the Buchan Mechanics Hall. ● Seek funding for a commercial kitchen to be installed at the Recreation Pavilion. ● Lobby for improvements to telecommunications and assess the possibility of building some telecommunications hubs for use in times of emergency.
To value our ageing population and ensure that there are services and facilities to support older people.	● <i>Explore ways of increasing home support for isolated older people and support independent living for residents living in remote and isolated locations.</i> ● Support Buchan Bush Nursing Association in securing new facilities. ● Explore options for providing low-care respite in Buchan. ● Support the Bush Nursing Association to offer Meals on Wheels. ● Look at extending opportunities for promoting preventive health messages to older people. ● Support improvements to the Golf Club. ● Look at ways of organising rubbish collection for the elderly.

Objectives	Strategies and Actions
To foster an active, healthy and safe community engaged in recreation, arts and cultural activities.	● <i>Explore East Gippsland Shire Council Library Service improving access to lifelong learning opportunities.</i> ● <i>Support the Early Years Reference Group in developing child-care, including after-school care options and family support.</i> ● Support the work of Outreach Arts Community Development through Buchan Neighbourhood House. ● Investigate ways to generate financial support for Buchan Gallery. ● Support the continued restoration of the Butter Factory as a Museum and Interpretive Centre. ● Support improvements to Buchan South Avenue of Honour. ● Find ways to maintain and extend educational outreach services. ● Support efforts to fund maintaining Buchan Cemetery. ● Continue exploring the application of the Heritage Overlay within Buchan township. ● Support improved provision of recreational infrastructure – barbecue facilities and shaded areas.
To provide an environment for our youth population to flourish, contribute and remain in the district.	● <i>Support Buchan Primary School Council in fundraising and locating a suitable site for a skate park and BMX bike track.</i> ● Explore ways of improving sporting facilities including new change rooms, toilets and showers, a multi-purpose, indoor sports area, resurfacing of playing areas and expansion of the Pony Club. ● Look for opportunities to support youth including possible youth-focused programs and funding for a youth worker position.



Sustainability

A sustainable, healthy and diverse natural environment and a built environment that is sensitive to our region’s natural attributes.

Objectives	Strategies and Actions
To protect, value and utilise the natural environment and to encourage responsible tourism.	- Promote the value of the region’s natural resources and wilderness tourism. - Promote Buchan and District as ‘The Caves Region’ and build on tourism packages and existing wilderness opportunities. - Encourage awareness and understanding of water health, native vegetation and weed infestation through schools. - Support the work of Land Care. - Support initiatives for controlling wild dogs, foxes, deer and fruit fly. - Investigate the viability of green town power - solar/wind/bio-power, etc.
To maintain a built environment that is sensitive to the region’s natural attributes.	- Support the sensitive provision of notice boards and plaques at important sites. - Create a community garden. - Explore the possibility of linking visitor locations with shared pathways, walking and bike tracks to discourage driving. - Explore ways of improving awareness and physical connectivity for Detarka Reserve and support the provision of a community building. - Explore the possibility of planting additional trees in the town, either deciduous or trees suitable for topiary. - Seek a position from East Gippsland Water regarding the likely timing and priority of town sewerage for Buchan.
To encourage recycling and responsible waste management.	- Lobby for increased opening hours at the tip. - Continue to support and promote the Community Op Shop. - Explore further opportunities for ‘trash and treasure’.

Productivity

A progressive community that encourages business and agriculture to thrive and develop sustainability.

Objectives	Strategies and Actions
To have sustainable and viable farming, timber and tourism industries.	- Support farmers who choose to stay on their land through information forums and education programs. - Lobby for better telecommunications on remote farms. - Contribute to discussions to clarify issues around zoning with East Gippsland Shire Council.
To support innovation and technology-based enterprise and new business.	- Support local growers and artisans through seasonal market days. - Investigate the viability of green town power – solar/wind/bio-power etc. - Explore opportunities for viable new enterprises. - Develop a tourism package which includes facilities and retail

Governance

A community with a unique identity, characterised by strong leadership and organisations which are open and accountable

Objectives	Strategies and Actions
To support productive engagement between individuals, community groups and agencies.	- The Buchan and District Community Planning Group will take responsibility for progressing ideas that come from the community, facilitating planning activity between groups and other agencies and supporting individuals who wish to join in and participate in this work. - The Buchan and District Community Planning Group will strive for open negotiation for a ‘place-based focus’ with East Gippsland Shire Council around issues such as rates and services.

Acknowledgements

As at January 2012 the Buchan and District Community Planning Group Members are:

Anne Brewer – Bush Nurse, Buchan Bush Nursing Association
Dick Baxter - Resident, Buchan Lodge
David Eagleson – Chair, Buchan Bush Nursing Association
Evelyn Schmidt – Coordinator, Buchan Neighbourhood House
Suzanne Davies – Chair, Buchan Neighbourhood House Association
Katie Hodge – Outdoor Educator, Buchan resident
Nigel Hodge – Farmer, Gelantipy
Tenzin Namtrul (Grace Davis) – Resident, Buchan
Clive Norfolk – Resident, Buchan South Avenue of Honour

Also supported through the Macpherson Smith Community Alliance
Photographs: Rhonda Coates and Louise Avery

Council Plans and Strategies that have informed this plan:

The Buchan and District Community Plan does not stand alone. It has been developed in partnership with East Gippsland Shire Council and has been informed by the following strategies and plans operating within the Shire.

- Council Plan 2009-13
- Economic Development Strategic Plan
- Community Well-being Plan 2010
- Accessible Information and Lifelong Learning Plan
- Municipal Early Years Plan 2009-13
- Regional Youth Strategy 2008-10
- Positive Ageing Strategy 2010-12
- Access and Mobility Plan
- Disability Action Plan 2007-09
- Strategic Plan for Sporting Infrastructure
- Municipal Emergency Management Plan
- Arts and Culture Strategy Plan 2011-12
- Strategic Tourism Plan 2006-11
- Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2008-13
- Sustainable Water Use Plan
- Roadside Management Plan

Getting Involved

The Buchan and District Community Plan is a living document that will continue to grow.

In the coming months, we will be developing projects to fulfil the aspirations of our Community Plan.

If you feel inspired by the idea of making things even better and want to participate, you can contact the Buchan and District Community Planning Group via Buchan Bush Nursing Association or Buchan Neighbourhood House or the Community Planning Co-ordinator at East Gippsland Shire Council on 03 5153 9500.